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Foreword

During the first half of 1998, America crossed an historic threshold. Six years after we put in place a new economic strategy, America's economy continued to reach new heights. Most dramatically, the Federal budget deficit—a number once so incomprehensibly large that it had 11 zeros—became merely zero. By May, we were projecting the first budget surplus since Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. This seismic shift, from an era of deficits to an era of surpluses, was the result of 6 years of hard work by the American people, and of tough choices made in Washington. The new era of budget surpluses would mean new opportunities and new challenges, and it would demand a new national debate about how best to use our hard-won prosperity. In my State of the Union address I sought to launch and frame this debate with four words: save Social Security first. I believed we had a duty to use the fruits of our prosperity to prepare for the challenges of the 21st century.

In this time of great public controversy, I redoubled my efforts to focus on America's true priorities. I proposed a national effort to help reduce class size in the early grades by hiring 100,000 new teachers and by building or modernizing 6,000 schools. I called on the Congress to pass a patients' bill of rights for the 160 million Americans in managed health care plans. And as part of my initiative on race, we held conversations across the country, bringing citizens together across lines of race, religion, and ethnicity to build one America.

It was a time when we moved forward to build new institutions and strengthen and advance America's values and leadership abroad. In Geneva, before the World Trade Organization, I set out a vision for a new international trading system. I said such a system must be more open and dynamic, but that it must also honor our values by ensuring that spirited economic competition among nations does not become a race to the bottom in environmental protections, consumer protections, or labor standards. In the first-ever tour by an American President of sub-Saharan Africa, I met with President Mandela of South Africa and witnessed firsthand the workings of a new democracy in which former oppressed and former oppressor sit side by side in a unity government, and traveled to some of Africa's emerging countries, from Ghana to Uganda. On my trip to China, I spoke to the Chinese people about the meaning of freedom. I said America believes that individual rights, including the freedom of speech, association, and religion, are universal, and that the Chinese government's actions in Tiananmen Square in 1989 were wrong. I also emphasized the interests both our nations could further by engaging with one another. And in Northern Ireland, the people agreed to an historic peace accord, raising hopes that decades of violence will come to an end. Around the globe, we saw the good that can come when America fulfills its mission as the strongest force for peace and freedom.

William J. Clinton

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the 42d President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period January 1–June 30, 1998. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against a tape recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed full-text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes, and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. That coverage provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. Also included are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed full-text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Hoover, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of Frances D. McDonald, Managing Editor, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Gwen H. Estep, Chief. The Chief Editor of this book was Karen Howard Ashlin, assisted by Brad Brooks, Anna Glover, Margaret A. Hemmig, Maxine Hill, Michael Hoover, Alfred Jones, Jennifer S. Mangum, Michael J. Sullivan, and Karen A. Thornton.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Printing Office under the direction of Michael F. DiMario, Public Printer.

Raymond A. Mosley
Director of the Federal Register

John W. Carlin
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of Agriculture	Dan Glickman
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Secretary of Education	Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Togo D. West, Jr.
United States Representative to the United Nations	Bill Richardson
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Carol M. Browner
United States Trade Representative	Charlene Barshefsky

Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Franklin D. Raines Jacob J. Lew (acting, effective May 20)
Chief of Staff	Erskine B. Bowles
Counselor to the President	Thomas F. McLarty III
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Janet Yellen
Director of National Drug Control Policy	Barry R. McCaffrey
Administrator of the Small Business Administration	Aida Alvarez
Director of Central Intelligence	George J. Tenet
Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency	James Lee Witt

Administration of William J. Clinton

1998

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Emigration Policies and Trade Status of Certain Former Eastern Bloc States

December 31, 1997

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 21, 1994, I determined and reported to the Congress that the Russian Federation was in "full compliance" with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. On June 3, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine were in "full compliance" with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan were in "full compliance" with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. These actions allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) status and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver.

As required by law, I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. You will find that the report indicates continued compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration for these countries.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 2, 1998.

The President's Radio Address

January 3, 1998

Good morning. The beginning of a new year is a time of promise, and at the start of 1998, we have much to be thankful for. We've made much progress on our mission of preparing America for the 21st century and making our country work for all our people. Both unemployment and crime are at their lowest level in 24 years. The welfare rolls have dropped by a record 3.8 million. The deficit has been cut by 90 percent.

In 1997 in Washington, we passed the historic balanced budget; embraced the idea of national academic standards for our schools for the first time; extended health insurance coverage to 5 million children; moved ahead with our environmental agenda to save the Everglades, the ancient forests in California, and Yellowstone Park. And we made a safer, more prosperous world by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention, expanding NATO, keeping the peace in Bosnia, and opening new opportunities for American high-tech products to be sold around the world. We also continued the work of building one America with our race initiative and the Presidents' Summit on Service.

As 1998 dawns, American families can look forward to tax cuts for their children and to truly historic tax relief that will make community college free for almost all Americans and help to pay for the cost of all education after high school, the largest such effort since the GI bill 50 years ago. I have done my best to give the American people a Government for the 21st century, not one that tries to do everything,

nor one that does nothing, but a Government that gives Americans the tools and conditions to make the most of their own lives in a new world of information and technological revolution and globalization.

But I've also done my best to call forth a new spirit of citizen service here at home, as necessary to meet our new challenges and to fulfill our obligations both at home and around the world.

From the beginning, I have worked to give more Americans the chance to serve, to join with their fellow citizens to take responsibilities for their communities and our country. We created AmeriCorps, which has already given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve our Nation and earn money for a college education. We strengthened that commitment with the Presidents' Summit on Service in Philadelphia, which already has moved thousands and thousands of Americans to give our children a helping hand. And this year, the day we honor Dr. Martin Luther King will be a day of service in communities all across America.

Today I want to talk about how we can strengthen one of the finest examples of citizen service, the Peace Corps. When President Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in 1961, he saw it as a bold experiment in public service that would unite our Nation's highest ideals with a pragmatic approach to bettering the lives of ordinary people around the world. He also saw it as an investment in our own future in an increasingly interdependent world. In the years since, it's paid off many times over.

Three decades ago, Peace Corps volunteers worked as teachers in villages in Africa and Asia, Latin America and the Pacific region. They helped communities inoculate their children against disease, clean their water, increase their harvests. In so doing, they helped communities and countries become stronger and more stable, making them better partners for us as we work together to meet common goals.

Today, the Peace Corps continues these efforts, but it's also adapting to the new needs of our era. Since the fall of communism, Peace Corps volunteers have gone to work in new democracies from Eastern Europe to central Asia, helping to nurture and strengthen free markets by teaching new entrepreneurs how to get their businesses running. Volunteers now work to protect the environment and help prevent the spread of AIDS.

Under Director Mark Gearan, the Peace Corps is also preparing to meet the challenges of the next century. To ensure that it does, I will ask Congress next month to continue its longtime bipartisan support for the Peace Corps and join me in putting 10,000 Peace Corps volunteers overseas by the year 2000. That's an increase of more than 50 percent from today's levels. I'll request that funding for the Peace Corps be increased by $48 million, the largest increase since the 1960's.

In a world where we're more and more affected by what happens beyond our borders, we have to work harder to overcome the divisions that undermine the integrity and quality of life around the world, as well as here at home. Strengthening the Peace Corps, giving more Americans opportunities to serve in humanity's cause is both an opportunity and an obligation we should seize in 1998.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:37 p.m. on January 2 at a private residence in Charlotte Amalie in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 3.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Libya

January 2, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect

beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the Libyan emergency is to continue in effect beyond January 7, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 7, 1986, has not been resolved. The Government of Libya has continued its actions and policies in support of terrorism, despite the calls by the United Nations Security Council, in Resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992), and 883 (1993), that it demonstrate by concrete actions its renunciation of terrorism. Such Libyan actions and policies pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and vital foreign policy interests of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure to the Government of Libya to reduce its ability to support international terrorism.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5. The notice of January 2 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
January 2, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. The previous submission covered progress through July 31, 1997. The current submission covers the period August 1, 1997, to September 30, 1997.

Highlights of the reporting period include the U.N. sponsored talks between President Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash held in Glion-sur-Montreux, Switzerland; U.S. Special Cyprus Coordinator Miller's trip to the region; and U.S. success in convening direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders on security issues.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5.

Remarks on the Federal Budget and an Exchange With Reporters
January 5, 1998

The President. Good afternoon and happy new year to all of you. I'm glad to be back at work, and I'm looking forward to 1998.

We can begin the year with some good news. I can now say that we believe that the deficit this year will be less than $22 billion. That means that it will decline for the 6th year in a row, a truly historic event. Twenty-two billion dollars is a far cry from the $357 billion the deficit was projected to be this year when I took office or the $90 billion it was projected to be when the balanced budget agreement was enacted. So we have come a very long way.

I can also say that the budget that I present to the Congress in February will be a balanced budget for 1999. Again, this will be the first time in 30 years we've had a balanced budget, and that's good news for the American people and for the American economy. It continues the

successful economic policy that we adopted beginning with the budget in 1993, which was the first major step.

We have followed a policy of investing in our people, expanding the sales of American goods and services overseas, and practicing fiscal discipline. We reversed 12 years of trickle-down economics in which the deficit of this country exploded year after year and our national debt was quadrupled. So we have taken a different course, and thanks to the hard work and productivity of the American people, it is working. And I'm very, very pleased about it.

Now, what we have to do now is to build on it, first with the balanced budget to keep interest rates down and keep the economy growing, secondly with other policies which I will be outlining in the State of the Union. I welcome other people to the debate.

But let me say, I want to caution everyone that I will do everything that I can to prevent anyone from using a projected future surplus as a pretext for returning to the failed policies of the past. We do not want to go back to the terrible conditions that paralyzed our Government and paralyzed our own people's potential in 1992 when I took office. We have to go forward.

This is great news today. I'm very pleased by it. The American people should be pleased by it. But we should be determined to stay on the course and do what works. And that's my determination.

Q. Are you ruling out a tax cut, Mr. President, with this surplus?

The President. I do not—let me just say, I want to say just exactly what I said. We don't have a surplus. We can project a surplus, but we don't have one. And we've waited 30 years for a balanced budget. Between 1981 and 1992, we projected all kinds of things and went out and spent the money on tax cuts and spending—both. We spent the money, and we quadrupled the debt, drove up interest rates, put our country in a terrible hole. We have dug ourselves out of that hole with a lot of effort and a lot pain. In 1993 it was a very difficult dig, and a lot of people paid a very high price for it. Then we had the overwhelming bipartisan support for the balanced budget.

All I'm saying is that any policy we adopt must not—it cannot—run any risk of returning to the failed policies of the past. We got away from trickle-down economics; we're into investing and growing our future. We're doing it the old-fashioned way. I have been exhorting the American people for 5 years now to be responsible, to remember that we cannot have opportunity without responsibility. Well, that same rule applies to the Government. We have to set a good example. We have to create opportunity, and we can't do it unless we're also responsible.

So whatever policies we adopt have to be within the framework of the budget to the best of our knowledge. We cannot take risks with the future that we have worked so hard to build.

Tobacco Legislation

Q. Mr. President, are you going to call for cigarette tax increases to help pay for new initiatives?

The President. I will—first of all, on the tobacco issue generally—I'll have more to say about this later, but keep in mind what my first priority is. My first priority is to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, from the illegal dangers of tobacco. And I will propose a plan that I believe is best designed to do that, that will build on the settlement agreement that was reached earlier. And I will work with Members of Congress in both parties in good faith to try to pass comprehensive tobacco legislation that I think will achieve that goal. And I'll say more about the details later.

Press Coverage of President's Vacation

Q. Mr. President, there's been some controversy today about whether the press invaded your privacy in St. Thomas. Do you feel your privacy was invaded, and where should the press draw the line, sir?

The President. The answer to the first question is yes. The answer to the second question is that's why we have a first amendment; you get to decide the answer to the second question. But——

Q. You didn't like your dancing picture? Everybody liked it.

The President. Actually, I liked it quite a lot. But I didn't think I was being photographed.

Q. Was it off limits, sir?

The President. That's a question that you have to ask and answer.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House prior to a meeting with the economic team.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Medicare

January 6, 1998

Thank you, Ruth. I think she has made clearer than I could ever hope to that, for many Americans, access to quality health care can mean the difference between a secure, healthy, and productive life, and the enormous burden of illness and worry and enormous financial strain.

Today the proposals I am making are designed to address the problems of some of our most vulnerable older Americans. I propose three new health care options that would give them the security they deserve. The centerpiece of our plan will let many more of these Americans buy into one of our Nation's greatest achievements, Medicare.

When Medicare was first enacted, President Johnson said, and I quote, "It proved that the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times." Once again we are faced with changing times: a new economy that changes the way we work and the way we live; new technologies and medical breakthroughs holding out hope for longer, healthier lives; a new century brimming with promise but still full of challenge and much more rapid change. The values remain the same, but the new times demand that we find new ways to create opportunity for all Americans.

For the past 5 years, we have had an economic strategy designed to expand opportunity and strengthen our families in changing times, insisting on fiscal responsibility, expanding trade, investing in all our people. Yesterday I announced that the budget I will submit to Congress in 3 weeks will be a balanced budget, the first one in 30 years. Within this balanced budget, we propose to expand health care access for millions of Americans.

Last summer, with the balanced budget agreement I signed, we took action to extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund until at least 2010, and we appointed a Medicare commission to make sure that Medicare can meet the needs of the baby boom generation. We took action to root out fraud and abuse in the Medicare system, assigning more prosecutors, shutting down fly-by-night home health care providers, taking steps to put an end to overpayments for prescription drugs. Since I took office, we have saved over $20 billion in health care claims, money that would have been wasted, gone instead to provide quality health care for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

We want to continue to do everything possible to ensure that the same system that served our parents can also serve our children. That means bringing Medicare into the 21st century in a fiscally responsible way that recognizes the changing needs of our people in a new era.

We know that for different reasons more and more Americans are retiring or leaving the work force before they become eligible for Medicare at age 65. We know that far too many of these men and women do not have health insurance. Some of them lose their health coverage when their spouse becomes eligible for Medicare and loses his or her health insurance at work. That's the story we heard today.

Some lose their coverage when they lose their jobs because of downsizing or layoffs. Still others lose their insurance when their employers unexpectedly drop their retirement health care plans. These people have spent their lifetimes working hard, supporting their families, contributing to society. And just at the time they most need health care, they are least attractive to health insurers who demand higher premiums or deny coverage outright.

The legislation that I propose today recognizes these new conditions and takes action to expand access to health care to millions of Americans. First, for the first time, people between the ages of 62 and 65 will be able to buy into the Medicare program at a fixed premium rate that, for many, is far more affordable than private insurance but firmly based in the actual cost of insuring people in this age group and, as you just heard from what Ruth said, far, far more affordable than the out-of-pocket costs that people have to pay if they need it.

This is an entirely new way of adapting a program that has worked in the past to the needs of the future. It is a fiscally responsible plan that finances itself by charging an affordable premium up front and a small payment later to ensure that this places no new burdens on Medicare. It will provide access to health

care for hundreds of thousands of Americans, and it is clearly the right thing to do.

Second, statistics show that older Americans who lose their jobs are much less likely to find new employment. And far too often, when they lose their jobs, they also lose their health insurance. Under this proposal, people between the ages of 55 and 65 who have been laid off or displaced will also be able to buy into Medicare early, protecting them against the debilitating costs of unforeseen illness.

Third, we know that in recent years too many employers have walked away from their commitments to provide retirement health benefits to longtime, loyal employees. Under our proposal, these employees, also between the ages of 55 and 65, will be allowed to buy into their former employers' health plans until they qualify for Medicare. And thank you, Congressman, for your long fight on this issue.

Taken together, these steps will help to take our health care system into the 21st century, providing more American families with the health care they need to thrive, maintaining the fiscal responsibility that is giving more Americans the chance to live out their dreams, shaping our most enduring values to meet the needs of changing times. It is the right thing to do. And thank you, Ruth, for demonstrating that to us today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ruth Kain, a heart patient who was denied full health insurance coverage after her husband's retirement at age 65; and Representative Gerald D. Kleczka of Wisconsin.

Statement on the Death of Representative Sonny Bono

January 6, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn this morning of the death of Representative Sonny Bono. His joyful entertainment of millions earned him celebrity, but in Washington he earned respect by being a witty and wise participant in policymaking processes that often seem ponderous to the American people. He made us laugh even as he brought his own astute perspective to the work of Congress. Hillary and I express our condolences to Representative Bono's wife and children and to his constituents and all Americans who appreciated his humor, his voice, and his devoted service to his community and Nation.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Child Care

January 7, 1998

Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. You know, I was listening to the Vice President and Tipper and Hillary speak, and I was looking at all these people out here, and I was thinking about all the great joys of being President. And one of the greatest joys of being President is that you get to stand up and make an announcement on which other people have done all the work. [*Laughter*]

I want to begin by thanking the Cabinet, especially Secretary Shalala who has done so much work on this. But I thank them all. I thank the Congress, not only the Women's Caucus of Republican and Democratic women in the Congress but the few errant men who are here—[*laughter*]—and those who are not here who care so passionately about this issue in the Senate and in the House.

I thank the children and families who are here and the child advocates who are here. I was looking around this room—there are some people in this room that I have been listening to on this issue for way over 20 years now.

They have waited a long time for this day. [*Laughter*]

I thank the Gores. You know, they started their family conference every year in Nashville even before we began our partnership together, and it was a brilliant and unique idea, the idea of every year focusing on the American family and some aspect of challenge or opportunity and bringing people in from all over America to talk about it. There's really no precedent for it as far as I know in our public policy, and it's a remarkable contribution that they have made.

And of course, I thank my wife, who has been talking to me about all these things for more than 25 years now and is sitting there thinking that I finally got around to doing what she has been telling me to do. [*Laughter*] I was thinking it would be nice to have something new to talk about for the next 25 years. [*Laughter*] That's one of the major reasons for this event today. And even if the rest of you can't appreciate it as much as I can, you'll just have to live with the truth. [*Laughter*]

But mostly I thank these children, for they remind us of our fundamental obligations as Americans and as human beings.

You know, throughout our history, our Founders told us that they organized our country in order to form a more perfect Union. And one of the most important ways we have done that now, for more than 220 years, is to always apply our most fundamental values to the circumstances and challenges of each new age. And the reason we have made it is that we have never forgotten that there is no more fundamental value than the American family, than its strength and its integrity. There is no more important job than raising a child. There is no more important responsibility than to create the conditions and give people the tools to succeed at raising their children. But I think we would all have to admit that as a nation we have not done what we should have done to enable all of our families to meet the challenge of the era in which we live.

For some time now, we have been, at least with one foot, in the 21st century. We know that the 21st century will be dominated by globalization and by information and technological revolutions. And we know that it has brought us many great benefits.

We as Americans should be very grateful today for the prosperity we enjoy. Even though all of you and your fellow Americans have worked hard to earn it and we've made some tough decisions in Washington to help bring it about, we should still be grateful for it. But we know that this new economy, with all the unprecedented prosperity it has brought us, has also imposed some significant new challenges.

We know, for example, that the average working family is spending more hours a week in the workplace than 25 or 30 years ago, with all the benefits of technology. And we know that more and more parents of young children are in the workplace, either because they're single-parent households or because both parents have to work to make ends meet or because both parents choose to work—and they ought to have that choice.

But there is no more important responsibility on us to apply the values of America, the timeless values of America, to modern conditions—none is more important than making sure every American can balance the dual responsibilities of succeeding as parents and succeeding at work. There is no more significant challenge. Indeed, one of the biggest debates we had when we were working through the welfare reform issue was how we could require people to be responsible and go to work without creating conditions which would require them to abandon their first responsibility to be good parents. That is the universal obligation of every parent, and it should be the dominant concern of our Government.

That's what this is about. I don't believe I have ever talked to a parent who was also in the workplace who has not been able to cite at least one example, and oftentimes many, many more, of a conflict between—that he or she felt between the obligations of parenthood and the obligations to the job. And that includes, of course, people who work in the White House—when the President makes them work too late at night. [*Laughter*] But you just—you know that. Everyone—I saw a lot of you nodding your heads. You just know that. It's part of the fabric of American life.

We know that the Government cannot raise or love a child, but that is not what we're supposed to do. What the Government is supposed to do is to help create the conditions and give people the tools that will enable them to raise and love their children while successfully participating in the American workplace.

Today I am proud to propose the single largest national commitment to child care in the history of the United States. It is a comprehensive and fiscally responsible plan to make child care more affordable and accessible, to raise the quality of child care, to assure the safety of care for millions of American children.

This is an issue that touches nearly every family, and I believe it must rise above politics and partisan interests. I welcome the bipartisan effort to improve child care that is already going on in the Congress. I thank the Members who are here and many who could not come today for their leadership and for demonstrating that this is an American issue that both Democrats and Republicans are embracing.

This proposal will be an important part of the budget I send to Congress next month. It will be the first balanced budget in 30 years. It will build on the achievements of the year just passed, one that was very good for working families. As has already been mentioned, last summer's historic balanced budget agreement provided working families with a $500-per-child tax credit; it made the first 2 years of college—community college—virtually free for almost every American family and made college more affordable for American families; expanded health coverage to 5 million uninsured people; advanced the cause of placing more children into solid, adoptive homes; and continued our efforts to collect more child support.

Over the past 5 years, we have worked hard to abandon the false choices of the past, including the false choice of having to choose between responsibilities at work and responsibilities at home. Our new economic strategy is designed in no small measure to get over that divide. From the Family and Medical Leave Act, to the earned-income tax credit, to the minimum wage increase, we have tried to demonstrate that it is not only possible but imperative to the survival of the American dream to help people meet their responsibilities at home and at work. Strengthening child care has always been a part of this strategy. Since we came here, we've helped a million children and their families to afford the child care that they need, but we have to do a lot more.

Now, this new proposal has three fundamental goals: first, to make child care more affordable and available to all Americans. With increased block grants to States, we will double the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than 2 million. One of the reasons welfare reform has worked as well as it has is because of the increased investment in child care. Now we have to help the lower income families who have never been on welfare in the first place but still struggle to pay for child care. We also will help more than 3 million working families to meet their child care expenses by dramatically expanding the child care tax credit. These tax credits will mean that a family of four making $35,000 and saddled with high child care bills will no longer pay one penny in Federal income taxes.

I'm also supporting new tax credits to encourage more businesses to provide child care for their employees. When I met the Members of Congress before coming in here, that's the first thing Congresswoman DeLauro said. She had just come from the opening of a corporate child care center. We need more businesses to do more, and we need to help the smaller businesses who can use this tax credit and cannot afford to do it on their own without a little help from the public.

Second, we must make sure that every child has a safe and enriching place to go after school. As the Vice President said, there are simply too many children who, through no fault of their parents, are left to fend for themselves in the hours between 2 and 6 o'clock—too many children roaming the streets, idling in front of the television, or getting into trouble.

I cannot emphasize the importance of this too much. The crime rate in this country has dropped dramatically in the last 5 years. All Americans should be proud of that. The juvenile crime rate has not dropped so much. And where it has dropped, almost without exception, it has dropped because people have found something positive for children to do in the hours between the time school ends and the time their parents come home at night. We do not need to keep building jail after jail after jail to house children who wouldn't be there in the first place if we took care of them while they're out free and able to build constructive, law-abiding, positive lives.

I am proposing the expansion of before- and after-school programs to help some 500,000 children say no to drugs and alcohol and crime and yes to reading, soccer, computers, and a brighter future for themselves. I thank the Vice President especially for his hard work on this issue.

Third, we have to improve the safety and quality of child care and make sure that child care advances early childhood development. I am proposing an early learning fund to help to reduce child-to-staff ratios in child care centers, train child care workers, and educate parents. We have to also strengthen the enforcement of State codes and licensing requirements, weed out bad providers, and through tougher criminal background checks, make sure that the wrong people aren't doing the right mission that we all need done properly. Finally, we ought to offer scholarships to talented caregivers.

Now, let me take a minute to thank our State leaders, from North Carolina to Washington State, from Rhode Island to Minnesota, for their efforts at improving child care and promoting early learning across America. I know Governor Almond of Rhode Island is here, and I want to especially thank him for Rhode Island's child opportunity zone program. It is a national model.

We are living in what may well be the most exciting era of human history. But the globalization, the information and technology revolution, they continue to alter the way we live and work, the way we do business, and the way we relate to each other and the rest of the world. They make some jobs easier; they render others obsolete. But nothing must be permitted to undermine the first responsibilities of parenthood.

No raise or promotion will ever top the joy of hugging a child after work. Nothing can be more bittersweet than sending a child you once cradled off in your arms off to college for the first time. [*Laughter*] Nothing weighs more heavily on a parent's mind than the well-being of a child in the care of others. No issue is more important to any family.

You know, a lot of us have had our own experiences with child care. I've often wondered how my mother, when she was widowed, would have been able to go back to school if I hadn't been able to move in with my grandparents. I was lucky, and it turned out reasonably well for me. [*Laughter*] But how many children are out there with exactly the same potential, who never got the same break by pure accident of family circumstance? You don't know the answer to that, and neither do I. But we know what the answer should be. The answer should be, not a single one.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Lincoln Almond of Rhode Island.

Statement on the Death of Manuel Zurita

January 7, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Customs Senior Special Agent Manuel Zurita. We are eternally grateful for the courage and bravery of the men and women who protect us each and every day. This tragic accident painfully reminds us of the risks our law enforcement officials face keeping our country safe.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and their four children as they deal with this devastating loss.

NOTE: Agent Zurita was fatally injured in a January 1 boat accident while aboard a U.S. Customs Service vessel providing security for the President's arrival in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in New York City
January 8, 1998

Thank you very much. The good news is this is the only speech I have. [*Laughter*] And I wrote it in the car on the way over from the airport. I want to thank Steve for what he said and for the extraordinary effort he's put in, in a very difficult and challenging year, as head of our National Democratic Party. I thank Craig and Jane for having us in their home. I have not been in this magnificent historic old building in, oh, about 10 or 11 years. And I'm a very schmaltzy person so I get all choked up when I come here. I keep imagining whether I'm standing someplace where John Lennon was, and all that. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much for letting us come here. Thank you, Judith Hope, for leading the New York Democratic Party.

And I think what I would like to do today is just talk in kind of a larger sense about where I think we are at this moment in history and why what you're doing here matters. And I'd like to begin with two, maybe, apparently, unrelated things.

The first is, you know we're 2 years from a new century in a new millennium, something that only happens every 1,000 years. I expect all the predictions of doom and the end of time to be rising up, and maybe there will be a lot of wonderful, glowing predictions as well. But the time just begs for historic drama. And the good news is you have it, because of the globalization of the world economy and society, because of the explosion in information and science and technology. People are fundamentally changing the way they work, the way they live, the way they relate to each other and the rest of the world. And that is changing everything else in ways that are, more often than not, quite positive, but sometimes quite troubling.

We have a lot of people in the finance community here today. Everybody is trying to calculate what is going on in Asia: Is it going to keep going on; is it going to stop; is there something the United States can do to stop it; regardless, what impact will it have on us? There is a level of interdependence in the world today and a scope and speed of change in the world today that has hitherto been unknown to the American people, and that is changing things. And that will shape the new—in that sense, we already have a foot in the 21st century.

The second thing I'd like you to think about is that—we have a lot of very distinguished actors here today. Hillary and I went to the premiere in Washington the other night of "Amistad," the new movie about the slave ship. It culminates in the work of John Quincy Adams helping a young American lawyer to get these slaves freed so they could be free to go back home to Africa before the Civil War. And they won a case in the Supreme Court on a unique point of property law. But it's a very moving picture, I think.

Why do I mention that? Because at that moment in our history, John Quincy Adams, a man who was a one-term President, got the living daylights beat out of him for reelection by Andrew Jackson, an American hero, and then was humble enough and dedicated enough to go back and serve nine terms in the House of Representatives, where he died in service in his early eighties—a unique American story. John Quincy Adams was the embodiment of the Nation's opposition to slavery, and to something called the gag rule which, believe it or not, was imposed by the Southerners on the Congress before the Civil War so that you weren't even supposed to be able to bring up petitions opposing slavery on the floor of Congress.

Now, at that moment, Adams was the symbol for our country of the idea that the National Government ought to take a stand against slavery, to strengthen the Union and to, in effect, apply the guarantees of the Constitution to the present moment—in other words, to acknowledge that we were wrong when we started as a country and we said that black people were only three-fifths human and they didn't really count as citizens.

What's that got to do with this time? In every period of profound change in the whole history of the country, the debate is always the same. The debate is between those who believe that the period of change requires us to come closer together as one nation and to extend the fundamental principles on which we were founded to the new moment—and there have been four

or five moments in American history which were literally break points, where we were being tested.

First, we got started; we had to decide, are we going to be one country or just a collection of States, kind of like an eating club, and every now and then we'll get together? And we decided to be one country. And then in the Civil War, when slavery and sectionalism threatened one nation and Abraham Lincoln literally gave his life, first for the Union and second to get rid of slavery.

Then in the industrial revolution, where first Theodore Roosevelt and then Woodrow Wilson's administration, and all the way through FDR, had to deal with the consequences of America moving from an agricultural to an industrial society—most of them were good, but not all of them were. How do you get the benefit of all this new wealth and say it's still not okay to work children 15 hours a day, 6 days a week in coal mines? How do you do that? How do you deal with all these people teeming into the cities of America from all over the world, and how do you assimilate them into our country, and how do you make immigrants a part of the American fabric of life? If the whole system breaks down, as it did in the Great Depression, how do you get it back up?

And throughout, there was the debate between—going from Lincoln to Roosevelt and Wilson to FDR—between those who say we have to strengthen the Union in order to preserve and enhance liberty, and those who said, "Ah, the Government, it will screw it up. They will mess up a one-car parade—[*laughter*]—and this country was founded on the principle that we've got to limit it and just let the market take its course." Then we had World War II and the cold war, which was a 50-year battle against totalitarianism, when there was much more of a consensus among the conservatives and the liberals for united policies to make the Nation strong because our very existence was at stake.

Now we literally are facing an era of globalization and information revolution which is upsetting the established patterns of life to an extent never before known. Most of it's positive. Some of it's not.

What are the problems we're facing? Well, first of all, we've got more people in the work force than ever before, more women in the work force than ever before, and nearly every family with children has trouble balancing the demands of work and family, even wealthy people. I don't know a single couple with young children that hasn't felt a moment of guilt at some time in the conflict between the demands of work and the demands of childrearing. That's fundamentally different, and rampant.

Second, there is the question of—the perennial question—how do you get the benefits of these new changes but make them available to everybody, give everyone a chance to participate? America has the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years; New York City has an unemployment rate of 9 percent. How do you bring the benefits of the new market to the neighborhoods that it hasn't reached? We have children who know more about computers than their parents, but not every child has access to a computer. How do you make sure that the benefits of technology are made more universal?

Third question—that you saw debated at Kyoto in the climate change conference—how do you continue to grow the economy and bring all these vast new countries like China and India—the two biggest countries in the world—into the mainstream of economic life to stabilize the lives of the people there and still not only preserve but indeed restore the economy?

Last question—big question—how do you accept the fact that the global marketplace is dominant and the cold war is over and say we're not going to disintegrate into chaos and anarchy? That is, how can you have a social contract where everybody has a chance, at least, and where people who deserve a hand up get it, and where people learn to live with each other amidst all their diversity and localism?

You said your daughter said it was not necessary for Socks and Buddy to like each other, but they did have to get along. Maybe that should be my policy in Bosnia. [*Laughter*] I mean—you laugh, but you think about it. This is a significant thing. How do we deal with the fact that the old structures that people used as magnets for identity in the world are breaking down, giving vast new freedoms, and still find ways for people to integrate and make sense of their lives? These are huge challenges.

I believe—and the reason I ran for President in 1991 and 1992—that we had to take a new direction. The progressive party, my party, I thought, had the right idea about trying to hold the country together, but they didn't seem too willing to change to develop new approaches

to deal with the new challenges. The Republicans had basically abandoned what might have been a basis for being a very successful modern party if they had essentially been like traditional northeast Republicans and modified their position. And instead, they adopted the Reagan position, which was, the Government is always the problem, is inherently bad, and is oppressing people, and what we really need to do is just to get it out of the way and everything will be fine. It seems to me that that is self-evidently untrue.

So what we tried to do was to take an approach that said that Government could not do everything, but it couldn't sit on the sidelines; and what we really should focus on is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and to build successful families and communities and to enable America to reach out to the rest of the world in a positive way. That's why we focused on an economic policy that works. That's why we supported local crime policies that work. That's why we've worked on—we've moved historic numbers of people from welfare to work.

And I think we've had a fair measure of success in meeting the new security challenges of the world beyond our borders. And after 5 years, as I said, we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We have cleaned up record numbers of toxic waste dumps, and we're tackling the big challenges of our time. So I think we're moving in the right direction.

Now, what are we about to do in Washington? Congress is about to come back to town, and I have to give the State of the Union Address. And I will very briefly tell you what I think is still out there to be done. First of all, we have got to find a way to bring economic opportunity to the areas in this country which haven't received it. We've got to bring economic empowerment and enterprise into isolated inner-city and rural communities. And I won't bore you with the details—you may have better ideas than I do—but we're going to have an agenda to do that.

Secondly, in the area of crime, the crime rate is dropping, but the juvenile crime rate is not dropping as fast. Kids get in trouble—almost all juvenile crime is committed between 2 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon, almost 100 percent of it. It is a very foolish thing for us to keep building prisons to put young people in to become permanent criminals as a strategy to lower the crime rate, when for much less money we could leave the schools open, give them something to say yes to and build their lives around. And so we're going to try to deal with that.

In the area of welfare reform, the fundamental issue is we've reduced the welfare rolls by 3.8 million; all the people that are left are going to be harder to place. Therefore, there needs to be more training, more child care, but also jobs that are created, if necessary, in community service work so that people aren't just cut off welfare.

The other thing we have to examine is how do we make sure that people aren't required to give up their educational programs if they're actually going to school. There's been a lot of publicity about that here in New York. And one of the things we're trying to do there is to make sure that people on welfare can qualify for work-study while they're going to college and they can work their way through school like everybody else does who has to work their way through school. So we're trying to work through that.

On the issue of balancing family and work, the most single meaningful action that I've taken as President, I think, if you took a poll, most people would probably say, "I like the Family and Medical Leave Act." Probably around 15 million people have been able to take some time off from work when a baby was born or a parent was sick.

Yesterday Hillary and I and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore announced the largest child care initiative in the history of the country, to try to make child care more affordable, more available, and of a higher quality and safer than ever before to millions more Americans.

The next big challenge we have to face is all of us around here in this room who are baby boomers—some of you are not, some of you are a little older, some of you are a little younger—but the baby boom generation, until—this generation now in the public schools is the biggest we've ever had, but until they were in the public schools, we were the largest generation. If we don't make some changes in Social Security and Medicare, when we retire we either won't be able to draw them in the way that they're now being enjoyed by seniors, or we will impose incredible tax burdens on our

children to do it, in ways that I think are morally unacceptable. So we have to undertake in the next 2 years a significant review of Social Security and Medicare, and they have to be modernized so that the baby boom generation can actually access them in a way that is universal and fair, but so that they actually work for the 21st century.

Over and above that, we have to recognize that half the people in this country have no retirement savings. And almost no one can maintain their standard of living on Social Security alone. There are very few people living on that little money. So we have to do more to get people to save for their own retirement. We've done a lot of work on that in the last 5 years; we must do more.

The next issue I'd like to mention is education. I spent, in my years in public life, more time on this than any other issue. In the end, a lot of Americans, a lot of you in this room over the last 5 years, have told me that you're very glad you've done well in life, but you're very concerned about the increasing inequality of wealth in America because people in the lower 40 percent of our work force have not had their earnings increase in a proportionate way—for 20 years now. Now, there's some indication, by the way, that that's turning around the last 2 or 3 years, and we've worked very hard on it.

What can a country do if it has great inequality and you don't believe in punishing the successful; what can you do? Well, in 1993 we asked upper income people to pay more and gave lower income working families a tax break as part of our strategy to bring down the deficit, but that's a one-time deal. We can expand trade and try to change the job mix in America, and we're doing that. For the last 2 years, more than half the new jobs in this country paid above-average wages. That's a slow process, since most people are not in jobs that were created last year. The only other thing you can do is to set up a system of lifetime education and training which starts with an excellent primary and secondary education and gives people the chance always to continuously upgrade their skills so they're on the cutting edge of change. In the end, that is the only answer to this. And, therefore, it is imperative that we do that.

History will record that the best thing about the balanced budget bill we passed last August was that we made community college free for all Americans, that we gave tax breaks for any kind of education after high school, from graduate school to workers in factories who have to go back to school to upgrade their skills.

The second thing we did was to launch the debate on whether America should have high national standards. And I want to talk about that a little bit. Fifteen big city school districts, including New York City, said, we support the President's desire to have national standards and national tests and measure kids by how well they do and tell their parents. But there is still an enormous resistance to that in this country. Now, there was a study that's in the paper today—you may have seen it—showing that big city school districts perform at significantly lower levels by any measure than non-city school districts in America.

You can say, well, what do you expect, the kids there are poorer. They may be poorer, but we spend more money on average on them. And I say that to make this point: We cannot pretend, if we have a truly progressive vision of the future, that we can ever achieve what we want to achieve unless we hold our children—all of our children, without regard to their race, their income, or their background—to high standards of learning, and then give them the support they need to meet those standards, and measure whether they do or not, and if they don't, keep on working at it until they do.

Chicago has just undertaken a complete overhaul of its school system in which local parent councils are involved in local school districts, and they have ended social promotion. You have to pass an exam to go on to the next grade. If you don't, you've got to go to summer school. If you get through summer school and you pass the exam, you can go on. If you don't, you have to stay back. But because it's a community-based, parent-based thing, you don't hear one word about it being discriminatory, about it being unfair, about anything else. Why? Because people have taken control of their children's education. They say, our kids have got to learn something.

In the end, when they're 50, their self-esteem will be more harmed by not being able to read and write and learn new skills than it will by having been held back one year in school when they were 10. And we have got to have that kind of commitment to national standards, to rigorous standards.

The survey also reported that children in Virginia, for example, in urban school districts—let me—I live across the river from one, from the most diverse school district in America, Fairfax County, Virginia—children from 180 different national and ethnic groups in one school district. And the survey concluded that the reason that the urban students in Virginia scored better was because they had specific, rigorous standards to which they were held and consequences for failure. So I say to you, I hope you will all support that.

Finally, let me say—in this old world we've got a lot of challenges; I just want to mention two. We need a national consensus to do something on global warming. It is real; it is significant; and what we need is an understanding that we can grow the economy and still preserve the environment. Just with the pressures that—public pressure that has been created in the last few months, look at all the new announcements that Detroit has made about cars that no one had anticipated before. We can do this. But we will pay a terrible price if we do not.

The second issue I'd like to raise is that the wonderful explosion in science and technology and information that allow kids in New York City to get on the Internet and talk to kids in Australia about school projects also mean that crazy people in New York can talk to crazy people somewhere else about how to make chemical weapons or biological weapons. You remember when we had the Oklahoma City bombing trial, the publicity came out that there was a webpage where, if you could hook into it, you could figure out how to make the bomb.

I say that simply to make the point that when you see me on behalf of the United States trying to stand up against the spread of chemical and biological weapons, or trying to devise ways to stop the spread of disease, or more rigorous standards to preserve the quality of our food supply as we import more food and more food goes across national borders—see that as part of this larger issue. We want all the benefits of globalization, but we have to preserve the integrity and the value of our life and that of people around the world.

And since we're in New York, I'll make my last pitch. I need your support for convincing the Congress that they should support and we should pay our way in the United Nations, in the World Bank, in the International Monetary Fund, and all the other international institutions. We live in an era of interdependence, and we have richly benefited from it. We were able to do what we did in Bosnia because others would help us. And I could give you lots of other examples.

Now, why should you be here and why are you doing this? Because we believe that Government is not the enemy, but it has to be an agent of change; because we believe this is an age in which we have to form a more perfect Union by giving people the tools to make the most of their own lives, to serve in their communities, and to build a strong country; and because the evidence is, after 5 years, that this approach is right for America.

You've made it possible for it to continue, and I very much appreciate it. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. at a private residence in the Dakota apartment building. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; luncheon hosts Craig Hatkoff and Jane Rosenthal; and Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party.

Statement on National Education Standards

January 8, 1998

This week, an independent report showed that more than half the students in our Nation's city schools are failing to master the basics in reading, math, and science—the building blocks of all the skills they will need to succeed in the 21st century. And while some city school* systems *are* making progress, all too many are clearly failing our children.

* White House correction.

As a nation, we have a responsibility to *all* of our children and especially to those in our most vulnerable communities. That is why I have fought for high national standards and national tests to help our children reach their highest potential.

Since I called for national standards, I am proud to say that 15 major city school systems have stepped forward to accept my challenge. But we must not rest until *every* school system in the Nation commits to adopting high standards—and helping their students to meet them.

If we are going to go strong into the 21st century, we must continue to expand opportunity for all of our people, and when it comes to our children's education, that means continuing to expect and demand the very best from our schools, our teachers, and above all, from our students. That is why I have fought for excellence, competition, and accountability in our Nation's public schools, with more parental involvement, greater choice, better teaching, and an end to social promotion. We cannot afford to let our children down when they need us the most.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in New York City

January 8, 1998

The President. First of all, let me say to Alan and Susan, it is wonderful to be back here. I remember very well when I was here in 1992. I also remember an event that they were part of in 1992, about 10 days before the New Hampshire primary, when everybody said I was absolutely dead; I had no chance to win; I was dropping like a rock in the polls. And we showed up in New York City for a fundraiser, and there were 700 people in this room for a dead candidate. So I said, "I am not dead yet." [*Laughter*]

And that night was memorable for two reasons: One was that we had so many people there, thanks to a lot of you in this room, who didn't believe that it was over and who believed in what I was trying to do. The other was that I had a very—what is now a very famous encounter in the kitchen, walking to the speech, with a Greek immigrant waiter who said that his 10-year-old son had asked him to vote for me because of what he'd heard me say, and he would do it if I would be more concerned about his son's safety. He said he lived across the street from a park, but his kid couldn't play in the park without his being there; he lived down the street from a school, but his child couldn't walk to the school. And he said that where he had lived, he was much poorer but he was free.

It was a very compelling portrait of why crime and physical safety is an important public issue. And he said, "So if I vote for you like my boy wants me to, I want you to make my boy free." And that man and his son became friends of ours, and they've been to lots of things, and they even went to Ohio once to an anticrime event with us.

So a lot has happened because of my friendship with Alan and Susan. If he had said one more time that he wasn't a Democrat—I thought he was protesting too much. [*Laughter*] I'm a Baptist; I believe in deathbed conversions. It's not too late. [*Laughter*]

Let me say what I thought would be helpful tonight. I do have to leave fairly soon, but before—because we've all been here and most of you have heard me give a zillion speeches, I'd like to just talk for 2 minutes and then give you time—if you have any questions or anything you want to talk about, I'd like to just hear from you.

Steve has already said what this investment is about. But let me back up a little bit. In 1992, I ran for President because I thought the country was divided and drifting, and I believed we were on the verge not just of a new century and a new millennium but a profoundly different time in human affairs. We now know that this whole process of globalization and the revolution in information in science and technology is dramatically changing the way we live and work and relate to each other and relate

to the rest of the world in ways that are mostly good, but have some stiff challenges as well.

We also know that we are much more interdependent than ever before, both within our country and beyond our borders. Today, you know, as I met people today, it was amazing how freely the conversations went back and forth between issues that once would have been thought of as foreign or domestic, but all were perceived as having a direct impact on the lives and welfare of the people with whom I was meeting today.

Now, we have tried basically to focus the country on making the changes necessary to create a 21st century America where there will be opportunity for everyone who's responsible enough to work for it; where, out of all of our diversity, we will build a community that is still one America, united and strong; and where our country will have enough support for our continuing involvement in the world, that we can keep leading the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity.

That has required a redefinition of the role of Government, basically, that the Republican Party tried for years with great success to simply discredit the whole enterprise of Government, and to say that Government was the problem, and to basically position individual freedom against Government. President Reagan was quite brilliant at it, and he did it very graphically and compellingly. But I think that the Democrats were not able to successfully counter, in part, because we seemed to be defending yesterday's Government. What we tried to do is to say that Government is the instrument of our personal freedom and our strong community, and there are some things that we can only do through our role as citizens. So I think the basic function of Government in the 21st century will be to establish the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and build strong families and communities and make this country strong—not to do everything but not to sit on the sidelines. And I'm very mindful of that because of all the obvious challenges we're facing today at home and abroad.

Now, if you look at where we are compared to where we were 5 years ago, basically, we've changed the economic policy, the crime policy, the social policy, and the education policy of the National Government, I think, to good results. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in history, a really serious attempt to deal with the conflicts of family and work that people face through things like the family and medical leave law, and a serious attempt to prove that we can grow the economy while improving the environment.

In the last 5 years, while we've had 13 million new jobs, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food supply is safer. We have cleaned up more toxic waste dumps than at any comparable period in history and put more land in trust in one form or another than any administration in American history except the administrations of the two Roosevelts.

So I think that we would have to say the record about the philosophy has been pretty good. In addition to that, the United States has been a force for peace and freedom and expanded mutual trade agreements to reinforce prosperity.

Now, as you look ahead to the future, just very briefly, what will we be dealing with in '98? What still needs to be done before I leave office in 2000? On the economy, first we must do no harm. We have fought very hard. We're going to have very close to a balanced budget this year. When I took office, the estimate was that the deficit would be $357 billion this year. The last thing we need to do is to explode the deficit again. So anybody who's got any kind of proposals, whether it's for spending or tax cuts or anything else, my view is, first, do no harm. We have fought too hard, and we see evidence all around the world that no country is big enough or strong enough to sustain its prosperity in the face of financial irresponsibility.

Second, we have got to do a better job of bringing the benefits of enterprise in the modern economy to poor areas. You heard Alan talk about how we once were interested in this. We see a real renaissance in some urban neighborhoods, but not in most urban neighborhoods. We must do better there.

On the environment, we have a number of challenges; I'll just mention one. I think this agreement we made at Kyoto will prove to be a very historic agreement. It wasn't perfect, it didn't have everything we wanted, but it's the first time that major nations of the world ever committed themselves to the proposition that they could grow the economy, cut greenhouse

gas emissions, and do it primarily through market mechanisms. And I believe it's profoundly important, and I intend to work very hard on implementing it this year.

We have an entitlement challenge in this country because the baby boomers are so numerous that we have to make some adjustments in both Social Security and Medicare if we expect to preserve them for the baby boom generation at a bearable cost for our own children. And I think you will see significant progress on that in the next 2 years.

In education, the fundamental problems it seems to me are—I'm very proud of the fact that in the balanced budget act we basically make community college free for people with the tax credits and open the doors of college—we did more for college access than anytime in 50 years, since the GI bill. It's a stunning piece of work that, for some reason, doesn't seem to have acquired a lot of notice in the press. But when I talk to ordinary people about it, they think it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. So that's a big deal.

But what we have to do now is make our schools work again. There's a report just today saying that urban schools basically are performing vastly below suburban schools on all national measures of testing. I've done my best to try to promote a set of structural reforms and high standards and rigorous testing with consequences. The report shows that in Virginia, where they have urban schools that have done much better than the national average, it's because they have specific, rigorous standards; they measure the standards, and there are consequences to the results they find. This is not rocket science. These children can learn. Most of the teachers are fully capable of doing what they need to do. The system is not adequate to meet what the children deserve and the country needs, and we intend to keep working on that.

Well, there are a lot of other issues I can—yesterday we announced the biggest child care program in the history of the country, that we will have to pay for. I think that's a good thing. But it must be paid for with the successful resolution of the tobacco issue, which I hope the Congress will resolve satisfactorily. On the international front, I hope we will approve the expansion of NATO. I'd still like to have more trade authority. And I hope the Congress will pay our debts to the United Nations and we can resume our global role and I think that will help.

I do believe that we will give some gifts to the millennium. I think you'll see a significant increase in medical research and a number of other things that are of interest to a lot of you in this room. I think '98, even though it's a political year, will be a good year. Some of you asked me about political reform, I will do my best. We have a vote scheduled in the springtime—in March, I think—and both the leadership in both Houses has promised to vote on some kind of campaign finance reform. They've not promised to vote on the bill that I support, McCain-Feingold, but a vote on some kind of campaign finance reform.

And I have said this repeatedly—I'll say it again—I think the trick is, if we're going to have limits on soft money, then the hard money contribution limits ought to be realistic in light of today's cost, number one. And, number two, we ought to have access to free or reduced air time for candidates who observe overall spending limits. The Supreme Court has made clear that you can't control how much money people spend on their own campaigns, because money is speech. I'm not sure I agree with the decision, but there it is, and it's been there for over 20 years.

What's driving the costs of campaigns is the cost of air time, the cost of communicating directly with the voters. If there were some standards for how that could be done, if you got the benefit of free or reduced air time, I think you might see a big turnup in voter turnout because you could have more, if you will, interactive air time—longer programs, call-in programs, townhall meetings, questions and answers. The whole thing could be changed. But we're going to have to have some help on the expenditure side, as well as on the money raising side.

So I think it will be a good year. I'm excited about it. We've already got more than one foot in the 21st century, but we also have some really significant challenges. And when you think about all the medical research that's going on, on the one hand, and the dangers of chemical and biological warfare on the other; when you think about how we're getting along in America with a couple of hundred racial and ethnic groups, on the one hand, and the fights that still go on from Africa to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Bosnia on the other, you see the

two sides of the 21st century. We have to make sure that interdependence and community triumph over anarchy and chaos. And I think we can do it if we stay on the course we're on.

Thank you. Anybody got a—I'll answer two questions. Anybody want to ask a question? Yes.

Projected Federal Budget Surplus

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, let me say first, we shouldn't spend it mindlessly because we have to realize that the surplus is produced in large measure because Social Security taxes are still higher than Social Security outlays on an annual basis. And we are now—we have under careful review what our various options are and—I'd like to be more candid, but I have to go through a consultative process with members of my party and others in Congress as well before I can announce a final position. But I've tried to make it as clear as I could that I favor being as prudent as possible with this money.

And I also think you've got to realize, we've got to think about, before we run off and spend all the money that is going to be generated, number one, it has not been generated yet. I mean, we hope that we can keep this economy going. We hope we can keep the growth going. We hope that—but this surplus everybody is talking about is a projected surplus. It's not a bird in the hand. So that's something you should know.

Number two, we have not yet decided as a country what we're going to do about Social Security and Medicare and how to handle the attendant changes and whether there will be costs to those changes, how they will be borne, and where the money will come from. So I'm taking a very cautious approach and I'm going to look at all the alternatives, but the number one thing is we've got to realize that this economy is humming along because we got the deficit down in large measure—not entirely—there's a lot of productivity in the American economy, millions of people make great decisions—but we got the deficit down and people perceive that we know what we're doing and that we're going to proceed with discipline and prudence in a world that is full of some uncertainty.

And the one thing I can tell you is whatever I do, I'm not going to do anything that will make anybody think we have abandoned our commitment to discipline and prudence and long term growth and investment. You make room for domestic spending if you pay the debt down; because if you pay the debt down, you reduce the percentage of the budget going to debt service. So you have more money that way. There are all kinds of things, I mean, there are lots of ways to look at this. I've not reached a final decision. And even if I had, frankly, I couldn't discuss it in great detail because I haven't finished my consultations yet. But I'm going to do something I think is economically prudent, that's the most important thing.

And, secondly, I want to think about the long run. We have to think about our intergenerational responsibilities on this entitlement business.

Q. Mr. President, one thing that I think most people—[*inaudible*]——

The President. Thank you. Yes, in the back.

President's Initiative on Race

Q. Mr. President, I'm very impressed with your initiative on race, but I'm concerned that you seem to be the only person in America who cares about this issue. And I wonder what you can do to have other members of your administration—Cabinet members and other prominent Democrats, Governors, whatever, speak out on it.

The President. Well, interestingly enough, first of all, my Cabinet—they've all been doing things. When I did my townhall meeting in Akron, my Cabinet that week, they were all doing different things around America. And Andrew Cuomo has, in particular, been very active in HUD in the last few months largely, I'm sad to say, because there is still a lot of housing discrimination in this country, a lot of old-fashioned discrimination in this country in housing. And he's done a lot on it.

We're trying to do more and more visible things. But let me say, we're trying to achieve—let me tell you what we're trying to achieve with the race initiative. First, we're trying to make sure that there is an honest dialog in every community—community-based approach to this—about how each community is going to deal with whatever their racial composition is and whatever the challenges of working together are. And the evidence is clear that the answer is to get people to work together, learn together, and serve together in the community.

The second thing we're trying to do is to catalog promising practices of really exhilarating

things that are going on around this country now, put them on our homepage, and make them widely available. And we now have a lot of them at our website, and we have huge numbers of people tapping into that and then getting in touch with others around the country to learn what they can do in their own community.

The third thing we're trying to do is to recruit leaders. I sent a letter to 25,000 student leaders and asked them to get involved in the race initiative, and we've gotten literally hundreds of replies from young people telling us exactly what they're doing. Some of them are fascinating, including a young white football player, star football player, who involved athletes in an interracial initiative in the Washington, DC, area.

And the fourth thing we're trying to do is to identify specific governmental policies that will help to not only address race problems that disproportionately affect minorities but will do it in a way that will bring people together, like the initiative we had to give scholarships to people who go teach in inner-city schools.

So we'll keep trying to turn it up. But I think it's been quite a productive thing, and I think the American people are actually quite interested in it. You know, people know—they pick up the paper every day. They see that there are tribal warfares in Africa. They know that we're still having trouble resettling the Croatians and the Muslims and the Serbs in Bosnia. They know that the Irish just had another round of killings, right on the verge of breaking through the Irish peace process. They know that there's still trouble in the Middle East. And they know there's still trouble in America. In the Washington papers, we've been living through the efforts of a Muslim school that wants to expand trying to find a location in a community that feels comfortable accepting it. And a Muslim symbol was defaced on the Capitol during the Christmas season, and Jewish leaders came out and condemned it—interesting.

So we're trying to work through this stuff. I think being explicit and open about it is helping us to get it right. In some ways the most important thing—if we can prove that along with all of our economic strength and our native political system that we can figure out how to be bound together and still celebrate our differences, but say what unites us is more important, that may be the most important meal ticket to the 21st century we have.

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, how bad do you see the situation in Asia right now? What are your nightmare concerns——

The President. Well, I hope you will understand that because of the fact that what is going on in Asia is the function of markets and they operate on perceptions, that I should be very careful about what I say about that.

Let me tell you what I think. I think that the United States has an interest in a stable and successful Asia. I think there's an enormous amount of productive capacity in those countries. And I think if we can get the policies right, we'll get through this. And I'm working as hard as I can to try to get it right. And there are some encouraging signs and some troubling signs, and it's a complex thing; we have to work it hard. I can say this, I think we've been very well served to have Bob Rubin and Larry Summers and the other people we've got at the Treasury Department working on this. I think they're making about the best stab at it anybody could. And we have worked very long hours for some extended period of time now on it, and we're just going to keep at it and try to make it come out okay.

Middle East Peace Process/Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, on the Middle East peace process, I'm going to see Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat in the next few days and try to move the thing forward a little bit. And I think it really depends upon whether the recent change in Israel, political change, is seen as a spur to action or a break on action, and whether we can find a way to keep this thing going forward.

The real problem with the Middle East peace process is it's like a living organism that gets sick if it doesn't move, you know. It's got to move. You've got to just keep something happening, even if it's not ideal—you've got to keep something happening. So we're working very hard on that, and I'm very hopeful about it.

With Iraq, keep in mind what happened. We've already achieved a not insignificant portion of our objective. Saddam Hussein's goal was to say, "I'm going to throw all these inspectors out and leave them out until you drop some or all of the sanctions." And we said, "You don't understand. We'll leave the sanctions on until

hell freezes over unless you let the inspections go forward."

Now, I have not ruled out—or in—any further action of any kind because there are still all kinds of unresolved questions about the integrity of the inspection process, and we're working on that. But keep in mind, Iraq's capacity to do damage to its neighbors has been dramatically eroded because of the sanctions process. There are a lot of countries that would like to relax it because they would benefit from that relaxation. But we have an obligation to try to limit the vulnerability not only of Americans but of the rest of the world to chemical and biological warfare.

This is not about refighting the Gulf war. It's not about Kuwait or anybody else. It's about—there's a reason those U.N. resolutions passed and a reason the world is rightfully concerned about trying to contain the damage of chemical and biological warfare.

So we're going to stay firm, and I'm not ruling in or out anything, but we're being vigilant. But keep in mind, what he tried to do didn't work. What he wanted was a relaxation of the sanctions in return for just going back to business as usual, and that strategy failed. And therefore, his capacity to do more harm is not materializing.

Federal Funding for Medical Research

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, let me basically say, I think you will see a significant increase in medical research coming out of this Congress. It's one thing we have bipartisan agreement on. It is something we know we have to do to try to offset the cutbacks to our health institutions that have come not only from the HMO's but from our attempts to save money in the Medicare and Medicaid programs which indirectly, at least, funded a lot of the teaching and research hospitals of the country. And I think you will see a big step forward there.

Support for the Arts

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. She asked if we saw any future in national support for the arts. I think that we have defeated the effort coming from the Republican right to destroy the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. I don't think that will be revived; I don't think it will. I think the real question is—since in some cases it's life or death; in other cases it's largely symbolic support. It says that we think this is important, an important national purpose.

What I have looked at is whether or not there was some way we could institutionalize and make permanent more of a genuine endowment on the arts—and we're batting that around and asking for ideas around the country—in a way that would take it out of the annual political debate, which would be helpful to some of our Republican friends who really do want to help, want to be supportive. I personally think it's very important, and I think that there will not be the onslaught there has been in the past to kill it. The question is whether we can institutionalize it maybe even at a higher level and make it permanent.

Go ahead.

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, I hope so. But that's up to Cuba. You know, we were making real progress in our relations with Cuba, and even in the Cuban-American community there was ample evidence of changing attitudes and an attempt to change within Cuba, reciprocated by change in the United States. That was the concept of the Cuba Democracy Act, which passed before I became President. The Democratic Congress passed it; President Bush signed it; I supported it strongly, and I used it. And it was a series of carrots and sticks designed to say, as Cuba opens, we will open to Cuba, like two flowers coming to bloom at the same time.

And then they murdered those people. They shot those people out of the sky, in international waters. And it would not have been legal for them to shoot them down if they had been in the territorial waters of Cuba or flying right over Havana, for that reason, under the Chicago Convention to which Cuba was a signatory.

So innocent people were killed. That put a deep chill on our relationship. It led to a new and more rigorous act being passed, which would prevent me from lifting the embargo without the support of Congress, among other things.

But my position, however, is the same as it has always been: I think there ought to be a reciprocal relationship here where, as Cuba shows more support for human rights and democracy, we should open up. We should try

some reciprocal effort. But it has to be reciprocal. We can't—I don't think, after what happened to those people, I don't think that—I don't have any confidence that a unilateral gesture would have any success.

Now, I would be interested to see how the Pope's visit goes and what happens there. I'm very encouraged that he's going. I was encouraged that the Cuban people were permitted to observe Christmas. And we'll just see what happens. I've got—the Pope is a very persuasive fellow and he, after all, is the voice of God to those of us who believe that. And we hope that he does well.

I've got to run. I'm sorry. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:18 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Alan and Susan Patricof; Greek immigrant Dimitrious Theofanis and his son, Nick; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Pope John Paul II.

Remarks at Mission High School in Mission, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you. Good morning. Well, first of all, weren't you proud of Elizabeth? Did she do a great job or what? [*Applause*] And she looked so tall standing here. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Elizabeth.

You know, there's been a lot of exciting things in Mission in the last couple of weeks. The valley got its first snowfall in 40 years, and, you know, all these limousines and cars descending on the area—to get an unexpected visit from Koy Detmer.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to be here. I have so many people to thank, but I want to start with Congressman Hinojosa, who has been a great friend of yours, a great Representative, and a great ally of mine to expand economic opportunity and trade and to improve education and to reduce the dropout rate especially among young Hispanic students. He represents you very, very well, and I thank him for helping me to come here today.

I'd like to thank Congressman Solomon Ortiz and Congressman Ciro Rodriguez and a native of Mission, Mission High School class of 1946, the former chairman of the Agriculture Committee in the House of Representatives, Congressman Kika de la Garza, and his wife, Mrs. de la Garza. Thank you for being here.

I'd like to thank the education commissioner, Mike Moses; the land commissioner, Garry Mauro; members of my administration who are here, including White House aides Mickey Ibarra, Janet Murguia, Cynthia Jasso-Rotunno; and the head of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, George Muñoz. All of them came down here today to meet with community leaders before I came out here to talk about the economic future of the valley and what we could do to help to accelerate the growth of your area.

I want to thank the legislators and the mayors who are here: Senator Carlos Truan, Representative Ismael Flores, Representative Miguel Wise, Representative Roberto Gutierrez; Mayor Ricardo Perez of Mission; the McAllen mayor, Leo Montalvo; the Edinburg mayor, Joe Ochoa. I thank the chairman of the Democratic Party, Bill White, for coming here. And as an old member of the band, I'd like to thank the high school bands from Mission, Edinburg, Weslaco, and Hidalgo for playing.

I thank the college students from South Texas Community College and UT–Pan Am, high school students from Hidalgo, Willacy, Bee, Brooks, and San Patricio Counties, and I thank the other AmeriCorps volunteers for being here.

This morning I talked with some community leaders about economic opportunity. Today, to this great and happy crowd, I want to talk with you about educational opportunity. And I want America to know about this school district. The Mission school district may not be the wealthiest one in the Nation, but it is rich in results. Attendance is up; dropout rates are down. Ten years ago, only about a quarter of Mission's high school seniors went on to college. This year, thanks in part to the new opportunities at the South Texas Community College, almost two-

thirds of the high school graduates will go on to college.

I am trying to see that every high school classroom, every middle school and elementary school classroom, and every library in this country are hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000. Let me tell you what that piece of paper says that just blew away—it says that just 2 days ago, every classroom in Mission High School was hooked up to the Internet, well ahead of schedule. Congratulations to you. Now some of the classrooms will become laboratories for the Nation as you begin using state-of-the-art video conferencing to take advanced college courses, as well as virtual field trips all around the world. Congratulations. I want America to see you and know that all children can learn and every school can improve. You have proved it, and I want you to stay on the course.

I want America to have an educational system where every 8-year-old can read, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old can go to college, and every adult can keep on learning for a lifetime. We have to have high standards and proven reforms, the best use of new technology, help to the children who need it, and a real commitment to the proposition that every child can learn.

We have to work to reduce the dropout rate. We have to convince many of our students, interestingly enough, especially in Latino communities throughout the United States, that what used to be a good thing to do, to drop out of school and go to work to help your family, can now in fact hurt your family and hurt your future because there is so much difference today between what someone with an education can learn and what someone who leaves high school before graduation can learn. That message has to be hammered home. And again I say, together we can do it, and you are setting an example here in Mission. And I thank you for that.

I also came here with a guarantee, one that is embodied in the sign that I stand in front of, for young people and for adults who work hard and achieve in the classroom, the results will pay off. Just a week ago, we began a new era in American education. Thanks to brand new HOPE scholarships and other initiatives, money is now no longer an obstacle to any American going to college. For the first time in this country's history, we can literally say we have opened the doors of college to everyone who has the desire and who has the preparation to go. That is a signal, important achievement for the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen, I loved it, and I think you did, too, when Elizabeth said that I was the first sitting President to come here not running for election. But I did come here in 1992 running for election, and I saw good, hard-working Americans, patriotic Americans, people who always answer the call of service when their country needs them, people who love their families and believe in their children and desperately want a better future for their communities. And I said I wanted us to take a new direction to the 21st century to make the American dream alive for every person who was willing to work for it, to make every American, without regard to race or background, part of our American community, and to do what is necessary to keep America the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity.

And the bargain I offered the American people was opportunity for everyone who is responsible, but we must have responsibility for everyone if we want opportunity, and a community in which everyone was part of our national family. The Government's job in that kind of America is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. That is what we have tried to do with the economy, and we must do more. That's what we talked about this morning in our community leaders meeting, and that is what we must do with education.

Right now, our approach looks pretty good. Our Nation is on a roll. Just this morning we learned that the economy added another 370,000 jobs last month. That means 14.3 million new jobs for Americans in the last 5 years. The deficit has been reduced by 90 percent, and next year, for the first time in three decades, we will have a balanced budget. Wages are rising for ordinary working people for the first time in 20 years. Hispanic unemployment is dropping. Record rates of small business growth are occurring. Hispanic-American new small businesses are being started at 3 times the national average rate. There are hundreds of thousands of new Latino homeowners in America, and we have over two-thirds of the American people in their own homes for the first time in our history.

Despite these gains, you and I know that Hispanic family income is not yet on the rise, and

here in the valley and other areas of America, the unemployment rate is still unconscionably high. One of the biggest reasons is that too many young people who live here drop out of school. Many leave for good reasons, as I said earlier; they want to help their families by working. But in a global economy, the best way for a young person to help his or her family is to stay in school, set yourself on a college path early, and complete at least 2 years of college. People who at least have a community college degree have a very good chance of getting a job with stability and prospects of a growing income. People who do less than that in a global economy where we depend more and more on what we can learn every day and the new skills we can apply, are playing Russian roulette with their future. That is why we have worked very hard with dedicated Members of Congress like Mr. Hinojosa to reduce the dropout rates and to reward people who stay and learn.

And let me tell you what I meant when I said there's a guarantee for people who go on to college now. Last year in the balanced budget, we put in place a college opportunity agenda that literally had the largest investment in helping people go to college since the GI bill was passed when the soldiers from the valley came home 50 years ago.

Here's what it means to the people who live here. First, we created HOPE scholarships and an education IRA; they started on January 1st. HOPE scholarships will basically use the tax system to reimburse families for up to $1,500 a year to pay for the first 2 years of college. That means schools like South Texas Community College will be virtually free to virtually all Americans. With education IRA's, parents will now be able to set money aside for their children's college education and let it grow, and then withdraw from the fund later without paying any taxes on it.

The second thing we've done is to create lifetime learning credits, tax cuts worth up to $1,000 a year to students who go to the 3d and 4th years of college or who go to graduate school, and those are available to adults who go back to school or to training programs because they have to change careers or they need to upgrade their skills.

The third thing we did is to increase Pell grant scholarships for nearly 4 million low and moderate income families. And finally, we made student loans easier to get and easier to pay off as a percentage of your income, so that no one ever has to fear borrowing money to go to college because they're afraid they will go broke trying to pay the loan back. Now you can get the loan at lower cost and less time and pay it back as a percentage of your income when you get out of school.

We are also offering young people more opportunities to do community service through the AmeriCorps program and earn money to go to college; 100,000 have taken advantage of it.

Now, there is one other thing I want to talk about. A lot of people have to work their way through school, like I did, and usually those of us who do think we're the better for it. Sometimes, if you have to work a little, you even are more disciplined with your time and you wind up studying a little more. The balanced budget I will submit to Congress next month will include a record 1 million work-study positions for college students. That represents an increase of nearly 50 percent during the last 3 years alone. It's not just about increasing financial aid, that's about increasing the circle of community service and the winner's circle of opportunity for the future.

For example, work-study students at more than 800 colleges in America today are helping to make sure that we reach one of our education goals, that every 8-year-old can read. Through the America Reads challenge, tens of thousands of college students are earning money for college while going into our schools to tutor young people to make sure that they don't get out of the third grade without being able to read independently; and now we'll have a million people doing that kind of work.

Let me just say this to all the young people here in this audience: We can create opportunities, but you have to seize it. I am determined—whenever I come to South Texas, I leave more determined than ever to find some way to better reward the energy, the patriotism, the commitment, the vision of the people here. We can do more to build on the empowerment zones and to do other things to help you to grow your economy, to preserve your environment, to create more jobs. But nothing—nothing—will matter in the end unless the young people who live here are committed to developing their own minds and keeping their visions high and believing in themselves and their futures. That is the most important thing. You have to believe that.

You have to make sure that you have raised your sights as high as you can.

And let me just say, I don't want to embarrass him, but I'd like to compliment the principal here at Mission High School, Mr. Ahmadian. He came here in the late seventies from Iran, without being able to speak a word of English. Now, as the leader of this remarkable school, he's helped thousands of people go on to careers in education, in medicine, in law enforcement. He's helping them to do what he did with high standards for higher education. Whether you're the son or daughter of a migrant laborer, or a doctor, the same formula applies: high standards and higher education; taking responsibility; sitting down with family, teachers, guidance counselors; committing to work hard to learn, to do the homework, to think about the future.

We're going to do our part in Washington to make sure that those of you who are prepared for the future can go on to college. We've removed the obstacles. There's an open field ahead, but you have to reach the goal line. Take the ball and run with it. Your future is bright; the future of the valley is bright; and the future of the Nation is in your hands.

God bless you. *Gracias. Viva el valle*. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in Tom Landry Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Mission High School student body president Elizabeth Gonzales, who introduced the President, principal Masoud Ahmadian, and alumnus Koy Detmer, NFL Philadelphia Eagles player; Lucille de la Garza, wife of former Representative Kika de la Garza; and William H. White, chair, Texas State Democratic Party.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Rubén Hinojosa in McAllen, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Ruben. Thank you very much to the Cantus, to Alonzo and Yoli, for having us in their modest little home here. [*Laughter*] Is this a beautiful place, or what? It's really wonderful. I'm so glad to be here.

I want to thank the Congressman and Marty and their entire family for making me feel so welcome down here. I thank Congressman Solomon Ortiz and Congressman Ciro Rodriguez who are also here and have been good friends of our administration and good for this country. I'm glad to be joined here today by the Secretary of Education in my administration, Dick Riley; our land commissioner, Garry Mauro; our State Democratic chair, Bill White; the county Democratic chair, Ramon Garcia; McAllen's mayor, Leo Montalvo, and all the other local elected officials.

I'd also like to thank Alfonso Hinostroza who created those beautiful wooden chairs inside. I don't know if you've seen them, but they commemorate my visit. And I said when I sat down in one that it actually made me feel like a real President. I felt—actually, I almost felt like a monarch sitting in that chair. It's a little too highfalutin for me on a daily basis. [*Laughter*]

Hector Reyna, Sr., I thank you for creating the stained-glass Arkansas State bird and flower. And I'd also like to welcome State Representative Richard Raymond, who is a candidate for land commissioner. Thank you all for being here, and I'm very glad to see you.

Let me say that I'm honored to be here to help this Congressman mobilize his district, to sit down this morning, early, with a lot of community leaders and talk about the economic challenges still facing the valley: what should be done to generate more jobs, more investment, to rebuild the transportation system and improve the quality and supply of water—all the issues we discussed this morning.

I loved going over to the school and seeing the children and telling them that starting this January we could honestly say we had opened the doors of college to all Americans. We've made community college virtually free to nearly everybody in this country now with tax credits called the HOPE scholarship. We've given a $1,000 tax credit for the junior and senior year

of college, for graduate schools, for adults that have to go back to school. We've got an education IRA now that allows people to save for their kids' education and then withdraw from it tax free. We have dramatically expanded Pell grants. We have dramatically expanded work-study positions.

I love talking about all that. But when the Congressman was talking about the two people that I met in the handicapped section of the rally, it reminded me of something I've been thinking a lot about lately as I try to ponder how I should spend every remaining day in this term. I must say, when I saw that crowd out there today, Congressman, I thought it was a good thing we had the 22d amendment, which limited my ability to run again, because I'd do it again after today if I could. [*Laughter*]

Here's what I want to tell you. He saw a great crowd, and he remembered the stories. In Washington we tend to talk of statistics. Today it came out that in December our economy created another 370,000 jobs, now 14.3 million jobs in the first 5 years of our administration—14.3 million. Well, that's a statistic. But behind that statistic there are over 14 million stories. There are people who have the dignity of work, who can support their children, who can create a different future because of that statistic.

The statistics say there are about 14 million people—maybe more now—who have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law so they could get a little time off from work when there's a sick family member or a new baby born. That's the statistic. The story is it strengthens family life. One of the great challenges in this country is, how do people balance the demands of being parents and the demands of work? There is no more important job for Americans than taking care of their kids and raising them well. So how are we going to balance that? Those are stories; they're not statistics.

I saw the other day something over a quarter of a million—I can't remember—but something over a quarter million people who had criminal or mental health histories were not able to buy handguns because of the Brady law. How many people didn't get killed, didn't get wounded, didn't get injured because of that? We don't know, but every one of them has got a different story because of that.

How many million people will now go on to college or stay in longer because we have opened the doors of college to everyone? That's the biggest, that list I just mentioned to you, the biggest increase in aid to college education since the GI bill was passed when our soldiers came home 50 years ago from World War II. That will create millions of different stories.

The reason I undertook this race initiative this year, to try to get people together across all the racial and ethnic and religious lines that divide America, is because I know that when we can celebrate our differences and then say what binds us together as Americans is even more important, then there is no stopping the United States in the 21st century.

But you can't take that for granted. Look at the problems we see in the world, from the tribal wars in Africa to the ethnic fight in Bosnia, from the longstanding religious conflict in Ireland to the religious and ethnic conflict that endures in the Middle East. You look all over the world, people have a hard time getting along with those that either look different or believe differently than they do about the nature of God and humanity's relationship to God. It's fascinating.

But we in America have always said if you believe in freedom, if you believe in the rule of law, if you believe in our Constitution, and if you show up for work every day—or you show up for school if you're a kid—that's all you've got to do. You can be part of our America if you respect other people and their right to live, just as they respect you and your right to live. That is the fundamental lesson that if we can embody, we will continue to grow and prosper in the 21st century, and we will be able to lead the world toward greater peace and freedom.

Finally, I want to say a special, personal word of thanks to Ruben for taking all the heat to stick with me on the fast-track issue and trying to continue to expand America's outreach to the rest of the world.

I can tell you that I do not believe that there is a majority in the House, just like there is clearly not one—we had almost 70 percent of the Senate with us last year—there is not a majority of Members of the House of Representatives who don't want to continue to expand trade. What they reflect is the ambivalence, the fears people have about the

globalization of the world economy and the explosion of information and technology and science, and how it's bringing us all closer together. And what everybody wants to know is, is everyone going to have a chance to participate in this new economy, or are some people going to be left behind? Are we going to have a higher level of citizenship and a higher level of society, or are we going to be thrown to the winds of chaos and anarchy by having global marketplace dominate democratic institutions and people?

There is a lot of anxiety about that out there, not only in our country but throughout the world. Our answer is to help people who are dislocated resume their normal lives as quickly as possible. And we have a plan to do more of that, to invest more in communities that have been left behind, invest more in people who need to upgrade their skills, give people tax incentives to invest in areas where the unemployment is too high. But don't let America run away from the rest of the world. America should be embracing the rest of the world and setting a standard of cooperation and an advance of freedom and democracy and prosperity at the same time. That's what your Congressman believes, and I appreciate that.

Thank you all for what has been an unbelievably wonderful day. I'll remember this day for the rest of my life. I flew all the way down from New York City last night. I didn't get in until about 2 o'clock in the morning. And I got up this morning wondering if I would be tired, but all the faces I have seen and the stories I have imagined have kept me going.

But you remember what I said: Politics is nothing more than people organized to pursue their common destiny. Our political system gives free people the assurance, number one, that their voice counts; number two, that they can make changes if they get together, and they can prevail; and number three, there will always be some limits on the Government so they can't be abused. And within that, politics gives us the chance to imagine what kind of life stories we want all of our people to have.

I hope the people I met on that ropeline will remember it for the rest of their lives, but I will, too. And when I go back to Washington, I'll be thinking what I have to do is to create more good stories. If we can do that, the American people will take care of the rest.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Alonzo and Yoli Cantu; Representative Hinojosa's wife, Marty; and Garry Mauro, Texas State land commissioner.

Remarks on Arrival in Brownsville, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. I believe that we should begin by giving Alma another hand. She did a great job, didn't she? Thank you. [*Applause*]

I want to thank Secretary Riley for his work and for coming here with me today. I want to say a very special word of thanks to your fine Congressman, Solomon Ortiz. Thanks to his leadership, you are finally going to have the Port of Brownsville bridge you need so much. Thank you, Congressman Ortiz.

I'd like to thank the State legislators who are here, Representatives Oliveira and Solis; Judge Hinojosa; the city commissioners; the city manager; President Juliet Garcia, UT-Brownsville; Mayor Gonzalez. I'd like to thank Congressman Rubén Hinojosa for coming over with me, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.

I'd like to say, too, that my family and our administration feel that we owe a lot to Brownsville. The First Lady was here about a year ago, and Hillary told me that she kind of resented my coming back without her today. This community has given two of our real stars to the Clinton-Gore administration, first of all, the president of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, one of 12 children here, George Munoz, and his parents are both here. Thank you, George, and thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Munoz. And second, our Secretary of Energy Federico Pena, whose parents, Gustavo and

Lucila Peña, are here. Thank you for a fine son and a fine Cabinet member.

I'd like to thank your land commissioner, Garry Mauro, for joining me today; and also thank the White House aides who helped to do so much work on this trip, Mickey Ibarra, Janet Murguia, Cynthia Jasso-Rotunno. I am very proud of the fact that I have appointed far more Hispanic-Americans than any previous President to important positions in my administration. I'm even prouder of the fact that they're doing a very good job for all Americans.

I'd like to welcome all the students and teachers and Head Start teachers and others here today. Thank you for coming. And I'd like to thank the bands that provided our music today; thank you very much.

I'd also like to say a special word of thanks for that plane back there. I don't know if you've looked at it—you've probably, those of you who live here, doubtless been here to see this plane before—but the Confederate Air Force preserved this BT–13 so thousands of people can come and learn about an aircraft that helped our country to fight and win World War II.

It reminds me of one of the wisest decisions that President Roosevelt made after World War II, and that was to give every returning soldier the chance to go on to college through the GI bill. The GI bill revolutionized educational opportunity in America. It made millions and millions and millions of middle class families and better futures for their children.

I am exceedingly proud that last year when we passed the balanced budget agreement last year, we passed an education program that opened the doors to college wider than ever before, the biggest increase in college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago. We learned the lesson from President Roosevelt. It's the right thing to do.

You know—all of you know, you live with this every day—that we are living in an age characterized by increasing communication across national borders and revolutions in technology and information. It's changing the way we work and live and relate to each other, and it will dramatically change the lives of these children who are here.

What I have tried to do, as I have said repeatedly, is to build a bridge to this new world and the 21st century, so that there is opportunity for every American child responsible enough to work for it; so that we all work together as one America, united across all the racial and ethnic and religious lines of diversity in this country; and so that America is still the world's best hope for peace and freedom.

Now, there are a lot of things that we can do to help to grow the economy. We have to do some more here in south Texas. And I met this morning with community leaders from the whole region to talk about that. But let me tell you, nothing we can do will equip our young people for the modern world unless all of our young people have a very good education and are able to keep on learning for a lifetime.

This week I announced that I will soon submit to Congress the first balanced budget the United States has had in 30 years. Here's what it will do for going on to college, within the context of balancing the budget.

There will be a HOPE scholarship, a $1,500 credit for the first 2 years of college, enough to make community college free for virtually every person in the United States. There will be lifetime learning credits, another $1,000-a-year tax credit for the 3d and 4th years of college, for graduate school, and for older people who have to go back to upgrade their skills. There will be education IRA's so that if parents save for their children's college education, when they want to withdraw the money plus the interest it's earned, they can do it without any tax penalty, because we don't want to tax savings for education.

We have expanded the Pell grant program to cover millions of eligible Americans so that the scholarship is larger and the number of people who are eligible are more. We now have had 100,000 young people, including quite a number from Texas, serve in our national service program, AmeriCorps, serving their community and earning money to go to college. And today a little earlier, I announced that our budget will also include for the first time a request for 1 million work-study positions for young people who want to work their way through college. What that means is that people literally will not be able to say anymore, "I can't go to college because I can't afford it."

We also reformed the student loan program so that you can pay the money back as a percentage of your income. You don't ever have to worry about being bankrupted if you have to borrow the money. There is no financial excuse.

But we must make sure that more of our young people stay in school, graduate from high school, and when they graduate, they know what they're supposed to know. There are still too many of our children who graduate from high school not knowing that. That's why I have pushed our national goals of making sure every 8-year-old can read, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, and every 18-year-old can go on to college with high standards, proven reforms, hooking up every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, making sure that every eligible child has a chance to be in a Head Start program or another good preschool program. We have to do these things so that all of our children can learn.

Let me also say that one of the most troubling things to me is that the high school graduation rates in America now are getting quite high—they're well above 80 percent, moving toward the 90 percent level they should reach—for every ethnic group in America except Hispanic young people. Too many of our Hispanic young people still drop out of high school, very often out of good motivation. They think, "I ought to drop out. I ought to go to work. I can support myself. I won't be a burden on my family. I can help my family make a living." That has been true for generations. That is simply not true anymore, and we have to change that attitude. It is not true anymore.

It has been clear now for at least 10 years that there is a huge and growing gap in the job prospects and the earning prospects of people who have 2 years or more of college and people who drop out of high school. It is imperative that we get 100 percent of our kids to stay in school, get their high school diploma, go back and get their GED if they have already dropped out, and then go on to at least 2 years of college. The financial obstacles have been removed. We have to tear down the walls in the minds of people that are keeping them from doing this.

I have asked Secretary Riley to work with Mickey Ibarra and Maria Echaveste, two Assistants to the President, and Gene Sperling, Director of my National Economic Council, to help us do everything we can do to deal with this. I have talked to Representative Hinojosa and Representative Ortiz about this, but I'm telling you, you folks have got to change this at the grassroots level. Every single child has got to stay in school, graduate, and they need to know what they're supposed to know when they get their high school diploma.

You can make it happen. We can open the doors. We can have the opportunity. We can set the standards. You have to make it happen. That's the way we can build a bridge to the 21st century that every single American can walk across. I want you to help me.

Thank you. God bless you. It's great to be back.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. in the Confederate Air Force Museum Hangar at the Brownsville South Padre International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Alma Garcia, principal, Yturria Elementary School, Brownsville; Texas State Representatives Rene O. Oliveira and Jim Solis; Cameron County Judge Gilberto Hinojosa; Brownsville City Commissioners Carlton Richards, Ernie Hernandez, and Harry E. McNair, Jr., and City Manager Carlos Rubenstein; and Mayor Henry Gonzalez of Brownsville.

Remarks to High School Teachers, Students, and Parents in Houston, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you. Let's give Ronald another hand. Didn't he do a great job? [*Applause*] Thank you very much. Let me say, first of all, thank you for the warm welcome; thank you for coming. I welcome all the students here from all the schools around the area, the college and the university presidents. And I understand we also have the student body presidents from the University of Houston, Texas Southern, Prairie View, and I believe the University of Texas at Austin. I welcome all of them here.

I also want to say a special word of thanks to the AmeriCorps volunteers because I believe all of us should serve, and I believe we should

give more young people the chance to serve in their community and then help them go on to college if they do.

I'd also like to thank Secretary Riley for his work and for being here with me today. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to your Congresswoman, Sheila Jackson Lee. She is a remarkable person. She has supported the efforts that I have done my best to make on your behalf to improve education and to improve economic opportunities, to reach out to the rest of the world and make America strong in the 21st century. She has done a remarkable job, and I'm honored to be in her district today.

I'd also like to thank Congressman Lampson for coming. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to your new mayor, Lee Brown, and thank him publicly for his service in my Cabinet. We could nearly have a Cabinet meeting today, we almost have a quorum because our former Treasury Secretary, your former Senator, Lloyd Bentsen, and his wife, B.A., are here, clearly one of the most successful Treasury Secretaries in the entire history of the United States. You should be very proud of that.

And lastly, of course, I want to thank your immediate former mayor, Bob Lanier, and his wonderful wife, Elyse, for their friendship to me and for their service to the city of Houston. I have told people all across the United States, I have never met a more gifted public servant than Bob Lanier.

Before I get into my comment about education, let me try to put it into some larger context. I wanted to have all the young people here today because I wanted this to be a meeting about your future. I thank my friend Jennifer Holliday for coming here to sing and for that magnificent song she sang just before I came out. There really is a dream out there with your name on it, but you have to go get it. And I want you to see your dreams and your life against a larger landscape of America's dream and America's life.

We already have one foot in the 21st century, and it's a time that will be very, very different from the immediate past. How will it be different? Well, you know and you see and you feel it here in Texas. First of all, there will be the phenomenon of globalization. People and products and ideas and information will move rapidly across national borders, both the borders that touch us like Texas and Mexico and the borders that are beyond the oceans that require us to fly or to communicate in cyberspace.

Secondly, there is a phenomenal revolution in information and science and technology. Not only can children in Houston communicate with children in Australia on the Internet or go into libraries in Europe to do research, but the very mysteries of the human gene are being unraveled now in ways that offer breathtaking possibilities to preserve the quality and the length of human life, to fight back disease, and to bring people together at a higher level of humanity than we've ever known. That's all very encouraging.

We also know that as the borders between people break down, we're more vulnerable to the problems of other people, and our neighbors are more than just the people that live next door to us. People all around the world are our neighbors now. We see a remarkable spread of malaria, for example, around the world, and a lot of people getting it in airports and bringing it to other countries as they travel between airports. We know that chemical and biological weapons can be made in small quantities and can do a lot of damage, and people can carry them around across national borders. So we know that not only with our possibilities but also with our problems, our challenges, we are more interdependent. And yet, we have to depend more on ourselves, as well. That's why education is so important.

My goal for your country, when I'm gone from the Presidency and all you young people are living out your lives, is that you will live in a new century in which the American dream is alive and well for every single person who's responsible enough to work for it; in which your country is still the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity, recognizing that we can't do it alone, that we have to do it as partners on good terms with as many people who share our values as possible; and finally, and key to the whole thing, that we will go forward as one America, across all the lines that divide us—the racial lines, the regional lines, the income lines, the lines of ethnicity and religion—every single separation.

We'll say, okay, we've got a lot of differences in this country, and that makes us more interesting. It makes life more interesting. We respect those differences. We celebrate those differences. But there are fundamental values that

bind us together as America, that make us one country, stronger than ever in a new world.

That's why I was profoundly honored when your former mayor, your present mayor, the Congresswoman, Phil Carroll, and so many others banded together to defeat Proposition A, and I was glad to actually come out and do my little part in that, not because I held all the answers to all the problems regarding all of our racial differences but because I know one thing: As your President, I have spent an enormous amount of time, the time you gave me to be President, trying to do what I could to save lives and stop people from killing each other over their racial, their ethnic, and their religious differences.

I see people in nations in Africa engaging in tribal warfare, when they're all so poor it breaks my heart, and I think, if only they would join hands to try to lift their children up, how much better would they be. I see my people in Northern Ireland still arguing over what happened 600 years ago between the Catholics and the Protestants, when the young people say, "We worship the same God. It's about time we started acting like it. Let's build a better future together." I see people in Bosnia—Serbs, Croatians, Muslims, Western Christians, Orthodox Christians, and followers of Muhammad—who shared the same piece of land for hundreds of years and lived for decades in this century in peace, slaughtered each other for years, and now we're trying to get them back together. And they have to learn to lay down their hatreds.

If we want to lead that kind of world away from that sort of thing, we have to set a good example. We have to prove that on every street corner in this country, in every school in this country, in every workplace in this country, in every apartment house in this country, we not only say we believe we are one America and none of us are any better than anybody else in the eyes of God, we have to live like it. We have to live like it.

And finally, just in a few days, I'm going to see the Prime Minister of Israel and the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Mr. Arafat, to try to end the longstanding differences in the Middle East. The beginning of the world's monotheistic religions, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, all in that little piece of land—nearly everybody in America, not all of us but most of us, trace our faith's roots to that place. Isn't it unbelievable that people still are fighting over that, when if they would say, "We are the children of one God. Why can't we be one people and share this land of milk and honey together?"

So I say that one of the reasons I challenge people to engage in citizen service, one of the reasons I was so proud to be introduced by Ronald Cotton, is not just because he's a valedictorian, not just because he's going to be a doctor, not just because I might need him to fix my heart one day—[*laughter*]—but because as busy as he is, he still does his citizen service. That's what we all should do. If he's got time to do it, the rest of us should have time to do it.

Now, what's all that got to do with education? You need to understand all this if you're going to make the most of the 21st century. It can be the brightest, best time in all of human history, but it will only work for America because this is a democracy, where we think everybody should have an opportunity. It will only work if everybody has a chance to walk across that bridge to the 21st century together, if we all have a chance.

That's what's special about America. That's how we got started. We believe nobody ought to get an unfair advantage, everybody ought to have a chance, and if people need a hand up, we ought to give it to them. That's what we believe as Americans. Now, the problem is, in this world we're living in, where the pace of change and the scope of change is greater than ever before, where the world is crowding in on you as never before, there is nothing anybody else can do for you unless you're willing to make your own dream by the development of your own mind.

Therefore, the 21st century will not only be known as the information age, the age of science and technology, it will also be known by ordinary people as the education age because what you know will depend—will determine in large measure the scope of your life in the new era. It's always been an advantage to have an education. But what I want you to understand now is it's not just an advantage; it is a necessity.

Let me just give you a couple of statistics. Two decades ago, college graduates made about 40 percent more than people with a high school diploma. Today, in less than 20 years, the gap has gone to 75 percent. Over a lifetime, people who have 2 years of college will make a quarter

of a million dollars more than high school graduates. Each additional year of college after high school means a 10 percent increase in yearly earnings for people. If you graduate from college, you're much, much, much more likely now to get a job with a pension, with health care, with other benefits, and where the income goes up, instead of staying the same or actually declining, as against inflation.

We have learned as a people, therefore, that the more we invest in education and the higher the quality is, the faster our economy grows as a whole. In the last 2 years—one of the things I'm proudest of is not only that we're now over 14 million new jobs in the 5 years I've been privileged to be your President, with a 24-year low in unemployment, but in the last 2 years, more than half of the new jobs coming into this economy have paid above average wages. That's the good news. But the challenging news is, you can't get those jobs unless you have the requisite education.

And let me say again, this is about more than money. This is not just about money; this is about our ability to be strong as a nation. You want America to lead the world? Do you really believe we can maintain the world's strongest defense, the world's strongest economy, the world's strongest diplomatic force unless we are the world's best educated people? There is no way. Do you want us to set an example for other people about how we should live and have good values? We also have to have smart enough minds and be sophisticated enough to figure out how to handle the honest differences that we have.

We have honest differences. That's what makes life interesting. We wouldn't have to have elections if we didn't have any differences. [*Laughter*] We have honest differences, but we have to figure out, how do we handle our differences in ways that we grow stronger, we grow richer, we improve the quality of life, and we strengthen our values?

It is not just about money. We will not succeed in the world of the 21st century unless we dramatically improve the quality of education that all of our children get from kindergarten through high school, and unless we have larger numbers of people going on to college and succeeding, not only because you have to know more but because—well, look what's happening. Look at the Internet. How many of you young people have ever used the Internet? How many of you have ever logged on to the Internet? Look at all these hands up.

Now, let me tell you something. Five years ago, when I became President—just 5 years ago—the Internet was still virtually the private property of research scientists. It started out as a little Government project so that research scientists could communicate with each other and share the latest data. And a young person in his twenties basically figured out that this thing could have great commercial applications, great educational potential. It was unbelievable. And all of a sudden, all these young people in their twenties were becoming multimillionaires, some of them worth hundreds of millions of dollars, figuring out how to use the Internet for education and for business purposes.

Now, it's staggering. Hundreds of thousands of new homepages are added to the Internet every month. It's probably the fastest growing communications institution in all of human history. And just 5 years ago, nobody knew what it was. I say that to make this point. The reason you need a good education is not just so when you get out of college you know what you're supposed to know; you have to be able to learn for a lifetime, and then to apply what you know. So that education is much more dynamic than it used to be. Think of the Internet. That's a good model, more and more things coming on. It's hard to keep up. You've got to keep learning about it. That's the way all work is going to be.

And that's why we're here. Now, we've worked hard to do what we could to improve our schools, to say: We ought to have high standards; we ought to push proven reforms; we ought to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000; we ought to make sure that nobody gets out of the third grade without being able to read independently—that's what the America Reads program is all about; we ought to make sure that everybody that needs it is in a good Head Start program or other pre-school program; we ought to make sure that after school and on the weekends our young people have something to do and something to say yes to so they have good lives and don't get in trouble. Houston was a leading force in proving that works.

But then after all that is said and done, we have got to get more people to go on to college. Now, I have done my best to fulfill a commitment I made to the American people when I

ran for President, which is that we would open the doors of college to everyone. Last year when we passed the balanced budget agreement, we agreed for the first time in 50 years to have a huge increase in help for people to go to college, the biggest increase since the GI bill when the soldiers came home from World War II, 50 years ago.

Here's what it does, here's what you can look forward to, every one of you, now: For the first 2 years of college, a family can get a $1,500-a-year tax credit per person in the first 2 years of college. That makes community college virtually free to virtually all Americans. In the junior and senior year, for graduate school, you can get another $1,000 tax cut.

If parents begin to save for their children's education in an education IRA, they can not only save the money, and it won't be subject to taxes when they save it, but then they can draw it out and what it earns, and it won't be subject to taxes either. I don't think we need to tax the money people save for a college education. It will enable ordinary people to save for a college education.

We had the biggest expansion in Pell grant scholarships in 20 years for deserving students, kids who need that. We rewrote the student loan program so you can get the loans quicker, and you can pay them back easier. I don't know how many young people I used to meet when I was Governor that said, you know, "I'm going to have to drop out of college because I'll never be able to afford to pay my loans back. I want to be a teacher. I want to be a police officer. I'm not going to make a lot of money. I can't pay my loans back." Now, under our direct loan program, you get to pay your loans back limited to a percentage of the money you earn when you get out of college, so it will never bankrupt you. We have opened the doors of college to all Americans.

A hundred thousand young people now have been in the AmeriCorps program earning money to go to college and serving in their communities. And today I announced that in the budget I am going to send up to Congress next month, we will actually ask for funding for 1 million work-study students, for people who are trying to work their way through college. We have opened the doors of college for all Americans.

That's opportunity, but opportunity never works without responsibility. So I want every young person here to remember this. We can open the door, but you have to walk through. And that means, first of all, you've got to finish high school, and you've got to make sure when you finish you know what you're supposed to know so the diploma you have means something. And then you have to keep your sights high. Remember, there is a dream out there with your name on it. And we're trying to open the door to the dream, but you've still got to walk through and seize it. You still have to walk across the bridge to your own future. You still have to build your own future.

But what I believe with all my heart is that you will live in the most interesting, exciting, kaleidoscopically diverse time in human history if we are wise and good and we continue to be the nation that is the world's best hope for peace and freedom, the nation that reaches out to others in principled interdependence, a people that learn to live together as one America, a people of responsible citizenship who can seize the opportunities that are out there. That's the America we're trying to build for you. But in the end, you will determine whether that's the America that lives in the 21st century. You can do it, and I know you will.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. in the General Assembly Hall at the George Brown Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Ronald Cotton, student, Robert E. DeBakey High School for Health Professionals; Philip J. Carroll, president and CEO, Shell Oil Co.; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Sheila Jackson Lee in Houston
January 9, 1998

I was just getting my last-minute instructions. [*Laughter*] Thank you for being here. Thank you for the warm welcome. Let me begin by saying that I am honored to be here on behalf of Sheila Jackson Lee and I'm delighted that you're here.

I want to thank her family for sharing her with the people of this congressional district and the United States Congress. It's not easy to do. It is easy to forget the rigors of public service, but ask yourself if you could do a job, even one you loved, if you had to fly back and forth from here to Washington every week, if you were away from your spouse and your children for prolonged periods of time, and when you came back to see them, over 100,000 people could call you on the phone and say why you should be with them instead of with your family. [*Laughter*]

It's a difficult job being in Congress, but Sheila Jackson Lee does it well. She does it with enormous energy, and she has had an unusual impact for a person with no more seniority than she has, just by the sheer force of will and work. I know I'm no different than other people—when I see her coming at me with that look in her eye—[*laughter*]—I don't even want to hear what she has to say. I just say, yes, yes. [*Laughter*] That way I don't have to keep dealing with it. I just say yes. [*Laughter*] Because if I say no or maybe, eventually I'm going to get around to yes anyway. [*Laughter*]

She just became the chairman of the House Children's Caucus. And we had a great announcement earlier this week at the White House where I announced a program to involve millions of more children in child care, to raise the standards, to train more trained child care workers, to make them safer and better—the child care centers of America. We still have to pass it through the Congress. I'll bet you it will pass this year, and when it does—you mark my words—Sheila Jackson Lee will deserve a lot of the credit, the largest effort by the National Government to help communities provide quality child care in the history of the United States of America. So I'm very hopeful about that.

We had a great meeting today over at the George Brown Auditorium with, I don't know, several thousand people, and at least half of them were young people, to talk about the fact that in the Balanced Budget Act, which Sheila Jackson Lee supported last year, we had the biggest expansion in aid to college since the GI bill was passed at the end of World War II 50 years ago.

Consider this: In that bill we gave the vast majority of American families of modest incomes, even upper middle-class incomes and down, access to a $1,500-a-year tax credit for the first 2 years of college—that makes community college virtually free for virtually everybody in the country—amazing thing; a $1,000 tax credit for the junior and the senior year, for graduate schools, to help people go to school. We had the biggest increase in Pell grant scholarships for students with modest incomes in 20 years. We redid the student loan program so you can get the loans quicker, where the fees cost less money, and now you can pay the loans back as a percentage of your income. So no one need ever fear borrowing money to go to school again, because you're not going to be bankrupted by paying the loans back because you can limit the loan to a percentage of your income.

And today I announced Texas has been one of the States that has made the most use of AmeriCorps, our community national service program. We've had 100,000 young people in this country who've earned money to go to college by serving in their communities. And today I announced we're going to ask for 1 million work-study slots next year, so people can work their way through college.

So I thank Sheila Jackson Lee for supporting my education program. She has supported my economic program, including my trade policies. And even when they were controversial. She understands we can't help people who are losing out in the global economy at home by cutting off opportunities to create more jobs by selling American products abroad. And I thank her for that, and you ought to thank her for that. She's done a very good job.

So I'm glad to be here for her. And I'm glad to be here with Mayor Brown. That's got a great sound, doesn't it: Mayor Brown. I got tickled today in our earlier meeting. I was here with the mayor, who was in my Cabinet. He ran—he was the drug czar in my Cabinet, my very first one. And former Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen was also at our meeting. We nearly had a quorum for a Cabinet meeting in Houston. [*Laughter*] Knowing how people in Texas think, you probably thought I just had three or four too few from Houston. [*Laughter*] But anyway, I was pretty proud of Houston's contribution to my Cabinet and my administration.

You know that story Lee told—unfortunately, that's a true story, that story he told about Memphis and how I left him to give the speech and when I left everybody left. [*Laughter*] But he will—you know, in his quiet, persistent way, he always gets even. [*Laughter*] And what I want to tell him is, his time is coming, because he got elected this year, and I got elected last year, and I can't run for reelection. So when I am a former President, I will come down here; I will let him introduce me to speak for him. And when he leaves, the media will leave, the crowd will leave, everybody will leave. [*Laughter*] And I will talk to the handful who are left with great energy, and we'll be even then. [*Laughter*]

I don't know how many of you have seen this wonderful movie "Amistad." Have you seen it? It's a great movie about the African slaves that were basically towed into New Haven harbor and eventually are freed through the intervention of former President John Quincy Adams in the 1840's, late 1830's, 1840's. And Quincy Adams has got a great line in here; he says, "There is nothing so pathetic as a former President." [*Laughter*] All I can tell you is, I hope to find out. [*Laughter*] I hope the good Lord has got that in mind for me, and I'll try to beat the odds.

We've had a good time today. I woke up in south Texas this morning, got there at 2 o'clock last night. I was in Brownsville, McAllen, and Mission today. I've had a great day. And then I came to Houston, and we've had a wonderful day. This is quite a remarkable place you have. You should be very proud of it.

I want to take just a very few minutes of your time to say something pretty serious, maybe a little bit abstract. We've talked about some of the specifics we are doing. In 1992 I was the Governor of Arkansas—in 1991, actually. I decided in late 1991 to run for President for a very simple reason: I wanted America in the 21st century to be the greatest country in the world as a force of peace and freedom. I wanted our country to be coming together as one America instead of to be driven apart by its diversity as so many other places in the world are. And I wanted the American dream to be alive not just for my child but for every child that was responsible enough to work for it. And I believed we had to change course to get there because it's a new time.

And it really is a different time. We've already got one leg in the 21st century; you surely know that in Houston. And how would you describe this? What is different about this new time?

First of all, the extent of globalization is greater than any other previous time. We are more tied to people all around the world in ways good and sometimes not so good, or at least potentially not so good, than ever before. Goods and services and people and money and technology and information, they just move around the world at great speed.

Secondly, there is, along with the globalization, an utter explosion in information and in science and technology which is changing the way we work and live and relate to each other and the way we relate to the rest of the world. When you put these two things together, the scope and pace of change is more rapid and profound in ordinary life than at any previous time.

Those of you who are in business know that. Those of you in education know that. In just about any line of work you know that. If you've got a law practice, you know that. If you run a branch of a bank, you know that being a bank teller is not what it was 5 years ago. I'll bet you some of you in here have not used the Internet very much, but if you have children, I bet your kids have. [*Laughter*]

Now, here's an interesting thing to think about. Five years ago, when I became President 5 years ago, the Internet was still largely the private province of research physicists. It got started as a Government research project. It was turned over to these research physicists. A couple of bright young people in their twenties figured out that this thing had enormous potential commercial and educational and just communication application and is now the fastest

growing social organism in human history, I guess. Just think, hundreds of thousands of pages are being added to the Internet worldwide every month, you know, whenever somebody has got some new idea.

So what does all that mean? Well, first of all, it means that the old arrangements are not adequate. And one of the things that had hurt my party, the Democratic Party, in national elections was that people said, "Well, the Democrats have a good heart, and they're trying to take up for the people that need help, but they're too wedded to the old arrangements." And then the modern Republican Party, the Republican Party of the last 20 years, said, "Well, the real problem is the Government itself. Government is inherently unsuited to deal with the problems of the modern age." And you heard them say that many times in all good faith: "The Government is the problem. The Government is bad. If we just had less Government, everything would be hunky-dory."

I did not agree with either approach. I didn't think that my party could afford to be a standpat party. I thought we had to change. But I thought I had seen enough of the world to know, number one, that no other country was trying to move into the 21st century without a partnership between government and business and labor and people in the public and private sectors and that there are some things we have to do together as a people that can only be done through our Government. There are conditions and tools that have to be provided to people to make the most of their own lives.

If you believe what I think is the American creed, which is: we're all created equal; nobody should be discriminated against; and everybody that needs it deserves a hand up—that's what I think. So I set out on this odyssey that has now culminated in where we are 5 years later, with the simple idea: I'm going to change the role of Government. We're not going to do nothing, but we're not going to try to do everything. We're going to focus on creating the conditions and give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives.

What does that mean? It means we're going to grow the economy by reducing the deficit, investing in people, and expanding trade. It means we're going to protect the environment, but we're going to do it in a way that proves we can improve the environment while we grow the economy. It means we're going to expand health care, but we're going to do it in a way that not only focuses on quality care but tries to keep the cost down. It means we're going to actually reduce the size of Government but increase the investment we make on the streets in trying to fight crime—different ideas, not being put into false choices.

And 5 years later, I think the results are pretty good. The budget is 92 percent lower than it was the day I took office—the deficit is. And I'm going to send a balanced budget to Congress next month for the first time in 30 years. We've had 14.3 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history, the highest rate of homeownership in history, including the highest rate of homeownership by African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans.

I didn't do all that. You did most of it. I did my job. Our job was to create the conditions and give people the tools to build good lives, good families, good communities, a strong nation, and then to reach out to the rest of the world, recognizing that this is an increasingly interdependent world.

I say this to make a simple point for why it really matters that you're here for Sheila Jackson Lee, apart from the fact that she's a fireball and you like her. [*Laughter*] That's good enough reason to show up, but there is a bigger reason. Ideas have consequences in public life, just like they do in the classroom or in novels or in your personal lives. We had an idea that there was a role for Government in public life in the 21st century; that it wasn't inherently bad, but it needed to be smaller and less bureaucratic and more focused on empowerment. And we have a lot of challenges left.

You've still got neighborhoods in Houston where there are people who haven't been helped by this global economy. We've still got places where free enterprise has not found its way in. The biggest untapped market for American goods and services are in the unemployed neighborhoods of America. We've made a lot of progress in education; there are still a lot of underperforming schools. I'm trying to get everybody to go to college, but the first thing you've got to know is when you get out of high school your diploma means what it says, and you can read it, and you know what it means, and you got out of it what you need.

The Congresswoman was trying to delicately sidestep the fact that I am the oldest of the baby boomers, but alas, it's true. [*Laughter*] And when our crowd retires, if we don't now—now—prepare with necessary, prudent reforms in Social Security and Medicare, we will put ourselves in the position of either sacrificing two of the most important accomplishments that have relieved the anxiety from old age and made the elderly people less poor than the rest of us for the first time in history—two fabulous accomplishments—or in order to keep them just like they are, if we're unwilling to change them, we'll have to put a big old tax on our kids that aren't fair and make it harder for them to support their grandchildren. Why? Because there's more of us than there are of them.

This is not a complicated deal. And there's about an 18-year bulge there that we have to get through, after which, because of the childrearing habits of our own children and because of immigration, things will kind of settle out again.

It is irresponsible—I don't know anyone in my generation, anybody in the baby boom generation, who really wants to saddle our kids with an unsustainable economic burden to take care of us in our old age. So we're going to have to make some prudent changes. If we do it now, we're open about it, we don't try to play politics with it, can we do it? We can reduce it nearly to an accounting problem. We'll just do what makes sense and do the commonsense thing and go on. But we have to do it.

We've got to figure a way to stop this climate change, this global warming. Can we do it without wrecking the economy? Of course we can. Look at all the announcements Detroit has been making just in the last few days about new cars. Of course we can.

We've got mountains of natural gas in this country we haven't even begun to use. We stopped using it 20 years ago because we thought we were running out of it. Now we know it's a good thing we didn't use it; now, we need to use it now to stop the climate from warming up too much. We have major challenges. There's another 10 I could give you.

The point I'm making is the country is in good shape now, and we can be glad about that. But when you're doing well the last thing you should do in a time of change is to sit on your laurels. When you're doing well you should say, "I have been given this opportunity to think long-term about the problem, to think about my children, to think about my grandchildren."

In Washington, some people have criticized me for trying to have this national year—have a dialog on race, because they say we don't have any riots in the cities. My view is, if I don't ever want any more riots in the cities and I don't like what I see in the problems from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to the tribal wars in Africa to Bosnia, why don't we try to do something about it while we're all getting along more or less? I think that's a pretty good idea.

I say that because ideas have consequences. I think the approach that Sheila Jackson Lee embodies—that you can be pro-business and pro-labor; that you can have compassion for people who deserve and need help and still be fiscally responsible; that you can be tough on crime but still smart enough to realize the best approach is to keep kids out of trouble in the first place; that you can grow the economy and preserve the environment; that you can reduce the size of Government and the burden of bureaucracy and still increase your investment in education and the future and science and technology— in other words, a modern, balanced, commonsense, progressive approach—it seems to me that that is what we need for quite a long while to come in the United States, not because things aren't doing well now, not because I'm not grateful, but because I don't think we're anywhere near finishing the transition we have to make as a country if we really want 21st century America to be a place where every single child can live up to his or her God-given capacities if they're responsible enough to do it, where we know we're going to be one America celebrating our diversity but bound together by things that are more important, and where we're still the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And I don't think you think it either.

I think every one of you, if you'd be really honest, would say, "I'm really glad we're doing well, but do we have challenges over the long run? You bet we do. It matters. Ideas have consequences. The approach you take matters." This woman has made a positive contribution to the direction of America, and I believe what we're doing needs to continue beyond the service that I can render as President. I believe it needs to continue well into the next century.

And thanks to your presence here, she's got a good chance to do that, and I want you to make sure it happens.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:48 p.m. in the ballroom at the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Lee Brown of Houston.

The President's Radio Address
January 10, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk with you about the extraordinary promise of science and technology and the extraordinary responsibilities that promise imposes on us.

As we approach the 21st century it is clearer than ever that science and technology are changing the way we live and work and raise our families. Remarkable breakthroughs in biomedical science are helping to unravel the mysteries of life, holding out new hope for lifesaving cures to some of our most dreaded diseases. In recent years, we've made real progress lengthening the lives of people with HIV, finding the genes that can show heightened risk for breast cancer and diabetes. Now we're on the verge of discovering new treatments for spinal cord and even brain injuries.

For 5 years I have maintained our Nation's solid commitment to scientific research and technological development, because I believe they're essential to our Nation's economic growth and to building the right kind of bridge to the 21st century. The balanced budget I will submit in just a few weeks to Congress reflects that continued commitment. And in my upcoming State of the Union Address, I'll talk more about what we're doing to keep America on the cutting edge of the scientific and technological advancements that are driving our new global economy.

Still, it's good to remember that scientific advancement does not occur in a moral vacuum. Technological developments divorced from values will not bring us one step closer to meeting the challenges or reaping the benefits of the 21st century.

This week, like many Americans, I learned the profoundly troubling news that a member of the scientific community is actually laying plans to clone a human being. Personally, I believe that human cloning raises deep concerns, given our cherished concepts of faith and humanity. Beyond that, however, we know there is virtually unanimous consensus in the scientific and medical communities that attempting to use these cloning techniques to actually clone a human being is untested and unsafe and morally unacceptable.

We must continue to maintain our deep commitment to scientific research and technological development. But when it comes to a discovery like cloning, we must move with caution, care, and deep concern about the impact of our actions. That is why I banned the use of Federal funds for cloning human beings while we study the risks and responsibilities of such a possibility. And that's why I sent legislation to Congress last June that would ban the cloning of human beings for at least 5 years while preserving our ability to use the morally and medically acceptable applications of cloning technology.

Unfortunately, Congress has not yet acted on this legislation. Yet, it's now clearer than ever the legislation is exactly what is needed. The vast majority of scientists and physicians in the private sector have refrained from using these techniques improperly and have risen up to condemn any plans to do so. But we know it's possible for some to ignore the consensus of their colleagues and proceed without regard for our common values. So today, again, I call on Congress to act now to make it illegal for anyone to clone a human being.

Our Nation was founded by men and women who firmly believed in the power of science to transform their world for the better. Like them, we're bound together by common dreams and by the values that will drive our own vision for the future. And our commitment to carry those enduring ideals with us will renew their promise in a new century and a new millennium. We must never lose touch with that, no matter what the reason, or we'll lose touch with ourselves as a people.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:00 p.m. on January 9 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Houston, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 10. In his address, the President referred to physicist Richard Seed, who announced on January 6 his intention to clone a human being within 2 years. Attached to the transcript of the address were copies of the President's memorandum of March 4, 1997, and his message to the Congress of June 9, 1997, on human cloning (*Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, 1997 Book I* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998), p. 233 and p. 711).

Remarks on Ending Drug Use and Drug Availability for Offenders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 12, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, General. Thank you, Mr. Holder and Mr. Vice President. Ladies and gentlemen, this country's eternal quest for a more perfect Union has always succeeded when we're able to apply our enduring values to a new set of challenges. That is what we try to do around here every year. Over the past 5 years, we've done our best to bring the values of personal responsibility, community, and respect for the law to bear on the fight against crime. We've sought to be tough and smart, to punish criminals, and to prevent crime. We've put more police on the streets and taken criminals, guns, and drugs off the streets. Crime rates have dropped steadily for the last 5 years. Drug use has fallen by half since its peak 15 years ago. Teen drug use is leveling off and, indeed, may well be decreasing again. But we're a long way from my vision of a drug-free America.

Fighting drugs in our prisons and among prisoners is absolutely critical, ultimately, to keeping drugs off the streets and away from our children. Of all the consequences of drug use and abuse, none is more destructive and apparent than its impact on crime. Too many drug users are committing crimes to feed their habit. More than half of the cocaine that is sold in our country is consumed by someone on parole or probation. Four out of five inmates in State and Federal prisons were either high at the time they committed their crimes, stole property to buy drugs, violated drug or alcohol laws, or have a long history of drug or alcohol abuse. Parolees who stay on drugs are much more likely to commit crimes that will send them back to jail.

We have to break this vicious cycle. Common sense tells us that the best way to break the cycle between drugs and criminal activity is to break the drug habits of the prisoners. That's why we have made coerced abstinence, requiring inmates to be tested and treated for drugs, a vital part of our anti-crime efforts. We've doubled the number of Federal arrestees who've been tested for drugs, expanded testing among inmates and parolees, and tripled the number of inmates receiving drug treatment. To inmates we say, if you stay on drugs, then you'll have to stay in jail. To parolees we say, if you want to keep your freedom, you have to stay free of drugs.

Last year, I worked for and signed a bill that requires States to test all prisoners and parolees for drugs before they can receive Federal prison funds.

Today I'm directing the Attorney General to strengthen this effort by taking necessary steps to achieve three goals. First, we have to help the States expand drug detection, offender testing, and drug treatment in their prisons by making it possible for them to use Federal funds for these purposes. Second, we have to help States get even tougher on drug trafficking in prisons by enacting stiffer penalties for anyone who smuggles drugs into prison. Finally, we have to insist that all States find out how many of their prisoners are actually using drugs so that every year they can chart their progress in keeping drugs out of prisons and away from prisoners.

The balanced budget I'm sending to Congress later this month will continue to strengthen our testing and treatment efforts. We can balance

the budget and fight crime and drugs at the same time.

If we can simply break the chain between drug use and criminal activity for people who are under criminal supervision, in prison, or on parole—if we could just do that—we can go a very long way toward making our streets and our neighborhoods safe for our children again. That is what this Executive order is designed to do. I know it can work. I have seen the high rates of return from good treatment programs in Federal facilities. We can do this at the State and Federal level. If we do not do it, we will continue to see people go right back on the streets with the drug habits that got them in trouble in the first place. If we do it, the crime rates will plummet, and the drug problem will dramatically shrink.

Thank you very much. Let me go sign the order.

[*At this point, the President signed the memorandum.*]

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, what do you hear about the Asian—[*inaudible*]——

Q. Mr. President, what do you say about Iraq's—[*inaudible*]——

The President. I'll take them both. On the Asian issue, I received a briefing this morning from Secretary Rubin and Secretary Albright, and I've obviously kept in touch with it; I do daily. We are working hard on it. I want to emphasize that the most important thing that has to be done is that all the countries affected have to make sure they have the very best policies to have good financial institutions, proper practices, things that will inspire investor confidence. But these economies have enormous productive capacity. They have generated dramatic increases in growth for their people, and we can restore stability if the countries will take the steps that are necessary. Then the IMF reform packages have to be followed. And the rest of us need to be in a position of supporting those trends.

We're following it on a daily basis, and I believe that the path we're pursuing is the correct one.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of Iraq's threat to block inspections by the American-led team? Are we going back to where we were last November? What can we do about this?

The President. Well, I certainly hope not. Now, of course it hasn't happened yet. But I think that it's important to make just a few basic points here.

Number one, if Saddam Hussein does this, it is a clear and serious violation of the United Nations Security Council resolution.

Number two, the United States had nothing whatever to do with selecting this team, the people on it, or its composition. The team that's there is part of a larger team of people, 43 people from 16 different countries. There are a substantial number of Americans on this team. They were picked by the person who is in charge of the inspection process because of their technical expertise. Everyone who goes there should be technically qualified, and the United States has not attempted to influence the composition of the people on the teams. But certainly Saddam Hussein shouldn't be able to pick and choose who does this work. That's for the United Nations to decide.

If they are denied the right to do their job tomorrow, then I expect the United Nations Security Council to take strong and appropriate action.

Sexual Offender Tracking System

Q. Mr. President, a few years ago you set into motion the Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act, that you wanted all 50 States to centralize their sexual offender records. Less than half the States and the District are into that interim computer system which is eventually going to lead to a permanent system, which caused you to sign—to send a letter to the Governors to get them off the dime.

How do you look at that effort now, when you think that sexual offenders may be falling through the cracks and only half the States are on board?

The President. Well, I think the letter I sent says it all. The truth is that the stakes here are quite high, and we have the ability, through technology, to centralize these records to get the job done. I know it requires some cost and some effort on the part of the States. We're having a similar problem with fewer States in the child support area, trying to centralize records there so we can interconnect the systems. And I know this is difficult, but it has

to be done. And if it is done, we can make the country much safer.

So we'll keep pushing them. And I think most of the States, probably all of them, really want to do it. They know it's the right thing to do, and they just need to put somebody on it in each State capital and make it a priority. It can be done.

Legislative Initiatives

Q. Mr. President, there's a Republican proposal to pay for 100,000 new teachers. What do you think of that, and why haven't you proposed that yourself?

The President. Well, I have lots of proposals for the State of the Union that haven't been made yet. You don't know what I'm going to propose.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—about raising the minimum wage?

The President. What I hope we will be able to do in this session of Congress is to make education a national issue. It would please me if it could be a nonpartisan issue. We fought awfully hard and finally succeeded in getting the Congress to agree that we ought to go forward with national standards and testing to see whether our children are meeting those standards. I hope we can reenergize that movement and do a lot of other things in this coming session of Congress for education reform. And I'm looking forward to it.

I have, some weeks ago, signed off on a very ambitious agenda, only part of which has been revealed. We'll just keep working at it. And then I'll work with the Congress, and, whatever ideas they have, we'll be glad to get together and work with them.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:39 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry R. McCaffrey; Deputy Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Memorandum on Ending Drug Use and Drug Availability for Offenders
January 12, 1998

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Zero Tolerance for Drug Use and Drug Availability for Offenders

Crime rates in this country have dropped significantly for 5 years, and the number of Americans who have used drugs is down nearly 50 percent from its peak 15 years ago. Also, drug-related murders have dropped to their lowest point in a decade, and recent drug use surveys indicate that—for the first time in years—teen drug use is leveling off, and in some instances, modestly decreasing. All of this news is encouraging.

Nonetheless, much more can and needs to be done to continue to bring down drug use and increase public safety. With more than half the offenders in our criminal justice system estimated to have a substance abuse problem, enforcing coerced abstinence within the criminal justice system is critical to breaking the cycle of crime and drugs. My Administration consistently has promoted testing offenders and requiring treatment as a means of reducing recidivism and drug-related crime. We have worked to expand the number of Drug Courts throughout the country, increase the number of Federal arrestees and prisoners who are tested and treated for drugs, and launched an innovative "Breaking the Cycle" initiative, which is a rigorous program of testing, treatment, supervision, and sanctions for offenders at all stages of the criminal justice process. And under your leadership, the Federal Bureau of Prisons provides models of excellence in drug detection, inmate testing, and drug treatment.

We can do still more to enforce coerced abstinence among State prisoners, probationers, and parolees. When a drug user ends up in a State prison, we have a chance to break his or her addiction. Convicted offenders who undergo drug testing and treatment while incarcerated and after release are approximately twice as likely to stay drug- and crime-free as those offenders who do not receive testing and treatment. But when drug use inside prisons is ignored, the demand for drugs runs high. In this environment, correction officials struggle to keep their

prisons drug-free. Often drugs are smuggled in by visitors; sometimes even by compromised correctional staff.

To maintain order in our prisons, to make effective treatment possible, and to reduce drug-related crime, we cannot tolerate drug use and trafficking within the Nation's prisons. Thus, I direct you to:

(1) Amend the guidelines requiring States receiving Federal prison construction grants to submit plans for drug testing, intervention, and treatment to include a requirement that States also submit a baseline report of their prison drug abuse problem. In every subsequent year, States will be required to update and expand this information in order to measure the progress they are making towards ridding their correctional facilities of drugs and reducing drug use among offenders under criminal justice supervision.

(2) Draft and transmit to the Congress legislation that will permit States to use their Federal prison construction and substance abuse treatment funds to provide a full range of drug testing, drug treatment, and sanctions for offenders under criminal justice supervision.

(3) In consultation with States, draft and transmit to the Congress legislation that requires States to enact stiffer penalties for drug trafficking into and within correctional facilities.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks in an Outreach Meeting on the President's Initiative on Race

January 12, 1998

The President. Well, welcome. I'm glad to see all of you, and I thank you for coming in, some of you from a very great distance. I will be very brief. We're about 6 months into this effort, and I think we've gotten quite a bit done, and we've certainly generated a fair amount of controversy. And we're hoping for a good next 6 months. We've got a very ambitious schedule laid out. But we thought it would be quite helpful to bring a group in and just listen to you talk about where you think we are with the issue, what you think still needs to be done, what this Advisory Board and our project can and cannot reasonably expect to do within this year. And maybe we can talk about some of the things that we expect to be in the budget and some other issues.

But I'll say more as we go along through the meeting, but I'd rather take the maximum amount of time to be listening to you. And maybe we could just start with Wade.

Wade Henderson. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Nice tie.

[*Wade Henderson, executive director, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, thanked the President for his initiative, noted that a challenge to affirmative action may appear on the November ballot in the State of Washington, and asked for the President's leadership to oppose it. He then urged a commitment to vigorous enforcement of existing civil rights laws, including a Federal zero-tolerance policy on discrimination and increased funding; suggested that the President direct the attention of business leaders toward addressing the growing gap in terms of the benefits of the Nation's robust economy between the haves and the have-nots; and suggested the creation of incentives to attract bright, committed, dedicated professionals to the teaching profession in order to ensure that more high-quality instruction is made available in both inner-city and rural school systems.*]

The President. I agree with that. Let me say on the first, on the discrimination, just very, very briefly, we're working on that. We have a good budget and a good plan. And I think we ought to go hard toward the people who say they are against discrimination but they oppose affirmative action in the Republican majority, and say, "Well, if you are, why won't you fund the EEOC? Give us the tools to do the job."

On the economy, we'll have a very aggressive set of proposals that go right at what you're suggesting and also in education. Of course, we've already suggested that we—and have offered a program of loan forgiveness for people who will go into educationally underperforming school districts to teach. But we have some other things to offer in that regard.

I think all these are important because we have to find ways to unify the American people around this agenda in ways that actually change the future outcomes for people. And so I appreciate that. I think that's very good.

Who wants to go next? Go ahead.

[*Alfred Rotondaro, executive director, National Italian-American Foundation, stated that it would be a tragedy if the work of the racial commission stops this year and suggested it should enlist the Nation's opinion leaders, including white ethnic organizations, in an effort to continue the fight against social injustice and racism. He also stated that the problem involved elements of class and stressed the importance of changing the attitudes of urban minority children toward academic excellence. Nan Rich, president, National Council of Jewish Women, stated that her suggestions should be advanced in the context of public-private-nonprofit partnerships. She then emphasized increasing economic opportunity for women and minority groups and corporate training to increase cultural diversity awareness. She also suggested that early childhood programs focus on diversity. Mayor Joseph Serna, Jr., of Sacramento, CA, stated that California faced the dilemma of scapegoating immigrants and cited California's Proposition 187 and Proposition 209 as wedge issues which divide people along racial lines. He suggested encouraging citizenship in the Latino and Asian communities and directing the Immigration and Naturalization Service to move more quickly in the process of naturalization.*]

The President. You know, when I came here, it was taking an unconscionably long time for people to get through the system, and we tried to accelerate it. And the Congress had such a negative reaction to it, the Republican majority did, they tried to investigate the whole INS because we took the position that you shouldn't have to wait years and years and years, after you had already been here 5 years, to have the Government decide whether you could become a citizen or not. I still think that's the right thing to do. I think it's entirely too bureaucratic, and I think we should do better.

Karen Narasaki. Mr. President, I'm very glad to hear you say that, because the backlog persists. It's already 2 million individuals, and it's 2 years long. That's how many would-be citizens we would have——

The President. But we were taking it down—to be fair—until we were viciously and unfairly attacked for making the law work the way it's supposed to.

[*Ms. Narasaki, executive director, National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, thanked the President for including more funding for food stamps in the budget, saying it would help the most vulnerable in society. She also thanked him for appointing Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee and thereby putting a face on the affirmative action debate. She urged the President to help narrow the race discussion by homing in on such topics as bilingual education and affirmative action. She advocated challenging religious leaders, including the Christian Coalition, and the entertainment and housing industries to participate in the discussion. Representative John Lewis of Georgia stated that the President should address the question of race in his State of the Union Address, making it a moral issue, and that he should not back off on the affirmative action debate. Stewart Kwoh, president and executive director, Asia Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California, said that the appointment of Acting Assistant Attorney General Lee built the best multiracial coalition in decades. He then suggested the President request direct action from local leaders to improve race relations, as well as incorporating race relations improvement into Federal programs at the local level, such as AmeriCorps.*]

The President. That's interesting because I've been just—sort of in support of what you said, we have—one of the most clearly successful things we've done, even though it's not—we don't have it on prime-time television in ads or anything, because we don't have that kind of money, but we put up this Internet homepage with promising practices in communities around the country. And substantial numbers of people have tapped into it to see what's being done someplace else, and can they apply it in their own community, and is there some way to build on it? It's been very, very impressive.

The other thing you said about recruiting leadership I think is—the one thing that we did was we wrote several thousand young people and asked them to take some initiative, and hundreds of them wrote us back with very specific things, saying what they were going to do. So that's some indication that if we identify a given

list of people, whether they're mayors, city council people, county officials, you name it, and ask them to do something specific, that they'll do that.

Hugh.

[*Hugh B. Price, president and chief executive officer, National Urban League, underscored the need to close the gap between young people who are achieving in school and those who aren't, advocated an almost warlike mobilization on that issue, and urged attention to those inner-city neighborhoods still unaffected by downtown revitalization efforts. He also raised the issue of police interaction with civilians, including attitudes of minorities toward police authority as well as problems in police practices.*]

The President. The profiling, I think, is a serious problem. We've talked a lot about it. I think I've seen—the three most glaring examples that I've seen since I've been President are the repeated examples black Americans have given of being stopped by police for no apparent reason—we had a black journalists group in here not very long ago, and every African-American male in the room had been stopped within the last few years for no apparent reason; the stopping of Hispanics for no apparent reason near the border—as part of drug—and the immediate assumption, after the Oklahoma City bombing, that some Arab-American had been involved. You know that I was able to sort of put a puncture in that within 24 hours, but it was—when I cautioned the American people not to do that. But we just—it's still a part of how we related to each other that we have to deal with.

Eleanor, go ahead. I'm sorry.

[*Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia praised the President for confronting race without a crisis situation, noting that there was more communication across racial lines during the era of the civil rights movement than today and that people comfortable in their separate racial niches tended to reinforce their own views. She emphasized the importance of filling the chairmanship of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, as well as adequately funding it. She also said that the State of the Union Address should present a call for action to the Nation and a call for Congress to avoid making affirmative action a wedge issue, and suggested that the President have a private conversation with Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. Roger Wilkins, professor of history and American culture, George Mason University, thanked the President and described a similar meeting with President Lyndon B. Johnson, noting that John Hope Franklin had not been present because he was in jail.*]

The President. That's why he looks so young; he had all those resting days. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Wilkins stated that the conversation was important and that the effort should not end in a year. He urged the President to use his office as a teaching lectern to remind the Nation of its history of denying opportunity to blacks. He also suggested establishing a Presidential medal to honor teachers, making teachers' pay a major issue, and focusing on joblessness as a detriment to good parenting.*]

The President. Let me say, one of the—just a couple of things real quick. Is it—one of the big entertainment organizations sponsors every year a big event honoring teachers. Is it Disney? Disney. Maybe we should see if we should do something with them.

On this unemployment, one of you mentioned this earlier—I think it was Hugh that mentioned it—but we announced today, it was in the paper, that we're going to spend a ton of money to try to focus on just training people to take jobs in technology companies. And the reason—how that happened was I read two things at the same time several weeks ago.

I get—a month after the unemployment rates comes out, the people who do the unemployment rates give you the State-by-State for that month, so like every month you're getting this month's national unemployment rate and last month's State-by-State. So I don't have the December State-by-States, but I do have it for November. In November, two States, North Dakota and one other—Nebraska, I think—had 1.9 percent unemployment. Now, that is essentially negative unemployment because any economist will tell you there's somewhere between 2 and 3 percent of the people walking around all the time. I mean, they're moving; they're getting married; they change States; they do something; something is always happening to a couple percent of the people that are just—in the way we measure unemployment.

And Washington, DC, had 7.8, or whatever it was. And at the same time—this was this month. Anyway, the month before when this

happened, the same day I pick up this article in the Washington Post which says that in all these suburban counties around Washington, DC, there's this huge shortage of high-technology workers. Well, if Washington, DC, had an unemployment rate of 2 percent instead of nearly 8 percent, we'd have about a quarter of the problems we've got here, maybe a tenth.

And so it occurred to me that a lot of—but a lot of these jobs in high-technology areas do not require 4-year college degrees. They do require technology training; they do require advanced skills over what you would get just coming out of high school. But they do not require a 4-year college degree. So what this announcement in the paper is about—it's Alexis Herman and some others, we've been working on this—we're trying to figure out whether, not just in DC but anywhere around the country where you've got this suburban ring of job demand and a high unemployment core, whether we can go in there and do profiles on people and see who is capable of getting these skills. And we're going to try and do it in some of the less urbanized areas, too. One of the problems—a lot of our Native Americans without jobs, without good jobs, live in highly dispersed areas where it's not as easy to get there.

But anyway, if this works—that is, if 4 months from now we can show you that we did "*X*" amount of training and the people that formerly would have gone into minimum wage jobs are now going into jobs that pay above-average wages, where they actually get retirement and health insurance and other things, because they got this—it will rather dramatically change the nature of job training and the whole strategy that the Federal Government has generally followed.

So, anyway—but I appreciate what you're saying about it.

Bob, you were next, I think.

[*Representative Robert T. Matsui commended the President for the diversity within his administration. He stated that affirmative action was a critical issue because its elimination would have a profound negative impact on the Nation. He also stressed the need to address inner-city poverty by involving the private sector in long-term planning, as well as technology and empowerment zone initiatives.*]

The President. Thank you. Go ahead.

[*Asifa Quraishi, president, Karamahi Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, described the diversity within the American Muslim community and its problem of harassment as a response to international political events. She stated that the American public must separate those events from individual minority citizens and see American Muslims as being American citizens first.*]

The President. You know, when I was—I made a big point to try to make that exact same point, interestingly enough, when I spoke in the Jordanian Parliament when we went to sign the peace agreement between Israel and Jordan, and how the United States had no quarrel with Islam. And it was amazing the impact it had when I went back to the place where I was—I didn't stay in this hotel, but I went back to this hotel and this public crowd there. It was amazing the impact that it had on the young people that were there. And then I got to Jerusalem, and I had an Arab Palestinian employee in one of the hotels where I was—came up to me and mentioned it to me. So even abroad it's a big deal.

And here at home, there was a very kind of troubling story here in our local press in the last week about a Muslim school that had 50 students, and they were trying to expand it, and they were looking for a new home. And people in the various places where they were looking were afraid that this would be funded by people who would be preaching terrorism and all that.

And I think it's exceedingly important that we disassociate religious conviction, and particularly being of Middle Eastern or South Asian heritage, from some iron connection to all the problems we're having there. And we're going to have to work on it more because the Muslim population is growing so substantially in this country.

[*Raul Yzaguirre, president, National Council of La Raza, suggested using the Advisory Board as a teaching tool for the long term to help the Nation build a national identity based on respect for all its constituent groups, including victims of conquest and colonialism. John Echohawk, executive director, Native American Rights Fund, advocated an effort to teach the American public about the legal and political status of tribal governments in the Federal system and their role in combating such problems*

as unemployment and low educational attainment in the Native American community.]

The President. Let me just say very briefly on this one subject, I think it's also quite important—and we've been working at this steadily for 5 years, and I thank Senator Daschle, particularly—I want to thank him because he knows a lot about these issues. But the Native American tribes have a—I don't want to tie the analogy too tight, but they have experienced in the last several decades a situation in dealing with the United States that is not unlike that experienced by the District of Columbia.

I always tell people, the problem that DC's had—one problem that DC has is sort of the "not quite" place. It's not quite independent, and it's not quite dependent. It's not quite a State, but it's not quite a city that we treat like a city. It's sort of "not quite." And we've had a policy that, if it had an honest label—an honest label—toward Native American tribes, would be something like sovereign dependence, or dependent sovereignty.

And what I have tried to do is not only to recognize the sovereignty of the tribes when it came to national resource and environmental issues and even issues where I maybe didn't always agree because it wasn't my place to decide—some of the gaming issues and other things that the law gives it to the tribes to decide. I think there is this whole other sort of superstructure of the way the Federal Government dealt with Native Americans relating mostly to their economic needs and their educational needs, which in my view was not focused enough toward economic and educational and health care and other empowerment issues, where I think we could—we'll never have the right sort of sovereignty relationship until the tools for success are there.

And I really—we've worked at this for 5 years. We haven't quite got it down yet exactly right, but I think we're making a lot of progress. And I appreciate the help you've given us.

Tom, and John—go ahead, John.

[*Historian John Hope Franklin, Chairman, President's Advisory Board on Race, noted that affirmative action favoring whites operated in the Nation for a much longer time than that favoring minorities. He also suggested that the President strongly publicize actions and events relating to the race initiative because that had not attracted much media attention thus far.*]

The President. Thank you very much. I also want to thank you for the extraordinary amount of time and energy you've put into this. It's been humbling to the rest of us.

Tom.

[*Senator Thomas A. Daschle stated that the Democrats in Congress need to amplify the President's leadership. He noted the extremely negative statistics on reservations throughout the Midwest, citing an 85 percent unemployment rate on reservations in North Dakota, as opposed to a 1.9 percent rate off reservations, as an example of the great need.*]

The President. Before we go I'd like to just leave you with this thought, just sort of food for thought to keep you churning on this. First, I'll make a request. I would like anything you can do to help us get more things that work in to the commission staff, so we can put it on the Internet and get it out, let people see that there are—people always write or they E-mail us and they say, "What can we do?" We'd like to say, here's something that's working somewhere; why don't you do it? That's important. Anything you can do to help us recruit any kind of new leadership to enlist in this cause, we'd like to have your help on that.

But anyway, let me finish. Here's the thing I'd like to leave you with, just sort of as food for thought, to continue this discussion and try to narrow it further. And I may be unfairly summarizing someone else's work, so I'll try not to—I hope I'm not being unfair. Bill Raspberry had an interesting column the other day in which he said this race effort is a big deal, and there's three things involved in it, and maybe nobody could ever deal with all three things. He said, first of all, there's the feeling of racial prejudice, how people feel about each other. And secondly, he said, there is the existence of illegal discrimination that our laws prohibit. And thirdly, there is the existence of outcomes which are dramatically different by race; your life chances and education, income, employment, and ownership and health care, among other things, are dramatically different based on your race.

He said, "I once thought we could fight all three of them in the sixties because we had an enemy, the Southern white people, and everybody else was on the same side." Now, at least when it comes to—maybe everybody feels some discrimination towards somebody else or—

he says now the problem is if we're all responsible for all this, it's hard to get enough allies to work on what really counts, which is changing the life experiences of the people, in terms of their outcomes. Most leaders of any group would give anything just to end whatever the disparities are in education, in health care, and in employment, income, and ownership. And I'm sort of amplifying, but I think this is a fair representation of what he said.

So he made the suggestion—he said what we need to do is get everybody on the same side, start out, and then see if we can work back to—so the logical extension—this was not in there, but the logical extension of the argument was if you could get everybody working on the same side on what to do about job outcomes, maybe you would come back and have a broader consensus on an affirmative action program than you think, or at least the people who are against it would then recognize their moral responsibility to put something credible in its place.

I thought that was an interesting argument, when you deal with—if you just deal with the three things I mentioned. It doesn't get you out of the primary obligation to enforce the laws against discrimination adequately, but it was an interesting way to think about it. If you ask everybody—for example, if you ask everybody who is on both sides of this English-as-a-second-language issue in California to start with the disparate educational outcomes and work back, you might get to a different place.

One of the things that always bothers me about all these litmus test issues—and I'm not innocent in this, so I'm not casting a stone—is that depending on which side of the litmus test you're on, once you figure out your crowd's winning, then you go on and worry about something else. Then when you figure out—when you realize your side's losing, you can't worry about anything else; but you can't have an honest conversation, because you're trying too hard to keep from getting killed in the next referendum or whatever.

In terms of the affirmative action referendum, all I can tell you is that I made a couple of statements in California in 209, and maybe I could have done more, and I think if the thing had gone on 3 more weeks, it would have come out differently on 209. I'm glad I was asked to be a part of the effort against the repeal in Houston, and it succeeded; it's the only one that has. But the real issue is if you left it alone and no one ever debated it again, we've had enough experience to know that it is insufficient to change the disparate outcomes. So what if we started on trying to figure out how we could close the gaps and work back; we might find that we had a lot more agreement than we thought.

Now, in the initial polling—I think this will change a lot, as the referendum is debated. And I confess, I have not read exactly what—the initial polling in California, on the English, the bilingual education initiative, is deeply troubling to defenders of bilingual education because the initial polling has 70 percent of Hispanic voters voting for the initiative.

Now, what does that mean? That doesn't necessarily mean that they understand the implications of this initiative and they want to vote for it. But what it does mean is that Hispanic parents are concerned about whether their children stay in the programs for too long, or whether the programs are sufficiently effective to let them learn everything else as well as they need to learn.

So instead of getting into the fight, could we at least start with dealing with what people's perception of the problem is, and then work back to the solution; then if you do that, you've got some alternative to put in place if you want to fight the initiative. In other words, you don't have to play their game; you don't have to let it be a wedge issue if you decide to articulate it in a way that forces everybody else to come talk to you about what the real issue is—which is, you want all these children whose first language is not English to be able to learn everything they need to learn, on time as much as possible, and to be English-proficient, if they're going to live in this country, as quickly as they can be.

But there are—depending on what age you come here and what your situation is and what your native language is and how difficult it is and what the subject is, it is more or less difficult to learn certain things in English within certain time periods. In other words, it's a complicated issue. But there is a broad perception that the bilingual services have become, if you will, institutionalized in a way that carry kids with them longer than they should be and may make them too dependent on it.

So why don't we analyze the facts and find out what they are, and then try to work back to that, instead of immediately joining the issue;

but do it quickly enough so that the people of California have some chance of having an honest debate. It isn't just history that people are deprived of; very often they are deprived of what the facts are on the issues they're debating. So all they can do is go on what they think their basic values are and their basic instincts.

And we get so caught up—and, believe me, I share the frustration that Dr. Franklin said about what the voters don't know. It's very hard to pierce through the public consciousness and to do a sustained public education campaign in the absence of some great conflict.

I'll never forget, 10 days before our congressional debacle in 1994, a man I didn't know very well who was a pollster just spontaneously sent me this survey he did—or at least I wasn't working with him at the time—and I was shocked. He said, "Here are 10 things that, if all the voters knew them, would change the outcome of this congressional election, which is about to be terrible for you, if they just knew"—maybe there were eight things on the list. But anyway, there were more than five things that we had done that absolutely nobody knew about. So this is a generic problem in a society as big and complex as ours, being bombarded from all edges.

But I just ask you to think about that. Suppose we did that with health care. Suppose we did that with education. For example, on the education issue, some people say, well, maybe this 10 percent solution that Texas adopted would work on the affirmative action. Well, the answer is it might well work in most States for admission to college, but it wouldn't do anything on the graduate school front. So what's your answer on graduate school?

There are a lot of these things that I'd just like to see—I'd like to see more, instead of just throwing barricades over the wall at one another, if we could start with what the problem is and work back, I really believe we can make an enormous amount of progress in this country, because most Americans who get caught in the middle on these referendums, where their values are pulling them one way and you're trying to—and the rhetoric is pulling them one way, and you're trying to cram information in as quick as you can before election time comes and all that kind of stuff. Most Americans really don't like the fact that we have disparate outcomes, and most Americans think anybody that's working hard and needs a hand up ought to get it, to have a fair chance.

So I think, to go back to what you said about talking to the Speaker on this issue, I think I'm going to try to follow this tack in dealing with our friends who disagree with us on so much. Let's see if we can't start with that and work back and see how much agreement we can make. I think we may do better than people think.

Thank you. This was great.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The meeting was part of "One America: The President's Initiative on Race."

Statement on Lifting the Medicare Home Health Provider Moratorium

January 13, 1998

Medicare is more than just another program. For millions of Americans, it is a lifeline. Maintaining the integrity of that lifeline has long been a top priority of this administration.

Last September I announced that the Department of Health and Human Services was declaring the first ever moratorium to stop new home health providers from entering the Medicare program. We took this unprecedented action to give the administration the opportunity to implement new regulations to create protections to screen out providers who are likely to cheat Medicare.

Today I am announcing that the Department is removing the moratorium because those new, tougher regulations are in place to root out fraud and abuse in the home health industry. These regulations will help keep the bad apples—the providers who commit fraud and abuse—out of the home health industry. These actions—combined with other antifraud initiatives and other savings initiatives—have helped

slow the growth of home health spending. In fact, the Medicare actuary now reports that the rate of increase in Medicare spending on home health has slowed to just 5.4 percent from previous rates that exceeded 25 percent.

These efforts to root fraud and abuse out of the home health industry build on my administration's longstanding efforts to combat fraud and abuse. Since 1993, we have assigned more Federal prosecutors and FBI agents to fight health care fraud than ever before. As a result, convictions have gone up a full 240 percent, and we have saved some $20 billion in health care claims. The Kassebaum-Kennedy legislation I signed into law created—for the first time ever—a stable funding source to fight fraud and abuse. This year's historic Balanced Budget Act, which ensured the life of the Medicare Trust Fund until at least 2010, also gave us an array of new weapons in our fight to keep scam artists and fly-by-night health care providers out of Medicare and Medicaid.

I would like to thank the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice for their efforts to combat fraud and abuse in the home health industry.

We will continue to work to ensure that we do everything possible to combat fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
January 13, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1 to November 30, 1997. The previous submission covered events in the period covering August 1 to September 30, 1997.

U.S. diplomacy to advance progress toward a Cyprus settlement continued at an intense pace during the reporting period. Special Presidential Emissary for Cyprus Richard C. Holbrooke, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas J. Miller, and other U.S. officials met in the United States and overseas with key participants in the process. Ambassadors Holbrooke and Miller met extensively with Cypriot President Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash during their visits to the United States. The two U.S. Envoys also traveled to the region in October to meet with the Turkish and (in the case of Ambassador Miller) Greek leadership to follow up on discussions begun with Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright at the U.N. General Assembly in September, and again in November when Ambassador Holbrooke brought the two Cypriot leaders together in the buffer zone for an informal exchange of views on achieving a Cyprus solution.

Also during November, Ambassador Holbrooke moderated a privately sponsored conference of business leaders from both Cypriot communities in Greece and Turkey to discuss the mutual benefits of the economic cooperation in the region. Ambassador Miller and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Kenneth C. Brill also participated.

Senior U.S. officials met extensively during the reporting period with officials of the European Union, EU member states, and others to support Cypriot EU accession prospects and to encourage stronger EU-Turkish relations.

Tensions rose on the island during the October and November (respectively) Greek/Greek Cypriot military exercise NIKIFOROS and the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot military exercise TOROS. The exercises effectively ended the May 9 moratorium on overflights of Cyprus by combat aircraft. Interceptions by Turkish fighters of the Greek Defense Minister's transport aircraft during the NIKIFOROS exercise further exacerbated tensions in the region.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Libya

January 13, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments since my last report of June 26, 1997, concerning the national emergency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 12543 of January 7, 1986. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c).

1. On January 2, 1998, I renewed for another year the national emergency with respect to Libya pursuant to IEEPA. This renewal extended the current comprehensive financial and trade embargo against Libya in effect since 1986. Under these sanctions, virtually all trade with Libya is prohibited, and all assets owned or controlled by the Libyan government in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked.

2. There have been two amendments to the Libyan Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 550 (the "LSR" or the "Regulations"), administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Department of the Treasury, since my report of June 26, 1997. The Regulations were amended on August 25, 1997. General reporting, record-keeping, licensing, and other procedural regulations were moved from the Regulations to a separate part (31 C.F.R. Part 501) dealing solely with such procedural matters (62 *Fed. Reg.* 45098, August 25, 1997). A copy of the amendment is attached.

On September 15, 1997, the Regulations were amended to add to appendices A and B to 31 C.F.R. chapter V the name of one entity and one individual who have been determined to act for or on behalf of, or to be owned or controlled by, the Government of Libya (62 *Fed. Reg.* 48177, September 15, 1997). A copy of the amendment is attached.

3. During the reporting period, OFAC reviewed numerous applications for licenses to authorize transactions under the Regulations. Consistent with OFAC's ongoing scrutiny of banking transactions, the largest category of license approvals (32) concerned requests by non-Libyan persons or entities to unblock transfers interdicted because of what appeared to be Government of Libya interests. Five licenses authorized the provision of legal services to the Government of Libya in connection with actions in U.S. courts in which the Government of Libya was named as defendant. Licenses were also issued authorizing diplomatic and U.S. government transactions, and to permit U.S. companies to engage in transactions with respect to intellectual property protection in Libya. A total of 49 licenses was issued during the reporting period.

4. During the current 6-month period, OFAC continued to emphasize to the international banking community in the United States the importance of identifying and blocking payments made by or on behalf of Libya. The OFAC worked closely with the banks to assure the effectiveness of interdiction software systems used to identify such payments. During the reporting period, more than 70 transactions potentially involving Libya, totaling more than $4.4 million, were interdicted. As of November 10, 1997, 8 transactions had been authorized for release, leaving a net amount of more than $4.3 million blocked for the period.

5. Since my last report, OFAC collected 7 civil monetary penalties totaling more than $77,000 for violations of the U.S. sanctions against Libya. Five of the violations involved the failure of banks to block funds transfers or loan syndication payments to Libyan-owned or -controlled financial institutions or commercial entities in Libya. One U.S. corporation and one law firm paid OFAC penalties for export and payment to the Government of Libya violations, respectively. Fifty-five other cases are in active penalty processing.

Various enforcement actions carried over from previous reporting periods have continued to be aggressively pursued. On June 26, 1997, a Federal grand jury for the Middle District of Florida returned an indictment charging a St. Petersburg, Florida man with one count of conspiring

to violate IEEPA and the Libyan Sanctions Regulations, two counts of dealing in property in which the Government of Libya has an interest, one count of purchasing goods (airline tickets) for export from Libya, and one count for transactions to evade and avoid the prohibitions of the LSR. The defendant remains a fugitive and warrants have been issued for his arrest. Numerous investigations are ongoing and new reports of violations are being scrutinized.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from July 7, 1997, through January 6, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of the Libyan national emergency are estimated at approximately $620,000.00. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the Office of the General Counsel, and the U.S. Customs Service), the Department of State, and the Department of Commerce.

7. The policies and actions of the Government of Libya continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. In adopting UNSCR 883 in November 1993, the United Nations Security Council determined that the continued failure of the Government of Libya to demonstrate by concrete actions its renunciation of terrorism, and in particular its continued failure to respond fully and effectively to the requests and decisions of the Security Council in Resolutions 731 and 748, concerning the bombing of the Pan Am 103 and UTA 772 flights, constituted a threat to international peace and security. The United States will continue to coordinate its comprehensive sanctions enforcement efforts with those of other U.N. member states. We remain determined to ensure that the perpetrators of the terrorist acts against Pan Am 103 and UTA 772 are brought to justice. The families of the victims in the murderous Lockerbie bombing and other acts of Libyan terrorism deserve nothing less. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against Libya fully and effectively, so long as those measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments as required by law.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.

Remarks Supporting Health Care Bill of Rights Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

January 14, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. Thank you, Mr. Gephardt, Senator Daschle. Mr. Bowles, thanks for hanging around. That will minimize our health care bills around here, I can assure you. [*Laughter*] I thank the Members of Congress for being here, and Deputy Secretary Higgins and Secretary Shalala. I'd like to especially thank two Members who are here, Congressman Dingell and Congressman Stark, for their leadership on this vitally important issue.

If I could, just very briefly, I'd like to put this issue into the larger context of what we're doing as a nation at this moment in history. If you look at the history of America, I think it's fair to say that we have not only survived, but prospered and grown increasingly stronger over 200 years because we have found a way, at every moment of challenge and change, to make the adjustments necessary to preserve our enduring values in a new set of circumstances. And we have done it by strengthening our Union and by applying the elemental principles of the Constitution and the fundamental values of the country to a new time. That's essentially what we're being called upon to do today.

I have said for 6 years now that, to me, all of our policies should be able to be explained

in terms of three words: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community that includes all Americans. Now, we know that because of the changes we're undergoing in the way people work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world, the way all our major systems work because of globalization and the revolution in information and technology, that we are having to systematically reform virtually every major institution of society.

We've dramatically reformed the way the Government works. It's as small as it was—now—when President Kennedy was here. I would argue it's doing more with greater impact in a positive way. We're in the process of trying to create a system of lifetime learning in America, opening doors of college to all Americans and raising the standards of our schools and trying some different things that have not been previously done before.

We're trying to help people balance work and family. That's what the Family and Medical Leave Act was all about, and raising the minimum wage and the earned-income tax credit and all those things. We're trying to make sure we can preserve the economy—preserve the environment while we grow the economy. And I would argue that we've demonstrated with a different approach you can do both things quite well. But all of this requires, anyway, a sense of purpose, to make sure that nobody gets left behind and that we really do change our institutions that protect the public interest as circumstances change.

That's basically what all these stories are about. I mean, the story that Mr. Gephardt told from the movie "As Good as It Gets," that I remember very well, too, is basically a story of a hard-working woman who's doing everything she's been asked to do by this country, gets up every day, goes to work, doesn't make a lot of money, obeys the law, does her best to take care of her kid, has done what she thought was right to provide health insurance to her child, and the system is not working for her. That means that we have not succeeded in reform. Yes, we've made a lot of progress in health care reform, but we've got a long way to go.

I think we were right to propose to extend Medicare coverage to people who can buy into it who are over 62 and have lost their health insurance or people who are over 55 who have been downsized or promised health care that they didn't get from their companies. I think that's important.

But this is really important. Why? Because so many people are in managed care and there are so many stories like the one that Senator Daschle told. And again, I would say to you, to me this can—what we should do can be answered in terms of those three little words I've tried to drill into the American consciousness for 3 years. You say to managed care people, okay, we have to reorganize the health care market, and you want the opportunity to sell your policies. Okay, you have that opportunity. You now have the responsibility to make sure when you sell a policy to somebody, they get quality health care. And we have to have an American community that's as healthy as possible. So it hurts us all if people are shelling out money for health insurance policies and they and their children can't get the right kind of health care. We are all diminished by the story that Tom Daschle just told. That's not the America we want to live in. That's not the America we want to represent. That's not the America we want to lift up to the rest of the world. Now, that's what this is all about.

So I know there will be objections to this, but there are objections to every time you want to make a fundamental change. You know, there were objections to our efforts to get the budget under control. The deficit was supposed to be $357 billion this year when I took office. It's going to be less than $23 billion, and next year we'll offer a balanced budget—I mean, I'll offer one this year for next year, and we'll have it. There are always objections to anything you do. But the point is, we couldn't go on doing what we were doing because it was unacceptable. It violated our notions of responsibility, we were depriving too many people of opportunity, and we were clearly undermining the future strength of our American community.

That's the circumstance here. We simply cannot go on giving—we all know people who run managed care plans are under pressure—we know that we finally succeeded, thanks in some measure to managed care, in taming the inflation beast in health care for the last few years and that people that run these plans are under great pressures now. We understand that there may not be easy answers to all these things. But the bottom line is, you cannot justify putting people who pay their insurance premiums and are working hard and are trying to take care

of themselves and their children at the kind of risk that so many Americans are at risk of today because they don't have the consumer protections that ought to be elemental in a society like this. And we have to pass this bill because of the dramatic reorganization of health care relationships in America. And we're either going to do it and strengthen our sense of community and strengthen our future, or we're not.

Now, do we all need to listen to what the practical problems are, should we have a good debate? Of course, we should. But the fundamental truth is everybody knows that this is a public interest issue, that the people who are in these plans cannot protect their own interest unless they band together as citizens and unless their elected representatives create a framework in which they can get the health care they deserve and that they're paying for. That's the fundamental truth. You can argue about the details until the cows come home, but we have to make this change because of the changes in the American health care market.

And I have been very heartened by the fact that many members of the Republican Party have expressed support for similar actions, and I'm hoping that we can get a big bipartisan vote for this bill. But if you look throughout the 20th century, the mission of our party, from the beginning of this century, has been to push the changes that need to be made to preserve the basic values of this country in new circumstances. That has been our mission. And we are here today, together, to fulfill that mission.

I believe we'll succeed. I hope we'll have as much Republican support as possible. But every person here and every person that will hear about this, in their heart of hearts—I don't care what they do for a living or what their position might be, their immediate financial interest—everybody knows there have been dramatic changes in the health care delivery system in America that require a change in the framework of protection for ordinary citizens. And we are determined to give it to them.

Thank you very much.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Have we got a shouting contest here?

Q. It's a shouting contest. Do you believe Iraq when it said that it is not experimenting with biological weapons on human beings?

The President. Well, I don't know what the facts are, but I think Mr. Butler's concerns are clearly what justifies the inspection regime. In other words, no American has to decide whether he or she believes Iraq or not, and no American can possibly know whether Mr. Butler is right or not, because all he said is he wants to take a look-see.

There is a framework for inspections. I am very encouraged, by the way, that we got a good statement out of the United Nations Security Council today. It is clear that the international community knows that Saddam Hussein is doing the wrong thing. And we have got to remain steadfast in our determination to continue the inspections process in a nonpolitical way where the leader of Iraq does not get to determine who, when, and what is going on in that inspections process.

I don't know the answer to your question, but I do know that we ought to be able to find out. That's what the U.N. resolution says.

Q. Tariq Aziz says it's a lie.

Q. Mr. President, you're clearly in the better position, though, than most to assess the credibility of those allegations. How seriously should people view the possibility that Iraq could experiment on human beings?

The President. Well, if Mr. Butler says that he believes that he's got enough to go on, we should view it seriously enough to insist that the inspections go forward.

We don't want to do them like they've done us, like they did the head of the inspection team, the American head of the inspection team, where they accused him of being a spy. And we didn't—the United States Government doesn't even know who is on what team from a day-to-day basis. They're all picked by the United Nations. So we don't want to convict them in advance. But if there is enough evidence for Mr. Butler to say that, then he ought to be able to go look.

I would remind you that in 1995, they admitted having stocks of chemical and biological weapons potential that were very troubling. That they admitted. So that's another reason we've got to keep going and continue these inspections. This is a case where the United Nations actually had it right. They've got a good framework, and we just need everybody to stiffen

their resolve now so we can go back and do our jobs. And we have to be absolutely resolute in insisting that it be done.

Thank you very much.

Q. Senator Lott says that you won't get tobacco legislation because it's your fault. [*Laughter*]

The President. I've missed you. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House following a meeting with Democratic congressional leaders. In his remarks, he referred to Richard Butler, Executive Chairman, United Nations Special Commission; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and United Nations weapons inspection team leader William Scott Ritter, Jr.

Statement on the AFL–CIO Initiatives Against Discrimination
January 14, 1998

Thousands of union men and women have been working hard to improve race relations in the workplace. Members of the AFL–CIO, in the tradition of A. Philip Randolph, have continued to lead the fight against discrimination in the workplace and in society. Today the Race Initiative Advisory Board, meeting in Phoenix, will hear worker and union member testimony highlighting these efforts.

I am very pleased that today the AFL–CIO has announced two initiatives to redouble its members' efforts against discrimination. I applaud their decision to take on this challenge by supporting these initiatives to help further the dialog and learning from today's Race Initiative Advisory Board meeting in Phoenix.

The AFL–CIO's leadership in sponsoring workplace forums on race will provide additional venues for thoughtful dialog and education for workers, managers, and employers. I encourage members of the Advisory Board to participate with Board Member Linda Chavez-Thompson and the AFL–CIO in these forums.

Additionally, the AFL–CIO's decision to produce a workplace guide to improve race relations will be key to moving dialog and learning into action. This practical step will help workers and employers throughout our Nation implement best practices for addressing racial issues and job discrimination in the workplace.

I urge all businesses to join this effort to improve race relations in the workplace. It is efforts such as those announced in Phoenix today by Ms. Chavez-Thompson that will bring our Nation closer to one America.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the China-United States Nuclear Cooperation Agreement
January 12, 1998

Dear _____*:*

I am writing to you with respect to sections (b)(1) and (b)(2) of Public Law 99–183, relating to the approval and implementation of the Agreement for Nuclear Cooperation Between the United States and the People's Republic of China, and with respect to section 902(a)(6)(B) of Public Law 101–246. The sections of Public Law 99–183 cited above require certifications to the Congress and a report to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate before exports or retransfers to China under the Agreement may begin. Sections 902(a)6(B)(i), (ii) and (iii) of Public Law 101–246 require a certification to the Congress and report to the Congress before terminating the suspensions and automatic disapprovals of nuclear cooperation with China.

I have made the certifications pursuant to section (b)(1) of Public Law 99–183 and section 902(a)(6)(B)(i) of Public Law 101–246, a copy of which is enclosed. The certifications pursuant to section (b)(1) of Public Law 99–183 satisfy

the condition under section 902(a)(6)(B)(ii). Submitted herewith, in accordance with the requirements of section (b)(2) of Public Law 99–183, is a report in unclassified form detailing the history and current developments in the nonproliferation policies, practices and assurances of the People's Republic of China. Because of the information controls that apply to the classified report, I am transmitting it by separate letter to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

In accordance with Public Law 99–183, I have certified as to three matters:

(A) That the reciprocal arrangements made pursuant to Article 8 of the Agreement have been designed to be effective in ensuring that any nuclear material, facilities or components provided under the Agreement shall be utilized solely for intended peaceful purposes as set forth in the Agreement.

The arrangements for exchanges of information and visits are provided for in a Memorandum of Understanding initialed on June 23, 1987. Side notes on protection of business confidential information were signed on October 22, 1997. These documents, along with a detailed explanation of my certification, are enclosed. These arrangements will provide the United States with the right to obtain all the information necessary to maintain an inventory of the items subject to the Agreement. This will include information on the operation of facilities subject to the Agreement, the isotopic composition, physical form and quantity of material subject to the Agreement and the places where items subject to the Agreement are used or kept. The arrangements also provide the United States with the right to confirm through on-site visits the use of all items subject to the Agreement. Finally, the arrangements apply as long as the provisions of Article 8(2) of the Agreement continue in effect, that is, as long as items subject to the Agreement remain in China's territory or under its jurisdiction or control. My determination that these arrangements have been designed to be effective in ensuring that items provided under the Agreement are utilized for intended peaceful purposes is based on consideration of a range of factors, including the limited scope of nuclear cooperation permitted under the Agreement, U.S. export-control procedures that will apply to any transfers to China under the Agreement, the fact that the People's Republic of China is a nuclear-weapon state and that the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or their equivalent are not required by the Atomic Energy Act for agreements for cooperation with nuclear weapon states. These arrangements will be published in the *Federal Register* using the procedure applicable to subsequent arrangements under section 131(a) of the Atomic Energy Act.

(B) That the Government of the People's Republic of China has provided additional information concerning its nuclear nonproliferation policies and that, based on this and all other information available to the United States Government, the People's Republic of China is not in violation of paragraph (2) of section 129 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954.

The United States Government has received additional information from the People's Republic of China concerning its nonproliferation policies since the enactment of Public Law 99–183 on December 16, 1985, most recently, China's May 1996 statement, its May 1997 State Council Notice on nuclear export policy and its September 1997 nuclear export control regulations (all of which are discussed in the enclosed unclassified report on China's nonproliferation policies and practices). On the basis of this and all other information available to the United States Government, I conclude that there is no legal bar to cooperation in this area, and, in particular, that paragraph (2) of section 129 of the Atomic Energy Act does not foreclose nuclear cooperation. The Government of the People's Republic of China has made substantial strides in joining the international nonproliferation regime, and in putting in place a comprehensive system of nuclear-related, nationwide export controls, since the nuclear cooperation agreement was concluded in 1985. I believe the initiation of cooperation under the Agreement will bring significant nonproliferation benefits to the United States.

(C) That the obligation to consider favorably a request to carry out activities described in Article 5(2) of the Agreement shall not prejudice

the decision of the United States to approve or disapprove such a request.

> The U.S. consent rights provided for in Article 5(2) of the Agreement satisfy this standard because the specific language used ensures that the United States must exercise an approval right before the activity in question is carried out. During Congressional consideration of the Agreement, the executive branch provided both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee with a legal memorandum on issues relating to the Agreement which covered this point in detail.

In accordance with Public Law 101–246, I have certified that China has provided clear and unequivocal assurances to the United States that it is not assisting and will not assist any non-nuclear-weapon state, either directly or indirectly, in acquiring nuclear explosive devices or the material and components for such devices. This certification is based on the statements, policies, and actions by China that were discussed above in connection with the certification under section (b)(1)(A) of Public Law 99–183.

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 902(b)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101–246), I hereby report to the Congress that it is in the national interest of the United States to terminate the suspensions and automatic disapprovals under section 902(a)(6). A document discussing the rationale for this report is enclosed. I believe the Agreement will have a significant, positive impact in promoting U.S. nonproliferation and national security interests with China and in building a stronger bilateral relationship with China based on respect for international norms.

This report under section 902(b)(2) satisfies the condition under section 902(a)(6)(B)(iii).

With the submission of the certifications and reports called for by Public Law 99–183 and Public Law 101–246, I am pleased that the process is underway to begin nuclear cooperation with China.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15. The memorandum of January 12 on certifications relating to the China-U.S. nuclear cooperation agreement is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the China-United States Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

January 12, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

By separate letter, I have transmitted to the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee the certification and unclassified report detailing the history and current developments in the nonproliferation policies and practices of the People's Republic of China that are required by Public Law 99–183, relating to the approval and implementation of the agreement for nuclear cooperation between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

Because of the information controls on the classified report that the Administration has also prepared for Congress on China's nonproliferation policies and practices in fulfillment of the remaining requirement of Public Law 99–183, I am transmitting the required classified report directly to your Committee. The Administration regards the report transmitted herewith as containing sensitive intelligence and diplomatic information and requests that it be treated accordingly.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard C. Shelby, chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and Porter J. Goss, chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15. The memorandum of January 12 on certifications relating to the China-U.S. nuclear cooperation agreement is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom
January 15, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. I want to begin with a warm welcome to all of our guests here, our honorees and their family members, members of the administration, Members of Congress, other distinguished officials.

It is fitting that today this ceremony occurs on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who 21 years ago was granted this award by President Carter posthumously, to ensure that his legacy would live on. Until every child has the opportunity to live up to his or her God-given potential, free from want in a world at peace, Dr. King's work and our work is not yet done. He once said that "No social advance rolls on the wheels of inevitability." After 5 years in Washington, I know that is true. [*Laughter*] Humanity makes progress through decades of sweat and toil by dedicated individuals who give freely of themselves and who inspire others to do the same, the kind of heroic men and women we honor today.

All of our honorees has helped America to widen the circle of democracy by fighting for human rights, by righting social wrongs, by empowering others to achieve, by preserving our precious environment, by extending peace around the world. Every person here has done so by rising in remarkable ways to America's highest calling, the calling, as the First Lady said, of active citizenship.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, I would like to bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom on these courageous citizens. Let me say, as I begin, that I am grateful to all of them who are here and those who are not.

First, Arnie Aronson, who unfortunately is ill and is represented here by his wife, Annette, his son, Bernie, his granddaughter, Felicia. Arnie Aronson, a glowing symbol of the coalition of conscience linking black and white communities, began his career in civil rights in 1941 when he and A. Philip Randolph secured a landmark Executive order banning discrimination on the basis of race. He later cofounded the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, helping hundreds of disparate groups keep their eyes on the prize and speak with one booming voice. As the legendary leader Clarence Mitchell, Jr., said of him, "There would not have been a civil rights movement without the Leadership Conference, and there would not have been a Leadership Conference without Arnie Aronson."

Commander Huey, please read the citation.

[*At this point, Lt. Comdr. Wesley Huey, USN, Naval Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Aronson's family and presented the medal.*]

The President. I never contradict my wife in public, but I couldn't help thinking when she said we were honoring 15 ordinary American citizens today, I thought, yes, people like Brooke Astor and David Rockefeller. [*Laughter*] But I say that to make this point: In some ways, we honor them more, because they certainly had other options. [*Laughter*] And that is important to remember.

At the age of 15, about eight decades ago, Brooke Astor wrote a wise poem. In that poem, an elderly man implores a young girl, "Take thy spade and take thine ax. Make the flowers bloom." With her legendary largesse and unequaled grace, she has made more flowers bloom than anyone, not only at such recognizable landmarks as the New York Public Library and the Metropolitan Museum of Art but also in forgotten homeless shelters, youth centers, and nursing homes. She is not only New York's unofficial First Lady, she has become America's guardian angel.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Ms. Astor and presented the medal.*]

The President. In 1961, a young Air Force psychiatrist in New Orleans saw a 6-year-old black girl being heckled by an angry crowd. The girl—Ruby Bridges was her name—did not yell back but instead knelt down to pray. The doctor, Robert Coles, was greatly moved. From that moment on, he dedicated his life to healing racial wounds, aiding children in crisis, and inspiring Americans to answer the call of citizen service. As a Harvard professor and a prolific documentarian of the American spirit, he has been the beacon of social consciousness for more than two generations of Americans, from Robert Kennedy to the freshmen in college today. There is hardly a person I know who has ever read his books who has not been profoundly changed. Hillary and I are personally grateful to him just for those books, but his life has elevated the morality and the spirituality of the United States.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Dr. Coles and presented the medal.*]

The President. Justin Dart literally opened the doors of opportunities to millions of our citizens by securing passage of one of the Nation's landmark civil rights laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act. Throughout his career, he has worn many hats, and he's wearing one of them today. [*Laughter*] At the University of Houston, he led bold efforts to promote integration. He went on to become, in his own words, "a full-time soldier in the trenches of justice," turning every State in the Nation to elevate disability rights to the mainstream of political discourse. He once said, "Life is not a game that requires losers." He has given millions a chance to win. He has also been my guide in understanding the needs of disabled Americans. And every time I see him, he reminds me of the power of heart and will. I don't know that I've ever known a braver person.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Dart and presented the medal.*]

The President. In the spring of 1942, a man fresh out of theology school sat down at the counter of Chicago's Jack Spratt Coffee Shop and ordered a doughnut. Because he was black, he was refused. Because his name was James Farmer, he did not give in. He and the other founders of the Congress of Racial Equality organized the Nation's first sit-in and launched an era of nonviolent protests for civil rights. He went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading freedom rides, voter drives, and marches, enduring repeated beatings and jailings along the way. He has never sought the limelight and, until today, I frankly think he's never gotten the credit he deserves for the contribution he has made to the freedom of African-Americans and other minorities and their equal opportunities in America. But today he can't avoid the limelight, and his long-overdue recognition has come to pass.

Read the citation, Commander.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Farmer and presented the medal.*]

The President. In 1976 the Girl Scouts of America, one of our country's greatest institutions, was near collapse. Frances Hesselbein, a former volunteer from Johnstown, Pennsylvania, led them back, both in numbers and in spirit. She achieved not only the greatest diversity in the group's long history but also its greatest cohesion and, in so doing, made a model for us all. In her current role as the president of the Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management, she has shared her remarkable recipe for inclusion and excellence with countless organizations whose bottom line is measured not in dollars but in changed lives. Since Mrs. Hesselbein forbids the use of hierarchical words like "up" and "down" when she's around—[*laughter*]—I will call this pioneer for women, voluntarism, diversity, and opportunity not up but forward to be recognized.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mrs. Hesselbein and presented the medal.*]

The President. In 1942 an ordinary American took an extraordinary stand. Fred Korematsu boldly opposed the forced internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. After being convicted for failing to report for relocation, Mr. Korematsu took his case all the way to the Supreme Court. The high court ruled

against him. But 39 years later, he had his conviction overturned in Federal court, empowering tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans and giving him what he said he wanted most of all, the chance to feel like an American once again. In the long history of our country's constant search for justice, some names of ordinary citizens stand for millions of souls: Plessy, Brown, Parks. To that distinguished list, today we add the name of Fred Korematsu.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Korematsu and presented the medal.*]

The President. As our mutual friend Mack McLarty once said, "Receiving advice from Sol Linowitz on international diplomacy is like getting trumpet lessons from the Angel Gabriel." [*Laughter*] Sol Linowitz has answered his call—his Nation's call many, many times. Over his distinguished career, he has always been willing to extend the hand of peace, freedom, and prosperity to our neighbors all over the world. With his admired style of quiet and conciliatory diplomacy, he has helped President Carter negotiate the Panama Canal treaties. He made great strides in the peace process in the Middle East. He worked to provide aid to starving Cambodians. He has been our administration's guiding spirit for expanding cooperation throughout our hemisphere. If every world leader had half the vision Sol Linowitz does, we'd have about a tenth as many problems as we've got in this whole world today. He's also led here at home, working to address problems of racism and poverty, always giving generously of his time no matter how busy he is. Sol Linowitz is an American patriot of the highest order.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Linowitz and presented the medal.*]

The President. When Wilma Mankiller was 10, she and her family were relocated from Cherokee lands in Oklahoma to San Francisco. But it was in San Francisco during the civil rights era that she found her voice and a belief in the power to make change. Later, Wilma Mankiller returned to Oklahoma and became chief of the Cherokee Nation. During her two terms in office—and I might add, she won reelection by 82 percent—[*laughter*]—she was not only the guardian of the centuries-old Cherokee heritage but a revered leader who built a brighter and healthier future for her nation. When she stepped down as chief, the Cherokee Nation wept. We know today's honor will bring tears of joy to many in both our Nations.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Ms. Mankiller and presented the medal.*]

The President. For Mardy Murie, wilderness is personal. She and her husband, Olaus, spent their honeymoon—listen to this—on a 550-mile dogsled expedition—[*laughter*]—through the Brooks Mountain Range of Alaska—fitting for a couple whose love for each other was matched only by their love of nature. And they certainly must have known each other better after the trip was over. [*Laughter*] After her husband died, Mrs. Murie built on their five decades of work together. She became the prime mover in the creation of one of America's great national treasures, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and blazed trails for generations of conservationists. Today, amidst the fir and spruce of the high Tetons, she shares her wisdom with everyone who passes by, from ordinary hikers to the President and the First Lady, inspiring us all to conserve our pristine lands and preserve her glorious legacy.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mrs. Murie and presented the medal.*]

The President. In 1970 Mario Obledo received a complaint that a public swimming pool in Texas was barring Mexican-Americans at the gate. He decided to travel 200 miles to take a swim. [*Laughter*] He was turned away and he filed suit. When Mr. Obledo won, even the joy in the courthouse could not match that of Mexican-American children whose civil rights had been defended as, finally, they had a chance to jump into that public pool. As cofounder of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund and the National Hispanic Bar Association, as chairman of the Rainbow Coalition, Mario Obledo has expanded opportunity for Americans of every race and ethnic background. Through the force of law and the power of the vote, he has enhanced the character and condition of America.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Obledo and presented the medal.*]

The President. After he was decorated on the beaches of Normandy and had begun to serve as a law clerk for Justice Felix Frankfurter, Elliot Richardson had a strange request for his distinguished boss. The brilliant young renaissance man asked if he could have an uninterrupted hour every morning to read poetry. Alas, he was refused. [*Laughter*] That effort failed, but little else has failed in Elliot Richardson's versatile, indefatigable career. He gave courageous and deeply moral service to our Nation as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare; Secretary of Defense; Ambassador to the United Kingdom; Secretary of Commerce—where he actually painted his own official portrait—[*laughter*]—and of course, as Attorney General, where on one difficult Saturday night, he saved the Nation from a constitutional crisis with his courage and moral clarity. No public servant is more beloved by those who have served him. No public servant has shown greater respect for the Constitution he has served. And it is my great honor to award him the Medal of Freedom today.

Commander, please read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Richardson and presented the medal.*]

The President. Rockefeller is a name that resonates throughout American history. It means not only private success and wealth but also an abiding sense of public responsibility. David Rockefeller is the standard-bearer of this family and this tradition for making unprecedented commitments to biomedical research, to sending tens of thousands of retired executives—all volunteers—to developing nations in need of advice and skills. In every region of the world, heads of state seek his counsel. But whether he is addressing the King of Spain or a fellow beetle collector he meets by chance, he treats everyone with exactly the same impeccable courtesy and respect, as I learned when I met him a good while before anyone but my mother thought I could become President. [*Laughter*] David Rockefeller is a gentleman, a statesman, a scholar, and most important, a genuine humanitarian of the likes our Nation has rarely seen.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mr. Rockefeller and presented the medal.*]

The President. You know, I hate to break the gravity of the moment, but I have now something else to thank you for. David, I've been wondering how we can get this ceremony out into the popular consciousness. And with the mention in the citation of the Trilateral Commission, I know we're going to be on talk radio all over America today, so thank you very much. [*Laughter*]

Albert Shanker illuminated our Nation's path toward educating our children with devastating honesty, sharp wit, and profound wisdom. He was one of the most important teachers of the 20th century. In 1983, when the "Nation At Risk" report challenged us to do far more to raise educational standards for all our children, Al Shanker was one of the very first to answer the call. That began for me, a young Governor who cared a lot about education, one of the most remarkable working relationships of my entire life. For Al Shanker was for me and so many others a model, a mentor, a friend, a leader of immense stature who always spoke his mind, no matter how unpopular the thought. We miss him dearly, but we are comforted to know that many others carry on his mission and that his wife, Edie, is here with us today to accept this award, which he so richly deserves, in his honor.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Mrs. Shanker and presented the medal.*]

The President. These days, Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt introduces himself as "a former sailor." That's sort of like calling Henry Ford a former car salesman. [*Laughter*] In 1970 Bud Zumwalt became the youngest man in our country's history to rise to the rank of Commander of Naval Operations, the Navy's top post. There, he earned billing as the Navy's most popular leader since World War II for his bold efforts to modernize Navy life. He is a genuine patriot with an astonishing life story that includes a remarkable wife, whom we met a year or two ago in Russia—in China, I'm sorry. But more than most Americans who have served our country with distinction, Admiral Zumwalt paid a deeply

personal price for his leadership of the Navy during the Vietnam War, for his son, a junior officer in the war, died of a cancer linked to his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. The remarkable thing was Admiral Zumwalt's response. He dedicated himself to fighting for those with war-related ailments. He established the first national marrow donor program to help cancer patients in need. He never stopped fighting for the interests, the rights, and the dignity of those soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines and their families. Hillary and I have been deeply blessed to know Bud Zumwalt and his wife, Mouza, and their family very well. Yes, he is a former sailor. He is also one of the greatest models of integrity and leadership and genuine humanity our Nation has ever produced.

Commander, please read the citation.

Did you think I was going to change my mind? [*Laughter*]

[*Lieutenant Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Admiral Zumwalt and presented the medal.*]

The President. Before we move to the State Dining Room for the reception in honor of our awardees, I'd like to close with a brief note about the future.

Hillary and I and the Vice President, indeed, our entire administration, are going to be working hard in the coming months to help the American people imagine what the 21st century can bring. As of today, that new century is just a little more than 700 days away—which, as you reflect on the remarkable lives we have celebrated today, is not a lot of time.

But I went back and checked. It's about the same amount of time that, from 1961 to 1963, an active citizen named King helped James Meredith go to college, stood up to Bull Connor, wrote a letter from a jail in Birmingham, helped to organize the March on Washington, and gave a little speech—his main line was "I have a dream." Not a bad 700 days' work.

We must resolve to use our time just as wisely. As we have learned today from the remarkable lives of the people we celebrate, some of whom span nearly this entire century, even a long, long life doesn't take long to live, and passes in the flash of an eye. They have shown us that if we live it well, we can leave this Earth better for our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on Tobacco Marketing to Youth and an Exchange With Reporters
January 15, 1998

The President. Before I leave for New York, I want to say a few words about the disturbing news that a major tobacco company appears to have targeted children to encourage them to begin smoking. For 5 years, we've done everything in our power to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. I've called for strong bipartisan legislation to reduce smoking, especially by young people. The documents that came to light today show more than ever why it is absolutely imperative that Congress take action now to get tobacco companies out of the business of marketing cigarettes to children. Reducing teen smoking has always been America's bottom line, and that's this administration's bottom line; now, it should become the industry's bottom line.

I'm confident that every Member of Congress, without regard to party, who reviews these documents will resolve to make 1998 the year that we actually pass comprehensive legislation to protect our children and the public health.

Thank you.

Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman

Q. Mr. President, did Alexis Herman take money to peddle influence in your administration?

The President. I don't believe that for a minute.

Situation in Iraq

Q. What are you doing about Iraq to put teeth into the statement?

The President. On Iraq, let me say that Mr. Butler is going back to Iraq with the strong support of the United Nations. I am very encouraged that even those who had been more sympathetic to Iraq saw through this totally unacceptable action. So now we have to see what happens. He ought to be given access. He's going back there; he's got the support of the U.N. We're going to watch this a day at a time and see what happens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to his departure for New York City.

Remarks to the Wall Street Project Conference in New York City
January 15, 1998

Thank you very, very much, Reverend Jackson. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. Grasso and Mr. Jones and all the other sponsors of this event for this historic day. I thank Secretary Herman for her leadership and for coming up here with me today, along with our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez. I don't know if Ambassador Richardson is in the audience, but I'll take a chance, because if he's here and I don't mention him, I'll live with it from now on—[*laughter*]—and because he cares deeply about these issues. I also see Reverend Suzan Cook, a member of our Race Advisory Board, here. I have many other friends here, business people, the mayors, and others. I thank the members of the New York congressional delegation for coming, Congressmen Rangel, Maloney, Owens, Manton, and Representative-elect Meeks. And I thank Lieutenant Governor Ross and Comptroller McCall and Speaker Silver and any other State officials who might be here, and Mr. Green and Mr. Vallone and any other city officials who are here.

Let me say that I've looked forward to this, but it occurs to me, on Martin Luther King's birthday, that the real danger we have here is that Reverend Jackson and I and all the others might be here preaching to the saved, that we all agree with what we're here to talk about. But there is still some merit in our being here in the hope that we can reach beyond those in this room in this very high place to those who are at work down below us today here in New York and throughout the country. Maybe we should have just let Santita sing to them. That would have persuaded them better than anything I could say.

It is true, Mr. Avant, that I told Jesse that I knew this was a historic day, because you've been to the White House a half-dozen times and never worn a tie. [*Laughter*] So I know that we are onto something big here. [*Laughter*]

Let me tell you—this is not part of my remarks, but I want to emphasize on Martin Luther King's birthday, since we're here talking about expanding opportunities of American enterprise to all our citizens, what I did this morning before I came up here. This day is always one of my very favorite days as President. This was the day this year that I awarded the Presidential Medals of Freedom. And let me give you some—I may not have every name down here, but I think this is interesting. If you just listen to the names, it will tell you something about your country.

Arnie Aronson, an 86-year-old Jewish American who founded—cofounded the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, worked all the way back with A. Philip Randolph in the forties on civil rights; James Farmer, 87 years old; Fred Korematsu, the Japanese-American who refused to go quietly into the internment camp in World War II and fought for years to have his conviction overturned—[*inaudible*]—Mario Obledo, former LULAC leader and one of the founders of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund; Justin Dart, the man who probably is more responsible for the Americans with Disabilities Act than any other single American citizen; Mardy Murie, a 93-year-old conservationist who lives at the foot of the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, who has done so much to save the West; the distinguished American psychiatrist Robert Coles, who probably has had more influence through his academic writings to promote equal

opportunity for all children and the whole cause of citizen service than any other academic in America; Frances Hesselbein, who saved the Girl Scouts when they were on the brink of extinction by diversifying the Girl Scouts and unifying them; Al Shanker of New York—[*applause*]—posthumously.

My wife said these were just ordinary American citizens, and I said, yes, ordinary American citizens like Brooke Astor and David Rockefeller—I gave them the Medal of Freedom today. [*Laughter*] And I did it for a very important point that brings us to Wall Street: They had other options. They didn't really have to go out and do good with their lives, but they did it anyway. Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to be chief of the Cherokee Nation; Elliot Richardson, who holds more—who's held more Cabinet positions than any other American citizen, a distinguished Republican who had a lot to do with saving our Constitution. And there were others, Admiral Zumwalt and a couple of others.

But I just give these names to give you a feel for what America is really all about. All these incredibly different people from different walks of life who made our country what it is. And it's a better country. And when it was over today and everybody was filing out of the East Room at the White House, they were all thinking, "Gosh, these people are all so different, but they shared something special in their citizenship, in their service, in their devotion to the ideals of this country. And because they all played their roles, we are a much greater, bigger, better country." That's really what we're here to talk about today.

From the beginning, this country was set on a mission by the Founders, and I quote, "to form a more perfect Union." It was a brilliant formulation of a national mission, because it recognized that our work would never be done and that there is no such thing as perfection, so that we would always have something new to do. And they wrote this Constitution for us that's full of good basic values, recognizing that it would always have to be applied to changing circumstances; and that if we kept the values and kept the mission in mind, that we were always supposed to be forming a more perfect Union, we might have a chance to do better than any other people had in human history. Over 220 years later, we're still here, the longest lasting big democracy in the history of humanity.

A generation ago, one man's words, wisdom, and work had a lot to do with leading us toward a more perfect Union. Toward the end of his life, Martin Luther King embarked upon securing what he called the next frontier of freedom, economic freedom. He reminded us that when we limit economic opportunities for some Americans, we limit the possibilities of all Americans.

We are here today because Wall Street has a critical role to play in fulfilling Dr. King's dream of opportunity for all Americans. Whether ensuring that companies on the Big Board draw on the talent and diversity of all of our people, or investing in communities long bypassed by capital but full of potential, businesses can and must help us to build the one America we all need for the 21st century. That's what I want to talk about today.

I have been working hard for 5 years so that 3 years from now, when I'm gone and a new century is here, we will have an America where the American dream really is alive for everybody who is willing to work for it, where America is still the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity, where our people have been brought together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America. If we are going to do that, we must bring more Americans into the winner's circle. We must bring more Americans into the winner's circle.

We know that this time is characterized by globalization and a revolution in science, technology, and information. We know that these things have changed profoundly the way we live and work, the way we relate to each other, the way we relate to the rest of the world. We know that, for good or ill, the scope and pace of change are greater than ever before. We know that, for good or ill, we are more interdependent than ever before.

Martin Luther King said once that we are all caught in an inescapable web of mutuality, and he was preaching to the American people and reminding us that we had to reach across racial lines. Today, like it or not, around the world we are caught in an inescapable web of mutuality. We see it every day on Wall Street, for good or ill.

We now have all kinds of new challenges because of globalization in the information and technology and science revolutions. These are just a few of them: How do we get the benefits of new markets and technologies to people and places that aren't part of our economic growth?

How do we maximize the impact of markets and still preserve the social contract? How do we give everybody who is willing to work a chance to get a job, to get an education, to have access to health care, and own a home and save for retirement? How do we grow the economy and preserve the environment at a time when climate change looms as a big problem, but there are many other environmental problems as well? How do we at home balance the demands of work and family when more and more people are in the work force but raising children is still our most important job? How do we take advantage of all the diversity and opportunities for self-expression that are now out there in the world, and the pulling back of the cold war, to promote community instead of chaos? Is the future of the world an American school district with kids from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, or is it the darkest days of Bosnia, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and you name it? Is the future of the world the end of the nuclear threat and security for our children, or is it the rise of terrorists and organized criminals and narcotraffickers carrying around small chemical and biological weapons? Will we build community or chaos? These are some of the big questions we face.

And here at home, if everything is changing, what happens to your Government? What's our role? I have tried to fashion a new approach—not an old style, top-down bureaucracy that says we can handle all this, because, you know, in the global economy that's not true. But I have never been much in sympathy with the newly resurgent belief that Government is the source of all of our problems.

My view is that we need a Government that is committed to giving people the conditions and tools they need to meet their own challenges, to act as a partner and to act as a catalyst, consistent with what I think ought to be the guiding philosophy of every American, a simple one: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all our citizens.

The truth is our Federal Government today is smaller and less bureaucratic than it used to be, but it's also a lot more active than it has been in the recent past. Beginning in 1993, we moved to establish the conditions for a growing economy with a plan rooted in the realities of the global economy and respecting the role of the financial markets.

First, we restored fiscal discipline. When I took office in January of 1993, we were told that the deficit for this year was going to be $357 billion. Instead, it is close to zero, and next year—next month I will send to Congress the first balanced budget for the coming year that we've had in a generation. This is something that ought to unite Americans, progressives and conservatives alike. Conservatives ought to like it because it's not profligate. Progressives ought to like it because it means we don't have to keep spending tax money paying interest on the debt; we can do more to invest in our people and our future. And most important, we all ought to like it because in the world in which we live, countries with irresponsible economic policies are punished in the global marketplace. They don't generate jobs; they don't lower unemployment; and therefore, they don't have the tax revenues they need to solve their common problems.

The second thing we've tried to do is to argue to the American people that America must lead in the global economy. A third of our economic growth has come from expanded exports, and that relates to the point we're making here today. We have to open markets, increase exports to make this new economy work for our people.

One of the things—sometimes I get a little credit for being able to communicate, but one of the things that I have not been able to communicate very well to a lot of people is that we cannot grow at home unless we help others to grow abroad; that with 4 percent of the population and 20 percent of the income, we can't keep growing unless we can expand the frontiers of our activity. And therefore, we ought to want our neighbors to do well by trading more with us, because they help us to do well as they buy more of our products.

An increasingly interconnected world financial system has helped to create this kind of strong economic system, the rising markets to which we have to export. But the international capital market is also a stern taskmaster, as we have seen in the last several weeks. When investor confidence flees, countries first have to put their own houses in order through serious and sustained economic reforms, just as we had to in 1993 so that we were serious about getting our economic house in order to get interest rates down, investment up, and to create jobs.

When severe instability sets in and threatens to spread, there is a vital role also, I believe, for international support to restore confidence, to provide breathing room. When countries are willing to help themselves, I think the United States ought to be a good neighbor and do its part to support that kind of endeavor.

Now, why should struggling Americans, Americans that are out here in New York City working hard to make ends meet, want their Government to support efforts to restore growth in distant lands? I'll say again, because we have 4 percent of the population and 20 percent of the income, we've got to have those folks as customers if we're going to keep growing our income and if we ever hope to extend opportunity to people in places within our borders that have not yet participated in the economic recovery. In other words, there is this web of mutuality, and it actually pays dividends to be a good neighbor. That's why we've taken a leadership role in addressing the current turbulence in Asia and in strengthening the institutions of the international financial system.

But the third point I want to make, and the third part of our economic strategy, is that we have done as much as we could, but we have to do more to invest in our own people, to give them the tools they need to succeed, and to widen the circle of opportunity. We've put in place the most significant investments in education in a generation: 200,000 more children in Head Start; tens of thousands of volunteers in our schools teaching our elementary kids to read well, so that they don't go through school not being able to learn; hooking up classrooms and libraries to the Internet; lifting academic standards; opening the doors of college to everybody who will work for it, with the HOPE scholarship and other initiatives. We've extended health care to 5 million more kids, helped young people to buy their first homes, done more to enable small business people and employees to save for their own pensions.

All that is working. That's why we've got over 13 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. For the first time in the history of this country, over 64 percent of the adults are working. For the first time in the history of this country, over two-thirds of the American people are in their own homes.

But it is not enough. You and I know there are still people and places in this city and in this country that have simply not been touched by all this whirlwind of economic activity. And it is holding America back.

Every time the Federal Reserve Board meets, there is all this breathless anticipation: Will they have to raise interest rates, because the unemployment rate is the lowest in 24 years? How can we put off inflation and continue to grow? Well, the answer is twofold. One is, technology and open markets are good depressants against the traditional forces of inflation. But the other is, if you're moving into an area that hasn't enjoyed growth, you can have growth without inflation because you're writing on a clean slate. And if it's good argument for America to sell more and invest more around the world, it's good argument for America to sell more and invest more down the street.

If it is true—a number of members of the New York delegation have been very good in trying to help me pass the Caribbean Basin Initiative, because we want to be good neighbors. There are a lot of people from the Caribbean here in New York City. And one of the unintended consequences of our trade agreement with Canada and Mexico is that Mexico seemed to get a comparative benefit over the Caribbean countries, which we never intended to happen.

I keep telling people—they say, "Oh, we can't afford to do this in the Caribbean." We're going to invest in the Caribbean one way or the other. We'll either pass the Caribbean Basin Initiative and we'll help to trade with them and help to grow their economy, or we'll invest in them indirectly. Americans will buy drugs from the South American narcotraffickers, and then the narcotraffickers will take our money and they will put it in the Caribbean so they will have a place to stop on their way to America. [*Laughter*] We will do this one way or the other. I don't know about you, but I prefer the direct way. I think the old-fashioned way is better. [*Laughter*]

You know, I talked to a guy the other day from Central America—we were talking about one of the countries down there, and he said, "It's unbelievable, the narcotrafficker is down there building schools in nation X"—I don't want to embarrass them. I said, "They're not building those schools, we are." [*Laughter*] America consumes almost half the world's drugs. We give those guys the money; they make the investment; they get the credit. No politician would ever do that—[*laughter*]—elect your opponent by giving him the money, and let him

give it to the electorate. I mean, we're laughing—this is serious business.

If every one of those arguments you can think of works beyond our borders, it works within our borders. If it works down the road, across the water, it works down the street. The unemployment rate in New York City is about 4 percent higher than the national average. The unemployment rate in the Nation's Capital is about 3 percent higher than the national average. And there are vast opportunities out there.

We just had a study published last week which said there are 365,000 jobs in computer-related areas that are going begging in America today and that it is a threat to our future economic growth. So you want to keep growing the economy and make this the longest peacetime expansion in history by a good long ways, keep reaching out to the rest of the world and do more to invest in America. Do more to trade with America. Do more to train America.

As far as I can tell, there are no other easy alternatives. And this is not only economic good sense, it's morally right. And that's why we're all here. That's the message we have to get out.

What's our role in that? What should the Government do specifically to close the opportunity gap? Well, first of all, I think it requires us to have, again I say, the right philosophy of Government. My view is that the principal role of Government is to provide the conditions and the tools to empower people to solve their own problems, and then to work as a partner with State and local governments, the private sector, and community groups, and a catalyst to take ideas that work someplace and make sure they work every place. That's what I think we ought to be doing.

There is not enough Government money in America to put everybody to work in New York City, much less in every city and every rural area that has been left behind. We have to create the conditions, the environment that will enable us to be good partners. And that's what we have tried to do. Pretty soon we'll have 125 empowerment zones and enterprise communities around America that basically say, if local communities—government, business, and community leaders—will pull together with a plan for revitalization, we will provide flexible funding and tax cuts to help make the plan work.

Has it worked everywhere? No. Has it worked some places? You bet it has. There are neighborhoods all over this country now that are much stronger because of those empowerment zones. In Detroit alone, the empowerment zone along with the stunning commitment of the automobile industry and the leadership of the mayor have helped to cut the unemployment rate in half in a city which some people thought once could not be saved.

We have created a network of what we call community development financial institutions—the CDFI's, in the jargon of the folks that deal with them. These are small community banks that can make loans in places and to people that ordinary commercial banks normally won't touch. So far, these banks have an extremely high repayment rate. And I might say, this is one case where we took something we were doing around the world and said, if it's good enough for American aid programs to finance these things around the world, why shouldn't we be doing this at home?

We've worked to dramatically strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act. The Community Reinvestment Act was passed in 1977, over 20 years ago. Eighty-five percent of the financial commitments made under the Community Reinvestment Act have been made in the last 5 years of our administration. I'm very proud of that. That's $270 billion for our hardest pressed communities.

We're helping cities to clean up and redevelop their brownfields, environmentally contaminated, otherwise attractive business sites. We've more than doubled the number of Small Business Administration loans to minority- and women-owned businesses. We've tried to reinvent the Housing and Urban Development Department so that it stands for empowerment and opportunity. We're finding innovative ways to build more affordable housing. When families move into homes they call their own, they can transform communities.

I had a wonderful time in the Bronx the other day. Some of you remember the pictures that were in the newspaper. I went to that place that President Reagan said looked like London during the Blitz. And it looks like a neighborhood we'd all be proud to live in today. The local people did that. They had empowerment support from others, partnerships; that's what we need everywhere in America.

But we have to do more, and so do you. In 1999 these are some of the things—but not all, I've got to save a little bit for the State

of the Union—[*laughter*]—some of the things that we intend to do. The balanced budget in 1999 will contain the most significant new community development and economic empowerment initiatives in years. It will expand the number of empowerment zones. It will increase funding for the community development financial institutions by 50 percent. It will expand eligibility for the low-income housing credit to create between 150,000 and 180,000 new rental units. It will help families with good histories of paying their rent to move into homes of their own.

I've asked Secretary Cuomo to do more with the private sector to also increase access to capital, create jobs, and fuel entrepreneurs, and I'll have more to say about that in the days ahead. But New York can be proud of him. He's doing a good job.

I also want to say that Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley and I have worked on a special project, which I hope will work, and I hope some of you will help us make work. When I read that we had 365,000 computer-related jobs going begging in America, that some people said this is threatening our growth, when I read another article in our local paper back in Washington—New York is probably the only city I can come to and say Washington has a local paper—[*laughter*]—but anyway I read an article which said that there was a dramatic employment shortage—not unemployment problem, employment shortage—in all the suburban counties surrounding Washington and that we had something like 25,000 computer-related jobs going begging in the Washington, DC, area. And I look at an 8 percent unemployment rate in our city; in some neighborhoods it's much higher. I asked Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley to come up with a program—we've never done this before—they've set aside millions of dollars to train people only to do these kinds of jobs and to try to focus them in the areas where they can be hired.

So I would like to ask you to look around New York. How many jobs are going begging here today? Can people be trained for them? Even if people in the inner cities don't have enough education to do them, are there people in lower level jobs now who could be trained for those, opening up those jobs for the people in the inner city? Shouldn't there be a plan to do that here? And shouldn't there be a plan everywhere? And if so, call Secretary Herman, and we'll participate.

A lot of you have done a lot, or you wouldn't be here today. But we have got to do more. We have got to do more. One study estimates that inner-city residents control $85 billion in purchasing power. That's more than the entire retail market in Mexico. Thirty percent of their demand for retail goods goes unmet. Shall I say that again? Thirty percent of their demand for retail goods goes unmet. We need more investment in these areas of high unemployment. Even in areas of high unemployment, most people are working. And a lot of people are working hard and being good citizens and paying their taxes and obeying the law, against odds that some of us could not stand up to. So I think we need to think about that.

We need more businesses to form partnerships with neighborhood schools. Major Owens and I were talking on the way up here. If you want all of our kids to have a good education, then those of us who believe in the public schools have to be for high standards, for flexibility, for accountability, and for involvement by people that can help to save these kids. And you need to be involved in it.

We need businesses committed to make sure welfare reform succeeds. We've reduced welfare rolls by 3.8 million, but the easy work has been done. The people that are left on the welfare rolls are people, by and large, who came from very difficult backgrounds; many of them came from abusive home backgrounds; many of them don't have a lot of education. We have training funds; we have child care funds. The mechanisms are in place, but somebody's got to believe in them and give them a chance.

We need you to help us in all these ways. We have to bring the world of the gleaming office tower and the dark shadow together, because the people who live in both places are all Americans and because we need each other. We need each other. We've got to develop the skills and potential of our people. We have to dramatically increase capital investment. We have to continue to build public-private partnerships. We have to open the doors of the executive suites, the sales floors, and the factories to talented people of all backgrounds. If we want our best people sitting in the boardrooms, our savviest clerks minding the stores, our hardest workers on the assembly lines, we've got to somehow have the talents of all of our people.

And we know from study after study after study that there are smart people, there are people who can organize, there are people who can lead, there are people who can innovate, there are people who can create in areas in America where there is no economic activity. Very often they wind up showing their leadership in less constructive ways. But they need to have an alternative. You can lead in creating that alternative.

We're going to do everything we can to put more on the table, to be a better partner, to give you more options, to support the city, to support the State, to support the private sector, to support these community groups. But you know as well as I do, just as no government can follow irresponsible policies and stand up against the winds of the global marketplace, no government alone can bring opportunity to the people and the places that have been left behind. We'll do our part, but you have to do yours.

I thank Reverend Jackson for his insight, that he has said for years and years and years you are missing a market here. This is America's opportunity to close the opportunity gap. Let's seize it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Windows on the World restaurant at the World Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and his daughter Santita; Richard Grasso, chairman and chief executive officer, New York Stock Exchange; Tom Jones, vice chair, The Travelers Group, Inc.; U.N. Ambassador Bill Richardson; New York State Assemblyman Gregory Meeks; Lt. Gov. Betsy McCaughey Ross of New York; H. Carl McCall, State comptroller; Sheldon Silver, State assembly speaker; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; Peter F. Vallone, New York City council speaker; and Clarence Avant, chairman, Motown Records. The President also referred to the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

Remarks on Community Policing in Jamaica, New York

January 15, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Mayor, Commissioner, Congressman Nadler, Congresswoman Maloney, thank you for being here. And I want to thank our Associate Attorney General, Ray Fisher, for coming up with me today.

Let me say that, first, I want to congratulate all the men and women in the police force in New York City, the ones who are standing behind me, the ones who are out there in the audience, and the ones who are out there on the beat. There has been an amazing turnaround in America's fight against crime in the last few years. It has basically been brought about with a new philosophy rooted in community police officers, better prevention, smarter and tougher punishment.

The mayor and I have shared that philosophy. He and many others in both parties worked hard for the passage of the crime bill in 1994. And it was a fascinating debate I'll never forget as long as I live. Because the crime bill was essentially written by law enforcement officials—I see Tom nodding his head—grassroots law enforcement officials across America, there was an astonishing amount of unanimity about it among Republicans and Democrats at the grassroots level. The only political problems we had with the crime bill were those that were basically occasioned, frankly, by the NRA and others when we got to supplementing rhetoric over reality at the debate of the crime bill. But now the evidence is in, and we know who was right and who wasn't.

The efforts embodied in the crime bill and the policies of cities all across America have brought the crime rate down to a 25-year low. That's an astonishing achievement. In the last 5 years alone, there's been a 22 percent drop in the murder rate nationwide, a 16 percent drop in the rate of violent crime. In neighborhoods where children couldn't walk to school alone, where elderly people double-locked themselves in their homes, people are beginning to feel confident and safe again. And community policing is at the heart of the new philosophy. It has done more to bring the crime rate down

than anything else—the proper, wise deployment of police resources in a community fashion to prevent crime and to catch criminals.

Since the crime bill passed, we've come a long way toward putting our goal of 100,000 police on the street. You heard the mayor say how many there were in New York City. We have to finish the job, however. We're about two-thirds of the way there, since 1994. We've funded about 67,000 police officers.

Today I'm pleased to announce that we are going to help New York City hire and deploy 1,600 more community police officers. With the new police officers, we now helped to fund more than 70,000 of the 100,000 community police across America. And I want you to know we intend to keep going until we've got all 100,000 on the beat. We want to get it done ahead of schedule. In the big cities like New York where the problems of crime and drugs and guns once seemed absolutely insurmountable, real progress has been made.

Now, there's still a lot to do. The mayor talked about the drug problem. Our budget coming up has more funds for drug education, drug prevention, and drug treatment. I issued an Executive order just a couple of days ago relating to drug treatment in the State penitentiaries of the country.

The New York Times reported today that some cities, particularly smaller cities, are still struggling, cities that never felt the kind of problems you came to take for granted or at least—not for granted—at least a part of your daily life before, and perhaps aren't as well equipped as you are to handle them. We have more to do to clean up our cities, to get more guns and gangs and drugs off the streets, and more police officers on the streets. But if we keep going we'll get the job done.

I'd also like to say, we all know that we have an unresolved problem with crime by young people, juveniles. While that rate seems to be dropping now, it has not gone down nearly as much as the overall crime rate. And I'm convinced we have to do more to deal with these young people in the hours where most of this crime is committed, which is after school but before their folks get home. We're committed to working hard with our cities to help to deal with that.

So today is a good day. Hundreds of more police officers from New York City—it means a lower crime rate for a city that has proved that the police can do the job, given the kind of community support we need and the kind of farsighted policies that I think we have to pursue together as Americans.

So thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Commissioner. Thanks to the Members of Congress. And my thanks to the people in the police department.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the press room in Port Authority Building #14 at John F. Kennedy International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir of New York City, and Thomas J. Scotto, president, National Association of Police Organizations. He also referred to his memorandum of January 12 on ending drug use and drug availability for offenders.

Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the Baltic Nations-United States Charter of Partnership

January 16, 1998

The President. President Meri; President Brazauskas; President Ulmanis; members of the Estonian, Lithuanian, and Latvian delegations; Secretary Albright; Mr. Berger; Members of Congress; Senator Dole; Mr. Brzezinski; and all friends of the Baltic nations who are here.

The Vice President and I and our administration were honored to welcome President Meri, President Brazauskas, and President Ulmanis to Washington to reaffirm our common vision of a Europe whole and free, where Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia play their full and rightful roles, and to sign a charter of partnership to build that Europe together.

To the three Presidents, let me say thank you. Thank you for the key role you have played

in making this moment possible, holding to the difficult path of political and economic reform, leading Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania back to the community of free nations where they belong. This charter of partnership underscores how far your nations have come. Almost exactly 7 years ago today, Baltic citizens were facing down tanks in the struggle to reclaim their independence. Today, your democracies have taken root. You stand among Europe's fastest growing economies. Your nations are a source of stability within your region and beyond, through the Partnership For Peace, the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion, and your contributions in Bosnia.

America has been proud to support this progress through our SEED assistance program, more than 500 Peace Corps volunteers, and in many other ways. We share a stake in your success. And with this charter, we set out a framework to achieve our common goals. It affirms our commitment to promoting harmony and human dignity within our societies; it stresses our interest in close cooperation among the Baltic States and with all their neighbors; it launches new working groups on economic development to spur greater trade, investment, and growth, complementing the efforts of our European friends; and it furthers America's commitment to help Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia to deepen their integration and prepare for membership in the European Union and NATO.

Of course, there can be no guarantees of admission to the alliance. Only NATO's leaders, operating by consensus, can offer membership to an aspiring state. But America's security is tied to Europe, and Europe will never be fully secure if Baltic security is in doubt. NATO's door is and will remain open to every partner nation, and America is determined to create the conditions under which Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia can one day walk through that door.

The hopes that fuel the goals of this charter must be matched by our will to achieve them. That's why we're forming a new partnership commission which Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott will chair. I'm pleased to report that the charter is making a difference already. Yesterday our nations signed treaties to eliminate double taxation, which will encourage American business to play an even greater role in Baltic prosperity. We're also expanding our common efforts to combat organized crime with better information-sharing and more joint operations.

And this year the United States, in a unique public/private partnership with the Soros Open Society Institute, will be creating a Baltic-American partnership fund to promote the development of civic organizations. Nothing is more crucial to democracy's success than a vibrant network of local groups committed to their communities and their nation. I want to thank George Soros for his visionary generosity.

I also want to say a special thanks to the Baltic-American communities. For 50 years, Lithuanian-, Latvian-, and Estonian-Americans kept alive the dream of Baltic freedom. Now, on the verge of a new century, they are working here at home and with their Baltic brothers and sisters to make sure the hard-won blessings of liberty will never be lost again.

President Meri, President Brazauskas, President Ulmanis, we recall the August day in 1989 when hundreds of thousands of people linked hands from Tallinn to Riga to Vilnius, forming a human chain as strong as the values for which it stood. Today, that Baltic chain extends across the Atlantic Ocean. America's hands and hearts and hopes are joined as one with yours. Working together, we can build a new Europe of democracy, prosperity, and peace, where security is the province of every nation and the future belongs to the free.

Thank you very much.

President Guntis Ulmanis of Latvia. Dear President, ladies and gentlemen, today is a happy day as we are signing the U.S.A.-Baltic charter. This charter will serve as a key for the next century. It makes us allies. Our signatures write the strategic philosophy for the next century. They mark strong Atlanticism and also the formation of a new Europe. The Baltic region is a success story for all who shape it by their everyday work.

I call on President Clinton and his administration to get actively involved in the formation of its future. The symbolic meaning of the charter has been expressed in its first words, which speak about our common vision of the future. It has been created by people of our countries in continuous work by mutual enrichment. I am proud of my people and its strengths. I am proud of my friends who I am happy to welcome here.

Thank you.

President Algirdas Brazauskas of Lithuania. Dear Presidents, ladies and gentlemen, today we are signing the particularly important document with the United States of America, with which we not only share common values but are also linked by a number of American Lithuanians who have found home in the United States. The charter of partnership establishes the institutional framework that promotes the furtherance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, reciprocal support to the Euro-Atlantic integration, and common efforts designed for the consolidation of security, prosperity, and stability within the region and Euro-Atlantic area as the whole.

The U.S.-Baltic charter confirms repeatedly that Lithuania is a serious candidate for accession to NATO, as well as that the United States support the Baltic States' aspirations and their efforts to become members of the alliance.

Lithuania values the charter first and foremost as the commitment to its further role as the promoter of stability within our region and Europe as a whole, its commitment to progress, economic reforms, and further enhancement of defense system effectiveness and interoperability with the North Atlantic alliance. We appreciate and are supportive of President Clinton's and the U.S. role of leadership in opening up to Central European democracies the doors to history's most successful alliance. It is our hope that this openness to new members will enhance the security and stability for all the present and aspiring members, as well as other European nations.

Thank you.

President Lennart Meri of Estonia. Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, today is an historic day in the history of our four nations. With the signing of the charter of partnership among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, we enter a new phase of even closer United States-Baltic relations.

Seventy-five years ago last summer, the United States and Estonia—[*inaudible*]—diplomatic relations, thus launching a special relationship based in mutual respect and trust. There is an old saying that one recognizes a true friend in times of need. With its bipartisan support for nonrecognition policy, America was a true friend of the Baltics in a time of need, acting as a beacon of hope throughout the long, dark, and cold years of the Soviet occupation.

You, Mr. President, were a true friend when, 4 years ago, you personally contributed to making sure that occupation would end and the foreign troops were withdrawn. This principled behavior is one quality of United States foreign policy that we greatly admire. The fact that morals play a major role in Americans' foreign policy is what defines the United States as the world's remaining superpower.

Estonia sees the United States-Baltic charter as the latest expression of that principled approach. The charter recognizes the Baltic States' role in the American strategy to guarantee security and stability on the European Continent, and spells out that the United States has a real, profound, and enduring interest in the security and sovereignty of the Baltic States.

An important element in our security strategy is eventual full membership in NATO. We believe that NATO continues to be the sole guarantor of security and stability in Europe. Estonia applauds President Clinton for his leadership in starting the process of NATO enlargement which has already redefined the terms of security policy in Europe.

Estonia also understands that NATO enlargement through the Baltics will be the next big project of the alliance. We believe that the question of Baltic membership in NATO will become the real test of post-Madrid security thinking—that is, that countries shall be able to choose their security arrangements regardless of geography. We are confident that, with American leadership, this test will be met with success.

Thank you.

The President. I thank you all. We are now going to sign our charter. Before we do, I just want to say again how much I appreciate all of our guests coming here, all from the three nations, their American counterparts. And thank you, Senator Durbin, Congresswoman Pelosi, Congressman Shimkus, Congressman Kucinich. Thank you, Senator Dole and Mr. Brzezinski.

And I'd also like to point out—I didn't earlier—we have a very large, unusually large, representation from the diplomatic corps here, which is a tribute to the importance of this moment, that the rest of the world community attaches to it. And I thank all the ambassadors who are here. Thank you all very much for your presence.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole; former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski; and philanthropist George Soros, chairman, Soros Fund Management, LCC. He also referred to the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Program.

A Charter of Partnership Among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania

January 16, 1998

Preamble

The United States of America, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, hereafter referred to as Partners.

Sharing a common vision of a peaceful and increasingly integrated Europe, free of divisions, dedicated to democracy, the rule of law, free markets, and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people;

Recognizing the historic opportunity to build a new Europe, in which each state is secure in its internationally-recognized borders and respects the independence and territorial integrity of all members of the transatlantic community;

Determined to strengthen their bilateral relations as a contribution to building this new Europe, and to enhance the security of all states through the adaptation and enlargement of European and transatlantic institutions;

Committed to the full development of human potential within just and inclusive societies attentive to the promotion of harmonious and equitable relations among individuals belonging to diverse ethnic and religious groups;

Avowing a common interest in developing cooperative, mutually respectful relations with all other states in the region;

Recalling the friendly relations that have been continuously maintained between the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania since 1922;

Further recalling that the United States of America never recognized the forcible incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the USSR in 1940 but rather regards their statehood as uninterrupted since the establishment of their independence, a policy which the United States has restated continuously for five decades;

Celebrating the rich contributions that immigrants from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have made to the multi-ethnic culture of the United States of America, as well as the European heritage enjoyed by the United States as a beneficiary of the contributions of intellectuals, artists, and Hanseatic traders from the Baltic states to the development of Europe; praising the contributions of U.S. citizens to the liberation and rebuilding of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Affirm as a political commitment declared at the highest level, the following principles and procedures to guide their individual and joint efforts to achieve the goals of this Charter.

Principles of Partnership

The United States of America has a real, profound and enduring interest in the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and security of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The United States of America warmly welcomes the success of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in regaining their freedom and resuming their rightful places in the community of nations.

The United States of America respects the sacrifices and hardships undertaken by the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to re-establish their independence. It encourages efforts by these states to continue to expand their political, economic, security, and social ties with other nations as full members of the transatlantic community.

The Partners affirm their commitment to the rule of law as a foundation for a transatlantic community of free and democratic nations, and to the responsibility of all just societies to protect and respect the human rights and civil liberties of all individuals residing within their territories.

The Partners underscore their shared commitment to the principles and obligations contained in the United Nations Charter.

The Partners reaffirm their shared commitment to the purposes, principles, and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents, including the Charter of Paris and the documents adopted at the Lisbon OSCE Summit.

The Partners will observe in good faith their commitments to promote and respect the standards for human rights embodied in the abovementioned Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) documents and in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. They will implement their legislation protecting such human rights fully and equitably.

The United States of America commends the measures taken by Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to advance the integration of Europe by establishing close cooperative relations among themselves and with their neighbors, as well as their promotion of regional cooperation through their participation in fora such as the Baltic Assembly, Baltic Council of Ministers, and the Council of Baltic Sea States.

Viewing good neighborly relations as fundamental to overall security and stability in the transatlantic community, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania reaffirm their determination to further enhance bilateral relations between themselves and with other neighboring states.

The Partners will intensify their efforts to promote the security, prosperity, and stability of the region. The Partners will draw on the points noted below in focusing their efforts to deepen the integration of the Baltic states into transatlantic and European institutions, promote cooperation in security and defense, and develop the economies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

A Commitment to Integration

As part of a common vision of a Europe whole and free, the Partners declare that their shared goal is the full integration of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into European and transatlantic political, economic, security and defense institutions. Europe will not be fully secure unless Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania each are secure.

The Partners reaffirm their commitment to the principle, established in the Helsinki Final Act, repeated in the Budapest and Lisbon OSCE summit declarations, and also contained in the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, that the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible.

The Partners further share a commitment to the core principle, also articulated in the OSCE Code of Conduct and reiterated in subsequent OSCE summit declarations, that each state has the inherent right to individual and collective self-defense as well as the right freely to choose its own security arrangements, including treaties of alliance.

The Partners support the vital role being played by a number of complementary institutions and bodies—including the OSCE, the European Union (EU), the West European Union (WEU) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Council of Europe (COE), and the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS)—in achieving the partners' shared goal of an integrated, secure, and undivided Europe.

They believe that, irrespective of factors related to history or geography, such institutions should be open to all European democracies willing and able to shoulder the responsibilities and obligations of membership, as determined by those institutions.

The Partners welcome a strong and vibrant OSCE dedicated to promoting democratic institutions, human rights, and fundamental freedoms. They strongly support the OSCE's role as a mechanism to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts and crises.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania each reaffirm their goal to become full members of all European and transatlantic institutions, including the European Union and NATO.

The United States of America recalls its longstanding support for the enlargement of the EU, affirming it as a core institution in the new Europe and declaring that a stronger, larger, and outward-looking European Union will further security and prosperity for all of Europe.

The Partners believe that the enlargement of NATO will enhance the security of the United States, Canada, and all the countries in Europe, including those states not immediately invited to membership or not currently interested in membership.

The United States of America welcomes the aspirations and supports the efforts of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to join NATO. It affirms its view that NATO's partners can become

members as each aspirant proves itself able and willing to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve European stability and the strategic interests of the Alliance.

The United States of America reiterates its view that the enlargement of NATO is an ongoing process. It looks forward to future enlargements, and remains convinced that not only will NATO's door remain open to new members, but that the first countries invited to membership will not be the last. No non-NATO country has a veto over Alliance decisions. The United States notes the Alliance is prepared to strengthen its consultations with aspirant countries on the full range of issues related to possible NATO membership.

The Partners welcome the results of the Madrid Summit. They support the Alliance's commitment to an open door policy and welcome the Alliance's recognition of the Baltic states as aspiring members of NATO. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania pledge to deepen their close relations with the Alliance through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Partnership for Peace, and the intensified dialogue process.

The Partners underscore their interest in Russia's democratic and stable development and support a strengthened NATO-Russia relationship as a core element of their shared vision of a new and peaceful Europe. They welcome the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the NATO-Ukraine Charter, both of which further improve European security.

Security Cooperation

The Partners will consult together, as well as with other countries, in the event that a Partner perceives that its territorial integrity, independence, or security is threatened or at risk. The Partners will use bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for such consultations.

The United States welcomes and appreciates the contributions that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have already made to European security through the peaceful restoration of independence and their active participation in the Partnership for Peace. The United States also welcomes their contributions to IFOR, SFOR, and other international peacekeeping missions.

Building on the existing cooperation among their respective ministries of defense and armed forces, the United States of America supports the efforts of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to provide for their legitimate defense needs, including development of appropriate and interoperable military forces.

The Partners welcome the establishment of the Baltic Security Assistance Group (BALTSEA) as an effective body for international coordination of security assistance to Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's defense forces.

The Partners will cooperate further in the development and expansion of defense initiatives such as the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BaltBat), the Baltic Squadron (Baltron), and the Baltic airspace management regime (BaltNet), which provide a tangible demonstration of practical cooperation enhancing the common security of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and the transatlantic community.

The Partners intend to continue mutually beneficial military cooperation and will maintain regular consultations, using the established Bilateral Working Group on Defense and Military Relations.

Economic Cooperation

The Partners affirm their commitment to free market mechanisms as the best means to meet the material needs of their people.

The United States of America commends the substantial progress its Baltic Partners have made to implement economic reform and development and their transition to free market economies.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania emphasize their intention to deepen their economic integration with Europe and the global economy, based on the principles of free movement of people, goods, capital and services.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania underscore their commitment to continue market-oriented economic reforms and to express their resolve to achieve full integration into global economic bodies, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) while creating conditions for smoothly acceding to the European Union.

Noting this objective, the United States of America will work to facilitate the integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with the world economy and appropriate international economic organizations, in particular the WTO and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), on appropriate commercial terms.

The Partners will work individually and together to develop legal and financial conditions in their countries conducive to international investment. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania welcome U.S. investment in their economies.

The Partners will continue to strive for mutually advantageous economic relations building on the principles of equality and non-discrimination to create the conditions necessary for such cooperation.

The Partners will commence regular consultations to further cooperation and provide for regular assessment of progress in the areas of economic development, trade, investment, and related fields. These consultations will be chaired at the appropriately high level.

Recognizing that combating international organized crime requires a multilateral effort, the partners agree to cooperate fully in the fight against this threat to the world economy and political stability. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania remain committed to developing sound legislation in this field and to enhance the implementation of this legislation through the strengthening of a fair and well-functioning judicial system.

The U.S.-Baltic Relationship

In all of these spheres of common endeavor, the Partners, building on their shared history of friendship and cooperation, solemnly reaffirm their commitment to a rich and dynamic Baltic-American partnership for the 21st century.

The Partners view their partnership in the areas of political, economic, security, defense, cultural, and environmental affairs as contributing to closer ties between their people and facilitating the full integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into European and transatlantic structures.

In order to further strengthen these ties, the Partners will establish a Partnership Commission chaired at the appropriately high level to evaluate common efforts. This Commission will meet once a year or as needed to take stock of the Partnership, assess results of bilateral consultations on economic, military and other areas, and review progress achieved towards meeting the goals of this Charter.

In order to better reflect changes in the European and transatlantic political and security environment, signing Partners are committed regularly at the highest level to review this agreement.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON President United States of America	LENNART MERI President Republic of Estonia
GUNTIS ULMANIS President Republic of Latvia	ALGIRDAS BRAZAUSKAS President Republic of Lithuania

Washington D.C.,
January 16, 1998

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

Statement on the Appointment of Senator John B. Breaux as Chairman of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare

January 16, 1998

I am pleased to join with Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and House Speaker Newt Gingrich in announcing the appointment of Senator John Breaux (D–LA) as Chairman of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare.

In addition, I am grateful that Representative Bill Thomas (R–CA) has agreed to become Administrative Chair, working with the Chairman on this important Commission.

Over the past 5 years, we have strengthened and modernized the Medicare system by providing Americans with more choice and preventative care, reducing fraud and waste within the system, and extending the life of the Trust Fund for more than a decade.

Despite these advances, there is more work to do to ensure that Medicare stays strong and solvent for the generations to come.

I look forward to working with the Commission and to receiving their analysis of and recommendations for the future challenges facing the Medicare program.

Statement on Action on Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

January 16, 1998

Today I am notifying the Congress of my decision to suspend for an additional 6 months the right of U.S. nationals to file suit against foreign firms trafficking in confiscated properties in Cuba. This decision is consistent with my strong commitment to implement the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (LIBERTAD Act) in a way that best advances U.S. national interests and hastens a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba.

I have taken this action to continue the effort we began in July 1996 to strengthen international cooperation in the effort to promote democracy in Cuba. I said last January and reaffirmed last July that I expected to continue suspending this provision of the LIBERTAD Act so long as our friends and allies continue their stepped-up efforts to promote a democratic transition in Cuba. I made this decision to take advantage of the growing realization throughout the world, in Europe and Latin America especially, that Cuba must change. We and our allies agree on the importance of promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba, and on the vital need for a peaceful transition to democracy on the island.

In the past 18 months, we have worked with our allies and friends to support concrete measures that promote peaceful change in Cuba. The international community is more united behind the cause of freedom in Cuba, and Fidel Castro is more isolated than ever before.

The European Union (EU) has reaffirmed its historic Common Position that, consistent with Europe's traditional democratic values, binds the 15 member nations to promote human rights and democracy in Cuba. The EU and its member states have strongly urged the Cuban Government to release imprisoned dissidents and stop the harassment of those who seek peaceful democratic change. Recently, they have gone further and created an EU Working Group on Human Rights among their embassies in Havana. This will help coordinate the EU's human rights efforts in Cuba.

The international effort is not confined to Europe. Under Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat made a trip to four Central American countries to energize their efforts to promote change in Cuba, with positive results. At the Ibero-American Summit in Venezuela in November 1997, leaders from Latin America and Europe made clear their position in favor of democracy and human rights. At the United Nations General Assembly in December, more countries than ever before cosponsored the resolution supporting human rights in Cuba.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) are increasing their support for dissidents on the island and maintaining international attention to repression in Cuba. The Dutch organization, Pax Christi, noting the historic and spiritual importance of the visit of the Pope this month, has continued its call for political change in Cuba. Amnesty International called on Cuba to release the four dissidents of the Dissident Working Group who were arrested in July.

Business groups have also been active in the effort. The Trans Atlantic Business Dialogue, composed of chief executive officers of leading European and U.S. corporations, called for businesses operating internationally to observe "best business practices" and to support human rights in international operations, including in Cuba. On January 7 in Washington, DC, the North American Committee of the National Policy Association sponsored a major conference on best business practices in Cuba. This committee includes over 100 representatives from business, labor, and the academic community in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

As the multinational effort has moved forward, we have continued our vigorous implementation of title IV of the LIBERTAD Act, which denies entry to the U.S. of executives of firms that traffic in confiscated property in Cuba. Our implementation efforts have had a significant impact. Several companies have withdrawn from commitments or altered their plans in Cuba in order to avoid determinations of trafficking. We will continue implementation of title IV as we work to conclude our negotiations with the EU on developing investment disciplines regarding confiscated property.

The U.S.-led international approach to promote democracy in Cuba must be preserved,

expanded, and strengthened. We will continue working with our friends and allies to develop comprehensive, effective measures to promote democracy in Cuba.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Action on Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

January 16, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to subsection 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114), (the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 1998, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

The President's Radio Address

January 17, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk about the steps we must take to protect our children and the public health from one of the greatest threats they face, tobacco. For years, tobacco companies have sworn they do not market their deadly products to children, but this week disturbing documents came to light that confirm our worst suspicions.

For years, one of our Nation's biggest tobacco companies appears to have singled out our children, carefully studying their habits and pursuing a marketing strategy designed to prey on their insecurities in order to get them to smoke.

Let me read you two of the most startling lines from an internal tobacco company presentation proposing a marketing campaign targeted at children as young as 14. Quote, "Our strategy becomes clear: direct advertising appeal to younger smokers." Younger smokers, this document says also, and I quote, "represent tomorrow's cigarette business." The message of these documents is all too clear: Marketing to children sells cigarettes.

Today I want to send a very different message to those who would endanger our children: Young people are not the future of the tobacco industry; they are the future of America. And we must take immediate, decisive action to protect them.

We know that every day 3,000 young people will start smoking, and 1,000 of them will die prematurely due to tobacco-related disease. We know that 90 percent of adults who smoke—90 percent—began using tobacco before the age of 18. That is why, starting in 1995, we launched a historic nationwide effort with the FDA to stop our children from smoking before they start, reducing their access to tobacco products and severely restricting tobacco companies from advertising to young people. The balanced budget agreement I signed into law last summer includes a $24 billion children's health initiative, providing health coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children, paid for by tobacco taxes.

But even these efforts are not enough to fully protect our children from the dangers of smoking. To do that, we need comprehensive bipartisan legislation. Last September I proposed five key elements that must be at the heart of that legislation. First, and most important, it must

mandate the development of a comprehensive plan to reduce teen smoking with tough penalties for companies that don't comply. Second, it must affirm the FDA's full authority to regulate tobacco products. Third, it must include measures to hold the tobacco industry accountable, especially for marketing tobacco to children. Fourth, it must include concrete measures to improve the public health, from reducing secondhand smoke to expanding smoking cessation programs to funding medical research on the effects of tobacco. And finally, it must protect tobacco farmers and their communities from the loss of income caused by our efforts to reduce smoking by young people.

If Congress sends me a bill that mandates those steps, I will sign it. My administration will do all it can to ensure that Congress passes this legislation. In September I asked the Vice President to build bipartisan support for the legislation, and he has held forums all across our country to focus public attention on the issue.

In a few weeks, my balanced budget proposal will make specific recommendations on how much the tobacco industry should pay and how we can best use those funds to protect the public health and our children. Today I want to let Members of Congress know that our administration will sit down with them anytime, anywhere to work out bipartisan legislation.

Reducing teen smoking has always been American's bottom line and always our administration's bottom line. But to make it the tobacco industry's bottom line, we have to have legislation. This is not about politics. This is not about money. It is about our children.

The 1998 Congress should be remembered as the Congress that passed comprehensive tobacco legislation, not the Congress that passed up this historic opportunity to protect our children and our future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:50 a.m. on January 16 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 17.

Statement on the Decision of Representative Louis Stokes Not To Seek Reelection

January 18, 1998

Throughout his illustrious career in the United States Congress, Representative Louis Stokes has been a champion of America's finest values. He has worked tirelessly to better the lives of our children and our veterans and has stood steadfast in an effort to bring our country together amid all of our diversity to build a stronger community.

Representative Stokes has been a true advocate for the people of Cleveland and for all Americans who support giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. He has served our country from the bottom of his heart, and his retirement after three decades of dedicated service will be a loss felt by all.

Exchange With Reporters at Cardozo High School

January 19, 1998

Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, according to Ambassador Seitz, the British believe that Jean Kennedy Smith passed along intelligence information to the IRA. Does that concern you, sir?

On another subject—[*laughter*]—sir, I didn't hear, I'm sorry, I'm getting hard of hearing. Well, on another subject, after Saturday are you persuaded you may prevail if the Jones case actually does go to trial?

The President. You know, the judge asked us not to talk about it, and I think at least somebody involved in it ought to follow her instructions.

Q. You mean the judge's gag order, sir?

The President. Mr. Bennett will say anything that I have to say about that.

Attack on U.S. Citizens in Guatemala

Q. Did you see that Seitz story, sir, the Ambassador Seitz book?

You've seen the news from Guatemala. Is there anything the United States can do to safeguard U.S. citizens down there?

The President. Well, first of all, it's a terrible thing what happened with that. I have a lot of concerns, obviously, for the victims and their families. But we're persuaded that the Government is taking appropriate action. And it is—where they were, you know, there had been some difficulties. But I think that the Government is doing what it can, and we've been in touch with them. The main thing we need to do now is be concerned with the victims and their families and do whatever we can to minimize such things happening in the future.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Are you discouraged about the advance word that Prime Minister Netanyahu may not have anything to say that would advance the peace process?

The President. Well, I'm looking forward to the meeting. I'm committed to making it a success. I'm going to do my part, and I just want us to have constructive relations where we can move this forward. And I've been working on it all morning; that's why I'm a little late here today. I'm going to be prepared to reach out a hand in cooperation to both the Prime Minister and to Mr. Arafat and we'll see what happens. But I've got high hopes. I've worked hard on it. The United States, I think, is viewed rightly as a country that just wants a just, stable, and lasting peace. And we're all going to have to make some moves if we're going to get there. But I'm looking forward to this meeting.

Participation in Community Service

Q. When was the last time you painted a wall, sir?

The President. Not very long ago. This is the third painting project I've done with the national service—with the AmeriCorps people. But we really wanted to emphasize Martin Luther King's birthday as a day of service, a day on, not a day off. And I want to thank the people from the DC school system and the city government and General Becton and the others. This is encouraging, to have all these young people out here. And all over America there are young people working today, tens of thousands of them. That's the image of our young people I'd like for the rest of America to see, and I hope that they will inspire more people of all ages to get involved in community service.

Q. Thank you.

The President. You guys need to give Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News] his cuts; he didn't have to work hard today. [*Laughter*]

Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith

Q. Sir, could you look into that Smith thing?

The President. Yes, I will. I will.

Participation in Community Service

Q. Mr. President, how much painting experience do you have?

The President. When I was a younger man, I did quite a bit of it.

Q. For who?

The President. For myself. That's the advantage when you elect a real middle class President—you get people who've had to do things like this in life.

Q. What's the shirt mean, Mr. President?

The President. It's just a shirt my daughter gave me.

Q. And the numbers on the back?

The President. I'm not sure. I have no idea. I hope it's not something embarrassing; I don't have a clue. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in Room 306 at the school, where he participated in a community service project to repaint classrooms. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright; Robert S. Bennett, the President's attorney in the Paula Jones civil lawsuit; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Gen. Julius W. Becton, Jr., USA (Ret.), superintendent, District of Columbia public schools. A reporter referred to Raymond G.H. Seitz, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Volunteers at Cardozo High School
January 19, 1998

The President. Thank you. Are you having a good day?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Me, too. I want to thank Mr. Ballard, the principal, and I want to say a special word of appreciation to the officials who are here with me today: first, the head of the Corporation for National Service, Harris Wofford; DC City Council Chairperson Charlene Drew Jarvis; General Becton; School Board President Harvey; Terri Green, the PTA president; the other school board members; and representatives of council members. And especially I want to thank all the volunteers in the AmeriCorps NCC program. And thanks for this; I like my little jacket here.

Thirty-one years ago Martin Luther King came to this very neighborhood and urged the people here to engage in citizen service to rebuild their lives and their community and their future. That's what you're doing here today. You are honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King and answering the highest calling of citizenship in this country.

My staff did a little research to illustrate what we could all do if we just gave back a little to our community. And they swear that if just everybody with the last name of Clinton and Gore in America—just the people whose last name is Clinton and Gore in America—would put in 2 hours a week, they could paint every classroom and every public high school in America by Martin Luther King's next birthday.

Now, that gives you an idea of what we can do if we serve and work together. That's why I have invested so much in AmeriCorps, our national service program that I'm so proud of. And all of you who are involved in the program, let me thank you from the bottom of my heart. I hope that you're getting a lot out of it. I know the AmeriCorps volunteers I painted with today made me feel proud that we started this.

That's why I have strongly supported, along with all the former Presidents, General Colin Powell and the Presidents' Summit on Service and the work that he is doing and that tens of thousands of people across America are doing to give all of our children a good chance in life.

But finally let me say that this country will never be all that it can be and your future will never be all that it can be unless we decide we're going to build that future together. We will never be able to bridge the racial and other divides in this country unless we decide we're not only going to work together and learn together but we're going to serve together.

We actually have to believe that we're all better off when our neighbors are better off. We actually have to believe that we'll do better if we go forward together. We actually have to believe that this diversity we have is a blessing; and that the fact that some of us start out life poorer than others is a condition that can be overcome if we work hard to give people who deserve it a hand up; and that as we do that, we are all happier, more fulfilled, and living in a stronger America. That's what this is about.

This is not just about painting the walls of a school, although I passionately believe it's important. I, personally, as a student, preferred old buildings to new ones, but every student deserves to go into a clean building with bright walls and clear windows, sending a signal that the student and his or her future is important.

But you're not just painting a school today, you're painting a very different picture for America's future. And it's a beautiful one because of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:49 p.m. in the cafeteria. In his remarks, he referred to Reginald C. Ballard, principal, and Terri Green, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) president, Cardozo High School; Wilma Harvey, president, District of Columbia school board; former Presidents Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George Bush; and Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth. The President also referred to the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) program of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Message on the Observance of the Lunar New Year
January 14, 1998

Warm greetings to all those celebrating the Lunar New Year.

This joyous occasion celebrates the blessings of family, community, and a rich and ancient heritage. It is a special time to reflect on the events of the previous year and to embrace the challenges of the year ahead. Vibrant with color, lights, dancing, parades, folk music, and delicious food, the Lunar New Year reminds all of us of the beauty and variety of Asian culture and of the strength, character, and achievement that Asian Americans bring to our national life.

As we join you in welcoming the Year of the Tiger, Hillary and I extend best wishes to all for a new year full of health, happiness, prosperity, and peace.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 20.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel
January 20, 1998

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Good morning.

Q. Mr. President, Cuba is about to be in the news. What does the United States gain from pressing the embargo?

The President. Well, let me say, our position on that is that we want Cuba to move toward freedom and openness, and if they do, we'll respond. That's always been our position, and I believe in the end it will prevail.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, on the Middle East, Mr. Arafat is talking with some threatening phrases, speaking of maybe the intifada will be resumed. And of course, the Prime Minister said last night that's no way to negotiate. How do you feel about——

The President. I agree with that. I think if he makes an observation that if this whole thing fails, that it won't be good, then that's understandable. But I don't think it should be encouraged. I've really looked forward to this week. I've worked hard to get ready for the meeting. I'm anxious to begin my sixth meeting with the Prime Minister and then to see Mr. Arafat in a couple of days. And I think we have to have a positive attitude. We need to be reassuring to people. We don't want to undermine any confidence. We need to keep working.

Q. Mr. President, you said yesterday that you had high hopes, and that seems out of step with some of the views of your top officials here. What makes you have high hopes for these talks?

The President. Well, I've often been out of step, in having high hopes, with a lot of people. It may be a defect in my nature, but I think—for one thing I think that Israel wants peace and a resolution of this. And I believe that it's very much in the interests of the Palestinians and Mr. Arafat to seek to resolve it, and we're working very hard. I've just found that, more often than not, you ultimately have success if you stay at something and keep working at it in good faith.

Q. Mr. President, could you just tell us what you believe a credible withdrawal would be? And does Chairman Arafat need to do anything before such a withdrawal should take place?

The President. I think that's a conversation I need to have with the Prime Minister first. I don't—and I will do that.

Prime Minister Netanyahu's Cabinet

Q. Mr. Netanyahu, may I ask you one question, please? Are you in a more difficult situation because of the new makeup of your Cabinet,

because it's a smaller coalition? Is it more difficult for you to make concessions and to negotiate?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. This is a difficult day for me because I've lost a good friend, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Education. But the composition of the government is irrelevant. The people who could topple the government before Mr. Levi departed could topple it after he departed. And I say to them what I say to everyone here and to President Clinton: We made a decision to go to peace. This is what this government is about, peace with security. And I am sure that I can muster the necessary support across the government and across the coalition for something that will move the peace process forward and maintain secure and defensible boundaries for Israel.

Q. And you believe you have enough support within your now more limited government to pass any sort of vote for withdrawal, for further Israeli withdrawal?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. For a withdrawal that will ensure our defenses, that is what we're prepared to do. We're prepared to move forward, but not to jeopardize the security of the State of Israel.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Prime Minister Netanyahu's Visit

The President. Welcome. Let me just briefly say that I am delighted to see the Prime Minister again. This is our sixth meeting. I'm looking forward to it. We're working hard to make progress, and I want to reaffirm to the people of Israel the strong support of the United States for Israel and the strong support of the United States for the security of Israel and a peace process that proceeds within that commitment. And I think we can succeed.

Q. Mr. President, what are your expectations from the meeting with the Prime Minister?

The President. That we're going to have a good-faith, detailed, frank discussion and do our best to make some progress. And I think we've got a chance to do that.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Are you going to pressure Mr. Netanyahu to give concessions to the Palestinians?

The President. I'm going to have a discussion with him about where we think the peace process is. I wouldn't use that word. Israel has to make its own decisions about its own security and its own future.

Q. Who do you think is breaching the agreement more severely, more seriously, the Israelis or the Palestinians?

The President. I don't think it's fruitful to discuss that. I think what we ought to talk about is what both sides can do now to get the peace process moving again. That's the most important thing.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:19 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, Prime Minister Netanyahu referred to the late Zevulun Hammer, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Culture, and David Levi, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Major General James L. Day, USMC (Retired)

January 20, 1998

The President. Hillary and I are delighted to welcome all of you here today, including our Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Togo West; the National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger; Senator Robb and Congressman Evans; Deputy Secretary of Defense Hamre; Secretary Dalton; General Shelton and other members of the Joint Chiefs; General McCaffrey; Deputy Secretary Gober; Mr. Bucha, the president of the Medal of Honor Society, and General Foley and other recipients of the Medal of Honor who are here. To all the commanders of our veterans service organizations and proud members of the United States Marine Corps and former marines, to the friends and the large and wonderful family of General Day and Mrs. Day, we welcome you.

I thank Captain Pucciarelli for the fine invocation. He is not devoid of a sense of humor; before we came out here, he said he was going out to offer the exorcism. [*Laughter*]

To those who lived through World War II and those who grew up in the years that followed, few memories inspire more awe and horror than the battle for Okinawa. In the greatest conflict the world has ever known, our forces fought no engagement more bitter or more bloody. In 82 days of fighting, America suffered more than 12,000 dead in this final epic battle, the most costly one during the entire Pacific war.

At the very heart of this crucible was the fight for a hill called Sugar Loaf, the key to breaking the enemy's line across the south of the island, some of the grimmest combat our forces had ever seen. The marines on Sugar Loaf faced a hail of artillery, mortars, and grenades. They were raked by constant machinegun fire. Time and again, our men would claw their way uphill only to be repulsed by the enemy. Progress was measured by the yard.

On May 14th, 1945, a 19-year-old corporal named Jim Day led several other marines to a shell crater on the slope of Sugar Loaf. What happened then surpasses our powers of imagination. On the first day in that isolated hole, Corporal Day and those with him fought off an advance by scores of enemy soldiers. That night he helped to repel three more assaults, as those with him fell dead or injured. Braving heavy fire, he escorted four wounded comrades, one by one, to safety. But he would not stay in safety. Instead, he returned to his position to continue the fight. As one of his fellow marines later reported, the corporal was everywhere. He would run from one spot to another trying to get more fire on the enemy.

When the next day broke, Corporal Day kept on fighting, alone but for one wounded fellow marine. Through assault after assault and into his second night, he fought on. Burned by white phosphorus and wounded by shrapnel, he continued to fire his weapon and hold his ground. He hauled ammunition from a disabled vehicle back to his shellhole and fought and fought, one assault after another, one day, then the next.

The battle on Sugar Loaf decimated two Marine regiments. But when Corporal Jim Day was finally relieved after 3 days of continuous fighting, virtually alone, he had stood his ground. And the enemy dead around his foxhole numbered more than 100.

His heroism played a crucial part in America's victory at Sugar Loaf. And that success opened the way to the capture of Okinawa and the ultimate triumph of the forces of freedom in the Pacific.

Now, for this extraordinary valor, we recognize James L. Day as one of the bravest of the brave. In words that echo from the peaks of American military history, he has distinguished himself, at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty. As Commander in Chief, I am proud to award General Day our Nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor. This medal confirms what every marine in this room already knows: the name Jim Day belongs in the rolls of the Corps' greatest heroes, alongside Dan Daly, Smedley Butler, Joe Foss, and John Basilone.

General, your achievements leave us all in awe. In particular, it is hard to know whether we should be conferring on you a Medal of Honor for bravery or for modesty.

Let me tell you the story of how we happen to be here today, over 50 years later. Although the battle for Okinawa was still raging when his battlefield commanders nominated young Corporal Day* for this decoration, so many died in the fighting and so many reports were lost in the battle, the paperwork simply never went forward in 1945. General Day later said that awards weren't on their minds in those days. As he put it, "We just had a job to do, and we wanted to get the job done." Years later, when veterans of Sugar Loaf wanted to restart the process, Jim Day forbade them from doing so. Then a general, he felt that seeking such an honor would set a bad example for those he commanded.

General Day, everyone in our Nation, in the military and outside it, can learn a lot from your selfless conduct both under fire and throughout your life. In your modest service, as well as your heroism, you are a shining example to all Americans.

Today, as we applaud one extraordinary performance on Sugar Loaf, we also celebrate one of the most remarkable military careers in our Nation's history. Just days after the action we recall now, Jim Day distinguished himself again on Okinawa and received the Bronze Star for

* White House correction.

his heroism. During a career that spanned more than four decades, he rose from enlisted man through the ranks to major general, becoming one of the greatest mustangs the Marine Corps ever produced. In Korea, his valor in combat was recognized with two Silver Stars. In Vietnam, his leadership and bravery under fire earned him a third Silver Star. Just as astonishing, for his service in three wars, Jim Day received six Purple Hearts.

General, I'm told that your ability to absorb enemy fire led to a lively debate among those who served with you as to whether it was safer to stand near you or far away. [*Laughter*]

Amid all this heroism, General Day and his wife have also raised a fine family. He has given not only a lifetime of devotion to the Corps, he and Sally have brought up two more generations of marines: his son, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Day, and grandson, Lance Corporal Joshua Eustice, both of whom are here today, and we welcome you.

General, we thank you for a lifetime lived to the highest standards of patriotism, dedication, and bravery. For all marines and, indeed, for all your fellow Americans, you are the embodiment of the motto *Semper Fidelis*. You have been unerringly faithful to those who fought alongside you, to the Corps, and to the United States. We are profoundly fortunate to count you among our heroes. On behalf of all Americans, I thank you for a lifetime of service without parallel and for all you have done to preserve the freedom that is our most sacred gift. Thank you, sir.

Lieutenant Commander Huey, read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:29 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Paul Bucha, president, Congressional Medal of Honor Society; Maj. Gen. Robert F. Foley, USA, Commander, U.S. Army Military District of Washington; Capt. George W. Pucciarelli, USN, Chaplain, U.S. Marine Corps; and Lt. Comdr. Wesley Huey, USN, Naval Aide to the President.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

January 20, 1998

Thank you very much. I want to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to Roy Romer and Steve Grossman, to Carol Pensky and Cynthia Friedman, to Alan Solomont and Dan Dutko, and to all the other people who have labored in this past year, sometimes under enormously difficult circumstances, to make sure that our party could celebrate this 150th anniversary year strong, in good shape, poised for the future, and proud of the last 5 years. They have done a terrific job, and I am very grateful to them.

I want to thank Melissa Manchester for being here tonight. I was thinking, when I told her that Hillary and I used to listen to her tapes—over 20 years ago when I became attorney general of my State, I had a little tape deck in my car, and one of the tapes I used to play over and over again was "Melissa Manchester's Greatest Hits," until it actually broke, the tape did, I listened to it so many times. And I looked at her and I listened to her, and I thought, I'm older and grayer, and she looks just like she did 20 years ago. But I thank her for that.

I want to thank all of you for your loyalty, your support, your belief in what we're doing and where we're going. You know, I was very moved by what Steve Grossman said a few moments ago, because to me politics is about more than winning elections. Power has no value in and of itself. What we're here to do is to use what the American people give us momentarily to broaden their horizons and deepen their possibilities and bring us together.

Yesterday, on Martin Luther King Day, I had the privilege of going to Cardozo High School here in the District of Columbia to be part of what was called this year a day on, not a day off, a day of service. And there were all these young people there, students at the high school, teachers, and AmeriCorps volunteers. I met a young woman from Pennsylvania who came right out of high school and joined

AmeriCorps because she wanted to do community service before going to Colgate next year. I met two other young volunteers who just finished college. I met two of the students at this high school—picture of America—one born in Panama, the other came here 3 years ago from Ethiopia. I met the teacher in the classroom I was helping to paint, who had been a dedicated schoolteacher in the District of Columbia since 1968, and a young man who was her student who now teaches chemistry at his old high school.

It's so easy to forget in Washington, when you read the papers and you listen to all the political back and forth, that out there in this country there are all these people out there who get up every day and try to do something to be worthy of the citizenship that they have been given, to work hard to take care of their families, to serve their communities, to educate our children. And when I left there, I just felt so good about America and about the prospects for our future.

I can't believe I've been here 5 years. It seems like yesterday when we flew out of Arkansas, Hillary and Chelsea and I, and then we went down to Monticello, to Thomas Jefferson's home, and took the bus up here. We walked across the bridge and rang the bells at my first Inauguration. And now about 60 percent of it is over, but 40 percent of it isn't. [*Laughter*] And what I'd like to do tonight is just—you can read in the little brochure all the details. I want to talk a little about the big picture.

This country, in my opinion, has been the greatest democracy and now the longest lasting large democracy in human history because we found a way to merge our incredible practical sense with our principles in a Government that has permitted us to meet each new challenge and rise above it by growing more strong together and by widening the circle of freedom.

That's what happened when George Washington and the rest of them decided we'd be one country instead of 13 States. That's what happened when Abraham Lincoln gave his life to keep us from splitting apart and to get over slavery. That's what happened when Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson helped us to reap the benefits of the Industrial Revolution when people came to the cities from off the farms but also stood against its excesses, exploiting people, and exploiting our natural resources. It's what happened when Franklin Roosevelt reminded us that all we have to fear is fear and helped us to preserve freedom and come out of a Great Depression. For 50 years it has happened as we have built in our efforts to lift up this country in freedom, to fight racism, to fight the despoliation of our environment, to make our workplace safer, to do all the things that have happened.

The reason I ran for President is that I felt that we were losing our way back in 1991 and 1992, not just because unemployment was high and social problems were worsening and we seemed to be kind of uncertain in a lot of the things we were doing around the world, but because I had a sense of drift and division in this country and a sense that we weren't being animated by a unifying vision that would take us into this new century, which I believe will be the best time in humanity's existence.

Just think about it. We've had this explosion in science and technology and information, and it's changing everything—the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other. Everybody E-mails now. The Internet is the fastest growing means of communication in human history. I forget—somebody told me the other day how many homepages were added to the Internet every week; it took my breath away. And I can't remember—there were a bunch of zeros after the one; I can't remember how many.

In the scientific revolution, we confront all these incredible prospects that we may be able, for example, to heal people with spinal cord injuries. We may be able to uncover the secret of what causes Alzheimer's and reverse it. We've detected the gene that causes or at least makes women strongly predisposed to breast cancer. We may be able not only to cure it but prevent it. When the human genome project is finished, we'll be able to send babies home with a genetic code. It may be troubling in a few odd cases when the children are overwhelmingly likely to have something tragic happen to them, but for most people it will enable them to raise their children in ways that will lengthen their lives and increase the quality of it.

We're exploring the heavens in partnership with other countries. We're working increasingly in partnership with other countries in a globalized world that goes far beyond commerce. It's a very exciting time. But it's like every other new time; you can't just sort of wade into it and expect to have it come out

all right. And if we're going to widen the circle of freedom and success in America and strengthen the bonds between us, we have to recognize that there is also an explosion of diversity in the world that can be positive but can lead to conflict.

We have to recognize that just like when we changed from an agricultural to an industrial society, now that we're going to an information age, we're going to have to work real hard to see that everybody has a chance to win, because people, for example, without a good education are having a very tough time in this economy ever getting a raise, if they can get a job.

We have to recognize that there are new common strains on the environment of this old Earth that we must meet together, chief of which is climate change. We have to recognize that the most important job in every society is not getting rich, or even working hard to make somebody else rich, but raising children. And now that we have the highest percentage of Americans ever in the work force, the number one family problem many families face is how to balance their responsibilities as parents and as workers—not confined, I might add, to people who can't afford child care. Nearly every parent I've ever talked to, even people with quite comfortable incomes, has felt instances of genuine gnawing conflict.

We look at a world in which we hope to build a great community of peace, in specific places like Bosnia and Ireland and the Middle East, and generally through efforts like the Chemical Weapons Convention and strengthening our efforts against biological warfare and continuing to reduce the nuclear threat and expanding NATO and unifying Europe and working out new partnerships with China and Russia—all these things. But we also see an almost primitive resurgence of racial and ethnic hatreds and religious hatreds around the world, which, interestingly enough, the very technologies that should be bringing us together can also facilitate.

So what I tried to do was to say, "Let's back up, and let's see if we can't make some sense of what's going on and figure out how to do what Americans always do when everything changes. How can we get the benefits of change and deal with its challenges in a way that strengthens our unity and broadens the circle of freedom and opportunity?" And that's what we've been trying to do.

So the words that I have used so many times, they may seem trite to the people who cover my speeches or those of you who have to listen to them all the time: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans. That means something to me. I think about it every single day. And every day I say, "Have we expanded opportunity? Have we reinforced responsibility? Have we done something to strengthen our American community and our community of partnership with like-minded people throughout the world?"

All of the specific things we've done have been things that flowed out of that. And there were two specific changes that I sought to make, which the future will have to judge better than the rest of us here. One is, it seemed to me that the argument that was going on between the Republicans and the Democrats in Washington over the role of Government was pointless and ultimately destructive. I mean, since 1981, we've been—the Republicans essentially had argued that the American people should distrust and dislike their Government; that Government was the problem, holding Americans back, and if we just didn't have any of it, everything would be hunky-dory. Well, for us Democrats, that was an easy target, but it was too easy a target because we spent too much time arguing that they were wrong, and we could just do more of the same. But when things change, you can't do more of the same. And what we tried to say is, okay, we need a new Government. It ought to be smaller; it ought to be less bureaucratic; it ought to work in partnership with the private sector more. But it has certain essential functions.

First, it has to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives, in a world where, increasingly, people have independent access to information and have to make their own decisions about are they going to get an education, for example. That is why I predict to you 30 years from now when they look back on this time and see that we finally opened the doors of college to every American who would work for it and say, this may well be the most profound thing that happened in terms of giving all Americans the opportunity they need to succeed.

Next, we have to be a catalyst for new ideas and experiment, because at a time of change nobody has all the answers. But if you work at it, even things that look little may have a

big impact. There was an unbelievable article in a newspaper someone sent me the other day about how hardly any schools had school uniform policies until I went to Long Beach, California. And now 20 percent of the school districts with over 30 percent of the students in all of our public schools in America have schools with school uniform policies, and attendance is up, achievement is up, dropouts down, violence is down, disruptions down. It's moving the country forward. That's a little example.

For 20 years we've had something called the Community Reinvestment Act, which requires banks to invest money in communities that are traditionally overlooked—for 20 years. Eighty-six percent of the total investment made in our inner-city communities under that act has been made in the last 5 years. It works. It works. The unemployment rate in our cities—our 50 biggest cities—it's higher than the national average, but not as much as you would think. It's 6 percent now. It was about 12 percent when I took office. So we're moving forward.

And the last thing that we believe is that Government has a responsibility to help the helpless and to empower the disadvantaged. Now, we've been able to do that and cut 90-some percent of the deficit, give you the smallest Federal Government since President Kennedy, and in 1998, 3 years ahead of schedule, I'm going to give the Congress the balanced budget, and I believe they'll pass it. And it will be a big thing.

The second thing I tried to change people's minds about, I must say with a mixed record of success, is to make us understand how interdependent we are with the rest of the world and how it just really doesn't make sense anymore almost to talk about foreign and domestic policy. Take the crisis in the Asian financial market. Some people say, "Why is the President messing with that?" Well, an enormous amount of our exports in the last 5 years have gone to Asia—enormous amount. A third of our economic growth in the last 5 years has come from exports. If their currencies collapse, what does that mean? It means they don't have as much money to buy our exports because everything we sell over there all of a sudden becomes more expensive. Parenthetically, everything they compete with us in other markets for gives them an advantage because all their exports to other markets become cheaper. So it's not just something there, it's something here.

Well, you say, what about Bosnia? Well, what if it spread beyond the borders of Bosnia and ethnic hatreds engulfed a lot of the Balkans and other places, compelling us to send huge numbers of American soldiers later to die. That's a big problem for America. And if we don't stand up against ethnic hatred around the world, can we preserve harmony at home when we have our Christians and Jews and Orthodox Christians and Muslims here, just like they do there? That, to me, is the essence at the heart of the trade argument.

Interestingly enough, the differences we have there have, in my view, rarely been accurately interpreted. I believe the Democratic Party—all of our members—believe that economics cannot, in effect, take precedence over everything else in life and that we should try to lift the labor standards of the countries with which we trade, because if other folks get richer and they get their fair share of a nation's wealth, then they will buy more American products and they'll have more stable societies, they'll be better democracies. And besides that, it's just the right thing to do.

I believe that we should seek to have common efforts in the environment, because we know that an environmental problem in another part of the world can now affect us. And if we are irresponsible, we can adversely affect others.

I believe when we expand trade, most people are big winners, but there are some losers, and we have to do a better job of getting those people back on the winning track. We should give them more and better training more quickly. We should give them more support. We should do a better job. But the answer is not to try to pretend that the world is not integrating economically and to run away from the opportunities that Americans manifestly have to trade and, in trading, to build support for democracy and build partnerships and build people who will want to work with us in other ways. And I hope you will help me continue to do that over the next 3 years. The United States must continue to lead, but lead in partnership with other countries. And the Democrats ought to be on the forefront of that.

Now, all this has worked pretty well, I'd say, for the last 5 years. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the highest rate of homeownership in history, the highest percentage of people in the

work force in history, declining rates of teen pregnancy and divorce, declining rates of drug use. Finally, even juvenile crime is coming down. But this is not a time to sort of sit back and say, "Gee, that's great." I didn't come here tonight for a pat on the back. I came here to ask you to renew your dedication to keep this country moving forward. If this direction is working now, you know as well as I do we still have unmet challenges before we really can say we have built our children a bridge to the 21st century they can all walk across. And until we can say that, we have no business giving ourselves a pat on the back. We've got lots of time left, lots of work to do, and I want you to leave here with your energy renewed for the fights, the struggles, and the issues of 1998 and beyond.

The evidence of the last 5 years is all the evidence you need to know that we need to keep on going. The first thing we need to do is balance the budget. Everybody is talking about what to do with the surplus. You know, nobody else would talk like this; only Government people could talk about what to do with a surplus when we've had a deficit every year since 1969, we quadrupled the debt since 1980, and we don't have a balanced budget yet. So it may be sort of old-fashioned, but if I might modestly suggest, let us balance the budget first, and then we can talk about the rest.

The second thing I'd like to say is, we have some new proposals that we think will help people deal with the challenges of the next generation. One is, since we've got more people than ever before in the workplace, but since raising a child is the most important thing, we need to do more to make quality child care, safe child care, affordable for more Americans. That's what is at the heart of our child care initiative. It's so people can know their kids are okay when they're at work. And it is very important.

The second thing we're going to do, and this is completely paid for in the budget, and I hope Congress will adopt it, is to say to the people who are in their later work years but not yet eligible for Medicare, they ought to be able to buy into Medicare if they're 55 or over and they get laid off and they can't get another job; or if they take early retirement from a company that promised them health insurance and then won't give it to them; or if they're married to an older spouse who quits work, goes on Medicare, and they're not eligible for it and they can't get health insurance anywhere. Now, a lot of these people will get help from their children in buying these policies, but they can't get policies now. I say do that.

What is the moral argument behind denying people access to a policy that is paid for that will not increase the deficit or wreck the Medicare Trust Fund? It is the right thing to do. It's a Democratic program within the constraints of fiscal discipline. And I hope you will support that. [*Applause*] Thank you.

There are a lot of other great things that are going to happen. And I ask for your support. But the main thing I want you to—if you leave here tonight and you think, "I'm proud to be a Democrat; these past 5 years were right; we've got the right philosophy for America; we're pulling America together," then I want you to leave committed to keep on doing it, because we need you badly.

Let me just leave you with this story. Today I had one of those wonderful experiences that comes to you when you're President. I bestowed the Congressional Medal of Honor on someone. And you say, well, we're not in a war now. Well, let me tell you this story. I bestowed the Congressional Medal of Honor on a retired marine major general who was 54 years ago a corporal on the island of Okinawa in the bloodiest battle of the war in the Pacific. And his job was to take a mountain called Sugar Loaf. And they got into a crater—a big kind of shell crater—he and his squad. His whole squad was wiped out. For 3 days—2 nights and 3 full days—he stayed awake, often alone. He lost all his men; they were either all killed or wounded. He left two or three times to take other wounded people to safety, always returning when he could have just stayed away, always going back to his post. He repelled assault after assault after assault after assault after assault. In the end, only one wounded marine was there helping him. For 3 solid days he stayed awake, and when finally they rescued him, there were 100—100—enemy casualties all around him.

The paperwork for his Medal of Honor was lost. Somehow, you know, a lot of records got lost at the end of World War II. Later, he went to Korea, where he won two Silver Stars for valor in combat. Later, he went to Vietnam, where he won another Silver Star for valor in combat. After three wars, he had six Purple Hearts. And so everybody in the Marine Corps

wanted to put him up for the Medal of Honor because they had misplaced his records, and he ordered them not do it. He said it was not the right thing for a man who is a general in the Marine Corps to permit his name to be elevated in that way. So it took him until he had spent nearly 40 years in the Marine Corps and retired as a major general and moved to California, until this could be done. It was an awesome event.

Why am I telling you this? Because every one of you must be just as moved as I was by the story. Not everyone could have been on Okinawa; not everyone could have done that. But everyone can be what he was: a loyal, good-serving citizen. Everyone could be in a school like the school I was in yesterday. My staff did some research and concluded that if everybody in the American phone books with the last name of Clinton or Gore would volunteer 2 hours a week, we could paint every classroom in every high school in America by Martin Luther King's next birthday. Now, that's a funny thing to say, but you think about it. You think about it.

This is a great country, and we have met every challenge. I am so grateful for these last 5 years. I am so pleased that America is doing so well. But remember, no one—no one—could have anticipated the scope or the pace of the changes through which we are going. And believe me, no one can see the end of it. There is no visionary that has imagined the future completely. We are not finished. We have a lot of work to do.

We have work to do to reform the entitlements so they'll be there for our children without bankrupting our grandchildren. We have work to do to preserve the environment. We have work to do to spread economic opportunity to all of our people. We have work to do to lift the academic standards and the educational opportunities of all of our children. We have work to do in this world to make it a safe world, not a dangerous world, for our kids in the 21st century. We have work to do. So celebrate the last 5 years by making the next 3 even better.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 p.m. in the Main Atrium at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Steve Grossman, national chair, Carol Pensky, treasurer, and Alan D. Solomont, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Cynthia Friedman, national co-chair, Women's Leadership Forum; Dan Dutko, chair, DNC Victory Fund; and entertainer Melissa Manchester.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Emigration Policies and Trade Status of Mongolia

January 20, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 4, 1996, I determined and reported to the Congress that Mongolia was not in violation of the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. This action allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation status for Mongolia and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver.

As required by law, I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Mongolia. The report indicates continued Mongolian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 21.

Interview With Jim Lehrer of the PBS "News Hour"
January 21, 1998

Mr. Lehrer. Mr. President, welcome.

The President. Thank you, Jim.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Lehrer. The news of this day is that Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel, is investigating allegations that you suborned perjury by encouraging a 24-year-old woman, former White House intern, to lie under oath in a civil deposition about her having had an affair with you. Mr. President, is that true?

The President. That is not true. That is not true. I did not ask anyone to tell anything other than the truth. There is no improper relationship. And I intend to cooperate with this inquiry. But that is not true.

Mr. Lehrer. "No improper relationship"—define what you mean by that.

The President. Well, I think you know what it means. It means that there is not a sexual relationship, an improper sexual relationship, or any other kind of improper relationship.

Mr. Lehrer. You had no sexual relationship with this young woman?

The President. There is not a sexual relationship—that is accurate.

We are doing our best to cooperate here, but we don't know much yet. And that's all I can say now. What I'm trying to do is to contain my natural impulses and get back to work. I think it's important that we cooperate. I will cooperate. But I want to focus on the work at hand.

Mr. Lehrer. Just for the record, to make sure I understand what your answer means, so there's no ambiguity about it——

The President. There is no——

Mr. Lehrer. All right. You had no conversations with this young woman, Monica Lewinsky, about her testimony, possible testimony before—in giving a taped deposition?

The President. I did not urge anyone to say anything that was untrue. I did not urge anyone to say anything that was untrue. That's my statement to you.

Mr. Lehrer. Did you talk to her about it—excuse me, I'm sorry——

The President. And beyond that, I think it's very important that we let the investigation take its course. But I want you to know that that is my clear position. I didn't ask anyone to go in there and say something that's not true.

Mr. Lehrer. What about your having—another one of the allegations is that you may have asked—or the allegation that's being investigated is that you asked your friend Vernon Jordan——

The President. To do that.

Mr. Lehrer. ——to do that.

The President. I absolutely did not do that. I can tell you I did not do that. I did not do that. He is in no way involved in trying to get anybody to say anything that's not true at my request. I didn't do that.

Now, I don't know what else to tell you. I don't even know—all I know is what I have read here. But I'm going to cooperate. I didn't ask anybody not to tell the truth. There is no improper relationship. The allegations I have read are not true. I do not know what the basis of them is, other than just what you know. We'll just have to wait and see. And I will be vigorous about it. But I have got to get back to the work of the country.

I was up past midnight with Prime Minister Netanyahu last night; I've got Mr. Arafat coming in; we've got action all over the world and a State of the Union to do. I'll do my best to cooperate with this, just as I have through every other issue that's come up over the last several years. But I have got to get back to work.

Mr. Lehrer. Would you acknowledge, though, Mr. President, this is very serious business, this charge against you that's been made?

The President. And I will cooperate in the inquiry of it.

Mr. Lehrer. What's going on? If it's not true, that means somebody made this up. Is that—

The President. Look, you know as much about this as I do right now. We'll just have to look into it and cooperate. And we'll see. But meanwhile, I've got to go on with the work of the country. I got hired to help the rest of the American people.

Pope John Paul II and Cuba-U.S. Relations

Mr. Lehrer. All right. Speaking of the work of the country, other news today, the Pope is arriving in Cuba almost as we speak.

The President. Good thing.

Mr. Lehrer. All right. Is the time come, maybe, for the United States to also bury some economic and political hatchets with Cuba?

The President. Well, I think that our previous policy, the one that we've had now and the one we've had through Republican and Democratic administrations, of keeping economic pressure on and denying the legitimacy of the Cuban Government, has been a good policy. I have made it clear from the day I got here that we would be prepared to respond to a substantial effort at political or economic opening by Cuba. And we have, as you know, a system for communicating with each other. Nothing would please me greater than to see a new openness there that would justify a response on our part, and I would like to work on it, and I think Mr. Castro knows that. I've tried to proceed in good faith here.

Mr. Lehrer. Have you thought about doing something dramatic? I mean, this is your second term—getting on an airplane and going down, or inviting him to come up here, something like that—just like what the Pope is doing?

The President. I'm glad the Pope is going there. I hope that we will have some real progress toward freedom and opening there, and I'll work on it. But that's still mostly up to Mr. Castro.

Mr. Lehrer. Why is it up to him?

The President. Well, because—look what the Pope is saying. The Pope is saying, "I hope you will release these political prisoners." You know, no American President getting on an airplane and going down there or having him come up here is going to deal with that. I mean, the Cuban-American community—I know a lot of people think they've been too hard on this, but they do have the point that there has been no discernible change in the climate of freedom there. And I hope that the Pope's visit will help to expand freedom, and I hope that after that we'll be able to talk about it a little bit.

Mr. Lehrer. The Pope, in fact, was interviewed on his plane a while ago by some reporters, and they asked him, "What message would you give to the American people?" And he said—about the embargo—and he said, "To change, to change, to change." That would be his message to the American people.

The President. His Holiness is a very great man, and his position on this is identical to that, as far as I know, of every other European leader. And only time will tell whether they were right or we were.

Mr. Lehrer. Explain to Americans who don't follow the Cuban issue very carefully why Cuba is different, say, than China, a Communist country, North Korea, a Communist country, Vietnam—we had a war with Vietnam, as we did with Korea and in some ways China as well. We have relations with them. Why is Cuba different?

The President. I think Cuba is different, in no small measure, because of the historic legacy we have with them going back to the early sixties. I think it's different because it's the only Communist dictatorship in our hemisphere, a sort of blot on our neighborhood's commitment to freedom and openness. And a lot of Americans have suffered personal losses there of significant magnitude. And I think, as a practical matter, we probably think we can have a greater influence through economic sanctions in Cuba than we can in other places.

Now, I have worked over the last 5 years in a number of different ways to explore other alternatives in dealing with this issue, and I wouldn't shut the door on any other alternative. But I believe that our denial of legitimacy to the government and our economic pressure has at least made sure that others didn't go down that path, and that now, I think, it's one of the reasons that every country in this hemisphere is a democracy and a market economy except for Cuba. I think a lot of people forget what the impact of our policy toward Cuba and what the highlighting of the Cubans' policies have done to change the governmental structures in other countries in our neighborhood.

So I'm hoping—nobody in the world would be happier than me to see a change in Cuba and a change in our policy before I leave office. But we have to have both; we just can't have one without the other.

Mr. Lehrer. You don't see anything happening anytime soon as a result of the Pope's visit?

The President. Oh, no, I'm very hopeful. I was very pleased when I heard he was going. I wanted him to go, and I hope it will be a good thing.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Lehrer. The Middle East: As you said a moment ago, you met with Mr. Netanyahu

twice yesterday; you meet with Mr. Arafat tomorrow. First, on Netanyahu, what is it exactly you want him to do?

The President. Well, let's talk about what he wants. What we want is not nearly as important as what he wants, what the Palestinians want, what the other people in the Middle East want. What we want is a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. What I believe that he and his government want is an agreement to go to final status talks in the peace process under circumstances that they believe maximize their security. I think what the Palestinians want is an agreement that moves them toward self-determination under circumstances that maximize their ability to improve the lives of their people and the reach of their popular government.

And we've been out there now for a year—I mean another year, of course, 5 years since I've been President—but since the Hebron withdrawal, we've been out there for a year in the Middle East looking around, listening, talking, watching the frustration, seeing the growing difficulties in the Middle East peace process. And we came up with an approach that we thought, in the ballpark, would satisfy both sides' objectives.

We worked with Mr. Netanyahu yesterday exhaustively to try to narrow the differences. And we didn't get them all eliminated, but we made some headway. And we're going to work with Mr. Arafat tomorrow to try to do that. And then we're going to try to see if there's some way we can put them together. And I'm very hopeful, because I think it's not good for them to keep on fooling with this and not making progress.

Mr. Lehrer. Why does it matter that much to an American President that these two men get together and make an agreement?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it matters in the Middle East because of our historic ties to Israel and the difficulty that it would cause us if there were another war in the region. Secondly, of course, we have major energy interests in the region; a big part of our economic recovery is having access to it. The third thing is we have a lot of friends in the region, beyond Israel, and if they all fall out with one another that's bad for America.

And of course, then if deprivation among the Palestinians leads to a rise of violence and leads to a rise of more militant Islamic fundamentalism in other countries throughout the region, then that could be a destabilizing fact that could really make things tough—if not for me, then for my successors down the road and for the American people down the road in the 21st century.

Mr. Lehrer. So you believe with those who say only America can make peace in the Middle East?

The President. I believe America is uniquely situated to help to broker a peace in the Middle East. I actually believe only the parties can make peace in the Middle East. I think only Israel and the Palestinians and Syria and Lebanon can join Jordan at that table; that's what I think. I think in the end we need to be very aggressive in stating what our views are; we need to fight hard to at least have our position taken seriously; but in the end, you know, they have to live with the consequences of what they do or don't do, all of them do. And they're going to have to make their own peace.

Mr. Lehrer. The word around, as I'm sure you know, is that you and Netanyahu really just don't like each other very much. Is that right?

The President. I don't think so. It's certainly not true on my part. But we have had differences of opinion on occasion in approach to the peace process, and then there has been a little smattering in the press here, there, and yonder about those differences and whether they were personal in nature. But for me, they're not personal in nature. I enjoy him very much. I like being with him. I like working with him.

We had a difficult, hard day yesterday. We had a long session in the morning, and then he worked with our team, including the Vice President, the Secretary of State, through much of the afternoon. Then after my dinner last night, I came back, and we worked again for a couple hours. So it's hard to do that if you don't like somebody. I really believe that he is an energetic man, and I think that within the limits of his political situation, I believe he's hoping to be able to make a peace and to get to the point where he and Mr. Arafat can negotiate that.

But our job is to see, if you will, from a different perspective, the positions of both the Palestinians and the Israelis. It's sort of like standing too close to an impressionist painting sometime—there's lots of dots on the canvas and the people who are standing too close to it, even though they're painting the canvas, may get lost in the weeds, and then the people that

are standing back can see the picture. And it's a beautiful picture if it all gets painted.

So that's what I'm trying to do. I have to keep backing the painters back, so they can see the whole picture, and then getting to the details and trying to help them ram it home. Because the one thing that I worry about is, you just sit there and have the same old conversation over and over again until the cows come home, and it's easy to do. So that's what I'm trying to—I'm trying to broker this thing, be a catalyst, get the people together, and give an honest view of what the picture looks like from back here about what the two artists can live with.

Mr. Lehrer. Well, some people say that it doesn't look like, to the innocent observer, that either one of these guys want to make peace; that you may be forcing them to do something that deep down in their either political hearts or otherwise——

The President. That could be.

Mr. Lehrer. ——they just don't want to do it.

The President. That could be. And I don't know what to say about that.

Mr. Lehrer. But you're not going to give up on it?

The President. No. No. You know, if I don't make any progress, I'll level with the American people and the rest of the world and tell them I'm doing my best but I'm not making any progress. But we were hitting it last night until late, and then we're getting ready now for Mr. Arafat to come, and we'll hit it hard tomorrow. And that's all I know to tell you; we're just going to keep hitting it.

Asian Economies

Mr. Lehrer. On Asia, the Asia financial crisis, what business is it of the United States to save these failing Asian economies?

The President. Well, first of all, we can't save the Asian economies if they won't take primary steps to help themselves, the way Mexico did. You remember, we loaned Mexico some money, and they paid back early with interest, and we made about $500 million because they took tough steps to restore economic growth and create jobs, raise incomes, and get their financial house in order.

That's the first and most important thing the Asians have to do. But in order to make it, they also need the backup of the International Monetary Fund and a plan designed to deal with the particular problems of each country, and then the U.S. and Japan and Germany and the rest of the Europeans to stand behind that to say, if necessary, we will put together a package to really restore confidence. In most of these Asian economies, the problem is the financial system and people can't pay back their loans or investors take their loans—when their loans are repaid, investors take the money and go somewhere else.

What's that got to do with America? Well, every day now in some of our newspapers you can see what's happening in the Asian stock markets and the Asian currency markets. What happens when a country's currency drops? When a country's currency drops, it doesn't have as much money in dollars, and therefore it can't buy as many American exports. A big part of America's economic growth since 1993 has occurred from exports, a big part of that from exports to Asia. If the value of all their money goes down, they can't keep buying our exports. And that hurts us. Also, if the value of their money goes down, everything they sell in other places in the world is all of a sudden much cheaper, so they can push us out of those markets.

Mr. Lehrer. Cheaper than our stuff?

The President. Correct. So if you want to just look at the plain, brutal, short-term economic interest, that's the short-term economic interest. If you want to look at the long run, we've got an interest in Asia in having stable democracies that are our partners, that work with us to help grow the region and grow with us over the long run to help shoulder burdens like climate change, cleaning up the environment, dealing with global disease, dealing with weapons of mass destruction, contributing to the efforts in Bosnia, ending the nuclear program in North Korea. All those things we depend on the Asian countries to be a part of. They can only do that if they're strong. So, we live in a world that's so interdependent that we need them to be strong if we're going to be strong.

Mr. Lehrer. As you know, there's some Members of Congress who are saying what this really boils down to is welfare for international bankers—that's what we're up to. How do you respond to that? That's going to get—that seems to be growing particularly in the last few days.

The President. It bothers me a lot. First of all, there's some truth to it. That is, if a country like Indonesia gets money from the International

Monetary Fund to deal with its financial problems, what are its financial problems? You've got to pay notes when they're coming due. And if somebody made a foolish loan that they should not have made in the first place, that's an only 90-day loan on a building that's going to last for 20 years, for example, you hate to see them get their money back plus a profit at someone else's expense.

On the other hand—and let me say, we're sensitive to that. Secretary Rubin has done a very good job of trying to get these big banks to roll over their debt.

Mr. Lehrer. Take some hits themselves?

The President. Take some hits—at least ride the roller coaster. They'll actually get their interest back——

Mr. Lehrer. If they'll hang in there.

The President. ——and the principal if they hang in there. But they need to hang in there. They don't need to just take the money and run.

On the other hand, if you start saying, well, everybody is going to get half back of what they put in, that will actually speed the rate at which people take money out and reduce the rate at which people put money in; you don't rebuild confidence, and therefore the collapse is more costly. That's what bothers me.

I mean, nobody likes the idea—I don't think any American likes the idea that every single banker in one of these countries that made every bad loan will get paid back. And that, in fact, won't happen. But when you try to pay back most things to stabilize the situation, the reason you're doing it is not to give the people who made the loans their money back; the reason you're doing it is to send a signal to the world that business is back up and going, that you have to be more careful now, but you can trust this country now and you can invest.

So I think—I'm convinced we're doing the right thing for our own economy. I'm convinced we're doing the right thing for our values and our principles. And I hope I can persuade the Congress that we are.

Situation in Iraq

Mr. Lehrer. All right. Another subject, Iraq—bad news today. Apparently, Mr. Butler left. What can you tell us about where that thing stands, in terms of whether the inspectors are going to be allowed to do what they want to do, et cetera?

The President. They seem to want to wait until early March to open the——

Mr. Lehrer. Iraq does?

The President. Iraq—open the sites that Mr. Butler believes that ought to be open. That's a problem for us because we believe that we have to do everything we can, as quickly as we can, to check for chemical and biological weapons stocks. And as I told the American people the last time we had the standoff with Saddam, before he relented and let the inspectors go back, my concern is not to re-fight the Gulf war; my concern is to prepare our people for a new century, not only in positive ways like creating a big international financial framework that works for them, as that we just talked about, but also to make sure we have the tools to protect ourselves against chemical and biological weapons.

So tonight I can't rule out, or in, any options. But I can tell you I'm very concerned about this, and I don't think the American people should lose sight of the issue. What's the issue? Weapons of mass destruction. What's the answer? The U.N. inspectors. What's the problem? Saddam Hussein can't say who, where, or when about these inspection teams. That has to be done by the professionals. And sooner or later, something is going to give here, and I'm just very much hoping that we can reason with him before that happens. But we've got to have those sites open.

Mr. Lehrer. Now, Ambassador Richardson with the U.N. and others in the administration have said the military option—just to pick up, just to continue your sentence—the military option remains on the table. The Ambassador from Iraq to the U.N. was on our program recently, and he pretty much acknowledged that Iraq is banking on that not being real, that the U.S. alone is not going to go in there and take out some suspected anthrax facility, particularly if it's in the palace where Saddam Hussein lives, et cetera, et cetera.

The President. The United States does not relish moving alone, because we live in a world that is increasingly interdependent. We'd like to be partners with other people. But sometimes we have to be prepared to move alone. You used the anthrax example. Think how many people can be killed by just a tiny bit of anthrax. And think about how it's not just a question of whether Saddam Hussein might put them on a Scud missile—an anthrax head—and send

it to some city of people he wanted to destroy. Think about all the terrorists and drug runners and other bad actors that could just parade through Baghdad to pick up their stores if we don't take the strongest possible action.

I far prefer the United Nations; I far prefer the inspectors. I have been far from trigger-happy on this thing. But if they really believe that there are no circumstances under which we would act alone, they are sadly mistaken.

And that is not a threat. I have shown that I do not relish this sort of thing. Every time it's discussed around here—I said, you know, one of the great luxuries of being the world's only superpower for a while—and it won't last forever, probably, but for a while—is that there is always time enough to kill. And therefore, we have a moral responsibility to show restraint and to seek partnerships and alliances. And I've done that.

But I don't want to have to explain to my grandchildren why we took a powder on what we think is a very serious biological and chemical weapons program, potentially, by a country that has already used chemical weapons on the Iranians and on the Kurds, their own people.

Mr. Lehrer. So you would order an air strike or whatever it would take to take out some facility if you couldn't get rid of it any other way?

The President. Well, I'm going to stay with my tried and true formulation: I'm not ruling out, or in, any option. I was responding to what you said, that the Iraqi official thought we were just talking because we wouldn't want to discomfit anyone or make them mad. That's not true. This is a serious thing with me. This is a very serious thing. And you imagine the capacity of these tiny amounts of biological agents to cause great harm; it's something we need to get after.

And I don't understand why they're not for getting after it. What can they possibly get out of this? If he really cared about his people—he's always talking about how bad his people have been hurt by these sanctions—if he really cared about his people he'd open all these sites, let everybody go in and look at them——

Mr. Lehrer. And get it behind him.

The President. If he's telling the truth, there's nothing there; and if he's not, he'd get it behind it one way or the other. And we could then—he could say, "Okay, what grounds does the United States have now for stopping the U.N. from lifting the sanctions? I have done everything I've been asked to do." And that would be a hard question for us, even though we've got reservations. We'd have a hard time answering that question.

Mr. Lehrer. But would you go along with lifting the sanctions?

The President. Right now—our position is, if he complies with all the United Nations sanctions—the conditions of all U.N. resolutions leading to sanctions, that that's what we want Iraq to do. But what he wants is, he wants to have it both ways. He wants to get the sanctions lifted because he thinks people want to do business with him, and he wants to be able to continue to pursue a weapons program that we think presents a danger to the region and maybe to the world and certainly to our own interests and values.

So I just want him to think about it again before they wait all this 2 months. I think that's a mistake. I want him to think about it and let these inspectors go back.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Mr. Lehrer. One more foreign policy area, and that's Bosnia. That just hasn't worked out the way you had hoped, has it?

The President. Well, it hasn't worked out as fast as I'd hoped, but it actually is kind of working out the way I had hoped in the sense that the Dayton peace agreement is very much alive and well. And we've separated the troops—I mean the forces—and the people, and we've got some relocation going on, and we've collected a lot of the bad weapons and destroyed them. We're making some progress on the joint institutions and other things, and we're trying to get that country together.

And I must say, I was very impressed on my recent trip there by the level of support for the United States and the international community in our presence there, the level of support for our staying there, and the level of commitment of so many people to genuine pursuit of peace. And I think we can make it in Bosnia.

Did I think we could all withdraw by now? Yes, I did. But if you had told me, on the other hand—that's the down side. If you had told me, on the other hand, you can go there and stay a couple of years and there won't be any gunshots fired, and the only people you'll lose will be in accidents of one kind or another,

and you'll have an increasing amount of harmony in the urbanized areas that you hadn't imagined you would get, and some of the other positive things that have happened, I think we'd all been very happy about that.

So I'm going to stay after this. Again, this may be my congenital optimism, but I believe we're going to make the Bosnian peace process work.

Mr. Lehrer. U.S. troops are going to have to be there a long time, aren't they, Mr. President?

The President. That depends on how long it takes to achieve the mission. What I do think we should do, since it just invites recalcitrance on the part of any parties in Bosnia that don't want to do something that's in the Dayton peace agreement, if the Americans say, "Well, we're leaving in a year," and then the Europeans say, "We're going to leave as soon as they do," then the people who have to make changes say, "Well, all I've got to do is hang around a year, and I won't have to make any changes at all." So I think we should lift the sort of time certain——

Mr. Lehrer. No more deadlines.

The President. ——for withdrawal. Yes. Because it—the world community really hasn't done anything like this in a while—not like this—and it's very complicated. But on the other hand, at bottom, it's about people getting along together and working together and serving together as citizens. And I have been quite impressed by how much has been done.

U.S. Role in an Interdependent World

Mr. Lehrer. We've been talking now about all these foreign policy things and I was just—if you were to go back through here, only the U.S. can keep peace in Bosnia; only the U.S. can make peace—and make peace in the Middle East; only the U.S. can stabilize——

The President. Facilitate peace.

Mr. Lehrer. Yes, facilitate peace.

The President. Whatever that word is.

Mr. Lehrer. Okay, facilitate peace.

The President. They've got to make the peace.

Mr. Lehrer. Okay. Only the U.S. can help stabilize the economies of Asia; only the U.S. can stare down Saddam Hussein in Iraq. If there are going to be any coalitions, the U.S. has to organize them and make them work. Is this the role of the United States of America for the immediate future?

The President. Well, it's a big part of it. But it also is a part of our role to put together a broad coalition on the climate change treaty to deal with global warming. It's also our role to put together global efforts to stiffen our efforts against biological warfare, or to put together a global effort to support the International Monetary Fund and nations themselves in dealing with the Asian financial crisis.

We live in a world that is interdependent in two or three ways. Number one, what happens in one country affects what happens in another one. We can see that. Number two, what happens on economic issues increasingly has a security impact, and vice versa. I'll just give you—the most blatant example is there's all these articles in the paper about all these countries, that their currency dropped and therefore they can't buy jet airplanes for their air forces. That's the most obvious case.

Mr. Lehrer. Thailand, for example.

The President. Yes. So there's the economics and the security; there's the national and the international. There's all this interdependence. And I just think that in this world, if you happen to be at the moment it's occurring, that this huge new world of interdependence is occurring—and plus you've got all this interdependence at a citizen level with the Internet exploding and the information explosion. We're going to have all kinds of implications with the scientific explosions going on now. And we just happen to be, at this moment in history, the strongest and the wealthiest country around. It is a unique gift for our people. They've worked hard for it, but it's still a blessing. But it's also a unique responsibility.

And, you know, looking back over the last 5 years—I just celebrated my 5th anniversary here—I think that our administration has had good success in changing the role of Government, in changing the debate about Government from—you know, the debate I heard for the 12 years before I got here was, the Government is the problem versus Government is the solution. And we've sort of come up with, no, no, Government is neither. Government is a catalyst; it's got to give people the tools to solve their own problems; it's got to be a good partner; it's got to empower neighborhoods and people. So we've got a smaller, more active Government, and yet we've invested more in education, more in science and technology, more in the

environment. And it's working, and we've got good results.

We've not been as successful in convincing people in very practical terms about the interdependence of foreign and domestic policy, of economic and security policy. We just haven't been. But I'm hoping we can be more successful.

Mr. Lehrer. The way it would come back to you would be this way, Mr. President. If there's a problem, like Asia has an economic problem, we're the folks that send the most money. You had a problem in Bosnia, Somalia, a military problem; we're the ones that send the most troops. That's how it translates in practice.

The President. Yes, but if you look at it—if you look at—there are some areas in the Bosnian peacekeeping operation, like civilian police, for example, where the Europeans have 9 times as many as we do. We put up more money. You look at the different allocations.

If you look at what's going on in the United Nations, if the congressional position—which is that we ought to have our U.N. dues lowered to 20 percent—prevails, since a lot of really poor countries pay even less than their fair share of the world's GNP, we'd actually be getting off light compared to many, many other countries—really light. So it's just not true that we always pay an unfair share, but it is true that we are called upon to bear the largest burden.

If it helps us, I think we ought to do it. And if it's right and we can do it at an acceptable price, we ought to do it, whether or not we're sure it helps us. But it's hard to quarrel with the argument that we've been hurt by having 220-odd trade agreements in the last 5 years, when you look at what's happened, and a third of our growth coming out of trade. It's hard to quarrel with the argument that we've been hurt by our leadership in Bosnia or the Middle East, in Northern Ireland or any of these other places.

It's hard to quarrel with the fact that our efforts to work with other countries to deal with chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, to deal with climate change, to deal with global disease spread, those things are good for Americans right where they live. And we just simply don't have an option to say, "Well, I'm sorry, it looks bad in the newspaper today so I think I'll check out of this old world." But it looked pretty good there for a couple of years, and we were getting a whole lot more than we were giving, so we liked that.

We've got to be consistent, and we've got to realize that there is an interdependence within our country, on each other, and beyond our country. And I've been working on that. And I'm supposed to be a pretty good communicator, but I don't think I've done as well as I need to. I've got to do more to persuade people.

Racial Divisions in America

Mr. Lehrer. On a domestic issue, one that you've also been talking about a lot—recently, in particular, but you've always talked about it—and that's the racial divisions in this country. Where would you put that in terms of your own concerns and the concerns that you think the average American should have about their country right now as we sit here?

The President. Well, I think the average American should be concerned about it particularly as it relates to the racial disparities in the results we get in living and working and educating in America. I mean, if you look at the number of minorities who are in poor inner-city schools, where the performance is lower than it should be; if you look at the number of people who either don't have jobs or are still underemployed, no matter how strong the economy is; if you look at the patterns of opportunity wherever there are differences, I think we should be concerned about that.

And we don't have to have a fight over affirmative action every time. We can actually say, how are we going to make it possible for more people to live together, learn together, and serve together and work together at the same level of excellence? I think everybody should be concerned about it. I think everybody ought to be concerned about discrimination where it still exists—and it still does.

And finally, you know, the Vice President gave a brilliant speech on Martin Luther King's Day, Monday, down in Atlanta, talking about how profoundly embedded in the human heart and culture and history the feelings of racial prejudice are. And I think it's really worth—if we're going to be an interdependent country leading an interdependent world, then all this interdependence has got to work. And with all of our diversity, we've got to keep working on it hard. It's not just a question of education. You've got to really work at it all the time.

Mr. Lehrer. Why are you having trouble getting some blunt talk started on this?

The President. I don't know—we finally got some blunt talk going on affirmative action. And there were some pretty compelling stories told in Phoenix the other day. But I would like to see some blunt talk.

Mr. Lehrer. On affirmative action?

The President. Well, we had some blunt talk on affirmative action. I don't think the whole debate ought to be about affirmative action.

I mean, you know, look at what we've done, for example, with something that's supposed to have a civil rights impact that's largely economic, the Community Reinvestment Act. It passed in 1977, over 20 years ago. Now, the Community Reinvestment Act was set up to say to the bank regulators, "Look, you guys go in and look at these banks and tell them, you've got to take some of your money and invest it in inner cities and neighborhoods and with people who otherwise would not get it so they have a chance to build homes, to build businesses, to create jobs, to build neighborhoods." In the 20-year history of the Community Reinvestment Act, 85 percent-plus of the money loaned out under it to poor inner-city neighborhoods has been loaned in the 5 years since I've been President.

So I think there are things we can do to improve education, to improve job growth, to improve not just having jobs but also income and ownership among minorities, to create opportunities for service that will bring people together, that will also mean fewer racial discrimination claims that have to be dealt with by Government, and also I think will help to tame the savage heart that still lurks within so many of us.

President's Goals and Accomplishments

Mr. Lehrer. What should the American people think about their President right now? You're going into your—the last 3 years of your administration; you got all this controversy today; you've got all kinds of things in the air.

The President. I think they ought to, first of all, think that—I came to office after the '92 election with a real theory of what I wanted to do to build America's bridge to the 21st century; that I wanted to strengthen our Union, and I wanted to broaden our set of opportunities, and I wanted to deepen our freedom, and I wanted to prepare for this modern world.

I had an idea about changing the philosophy of Government, which I talked about earlier. I had an idea that all of our policies ought to be rooted in my three little words: opportunity, responsibility, and community. We had a plan for changing the economic policy of the country, the welfare policy of the country, the crime policy of the country, the policy helping people balance work and family, of integrating economic and other kinds of foreign policy. We had all these plans, and I think you'd have to say, on balance, it's working pretty good.

So the first thing I would hope they say is, the President might be right about his philosophy of Government and the values and the principles that we ought to be looking to, and about this whole interdependence business—because we do have the lowest unemployment rate, the lowest inflation rate in a generation, the lowest crime rate in a generation, the biggest drop in welfare ever, dropping rates of juvenile crime, teen pregnancy, drug use, and we're moving ahead in the world.

The second thing I'd like for them to say is, we've still got some significant challenges out there before we are completely prepared for this new era. We've got the entitlement challenge: How are our parents going to be on Social Security and how are the baby boomers going to be on Social Security without bankrupting their kids? We've got the work and family challenge still there: How can you do the most important work of society, raising children, and still be good at work? We've got the environment and economy challenge out there: How do you deal with climate change and clean air, clean water, safe food, diseases spreading—all this sort of stuff—preserving the environment, growing the economy? Those are just three of the big changes out there.

Look at the world. You know, in America we talk about diversity, and it's a real positive thing. We say we're going to get all these people together. In a world where the Internet can also give you information about how to make a terrorist bomb, and there's more and more diversity among religious and racial and ethnic hatreds, how can you make sure the world is about community, not conflict?

These are huge questions. And I don't think any serious person believes we've resolved all these questions. So when I look at '98, yes, I want to balance the budget; yes, I've got this great child care initiative which deals with work

and family; I've got a Medicare initiative and the Medicare commission, which deals with honoring our obligations to our parents. But we've still got a bunch of work to do.

So the second thing I want them to say is, yes, he was right the first 5 years, and we're way ahead of where we were 5 years ago, but we've got a huge amount to do yet, a huge amount before we're really ready for the year 2000 and the 21st century.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Lehrer. But on a more personal level, Mr. President, you're a week from your State of the Union Address, and here you're under investigation for a very, very serious crime—allegation of a serious crime. I mean, what does that do to your ability to do all of these things that we've been talking about, whether it's the Middle East or whether it's child care reform or what?

The President. Well, I've got to do my best. I'd be less than candid if I said it was just hunky-dory. But I've been living with this sort of thing for a long time. And my experience has been, unfortunately, sometimes when one charge dies, another one just lifts up to take its place. But I can tell you, whatever I feel about it, I owe it to the American people to put it in a little box and keep working for them. This job is not like other jobs in that sense. You don't get to take a vacation from your obligations to the whole country. You just have to remember why you ran, understand what's happening and why, and go back and hit it tomorrow. That's all you can do.

Mr. Lehrer. But going back to what we said at the beginning, what we were talking about, isn't this one different than all the others? This one isn't about a land deal in Arkansas, or it's not even about sex. It's about other things, about a serious matter.

The President. But all the others, a lot of them were about serious matters. They just faded away.

Mr. Lehrer. I'm not suggesting that they weren't serious——

The President. All I can tell you is I'll do my best to help them get to the bottom of it. I did not ask anybody to lie under oath. I did not do that. That's the allegation. I didn't do it. And we'll just get to the bottom of it. We'll go on.

And meanwhile, I've got to keep working at this. I can't just ignore the fact that every day that passes is one more day that I don't have to do what I came here to do. And I think the results that America has enjoyed indicates that's a pretty good argument for doing what I came here to do.

Public Opinion of the President

Mr. Lehrer. Whatever the personal things may be, the polls show that people approve of your job as President, even though they may not have that high regard of you as a person.

The President. Hardly anyone has ever been subject to the level of attack I have. You know, it made a lot of people mad when I got elected President. And the better the country does, it seems like the madder some of them get. But that's not important. What's important here is what happens to the American people. I mean, there are sacrifices to being President, and in some periods of history the price is higher than others. I'm just doing the best I can for my country.

Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Mr. Lehrer. We're sitting here in the Roosevelt Room in the White House, it's 4:15 eastern time. All of the cable news organizations have been full of this story all day. The newspapers are probably going to be full of it tomorrow, and the news may; this story is going to be there and be there and be there. The Paula Jones trial coming up in May, and you're going——

The President. I'm looking forward to that.

Mr. Lehrer. Why?

The President. Because I believe that the evidence will show what I have been saying, that I did not do what I was accused of doing. It's very difficult, you know—one of the things that people learn is you can charge people with all kinds of things; it's almost impossible to prove your innocence. That's almost impossible to do. I think I'll be able to do that. We're working hard at it.

Mr. Lehrer. What about the additional element here? You're the President of the United States. You've got—certainly you've got personal things that you want to prove or disprove, et cetera. But when does just the process become demeaning to the Presidency? I mean, somebody said—in fact they said it on our program—

that this trial in May will be tabloid nirvana. And look—just what happened——

The President. I tried to spare the country that. That's the only reason that we asked the Supreme Court to affirm that, absent some terrible emergency, the President shouldn't be subject to suits, so that he wouldn't become a political target. They made a different decision. And they have made the decision that this was good for the country. So I'm taking it and dealing with it the best I can.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Lehrer. And the new thing—you're going to be, you know, "Pour it on; nothing is going to change"?

The President. I have got to go to work every day. You know, whatever people say about me, whatever happens to me, I can't say that people didn't tell me they were going to go after me because they thought I represented a new direction in American politics and they thought we could make things better. And I can't say that they haven't been as good as their word—every day, you know, just a whole bunch of them trying to make sure that gets done. But I just have to keep working at it.

I didn't come here for money or power or anything else. I came here to spend my time, do my job, and go back to my life. That's all I want to do. And that's what I'm trying to do for the best interests of America. And so far, the results have been good, and I just hope the people will keep that in mind.

Mr. Lehrer. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was videotaped at 3:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for evening broadcast on Public Broadcasting Service television stations nationwide. In his remarks, the President referred to Monica S. Lewinsky, former White House intern and subject of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's expanded investigation; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; Richard Butler, chairman, United Nations Special Commission; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Nizar Hamdun, Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations.

Excerpt of a Telephone Interview With Morton Kondracke and Ed Henry of Roll Call

January 21, 1998

Mr. Henry. Hello, Mr. President, this is Ed Henry. How are you?

The President. Hi, Ed.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Kondracke. A few questions about the breaking news. Do you think that this Monica Lewinsky story is going to overshadow your State of the Union Address?

The President. Well, I hope not. But you guys will have to make that decision. The press will make that decision.

Mr. Henry. Some Republicans have been talking about impeachment for months now. And even your former adviser George Stephanopoulos mentioned it this morning, that it could lead to that. What is your reaction to the suggestion that this may lead to impeachment?

The President. Well, I don't believe it will. I'm going to cooperate with this investigation. And I made it very clear that the allegations are not true. I didn't ask anybody not to tell the truth. And I'll cooperate. So I think that there will be a lot of stirring and there will be a lot of speculation about how this all was done and what it means and what it portends, and you all will handle it however you will. I'm just going to go back to work and do the best I can.

Mr. Kondracke. Do you think you have to refer to it in some way in the speech on Tuesday?

The President. I've given no thought to that, no.

Mr. Henry. Will this cloud your ability to get anything done with this Congress as you head into the new session?

The President. Well, that will be up to them. I don't think so. It's election year; they'll want to get some things done, too. And we've got

a lot to do. I'm going to give them the first balanced budget, 3 years ahead of time, and a great child care initiative and an important Medicare initiative. We've got a Medicare commission meeting. We're going to be able to actually see this budget balanced and start to run a little surplus. We've got a lot of things to do around the world, so I think this is quite important.

Mr. Kondracke. Okay. Let me just ask you one more question about this. You said in a statement today that you had no improper relationship with this intern. What exactly was the nature of your relationship with her?

The President. Well, let me say, the relationship's not improper, and I think that's important enough to say. But because the investigation is going on and because I don't know what is out—what's going to be asked of me, I think I need to cooperate, answer the questions, but I think it's important for me to make it clear what is not. And then, at the appropriate time, I'll try to answer what is. But let me answer, it is not an improper relationship, and I know what the word means. So let's just——

Mr. Kondracke. Was it in any way sexual?

The President. The relationship was not sexual. And I know what you mean, and the answer is no.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:26 p.m. The President spoke from the Oval Office at the White House.

Interview With Mara Liasson and Robert Siegel of National Public Radio
January 21, 1998

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Siegel. Mr. President, welcome to the program.

Many Americans woke up to the news today that the Whitewater independent counsel is investigating an allegation that you, or you and Vernon Jordan, encouraged a young woman to lie to lawyers in the Paula Jones civil suit. Is there any truth to that allegation?

The President. No, sir, there's not. It's just not true.

Mr. Siegel. Is there any truth to the allegation of an affair between you and the young woman?

The President. No, that's not true, either. And I have told people that I would cooperate in the investigation, and I expect to cooperate with it. I don't know any more about it than I've told you and any more about it really than you do, but I will cooperate. The charges are not true, and I haven't asked anybody to lie.

Ms. Liasson. Mr. President, where do you think this comes from? Did you have any kind of relationship with her that could have been misconstrued?

The President. Mara, I'm going to do my best to cooperate with the investigation. I want to know what they want to know from me. I think it's more important for me to tell the American people that there wasn't improper relations; I didn't ask anybody to lie; and I intend to cooperate. And I think that's all I should say right now, so I can get back to the work of the country.

Ms. Liasson. But you're not able to say whether you had any conversations with her about her testimony, any conversations at all?

The President. I think, given the state of this investigation, it would be inappropriate for me to say more. I've said everything I think that I need to say now. I'm going to be cooperative, and we'll work through it.

Mr. Siegel. But is the fact that in this case, as we understand it, a close friend of this young woman was outfitted with a wire, with a microphone to record conversations with her at the instruction of the Whitewater counsel, does that disturb you? Do you regard that Mr. Starr is playing the inquisitor here in this case?

The President. Well, that's a question the American people will have to ask and answer, and the press will have to ask and answer, the bar will have to ask and answer. But it's inappropriate for me to comment on it at this time. I just have to cooperate, and I'll do that.

Scrutiny of the Presidency

Mr. Siegel. And a broader question. I understand that you don't want to comment on this. There are some commentators—on our network,

it would be Kevin Phillips, who said that the moral leadership of the Presidency justifies the kind of scrutiny that you're receiving. Do you agree with that?

The President. Well, I think there is a lot of scrutiny, and there should be, and I think that's important. I'll leave it to others to define whether the kind we have received in volume, nature, and accuracy, and sometimes downright honesty, is appropriate. That's for others to determine.

I just have a certain number of days here. I came here as not a Washington person. I came here to try to change the country and to work to build the future of America in a new century. And I just have to try to put this in a little box like I have every other thing that has been said and done, and go on and do my job. That's what I'm going to work at.

Ms. Liasson. Mr. President, earlier today you said you tried your best to contain your natural impulses and get back to work. Were you furious? Is that what you were referring to?

The President. I was. I was.

Ms. Liasson. And what were you furious about?

The President. Well, I worked with Prime Minister Netanyahu until 12:30 last night; I'm getting ready for Mr. Arafat; I'm working on the State of the Union; and we've got a lot of big issues out there within and beyond our borders. And I don't think any American questions the fact that I've worked very hard at this job. And anything that's a distraction I dislike.

Ms. Liasson. Do you see this as a partisan attack? Is that what——

The President. I didn't say that. I don't know what the facts are. I don't know enough to say any more about this. I don't want to get into that. You know at least as much about it as I do. I worked until 12:30 last night on something else. That's why I have given the answer that I have given to your questions today.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Siegel. Moving on to the matter you were working on late at night last night. First, it seems the message to Mr. Netanyahu from the U.S. was, we want to see you withdraw from some part of the West Bank. First, what's the message to Yasser Arafat, if you could sum it up?

The President. Well, first of all, let's talk about what they want. I think what Israel wants is a peace process that moves immediately to final status negotiations and gives them a stronger sense of security. I think what the Palestinians want is a peace process that gives them a stronger sense of self-determination and possibility and dignity.

So what we've tried to do—for 12 months now, ever since the Hebron redeployment, we have been out involved in the region, talking to all the players—that's not the royal "we," I mean me, the Secretary of State, Mr. Ross, Mr. Berger, others involved—trying to analyze what it would take to get the peace process back on track. And we've formulated some ideas and we talked to the Israeli Prime Minister about them yesterday; we're going to talk to Mr. Arafat about them tomorrow. We hope that by the time we finish the talk that both sides will be closer together than they were before we started. And if they are, then we'll try to close. But I think there may be circumstances under which we could take a real leap forward in the Middle East peace process if we get a break or two.

Mr. Siegel. This week?

The President. No, I wouldn't go that far. It's going to take a while. We have to work with the Palestinians tomorrow, then we have to analyze where we are with both and whether we can go forward. And we may not make any progress at all. And if we don't, I'll tell you that.

Mr. Siegel. I'd like to ask you, though, after spending so much time with Mr. Netanyahu on this visit and on other visits, some people regard him as a man who always opposed a land for peace settlement to the conflict with the Palestinians, certainly wouldn't have negotiated the Oslo accords had he been in office then, has never liked them particularly. Some would say he's really trying to thwart that process and contain the damage from his standpoint. Do you think so?

The President. No, I can't say that based on what I've seen. I do believe—he's made no secret of the fact that he has principle differences with the Oslo process, which he has pledged to support. And we all know he has a different political coalition, and that indeed, the political forces in Israel itself are different than they were even a few years ago in terms of the composition of the population, the rise of these

small parties and immigrant-related intense groups and all that. So I think that's all there. I think that, historically, there's been a little bit of difference in the kind of the texture of the relationship between the Likud Party and the Palestinians and the Labor Party and the Palestinians. So there are a lot of layers here.

But the bottom line is, I think, Mr. Netanyahu is an intelligent man who wants to make peace and understands that there has to be some formula where some marginal increase in territorial insecurity by giving up land is more than offset by a dramatic increase in security by changing the feelings of the people, the climate, the capacity for growth and opportunity.

So we're just trying to hammer out what each side will have to do to take another step. I'm hopeful.

Situation in Iraq

Ms. Liasson. Mr. President, in Iraq, diplomacy hasn't worked yet. UNSCOM is still barred from doing its job the way it sees fit, getting into the sites that it wants to inspect. Yet on the other hand, military action also has downsides. It might upset any progress you're making with allies on other issues. Do you think the U.S. has any good choices on Iraq?

The President. Well, there are no easy choices. If we define good as easy, the answer is no. What is the problem? The problem is the weapons of mass destruction program, chemical and biological weapons, primarily. What is the solution? Letting the UNSCOM inspectors go wherever they want. And that means that Saddam Hussein cannot determine when, where, and who, when it comes to the UNSCOM teams. So now he says that he's going to determine that, and there is not going to be any "when" for a couple of months, during which time he'll be free to move whatever he wants wherever he wants.

I think that this is a big mistake, and I believe that the United Nations will see it as such, and a real thwarting of its position. And we just have to see where we go from here.

Mr. Siegel. Do you feel that to even wield the threat of military action, possible military action, that you have to be able to point to some progress in the Arab-Israeli negotiations in order to maintain the support of U.S. friends in the region? Is there some linkage between progress——

The President. I don't think there is a linkage, a direct linkage. It may affect the atmospherics, just, you know, the attitude about America. But I think it would be wrong to say there's a direct linkage.

The main thing is every country in the region and throughout the world has a vested interest in seeing that no one who would either use or sell weapons of mass destruction—especially chemical and biological weapons which could be carried around in small amounts, in little valises—that no one who would use or sell them has a big program of them, which is why the whole United Nations is against the Iraqi program. They need to think long and hard, these countries that have been a little squeamish about being firm, whether or not it's possible that they could be the victims of this, if not directly from Iraq, from some group or another that Iraq sells to in the future.

So I think we need to be firm, and I'm going to do my best to keep rallying support and keep working ahead. I prefer the inspections. I prefer the diplomatic pressure. I have not been trigger-happy on this; some here in our country think that we should have acted before. But I don't think we can rule out any option.

Federal Budget

Ms. Liasson. Mr. President, moving to domestic policy and the budget surplus, Republicans and Democrats on the Hill have already said what they want to do with it, either cut taxes or pay down the debt or spend more money on social problems. But so far, you've been silent on this. And I'm wondering if you are ready to make a commitment to using whatever surplus there might be to shoring up the Social Security Trust Funds, making sure that safety net is there for the baby boom generation when it retires.

The President. Well, I'll make a commitment that—in my State of the Union Address, I'll announce what I think should be done.

Q. Well, what do you think should be done?

The President. I've decided, but I don't want to announce yet. I need to have something to say in the State of the Union that's new.

But let me say before I say that, I would like to just caution—we've had 5 great years, and we've always done better than we were predicted to do on the deficit. But I think I would still caution the Democratic and Republican leaders of Congress from passing some big 5-

year program to spend money through spending programs or tax cuts that hasn't yet materialized. We do not yet have a balanced budget. We've worked so hard for so long to get this done; I sure hate to start counting our chickens before they hatch. So I would like to start with that. And then when I speak at the State of the Union, I'll say what I think ought to be done.

Social Security

Mr. Siegel. Would you like to caution equally against shoring up the Social Security fund in that case?

The President. Well, in general, I believe—my position on Social Security is that we need a bipartisan and fairly rapid process to work through the options and prepare for the long term health and viability of the Social Security system, along with the efforts that are going to be made by the Medicare commission, which I'm very hopeful about. One of the big things I hope to achieve before I leave office is entitlement reform in both major systems. So I tell you, I think that that needs to be done, and we're exploring how best to do that.

Ms. Liasson. Well, we don't want to let you off the hook too easily. You're not saying you're against using the surplus to shore up the Social Security Trust Funds?

The President. I'm not saying one way or the other. I'm saying I'd like to have something to announce on State of the Union night.

Proposed Tobacco Agreement

Mr. Siegel. Mr. President, on tobacco, there is talk on Capitol Hill of writing and passing a "kids only" bill, as opposed to seeking a huge global settlement. That would achieve the aims in theory of raising the cost of a pack of cigarettes by so much that it would be beyond the reach of teenagers, achieve your major aim, and not take companies off the hook for future liability. Are you in favor of such a bill?

The President. You'd have a "children's only" bill that did what? I'm sorry, you had a lot of points there.

Mr. Siegel. Yes, well, first, it would raise the price of a pack of cigarettes simply to deter teenage purchasers of cigarettes.

Ms. Liasson. And strengthen the hand of the FDA, do some marketing restrictions, but not be a complete global settlement.

The President. Well, I would favor doing something like that without committing to the specifics if we fail to get a global settlement. But I think we owe it to the attorneys general and the others who worked with us on this in good faith to try to achieve one, because I think, long term, we need to deter teen smoking with more than just a higher price tag for cigarettes. I think there are lots of other things that can be done. And I think that we ought to have certain benchmarks of performance for the tobacco companies, too, which in my view will help because then they'll be free to do more—that they even have to spend a little more money than they're obligated to under the agreement—if they're not meeting the targets, they may decide they ought to do that to save even more money down the road.

So I'm going to look for a global settlement in the tobacco case for the benefit of our children. If we fail, then I'll look at something else.

Ms. Liasson. Mr. Clinton, following up on that, you've cautioned Congress not to spend the surplus until they have it. Yet you have committed $60 billion of some projected tobacco settlement bill before it's even passed to new spending. Do you think that's wise? And if you don't get a tobacco settlement, are you committed to those programs? Will you cut elsewhere in order to keep that new spending?

The President. Well let me just say this: I will not, under any circumstances, favor funding anything I have recommended with the surplus—with the projected surplus.

Ms. Liasson. So, if you don't get the tobacco settlement, you'll cut elsewhere?

The President. If I don't get—in other words, if we don't get the tobacco settlement, we'll either have to cut the size of the child care initiative or cut elsewhere, or do something else, because I will not just, on my own, get up and propose that we spend the proposed settlement, or part of it, on these programs. I think they are terribly important, but right now we've got other fish to fry. And we've got to make sure—the most important thing is to keep this economy growing, to keep disciplined, to keep strong, to do what makes sense. And that's what has gotten us here, 5 hard years of that, and we don't want to forget that.

So we do have new spending in our programs, but it's new spending within a context of fiscal discipline. It's new discipline with the smallest Federal Government since Kennedy was President and the size of it continuing to go down.

Accused Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski

Mr. Siegel. Federal prosecutors reportedly rejected a plea bargain agreement not long ago with Theodore Kaczynski, with his lawyers at least, that might have guaranteed his imprisonment for life. Evidently they want the death penalty. Is it important to you, say, if he's convicted, that there be an exercise of the Federal death penalty?

The President. If he's guilty, he killed a lot of people deliberately, and, therefore, I think it's something that the jury should be able to consider. From my point of view, I approve of the laws that we have in America now, the sort of two-tiered trial where you determine guilt and then you determine penalty, and I would want to hear all the testimony before I decided how I'd vote in that case. But I do think it should be presented to the penalty phase.

Mr. Siegel. Even if you had a guilty plea that—as there is no parole in the Federal system—guaranteed none and spared any possibility of an acquittal, you would still prefer to reject that plea, to offer the jury the option of the death penalty?

The President. I think the jury should have the option. Now, also, as a practical matter, there aren't many inmates—perhaps he would be one—that actually do get life without parole. And that's probably not a terrible thing. That is, in a prison system, where you don't want prison riots, you have to reward people who do an extraordinarily good job of being good inmates within the prison system, perhaps the practice of allowing people who have life sentences to be paroled after quite a long period of time is a good one, or, at least, defensible. But juries know that, too.

So I think the—it's hard to generalize. But this was a case where, based on what I know, I would consider it appropriate to present that to the jury.

Asian Economies

Ms. Liasson. Mr. President, on the Asian financial crisis, a lot of Americans don't understand why taxpayers should help bail out banks and investors in the U.S. or Japan or in Europe who took a risk and made some mistakes. Don't they bear some responsibility? Don't they have to take some of the hit?

The President. Absolutely. They do bear some of the responsibility, and they shouldn't all be bailed out. And that's one of the most frustrating things about this. On the other hand, what this is about is about rebuilding confidence in the investment climate of these countries. I don't think they ought to get one red cent unless the governments commit to do things for the future that will mean these banks will have to take a bigger risk, and get their act cleaned up, unless the International Monetary Fund plan is implemented, and then the U.S. and Japan and these other countries come in as a backup.

But if we refuse on the front end to do anything, the problem is it could hurt us a lot worse than it could hurt the odd banker that doesn't get his money back, because if a lot of people start not getting any of their money back, then other people say, "Well, I'm going to get my money out," and then others say, "Well, I'm not going to put my money in"; and then all of a sudden the value of the currency goes way down. Then what happens? They don't have any money to buy American products and all their products are cheaper, competing against ours and other countries.

So we have a big economic interest as well as a huge interest in a stable, democratic Asia. And that's why I think we're doing the right thing. I hope in the State of the Union I can persuade the American people that it's the right thing.

President's Political Philosophy

Ms. Liasson. I want to ask you about "Clintonism." We've been hearing a lot about "Clintonism" lately, a coherent political philosophy that may or may not be identified with you. Do you think there is such a thing, and what is it?

The President. Well, I do. I think, first of all, it's a very—it's a future-oriented political philosophy that attempts to break the logjam between the 1980's and early nineties debate of the Republican position that Government is the enemy and the Democratic position is, sort of, Government is the solution if we do more of the same; we just need to do more.

My position is we need a different kind of Government for a different kind of society and a different kind of world. And we need to focus more on giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, more on being a catalyst for good ideas, more on empowering

the disadvantaged, and creating opportunity, enforcing responsibility, building community. I think that's what "Clintonism" is about. And I think it will get us to the 21st century.

Mr. Siegel. Mr. President, thank you very much for talking with us.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Siegel. I'd like to tell our listeners that the entire transcript as well as audio of this interview will be available later this evening on our website, which is www.npr.org. And once again, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:08 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House and was broadcast live on National Public Radio stations nationwide. During the interview, the President referred to Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; and the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM). Mr. Siegel referred to Linda R. Tripp, witness in Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's expanded investigation.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 21, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The first notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1996.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency, on January 23, 1995, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities with the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and which are hostile to U.S. interests in the region. Such actions threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to deny any financial support from the United States for foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the White House Endowment Dinner

January 21, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention please? This will be a brief program, because we want you to have a wonderful time tonight at the White House. We thank you for doing so much to support the White House Endowment Fund and for your commitment to

ensuring that this house, the people's house, remains the pride of our people well into the next millennium.

No one has been more committed to making sure that this house is for all of our people than the First Lady. Over the past 5 years, Hillary has worked so hard to showcase the talent and creativity of all Americans in each of these grand and historic rooms, from refurbishing the Blue Room to securing the first painting by an African-American, or the first painting by Georgia O'Keefe for the White House's permanent collection. Her contributions to this house will remain a long time after we're gone from Washington.

Let me say it was in no small part because of her dedication that the 1.5 million visitors who walk through the White House every single year have been able to enjoy the richness and diversity of America's cultural heritage. I thank her for her leadership and for making this house on all floors a more wonderful and truly historic place to live.

And now, in reverse of the usual order, it is my pleasure and honor to introduce the First Lady of the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Emigration Policies and Trade Status of Albania

January 21, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Albania. The report indicates continued Albanian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restrictions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania was in full compliance with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. That action allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual report is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters

January 22, 1998

Middle East Peace Process

The President. Let me say before we begin that I am very pleased to welcome Chairman Arafat back to the United States as our partner in the peace process. As I did with Prime Minister Netanyahu, I want to emphasize what a critical time this is in the process and the importance of both parties meeting their obligations.

I also would like to take just a second to underline the principles of the peace process: mutual obligations and the concept of land for peace, so that Israelis can live in security, recognized by all their neighbors, and the Palestinians can realize their aspirations to live as a free

people. If we can focus on these principles, I'm convinced we can make some progress. I'm going to give Chairman Arafat a little report on my meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, and then we're going to go to work.

Q. Mr. President, when do you think the Israelis will finally meet their U.N. obligations, or treaty obligations, to give back conquered land?

The President. Well, we're going to discuss that. We're working on it. We believe the Oslo process sets out a schedule for redeployment, and that's obviously one of the major issues to be discussed.

Q. But they're not going to meet it, are they?

The President. Well, give us a chance. We're working on it.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. President, what's the next step now, and is there a timeframe where you want things to move?

The President. Well, after this meeting, then what we'll do is to see whether we have moved the parties closer together. And if we have, then we'll try to figure out how to close the loop and get an understanding on what the next steps are. And if we can do that—we want to do it, obviously, fairly quickly; we don't want to just keep dragging this out. I think we have a sense of urgency here.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. Arafat, do you believe progress was made with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and do you believe progress will be made this week? And would you agree to a few-stage withdrawal?

Chairman Arafat. As long as there is pressure and efforts by President Clinton, I'm fully confident that the peace process will be protected and will be succeeded. And we should not forget that the President also has sent Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, and Mr. Ross to the region many times to push the peace process forward.

Q. So you believe Mr. Netanyahu will stand by his commitments?

Chairman Arafat. We hope so, he would do so.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Forgive us for raising this while you're dealing with important issues in the Middle East, but could you clarify for us, sir, exactly what your relationship was with Ms. Lewinsky, and whether the two of you talked by phone, including any messages you may have left?

The President. Let me say, first of all, I want to reiterate what I said yesterday. The allegations are false, and I would never ask anybody to do anything other than tell the truth. Let's get to the big issues there, about the nature of the relationship and whether I suggested anybody not tell the truth. That is false.

Now, there are a lot of other questions that are, I think, very legitimate. You have a right to ask them; you and the American people have a right to get answers. We are working very hard to comply and get all the requests for information up here, and we will give you as many answers as we can, as soon as we can, at the appropriate time, consistent with our obligation to also cooperate with the investigations.

And that's not a dodge, that's really why I've—I've talked with our people. I want to do that. I'd like for you to have more rather than less, sooner rather than later. So we'll work through it as quickly as we can and get all those questions out there to you.

Visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba

Q. Mr. President, about the Pope and Cuba, what are your impressions of the remarkable scenes of the Pope in Cuba, and what about his call for an end to the embargo?

The President. Well, first of all, I'm glad he went to Cuba. I think it's a wonderful thing and I'm glad that Mr. Castro invited him to come. I'm glad the Cuban Government let the Christian people in Cuba celebrate Christmas last Christmas, acknowledge it in an explicit and open way. And I hope that this trip will lead to some reassessment on the part of the Cuban Government that would enable us to move closer together in many ways.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Chairman Arafat spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, the President

referred to President Fidel Castro of Cuba. Chairman Arafat referred to Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, U.S. Special Middle East Coordinator. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Videotaped Remarks Commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe* v. *Wade* Decision

January 22, 1998

On January 22d, we mark the 25th anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court decision that affirmed every woman's right to choose whether and when to have a child, and in doing so, affirmed two of our Nation's most deeply-held values, personal privacy and family responsibility.

Over the past 25 years, *Roe* v. *Wade* has had a major positive impact on the health and well-being of American women and their families. Safe, legal abortion has all but eliminated the dangerous, clandestine conditions that claimed too many women's lives when the procedure was illegal.

I'm committed to keeping abortion safe, legal, and accessible—and to making it more rare. Over the last 5 years, we've led the way on policies to prevent unintended pregnancy by making comprehensive family planning and sex education programs more widely available. We've increased support for Title X family planning services every year in our budget. And I'll do so again this year.

I've fought to continue funding for international family planning, bringing much needed health care to women all around the world. Here at home, by working together with health care professionals, community groups, schools, and family planning agencies, we've made real progress in reducing teen pregnancy. And I was proud to sign legislation to protect the rights *Roe* established by protecting women's clinics from violence. We have enforced that law to its full extent.

I will continue to do everything I can to make sure that every child in America is a wanted child, raised in a loving, strong family. Ultimately, that idea is what the anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade* celebrates.

Hillary and I join with all of you in commemorating this milestone and pledge ourselves anew to protecting the right to choose.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: These remarks were videotaped at approximately 4:30 p.m. on January 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Statement on the Apprehension of Indicted War Criminal Goran Jelisic

January 22, 1998

I welcome the news that Goran Jelisic has been detained by SFOR forces, led by American units, in the Republika Srpska city of Bijelina. He is now being transported to The Hague for trial before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Jelisic was indicted by the Tribunal in 1995 for 56 counts of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The SFOR forces acted according to their rules of engagement, which authorize the apprehension of indicted war criminals when encountered in the course of their duties. This was the third such apprehension by SFOR forces, following actions last July and December that resulted in the capture of four indictees and the death of a fifth.

I congratulate the SFOR troops who participated in this effort. The United States continues to support fully the work of the Tribunal to bring indicted war criminals to justice. Jelisic will be the 23rd of 78 indictees brought to The Hague for trial. It is important to recall that

most of these were delivered in the last 7 months by the parties themselves. We intend to sustain political and economic pressure to assure continued compliance with the Dayton accords.

We must continue this progress. Today I call again on all parties to the Dayton accords to fulfill their obligations to bring all indicted war criminals to justice. Carrying out these commitments is essential for advancing the work of reconciliation in Bosnia.

Statement on Receiving the Interim Report of the Secretary of State's Special Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad

January 23, 1998

I welcome the report of the Committee, which my administration established in November 1996 to advise us on means to combat religious persecution and intolerance abroad.

I am pleased that the Committee has recognized the considerable efforts we have already made to raise the profile of these issues and invigorate our advocacy, and we will carefully study the Committee's recommendations on how we can do more.

This distinguished group of Americans is playing a critical role in our effort to promote religious freedom abroad, and we look forward to a continued and close collaboration as the Committee prepares its final report in the months to come.

The President's Radio Address

January 24, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk about our continuing efforts to fight fraud and abuse in the Medicare system.

For more than 30 years, Medicare has helped us to honor our oldest obligations to our parents and grandparents. And since I took office, our administration has made strengthening Medicare one of our top priorities. The balanced budget I signed into law last summer will extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for at least a decade. But to ensure that Medicare is as strong in the 21st century as it has been in the 20th, we must also do more to root out fraud and abuse.

Medicare fraud cheats beneficiaries and taxpayers out of billions of dollars every single year. It undermines the strength of this vitally important program. Since 1993, we've assigned more Federal prosecutors and investigators to fight Medicare fraud than ever before, increasing fraud convictions by a record 240 percent. All told, we've saved taxpayers over $20 billion. And the Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation I signed into law in 1996 has given us new resources and tools to investigate, prosecute, and convict dishonest providers and medical suppliers.

On Monday, I'll send to Congress a report that shows just how effective those new tools have been. I'm proud to say that in the last year alone we've collected nearly a billion dollars in fines and settlements for health care fraud. Money that would have lined the pockets of scam artists is now going instead to preserve the Medicare Trust Fund and to improve health for millions of Americans. We've increased prosecutions for health care fraud by more than 60 percent, and we've stopped health care fraud before it starts by keeping nearly twice as many bad providers out of the system.

Now, make no mistake; Medicare fraud is a real crime, committed by real criminals intent on stealing from the system and cheating our most vulnerable citizens. Let me just give you one example.

In New York City, a Russian immigrant, believed by Federal investigators to be part of an organized crime ring, defrauded Medicare of $1½ million by selling substandard medical

supplies to elderly people and billing Medicare for premium goods. We shut him down and put him in jail, but he never should have been a Medicare supplier in the first place.

Last week I put in place new regulations that require medical suppliers to post surety bonds to prove they're legitimate, solvent businesses. And to further ensure that medical suppliers aren't defrauding Medicare, the Department of Health and Human Services will expand its site inspections of medical supply companies all over the country.

But we must do more to crack down on fraud and abuse in the Medicare system. The balanced budget I'll submit to Congress next month will include antifraud and waste provisions that will save Medicare more than $2 billion. First, it will eliminate overpayment for certain drugs by making sure doctors receive no more and no less than the price they pay for the medicines they give Medicare patients. Second, it will ensure that when fly-by-night providers go bankrupt, Medicare is at the top of the list of debts to be repaid. And finally, it will bring down costs by allowing Medicare to purchase goods and services at a competitive price.

We will only win the fight against fraud and abuse in the Medicare system with the help of the American people. We know that patients and honest providers want to help crack down on fraud and abuse. Starting next month we'll make it easier for them to do so, with a toll-free hotline that will now appear on every statement Medicare sends out to every beneficiary it serves.

With these steps, we're making sure that the Medicare system, which has served our parents and grandparents so well, will also serve our children and grandchildren well into the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:13 p.m. on January 23 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 24.

Remarks on the After-School Child Care Initiative

January 26, 1998

Thank you very much. First, let me thank all of you who are here. Many of us have been working together now for 20 years on a lot of these issues, and this is a very happy day for us.

I thank the First Lady for all she has done on this issue for as long as I have known her. I thank the Vice President and Mrs. Gore for their family conference and the light it has shed on the announcement we're here to emphasize today. Thank you, Secretary Riley, for the community learning centers, and I'm very proud of what we've done there.

Thank you, Bill White. I'll talk more about your contribution in a moment, but it is truly remarkable. And I thank Rand and Debra Bass for giving us a living, breathing example of the best of America: parents who are working hard to do their jobs but also determined to do their most important job very well with their children. I thank Senator Feinstein, Senator Dodd, and Senator Boxer for being here.

Tomorrow, in the State of the Union Address, I will spell out what we seek to do on behalf of our children to prepare them for the 21st century. But I want to talk a little bit about education today and about this announcement in that context.

Education must be our Nation's highest priority. Last year, in the State of the Union Address, I set out a 10-point plan to move us forward and urged the American people to make sure that politics stops at the schoolhouse door. Well, we've made a lot of progress on that 10-point plan: a remarkable—a remarkable—array of initiatives to open the doors of college to every American who's willing to work for it; strong progress toward high national standards in the basics, the America Reads challenge to teach every 8-year-old to read; continued progress in the Vice President's program to hook up all of our classrooms and libraries to the Internet by the year 2000.

This has been the most important year in a generation for education reform. Tomorrow

I'll set out the next steps on our continuing road.

First, I will propose the first-ever national effort to reduce class size in the early grades. Hillary and I worked very hard 15 years ago now to have very strict class sizes at home in the early grades, and it was quite controversial and, I think, enormously beneficial when we did it. Our balanced budget will help to hire 100,000 teachers who must pass State competency tests but who will be able to reduce class size in the first, second, and third grades to an average of 18 nationwide.

Second, since there are more students and there will be more teachers, there must be more classrooms. So I will propose a school construction tax cut to help communities modernize and build new schools.

Third, I will promote a national effort to help schools that follow the lead of the Chicago system in ending social promotion but helping students with summer school and other programs to give them the tools they need to get ahead.

All these steps will help our children get the future they deserve. And that's why what we're announcing here is so important as well.

Every child needs someplace to go after school. With after-school programs, we can not only keep our kids healthy and happy and safe, we can help to teach them to say no to drugs, alcohol, and crime, yes to reading, sports, and computers. My balanced budget plan includes a national initiative to spark private sector and local community efforts to provide after-school care, as the Secretary of Education said, to half a million more children.

Now, let me say, in addition to all the positive benefits, I think it's important to point out that the hours between 3 and 7 at night are the most vulnerable hours for young people to get in trouble, for juvenile crime. There is this sort of assumption that everybody that gets in trouble when they're young has just already been abandoned. That's not true. Most of the kids that get in trouble get in trouble after school closes and before their parents get home from work. So in the adolescent years, in the later years, it is profoundly important to try to give kids something to say yes to and something positive to do.

But we can't do it alone. As I said, our plan involves a public-private partnership. So it has fallen to me to announce that our distinguished guest from the Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan, has pledged up to $55 million to help ensure that after-school programs supported by Federal funds are of the highest quality. That is an astonishing gift. Thank you, Bill White. Thank you.

We are determined to help Americans succeed in the workplace, to raise well-educated, healthy kids, and to help Americans succeed at the toughest job of all, that of being a parent. And the Mott Foundation has gone a long way toward helping us. I thank them.

Now, I have to go back to work on my State of the Union speech. And I worked on it until pretty late last night. But I want to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again. I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time—never. These allegations are false. And I need to go back to work for the American people.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bill White, president and chief executive officer, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Rand and Debra Bass, parents whose children attended an after-school child care program at Barcroft Elementary School, Arlington, VA; and Monica S. Lewinsky, former White House intern and subject of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's expanded investigation.

Presidential Determination No. 98–11—Memorandum on Assistance for the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union
January 26, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Assistance Program for the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union

Pursuant to subsection (c) under the heading "Assistance for the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union" in Title II of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1998 (Public Law 105–118), I hereby determine that it is in the national security interest of the United States to make available funds appropriated under that heading without regard to the restriction in that subsection.

You are authorized and directed to notify the Congress of this determination and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union
January 27, 1998

The President. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans: Since the last time we met in this Chamber, America has lost two patriots and fine public servants. Though they sat on opposite sides of the aisle, Representatives Walter Capps and Sonny Bono shared a deep love for this House and an unshakable commitment to improving the lives of all our people. In the past few weeks, they've both been eulogized. Tonight I think we should begin by sending a message to their families and their friends that we celebrate their lives and give thanks for their service to our Nation.

For 209 years, it has been the President's duty to report to you on the state of the Union. Because of the hard work and high purpose of the American people, these are good times for America. We have more than 14 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest core inflation in 30 years; incomes are rising; and we have the highest homeownership in history. Crime has dropped for a record 5 years in a row, and the welfare rolls are at their lowest levels in 27 years. Our leadership in the world is unrivaled. Ladies and gentlemen, the state of our Union is strong.

But with barely 700 days left in the 20th century, this is not a time to rest. It is a time to build, to build the America within reach, an America where everybody has a chance to get ahead with hard work; where every citizen can live in a safe community; where families are strong, schools are good, and all our young people can go on to college; an America where scientists find cures for diseases from diabetes to Alzheimer's to AIDS; an America where every child can stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever composed; where government provides opportunity and citizens honor the responsibility to give something back to their communities; an America which leads the world to new heights of peace and prosperity. This is the America we have begun to build; this is the America we can leave to our children if we join together to finish the work at hand. Let us strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

Rarely have Americans lived through so much change in so many ways in so short a time. Quietly, but with gathering force, the ground has shifted beneath our feet as we have moved into an information age, a global economy, a truly new world. For 5 years now, we have met the challenge of these changes, as Americans have at every turning point in our history, by renewing the very idea of America: widening

the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of our freedom, forging a more perfect Union.

We shaped a new kind of Government for the information age. I thank the Vice President for his leadership and the Congress for its support in building a Government that is leaner, more flexible, a catalyst for new ideas, and most of all, a Government that gives the American people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives.

We have moved past the sterile debate between those who say government is the enemy and those who say government is the answer. My fellow Americans, we have found a third way. We have the smallest Government in 35 years, but a more progressive one. We have a smaller Government, but a stronger Nation. We are moving steadily toward an even stronger America in the 21st century: an economy that offers opportunity, a society rooted in responsibility, and a nation that lives as a community.

First, Americans in this Chamber and across our Nation have pursued a new strategy for prosperity: fiscal discipline to cut interest rates and spur growth; investments in education and skills, in science and technology and transportation, to prepare our people for the new economy; new markets for American products and American workers.

When I took office, the deficit for 1998 was projected to be $357 billion and heading higher. This year, our deficit is projected to be $10 billion and heading lower. For three decades, six Presidents have come before you to warn of the damage deficits pose to our Nation. Tonight I come before you to announce that the Federal deficit, once so incomprehensibly large that it had 11 zeros, will be, simply, zero. I will submit to Congress for 1999 the first balanced budget in 30 years. And if we hold fast to fiscal discipline, we may balance the budget this year—4 years ahead of schedule.

You can all be proud of that, because turning a sea of red ink into black is no miracle. It is the product of hard work by the American people and of two visionary actions in Congress: the courageous vote in 1993 that led to a cut in the deficit of 90 percent, and the truly historic bipartisan balanced budget agreement passed by this Congress. Here's the really good news: If we maintain our resolve, we will produce balanced budgets as far as the eye can see.

We must not go back to unwise spending or untargeted tax cuts that risk reopening the deficit. Last year, together, we enacted targeted tax cuts so that the typical middle class family will now have the lowest tax rates in 20 years. My plan to balance the budget next year includes both new investments and new tax cuts targeted to the needs of working families, for education, for child care, for the environment.

But whether the issue is tax cuts or spending, I ask all of you to meet this test: Approve only those priorities that can actually be accomplished without adding a dime to the deficit.

Now, if we balance the budget for next year, it is projected that we'll then have a sizable surplus in the years that immediately follow. What should we do with this projected surplus? I have a simple four-word answer: Save Social Security first.

Tonight I propose that we reserve 100 percent of the surplus—that's every penny of any surplus—until we have taken all the necessary measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the 21st century. Let us say to all Americans watching tonight—whether you're 70 or 50 or whether you just started paying into the system—Social Security will be there when you need it. Let us make this commitment: Social Security first. Let's do that together.

I also want to say that all the American people who are watching us tonight should be invited to join in this discussion, in facing these issues squarely and forming a true consensus on how we should proceed. We'll start by conducting nonpartisan forums in every region of the country, and I hope that lawmakers of both parties will participate. We'll hold a White House conference on Social Security in December. And one year from now, I will convene the leaders of Congress to craft historic, bipartisan legislation to achieve a landmark for our generation: a Social Security system that is strong in the 21st century.

In an economy that honors opportunity, all Americans must be able to reap the rewards of prosperity. Because these times are good, we can afford to take one simple, sensible step to help millions of workers struggling to provide for their families: We should raise the minimum wage.

The information age is, first and foremost, an education age, in which education must start at birth and continue throughout a lifetime. Last year, from this podium, I said that education

has to be our highest priority. I laid out a 10-point plan to move us forward and urged all of us to let politics stop at the schoolhouse door. Since then, this Congress—across party lines—and the American people have responded, in the most important year for education in a generation, expanding public school choice, opening the way to 3,000 new charter schools, working to connect every classroom in the country to the information superhighway, committing to expand Head Start to a million children, launching America Reads, sending literally thousands of college students into our elementary schools to make sure all our 8-year-olds can read.

Last year I proposed and you passed 220,000 new Pell grant scholarships for deserving students. Student loans, already less expensive and easier to repay—now you get to deduct the interest. Families all over America now can put their savings into new tax-free education IRA's. And this year, for the first 2 years of college, families will get a $1,500 tax credit—a HOPE scholarship that will cover the cost of most community college tuition. And for junior and senior year, graduate school, and job training, there is a lifetime learning credit. You did that, and you should be very proud of it.

And because of these actions, I have something to say to every family listening to us tonight: Your children can go on to college. If you know a child from a poor family, tell her not to give up; she can go on to college. If you know a young couple struggling with bills, worried they won't be able to send their children to college, tell them not to give up; their children can go on to college. If you know somebody who's caught in a dead-end job and afraid he can't afford the classes necessary to get better jobs for the rest of his life, tell him not to give up; he can go on to college. Because of the things that have been done, we can make college as universal in the 21st century as high school is today. And my friends, that will change the face and future of America.

We have opened wide the doors of the world's best system of higher education. Now we must make our public elementary and secondary schools the world's best, as well, by raising standards, raising expectations, and raising accountability. Thanks to the actions of this Congress last year, we will soon have, for the very first time, a voluntary national test based on national standards in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. Parents have a right to know whether their children are mastering the basics. And every parent already knows the key: good teachers and small classes.

Tonight I propose the first ever national effort to reduce class size in the early grades. My balanced budget will help to hire 100,000 new teachers who've passed a State competency test. Now, with these teachers—listen—with these teachers, we will actually be able to reduce class size in the first, second, and third grades to an average of 18 students a class, all across America.

If I've got the math right, more teachers teaching smaller classes requires more classrooms. So I also propose a school construction tax cut to help communities modernize or build 5,000 schools.

We must also demand greater accountability. When we promote a child from grade to grade who hasn't mastered the work, we don't do that child any favors. It is time to end social promotion in America's schools. Last year, in Chicago, they made that decision—not to hold our children back but to lift them up. Chicago stopped social promotion and started mandatory summer school to help students who are behind to catch up. I propose to help other communities follow Chicago's lead. Let's say to them: Stop promoting children who don't learn, and we will give you the tools to make sure they do.

I also ask this Congress to support our efforts to enlist colleges and universities to reach out to disadvantaged children, starting in the sixth grade, so that they can get the guidance and hope they need so they can know that they, too, will be able to go on to college.

As we enter the 21st century, the global economy requires us to seek opportunity not just at home but in all the markets of the world. We must shape this global economy, not shrink from it. In the last 5 years, we have led the way in opening new markets, with 240 trade agreements that remove foreign barriers to products bearing the proud stamp "Made in the USA." Today, record high exports account for fully one-third of our economic growth. I want to keep them going, because that's the way to keep America growing and to advance a safer, more stable world.

All of you know, whatever your views are, that I think this is a great opportunity for America. I know there is opposition to more comprehensive trade agreements. I have listened

carefully, and I believe that the opposition is rooted in two fears: first, that our trading partners will have lower environmental and labor standards which will give them an unfair advantage in our market and do their own people no favors, even if there's more business; and, second, that if we have more trade, more of our workers will lose their jobs and have to start over. I think we should seek to advance worker and environmental standards around the world. I have made it abundantly clear that it should be a part of our trade agenda. But we cannot influence other countries' decisions if we send them a message that we're backing away from trade with them.

This year I will send legislation to Congress, and ask other nations to join us, to fight the most intolerable labor practice of all: abusive child labor. We should also offer help and hope to those Americans temporarily left behind by the global marketplace or by the march of technology, which may have nothing to do with trade. That's why we have more than doubled funding for training dislocated workers since 1993. And if my new budget is adopted, we will triple funding. That's why we must do more, and more quickly, to help workers who lose their jobs for whatever reason.

You know, we help communities in a special way when their military base closes; we ought to help them in the same way if their factory closes. Again, I ask the Congress to continue its bipartisan work to consolidate the tangle of training programs we have today into one single "GI bill" for workers, a simple skills grant so people can, on their own, move quickly to new jobs, to higher incomes, and brighter futures.

We all know, in every way in life, change is not always easy, but we have to decide whether we're going to try to hold it back and hide from it or reap its benefits. And remember the big picture here: While we've been entering into hundreds of new trade agreements, we've been creating millions of new jobs.

So this year we will forge new partnerships with Latin America, Asia, and Europe. And we should pass the new "African Trade Act"; it has bipartisan support. I will also renew my request for the fast-track negotiating authority necessary to open more new markets, create more new jobs, which every President has had for two decades.

You know, whether we like it or not, in ways that are mostly positive, the world's economies are more and more interconnected and interdependent. Today, an economic crisis anywhere can affect economies everywhere. Recent months have brought serious financial problems to Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, and beyond.

Now, why should Americans be concerned about this? First, these countries are our customers. If they sink into recession, they won't be able to buy the goods we'd like to sell them. Second, they're also our competitors. So if their currencies lose their value and go down, then the price of their goods will drop, flooding our market and others with much cheaper goods, which makes it a lot tougher for our people to compete. And finally, they are our strategic partners. Their stability bolsters our security.

The American economy remains sound and strong, and I want to keep it that way. But because the turmoil in Asia will have an impact on all the world's economies, including ours, making that negative impact as small as possible is the right thing to do for America and the right thing to do for a safer world.

Our policy is clear: No nation can recover if it does not reform itself. But when nations are willing to undertake serious economic reform, we should help them do it. So I call on Congress to renew America's commitment to the International Monetary Fund. And I think we should say to all the people we're trying to represent here that preparing for a far-off storm that may reach our shores is far wiser than ignoring the thunder till the clouds are just overhead.

A strong nation rests on the rock of responsibility. A society rooted in responsibility must first promote the value of work, not welfare. We can be proud that after decades of finger-pointing and failure, together we ended the old welfare system. And we're now replacing welfare checks with paychecks.

Last year, after a record 4-year decline in welfare rolls, I challenged our Nation to move 2 million more Americans off welfare by the year 2000. I'm pleased to report we have also met that goal, 2 full years ahead of schedule.

This is a grand achievement, the sum of many acts of individual courage, persistence, and hope. For 13 years, Elaine Kinslow of Indianapolis, Indiana, was on and off welfare. Today, she's a dispatcher with a van company. She's saved enough money to move her family into a good neighborhood, and she's helping other welfare

recipients go to work. Elaine Kinslow and all those like her are the real heroes of the welfare revolution. There are millions like her all across America. And I'm happy she could join the First Lady tonight. Elaine, we're very proud of you. Please stand up. [*Applause*]

We still have a lot more to do, all of us, to make welfare reform a success—providing child care, helping families move closer to available jobs, challenging more companies to join our welfare-to-work partnership, increasing child support collections from deadbeat parents who have a duty to support their own children. I also want to thank Congress for restoring some of the benefits to immigrants who are here legally and working hard, and I hope you will finish that job this year.

We have to make it possible for all hard-working families to meet their most important responsibilities. Two years ago we helped guarantee that Americans can keep their health insurance when they change jobs. Last year we extended health care to up to 5 million children. This year I challenge Congress to take the next historic steps.

A hundred and sixty million of our fellow citizens are in managed care plans. These plans save money, and they can improve care. But medical decisions ought to be made by medical doctors, not insurance company accountants. I urge this Congress to reach across the aisle and write into law a consumer bill of rights that says this: You have the right to know all your medical options, not just the cheapest. You have the right to choose the doctor you want for the care you need. You have the right to emergency room care, wherever and whenever you need it. You have the right to keep your medical records confidential. Traditional care or managed care, every American deserves quality care.

Millions of Americans between the ages of 55 and 65 have lost their health insurance. Some are retired; some are laid off; some lose their coverage when their spouses retire. After a lifetime of work, they are left with nowhere to turn. So I ask the Congress, let these hard-working Americans buy into the Medicare system. It won't add a dime to the deficit, but the peace of mind it will provide will be priceless.

Next, we must help parents protect their children from the gravest health threat that they face: an epidemic of teen smoking, spread by multimillion-dollar marketing campaigns. I challenge Congress: Let's pass bipartisan, comprehensive legislation that will improve public health, protect our tobacco farmers, and change the way tobacco companies do business forever. Let's do what it takes to bring teen smoking down. Let's raise the price of cigarettes by up to a dollar and a half a pack over the next 10 years, with penalties on the tobacco industry if it keeps marketing to our children. Tomorrow, like every day, 3,000 children will start smoking, and 1,000 will die early as a result. Let this Congress be remembered as the Congress that saved their lives.

In the new economy, most parents work harder than ever. They face a constant struggle to balance their obligations to be good workers and their even more important obligations to be good parents. The Family and Medical Leave Act was the very first bill I was privileged to sign into law as President in 1993. Since then, about 15 million people have taken advantage of it, and I've met a lot of them all across this country. I ask you to extend that law to cover 10 million more workers and to give parents time off when they have to go see their children's teachers or take them to the doctor.

Child care is the next frontier we must face to enable people to succeed at home and at work. Last year I cohosted the very first White House Conference on Child Care with one of our foremost experts, America's First Lady. From all corners of America, we heard the same message, without regard to region or income or political affiliation: We've got to raise the quality of child care. We've got to make it safer. We've got to make it more affordable.

So here's my plan: Help families to pay for child care for a million more children; scholarships and background checks for child care workers, and a new emphasis on early learning; tax credits for businesses that provide child care for their employees; and a larger child care tax credit for working families. Now, if you pass my plan, what this means is that a family of four with an income of $35,000 and high child care costs will no longer pay a single penny of Federal income tax.

I think this is such a big issue with me because of my own personal experience. I have often wondered how my mother, when she was a young widow, would have been able to go away to school and get an education and come back and support me if my grandparents hadn't been able to take care of me. She and I were

really very lucky. How many other families have never had that same opportunity? The truth is, we don't know the answer to that question. But we do know what the answer should be: Not a single American family should ever have to choose between the job they need and the child they love.

A society rooted in responsibility must provide safe streets, safe schools, and safe neighborhoods. We pursued a strategy of more police, tougher punishment, smarter prevention, with crimefighting partnerships with local law enforcement and citizen groups, where the rubber hits the road. I can report to you tonight that it's working. Violent crime is down; robbery is down; assault is down; burglary is down—for 5 years in a row, all across America. We need to finish the job of putting 100,000 more police on our streets.

Again, I ask Congress to pass a juvenile crime bill that provides more prosecutors and probation officers, to crack down on gangs and guns and drugs, and bar violent juveniles from buying guns for life. And I ask you to dramatically expand our support for after-school programs. I think every American should know that most juvenile crime is committed between the hours of 3 in the afternoon and 8 at night. We can keep so many of our children out of trouble in the first place if we give them someplace to go other than the streets, and we ought to do it.

Drug use is on the decline. I thank General McCaffrey for his leadership, and I thank this Congress for passing the largest antidrug budget in history. Now I ask you to join me in a groundbreaking effort to hire 1,000 new Border Patrol agents and to deploy the most sophisticated available new technologies to help close the door on drugs at our borders.

Police, prosecutors, and prevention programs, as good as they are, they can't work if our court system doesn't work. Today, there are large numbers of vacancies in our Federal courts. Here is what the Chief Justice of the United States wrote: "Judicial vacancies cannot remain at such high levels indefinitely without eroding the quality of justice." I simply ask the United States Senate to heed this plea and vote on the highly qualified judicial nominees before you, up or down.

We must exercise responsibility not just at home but around the world. On the eve of a new century, we have the power and the duty to build a new era of peace and security. But make no mistake about it; today's possibilities are not tomorrow's guarantees. America must stand against the poisoned appeals of extreme nationalism. We must combat an unholy axis of new threats from terrorists, international criminals, and drug traffickers. These 21st century predators feed on technology and the free flow of information and ideas and people. And they will be all the more lethal if weapons of mass destruction fall into their hands.

To meet these challenges, we are helping to write international rules of the road for the 21st century, protecting those who join the family of nations and isolating those who do not. Within days, I will ask the Senate for its advice and consent to make Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic the newest members of NATO. For 50 years, NATO contained communism and kept America and Europe secure. Now, these three formerly Communist countries have said yes to democracy. I ask the Senate to say yes to them, our new allies. By taking in new members and working closely with new partners, including Russia and Ukraine, NATO can help to assure that Europe is a stronghold for peace in the 21st century.

Next, I will ask Congress to continue its support of our troops and their mission in Bosnia. This Christmas, Hillary and I traveled to Sarajevo with Senator and Mrs. Dole and a bipartisan congressional delegation. We saw children playing in the streets, where 2 years ago they were hiding from snipers and shells. The shops are filled with food; the cafes were alive with conversation. The progress there is unmistakable, but it is not yet irreversible. To take firm root, Bosnia's fragile peace still needs the support of American and allied troops when the current NATO mission ends in June. I think Senator Dole actually said it best. He said, "This is like being ahead in the fourth quarter of a football game. Now is not the time to walk off the field and forfeit the victory."

I wish all of you could have seen our troops in Tuzla. They're very proud of what they're doing in Bosnia, and we're all very proud of them. One of those brave soldiers is sitting with the First Lady tonight: Army Sergeant Michael Tolbert. His father was a decorated Vietnam vet. After college in Colorado, he joined the Army. Last year he led an infantry unit that stopped a mob of extremists from taking over a radio station that is a voice of democracy

and tolerance in Bosnia. Thank you very much, Sergeant, for what you represent. Please stand up. [*Applause*]

In Bosnia and around the world, our men and women in uniform always do their mission well. Our mission must be to keep them well-trained and ready, to improve their quality of life, and to provide the 21st century weapons they need to defeat any enemy.

I ask Congress to join me in pursuing an ambitious agenda to reduce the serious threat of weapons of mass destruction. This year, four decades after it was first proposed by President Eisenhower, a comprehensive nuclear test ban is within reach. By ending nuclear testing, we can help to prevent the development of new and more dangerous weapons and make it more difficult for non-nuclear states to build them. I'm pleased to announce that four former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—Generals John Shalikashvili, Colin Powell, and David Jones and Admiral William Crowe—have endorsed this treaty. And I ask the Senate to approve it this year.

Together, we must confront the new hazards of chemical and biological weapons and the outlaw states, terrorists, and organized criminals seeking to acquire them. Saddam Hussein has spent the better part of this decade and much of his nation's wealth not on providing for the Iraqi people but on developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. The United Nations weapons inspectors have done a truly remarkable job finding and destroying more of Iraq's arsenal than was destroyed during the entire Gulf war. Now Saddam Hussein wants to stop them from completing their mission.

I know I speak for everyone in this chamber, Republicans and Democrats, when I say to Saddam Hussein, "You cannot defy the will of the world," and when I say to him, "You have used weapons of mass destruction before. We are determined to deny you the capacity to use them again."

Last year the Senate ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention to protect our soldiers and citizens from poison gas. Now we must act to prevent the use of disease as a weapon of war and terror. The Biological Weapons Convention has been in effect for 23 years now. The rules are good, but the enforcement is weak. We must strengthen it with a new international inspection system to detect and deter cheating.

In the months ahead, I will pursue our security strategy with old allies in Asia and Europe and new partners from Africa to India and Pakistan, from South America to China. And from Belfast to Korea to the Middle East, America will continue to stand with those who stand for peace.

Finally, it's long past time to make good on our debt to the United Nations. More and more, we are working with other nations to achieve common goals. If we want America to lead, we've got to set a good example. As we see so clearly in Bosnia, allies who share our goals can also share our burdens. In this new era, our freedom and independence are actually enriched, not weakened, by our increasing interdependence with other nations. But we have to do our part.

Our Founders set America on a permanent course toward a more perfect Union. To all of you I say, it is a journey we can only make together, living as one community. First, we have to continue to reform our Government, the instrument of our national community. Everyone knows elections have become too expensive, fueling a fundraising arms race. This year, by March 6th, at long last the Senate will actually vote on bipartisan campaign finance reform proposed by Senators McCain and Feingold. Let's be clear: A vote against McCain-Feingold is a vote for soft money and for the status quo. I ask you to strengthen our democracy and pass campaign finance reform this year.

At least equally important, we have to address the real reason for the explosion in campaign costs: the high cost of media advertising.

[*At this point, audience members responded.*]

The President. To the folks watching at home, those were the groans of pain in the audience. [*Laughter*] I will formally request that the Federal Communications Commission act to provide free or reduced-cost television time for candidates who observe spending limits voluntarily. The airwaves are a public trust, and broadcasters also have to help us in this effort to strengthen our democracy.

Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we've reduced the Federal payroll by 300,000 workers, cut 16,000 pages of regulation, eliminated hundreds of programs, and improved the operations of virtually every Government agency. But we can do more. Like every taxpayer, I'm outraged by the reports of abuses by the IRS.

We need some changes there: new citizen advocacy panels, a stronger taxpayer advocate, phone lines open 24 hours a day, relief for innocent taxpayers. Last year, by an overwhelming bipartisan margin, the House of Representatives passed sweeping IRS reforms. This bill must not now languish in the Senate. Tonight I ask the Senate: Follow the House; pass the bipartisan package as your first order of business.

I hope to goodness before I finish I can think of something to say "follow the Senate" on, so I'll be out of trouble. [*Laughter*]

A nation that lives as a community must value all its communities. For the past 5 years, we have worked to bring the spark of private enterprise to inner city and poor rural areas, with community development banks, more commercial loans in the poor neighborhoods, cleanup of polluted sites for development. Under the continued leadership of the Vice President, we propose to triple the number of empowerment zones to give business incentives to invest in those areas. We should also give poor families more help to move into homes of their own, and we should use tax cuts to spur the construction of more low-income housing.

Last year, this Congress took strong action to help the District of Columbia. Let us renew our resolve to make our Capital City a great city for all who live and visit here. Our cities are the vibrant hubs of great metropolitan areas. They are still the gateways for new immigrants from every continent, who come here to work for their own American dreams. Let's keep our cities going strong into the 21st century; they're a very important part of our future.

Our communities are only as healthy as the air our children breathe, the water they drink, the Earth they will inherit. Last year we put in place the toughest-ever controls on smog and soot. We moved to protect Yellowstone, the Everglades, Lake Tahoe. We expanded every community's right to know about the toxins that threaten their children. Just yesterday, our food safety plan took effect, using new science to protect consumers from dangers like *E. coli* and salmonella.

Tonight I ask you to join me in launching a new clean water initiative, a far-reaching effort to clean our rivers, our lakes, and our coastal waters for our children.

Our overriding environmental challenge tonight is the worldwide problem of climate change, global warming, the gathering crisis that requires worldwide action. The vast majority of scientists have concluded unequivocally that if we don't reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, at some point in the next century, we'll disrupt our climate and put our children and grandchildren at risk. This past December, America led the world to reach a historic agreement committing our Nation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through market forces, new technologies, energy efficiency. We have it in our power to act right here, right now. I propose $6 billion in tax cuts and research and development to encourage innovation, renewable energy, fuel-efficient cars, energy-efficient homes.

Every time we have acted to heal our environment, pessimists have told us it would hurt the economy. Well, today, our economy is the strongest in a generation, and our environment is the cleanest in a generation. We have always found a way to clean the environment and grow the economy at the same time. And when it comes to global warming, we'll do it again.

Finally, community means living by the defining American value, the ideal heard 'round the world, that we are all created equal. Throughout our history, we haven't always honored that ideal and we've never fully lived up to it. Often it's easier to believe that our differences matter more than what we have in common. It may be easier, but it's wrong.

What we have to do in our day and generation to make sure that America becomes truly one nation—what do we have to do? We're becoming more and more and more diverse. Do you believe we can become one nation? The answer cannot be to dwell on our differences but to build on our shared values. We all cherish family and faith, freedom and responsibility. We all want our children to grow up in a world where their talents are matched by their opportunities.

I've launched this national initiative on race to help us recognize our common interests and to bridge the opportunity gaps that are keeping us from becoming one America. Let us begin by recognizing what we still must overcome. Discrimination against any American is un-American. We must vigorously enforce the laws that make it illegal. I ask your help to end the backlog at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Sixty thousand of our fellow citizens are waiting in line for justice, and we should act now to end their wait.

We also should recognize that the greatest progress we can make toward building one

America lies in the progress we make for all Americans, without regard to race. When we open the doors of college to all Americans, when we rid all our streets of crime, when there are jobs available to people from all our neighborhoods, when we make sure all parents have the child care they need, we're helping to build one nation.

We, in this Chamber and in this Government, must do all we can to address the continuing American challenge to build one America. But we'll only move forward if all our fellow citizens, including every one of you at home watching tonight, is also committed to this cause. We must work together, learn together, live together, serve together. On the forge of common enterprise, Americans of all backgrounds can hammer out a common identity. We see it today in the United States military, in the Peace Corps, in AmeriCorps. Wherever people of all races and backgrounds come together in a shared endeavor and get a fair chance, we do just fine. With shared values and meaningful opportunities and honest communication and citizen service, we can unite a diverse people in freedom and mutual respect. We are many; we must be one.

In that spirit, let us lift our eyes to the new millennium. How will we mark that passage? It just happens once every 1,000 years. This year Hillary and I launched the White House Millennium Program to promote America's creativity and innovation, and to preserve our heritage and culture into the 21st century. Our culture lives in every community, and every community has places of historic value that tell our stories as Americans. We should protect them. I am proposing a public-private partnership to advance our arts and humanities and to celebrate the millennium by saving American's treasures, great and small.

And while we honor the past, let us imagine the future. Now, think about this: The entire store of human knowledge now doubles every 5 years. In the 1980's, scientists identified the gene causing cystic fibrosis; it took 9 years. Last year scientists located the gene that causes Parkinson's disease in only 9 days. Within a decade, "gene chips" will offer a roadmap for prevention of illnesses throughout a lifetime. Soon we'll be able to carry all the phone calls on Mother's Day on a single strand of fiber the width of a human hair. A child born in 1998 may well live to see the 22d century.

Tonight, as part of our gift to the millennium, I propose a 21st century research fund for pathbreaking scientific inquiry, the largest funding increase in history for the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the National Cancer Institute. We have already discovered genes for breast cancer and diabetes. I ask you to support this initiative so ours will be the generation that finally wins the war against cancer and begins a revolution in our fight against all deadly diseases.

As important as all this scientific progress is, we must continue to see that science serves humanity, not the other way around. We must prevent the misuse of genetic tests to discriminate against any American. And we must ratify the ethical consensus of the scientific and religious communities and ban the cloning of human beings.

We should enable all the world's people to explore the far reaches of cyberspace. Think of this: The first time I made a State of the Union speech to you, only a handful of physicists used the World Wide Web—literally, just a handful of people. Now, in schools, in libraries, homes, and businesses, millions and millions of Americans surf the Net every day. We must give parents the tools they need to help protect their children from inappropriate material on the Internet, but we also must make sure that we protect the exploding global commercial potential of the Internet. We can do the kinds of things that we need to do and still protect our kids. For one thing, I ask Congress to step up support for building the next generation Internet. It's getting kind of clogged, you know, and the next generation Internet will operate at speeds up to 1,000 times faster than today.

Even as we explore this inner space in the new millennium, we're going to open new frontiers in outer space. Throughout all history, humankind has had only one place to call home, our planet, Earth. Beginning this year, 1998, men and women from 16 countries will build a foothold in the heavens, the international space station. With its vast expanses, scientists and engineers will actually set sail on an uncharted sea of limitless mystery and unlimited potential.

And this October, a true American hero, a veteran pilot of 149 combat missions and one 5-hour space flight that changed the world, will return to the heavens. Godspeed, John Glenn.

[*Applause*] John, you will carry with you America's hopes. And on your uniform, once again, you will carry America's flag, marking the unbroken connection between the deeds of America's past and the daring of America's future.

Nearly 200 years ago, a tattered flag, its broad stripes and bright stars still gleaming through the smoke of a fierce battle, moved Francis Scott Key to scribble a few words on the back of an envelope, the words that became our national anthem. Today, that Star-Spangled Banner, along with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, are on display just a short walk from here. They are America's treasures, and we must also save them for the ages.

I ask all Americans to support our project to restore all our treasures so that the generations of the 21st century can see for themselves the images and the words that are the old and continuing glory of America, an America that has continued to rise through every age, against every challenge, a people of great works and greater possibilities, who have always, always found the wisdom and strength to come together as one nation to widen the circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to form that more perfect Union. Let that be our gift to the 21st century.

God bless you, and God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. in the House Chamber of the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole and his wife, Elizabeth; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 27, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments concerning the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

1. On January 23, 1995, I signed Executive Order 12947, "Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process" (the "Order") (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5079, January 25, 1995). The Order blocks all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of 12 terrorist organizations that threaten the Middle East peace process as identified in an Annex to the Order. The Order also blocks the property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of persons designated by the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, who are found (1) to have committed, or to pose a significant risk of committing, acts of violence that have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process, or (2) to assist in, sponsor, or provide financial, material, or technological support for, or services in support of, such acts of violence. In addition, the Order blocks all property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, any other person designated pursuant to the Order (collectively "Specially Designated Terrorists" or "SDTs").

The Order further prohibits any transaction or dealing by a United States person or within the United States in property or interests in property of SDTs, including the making or receiving of any contribution of funds, goods, or services to or for the benefit of such persons. This prohibition includes donations that are intended to relieve human suffering.

Designations of persons blocked pursuant to the Order are effective upon the date of determination by the Secretary of State or her delegate, or the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury. Public notice of blocking is effective upon the date of filing with the *Federal Register*, or upon prior actual notice.

Because terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and vital interests of the United States in the Middle East, on January 21, 1998, I continued for another year the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, and the measures that took effect on January 24, 1995, to deal with that emergency. This action was taken in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)).

2. On January 25, 1995, the Department of the Treasury issued a notice listing persons blocked pursuant to Executive Order 12947 who have been designated by the President as terrorist organizations threatening the Middle East peace process or who have been found to be owned or controlled by, or to be acting for or on behalf of, these terrorist organizations (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5084, January 25, 1995). The notice identified 31 entities that act for or on behalf of the 12 Middle East terrorist organizations listed in the Annex to Executive Order 12947, as well as 18 individuals who are leaders or representatives of these groups. In addition, the notice provided 9 name variations or pseudonyms used by the 18 individuals identified. The list identifies blocked persons who have been found to have committed, or to pose a significant risk of committing, acts of violence that have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process or to have assisted in, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or services in support of, such acts of violence, or are owned or controlled by, or act for or on behalf of other blocked persons. The Department of the Treasury issued three additional notices adding the names of three individuals, as well as their pseudonyms, to the List of SDTs (60 *Fed. Reg.* 41152, August 11, 1995; 60 *Fed. Reg.* 44932, August 29, 1995; and 60 *Fed. Reg.* 58435, November 27, 1995).

3. On February 2, 1996, OFAC issued the Terrorism Sanctions Regulations (the "TSRs" or the "Regulations") (61 *Fed. Reg.* 3805, February 2, 1996). The TSRs implement the President's declaration of a national emergency and imposition of sanctions against certain persons whose acts of violence have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process. There has been one amendment to the TSRs, 31 C.F.R. Part 595 administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury, since my report of August 5, 1997. The Regulations were amended on August 25, 1997. General reporting, recordkeeping, licensing, and other procedural regulations were moved from the Regulations to a separate part (31 C.F.R. Part 501) dealing solely with such procedural matters (62 *Fed. Reg.* 45098, August 25, 1997). A copy of the amendment is attached.

4. Since January 25, 1995, OFAC has issued three licenses pursuant to the Regulations. These licenses authorize payment of legal expenses of individuals and the disbursement of funds for normal expenditures for the maintenance of family members of individuals designated pursuant to Executive Order 12947, and for secure storage of tangible assets of Specially Designated Terrorists.

5. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from July 22, 1997, through January 22, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency with respect to organizations that disrupt the Middle East peace process are estimated at approximately $165,000. These data do not reflect certain costs of operations by the intelligence and law enforcement communities.

6. Executive Order 12947 provides this Administration with a tool for combating fundraising in this country on behalf of organizations that use terror to undermine the Middle East peace process. The Order makes it harder for such groups to finance these criminal activities by cutting off their access to sources of support in the United States and to U.S. financial facilities. It is also intended to reach charitable contributions to designated organizations and individuals to preclude diversion of such donations to terrorist activities.

Executive Order 12947 demonstrates the United States determination to confront and combat those who would seek to destroy the Middle East peace process, and our commitment to the global fight against terrorism. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against extremists

seeking to destroy the hopes of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Israelis as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

January 27, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 28.

Remarks at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois
January 28, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Well, I was just sitting here thinking two things. First, when the Vice President got really warmed up—[*laughter*]—I thought to myself, first, it will become slightly obvious to this audience that he and I come from a little further south in the United States. [*Laughter*] And then I was thinking, when he really got going, I wish I had people walking the aisles passing the plate. It was amazing. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, the second thing I thought in the midst of this wonderful event was that I wish that I could take the Pep Band with me for the next month or two wherever I go. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Audience members. We love you, Bill!

The President. Thank you. I want to say to Chancellor Aiken and President Stukel and Mayor McCollum, Mayor Satterthwaite, Congressman Ewing, Senator Durbin, and Senator Moseley-Braun, Secretary Riley, and Mr. Vice President, I am delighted to be here. I have spent a lot of time in Illinois in the last 7 years, and this State has been very good to me in many ways. The Vice President has been here a lot, and Hillary came and got a honorary degree and was able to speak here. And I have heard from also our families, friends what a wonderful place this is. I don't know how, with all my roaming across America, I have never lit down here before, but I'm sure glad I got here today. And I thank you for making me feel so welcome.

If you heard the State of the Union last night or just listened to the Vice President here today you know that—you know there's a reason we're here, because you represent, both all of you individually and this great institution, what we're trying to build for the future of America. Last night I talked about all the changes that have occurred just in the last few years. We've had one foot in the 21st century for quite some time. The generation living today has lived through more changes in more different areas in a shorter time than virtually any generation in the history of this country.

And when the Vice President and I took office, we were committed to trying to make America work again, to try to fix the things that just weren't working for ordinary people, and then to free us up to sort of imagine the future and take the steps that were necessary to get us to the future we want to build. That's really what I talked about last night: How can we strengthen this country for the 21st century? What do we have to do?

Now, I don't want to go over everything that was said, and besides that, I can't do as well as the Vice President. He must have gotten 30 more minutes sleep than I did last night. [*Laughter*] He was terrific. But I want to talk to you about just two or three things that I think we should be thinking about for tomorrow.

Let me begin with a bit of history, and your chancellor mentioned it earlier, or the president did. Shortly before—shortly after Abraham Lincoln was elected President, Congressman Justin Morrill, from Vermont, asked his colleagues to help him create a system of land grant colleges. It was in the middle of the Civil War, and frankly, most of them thought he was nuts. You know, people were worried about the survival of the Union. But Abraham Lincoln was always worrying about other things, even in the middle of the Civil War.

At night, when I work in the White House, I go to an office that I've had restored to the way it was in the mid-1800's. And I remember that that room was Abraham Lincoln's waiting room during the Civil War. And all during the

Civil War, at certain appointed hours, he kept a time apart to meet with ordinary citizens. If you wanted a job in a post office in Baltimore in 1862, if you came at the appointed day, at the appointed hour, you could walk up to the room that I go into every night, and sit there, and Abraham Lincoln would see you; the President would see you and listen to you tell why you wanted a post office job. And when he was asked why he did this, he said, "I have to remember that people are concerned about other things, and I want this war to be over so all of us can go back to thinking about things like that."

So he always thought about what life would be like when the war was over. And he was open to this. In 1862, Morrill's bill passed, and President Lincoln signed it into law. It became one of the wisest investments our Nation ever made, and the University of Illinois, here, was one of the original land grant colleges under that Morrill Act.

It's played a dramatic role in helping to shape our Nation. You heard and you were cheering about all the Nobel Prize winners and all that. The Vice President pointed out that it was here that the transistor was invented; Jack Kilby, class of '47, co-invented the microchip. NCSA, headed by Larry Smarr, launched a billion-dollar browser industry. Illinois and other land grant colleges have literally led our way into the information age.

And it all stemmed from something somebody did in 1862 that no one could have imagined would one day have led to all you see around you. I think Lincoln would have liked the Pep Band. [*Laughter*] But he could not have imagined it.

So that's what we've been trying to do. And you heard the Vice President say that basically our view was—the first thing we had to do was we had to get rid of the deficit, but we had to do it in a way that would enable us to invest in our future. We had to shrink the Government, but we had to do it in a way that would allow us to be more active in the areas that were important to our future, that would help to bring us together and widen the circle of opportunity. And the strategy is working.

Now, as you look ahead, I'd just like to mention three things today that I think the University can have a major impact on, two directly and one indirectly. First, we should look to the millennium to try to speed the pace of scientific and technological advances in ways that benefit all of us. So I proposed last night a huge increase in medical research, an increase in the National Science Foundation, a doubling of the National Cancer Institute, because I believe we have enormous opportunities there, and you should be a part of that.

I think it is highly likely that many of you who will be having children in the next 3 or 4 years will have children that will live into the 22d century because of the work that will be done in places like the University of Illinois.

The second thing that I think we should think about is we should reaffirm our commitment to the exploration of outer space. I talked a little about the international space station last night and about Senator John Glenn at 77 years old going back into space. It's so thrilling, and I know all of you are happy about that. But we are learning a lot from our work in space about how our bodies work here on Earth and about how our environment works here on Earth and how it might be better preserved. And so I ask all of you to continue to support the work we're doing there.

And finally, I'd ask you to support, as the Vice President said, this next generation Internet. I mean, can you really believe that only 5 years ago there were just 50 webpages on the Internet; that the Internet was the private preserve of physicists 5 years ago, and now, most 8-year-olds know more about it than their parents? [*Laughter*] I mean, that gives you some sense of the speed of change.

So we're trying to develop the next generation Internet, and Larry Smarr is helping us, and if it works, it will work about 1,000 times faster than the present one does. I don't know how we can absorb any more speed in information, but we have to be able to. We have to maintain public support across party lines and regional lines and age lines and race lines and all kinds of lines for investments in the future. We always have to be trying to shape the future, and we need your help to do that.

Now, the second thing that I want to emphasize is that I want all of you to support the proposition that we have to make, in the years ahead, a college education as universal as a high school education is today. Now, why do I say that? Already it is perfectly clear from looking at all the census figures that any young person who has at least 2 years of college or more

is highly likely to get a job with growing income prospects and high stability and the prospect of positive change in the future. Now, a young person with less than 2 years of college is highly likely to be in a job where income increases don't keep up with inflation, subject to changes which may be unstable and not positive.

We have to create a network of lifetime learning. We have to, first of all, make our elementary and secondary education as excellent as our higher education is today so more people will be prepared to go to college. But then we literally—we've got to make sure that college is open to all.

Now, as the Congressman said, 1997 was the best year for education in a generation, and I believe, clearly, the best year since the GI bill was passed. If you listen to all the things that were done—and I'll just litanize them for you—I think you can make a compelling case that the doors of college have been opened to everybody who will work for it. Now, listen to this: 220,000 new Pell grant scholarships and the maximum amount increased; 300,000 new work-study positions; 50,000 AmeriCorps slots for people who do community service work and earn money to go to college. As Senator Moseley-Braun said, she cosponsored the bill to make interest on student loans tax deductible again; there are IRA's now that you can invest in and then withdraw from, tax-free, if the money is used for education. The first 2 years of college, virtually all Americans are eligible for a $1,500 tax cut to pay for tuition in the first 2 years of college, the HOPE scholarship; and then another tax credit for the 3d and 4th years of college, for graduate school, and for further job training—a lifetime learning credit.

Now, this is an amazing thing. But what I want to say to you is, all of you who are here, I came here to ask, as a great university, in whatever service groups you're in, in whatever family or neighborhood or church networks you have, you need to get this message out to people who are coming on behind you. We need every child in this country to know that if he or she works hard and learns what they're supposed to learn, they can all go to college now. And we need them there for our future in the 21st century.

Now, the last thing I want to ask your help on in the coming year, because we're going to have a big dialog about it, is something that all of you students probably never think about, and that is Social Security and your retirement. I don't know about you, but when I was your age, I never thought about it. [*Laughter*] I thought I would live forever, always young. And what Senator Moseley-Braun said is true: The older you get, the faster time goes.

I never will forget, once, a few years ago, I saw a man who was 76 years old at an airport meeting his brother, getting ready to go to his sister's funeral. And I said, "What are you thinking about?" And he said, "Oh, I'm thinking about when we were 5 years old, how we used to play together." He said, "You know, Bill, it doesn't take long to live a life." I say that to say that even the young must care for the future, even the young must think about their obligations to generations yet unborn; that America must work as a seamless web of community, always doing what is best for today and tomorrow.

Now, what's that got to do with Social Security? There are polls that say that young people in their twenties think it's more likely that they will see UFO's than that they will ever collect Social Security. [*Laughter*] And all of you know that the Social Security system is supposed to be in trouble. Now, what does that mean? It is not in trouble today; nobody today has got any problems drawing their money. In fact, today we collect more money in Social Security taxes every year, quite a bit more, than we pay out.

The problem is that when the baby boomers retire—starting with me, I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—people my age and down about 18 years younger, we are the largest group of Americans that have ever lived, except the group that started first grade last year—second grade, or third grade, whatever it is, something in grade school—because we've got more children in schools now, public schools, than we had during the baby boom generation for the first time. But we're going to have 18, 20, 25 years where there will be a huge number of people on Social Security in their retirement years, compared to the people who are paying in. That is the issue.

Now, the question is, what is the best way to prepare for the retirement of the baby boomers in ways that do not either rob those people who need it of their secure retirement or impose intolerable burdens on our children, who, in turn, will be burdened in raising our grandchildren?

I don't know anybody in my generation who believes that we ought to just take it out on you and put our feet up when we turn 65 and turn away from the obligations we have to contribute to the further growth and vitality of people who are younger than we are. So the question is, what is the fairest way to change this? What's best for people who are on Social Security now? What's best for the baby boomers? What's best for young people in their twenties and thirties just starting to pay into the system? What's best for the kids that are in high school now who haven't even started?

We're going to spend a year having forums all across the country, completely nonpartisan, trying to bring people in and debate it. And then about a year from now, I'm going to convene the leaders of Congress, and we're going to try to craft historic bipartisan legislation to reform Social Security, to save it for the 21st century, to make sure it's there not just for the baby boomers but for everybody in this audience and all your children, too, so we'll have a system that works, so that people who work hard and do their part will know they'll have elemental retirement security and that we can do it without bankrupting the country. I think we can do it. I know we can do it. But it's going to take your good-faith involvement—people of all ages.

And since what we do may affect how you proceed throughout your entire worklife, we've got to have people involved in their twenties, in their thirties. The young people of this country have got to be involved in this debate. It will affect you as much as anybody else.

But if we do it, it will be just sort of like balancing the budget. You know how people said, "Oh, you'll never get that budget balanced. You'll never do that. That's just something politicians talk about. It is a huge thing to do." Why? We spend less money on debt; we invest more money in our future; we have a stronger economy. The same thing will be true of Social Security. Once we make the adjustments necessary to fix it, the increase in confidence, the increase in savings, the increase in belief in the future of this country as we go forward together will be absolutely astonishing. And we need you to be a part of it.

The last thing I want to ask about—the Vice President touched this briefly, and he knows more about it than I do—but we need young people in this country, particularly young people in our university system, to convince the rest of America that we must and we can address the challenge of climate change and global warming.

Now, I can tell you, I have been working on the economics of energy efficiencies for over 20 years now in various guises. I am convinced that the technology is out there right now to do what we need to do to do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in factories, in power generation systems, in homes and office buildings. And we're getting very, very close in automobiles. We can get there.

But listen, this is your future; this is your life; this is the world your children and your grandchildren will have to live in, in the 21st century. This is crazy for us not to do this. We do not have to take the economy down; we will lift the economy up. And you have to take the lead in helping us meet this challenge.

Scientific research, universal access to university education, reforming Social Security for the 21st century, dealing with the challenge of climate change: those are just four of the things that are out there. Keep your eyes on the future. Believe in this country. Believe in yourself. Reach out across the lines that divide us. Do not let people—do not ever let people who are divisive or pessimistic convince you that there is anything this country can't do. I can look at you and tell you that this country can do anything we put our minds to.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. in Assembly Hall at the University of Illinois. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Aiken, chancellor, and James Stukel, president, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana; Mayor Dan McCollum of Champaign; Mayor Tod Satterthwaite of Urbana; and Larry Smarr, director, National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA).

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana

January 28, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Let me, first of all——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. [*Laughter*] Thank you. Let me ask you a question. Did you see the event in the other place? [*Applause*] One fellow over here said, "Yeah, you don't have to say anything again. It was great." [*Laughter*] Well, I want to thank Secretary Riley and thank the Vice President, but mostly, let me tell you we are overwhelmed at the crowd that has come out today. Here—5,000 people here. There's another 3,500 people in another room. I'm overwhelmed, and I thank you very much.

Look, here's the bottom line. Here's the bottom line. For 5 years we have worked basically on two things: First of all, we tried to get the country in shape, in good shape, so that it just works in a good way for people; and secondly, we tried to get the American people to imagine the future, to think about the 21st century, to think about what kind of country we want this to be and how we're going to build it. Now that we have the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership ever, record drops in welfare, 5 years of dropping crime, things are pretty well in shape. We need to be thinking about the future. And that's what I tried to talk about last night.

We need a future in which all these areas that have been left behind in the economic recovery have a chance to educate their children well, to have their kids on safe streets, to have jobs in places that have never been there. We need a future like that. And we need a future that you can help us with, younger people especially can help us with, a future where we understand that our future is tied to the rest of the world, that we have to work in cooperation with other countries and it doesn't make us weaker, it makes us stronger when we reach out a hand of friendship to Africa, to Latin America, to Asia, to all these other countries, and we work together to go forward. We have to understand that.

We need a future in which we understand—we believe that America can lead the world in growing an economy and not only saving but actually improving our natural environment. We can cure this problem of global warming and grow the economy. Young people believe that. America has to believe that. And you have to make it happen.

And finally, we need a future in which we really believe that education is for everyone. We have worked so hard—you heard us talking about it in the other room—we worked so hard to make it possible for every young person in this country to go on to college. And you have to tell people who are coming along behind you, "You can do it. Don't be discouraged." That little baby in your arms can go to college. Every baby in this country I want to be able to go to college.

We have to figure out a way when the Vice President and I, when our generation retires, the so-called baby boomers, we provide for a system that preserves our retirement, guarantees it for the 20- and 30-year-olds today, and doesn't bankrupt you. We can do that, if you'll help us do it, next year.

And the last thing I want to say is this, and in some ways this may be more important than anything else. America—look at this crowd here today. Look at you. Look at each other. Now, we've got people who are young and not so young. [*Laughter*] We have people who are in wheelchairs and people who may play varsity athletics. We have people from every conceivable racial and ethnic group here in what you used to think of as homogeneous Champaign-Urbana. Why is that? Because America is changing. We're becoming more and more and more diverse.

Now, a lot of the time that Al Gore and I spend working for you, we're out there worrying about these ethnic problems in Bosnia, or religious and ethnic differences in the Middle East, or old hatreds in Ireland, or tribal warfare in Africa. And we still see examples of horrible discrimination from time to time in America. But you know, just look around this room. This is our meal ticket to the future, our diversity

and sharing values, believing in each other, believing in the fundamental unity of human nature. That's our meal ticket to the future. You can make one America. And I want you to help us make one America for a new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in Gymnasium 1 of the Intramural Physical Education Building.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana

January 28, 1998

Thank you. First of all, thank you for coming, and thank you for waiting. I'm sorry you had to wait so long.

I want to thank Secretary Riley and the Vice President, and I also want to thank your Congressman, Congressman Tom Ewing, for coming along with me. Let's give him a big hand. [*Applause*]

We have had an incredible day at the University of Illinois—an incredible day. You know, this is the third meeting we've been to. You had to sit through the other two, didn't you? Is that okay? [*Applause*]

This reminds me—I hate to give the same speech over, but once I went to a concert where Tina Turner sang—you all know who Tina Turner is—and at the end of the concert, after singing all her new songs, she started to sing her first hit, "Proud Mary." And the crowd started clapping, and she said, "I have been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it."

But I'm not going to give you the whole dose again. I want to just make two points very briefly. Number one, the Vice President and I and our administration, we've worked very hard these last 5 years to get America in good shape, to have this country work again for ordinary people. And I think you can see, from the condition of the economy and from the fact that we're making real progress on our social problems and from our work in the world at large, that we're making that kind of progress.

Now is the time we need to be thinking about what the 21st century will look like for all the young people here. And that means a commitment to education for everybody, all the way through college. It means a commitment to the idea that we can preserve and improve our environment while we grow the economy. It means a commitment to the idea that we can reform Social Security so that the big baby boom generation, that I'm the oldest member of, can retire without putting unfair burdens on those of you who are younger and your children.

And it means that we can find a way in our increasingly diverse country to come together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America, because in a global society, believe you me, a great democracy like ours that can accommodate people of every race, every background, every religion, and still be bound together by shared values is the most blessed place on Earth.

Our best days are ahead of us as a nation. And we are here today to ask you to stand with us in that fight, to imagine that kind of future and to be a part of it. And I am very grateful to you for coming out.

Thank you, and God bless you. I want to go shake hands. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. in Gymnasium 2 of the Intramural Physical Education Building.

Remarks in La Crosse, Wisconsin
January 28, 1998

Thank you so much. Thank you for the warm welcome—the "warm" welcome. [*Laughter*] Thank you for being here in great numbers and with great enthusiasm. Thank you for sending Ron Kind to Congress. He's a fine man, and he represents you well. Thank you, Attorney General Doyle. Thank you, Mayor Medinger. Thank you, Secretary Riley, for all you do. Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for getting our blood running—[*laughter*]—and for your magnificent leadership. And thank you, Lee and Ruth Mathison, for reminding us what's best about the United States of America. Didn't they do a good job? Let's give them another hand. [*Applause*]

Were any of you here back in 1992, when the Vice President and I came on the bus? [*Applause*] I remember we had been on the road 18 hours. We got into the Days Inn about 2 o'clock. I could barely speak, and I was bone tired. But the people that were there for us on that night, giving us high fives, making us feel at home, make it a wonderful memory, and it feels good to be back in God's country tonight. And I thank you so much for being here.

The Vice President and I even got to speak on the Clinton Street Bridge. And I remember that.

You've heard everybody talk already about the blessings our country enjoys, and I am grateful for that. I'm grateful for the chance that I had last night to outline the state of the Union and to talk about the future. I'm grateful that we really have opened the doors of college education to all Americans for the first time. And I hope everybody here who is a young person knows that because of the tax cuts and the scholarships and the grants and the work-study program and the Ameri-Corps program, you ought to go out and tell everybody they can go to college now, and they never have to worry about that again.

But I want to thank you for what you're doing here to make America work from the ground up, to make America work together to give our kids a better future. I can't mention all the local heroes behind me today, but I want to mention one, Jerry Freimark, who has worked with businesses and students to help students in rural areas gain the skills necessary for 21st century careers in banking and finance by learning over interactive TV.

You know, we forget sometimes that people in small towns and rural areas have the same right to the 21st century future everybody else does. And I want you to know that Al Gore and I will never forget that.

But tonight I don't want to talk about that. I want to talk very briefly about that future, because to me the most important thing we've done in the last 5 years is just to try to make America work again for ordinary people, so that we can be free to imagine the 21st century and we can be free to build it.

In 1962, President Kennedy said, "The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining." And I couldn't say that any better tonight. I'm grateful that we have—almost have a balanced budget. We're going to get one this year or next year. I'm proposing one for next year, and I think it will be balanced before the year is out.

Now, let's talk about what we're going to do. And I just want to mention two or three things. I want all of you to think about this and be involved in it. First of all, it's projected we're going to have a big surplus, cumulative, over the next 4 or 5 years; we haven't had one in 30 years. Naturally enough, people are thinking, well, let's cut taxes or let's spend the money, even though we've still got a debt we've piled up that's quite considerable. What I want to do is to say, before we spend any of that surplus, let's make sure that we have saved the Social Security system so we don't bankrupt our children when the baby boomers retire.

Now, this is a place of community. I can look around—here's a couple who have been married 51 years, still working, with kids. I want to think about our intergenerational responsibilities. I saw a survey the other day that said young people in their twenties thought it was more likely that they would see UFO's than that they'd ever get to collect Social Security. [*Laughter*]

Now, here's what I have to say about that. I don't want to stop people from watching the "X-Files." Go on and do that. [*Laughter*] But

I hope you'll also next year participate in the discussions we're going to have all across America—nonpartisan, across party lines, across age lines—about the Social Security system and what we need to do to make sure that when the baby boomers—and I'm the oldest baby boomer at 51—when people my age and 18 years younger, when we retire—and there's so many of us that there will be more than ever before, more people retired compared to people working—how are we going to save the system in a way that doesn't put undue burdens on our children and, therefore, undue burdens on our children when they're raising their children? I think that's something we all want.

And let me tell you something. We can do it. It won't be too difficult. But we have to do it in a nonpolitical way, and we have to do it as friends and neighbors and family members. La Crosse can be the model for how we save Social Security for the 21st century, and I hope you'll support us in that.

The second thing I want to say is, we've got to save our education system for the 21st century. I could just feel it last night at the State of the Union. I was talking about all the things we had done to open the doors of college, and people were cheering all over America. They thought, "Oh, my goodness, that's something I won't have to sweat." Why were we cheering? Why? Because we know we have the best system of higher education in the entire world. No one questions that. I want, in the 21st century, people to be able to say with the absolute same conviction, we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the entire world.

The third thing I want you to think about is what we can do—and I talked a little about it last night—to bring more investment into the inner-city areas and into the small towns and rural areas that have been left behind in this recovery. You know as well as I do, we still have a lot of people leaving the farm. The average farmer in America is 59 years old today.

Now, I don't have all the answers, but I come from a rural State that had tough inner-city areas. And I'm proud of the fact that we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, and I'm glad we've got the highest percentage of people in the work force in history. But you know and I know that there are still people who are working hard and don't have enough to live on, and there are still people who would like to work who don't have jobs. And you know and I know that the prosperity we have seen has still not swept into every neighborhood in America.

So I ask you, let's find a way in the 21st century to make free enterprise reach every rural community and every inner-city neighborhood. We can do it if we'll do it together.

The next thing I'd like to mention that I think is very important, and the Vice President talked about it a little bit, is the environment. We have a lot of environmental challenges. I'm very proud of the fact that, compared to 5 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; we have fewer toxic waste dumps; our food supply is safer. I am proud of that. But we do have—the Secretary made that joke about El Nino, and I loved it because I was shaking up here, too, but the truth is that the scientific opinion in the world is virtually unanimous that the climate of the Earth is warming at an unsustainable pace—even on this cold night. And we know that just small changes in temperature can affect great changes in the surface of the Earth and the way we live.

We know what's mainly causing it: It's greenhouse gases, the stuff we put out in the air from powerplants, from homes, from factories, from farms, from cars, from trucks, you name it. We also know that without a lot of effort, if we really put our mind to it, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and grow the economy.

Now, every time we have faced a new environmental challenge, pessimists have said, "Oh, goodness, if we do that, maybe we can clean the environment, but it will shut our economy down." It has never happened. We have the cleanest environment in history and the strongest economy we've ever had. And I want you to make a commitment here that places like the University of Wisconsin can figure out how to find the technological ways to have the efficient cars, the efficient trucks, the efficient homes, the efficient office buildings, the efficient factories, the efficient electricity generators to make sure we save this planet for our grandchildren and their grandchildren. We can do that in the 21st century.

Finally, I want us to really tap the full measure of the scientific and technological potential of this country. Ron Kind said he hoped that his child and the child he's about to have might be two of those that I talked about last night

when I said children born in the next couple of years might well live to see the 22d century. That is literally true. We have proposed, the Vice President and I and our administration, to create a research fund for the 21st century to make an unprecedented effort in the National Institute of Health, the National Cancer Institute, the National Science Foundation. I hope you will support that.

I hope you will support something that may seem a long way from La Crosse. I hope you will support our mission in space and the international space station. Why? Because when John Glenn, at 77 years old, goes up into space, we're going to learn something about how people's bodies work down here on Earth. A lot of our space research is helping us not only to find out what's in the heavens and to protect ourselves in the future but also to find out what's going on here on Earth, how to preserve our environment, how to improve our health. It may seem a long way from La Crosse, but we have learned that we dare not turn away from the frontiers of knowledge. We need to embrace them and make them work for the good of humanity, and we can do it, and I hope you will support that.

The last thing that I want you to think about for the 21st century is how we can make all of America work the way these local community heroes work in their communities. How can we reach across the lines that divide us?

I know that in La Crosse you had a conference on race last month, with the leadership of Thai Vue and June Kjome and Roy Heath and other citizen heroes that are here today. I want to thank them for that. And I thank all of you who participated.

Let me say to you—I said last night to the American people, we are more interdependent on each other and on the rest of the world than ever before. I mean, whether we like it or not, a third of our economic growth that we all celebrate came because we're selling things to people around the world. We represent 4 percent of the world's population and, thanks to our hard work and God's good fortune to us, we have about 20 percent of the world's wealth. So we have to work with others around the world.

And when you do business with people, you also have to be good partners, good neighbors, good friends. You have to care about them, and you have to get them to kind of reach out of their own prejudices and problems. I spent a lot of time working on getting people to stop behaving like fools, frankly, and hating each other because they have different races or different ethnic backgrounds or different religious backgrounds, whether it's in Bosnia or Northern Ireland or the Middle East or in Africa—around the world, the whole world is tormented by that. Now, here in America, we're becoming more and more and more diverse. And if we can prove to the world that we can live together, work together, learn together, and serve in our communities together, you can bet your bottom dollar we'll get along together. And America will still be the shining light of freedom and hope in the world well into the 21st century. And that's what we have to do.

I thank you again for having us here, for waiting in the cold—or the warm—[*laughter*]—and I don't know how many of you were at the Packers' welcome home party, but I thank them for showing up. [*Laughter*] Hang in there. There's always next year.

I will never forget looking out on this sea of people tonight, this beautiful old restored street, all the American flags, reading the stories of the American heroes. This is the best of America. This is the best of our past and the hope of our future. And together, we can make America's best days ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:31 p.m. at the La Crosse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Wisconsin Attorney General Jim Doyle; Mayor John Medinger of La Crosse; Lee and Ruth Mathison, who introduced the President; and Thai Vue, June Kjome, and Roy Heath, community service volunteers.

Statement on the Nomination of General Joseph W. Ralston to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

January 28, 1998

I am pleased to announce that I have nominated General Joseph W. Ralston for a second 2-year tour as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

General Ralston has served with distinction as Vice Chairman over the past 2 years, providing excellent advice and support for two Secretaries of Defense and two Chairmen. His experience with the quadrennial defense review and major defense policy issues, along with his demonstrated leadership skills, ensure that the position of Vice Chairman will continue to be filled by the high caliber of individual needed for this challenging and vital post.

Statement on the Senate Republican Child Care Proposal

January 28, 1998

Earlier this month, I unveiled an ambitious initiative to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. Last night, in my State of the Union Address, I asked Congress to reach across party lines to work on this important issue. I am very pleased that today Senators Chafee, Hatch, Snowe, Roberts, Specter, and Collins proposed a child care package that, like mine, significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides additional tax relief to help low- and middle-income families pay for child care, creates a tax credit for businesses that provide child care to their employees, and improves State enforcement of health and safety standards. I look forward to working with Members of Congress in both parties to enact comprehensive child care legislation to meet the needs of children and families.

I believe that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and, even more importantly, as parents. With this important contribution from Senator Chafee and his Senate colleagues, we move significantly closer to enacting child care legislation that is right for America's children.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Zimbabwe-United States Extradition Treaty With Documentation

January 28, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, signed at Harare on July 25, 1997.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. As the report explains, the Treaty will not require implementing legislation.

The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

This Treaty will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of both countries, and thereby make a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts. It is the first extradition treaty between the two countries.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

January 28, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Latvia-United States Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty With Documentation

January 28, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Republic of Latvia on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on June 13, 1997. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, an exchange of notes that was signed the same date as the Treaty and that provides for its provisional application, as well as the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing. The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking of testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to restraint, confiscation, forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

January 28, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Kazakhstan-United States Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreement With Documentation

January 28, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, with accompanying annex and agreed minute. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the agreement, and the memorandum of the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency with the Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement concerning the agreement. The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, which includes a summary of the provisions of the agreement and various other attachments, including agency views, is also enclosed.

The proposed agreement with the Republic of Kazakhstan has been negotiated in accordance

with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 and as otherwise amended. In my judgment, the proposed agreement meets all statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States. The agreement provides a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan under appropriate conditions and controls reflecting our common commitment to nuclear nonproliferation goals.

Kazakhstan is a nonnuclear weapons state party to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Kazakhstan agreed to the removal of all nuclear weapons from its territory. It has a full-scope safeguards agreement in force with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to implement its safeguards obligations under the NPT. It has enacted national legislation to control the use and export of nuclear and dual-use materials and technology.

The proposed agreement with the Republic of Kazakhstan permits the transfer of technology, material, equipment (including reactors), and components for nuclear research and nuclear power production. It provides for U.S. consent rights to retransfer, enrichment, and reprocessing as required by U.S. law. It does not permit transfers of any sensitive nuclear technology, restricted data, or sensitive nuclear facilities or major critical components thereof. In the event of termination, key conditions and controls continue with respect to material and equipment subject to the agreement.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the agreement and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

Because this agreement meets all applicable requirements of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended, for agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation, I am transmitting it to the Congress without exempting it from any requirement contained in section 123 a. of that Act. This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. The Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 28, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Switzerland-United States Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreement With Documentation

January 28, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Swiss Federal Council Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, with accompanying agreed minute, annexes, and other attachments. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the agreement, and the memorandum of the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency with the Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement concerning the agreement. The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, which includes a summary of the provisions of the agreement and other attachments, including the views of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, is also enclosed.

The proposed new agreement with Switzerland has been negotiated in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (NNPA) and as otherwise amended. It replaces an earlier agreement with Switzerland signed December 30, 1965, which expired by its terms August 8, 1996. The proposed new agreement will provide an updated, comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation between the United States and Switzerland, will facilitate such cooperation, and will establish strengthened nonproliferation conditions and controls including all those required by the NNPA. The new agreement provides for the transfer of moderator material, nuclear material, and equipment for both nuclear research and nuclear power purposes. It does not provide for transfers under the agreement of any sensitive nuclear technology (SNT). (U.S. law permits SNT to be transferred outside the coverage of an agreement for cooperation provided that certain other conditions are satisfied. However, the Administration has no plans to transfer SNT to Switzerland outside the agreement.)

The proposed agreement has an initial term of 30 years, and will continue in force indefinitely thereafter in increments of 5 years each until terminated in accordance with its provisions. In the event of termination, key nonproliferation conditions and controls, including guarantees of safeguards, peaceful use and adequate physical protection, and the U.S. right to approve retransfers to third parties, will remain effective with respect to transferred moderator materials, nuclear materials, and equipment, as well as nuclear material produced through their use. The agreement also establishes procedures for determining the survival of additional controls.

Switzerland has strong nonproliferation credentials. It is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the application of full-scope IAEA safeguards within its territory. In negotiating the proposed agreement, the United States and Switzerland took special care to elaborate a preamble setting forth in specific detail the broad commonality of our shared nonproliferation commitments and goals.

The proposed new agreement provides for very stringent controls over certain fuel cycle activities, including enrichment, reprocessing, and alteration in form or content and storage of plutonium and other sensitive nuclear materials. The United States and Switzerland have accepted these controls on a reciprocal basis, not as a sign of either Party's distrust of the other, and not for the purpose of interfering with each other's fuel cycle choices, which are for each Party to determine for itself, but rather as a reflection of our common conviction that the provisions in question represent an important norm for peaceful nuclear commerce.

In view of the strong commitment of Switzerland to the international nonproliferation regime, the comprehensive nonproliferation commitments that Switzerland has made, the advanced technological character of the Swiss civil nuclear program, the long history of U.S.-Swiss cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy without any risk of proliferation, and the long-standing close and harmonious political relationship between Switzerland and the United States, the proposed new agreement provides to Switzerland advance, long-term U.S. approval for retransfers to specified facilities in the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) of nuclear material subject to the agreement for reprocessing, alteration in form or content, and storage, and for the return to Switzerland of recovered nuclear materials, including plutonium, for use or storage at specified Swiss facilities. The proposed agreement also provides advance, long-term U.S. approval for retransfers from Switzerland of source material, uranium (other than high enriched uranium), moderator material, and equipment to a list of countries and groups of countries acceptable to the United States. Any advance, long-term approval may be suspended or terminated if it ceases to meet the criteria set out in U.S. law, including criteria relating to safeguards and physical protection.

In providing advance, long-term approval for certain nuclear fuel cycle activities, the proposed agreement has features similar to those in several other agreements for cooperation that the United States has entered into subsequent to enactment of the NNPA. These include U.S. agreements with Japan and EURATOM. Among the documents I am transmitting herewith to the Congress is an analysis of the advance, long-term approvals contained in the proposed U.S. agreement with Switzerland. The analysis concludes that the approvals meet all requirements of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended.

I believe that the proposed agreement for cooperation with Switzerland will make an important contribution to achieving our nonproliferation, trade, and other significant foreign policy goals.

In particular, I am convinced that this agreement will strengthen the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, support of which is a fundamental objective of U.S. national security and foreign policy, by setting a high standard for rigorous nonproliferation conditions and controls.

Because the agreement contains all the consent rights and guarantees required by current U.S. law, it represents a substantial upgrading of the U.S. controls in the recently-expired 1965 agreement with Switzerland.

I believe that the new agreement will also demonstrate the U.S. intention to be a reliable nuclear trading partner with Switzerland, and thus help ensure the continuation and, I hope, growth of U.S. civil nuclear exports to Switzerland.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the agreement and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

Because this agreement meets all applicable requirements of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended, for agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation, I am transmitting it to the Congress without exempting it from any requirement contained in section 123 a. of the Act. This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. The Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 28, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 29.

Videotaped Remarks on Id al-Fítr

January 29, 1998

On behalf of all Americans, I want to extend my personal greetings to the entire Muslim community in the United States and around the world as you celebrate the Id al-Fıtr.

This week marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. It's a time for rejoicing and celebration, a time of family and community. It is also a time for reflection and for recommitting ourselves to the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding. In a world where many Muslims suffer the terrible consequences of war, poverty, and unrest, we must renew our efforts to resolve conflicts and remove the causes of strife.

The United States is determined to do all it can to bring a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace to the Middle East. As I told Chairman Arafat, Palestinians should be allowed to realize their aspirations to live as a free people, and Israelis should be able to live in security, recognized by all their neighbors. Our goal is to help the people of the region end this age-old conflict and to give their children the future of hope and promise they deserve.

Today our sympathies are with the people of Algeria and Afghanistan, who have endured too much suffering, and we pray that a time of healing will soon come for them. We are also deeply concerned by the hardships that afflict the people of Iraq, and we will continue working within the United Nations so that they receive the food and medicine they need.

To the people of Iran, I would like to say that the United States regrets the estrangement of our two nations. Iran is an important country with a rich and ancient cultural heritage of

which Iranians are justifiably proud. We have real differences with some Iranian policies, but I believe these are not insurmountable. I hope that we have more exchanges between our peoples and that the day will soon come when we can enjoy once again good relations with Iran.

Let me say to the Muslims of South Asia, I look forward to visiting your region later this year and to deepening the bonds between the United States and the peoples of the subcontinent.

On this occasion, let us rekindle our commitment to the cause of peace among all the peoples of the Earth. If we are dedicated in our belief and constant in our labor, we can build a better future, one of cooperation, understanding, and compassion for ourselves and for generations to come.

As the new moon ushers in this holy celebration, let me say to all who follow the faith of Islam: *As-Salaamu alaykum.* May peace be with you, and may God grant you health and prosperity, now and in the years ahead.

NOTE: These remarks were videotaped at approximately 6 p.m. on January 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET, and they were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 29. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the National Defense University
January 29, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, General Shelton, for those kind remarks and for your little walk through memory lane about our association together. My most vivid memory of my association with General Shelton is when he walked out of the water and looked down at the Haitian dictator and said he thought he would have to go. And I thought to myself, we should have just sent him down there by himself. [*Laughter*] I thank you for your leadership.

Thank you, Secretary Cohen, for your remarks and for your extraordinary leadership of the Defense Department and for helping us to demonstrate every day that this is not a Democratic or a Republican effort, or a Democratic or Republican administration when it comes to the defense of this country and the welfare of the American people and our men and women in uniform.

To the members of the Joint Chiefs, the commanders in chief, General Chilcoat, the students of the National Defense University, faculty, and others; I am delighted to be here, at a place where education, experience, and excellence make a common home. I'm especially pleased to be here with the members of the Joint Chiefs and our commanders in chief, whose 68 stars form a shining constellation of talent and achievement.

We have just had a wonderful meeting, and each of the commanders in chief has shared a few moments with me, and we've had a little conversation discussing the whole range of America's security interests, the whole range of the concerns of people who are managing the welfare of our men and women in uniform. And I must say that I couldn't help thinking, during the course of this meeting, I wish every person who wears the uniform of the United States could be watching this on closed-circuit television, because they'd have so much confidence in the leadership of our military.

And in a larger sense, I wish every American citizen could have seen it because they would feel so much more pride, even than they do now, in the way our military is led, the thinking about the future that is going on, the innovation that is going on, and the profound concern for the people who wear our Nation's uniform, as well as what I consider to be an enormous sensitivity to the increasing interdependence of our United States with other countries and the necessity of more creative, positive partnerships around the world. And I know we have people here from other nations in this audience today, and I welcome you here.

Twelve of the commanders in chief behind me are graduates of the National Defense University. They indicate the value of this university

to the Nation. They also indicate that in the not too distant future, some of you out there will be sitting up here or will otherwise be helping to shape the future of the United States. For that I am very grateful.

In my State of the Union Address, I talked about what we all have to do together to strengthen America for the 21st century. Today I wanted to meet with you, the future stewards of our national security, to talk about the foundation of our strength, our military, and the essential role it will play in this era of challenge and change.

You all know that we live in a time of tremendous promise for our Nation in the world. Superpower conflict has ended. Democracy is on the march. Revolutions in technology and communications have literally brought a world of information to our doorstep. Americans are more secure and prosperous than ever. And we have a rare opportunity and a profound responsibility to build a new era of peace and cooperation in the world.

Even as we welcome this hopeful new moment, we all acknowledge, especially those of you who are here studying it, that the world is far from free of risk. Challenges persist, often in more complex guises, from the spread of weapons of mass destruction to the menace of rogue states to the persistence of religious, ethnic, and regional conflict. The openness and freedom of movement that we so cherish about this modern world actually make us more vulnerable to a host of threats, terrorists, drug cartels, international criminals, that have no respect for borders and can make very clever use of communications and technology.

In this new world, our global leadership is more important than ever. That doesn't mean we can go it alone or respond to every crisis. We have to be clear where our national interests are at stake. But more than ever, the world looks to America to get the job done. Our Nation is leading in building a new network of institutions and arrangements to harness the forces of change, while guarding against their dangers. We are helping to write the international rules of the road for the 21st century, protecting those who've joined the family of nations and isolating those who do not.

To advance this strategy, we have to preserve and strengthen the tools of our engagement of fully funded diplomacy backed by a strong and modern defense. Diplomacy and force are two sides of the same coin. Our diplomacy is effective precisely because it is backed by the finest military in the world. Nothing illustrates the scope of our interests or the purpose of our power better than our unified commands. No other nation in history has achieved a global force presence, not through intimidation, not through invasion, but through invitation. That is an extraordinary thing. No other nation has acquired mastery of land, sea, sky, and space and used it to help advance world peace, instead of to pursue conquest.

The military commanders who share this stage and the forces they lead know their first mission must be always to be ready to fight and win our Nation's wars. But day-in and day-out, around the world, they are shaping an international environment, enhancing the security of America and the world so that peace can endure and prevail. In our own hemisphere, where elected civilian governments now reign, American leadership is spurring greater military cooperation than ever, promoting regional confidence, working together as peacekeepers, supporting law enforcement efforts against drugs. Through the defense ministerial of the Americas, with the assistance of the NDU, we are finding new ways to advance common goals, such as healthy civil-military relations and respect for human rights.

In Europe, our Armed Forces are reinforcing the foundations of an undivided democratic continent. They've helped new democracies to restructure their own defenses. They have participated in dozens of joint exercises with new partners. They stopped a brutal war in Bosnia, and they're helping to heal its scars.

During my meeting with the CINC's, I talked with General Clark, our Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, about our Bosnia mission. I am very proud of the men and women who are representing all of us in Bosnia. But perhaps even more important, they're pretty proud of themselves. They know that they have stopped the guns, enabled free elections, made it possible for refugees to come home, given the children of Bosnia the precious gift of peace.

Yes, the progress has been slower than we had hoped, but clearly, it is moving forward. If we walk away, it could backslide into war, costing the lives of more innocent people, jeopardizing Europe's stability. Last month I concluded that our troops should take part in a follow-on security presence when the SFOR

mission leaves in June. Soon, NATO will finish its review of what forces are appropriate for the new mission. And this spring, I will submit funding requests to ensure that we can pay our share without undercutting our readiness. I'll be working closely with Congress to ensure approval of this important legislation.

The NATO-led efforts in Bosnia reflect our hope for Europe's future as former rivals work together for stability and peace. Soon, I'll ask the Senate to give its advice and consent to make Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic NATO's newest members. By enlarging the sphere of security in Europe, we can secure democracy's roots and help to prevent conflicts like Bosnia from happening again.

We're also working to strengthen democracy and peace in Africa by helping Africans to help themselves. Through the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, we're helping African militaries to improve their peacekeeping capabilities so they can respond to crises more quickly and effectively and stop trouble from escalating into tragedy.

And just as our interests span the Atlantic, so they bridge the Pacific. In our meeting today, Admiral Prueher, the Commander in Chief of our Pacific Command, and General Tilelli, the Commander of U.S. Forces, Korea, confirmed that the 100,000 troops they lead continue to perform superbly. From the soldiers of the Korean DMZ who sleep in their uniforms, ready to stop an invasion at a moment's notice, to the marines and the sailors on the ships of the 7th Fleet forward deployed in Japan, our troops provide the bedrock of stability on which Asia's peace and America's interests depend.

In recent years, we've strengthened our treaty alliances with Japan, with Thailand, with South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines. We persuaded North Korea to halt its dangerous nuclear program. We've launched talks that can bring about a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. We're deepening our areas of agreement with China, while dealing with our differences frankly and openly. We're working with our partners to restore Asia's financial stability, as we build a secure and prosperous Asia-Pacific community. Our troops make clear that America is committed to remaining a Pacific power, and every day they help the Pacific region live up to its name.

America also has vital interests in a stable Persian Gulf region. It's home to two-thirds of the world's oil resources and some of its most hostile regimes. General Zinni, our Commander in Chief of the Central Command, provided me today with an up-to-date assessment of Saddam's latest challenge to the community of nations. Since Desert Storm, America has worked steadily and persistently to contain the threat Saddam poses, through sanctions that deny him billions every year to rebuild his military and, where necessary, with force. We struck Iraq's intelligence headquarters after its agents plotted to murder President Bush. We convinced Saddam to pull back his troops from Kuwait's border in 1994. We tightened the strategic straitjacket on him by extending the no-fly zone when he attacked the Kurds in 1996.

As I said in the State of the Union Address, we know that Saddam has used weapons of mass destruction before. We again say he should comply with the UNSCOM regime and the will of the United Nations. But regardless, we are determined to deny him the capacity to use weapons of mass destruction again. Preventing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons from winding up in the wrong hands is among the primary challenges we face in the new security environment. Nineteen ninety-eight will be a decisive year for our arms control and nonproliferation agenda.

I'm very pleased that four Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs, General Shalikashvili, General Powell, Admiral Crowe, and General Jones, have just this week announced their support for Senate ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The treaty will help to prevent the development of new and more dangerous weapons and make it more difficult for non-nuclear states to build them. The Senate should ratify it this year.

We are also committed to toughen the Biological Weapons Convention by establishing an international inspection system to track down and crack down on cheating. And we'll continue to urge the Russian Duma to ratify START II, paving the way for START III, and even deeper nuclear weapons reduction. General Habiger, Commander of America's Strategic Command, understands the importance of arms control and addressing the threat of weapons of mass destruction. Today he and I reviewed the steps we've taken to ensure that our nuclear deterrent force remains safe, reliable, effective, and unchallenged well into the 21st century.

One of the key reasons that all of these efforts can be successful is the skill of our military.

And one of the greatest privileges of my job, as I said earlier, has been seeing our military at work. At home and abroad, from Haiti to Bosnia, from Japan to Kuwait, at sea and on shore, it makes no difference where they're stationed, the rank they hold, or how many ribbons they wear; our service men and women reflect America's highest standards of skill, discipline, and service. They are the patriots who answer the call whenever our Nation needs them, heroes who man their stations around the clock so the rest of us can sleep without fear. Hardship, uncertainty, and separation from loved ones are a part of the job. Many have missed the birth of their own sons and daughters to make the rest of our children safer.

Part of the reason I wanted to come here today, to one of our top military educational institutions, in the company of our military leadership, is to bring home to the American people the extraordinary service of our military men and women and all they do to protect our Nation and bear the burden of our global leadership. In times of peace, it's tempting to ignore that the dangers to that kind of service exist, but they do. When the guns are silent, it's easy to forget that our troops are hard at work, but they are. We must never, never take our Nation's security or those who provide it for granted. Defending our Nation is difficult and dangerous work, even in peacetime.

Most Americans, for example, have absolutely no idea that we lose about 200 of our service men and women in training accidents and in the course of regular duty every single year—people like Private Michael Harrington and Private First Class Brenda Frederick, who were killed just this week in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, when their truck rolled over and burst into flames during a night blackout drive training; people like Captain Lynn Svoboda, who went down with her A–10 fighter while training in Arizona last summer, the first female Air Force fighter pilot to die in a military plane crash.

I think the American people ought to know that. And I hope all of you, as you go out and you have communications with your family and friends around the country, will just say that in passing, and ask your family members and your friends to share it with their fellow citizens. It is not easy to wear the uniform, and it is never a completely safe proposition.

As President, the hardest decision I ever have to make is to put our troops in harm's way. Force can never be the first answer, but sometimes, still, it is the only answer. We must and we will always do everything we can to protect our forces. We must and we'll always make their safety a top priority, as I did on the issue of antipersonnel mines. But we must be strong and tough and mature as a nation, strong and tough and mature enough to recognize that even the best prepared, best equipped force will suffer losses in action.

Every casualty is a tragedy all its own for a parent or a child or a friend. But when the cause is just and the purpose is clear, our military men and women are prepared to face the risk. The American people have to be, as well. As the inscription on the Korean War Memorial says, "Freedom isn't free."

Our obligation to our service men and women is to do all we can to help them succeed in their missions, to provide the essential resources they need to get the job done. This week I will submit to Congress my defense budget request for the coming fiscal year, a budget that is fully consistent with the quadrennial defense review.

Readiness remains our number one priority, and my budget provides for the readiness we need in a hopeful but still hazardous time. It makes the enhancements in quality of life that our service personnel and their families deserve. It funds the procurement of sophisticated weapons to make sure our troops can be certain of victory, no matter how uncertain the future.

Our military leaders understand that tomorrow's force must be agile, effective, and lean, not only in its personnel but in its operations. Secretary Cohen, working with General Shelton and General Ralston, has put together a far-reaching defense reform initiative to revolutionize the way we do the business of defense, streamlining operations, spurring competition, emphasizing efficiency. If our Armed Forces are to have the training, the readiness, the equipment, the personnel to man the frontiers of freedom abroad, Congress must do its part by making tough choices here at home. That includes closing down bases we no longer need, stripping away excess infrastructure, not adding funds for unneeded or lower priority projects.

Let our common commitment be to support our troops. Let that be the bottom line. And

let us uphold in the future, as well as the past, the legacy of our American leadership.

Earlier today, as I walked into my meeting with our CINC's and members of the Joint Chiefs, I saw emblazoned on the wall a quote from General George Marshall. It read, "We are now concerned with the peace of the entire world. And the peace can only be maintained by the strong." Those words are no less true today than the day they were spoken by General Marshall. America's leadership is no less imperative today than the day General Marshall spoke those words. Our strength is every bit as important. But more than just maintaining the peace, now we have a chance to shape the future, to build a world more secure, more prosperous than any we have ever known, to give our children a world that our own parents could not even have dreamed of.

Our Nation will continue to look to our Armed Forces to pursue that historic mission. And I know, because of people like you, our Armed Forces will never let us down.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. in Baruch Auditorium, Eisenhower Hall at Fort McNair. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, and Gen. Joseph W. Ralston, USAF, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lt. Gen. Richard A. Chilcoat, USA, President, National Defense University; commanders in chief Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Adm. Joseph W. Prueher, USN, Gen. John H. Tilelli, Jr., USA, Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, USMC, and Gen. Eugene E. Habiger, USAF; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA (Ret.), Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), Adm. William J. Crowe, Jr., USN (Ret.), and Gen. David C. Jones, USA (Ret.). The President also referred to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START) II and III.

Statement on the Bombing of a Family Planning Clinic in Birmingham, Alabama

January 29, 1998

I strongly condemn the senseless violence that claimed the life of an off-duty police officer, and injured others, in Birmingham, Alabama, this morning.

This bombing was an unforgivable act that strikes at the heart of the constitutional freedoms and individual liberties all Americans hold dear. It is specifically in order to protect those liberties that I signed into law legislation that makes it a Federal crime to interfere with a woman exercising her constitutional right to visit a women's health center. We will continue to enforce that law to its fullest extent, and to protect our Nation's family planning clinics.

Federal agents are already in Birmingham to assist local law enforcement officials in bringing the perpetrators of this terrible crime to justice.

Hillary and I join all Americans in sending our thoughts and prayers to the families and friends of the victims.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Trademark Law Treaty With Documentation

January 29, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for advice and consent to ratification, the Trademark Law Treaty done at Geneva October 27, 1994, with Regulations. The Treaty was signed by the United States on October 28, 1994. I also transmit for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty,

accompanied by a detailed analysis of the Treaty and Regulations, prepared by the Department of State and the Patent and Trademark Office of the Department of Commerce.

Ratification of the Treaty is in the best interests of the United States. The Treaty eliminates many of the burdensome formal requirements that now exist in the trademark application and registration maintenance processes of many countries. Those requirements cause considerable expense and delay for trademark owners. The Treaty is aimed at standardizing and simplifying the application process so that the application will be accepted and processed by the trademark offices of all parties to the Treaty.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Trademark Law Treaty with Regulations and give its advice and consent to the ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 29, 1998.

Remarks at a United States Conference of Mayors Breakfast
January 30, 1998

Thank you for that wonderful welcome. When Secretary Pena started talking about Mayor Helmke being on "Jeopardy," I thought he was going to say—and I knew we were getting into this law school business—I thought he was going to say, "Which two politicians in this room went to the greatest lengths early in their career to cover up the fact that they went to Ivy League schools?" [*Laughter*] Once you get gray headed, you can fess up to that.

I'm delighted to be here with you, Paul, and I'm very proud of your success and the partnership we've enjoyed. Mayor Webb, good job in the Super Bowl. [*Laughter*] I want to say to all of you—my mayor, Jim Dailey, is here. I want to thank Secretary Cuomo and Secretary Pena, Secretary Riley, Secretary Babbitt, Secretary Slater, OMB Director Frank Raines, OPM Director Janice Lachance, General McCaffrey, Gene Sperling, my National Economic Adviser. And I want to thank our whole team. There are others who are here. I also want to say a special word of thanks to Mickey Ibarra and Lynn Cutler, who have been working with you on this conference. I think they've done a superb job, and I hope you are pleased with it.

And we have a lot of other members of the administration here from other departments in the White House. We all like it when the mayors come to town; we get to talk about real people, real issues, and building a real future for America, because that's what you embody.

Earlier this week in the State of the Union Address I asked the American people to continue working with me to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century—just 700 days, more or less, left in this century and in this millennium.

We can be very grateful for the strength that our country enjoys today. We got some new evidence, actually, this morning of that strength with the new economic report. Our economy continues to grow steadily and strongly. In the fourth quarter of last year, our economy expanded at a vigorous 4.3 percent rate with continued low inflation. Last year, economic growth for the entire year was fueled by strong exports and strong business investment. It was 3.8 percent on an annual basis. That's the highest growth rate for the United States in a decade, after years of economic expansion.

This economic strategy that we have embraced of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investment in our people and our future is working. What I want to talk to you about today is that we have to continue that until every American is a part of this success story.

The next steps we have to make—in education, in economic development, in crime, in partnerships with our cities, in involving all of our citizens in the work of our cities and nations—these next steps will be critical. Whether we can empower all of our urban areas and our urban citizens to make the most of their own lives will be critical to determining whether we can, in fact, take all this success that our

country has had and reach every neighborhood, every block, every family, every child.

Today, thanks to your leadership, there is truly an urban renaissance taking place all across America, from New York, where crime has dropped to record lows, to Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half, to Long Beach, where the downtown is once again bustling with shoppers and students in school uniforms are learning more in safer environments.

The urban revitalization is one of the most extraordinary successes of the past 5 years. It is a great achievement of America's mayors and the people whom they lead. Our cities are back because so many of you rolled up your sleeves and went to work. I thank you for your leadership and for the extraordinary opportunity that we have had to work together. I can tell you, for me, it's been a lot of fun, and we've done a lot of good. And we're going to do even more in the next 3 years. I know we can.

The other night in the State of the Union Address, I tried to capture for the American people the different direction in Government that our administration has pursued for the last 5 years. I said that one of the reasons I came to Washington as the Governor of a small State—sort of like being the mayor of a big city—was to break out of this old gridlock between those who said Government is the problem and those who said Government is the solution. It was obvious that, if for no reason than the deficit, Government could not be the solution; plus the nature of the problems we have and the nature of the changing economy and society that we're living in, and certainly the one toward which we are moving, made it impossible to think about the solutions to today's problems in sort of 1930's through 1960's terms.

So what we said is there has got to be a third way here. These two extremes won't work. We think Government ought to be a catalyst for new ideas to experiment. We think Government ought to be a partner with the private sector and community groups. We think the Government ought to focus on creating the conditions and giving people the tools so that people can solve their own lives and chart their own futures and build this country from the ground up. That is what you represent for me. You do that all day, every day, sometimes without even thinking about it. You do it because it is the only way to proceed, and you do it without regard to party. A long time ago, Mayor La Guardia said, "There's no Republican or Democratic way to pick up the garbage. It either gets picked up or it doesn't." [*Laughter*]

Now, I tried to reflect that third way approach in how we have related. A lot of you were terrifically understanding when I came into office and I said, "You know, you're my friends, and I care about you, but the first thing I've got to do is get this deficit down, otherwise the economy will never come back, and you won't have any jobs anyway." And we found a way to find some more investments, to make some innovative partnerships, while we were continuing to follow the discipline necessary that has brought us to the point where we are now; where the budget deficit was estimated to be $357 billion for this year when I took office, now the estimate is $10 billion. That's a pretty big difference.

We know, and I think you can see by the extraordinary presence of Cabinet members here today, we know that every single part of this Federal Government has a responsibility to work with you and to be a good partner. Secretary Cuomo's reinvented HUD exemplifies the kind of approach we're trying to take to working with the cities all across the Federal Government. We want to be your partner, and we want to be a good partner and help you be a good partner with the private sector, with community groups, with individual citizens.

Now, on Monday, as a part of my balanced budget, I'll be proposing one of the broadest, strongest, and most innovative urban agendas in a generation that will focus on three keys to closing the opportunity gaps in America and building one America for the 21st century: education, economic development, and crime.

First, as I said the other night, all Americans know, I think, in the marrow of their bones that we have the finest system of higher education in the world. Therefore, when I was able to announce to the American people the other night all the steps we had taken essentially to open the doors of college to all Americans, I could hear the cheering in living rooms all across this country. You didn't have to say—people knew we were giving them a good thing.

We have to keep working until people have that same level of confidence that their elementary and secondary schools will give their children the best education in America. And we can do it. If we can build an international space

station in the sky, if we can put all the telephone calls on Mother's Day on a single piece of fiber the width of a human hair—which will happen in just a couple of years—if our scientists can unlock the secrets—the genetic secrets of Parkinson's disease in 9 days, all those things I talked about the other night, this is not rocket science. This is not rocket science. We can do this. We have never had, in the last 20 years, when we have known we needed to do it, the kind of systematic, disciplined approach to giving our children the education they need that we must bring to bear on this problem now. But we can do it.

One thing I know, there are some cities where the mayors have direct jurisdiction over the schools and other cities where the mayors seem to have no legal say over the schools, but in every city the mayor should be involved in the schools. I am thrilled that you're going to have a conference on public schools. I thank you for your invitation, and I expect to be there. I want us to continue to work together on this important issue.

I am—as you know, if you heard the speech the other night, I'm very excited about what's going on in Chicago with the schools. I have been there twice. I have spent a lot of time both in the schools and sitting around tables talking to the people who are part of the restructuring of the way they're operated, not only from the district down but from the school level up, with parental involvement.

I think it is a good thing to do end social promotion, but I think you have to couple that with second chances. And so when they ended social promotion, they also had mandatory summer school to give every child a second chance. You can stand up and say something like, I'm ending social promotion, and it sounds great and everybody will clap and your popularity will go up, but in the end, the only thing that really matters is, are the children learning or not? And the reason we should stop the practice is that it covers up the sins of the system which is not producing an educated citizenry among our children and not preparing them for the future.

So it's a good thing to do to end it, but it's not enough, because you have to put something in its place. And the thing that's exciting to me about Chicago is they have—if these children don't perform at grade level, then they have a mandatory summer school program and everybody goes. By the way, it cuts down on juvenile disruption problems as well.

But it's an exciting thing. I went to a school there with a principal and a parent, and the parent had a child in the school as a student and a child in the school as a teacher. And it was an inner-city school, and all of these parent groups showed up. None of them felt aggrieved because this school had ended social promotion. They felt empowered because it had, because it was done at the grassroots level. And they thought it was a fair system because they were involved in it and because their kids had a positive alternative. So it wasn't just that they were going to be held back. We have to do things like that all across the country.

I am proposing new education opportunity zones to help poor school districts close down falling schools, promote public school choice, remove bad teachers, follow the model of the Chicago system to try to help to stop social promotion, but start learning—an opportunity for our kids.

I also proposed the first-ever Federal help to help our local schools hire 100,000 more school teachers, so that we can have smaller classes in the early grades. We can reduce class sizes in the first, second, and third grade to an average of 18 nationwide if my proposal is adopted. And because that will create enormous problems—we have both more teachers and more students; we have to have more classrooms—I have proposed a school construction tax cut to help communities modernize or build 5,000 schools. And that will help a lot of you in this room.

The second thing we have to do is keep working to extend economic opportunity to every corner of every community. Over the past 5 years, with the leadership of the Vice President, we've created 125 empowerment zones and enterprise communities, offered tax cuts to clean up and redevelop brownfields, offered a network of community development banks to make loans to people in places where they're not normally made, and we have dramatically strengthened the Community Reinvestment Act. I don't know if anybody has talked about that here yet, but that act has been on the book since 1977. Over 80 percent of all the lending done in the 20-plus year history of the Community Reinvestment Act has been done in the last 5 years, since we've been here. And it's made a big

difference, in communities all across this country, to grow the economy and bring opportunity. And I'm very proud of that.

Our balanced budget will propose, as I'm sure Secretary Cuomo has already said, new housing vouchers to help people stay off welfare and move closer to jobs, an expanded low income housing tax credit, new opportunities for homeownership, tougher efforts to fight housing discrimination.

We have created 14 million new jobs here in the last 5 years. Just 13 percent of them, though, have been in the central cities. We have to get the message out to our businesses. And that's why I went to Wall Street the other day with Jesse Jackson and people from Wall Street to say, the most important emerging market for a strong American economy, the most important way to continue to grow the economy and keep inflation low, is to move into the markets that are right here within the borders of the United States, into these neighborhoods that have not been developed.

That's why I am announcing today that my balanced budget will create a new $400 million community empowerment fund to be run by HUD that will help local governments attract more businesses and jobs to poor and underserved neighborhoods. The fund will encourage the standardization of economic development lending, a first step in creating a secondary market for such loans. It will provide capital to businesses who recognize the potential and the possibilities of the inner cities. This is the right way to help our cities. It is not a handout. It will bring new credit, new jobs, and new hope to the people. I thank Secretary Cuomo for developing it, and it's going to bring a lot of economic opportunity to many of you.

Let me also say, though, one of the things I appreciate about the mayors is that you not only want me to help you do the things you have to do, you understand that some of the things we do create the framework within which you proceed. So mayors have been very good about supporting my efforts to balance the budget. Mayors have been very good, across party lines, in supporting my efforts to expand trade. And I was very excited with the focus you put on Africa trade. You know, we've got an Africa trade initiative coming up. And I just wanted to say to you, one of the things that we have to understand about this new world is that the old dividing line in our mind between a domestic issue and a foreign policy issue has come crashing down. And increasingly, the dividing lines in our mind between what is a national security issue and an economic issue is coming crashing down.

Yesterday I had my annual meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and our other commanders in chief of our regions around the world of various military functions like space and transportation and other things. And what we do every year is we sit around, and basically they go around the table and make a report to me about their area of responsibility, and then I make a comment, and we talk a little about it. And yesterday at the meeting, a big topic of conversation was the financial crisis in Asia. Now, you say, "Well, what are the military people worried about that for?" Well, it affects the ability of those Asian countries to modernize their militaries. It affects their capacity to cooperate with us. It affects the internal stability of their government. So, all of a sudden, if you get to wear four stars around on your shoulder and go to the Pacific, you got to become an expert in international finance. And you have to care about whether the Congress will vote to have America do its part in contributing to the International Monetary Fund and rebuilding the economy.

So, if you're a mayor in Indiana or Wyoming or Wisconsin, why should you care about it? Because you know that the overall health of the American economy will determine the parameters within which you must proceed. Now, you may do a better or worse job on any given day, like all of the rest of us, but you know that.

So I would say to you again, thank you for your concern for and support for trade. But I think the mayors, without regard to party and without regard to the particular conditions in each city, understand that over the long run we are much better off when we continue to expand trade and when we build good, constructive economic partnerships with free countries who share our values around the world.

So I ask for your support for the international trade agenda I announced, for more open doors to Africa and Latin America, for an extension of the fast-track authority, and most immediately, for the United States doing its part with the International Monetary Fund to stabilize the

situation in Asia. Those are very important markets for us, and I ask you for your help in securing that in Congress.

The third thing that we have to do, if we really want to bring all the cities back and all the neighborhoods back, is make the streets safe. People are not going to invest money, they're not going to open businesses, they're not going to stake their future on the schools of a place where they don't feel safe. The greatest thing that's happened in some ways to all of our cities is the capacity that you have developed to dramatically lower crime rates.

Now, we have worked with you to empower that strategy, to make it work more. The crime bill we passed in '94, with the strong support of many of the mayors here, was written, in effect, by local law enforcement officials, local elected officials like mayors, and local community group leaders who were concerned about making our streets safe. You know, I wasn't Einstein up here coming up with a bunch of ideas; I just took what I knew would work based on the experience that was sweeping the country. And it has been working. More police, tougher punishment, better prevention: those things work, working at a neighborhood level where everybody works together to try to keep crime from happening in the first place. Now, crime is down now for 5 years in a row in this country.

So even though we have to balance the budget, we have to do more to invest in the fight, for two reasons: One, we have to finish what we started in '94 and finish the work of putting all 100,000 police on the street. Second, we have to recognize that we still have some issues out there that we have to face. Particularly, as all of you know, the juvenile crime rate has not dropped as much as the overall crime rate has. We have the biggest group of young people in our schools in history. Finally, we've got a group of kids in our schools more numerous than the baby boom generation. And by the time they all start turning 12, 13, 14 years old, we'd better have found a solution to the juvenile crime problem, or we will not be able to continue to say, we're lowering the crime rate. It will become a new, horrible problem for the cities.

Now, we have seen from what many of you have done that there are ways to dramatically lower the juvenile crime rate. So all we're trying to do here is basically to do a step two in the fight against crime that reflects a national effort to give you the tools to do with juvenile crime what you have already done with the overall crime rate.

I have proposed a Federal effort to help to hire as many as 1,000 neighborhood prosecutors across our country to work closely with police and residents to prevent crime as well as prosecute criminals. They'll try to prevent crime with a lot of tools like injunctions to clear playgrounds of drug dealers and other legal strategies to rid neighborhoods of troubled spots.

You know, I've seen what has happened when we have more prosecutors and more probation officers and they're working in a systematic way. I've seen—I see Mayor Menino back there—the experience of Boston has become legendary, but it is not unique now because so many others are doing this. We have to do this everywhere.

I remember one day I spent with Mayor Menino in Boston, my jaw dropped when the people that were sitting at our roundtable said that the young people on probation—they had a 70 percent compliance rate with probation orders. And I figured that's probably about double what the national average is for any city of any size in America, because they were going in the homes, working the streets, bringing the neighborhoods back into the real life of the community. So that's what this juvenile initiative to have more community prosecutors and more probation officers is all about.

We also are going to strengthen our efforts against illegal gun-trafficking, helping local police departments and the ATF to trace all guns discovered at crime scenes. I want to hire over 160 new ATF agents to investigate and arrest gun traffickers who sell guns illegally to gangs and to juveniles. That's our responsibility. We need to do more to help you with that.

Finally, on the domestic front here, in addition to the prosecutors and the probation officers and the gun efforts, I think it's important that the mayors sent a loud and clear, nonpartisan message to the Congress and to the country that most juvenile crime is not committed by people who don't have anybody in their family who cares about them. Most juvenile crime is committed by young people who get in trouble when the school is out and mama or daddy aren't home from work; between 3 and 8 at night is when most juvenile crime is committed. So we've got to do more to have after-school programs either in the schools or

in community centers. That would do more than anything else.

Now, we have some money coming through the Justice Department for this; we have some money coming through the Education Department for this, for community-based learning centers. I think Secretary Riley's initiative is called 21st Century Community Learning Centers or something like that. We need your help. We really need your help to tell the Congress that this is not a political issue; this is not a partisan issue; and this is not shoveling some old-fashioned grant to the cities that some of the Members of Congress may not want. This is children's lives. And this is whether you can succeed or not in really building the kind of cities you want for the 21st century.

You cannot make it unless we can do something about the problem of juvenile crime. And we're not going to do it, with all those kids, when all their juices are flowing and they're out there vulnerable to get in all kinds of trouble, unless you give them something positive to do when the schoolhouse door is open for the last time in the day until they can go home and be under proper supervision at night. We have got to do this. And we need your help to do it. And we can do it.

Let me also say that there is something else we have to do more of—and General McCaffrey is here; I want to mention this. We want to do a better job of keeping drugs from coming into this country in the first place. Not long ago I went to Miami with General McCaffrey, and we saw the work that the Coast Guard is doing there to try to interdict drugs. The problem is that the better job we do in stopping drugs from coming in in the water and through the air, the more pressure it puts on land through Mexico.

I mean, these people didn't get rich being stupid. They are a very powerful, well-organized, violent, and phenomenally wealthy enemy of the children and the future of the United States. What we want to try to do is to dramatically increase our capacity to deal with border imports. And we proposed to hire another 1,000 border patrol agents, to continue our antidrug media campaign, which is important, to crack down on heroin and methamphetamine trade, to boost drug abuse treatment and prevention—also very important. We're also going—and Secretary Slater is here—we're also going to try to bring to bear the latest technologies and really spend some money. And we've reauthorized this new transportation bill. And I want all of you to support us, whether you live near the border or not, because it affects you. We need to spend some serious money on the border to have the best available technology to do everything we can to find drugs.

Now, it is not possible yet with technology, but if I could paint a picture of the future and I could have any technological breakthrough—if a genie came down the aisle here and said, "In the next 3 months, you could have any technological breakthrough you want for your country. What would you do?" I think that if I could pick one for the next 3 months, I would say I would like to have a border patrol system for picking drugs that is as effective as airport metal detectors are from getting weapons away from people. I mean that should be our model. That's what we should be imagining.

Why? Because it not only is effective, we don't hold up everybody else very long. You never hear anybody griping about going through an airport metal detector anymore. And every now and then you've got a money clip in your pocket or something, you've got to go back around and go through again, but it's not any kind of a big deal. That should be what we are working for. We should be working and working and working; we shouldn't stop until we basically have the capacity to check every vehicle that crosses our border in a way that doesn't shut commerce down and unduly burden totally innocent people who are just going about their lives.

And I want you to help us when this transportation bill comes up, and I want you to help us when the drug budget comes up to get that kind of structure, because you have got to have more help in trying to cut off the drugs at the source in the first place. And we're going to do our best to give it to you.

The last point I want to make is I believe that our cities can embody the image that I have for America in the 21st century because they are the most diverse places in America. And as we become more diverse, in a funny way we've got to become more united. As we become more diverse, we have to learn to celebrate what's different about ourselves, but we have to hold even tighter to the things that bind us together at the family and the neighborhood and the community level.

We're going to reauthorize the national service program, AmeriCorps, this year. I hope all of you will support it because you have really used it a lot. I know General Powell is going to speak to you before you end your conference, and I hope all of you will support what he's doing. That Presidents' Summit on Service in Philadelphia last April was a remarkable thing. The idea that we ought to mobilize hundreds of thousands of volunteers, maybe millions of them, to give every child a safe street to grow up on, a good school to attend, a good health care system so that the child is healthy, a mentor, and the chance to serve—those are five laudable goals.

And if you think about it, in terms of what I just said, about the economy and education and crime, if we have a country in which in every city, across the lines of race, people have an equal chance to work together, to learn together, to serve together, we're going to get along together just fine. You all show that every day. And most of you have a good time doing it. I think it's fun to be a mayor these days, isn't it? [*Laughter*] I think you're having a good time doing it.

When I think of one America, I think of all the places I've been in all of your communities, where people are living together, learning together, working together, serving together, closing those opportunity gaps, building one country. The best days of this country are ahead of us. All we have to do is to bear down and do more of what you have been doing these last few years.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks he referred to Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Mayor Jim Dailey of Little Rock, AR; Mayor Thomas Menino of Boston, MA; and former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell, USA, (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth.

Remarks to the 1997 Stanley Cup Champion Detroit Red Wings

January 30, 1998

The President. Commissioner Bettman, Coach Bowman. To Denise Ilitch-Lites and all the members of the Ilitch family, please tell Mike and Marian we're thinking about them. Senator Abraham, Congressman and Mrs. Dingell, thank you so much for being here. Congressman Kildee, Congressman Knollenberg, Congressman Levin, Congressman Stupak, former Senator Riegle, former Governor Blanchard, and to the very proud mayor of Detroit, Mayor Archer.

Teddy Roosevelt became famous for many things, but one of them was his great saying, "Speak softly and carry a big stick"—advice the Red Wings have taken literally. [*Laughter*] No one has to remind anyone else that you are the Stanley Cup champion. You didn't just win the Stanley Cup, you swept a strong Flyers team in four games after finishing with the best record in the league. Your coach's name is engraved on the cup so many times, I'm surprised it's not called the Stanley-Bowman Cup now. [*Laughter*]

But it's the first Stanley Cup for your captain, Steve Yzerman. Steve, you and your teammates proved that the Red Wings were the best hockey team in the world. And now all of your games will be engraved forever on this historic cup.

There's one member of this team I especially want to mention, because I know how much Vladimir Konstantinov means to everyone here. And I just met him, and I'm thrilled that he's here. Thank you, Vladimir. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Vladi, we know how hard you are working, and how far you have come since your accident last summer. You are showing every day that you have the heart of a champion, and you're showing even greater courage off the ice.

When I met Vladi in there a few minutes ago, I reminded him that I am term-limited in my present position, and I asked him to take a picture with me. I said, you know, you can't ever tell, I might want to run for office in Russia some day. [*Laughter*] So he agreed to do it. I expect it to be in the papers in Moscow any

day—[*laughter*]—and I expect my popularity to soar as a result of it. [*Laughter*] And we thank him so much.

I also want to say, I know we're all thinking about Sergei Mnatsakanov. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and with his family.

Now let me thank the entire team for letting us borrow the Cup to display here at the White House. You've earned it, and I don't expect you to give it up without a fight. So congratulations on your victory, and good luck in 1998.

Thank you. And now I'd like to introduce Senator Levin. Thank you very much.

[*At this point, Senator Carl Levin and Denise Ilitch-Lites made brief remarks, followed by Coach Scotty Bowman, who made brief remarks and presented the President with a miniature Stanley Cup replica with the President's name engraved on it.*]

The President. Oh, thank you. [*Inaudible*]

[*At this point, Steve Yzerman made brief remarks and presented the President with a personalized Red Wings jersey.*]

The President. Oh, isn't it great? Thank you. Thank you so much. Bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Bettman, commissioner, National Hockey League; Red Wings owners Mike and Marian Ilitch, and their children, Denise Ilitch-Lites, Ronald Ilitch, and Lisa Ilitch-Murray; Debbie Dingell, wife of Representative John D. Dingell; former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; former Gov. James J. Blanchard of Michigan; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit; and Red Wings defenseman Vladimir Konstantinov and team masseur Sergei Mnatsakanov, both of whom were seriously injured in an automobile accident a few days after the Stanley Cup finals in June 1997.

Statement on the Japan-United States Civil Aviation Agreement

January 30, 1998

I am pleased that the United States has reached a landmark agreement with Japan that will dramatically increase air service between our countries. This agreement will expand a $10 billion market that services nearly 12 million passengers and carries well over 1 billion pounds of cargo each year. It will allow more U.S. cities to have direct service to Japan and give U.S. airlines extensive new rights to fly into and beyond Japan. This increased competition means more choices for American business travelers and tourists alike.

Like our agreements on telecommunications and financial services, this aviation agreement reflects my policy of opening the world's markets in areas where American companies are most competitive. In aviation alone, we have already concluded far-reaching agreements with Germany, Canada, and 20 other nations. Along with today's agreement, these pacts are moving international aviation into a 21st* century where consumer needs, not governments, will determine where and how often passenger and cargo planes travel.

I want to thank Secretaries Albright and Slater and the negotiators at the Departments of State and Transportation for their sustained efforts in reaching this historic agreement.

* White House correction.

Memorandum on Enhancing Education Through Technology
January 30, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Enhancing Learning and Education Through Technology

The Federal Government continually invests in training its employees. Federal agencies have an obligation to provide the best training for their employees at the lowest possible cost. Federal agency training programs should be model users of new technologies to enhance learning. Many agencies are already improving training by using new technology effectively, but more can be done. New instructional technologies can also make education, at work and at home, easier and more convenient for all American workers. Federal programs that provide financial support for lifelong learning should adapt to the new opportunities technology provides. A Federal Government-wide effort is needed to explore how Federal programs and initiatives can better support the use of technologies for lifelong learning. Therefore, I hereby direct as follows:

1. The National Economic Council (NEC), in consultation with the Chief Information Officers Council (CIOC) as established by Executive Order 13011 of July 16, 1996, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), shall investigate how to make full use of emerging technologies to improve the cost-effectiveness and the quality of Federal training programs. Specifically, I direct that within 6 months from the date of this memorandum the NEC, in consultation with CIOC, OPM, and OSTP, provide me a plan identifying areas in which technology-enhanced training and learning may complement conventional Federal training and learning. The plan should describe how the agencies, when feasible and appropriate, will:

(a) make full use of best commercial practices when purchasing instructional software;

(b) work with businesses, universities, and other appropriate entities to foster a competitive market for electronic instruction;

(c) develop a model technical approach to facilitate electronic instruction building on existing agency efforts, such as the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative Partnership; and

(d) develop and support a program of research that will accelerate the development and adoption of new instructional technologies.

2. The Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Labor shall work together to promote adoption of the best new ways of using technology to enhance training and education in programs that provide Federal support for education and training.

3. The NEC, in coordination with the Office of Management and Budget, the OSTP, and other appropriate Federal Government entities, shall develop a national strategy to promote high-quality education and training opportunities that can be offered in a manner that is efficient, affordable, and convenient. Industry, universities, labor unions, and other stakeholders should be consulted in the development of the strategy. The strategy shall be completed within 6 months of the date of this memorandum.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The President's Radio Address
January 31, 1998

Good morning. Today I'd like to talk to you about one of the ways we are strengthening our Nation for the 21st century: our bold new efforts to deal with the challenge of global climate change through the force of the market and the power of American innovation.

The world's leading climate scientists have concluded, unequivocally, that if we don't reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere all across the Earth, then the temperature of the Earth will heat up, seas will rise, and increasingly severe floods and droughts

will occur, disrupting life in low coastal areas, disrupting agricultural production, and causing other difficulties for the generations of the 21st century. Fortunately, we can avert these dangers and do it while keeping our economy going strong.

This past December, America led the world to reach a historic agreement committing nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through market forces, new technology, and energy efficiency. We can do some things right here, right now, to show that America is doing its part. In my State of the Union Address, I called for an unprecedented commitment of $6 billion for research and tax incentives to mobilize cutting-edge technology in the fight against global warming. I'd like to explain just what that means to you.

First, we want to help bring down the price of high-efficiency cars for every American. Earlier this month, Ford, GM, and Chrysler unveiled prototypes of advanced-technology cars that get more than twice the mileage of today's models with no sacrifice in comfort, safety, or performance. When cars like these begin to enter the showrooms in the year 2000, we'll give everyone who buys one a $3,000 tax credit to apply to every size car. When these cars become even more efficient, we'll increase the tax credit to $4,000. We're committed to making it not only wiser but actually cheaper to buy highly efficient cars.

Second, we'll help you turn your home into a model of energy efficiency. We'll offer tax credits that will give you a discount of 20 percent off the cost of energy-saving water heaters and air conditioners. And we'll also offer a tax credit—worth up to $2,000—to help you put solar panels on your roof or to help you buy an energy-efficient home in the first place.

Third, we will accelerate research on clean, renewable energy and energy-saving technologies. We'll help to develop energy-efficient lighting, refrigerators, and other appliances that will mean lower monthly bills for you and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. And we will work with industry to cut their energy use so that they can also protect the environment while enhancing the bottom line.

Whenever we act to heal our environment, some always question whether it will hurt our economy. But today, our economy is the strongest in a generation and our environment, the cleanest in a generation. Whether the problem has been acid rain, deadly pesticides, polluted rivers, or the ozone hole, the ingenuity of the American people has always proved to carry the day—and we'll do it once again. Working together, we will overcome the challenge of global climate change and create new avenues of growth for our economy. And most important, we'll honor our deepest responsibility to pass on this home, without harm, to our children, our grandchildren, and generations yet to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:40 p.m. on January 30 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 31.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the United States Air Force Operating Location Near Groom Lake, Nevada

January 31, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 6001(a) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (the "Act"), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6961(a), notification is hereby given that on September 26, 1997, I issued Presidential Determination No. 97–35 (copy attached) and thereby exercised the authority to grant certain exemptions under section 6001(a) of the Act.

Presidential Determination No. 97–35 exempted the United States Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake, Nevada, from any Federal, State, interstate, or local hazardous or solid waste laws that might require the disclosure of classified information concerning that operating location to unauthorized persons. Information concerning activities at the operating location near Groom Lake has been properly determined to be classified, and its disclosure

would be harmful to national security. Continued protection of this information is, therefore, in the paramount interest of the United States.

The Determination was not intended to imply that in the absence of a Presidential exemption RCRA or any other provision of law permits or requires the disclosure of classified information to unauthorized persons, but rather to eliminate any potential uncertainty arising from a district court decision in pending litigation, *Kasza* v. *Browner* (D. Nev. CV–S–94–795–PMP), the relevant appeal which, was subsequently dismissed as moot (9th Cir. Nos. 96–15535 and 96–15537; decided January 8, 1998). The Determination also was not intended to limit the applicability or enforcement of any requirement of law applicable to the Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake except those provisions, if any, that would require the disclosure of classified information.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 2.

Remarks on Submitting the 1999 Federal Budget

February 2, 1998

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Bowles, members of our economic team, members of the Cabinet, and administration. And I thank the large numbers—large number of Members of Congress who have come here today, and others, all of you here, for the submission of the first balanced budget in 30 years, one that will truly strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

This budget marks the end of an era, an end to decades of deficits that have shackled our economy, paralyzed our politics, and held our people back. It can mark the beginning of a new era of opportunity for a new "American Century."

Consider what has been achieved in so short a time. In the 12 years before I took office, trickle-down economics led to an explosion in the Federal deficit which quadrupled our national debt in only 12 years. Government deficits soaked up trillions of dollars in capital that should have been used for productive investment. Massive deficits led to high interest rates that slowed growth. And massive deficits also paralyzed the Congress in their attempts to invest in our future, as we spent more and more and more of the taxpayers' dollars just to pay interest on the debt we had run up.

The new economy was being held back by old political ideas and arrangements. The deficit was more than an economic reality; it was a powerful symbol that Government had simply failed to meet its most basic obligations. And doing something about the deficit was one of the reasons I ran for President in 1992.

The day I took office, the deficit was projected to be about $300 billion for that year. For 5 years, beginning in 1993, as the Vice President said, the Congress and the American people have worked tirelessly to put our economic house in order; we have worked hard here to put our fiscal house in order. The Government is the smallest it's been in 35 years. And deficit reduction has given us lower interest rates, higher investment, and, I might add, lower unemployment, more taxpayers, and more funds to invest in America's future.

That is the gamble we took in 1993—a gamble now that I thought was not such a gamble at all. But it did, as the Vice President said, cost several Members of Congress their jobs. Wherever they are today—wherever they are—I hope they know and remember that we passed that budget in '93 by one vote in the Senate and by one vote in the House; we did not have a vote to spare. And everybody that stood up, and especially those who lost their seats, can know they gave 14 million Americans jobs that would not have been there otherwise and a brighter future for all the American people, and I'm very grateful for that.

I also want to point out, as the Vice President did, that the job to be finished and to eliminate

the structural deficit came with the balanced budget agreement last year. And we should applaud all those in both parties who were part of that, because it will not only enable us to achieve a balanced budget, it will enable us to maintain a balanced budget long into the future, if we stay with the disciplined framework that was embraced last year by very large majorities in both Houses of both parties. And that is very important. It's one thing to get the deficit down, another thing to hold it there. And that balanced budget agreement will not only go from a much smaller deficit down to balance but also will hold it there, if we stay with the discipline. We have not done all this work to let it go.

Now, I believe if we will stay with the plan, we can balance the budget without further cuts. Indeed, the balanced budget I submitted shows we can balance the budget and still hire 100,000 new teachers and modernize 5,000 schools. We can balance the budget and allow hundreds of thousands of middle-aged Americans who have no health insurance through no fault of their own to buy into Medicare. We can balance the budget and still extend child care to a million more children. And above all, we can balance the budget and save Social Security first.

In other words, it is obvious that you can have a smaller Government but a more progressive one that gives you a stronger America. We've done more than simply balance the budget, more than just line up numbers on a ledger. We have restored the balance of values in our policy, restored the balance of confidence between Government and the public. Now, we'll have a balanced budget not only next year but as far as the eye can see.

We have to use this opportunity to build a stronger America. And let's just talk about that. First and foremost, we project that the budget will not only balance, it will actually run a surplus of $9.5 billion next year and over $200 billion over the next 5 years, fully $1 trillion over the next 10 years. This budget reserves that surplus—I want to say it again—this budget reserves that surplus, saving it until we have taken the steps necessary to strengthen Social Security into the next century.

One of the reasons that balancing the budget has been hard is that we have insisted on a balanced budget that honors our values. Finding a way to reduce red ink without shrinking the circle of opportunity has been at the heart of our efforts. And when we started, most people said you couldn't do it. They said there is no way to cut the rest of Government enough to reduce the deficit and increase investment in important areas. But that is an important achievement as well.

Now it is most important of all that we balance the budget while renewing our commitment to save Social Security. When I left Washington last week and went to Champaign, Illinois, and La Crosse, Wisconsin, I was moved by the strength and depth of the American people's priority for the surplus they created. I think they want us to save Social Security first, as well. And I hope all of you, and Members of Congress in both parties, will support that.

We have a great opportunity now to take action now to avert a crisis in the Social Security system. We have a great opportunity now to be able to tell all these young people who are shadowing their Cabinet and administration leaders that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. We have a great opportunity, those of us in the baby boom generation, to tell our own children that when we retire and start drawing Social Security, it isn't going to bankrupt them to take care of us and undermine their ability to take care of their own children. We need to do this. We don't need to take any shortcuts; we don't need to take any short-term benefits. Before we do anything with that surplus, let's save Social Security first. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The budget continues our efforts at education reform. As I said, it enables us to hire 100,000 new teachers working with States, to reduce class size to an average of 18 in the first, second, and third grades, and to help modernize or build 5,000 schools. It helps to give our parents the tools they need to meet their responsibilities at home and at work, among other things allowing people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance to buy into the Medicare program. It includes a breakthrough investment in child care through tax credits, vouchers for States, scholarships for caregivers.

It will help America to meet its obligations in international leadership, meet our obligations to stabilize the world's financial markets, to pay our dues to the United Nations, to continue our support of our military so that our men and women in uniform can continue to do the job for us.

It will provide tax cuts in research and development to help meet the challenge of global climate change in a way that enables us to grow the economy while actually improving the environment. It continues to support our urban empowerment strategy, bringing more private sector investments to our hardest-pressed cities and neighborhoods while continuing to put 100,000 police officers on the streets and giving our children something to do after school, so more of them can stay out of trouble and on a path to success.

It will leave to future generations the gift of scientific and medical advances. The 21st century research fund, the largest funding increases ever for the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the National Cancer Institute, will speed the progress of biomedical breakthroughs in the fight against many of our deadliest diseases.

The budget funds these initiatives by continued cuts in Government programs, by closing unwarranted tax loopholes, and from the passage of tobacco legislation, which, as every passing day shows, is critically important to the future of our children and therefore of our country.

This budget meets the test I set out before Congress last week: no new spending initiatives, no new tax cuts unless they can actually be accomplished without adding a dime to the deficit. For more than two centuries, Americans have strengthened our Nation at every critical moment with confidence, unity, a determination to meet every challenge. For too long, the budget deficit, a worsening crime wave, the seemingly unsolvable welfare difficulties—they all seemed to challenge our innate American confidence. In the past 5 years, the American people have met these challenges and have moved to master them. Now we have a chance, in a period of peace and prosperity with renewed confidence, to build for the future. That's what this balanced budget does.

Now, it is—I am going to close my remarks now by asking the Vice President to give me a magic marker so that I can be the first person to actually certify what the budget will say for the coming year. Even we can do this. I am technologically challenged; therefore, we're not doing this on a computer. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. At the end of his remarks, he wrote "$0!" on a poster labeled "1999 Deficit."

Statement on Land and Water Conservation Fund Acquisitions

February 2, 1998

Last spring, in concluding an historic balanced budget agreement with the Congress, one of my highest priorities was ensuring the funds needed to continue our efforts to protect America's natural treasures. With those funds now appropriated, I am pleased that today Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman are transmitting to Congress a list of sites that are particularly precious to Americans and deserving of our stewardship.

Each of the 100 sites on this list represents an important piece of America's natural and historic legacy. With these acquisitions, we will put the finishing touches on the renowned Appalachian Trail and secure critical winter range for Yellowstone's bison and elk. We will rebuild salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest and protect an ancient caldera in New Mexico that is home to one of the country's largest elk herds. We will preserve Civil War battlefields where Americans fought and died. We will safeguard vital swaths of this great land literally from coast to coast.

I am extremely proud of our success in preserving Yellowstone, the Everglades, Lake Tahoe, and the red rock canyons of Utah. The budget I submit today to Congress—the first balanced budget in a generation—will allow us to save even more of America's natural and historic treasures. I am confident that with the bipartisan support of Congress, we can continue not only to protect but to restore nature's magnificent gifts. Together, we can assure that future generations know and enjoy this land in all its true splendor.

Remarks at Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico
February 3, 1998

Thank you so much for that warm welcome. Thank you, Secretary Pena, for being a truly outstanding Energy Secretary. Thank you, Senator Bingaman, for your long friendship and your leadership. Thank you, Congressman Redmond. I really admire a guy who had enough guts to tell that joke. I wouldn't do it. [*Laughter*] But you know, the nice thing about that story is everybody knows that 13 doesn't last forever. [*Laughter*] Unfortunately, 18 comes, and they're gone, and you wish even they were 13 again, you would take.

Thank you, Dr. Browne, for a wonderful, but too brief, review of the operations here at Los Alamos. And we're delighted to be joined today by the Directors of the Sandia and Lawrence Livermore Labs, Dr. Paul Robinson and Dr. Bruce Tarter. I thank Attorney General Udall for being here, the chair of the Corporation Commissioners, Jerome Block, Commissioner Serna, the tribal leaders, and others who have joined us. Thank you all.

I am delighted to be back in New Mexico. We landed Air Force One this morning, and then I got on my helicopter to fly up here, and I told them to fly low so I could see it all. And it was a wonderful, exhilarating experience, as it always is when I come here.

I want you to know that among other things in our budget, there is an item of particular importance, I know, to Senator Bingaman, and I am sure is supported by all members of the New Mexico congressional delegation. Congressman Redmond and I talked about it a little today, but Jeff Bingaman told me a good while ago, in no uncertain terms, that we had to move forward to protect the magnificent Valle Grande, 100,000 unspoiled acres near the Santa Fe forest. And in my budget, there is $40 million to support this project to secure this land.

There is also other money to preserve national monuments, national parks, and other invaluable cultural resources. This is a very unique and wonderful place. I know all of you understand that. And we want to be good partners in preserving the heritage that all of you cherish and are fortunate enough to live with. So when all the children here in this audience have their own grandchildren, it will all still be there for them.

Los Alamos in so many ways is the place that forever changed the 20th century. I came here to talk about what we must do to start a chain reaction of opportunity for all our people in the 21st century. This week we took the most important step toward meeting that challenge when I submitted to Congress the first balanced budget since 1969. Think of how long it has been: You heard the Beatles, "Hey Jude"; 1969 was also the year that Neil Armstrong first stepped on the Moon. Now the balanced budget of 1999 will pave the way for America's next great leap forward over the next 30 years.

It will help keep interest rates down. It will free up capital to spur private investment in new business, in new homes, in new education, in research and development. And because we are doing this the right way, there will be funds necessary to make the public investments we need to make our Nation stronger. In this budget we demonstrate that we can balance the budget and still save Social Security for the 21st century by saving the projected budget surplus from either tax cuts or new spending, both of which would be more popular in the short run. But we shouldn't spend that surplus until we know for sure we have secured Social Security for the 21st century, so that the baby boomers don't bankrupt their children when they retire. It is a moral obligation that should override any short-term consideration that any of us have, and I hope all of you will support that.

We can balance the budget and still continue to invest in education. We can hire 100,000 teachers for our elementary schools to lower class size to 18 in the first through third grades, and help to repair or build 5,000 new schools. We can open the doors of college literally to every American with the laws that are on the books now by continuing to fund them through the next 5 years. We can allow hundreds of thousands of middle-aged Americans who've lost their jobs and their health insurance to buy into the Medicare program without burdening the Trust Fund. We can extend child care to a million more children. And most important for you, I think, we can still continue to substantially

increase our commitment to scientific research and technological development, which are key to our success in the new global economy of the information age.

Many of you know this, but the entire store of human knowledge is now doubling every 5 years. Breakthroughs which now seem normal, just a couple of years ago seemed impossible. In the 1980's, scientists identified the gene for cystic fibrosis after 9 years of effort. Last year scientists located the gene that causes Parkinson's disease after 9 days of effort. Within a decade, gene chips will offer a roadmap for prevention of illness throughout a lifetime. And we'll discover cures for many of our most deadly diseases, from diabetes to Alzheimer's to AIDS.

I have worked to increase our investments in research and development for the last 5 years, even as we have reduced the deficit by over 90 percent. And the new balanced budget contains the largest investment in science and technology in history. It includes a $31 billion 21st century research fund to significantly increase funding for the Department of Energy, the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the National Cancer Institute.

It funds critically important initiatives in areas ranging from astrophysics to agricultural technology. Now, just a few minutes ago, I toured the labs here to see some of that 21st century technology our balanced budget will help to develop further. The supercomputers here, along with those at Lawrence Livermore and Sandia Laboratories, are already the fastest in the world. They're already being used to do everything from predicting the consequences of global warming to designing more fuel efficient engines to discovering life-saving drugs to cracking down on Medicare fraud.

Let me just say, parenthetically, it is terribly important that this environmental mission continue, because I have a big job to do as President to convince all of you, and people like you all across America, that there really is a scientific consensus that if we don't do something to slow the rate of greenhouse gas emissions and in fact turn it around and reduce it in America and throughout the developed world and eventually throughout the developing world as well, we will disrupt our climate in ways that are potentially disastrous for people all around the world sometime in the next century.

And just as I saw you all clapping, because a lot of you—particularly those of you who are my age or a little younger, those of us who are baby boomers, we know it would be terribly wrong for us either to bankrupt the Social Security system or bankrupt our kids making them pay for us. We know that would be wrong. Believe me, it is just as wrong, and potentially even more devastating, for us not to deal now in a responsible, disciplined way with the problem of global climate change, even though our grandchildren, perhaps even our great-grandchildren, would be the ones to bear the greatest consequences.

We know now things that we couldn't have ever known before because of what science is teaching us, and it enables us to take small steps now to avoid having to take huge and more burdensome steps later to do what is clearly right. So I think that it is almost impossible to exaggerate the responsibility and the opportunity these labs have to build a consensus necessary in our country to do what has to be done to both continue to grow our economy at a brisk rate but to do it in a different way so that we reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And I thank you for your work on that.

Now, that to me is just the beginning. Today I also want to announce to you that that balanced budget includes over $500 million—$517 million, to be exact—to help the Department of Energy develop the next generation of supercomputer technology. Just recently, we signed contracts with four leading United States companies to help to build supercomputers that will be 1,000 times faster than the fastest computer that existed when I took office. By 2001, they'll be able to perform more calculations in a second than a human being with a hand-held calculator could perform in 30 million years.

Now, even a person as technologically challenged as me can understand that is a big deal. [*Laughter*] It is a good investment. It is an investment we must secure. Of all the remarkable things these supercomputers will be able to accomplish, none will be more important than helping to make sure the world is safe from the threat of nuclear weapons.

For more than 50 years, since we first split the atom and unleashed its awesome force, the nuclear threat has hovered over our heads. Throughout the cold war and the arms race, it has been an ever present threat to our people and the people of the world. For 5 years I

have worked to reduce that threat. Today, there is not a single Russian missile pointed at America's children. But we have to do more. Last fall I sent the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for its advice and consent. In my State of the Union Address last week, I asked the Senate to approve that treaty this year. By banning all nuclear tests for all time, we open a new era of security for America.

At the same time, our national security requires that we maintain a nuclear arsenal strong enough to deter any adversary and safe enough to retain the confidence of our military leaders, our political leaders, and the American people.

Five years ago I directed the development of the stockpile stewardship program to maintain our nuclear arsenal through science. The program is an essential safeguard to accompany the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. In fact, I don't think we can get the treaty ratified unless we can convince the Senate that the stockpile stewardship program works, that we will be secure while we try to make the world safer from the dangers of nuclear development and nuclear use in other countries. Now, by combining past nuclear data with the high-tech simulations that computers like those here at Los Alamos make possible, we are keeping the arsenal safe, reliable, and effective. And we're doing it without detonating a single explosion.

I just received a briefing, as you heard, by Dr. Browne and the other Directors of our national labs on the stewardship program. They confirmed that we can meet the challenge of maintaining a nuclear deterrent under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty through the stockpile stewardship program. This Test Ban Treaty is good for America's security. Already, four former Chairmen of the Joints Chief of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, General Colin Powell, General David Jones, and Admiral Bill Crowe, have all endorsed it. I also discussed the issue last week when I had my annual meeting with our Nation's senior military leadership, all of our four stars, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the heads of various commands around the world. General Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and General Habiger, the Commander in Chief of our Strategic Command, have both given their treaty their full support. This is in America's interests.

Five years ago I extended the moratorium on testing passed by Congress in 1992. The Test Ban Treaty will hold other nations to the same standard we already observe; that is its importance. Its ban on all nuclear explosions will constrain the nuclear powers from developing more advanced and more dangerous weapons, making a costly arms buildup less likely.

It will also make it more difficult for states that don't now have nuclear weapons to develop them, because without testing there's no way for them to know whether a new weapon will work as it is designed or whether it will work at all. The treaty will also put in a place an extensive global network of monitoring stations to detect and deter nuclear explosion on land, underground, beneath the sea, or in space. Our national security demands that we monitor such nuclear weapons programs around the world. We have to do that with or without the Test Ban Treaty. But with the treaty in force, we will gain a powerful new tool to do that monitoring.

The great scientist Louie Pasteur once said that he held, and I quote, "the unconquerable belief that science and peace will triumph over ignorance and war, that nations will come together not to destroy, but to construct, and that the future of humanity belongs to those who accomplish the most for humanity." With the new balanced budget, with our commitment to science and technology, with our commitment to the Test Ban Treaty, with the work you have done here and at the other labs to assure the safety of the treaty through the stockpile stewardship program, all these things are helping to build a stronger America for the 21st century, a safer world for our children in the 21st century, and a legacy worthy of America's glorious past. For your role in that, I thank you very, very much.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Main Auditorium of the Administration Building. In his remarks, he referred to John C. Browne, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory; New Mexico Attorney General Tom Udall; Jerome D. Block, chair, and Eric P. Serna, member, New Mexico Corporation Commission; Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Gen. Eugene E. Habiger, USAF, Commander in Chief, U.S. Strategic Command.

Remarks in Albuquerque, New Mexico
February 3, 1998

Thank you. I want to begin by thanking the University of New Mexico Band. They have been wonderful tonight. And I might say, I saw the end of your basketball game the other night; it was pretty impressive, too.

Mr. Mayor, Senator Bingaman, Secretary Pena; Evangeline Trujillo, thank you for your wonderful remarks and your even more important example. Didn't she do a terrific job tonight? [*Applause*]

I'm also delighted that we are joined tonight by Congressman Redmond, Attorney General Udall, Treasurer Montoya, Secretary of State Gonzales, State Auditor Robert Vigil; former Governors King, Anaya, and Apodaca—all friends of mine—thank you for being here; Sam Vigil, Commissioner of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Education; and at least two of our tribal leaders, Governors Pasqual and Tortalita. Thank you all for being here tonight.

Let me say there is one person who would love to be here who can't be, and I promised him that I would say hello to you, New Mexico's own and America's very great Ambassador to the United Nations, Bill Richardson.

I'd also like to recognize two New Mexicans who work at the Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, who have not been properly recognized. Chris Cherry and Rod Owenby, in 1996, assisted FBI and ATF agents during the search of Theodore Kaczynski's residence in Montana. They, at considerable risk to themselves, helped lead to the capture and the conviction of Mr. Kaczynski and put an end to his deadly attacks. They live among you. They have never gotten credit for what they did, and I think we ought to express our thanks to them tonight.

Thank you for coming out. I want to especially thank the children for being here tonight. Thank you for coming, and all of you who brought them. I'm glad to be back in New Mexico and on this very spot to talk about how we are going to strengthen our Nation for a new century by balancing the budget while investing in our people and preparing for our future.

I'll never forget back in 1992, on election day, at 3 a.m. in the morning, what Hillary and I saw at the hangar at the Albuquerque International Airport. That hangar was filled with people who were tired and cold but warm with hope. At 3 o'clock in the morning, Bruce King brought me a Mexican breakfast, which I loved. And I was saying to the people there in the early morning hours, before the polls had opened and when the outcome of the election was still uncertain, that America faced a profound choice between hope and fear, between whether we would or would not have the courage to change. In 1992 the people of the United States and the people of New Mexico gave Bill Clinton and Al Gore a chance to chart a new course for America's future. I thank you, and I believe it is working.

We have worked hard to move past the sterile debate between those who say that Government is the enemy and those who claimed it could solve all our problems, to build a new kind of Government; to take what some have called a third way; to give you a Government that is smaller, that is more flexible, that is less bureaucratic, that promotes new ideas and, most of all, tries to give all of you and all your fellow Americans the tools you need to make the most of your own lives in a very new world.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are committed to building a 21st century America with an economy based on opportunity, a society full of responsibility, an America that lives together across racial and religious lines as one American community.

I think that we all know this approach is working. Compared to 5 years ago, our deficit is down by more than 90 percent. We have 14 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. And yesterday I submitted to Congress the first balanced budget in 30 years.

Not so very long ago our deficit was so large it had 11 zeros. Now it is going to be simply zero. And you should all be proud of that. Balancing the budget can mark the beginning of a new era of opportunity for America, a new era of achievement, a new era of wholeness

to our public national life in the 21st century. What are we going to do with this opportunity? That's what I want to say to you again tonight.

First, we must know we can balance the budget and save Social Security in the 21st century. And that is important. Now, all of you here know that when the baby boomers—and I know about this because I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—that when we retire there will be a lot more people retired, compared to people working, than there ever have been before in American history. And we know that will put new burdens on the Social Security system. But if we begin now to prepare for that, with all we know and all we can find out, and if we don't make this a political thing, if we make it an American crusade across party lines and age lines and income lines, we know that we can save Social Security for the 21st century in such a way that my generation does not expect to bankrupt our children to take care of us and impair our children's ability to take care of our grandchildren. We can do that.

And all I have asked of the Congress is that when we balance the budget—it is then projected that we will begin to run surpluses for the first time in a coon's age, since anybody can remember. Nobody can remember when that happened. It is projected now that we could have surpluses as high as $200 billion over the next 5 years. And what I say to you is, the easy thing is for us to take the money back in tax cuts or spending programs. But I want you to commit to me that you will support the Congress in saying, don't do anything with the money until you fix Social Security first.

We can balance the budget and give Americans the finest education in the world. Perhaps the proudest achievement of the balanced budget agreement last year was that it opened the doors of college to all Americans: over 200,000 new Pell grants in the last 3 years; 300,000 new work-study positions; education IRA's you can save for a college education for yourselves or your children and withdraw from them tax free; a $1,500 tax cut; a HOPE scholarship tax credit for the first 2 years of college; and a lifetime learning tax cut for the 3d and 4th years, for graduate school, for adults who have to go back for job training. If you want to go to college, you can go now. Don't let anybody tell you you can't.

But now we have to make sure that the years of education before college are as good as the college education is in America. Everybody knows America has the finest system of higher education in the entire world. I will never be satisfied until we know we have the finest system of elementary and secondary education in the entire world.

We can balance the budget and put 100,000 more teachers in the first 3 grades to lower average class size to 18, so all our kids have a chance to learn. We can balance the budget and build or repair 5,000 more schools, because if there are more kids and more teachers, you have to have more classrooms. We can balance the budget and help the poorest, most underprivileged communities in rural and urban areas to achieve high standards of excellence, to end social promotion but to get a second chance to really learn what all our children are fully capable of learning.

We can balance the budget and make an unprecedented commitment to improving the quality of Hispanic education and reducing the unacceptably high dropout rate among Hispanic-American students. This commitment—hundreds of millions of dollars over the next several years—will build on the progress of the President's Advisory Commission on Excellence in Hispanic Education to lower the dropout rate and help young Hispanic-Americans to succeed in school. I want to thank Sam Vigil, who is here with us today, and Senator Bingaman, who has worked so hard on this issue. We cannot have an America where there is a huge racial disparity in the dropout rate. All of our kids need to finish high school, and all of our kids can finish high school.

We can balance the budget and deal with the challenge that Mayor Baca talked about earlier. I am very happy and proud of the work that our administration has done in partnership with local law enforcement and citizen groups to have a big 5-year decline in the crime rate. But if you have been following it closely, you know that the juvenile crime rate has not gone down as much as the adult crime rate has. There's still too many of our kids getting in trouble, and most of that trouble happens between the time school closes, about 3, and the time all the parents get home, about 8, from work. We must give our children something positive to do in those hours, and we can balance the budget and do that and keep our kids out of trouble.

We can balance the budget and help millions of Americans to provide child care to their children that is of good quality, that is affordable, and that helps people to balance the demands of school and work. We can balance the budget and extend health care coverage to more hard-working Americans. I'll bet you anything there are people in this audience tonight, between the ages of 55 and 65, where your spouse has gone on Medicare but you're not old enough for it yet; or you lost a job and you haven't gotten another one, so you don't have health care; or you took early retirement from a company that promised you health insurance coverage and then didn't deliver. I say we should let those people have the opportunity to buy into the Medicare program early. It won't cost Medicare a dime, and it will be worth all the money in the world to them.

We can balance the budget and continue to clean our environment. Compared to 5 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer in America; there are fewer toxic waste dumps. But we have more to do. We have got to deal with the crisis of climate change, do something about global warming, and bring our people the benefits of a growing economy and a cleaner environment. In New Mexico, you know we can do that. Help us lead the way in America.

And we can balance the budget and invest in the science and technology that can revolutionize our way of life; whether it is in cleaning the environment, finding cures for diseases, solving practical problems in America, we can do it. I announced today at Los Alamos that our balanced budget will put over $500 million into developing the fastest supercomputers in human history, 1,000 times faster than the fastest one when I took office 5 years ago. We are going to develop a computer that will do more calculations in a second than you can with your hand-held computer in 30 million years. That is on the verge of reality.

But the last thing I want to say to you is, we can balance the budget, and we can do all that, but we have to remember we're living in a smaller and smaller world where we're more interconnected, whether we like it or not, with people all around the world, not just economically but also in terms of the spread of disease or our vulnerability to terrorism or drug traffickers or our vulnerability to common, shared environmental problems. And yet we can do so much more when we work together.

In a world like this, there is no nation better suited to do well in the 21st century than our United States. Why? Because here the price of citizenship is believing in America. It is not a function of your race; it is not a function of your religion; it is not a function of where you were born; it is not a function of how much money you have; all you have to do is to be willing to work hard, obey the law, and say you believe in the things that have made our country great.

And I'm telling you, folks, you just look around this crowd today and you think about what it means to be in a global society. I tell you, we can build one America. We can balance the budget. We can invest in our future. And if we do, all these little children today, they will be living in the greatest days the United States has ever known. Help us do that.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. at the Civic Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jim Baca of Albuquerque; Evangeline Sandoval Trujillo, director, Mathematics, Engineering, Science Association, who introduced the President; New Mexico State Treasurer Michael Montoya; New Mexico Secretary of State Stephanie Gonzales; former New Mexico Governors Bruce King, Toney Anaya, and Jerry Apodaca; Acama Pueblo Governor Reginald Pasqual; Santo Domingo Pueblo Governor Tony Tortalita; and convicted Unabomber Theodore J. Kaczynski.

Statement on Federal Election Commission Action on Campaign Finance Reform

February 3, 1998

I strongly support action to end the soft money raised by both political parties. That is why last year I asked the Federal Election Commission to ban soft money, under its current legal authority. I am very pleased that the agency's General Counsel has proposed a new rule prohibiting national parties from raising soft money. Now I ask the members of the Commission to step up to their responsibility and act, within their legal authority, to end the soft money system.

Statement on the Accident Involving United States Aircraft in Italy

February 3, 1998

I was deeply saddened to learn a short while ago that a U.S. military jet aircraft was involved in an accident in Italy that resulted in the deaths of several Italian citizens.

The plane is part of the U.S. force stationed at Aviano Air Base in Italy that is supporting the NATO SFOR mission in Bosnia. U.S. military authorities in Aviano have launched an investigation into this accident. I have expressed my condolences to Prime Minister Prodi and assured him that we will cooperate fully with the Italian Government and do everything we can to find out what happened and prevent an accident like this from happening again.

On behalf of the American people, I offer my heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of those killed and injured in this accident.

Statement on the Death of Roger Stevens

February 3, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of our dear friend Roger Stevens. He will long be remembered as a defining force in America's cultural life.

As founding chairman of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Roger can be credited with spotlighting our Nation's Capital as a haven for the performing arts. The Kennedy Center, one of America's finest cultural showcases, might never have been built if it weren't for Roger's dedication and energy. His love of the arts led him to produce more than 200 plays, including "West Side Story," "Bus Stop," and "Deathtrap." Roger served as the first Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, and won numerous awards for his dedication to highlighting the performing arts, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1988), the National Medal of Arts (1988), the Kennedy Center Honors (1988), and the National Artists' Medal (1983).

Our Nation is mourning the loss of this important cultural figure. Our thoughts and prayers are with his friends and family in this sad time.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Railroad Retirement Board
February 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Railroad Retirement Board for Fiscal Year 1996, pursuant to the provisions of section 7(b)(6) of the Railroad Retirement Act and section 12(l) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 3, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Latvia-United States Fisheries Agreement
February 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Latvia extending the Agreement of April 8, 1993, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States, with annex, as extended (the 1993 Agreement). The present Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Riga on February 13 and May 23, 1997, extends the 1993 Agreement to December 31, 1999.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Latvia, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 3, 1998.

Message to the Congress Reporting Budget Deferrals
February 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report eight new deferrals of budgetary resources, totaling $4.8 billion.

These deferrals affect programs of the Department of State, the Social Security Administration, and International Security Assistance.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

February 3, 1998.

NOTE: The report detailing the deferrals was published in the *Federal Register* on February 11.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

February 3, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from November 26, 1997, to the present.

My last report included the U.N.-Iraq standoff which began on October 29, 1997, when the Iraqi government announced its intention to expel all U.S. personnel working in Iraq for the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM). Iraq's apparent aim was to force UNSCOM's withdrawal or to significantly restrict its ability to function effectively and independently, thereby establishing an environment under which Iraq could restore its capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) without restriction. In November, the members of the U.N. Security Council thwarted this effort through joint diplomacy and the use of Secretary Council resolutions—backed by the deployment of forces in the Gulf. This resulted in the Iraqi government's explicit commitment, on November 20, 1997, to allow UNSCOM inspectors, including those who are U.S. citizens, to return unhindered to their duties.

In violation of that commitment and of U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 687 and subsequent resolutions, including 707, 1134, and 1137, Iraq has attempted again to dictate the composition of UNSCOM inspection teams and the terms of its compliance with Council resolutions. In addition, Iraq has persisted in its efforts to defy the Council by unilaterally imposing unacceptable conditions on the operations of UNSCOM. This report covering the last 60 days reflects the failure of the Government of Iraq to live up to its obligations under all applicable UNSC resolutions and its continued hindrance of UNSCOM's work.

In December 1997, the Iraqi government reiterated its longstanding refusal to allow any access to all so-called "Presidential" sites, and said it would limit access to so-called "sensitive" sites by UNSCOM inspectors.

On January 5, 1998, an inert rocket-propelled grenade struck a building in Baghdad that houses various U.N. elements, including UNSCOM headquarters, but caused no injuries. The Iraqi government denied responsibility but has yet to arrest any suspects.

On January 12, the Government of Iraq refused to cooperate with an UNSCOM inspection team, declaring that the team was dominated by too many "Anglo-Saxons". The team had been investigating, among other things, allegations that Iraq may have used human beings as experimental subjects in chemical and biological warfare development.

On January 17, the Iraqi government declared a Jihad (holy war) against U.N. sanctions and called for 1 million Iraqi citizens to undergo military training to prepare for any consequences.

During the last 60 days, UNSCOM launched two special inspection teams that once again targeted Iraq's "Concealment Mechanism" in order to ferret out WMD programs and documents that UNSCOM—and we—believe Iraq stubbornly retains. It became clear that the Iraqis had no intention of cooperating with these inspections as specifically called for in the most recent UNSCRs on the topic—Resolutions 1134 of October 23 and 1137 of November 12. The teams were stopped *en route,* denied access, and prevented from video-taping equipment movement or document-destruction activity at suspect sites.

Ambassador Butler, UNSCOM's Executive Director, traveled to Baghdad on December 12, 1997, and again on January 19, 1998, to attempt to obtain Iraqi assurance that UNSCOM can resume its work unhindered, including unfettered access to "Presidential" and "sensitive" sites. Following the January 19 meetings, the Iraqis continued to defy and challenge UNSCOM by refusing to discuss access to "Presidential" sites until after Technical Meeting talks have concluded in April. As Ambassador Butler reported to the Security Council on January 22, the talks were characterized by moments

"of abuse and denunciation of UNSCOM and its professional officers; an attempt to apportion literally all blame to UNSCOM, past and present, for the fact that the disarmament task has not been completed and sanctions on Iraq remained in force." Throughout, the UNSC has expressed its support for UNSCOM and its mission in five unanimous Presidential Statements since October 1997.

This record of intransigence is only the latest chapter in the long history of efforts by the Iraqi regime to flout its obligations under relevant UNSC resolutions. Without full disclosure and free access to all sites UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) wish to inspect, the ongoing monitoring and verification mandated by relevant UNSC resolutions, including Resolutions 687, 707 and 715, cannot effectively be conducted. UNSCOM must be allowed to continue to investigate all of Iraq's programs until it can verify with absolute certainty that all the equipment has been destroyed and that all the capabilities have been eliminated. Otherwise, Iraq eventually will be free to develop the capacity to strike at any city in the Middle East, delivering biological, chemical and possibly even nuclear weapons.

Biological/Chemical Weapons

Iraqi biological and chemical weapons are currently the most troubling issues for UNSCOM. This is due to the innate dual-use nature of the technology: biological and chemical agents can easily be hidden within civilian sectors, such as the pharmaceutical and pesticide industries. Iraq continues to prevent full and immediate access to sites suspected of chemical or biological warfare activities. UNSCOM is still unable to verify that all of Iraq's SCUD missile warheads filled with biological agents—anthrax and botulinum toxin—have been destroyed.

Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Systems

The Iraqi regime contends that UNSCOM and the IAEA should "close the books" on nuclear and missile inspections, but there are still many uncertainties and questions that need to be resolved. Iraq has failed to answer critical questions on nuclear weapons design and fabrication, procurement, and centrifuge enrichment; to provide a written description of its post-war nuclear weapons procurement program; and to account for major engine components, special warheads, missing propellants, and guidance instruments that could be used to assemble fully operational missiles.

U.S. Force Levels

The U.S. has led international efforts to secure UNSCOM the access and cooperation it must have to do its job. As a demonstration of our resolve, the aircraft carriers USS NIMITZ, USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, their accompanying battle group combatant ships, and additional combat aircraft have remained in the region. On January 15, the Government of the United Kingdom dispatched the aircraft carrier HMS INVINCIBLE and escort ships to the Gulf via the Red Sea.

United States force levels in the region include land- and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine amphibious task force, a Patriot missile battalion, a mechanized battalion task force, and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of USCINCCENT operations. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel have been deployed for continuous rotation. USCINCCENT continues to monitor closely the security situation in the region to ensure adequate force protection is provided for all deployed forces.

The U.S. and its coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq under Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. In response to a series of Iraqi no-fly zone violations in October and November 1997, we increased the number of aircraft participating in these operations. There have been no observed no-fly zone violations during the period covered by this report. We have repeatedly made clear to the Government of Iraq and to all other relevant parties that the U.S. and its partners will continue to enforce both no-fly zones.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 949, adopted in October 1994, demands that Iraq not use its military or any other forces to threaten its neighbors or U.N. operations in Iraq and that it not redeploy troops or enhance its military capacity in southern Iraq. In view of Saddam's accumulating record of brutality and unreliability, it is prudent to retain a significant U.S. force presence in the region to deter Iraq and respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors.

We again take note of and welcome H. Res. 322 of November 13, 1997, expressing the sense

of the House that the U.S. should act to resolve the crisis in a manner that assures full Iraqi compliance with UNSC resolutions regarding the destruction of Iraq's capability to produce and deliver WMD. While the increased forces in the region give us a wide range of military options we remain committed to exhausting all diplomatic options before resorting to other alternatives.

Sanctions

United Nations sanctions against Iraq were imposed as the result of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It has been necessary to maintain them because of Iraq's failure to comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions, including those ensuring the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless of Iraq's WMD.

The Iraqi regime continues to insist on the need for rapid lifting of the sanctions regime, despite its record of noncompliance with its obligations under relevant resolutions, out of alleged concern for the well-being of the Iraqi people, claiming that malnutrition and inadequate medical care are the direct result of internationally imposed sanctions.

To the contrary, since their inception, the sanctions against Iraq have exempted food and medicines—evidence of the concern of the U.S. and the international community for the welfare of the Iraqi people. In August 1991, when Iraq claimed that it was unable to pay for its food needs, the Security Council adopted UNSCR 706 (and later 712), authorizing Iraq to sell limited amounts of petroleum on the international market, with the proceeds to be used to purchase humanitarian supplies and to fund vital U.N. activities regarding Iraq. The Government of Iraq, however, ignored the needs of its own people by refusing to accept UNSCR's 706 and 712.

In April 1995 the Security Council proposed a new oil-for-food offer to Iraq in UNSCR 986, sponsored by the U.S. and others. UNSCR 986 authorized the sale of up to $1 billion of oil every 90 days for a total of $2 billion during a 180-day period for Iraq to purchase food, medicines, and other "humanitarian items" for its people, and to fund specified U.N. activities regarding Iraq. The Government of Iraq delayed implementation of UNSCR 986 for a year and a half, until December 1996.

Since December 1996, the Iraqi regime has continued to obstruct and delay the relief plan. The regime delayed oil sales for two months in June and July 1997 under the second phase of the program (UNSCR 1111), and again for over one month in December 1997 and January 1998 under the third phase (UNSCR 1143).

The United States has consistently made clear our openness to improving the oil-for-food program to better meet the essential needs of Iraq's civilian population. The Secretary General has just submitted a report to this effect to the Council. We are prepared to consider carefully and favorably the Secretary General's suggestions to improve and expand the program. Expanding 986 would serve our humanitarian and strategic interests. First, the sanctions regime is aimed at the threat Saddam poses—not the Iraqi people. We should do whatever we can to ease their plight, consistent with our interests. Second, expanding 986 will make it more difficult for Saddam to use the plight of his people as a propaganda card in the Middle East and so help us shore up the anti-Saddam coalition. Third, by expanding oil-for-food, we will broaden and strengthen the U.N.'s grip on Iraq's revenues and expenditures, tightening the leash on Saddam and making it more difficult for him to divert funds to the military and WMD.

Implementation of UNSCR 1051 continues. It provides for a mechanism to monitor Iraq's efforts to reacquire proscribed weapons capabilities by requiring Iraq to notify a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit in advance of any imports of dual-use items. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of dual-use items.

The Multinational Interception Force (MIF), operating under the authority of UNSCR 665, is aggressively enforcing U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of this international naval force, augmented by ships and aircraft from Australia, Canada, Belgium, The Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council support the MIF by providing logistical support and shipriders who ensure that merchant ships do not deviate from their recorded courses to legal ports and by pulling vessels caught violating sanctions into member state ports.

Since my last report, the MIF has intercepted five sanctions violators in the Gulf. Ships involved in smuggling often utilize the territorial seas of Iran to avoid MIF inspections. We have

given detailed reports of these illegal activities to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in New York.

The volume of illegal smuggling of petroleum products from Iraq continues to increase. Iraq is working to improve loading facilities in the Shatt Al Arab waterway and the continuing cooperation of the smugglers with Iran frustrates the naval forces which are restricted to international waters to carry out their duties. We estimate that over 200,000 metric tons of gasoil and other petroleum cargoes leave Iraq illegally each month. Profits from this illegal trade support Saddam at the expense of the Iraqi people.

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to UNSCR 687 and 692, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued almost 1.3 million awards worth approximately $6 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by UNSCR's 986, 1111, and 1143 have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. To the extent that money is available in the Compensation Fund, initial payments to each claimant are authorized for awards in the order in which the UNCC has approved them, in installments of $2,500. To date, 455 U.S. claimants have received an initial installment payment, and payment is in process for an additional 323 U.S. claimants.

Human Rights

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be cause for grave concern. Reports that the Government of Iraq used humans as experimental subjects in its chemical and biological weapons programs have been noted above. Credible reports from numerous, independent sources indicate that the Government of Iraq also may have summarily executed anywhere from 800 to 1500 political detainees in November and December 1997. Opposition groups have alleged that many of those killed were serving sentences of 15–20 years for such crimes as insulting the regime or membership in an opposition political party. Max van der Stoel, Special Rapporteur for Iraq for the U.N. Human Rights Commission and Bacre Ndiaye, the Commission's Special Rapporteur for Summary Executions, are investigating these reports.

Iraq's repression of its Shi'a population continues, with policies that are destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life in southern Iraq and the ecology of the southern marshes. Iraq continues to stall and obfuscate rather than work in good faith toward accounting for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared during or after the occupation of Kuwait, and nearly 5,000 Iranian prisoners of war captured by Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. The Government of Iraq shows no sign of complying with UNSCR 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people. The U.N. Human Rights Commission's Special Rapporteur on Iraq reported to the General Assembly his particular concern that extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the practice of torture continue to occur in Iraq.

Led by various independent Iraqi opposition groups and nongovernmental organizations, the INDICT campaign—which seeks to document crimes against humanity and other violations of international humanitarian law committed by the Iraqi regime—continues to gain momentum.

Regarding northern Iraq, the cease-fire between the Kurdish parties, established November 24, 1997, as the result of U.S. efforts, continues to hold. In recent weeks, both Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have made positive, forward-looking statements on political reconciliation, which may signal a willingness to settle some of their differences. We will continue our efforts to reach a permanent settlement through mediation in order to help the people of northern Iraq find the permanent, stable accommodation which they deserve, and to minimize the opportunities for Baghdad and Tehran to insert themselves into the conflict and threaten Iraqi citizens in this region. The Peace Monitoring Force—sponsored by the U.S., Great Britain and Turkey under the Ankara process and comprising Iraqi Turkomans and Assyrians—remains in garrison.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. As I told the American people in my recent State of the Union address, our country is united in its view that Saddam Hussein cannot defy the will of the world. He has used weapons of mass destruction before. We are determined to deny him the capacity to use them again. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 4.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Iraq

February 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments since my last report of July 31, 1997, concerning the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

Executive Order 12722 ordered the immediate blocking of all property and interests in property of the Government of Iraq (including the Central Bank of Iraq) then or thereafter located in the United States or within the possession or control of a United States person. That order also prohibited the importation into the United States of goods and services of Iraqi origin, as well as the exportation of goods, services, and technology from the United States to Iraq. The order prohibited travel-related transactions to or from Iraq and the performance of any contract in support of any industrial, commercial, or governmental project in Iraq. United States persons were also prohibited from granting or extending credit or loans to the Government of Iraq.

The foregoing prohibitions (as well as the blocking of Government of Iraq property) were continued and augmented on August 9, 1990, by Executive Order 12724, which was issued in order to align the sanctions imposed by the United States with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 661 of August 6, 1990.

This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 and matters relating to Executive Orders 12724 and 12817 (the "Executive Orders"). The report covers events from August 2, 1997, through February 1, 1998.

1. In April 1995, the U.N. Security Council adopted UNSCR 986 authorizing Iraq to export up to $1 billion in petroleum and petroleum products every 90 days for a total of 180 days under U.N. supervision in order to finance the purchase of food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies. UNSCR 986 includes arrangements to ensure equitable distribution of humanitarian goods purchased with UNSCR 986 oil revenues to all the people of Iraq. The resolution also provides for the payment of compensation to victims of Iraqi aggression and for the funding of other U.N. activities with respect to Iraq. On May 20, 1996, a memorandum of understanding was concluded between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Government of Iraq agreeing on terms for implementing UNSCR 986. On August 8, 1996, the UNSC committee established pursuant to UNSCR 661 ("the 661 Committee") adopted procedures to be employed by the 661 Committee in implementation of UNSCR 986. On December 9, 1996, the President of the Security Council received the report prepared by the Secretary General as requested by paragraph 13 of UNSCR 986, making UNSCR 986 effective as of 12:01 a.m. December 10, 1996.

On June 4, 1997, the U.N. Security Council adopted UNSCR 1111, renewing for another 180 days the authorization for Iraqi petroleum sales and purchases of humanitarian aid contained in UNSCR 986 of April 14, 1995. The Resolution became effective on June 8, 1997. On September 12, 1997, the Security Council, noting Iraq's decision not to export petroleum and petroleum products pursuant to UNSCR 1111 during the period June 8 to August 13,

1997, and deeply concerned about the resulting humanitarian consequences for the Iraqi people, adopted UNSCR 1129. This resolution replaced the two 90-day quotas with one 120-day quota and one 60-day quota in order to enable Iraq to export its full $2 billion quota of oil within the original 180 days of UNSCR 1111. On December 4, 1997, the U.N. Security Council adopted UNSCR 1143, renewing for another 180 days, beginning December 5, 1997, the authorization for Iraqi petroleum sales and humanitarian aid purchases contained in UNSCR 986. As of January 2, 1998, however, Iraq still had not exported any petroleum under UNSCR 1143. During the reporting period, imports into the United States under this program totaled about 14.2 million barrels, bringing total imports since December 10, 1996, to approximately 23.7 million barrels.

2. There have been two amendments to the Iraqi Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 575 (the "ISR" or the "Regulations") administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Department of the Treasury during the reporting period. The Regulations were amended on August 25, 1997. General reporting, recordkeeping, licensing, and other procedural regulations were moved from the Regulations to a separate part (31 C.F.R. Part 501) dealing solely with such procedural matters (62 *Fed. Reg.* 45098, August 25, 1997). A copy of the amendment is attached.

On December 30, 1997, the Regulations were amended to remove from appendices A and B to 31 C.F.R. chapter V the name of an individual who had been determined previously to act for or on behalf of, or to be owned or controlled by, the Government of Iraq (62 *Fed. Reg.* 67729, December 30, 1997). A copy of the amendment is attached.

As previously reported, the Regulations were amended on December 10, 1996, to provide a statement of licensing policy regarding specific licensing of United States persons seeking to purchase Iraqi-origin petroleum and petroleum products from Iraq (61 *Fed. Reg.* 65312, December 11, 1996). Statements of licensing policy were also provided regarding sales of essential parts and equipment for the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline system, and sales of humanitarian goods to Iraq, pursuant to United Nations approval. A general license was also added to authorize dealings in Iraqi-origin petroleum and petroleum products that have been exported from Iraq with United Nations and United States Government approval.

All executory contracts must contain terms requiring that all proceeds of oil purchases from the Government of Iraq, including the State Oil Marketing Organization, must be placed in the U.N. escrow account at Banque Nationale de Paris, New York (the "986 escrow account"), and all Iraqi payments for authorized sales of pipeline parts and equipment, humanitarian goods, and incidental transaction costs borne by Iraq will, upon approval by the 661 Committee and satisfaction of other conditions established by the United Nations, be paid or payable out of the 986 escrow account.

3. Investigations of possible violations of the Iraqi sanctions continue to be pursued and appropriate enforcement actions taken. Several cases from prior reporting periods are continuing and recent additional allegations have been referred by OFAC to the U.S. Customs Service for investigation.

On July 15, 1995, a jury in the Eastern District of New York returned a verdict of not guilty for two defendants charged with the attempted exportation and transshipment to Iraq of zirconium ingots in violation of IEEPA and the ISR. The two were charged in a Federal indictment on July 10, 1995, along with another defendant who entered a guilty plea on February 6, 1997.

Investigation also continues into the roles played by various individuals and firms outside Iraq in the Iraqi government procurement network. These investigations may lead to additions to OFAC's listing of individuals and organizations determined to be Specially Designated Nationals (SDNs) of the Government of Iraq.

Since my last report, OFAC collected civil monetary penalties totaling more than $1.125 million for violations of IEEPA and the ISR relating to the sale and shipment of goods to the Government of Iraq and an entity in Iraq. Additional administrative proceedings have been initiated and others await commencement.

4. The Office of Foreign Assets Control has issued hundreds of licensing determinations regarding transactions pertaining to Iraq or Iraqi assets since August 1990. Specific licenses have been issued for transactions such as the filing of legal actions against Iraqi governmental entities, legal representation of Iraq, and the exportation to Iraq of donated medicine, medical supplies, and food intended for humanitarian relief

purposes, sales of humanitarian supplies to Iraq under UNSCR 986 and 1111, diplomatic transactions, the execution of powers of attorney relating to the administration of personal assets and decedents' estates in Iraq, and the protection of preexistent intellectual property rights in Iraq. Since my last report, 88 specific licenses have been issued, most with respect to sales of humanitarian goods.

Since December 10, 1996, OFAC has issued specific licenses authorizing commercial sales of humanitarian goods funded by Iraqi oil sales pursuant to UNSCR 986 and 1111 valued at more than $239 million. Of that amount, approximately $222 million represents sales of basic foodstuffs, $7.9 million for medicines and medical supplies, $8.2 million for water testing and treatment equipment, and nearly $700,000 to fund a variety of United Nations activities in Iraq. International humanitarian relief in Iraq is coordinated under the direction of the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator of Iraq. Assisting U.N. agencies include the World Food Program, the U.N. Population Fund, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF. As of January 8, 1998, OFAC had authorized sales valued at more than $165.8 million worth of humanitarian goods during the reporting period beginning August 2, 1997.

5. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from August 2, 1997, through February 1, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Iraq are reported to be about $1.2 million, most of which represents wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Transportation (particularly the U.S. Coast Guard).

6. The United States imposed economic sanctions on Iraq in response to Iraq's illegal invasion and occupation of Kuwait, a clear act of brutal aggression. The United States, together with the international community, is maintaining economic sanctions against Iraq because the Iraqi regime has failed to comply fully with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. Iraqi compliance with these resolutions is necessary before the United States will consider lifting economic sanctions. Security Council resolutions on Iraq call for the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Iraqi recognition of Kuwait and the inviolability of the Iraq-Kuwait boundary, the release of Kuwaiti and other third-country nationals, compensation for victims of Iraqi aggression, long-term monitoring of weapons of mass destruction capabilities, the return of Kuwaiti assets stolen during Iraq's illegal occupation of Kuwait, renunciation of terrorism, an end to internal Iraqi repression of its own civilian population, and the facilitation of access of international relief organizations to all those in need in all parts of Iraq. Seven and a half years after the invasion, a pattern of defiance persists: a refusal to account for missing Kuwaiti detainees; failure to return Kuwaiti property worth millions of dollars, including military equipment that was used by Iraq in its movement of troops to the Kuwaiti border in October 1994; sponsorship of assassinations in Lebanon and in northern Iraq; incomplete declarations to weapons inspectors and refusal to provide immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to sites by these inspectors; and ongoing widespread human rights violations. As a result, the U.N. sanctions remain in place; the United States will continue to enforce those sanctions under domestic authority.

The Baghdad government continues to violate basic human rights of its own citizens through systematic repression of all forms of political expression, oppression of minorities, and denial of humanitarian assistance. The Government of Iraq has repeatedly said it will not comply with UNSCR 688 of April 5, 1991. The Iraqi military routinely harasses residents of the north, and has attempted to "Arabize" the Kurdish, Turkomen, and Assyrian areas in the north. Iraq has not relented in its artillery attacks against civilian population centers in the south, or in its burning and draining operations in the southern marshes, which have forced thousands to flee to neighboring states.

The policies and actions of the Saddam Hussein regime continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, as well as to regional peace and security. The U.N. resolutions affirm that the Security Council be assured of Iraq's peaceful intentions in judging its compliance with sanctions. Because of Iraq's failure to comply fully with these resolutions, the United States will continue to apply economic sanctions to deter it from threatening peace and stability in the region.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 3, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 4.

Remarks Announcing the High Hopes for College Initiative
February 4, 1998

Let's give her a hand; she was great. Bravo! [*Applause*] Thank you very much. Fabiola, you can introduce me any time you want. [*Laughter*] You were magnificent, and I know your family is very proud of you today.

Mr. Vice President, thank you for all the work you've done on our education initiatives. Secretary Riley, thank you for what you said and for what you've done. And I want to thank you and all your people, Leslie Thornton and the others who worked on this. I want to thank Gene Sperling—the Vice President has already blown his head up too big—[*laughter*]—but he has been working on this issue with deep personal conviction for 5 years. Now, all of you who know Gene know that since he never sleeps, that is the equivalent of 10 years' work for anyone else. [*Laughter*]

I thank Harris Wofford and all the people at AmeriCorps, including the young volunteers who are here today; Linda Chavez-Thompson; and especially Congressman Chaka Fattah, for whom this has been a life passion. I thank the Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, who are here and those who could not come today. We have an extraordinary representation from Congress among those who are here and among those who are not. I thank the college presidents who are here and the over 300 they represent, and the heads of organizations who are here.

And I think before I begin I should recognize a man who has been a mentor to all of us, and a great friend to Hillary and to me for many years, Mr. Eugene Lang, would you please stand. Thank you, and God bless you, sir, for everything you have done. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Since this is my only public appearance of the day, before I begin it is important, I think, to say a few words about the situation in Iraq. Later today, Secretary Albright is going to report to me about her intensive week of meetings with our friends in the Persian Gulf, Europe, and Russia. I'm encouraged by the strong consensus she found that Iraq must fulfill all the United Nations Security Council resolutions and that it must allow international weapons inspectors full and unfettered access to all suspect sites. All of us would prefer a genuine diplomatic solution. I want to reiterate that to every single American. All of us would prefer a genuine diplomatic solution.

The best way to stop Saddam from building nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons is simply to get the international inspectors back to work with no restraints. Keep in mind, they have done a marvelous job. They have uncovered more weapons potential and weapons stores than were destroyed in the entire Gulf war. But I will say again, one way or the other, we are determined to deny Iraq the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them. That is our bottom line. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now, back to the moment. Last week in my State of the Union Address, when I spoke about what we had to do to strengthen America for the 21st century, I said I wanted an America where everybody has a chance to work, where everyone has a chance to get ahead with that work, where people have the chance to live up

to their God-given potential, where our Government provides opportunity and our citizens exhibit the responsibility to give something back to their communities. This is the kind of America the High Hopes initiative we announced today will put within our reach.

Thanks to the new $1,500 HOPE scholarships, the lifetime learning tax credits, the education IRA's, education grants for serving with AmeriCorps, streamlined loans, and expanded Pell grants, we have opened the doors to college wide to those willing and able to work for it. Now we have to make sure that all our students, especially those from our hardest pressed families, have a guardian angel helping to guide them to those doors and to make sure they are ready to walk through them. That's what this is all about.

You know, I was listening to Secretary Riley's lilting southern accent, looking at the Vice President, thinking about all three of us white southerners up here, overrepresented on the platform—[*laughter*]—and remembering the last 20 years that Dick Riley and I have worked together on these issues. There's a reason we feel so passionately about this.

When I was born in Arkansas, the per capita income of my State was 56 percent of the national average. That's what the average income was. And I came from a family without a lot of money. Nobody in my family had ever been to college before, but by the time I got out of Ramble Grade School in Hot Springs, Arkansas, I never had any doubt that I was going to college. My family told me I was going to college; all my teachers told me I was going to college; all the people at my church told me I was going to college; everybody told me I was going to college. It never occurred to me that I wouldn't go to college, and yet no one in my family had ever been to college before. I was in an environment which made it very difficult for me to fail. That's the environment I want for every child in America.

Now, Congressman Fattah has a similar story. His grandmother set him early on his path to college. She used to tell him and his five brothers, "Unless you're dead or dying, you're going to school." [*Laughter*] Apparently, the acorn does not fall far from the tree. I just found out that on this, perhaps the most important day of his public service, Chaka Fattah would not let his son, Chip, come to the ceremony because he wouldn't permit him to miss class.

But you know, a lot of our young students are not as lucky. They grow up without realizing how important or how possible college is. There may not be anyone in their homes to push them to take algebra, to take those other classes that are important to college. They probably don't know how to secure scholarships or grants or loans. And maybe most important, there may not be anybody pumping them up with hopes and dreams.

That's why we have to make mentorship a way of life in America. The High Hopes initiative will enlist colleges and community groups to form partnerships with thousands of middle schools and give more than a million students both the information and the inspiration to seize the opportunity of college.

Our balanced budget for 1999 includes $140 million to help these groups harness the power of citizen service and reach out to students, no later than seventh grade, and work with them all the way to high school graduation. Trained mentors and role models will help children pick challenging courses, tutor them when they need some extra help, take them on college visits and other academic field trips, and help them during the college application process.

And with Representative Fattah's leadership, we will make sure children and their parents receive a 21st Century Scholar certificate telling them how much aid for college they will receive well in advance, so they will never have any doubt that if they do their part they can, in fact, go on to college.

I want to thank the more than 300 college presidents and more than 50 major education, religious, civil rights, and service groups who have embraced this initiative. And to show you the depth of support—we've already seen how many Members of Congress have come here for this today—I'd like to ask the leaders of these groups and the college presidents who are here today to stand and be recognized. Look at them. Thank you very much. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Again, I want to thank the Republican and Democratic Members of Congress who are here. I want to thank Linda Chavez-Thompson and the rest of the members of my Race Advisory Board for their help with this initiative. They found already that early mentoring and tutoring has made a remarkable difference in the lives of minority students. And they believe, as I do,

that these High Hopes scholarships—partnerships—will help close our Nation's opportunity gap and help us to build that one America.

I want to thank General Colin Powell and the people who are working in the Presidents' Summit on Service. Remember, when we had that summit, they identified making sure that every child in America who needed it had a mentor as one of the five things we ought to be able to guarantee to all of America's children.

I want to thank, as I said, Eugene Lang, and all others who have gone into their personal pockets to give children this kind of guarantee long before the rest of us were involved in the endeavor.

The High Hopes partnerships are just one of the ways we're working to raise expectations and lift the sights of our young people. Because we know that high school dropout rates are still too high, especially among Hispanic students, the Vice President just announced a $600 million effort to focus more classroom attention on those most at risk. We're also expanding Head Start to a million children; enlisting thousands more college students to make sure all our 8-year-olds can read; working to add 100,000 qualified teachers to the first, second, and third grades to get average class size down to 18; challenging our States to adopt high academic standards and to ensure that all our children master the basics.

In every community in this country, there are children with an enormous ability, who just need a little spark to go on to great things. There's a child in rural Tennessee who, with a helping hand and a higher education, will go on to a career in medical research; a child in southwest Washington who, with the guidance of a caring college student, will go on to become a college president; a first generation American in Texas who might go on to become President of the United States.

We have to have high hopes for all of our children. And we have to make them know that they can have high hopes for themselves. A great nation that aspires to even greater things in a new century in a new millennium cannot afford to leave a single child behind. And we don't intend to.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Fabiola Tafolla, a recent college graduate and mentorship program participant who introduced the President; Leslie Thornton, Chief of Staff, Department of Education; Eugene Lang, founder and chairman emeritus, "I Have a Dream" Foundation; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth.

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast
February 5, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you very much to my good friend and sometimes golfing partner, Senator Akaka, to all the Members of Congress here, Reverend Graham, other head table guests, ladies and gentlemen, especially to the organizers of this wonderful event.

For 5 years now, Hillary and I have looked forward to this day. For me it's a day in which I can be with other people of faith and pray and ask for your prayers, both as President and as just another child of God. I have done it for 5 years, and I do so again today.

At each of these breakfasts, from our shared experiences and our prayers, God's grace always seems to come, bringing strength and wisdom and peace. Today I come more than anything else to say thank you. First, thank you, Connie Mack, for your wonderful message and the power of your example. I also thank all of you here for many things in the last 5 years and ask your help in helping us to work together to make our Nation better and the work that God has sent me to do and you to do.

I thank you for helping me to strike blows for religious liberty—with the work so many of you in this room have done to help us to protect the rights of Federal employees to follow their faith at work—our students in school. In particular, I want to thank Reverend Don Argue, the former president of the National Association

of Evangelicals, and Rabbi Arthur Schneier and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Newark, Theodore McCarrick, who next week will go to China to look into religious practices there and to begin a dialog there in the hopes that a part of our relationship with China will be about our concern for the kind of religious liberty we have practiced here this morning.

I thank so many of you in the community of faith who have worked with the Government in partnership to help move poor families from welfare to work, to honor the scripture that our friend Dorothy Height read today. And I ask more of you to join in. I thank those of you who have been responsible for working with me—and I see Senator Grassley out there and Harris Wofford is here—to bring communities of faith into the circle of national service.

We now have 5,000 young Americans working with religious organizations earning the AmeriCorps scholarship to go to college with after they serve with their community of faith wherever they live in America. And the Congress has provided for many more positions, and I ask you to help us to enlist more young Americans to give meaning to their lives, to live out their faith, and to help make our country a better place.

I thank you for the prayers, the letters, the scriptural instruction that I have gotten from so many of you and many others around this country in recent weeks and, indeed, in the last 5 years. And I ask that they continue.

Finally, I couldn't help thinking when Connie Mack was talking that what we all need very much is to take what we feel when we're here every year and keep it close with us when we leave here every year, day-in and day-out, week-in and week-out, in good times and bad. And I ask for your help in that.

We have a difficult decision that we are facing now, as a country and our administration, because of the concern all Americans have that we not expose our children, if we can help it, to the dangers of chemical and biological warfare. And last night I came across a scripture verse that a friend of mine sent me in the last 72 hours that I had not had the chance to read, a prayer of King Solomon that I ask you to keep in mind as we face this decision. Solomon said in 1 Kings, "I am only a little child, and I do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong, for who is able to govern this great people of yours."

I also ask for your prayers as we work together to continue to take our country to higher ground and to remember the admonition of Micah, which I try to repeat to myself on a very regular basis. I ask your prayers that I, and we, might act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:11 a.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to evangelist Rev. Billy Graham; Senator Connie Mack; Rev. Don Argue, president, National Association of Evangelicals; Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president, Appeal of Conscience Foundation; and Dorothy Height, chairman of the board, National Council of Negro Women.

Remarks Welcoming Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

February 5, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Blair, members of the British delegation, welcome to America and to the White House. We apologize for the rain, but the Sun is shining in our hearts today because you are here. Today we celebrate the unbreakable bond between our two nations. It led the fight for freedom in the 20th century, and we set our sights now on renewing our alliance for a new century with all its promise and challenge.

At the heart of all we have done and all we will do together in the future is the unshakable conviction that our people have the inalienable right to pursue their dreams in peace, security, and freedom, and the sure

knowledge that we can always depend upon each other to stand for that conviction together.

These are good times for the people of the United States and Great Britain. Freedom and democracy are taking hold around the world. In both our nations, a vibrant new economy is growing, rooted in new ideas, new technologies, new scientific breakthroughs, changing the way we live and learn, the way we work and compete, the way to relate to each other and the rest of the world.

In both our nations we have moved to build a government for the 21st century going beyond the dogmas of the past, focused on giving our people the tools to make the most of their own lives: a world-class education, the ability to move from welfare to work, a system of retirement security as strong for our children as it has been for our parents. In this new era, a new Britain and a new America, true to our oldest and most cherished values, can blaze new paths for the world.

Our 21st century alliance, by example and exertion, must protect the promise we are working so hard to secure. We will stand together for peace, as in Bosnia where our troops are working side by side to secure the Dayton accords. We will search the new solutions to stubborn strife, as in Northern Ireland, where the Prime Minister's courageous leadership and the determined efforts of the Irish Government are clearing a pathway to peace. We will stand against those who defy the will of the international community, bringing terrorists to justice in the case of Pan Am 103, maintaining stability in the Persian Gulf, where the British aircraft carrier *Invincible* is patrolling the waters alongside our U.S. Fleet, something that our men and women in uniform find great strength in, Mr. Prime Minister.

Our 21st century alliance embraces the idea of a Europe strong, prosperous, democratic, and undivided for the first time in history. So as Britain maintains its friendship with America, it is playing a leading role in shaping that new Europe: a healthy European Union, reaching out to new members; a strong NATO taking in new allies; practical partnerships with new democracies, including Russia and Ukraine, all important steps on the road to a more peaceful 21st century.

Mr. Prime Minister, the earliest English settlers who came to this country had the vision to see over the horizon. Like them, you have shown the foresight, the imagination, the daring to envision a new world and the determination to make that vision real. You have invigorated Britain, issued an exhilarating challenge for a proud people whose best days, clearly, still lie ahead.

T.S. Eliot, who has been variously claimed by both our countries, once wrote in the "Four Quartets," "The end is where we start from." At the end of a century of friendship, let us pledge to connect our storied past to the unwritten promise of our future. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House, where Prime Minister Blair was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, the President referred to the Prime Minister's wife, Cherie. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Blair.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters

February 5, 1998

The President. Sorry about the rain, guys. Let me just say, to start out, the reason we're kind of hanging around like this is we're about to go into the back dining room there so we can have a working lunch. And I'm looking forward to this. We're going to have 2 good days, and we have a lot to discuss, not only Iraq, which everyone knows about, and Ireland but also the plans that we're making together, or at least in common, for our countries domestically and a lot of other issues that will affect both the people of Great Britain and the people of the United States. This is going to be a good meeting.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, would you like to use this occasion to tell the American people what kind of relationship, if any, you had with Monica Lewinsky?

The President. Well, I've already said that the charges are false. But there is an ongoing investigation, and I think it's important that I go back and do the work for the American people that I was hired to do. I think that's what I have to do now.

Q. Are you going to assert executive privilege, sir?

The President. First, let me make it clear, for 4 years we've been cooperating exhaustively. And that's a hypothetical question, as far as I know. Should it arise, I will await a recommendation from the White House Counsel about the institutional responsibilities of the Presidency. And then, when I get it, then I'll make a decision.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, there are a lot of Republican leaders and armchair generals who want you to change your policy toward Iraq and to take out Saddam. What is your feeling about that now?

The President. Well, I would make two—first of all—and I believe that the Prime Minister has also made this point—what is the cause of the present standoff? It is the suspension of the inspections by the United Nations inspectors and the restrictions on where they can inspect. Our interest is in preventing Saddam Hussein from building biological, chemical, nuclear weapons capability, the missiles to deliver such weapons. That is our interest. That's where the authority from the United Nations resolutions rests. That's the first thing.

Now, the second thing, as a practical matter we can pursue that interest with available options. Would the Iraqi people be better off if there were a change in leadership? I certainly think they would be. But that is not what the United Nations has authorized us to do; that is not what our immediate interest is about.

Now, we intend to be very firm on this, and I hope that we will have the world community with us. But what I really hope most of all is that there will be a diplomatic resolution of this, that Saddam Hussein will move away from his present position.

Q. But if you were to order military strikes, I mean, they would not be directed specifically at him?

The President. Well, first of all, there's an Executive order that's been in place for over 20 years on that subject.

Q. Does that apply?

The President. It does. But let's not discuss hypothetically what targets might be there or what we might do. I think it is important that he understand that we are very resolute on the issue of the inspection system. And it's not an American issue. You might want to ask the Prime Minister about that.

Q. Are you saying there's an order to take him out?

The President. No, no, no. No, no, I was referring to the Executive order, I believe first issued by President Ford, saying that it is against—that political killing, or assassination if you will, is against American foreign policy interests, that we don't do that. But we are very firm in our resolve. And I was very heartened by the Prime Minister's statement in the White House there about his position.

Q. Are you concerned that Mr. Yeltsin's comments about the possibility of leading towards a war—I know he backed off that a little bit, but what are your views on that?

The President. Well, I doubt that that would happen. We had a good talk the other day, President Yeltsin and I did. And I know that he very much hopes that a violent confrontation can be avoided. So do I. But in the end, it is up to Saddam Hussein. It is not up to the rest of us. I haven't talked to a single soul who hopes there will be some sort of violent encounter here, not a soul.

Prime Minister Blair. That's absolutely right.

Q. There are a lot of diplomatic efforts by the French and the Russians in Baghdad right now. Do you think they can bear fruit and avoid a military strike?

Prime Minister Blair. Everyone hopes that a diplomatic solution is available and can work. We all want that. But I think all of our experience with Saddam Hussein teaches us that diplomacy has very little chance of working unless it is clear to him that if diplomacy does not work, then the threat and the reality of force is there.

And the reason why it's important for us to take the position we are is because over these past few years, the U.N. weapons inspectors

have uncovered literally thousands of chemical weapons; they've discovered biological warfare capability; they've discovered the beginnings of nuclear capability. It is for that very reason that the inspectors are there. It's for that very reason that the U.N. has made it quite clear that the U.N. inspectors have got to go in, so that we destroy that capability to develop weapons of mass destruction.

And I think that the entire international community, whatever varying degrees of enthusiasm for using the military option, understands that Saddam Hussein has to be stopped and that it is absolutely essential in the long-term interests of world peace that we make sure that he can't develop these weapons of mass destruction, because he is a man who's used those weapons before. He will use them again if he's give the opportunity to do so.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, aside from your role on Iraq, do you have a specific role in the Middle East peace process now?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, we obviously want to do everything we can, both as Great Britain and also as the President of the European Union at the moment, to back up the efforts that are being made here to try and secure a peace settlement in the Middle East. I myself have both seen and corresponded regularly with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat, and we continue the whole time to see what we can do to move that process forward, because there is a process underway. It is a very difficult situation at the moment. But as we know from our own attempts to secure peace in Northern Ireland, if we don't try and push these processes forward, they very quickly slip back. So I think there is a great deal of urgency there, and we will obviously work with our American colleagues to see what we can do to help.

The President. We're going to talk about this quite a bit. I view the Prime Minister's interest in the Middle East in a very positive light. As you know, we are working—Secretary Albright has been working very hard to jumpstart these negotiations again, to get them through this next phase so we can go on to final status talks. And we're going to need all the help we can. And we need all the help we can in the world to rebuild the economic fabric, as well as—of the Palestinian areas—as well as a climate of confidence and trust between all the parties. So I'm hopeful we can make some headway, and we're going to talk about it.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Are you prepared to answer any questions on the Monica matter tomorrow?

The President. I can only say—I've said the charges aren't true. There's an investigation going on. And while that's going on, it's my duty to keep doing the job I was hired to do by the American people, and that's my position.

Q. Don't tell them anything we didn't find out.

The President. Don't worry, I give you my word on that. I'll protect you.

Q. Thank you.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Situation in Iraq

Q. Does the fact that you're drawing up a battle plan mean that action against Iraq is now well nigh inevitable?

The President. No, no. That's up to Saddam Hussein. I do not want a conflict. I don't believe the Prime Minister wants a conflict. I want a diplomatic resolution of this. But we know from the sheer volume and diversity of material that has been found by the UNSCOM inspectors since 1991 that Saddam Hussein had been aggressively pursuing a weapons of mass destruction program, including biological and chemical weapons, as well as the capability to deliver them by missile.

Now, what we want is for the U.N. inspectors to be able to do their job, to finish looking at all the sites, and then for monitors to be able to check on a regular basis to make sure there's no rebuilding. It's as simple as that. And if that assurance can be given in reasonable form, that anyone with sound judgment would accept, then nothing is inevitable here. No one wants this. This is about trying to protect our children and their world in the next century from chemical and biological weapons.

Q. Could I ask you both if you believe you can undertake military action despite the vociferous opposition from the Russians and clear opposition from the French and the Chinese as well, because it does seem that the two of you are somewhat against the grain of international opinion at the moment?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I certainly wouldn't accept that. I believe that there is a very clear understanding in the international community that the U.N. security resolutions about the weapons inspections have to be upheld. Saddam Hussein, after all, agreed at the end of the Gulf war that he was going to allow the inspectors in in order to destroy all the weapons of mass destruction. They have been, as the President has just been saying, for the last 6 years carrying out their work. They have uncovered vast arsenals of weapons and the possibility of making many more. So it's absolutely clear, I think, to everybody in the international community, that Saddam Hussein has to be stopped, that the capability to develop these weapons of mass destruction has to be destroyed and taken out. And of course we want to do that by diplomatic means. We all do. No one wants a conflict. But the bottom line has got to be that he is prevented from developing those weapons of mass destruction and brought back into line with the agreements that he entered into and is now in breach of.

The President. I think, to be fair, the Russians and the French have made strenuous efforts to get Saddam Hussein to comply, to do something reasonable and consistent with the United Nations resolutions. I think they share many of our frustrations. They started from a different place. But we are working very hard. I've had good conversations with President Yeltsin, with President Chirac, and with others around the world. We will continue to work to try to build the strongest consensus we can.

But let me say that the best solution is to have the weapons inspection program reinserted, have all the sites open, and have some system for regular monitoring. If you look at the astonishing results they have achieved—far more weapons, bigger volume of chemical and biological stocks found and destroyed by these UNSCOM inspectors than was destroyed during the Gulf war—that is the answer. And it's up to Saddam Hussein. No one wants a battle over this.

But if you think about the potential even a small amount of biological agent—the damage, the number of people that can be killed—if you think about the potential of it and you think about the evidence we have that the Prime Minister mentioned earlier, that he had actually used chemical weapons on the Iranians and on the Kurds, his own people, the United Nations resolution is right, and it needs to be seen through.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, we've had a few rocky weeks in the Ulster peace process. How optimistic are you that a solution can be found?

The President. Well, the thing I found heartening is that with these various actions, violent actions, that the main bedrock parties—nobody has quit yet. There was a time when with this level of provocation the whole thing would have just come apart. And I think that's a tribute to the trust that the parties have in the Prime Minister. I think it's a tribute to the efforts of the Irish Government. And frankly I think it reflects an understanding by the people who are around the edges of this process that the vast majority of the people of Northern Ireland want a peaceful resolution to this.

So for those reasons, even though I don't minimize for a moment the enormous hurdles that lie ahead, I'm fairly optimistic. I think the fact that the blows that have been rained on this process by people who thought that if they could go out and kill a few people it would come apart—the fact that it hasn't is a tribute to the Prime Minister, to the Irish Government, to the people of Northern Ireland working for peace, and to the public in Northern Ireland. That's where they are. They want this worked out in a peaceful way.

Public Responsibilities

Q. Can we take it from what you said on TV this morning that it matters what politicians get up to in their private lives? And could I ask you also whether you have any reason to be jealous of President Clinton in any way?

The President. I don't think so. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Blair. What I was saying, so that I can repeat it for you very, very clearly, is that what is important is that we focus on the issues, which are the issues that we were elected to focus upon by our people. And from my own point of view, what I was elected to do was to sort out the school system that wasn't working under the last Conservative government, sort out our welfare state, make sure that we produced a stable, well-managed economic situation, rebuild our relations with Europe, put through the program of constitutional change, developed the possibility of peace in Northern Ireland, tackled the issues of crime in our

streets, dealt with the international problems we face like Iraq in a proper, mature, and sensitive way. And that's precisely what we're doing, and that is what people would expect us to do. That is what, actually, our people want us to do, the people in Britain and the people in America.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Might I just ask, sir, what is your next move with regard to the Kenneth Starr investigation? Is there going to come a time soon when you will again be able to address the American people and perhaps give them a fuller explanation of your relationship with this young woman?

The President. Let me just say what I just said to the American press. I have already denied the legal charges, strongly, and I do so again. But there is an ongoing investigation. Under those circumstances, the right thing for me to do is to go back and do the job the American people hired me to do, and that's what I am doing. And I feel very comfortable with it. I feel good about where we are. I'm gratified by the response of the American people to the State of the Union and the plans I have for the coming year. And I'm going back to work.

United Kingdom-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*]—important your relationship with the Prime Minister is?

The President. I think the relationship of the United States and Great Britain is very important. It is changing; it is maturing. Britain is a clear leader in forging a new Europe, and a lot of interesting questions have to be worked out.

Q. But your personal—[*inaudible*]—chemistry?

The President. Let me finish. But I think if you look at the success of the British economy, if you look at the commitment that Britain has to the kind of internal reforms under Prime Minister Blair's leadership that we have tried to undertake here, if you look at the things we have in common, and if you look at the—[*inaudible*]—I think that it's not surprising that there would be very good personal chemistry between us. I think it's good for the people of your country, good for the people of our country, that we recognize that we share values, we share interests, and now we have a common vision of the future. And I personally feel very good about it. I think it will help us in a whole variety of ways.

But I have to say I've never accepted the idea that there was ever an end to the so-called special relationship between the United States and Britain. I don't believe that. But I think the fact that he and I have—are sort of on the same wavelength about the present and the future is something that may well redound to the benefit of both our people. I certainly hope it does, and it's something I enjoy very much.

Q. What is this 21st century alliance you talked about?

The President. Well, I talked about it in there. I mean, if you look at what we did in Bosnia, I think that's a pretty good indication of the kind of things we'll have to do in the 21st century. Basically, what are the great questions of the 21st century? Will this explosion of markets and the movement of people around the world and the movement of ideas and the movement of technology, will it lead to greater prosperity for all or just for a few? Will it lead to a stronger sense of global community, or will it lead to more chaos?

If you know what the answer is that you want, then it makes it easier to decide that you ought to do what we did together in Bosnia, just for example.

No one can chart the future with exactitude, but I think the fact that we have the same orientation and the same—where trying to build the same future for our children increases the chances that together we'll be able to make a difference.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and President Jacques Chirac of France. The President also referred to the following series of Executive orders on U.S. intelligence activities: Executive Order 11905, signed by President Gerald Ford on February 18, 1976 (41 FR 7703); Executive Order 12036, signed by President Jimmy Carter on January 24, 1978 (43 FR 3674); and Executive Order 12333, signed by President Ronald Reagan on December 4, 1981 (46 FR 59941). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Maryland
February 5, 1998

The President. Thank you. Let's give the band a hand. Are they good or what? [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you very much.

First of all. I want to thank Elizabeth for her introduction, and Nikole for her introduction of Prime Minister Blair. Weren't you proud of your fellow students today? [*Applause*] They were great.

Governor, Senator, Members of Congress, Nancy, all the faculty and administration staff here at Montgomery Blair High School, we are very glad to be here. I want to paraphrase something President Kennedy said when he and his wife went to Paris: I now will go down in history as the man who accompanied Tony Blair to Montgomery Blair High School.

I want all of you to know that in years to come you will be very glad you were here for many reasons. But one of them is that Hillary and I are convinced, based on our friendship with Prime Minister Blair and his wonderful wife, Cherie, that they are going to make truly historic contributions to the world of the 21st century, and you are a part of that because you invited him here today, and I thank you for that.

I want to just say a couple of things very briefly about this whole issue of education. You know that we just were in your computer room and we were E-mailing students in England. And I was thinking about how the first time I went to England, 30 years ago this year, I went on a ship and it took me 6 days. Now, people can look at me over a computer, and we can communicate in a matter of seconds.

One of the biggest questions we have to face as a people, and one of the great questions they're facing in Great Britain, is whether or not this new technology-driven, information-driven, scientifically exploding world all of you will live in will work to the benefit of all of our people without regard to their racial, their ethnic, their religious background, their income, or will it just benefit even more people who are privileged by birth to have a high income and then can get a good education? I am committed to making sure that every single American child is a part of the 21st century revolution.

And I just want to say that the first thing that I tried to do was to open the doors of college to everyone who would work for it. And I believe I can look at every one of you today and say, because of the HOPE scholarship, a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, because of the lifetime learning credit, because of more Pell grants and more work study positions and more national service positions and better student loans with better repayment terms—if you will work for it, you can go to college in American today. You can do it, and that's important.

And now what we have to do in our country——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Thank you.

What we've got to do is to make sure that every American has access to the best elementary and secondary education in the world. And in order to do that, we have to do a lot of things. If you saw the State of the Union the other night, I talked about it. I want to lower class sizes in the first 3 grades to 18. I want to help build new classrooms or remodel them in 5,000 schools so we can deal with the problems of overcrowding. I want to help to lift standards in the poorest school districts in America. And I want to make sure we hook up every classroom and library in every school in America to the Internet by the year 2000.

There are two things I want to say about this, and one of them you know I'm accurate about. The first thing is, it's one thing to say we can hook up the schools and the classrooms and another thing for the schools to be able to afford it. So the Federal Communications Commission—and we have some members here from the FCC—have given a $2 billion education discount to the schools of America so all our schools can afford to be on the Internet by the year 2000.

And the second thing I want to say is that a lot of school teachers are like the President; they're sort of technologically challenged. [*Laughter*] And there are a lot of classes in America where the kids know a whole lot more about the Internet than their teachers do, right? So now we can laugh about it and have a lot

of fun, but if our objective is to make sure that every single child can tap the full potential of the information age, then every single teacher must be in a position to know all he or she needs to know. So we are also investing to make sure that from now on, every newly certified teacher will be trained to know at least as much, if not more, about those computers and the Internet and communications as the students in the classroom. That is important.

I want to make this last point. Prime Minister Blair complimented you on your school spirit, and we loved it when you cheered when we came in, all of you, and we thank you. But look around this room, look around, look at each other. This is a picture of America in the 21st century, people from all backgrounds, all walks of life, all—[*applause*]—and what you have to believe with all your heart and soul is that if you get an education, you can live out your dreams. And if all of you get an education, we can prove that America can accommodate all this diversity and grow stronger by the values we have in common; that we will only grow stronger and more prosperous and give more opportunities to more people to live out their dreams if we can give everybody a good education and then we prove that we can get along, across the lines that divide us, as one America. That's the America I want you to help me build for the new century.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Elizabeth O'Brien, student, and Nikole Sara Bender, vice president, student government, Montgomery Blair High School; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; Senator Barbara A. Mikulski; and Nancy J. King, president, Montgomery County board of education. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation

February 5, 1998

Earlier this week, I submitted my budget proposal to Congress. I am proud that this budget—the first balanced budget in a generation—includes an ambitious initiative to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. Yesterday we moved closer to achieving meaningful child care legislation because of an important step taken by Senator Chris Dodd and many of his Democratic colleagues in the Senate. Senator Dodd has introduced a comprehensive child care package that, like mine, significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides greater tax relief to help low- and middle-income families pay for child care, creates a tax credit for businesses that provide child care for their employees, increases after-school opportunities for children, promotes early learning, and improves child care quality.

In putting forward this proposal, Senator Dodd and his cosponsors have built on their longstanding commitment to improving child care for our Nation's children. I was also pleased that last week a group of Republicans introduced a promising child care proposal. I look forward to working with the Congress on a bipartisan basis to enact child care legislation this year that will help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more importantly, as parents.

Statement on the Fifth Anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act

February 5, 1998

On this fifth anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act, I am happy to report that this law has been good for America's families and good for this country's businesses. Before

I signed this bill into law, the United States was the only industrialized nation without a national family and medical leave policy. Workers shouldn't have to choose between their families and their jobs when a child is born or a parent is sick. This law keeps many workers from having to make that choice.

Many American families continue to face a serious shortage—a shortage of time needed to balance work and family obligations. Over a year ago I called upon Congress to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow 24 additional hours of leave each year so that parents can participate in children's activities or so that family members may take children or elderly relatives to medical or dental appointments or for other professional services. This law deserves support and expansion so it can continue to work for American workers, their families, and their employers.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for the Humanities

February 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to present to you the 1996 annual report of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Federal agency charged with fostering scholarship and enriching the ideas and wisdom born of the humanities. The agency supports an impressive range of projects encompassing the worlds of history, literature, philosophy, and culture. Through these projects, Americans of all walks of life are able to explore and share in the uniqueness of our Nation's democratic experience.

The activities of the NEH touch tens of millions of our citizens—from the youngest students to the most veteran professors, to men and women who simply strive for a greater appreciation of our Nation's past, present, and future. The NEH has supported projects as diverse as the widely viewed documentary, *The West*, and research as specialized as that conducted on the Lakota Tribe. Small historical societies have received support, as have some of the Nation's largest cultural institutions.

Throughout our history, the humanities have provided Americans with the knowledge, insights, and perspectives needed to move ourselves and our civilization forward. Today, the NEH remains vitally important to promoting our Nation's culture. Not only does its work continue to add immeasurably to our civic life, it strengthens the democratic spirit so essential to our country and our world on the eve of a new century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 5, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Poland-United States Fisheries Agreement

February 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Poland extending the Agreement of August 1, 1985, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States, with annexes and agreed minutes, as amended and extended (the 1985 Agreement). The Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Warsaw on February 5 and August 25, 1997, extends the 1985 Agreement to December 31, 1999.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Poland, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

February 5, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Commodity Credit Corporation
February 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the provisions of section 13, Public Law 806, 80th Congress (15 U.S.C. 714k), I transmit herewith the report of the Commodity Credit Corporation for fiscal year 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 5, 1998.

Letter to the Chairman and Members of the Federal Communications Commission on Free and Discounted Airtime for Campaign Advertising
February 5, 1998

Dear _____:

In my State of the Union Address I called upon the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to act to require media outlets to provide candidates with free and discounted airtime for campaign advertising. Free and discounted time will reduce the need for more campaign money, and will allow candidates to spend less time fundraising and more time addressing the concerns of our country.

Spending on congressional campaigns has risen six-fold in the last two decades, more than three times the rate of inflation, and spending on television is the primary reason. In 1970 expenditures on television advertising in congressional campaigns totaled $50 million. In 1996 that number had risen to $400 million. The evidence at the beginning of this election year is that the cost of media spending by candidates for public office will continue to spiral upward. We must address the reason for the explosion in campaign costs.

The dawning of the digital age of broadcasting makes it imperative that we update broadcasters' public interest obligation. Broadcasters have been loaned an additional channel worth billions of dollars for free. The FCC must ensure that broadcasters, given the opportunity to benefit from their use of a valuable public resource, use this public resource to strengthen our democracy.

Free and discounted television time can make our most powerfully effective medium a powerful force for expanding democracy in the information age. I call upon the Commission to develop policies, as soon as possible, which ensure that broadcasters provide free and discounted airtime for candidates to educate voters.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to Chairman William E. Kennard and the other members of the Commission. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to the Members of the Federal Election Commission on Campaign Finance Reform

February 5, 1998

To the Members of the Federal Election Commission:

I strongly support action to end the soft money raised by both political parties. That is why last year I asked the Federal Election Commission to ban soft money, under its current legal authority. I am very pleased that your General Counsel has proposed a new rule prohibiting national parties from raising soft money. Banning soft money fundraising by national party committees will enable our election laws to catch up with the reality of the way elections are financed today, and along with new campaign finance reform legislation, will take significant strides toward restoring public confidence in the campaign finance process.

Now I ask you to step up to your responsibility and act, within your legal authority, to end the soft money system. The American people deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

February 5, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening, and welcome to the White House. To Prime Minister and Mrs. Blair, members of the British delegation, to all our distinguished guests, let me say that the bad news is you have to listen to two brief toasts; the good news is it comes at the beginning of the dinner. We are delighted to have all of you here.

Tonight, in honor of the Prime Minister's visit, I would like to go over some of the highlights of the so-called special relationship between the United States and Great Britain. It began rather early in our history, this special relationship. [*Laughter*] In 1785 Thomas Jefferson, soon to be our first Secretary of State, insisted that the United Kingdom was an evil empire whose time was running out. [*Laughter*] "The sun of her glory is fast descending to the horizon," he said, with uncharacteristic myopia.

In 1814 marauding English soldiers gave new meaning to the term "global warming" when they torched the White House where we sit tonight—[*laughter*]—along with much of the surrounding countryside. My predecessor James Madison was lucky to escape with very few belongings and a chastened view of our defense capabilities.

But Mr. Prime Minister, we are a forgiving people. And we learned a valuable lesson on that night in 1814: From now on, let's get these guys on our side. That's been the core of our foreign policy ever since. [*Laughter*]

When we think over the challenges of the 20th century, it's extraordinary what our two nations have been through together, decade after decade, staring down the darkest threats in the history of humankind. We would not have survived this turbulent century without the grand alliance joining our peoples. Through common values and a common language, we have forged an uncommon friendship.

Let me take this opportunity to announce that in honor of your visit, the place where you and Cherie are staying will now be forever known as Blair House. [*Laughter*]

Tonight we look forward to a new millennium and a 21st century alliance for peace, prosperity, and progress. We have a rare chance to bring fruition to a century's worth of partnership. We can define the new century before it begins, escaping the 20th century's darkest moments and seizing the new century's most brilliant possibilities. We can stand together against tyrants. We can help peace flourish from Bosnia to

Northern Ireland to the Middle East. We can continue to open our minds, our hearts, our societies to new ideas and new possibilities.

Mr. Prime Minister, you are breathing new life into politics and restoring faith in ancient principles of liberty so dear to every citizen of your realm. Throughout our history, our peoples have reinforced each other in the living classroom of democracy. It is difficult to imagine Jefferson, for example, without John Locke before him, difficult to imagine Lincoln without knowing that he read Shakespeare and Bunyan on the frontier.

In the new century, we must continue together undaunted—in the words of the Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden, "never beleaguered by negation, always showing an affirming flame." One of our most stubbornly affirmative Presidents, Harry Truman, felt that way. It's a rather closely guarded secret that this hard-nosed Missourian was shamelessly devoted to 19th century English sentimental poetry. When he graduated from high school in 1901, at the dawn of the new century, Harry Truman copied his favorite poem onto a piece of paper. Throughout his life, he kept it with him, which required him to recopy it at least 20 times. Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" may seem an unusual choice, but the poem resonated with Truman's optimistic vision of the future, a future that then, as now, was limitless.

With a new century beginning, "Locksley Hall" still holds the promise of a better life for those of us glimpsing the new world just over the horizon: "For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see, saw the vision of the world and all the wonder that could be." We must realize the promise of that poem.

Our alliance is strong. Our personal friendship is strong. It is a pleasure and an honor for Hillary and for me to reciprocate the hospitality that you, Mr. Prime Minister and Cherie, showed to us last May. And so I ask you all, ladies and gentlemen, to join me in raising a glass to my good friend the Prime Minister of Great Britain, to Cherie, and all the people who are here with them, who represent the best promise of our tomorrows.

[*At this point, the President toasted the Prime Minister.*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:11 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Blair.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

February 6, 1998

The President. First, let me say that it's been a real pleasure to welcome my friend Prime Minister Blair here to Washington with the entire British entourage. It continues a great tradition of partnership between our nations, anchored by common values, driven by common vision, eager to meet the challenges of this new age.

Today we'll pay tribute to that heritage with a visit to the FDR Memorial. Earlier in this century, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill led the community of free nations that prevailed in world war. Now, on the eve of the 21st century, the Prime Minister and I seek to shape the peace in a world that is rich with possibility and promise but still not free from risk.

We have a very similar outlook on preparing our own countries for the future. And if I might just take a moment to talk about the latest economic news, the strategy we are both working is to prepare all our people for the information age and the global economy. Today we have new evidence that that strategy is working here. In the last month America had 358,000 new jobs, over 1 million in the last 3 months. We are approaching 15 million new jobs in the last 5 years with the lowest unemployment in 24 years. Wages are rising, inflation is low. The role of Government has changed. We have the smallest percentage of these new jobs in the

public sector and the highest percentage in the private sector in the United States since the 1920's. By maintaining fiscal discipline, opening more markets, investing more in our people, we will continue to expand opportunity and promote prosperity.

We also share a common view of the changes that are occurring in the world and a belief in the importance of working together to harness them to the benefit of our people. We've reviewed our progress in building an undivided Europe; welcoming Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland into NATO; forging strong relations with the new democracies there, including Russia and Ukraine; helping the parties in Bosnia to fulfill the requirements of the Dayton peace accord.

Both our nations agree we should take part in a follow-on security presence when the SFOR mission ends in Bosnia in June. We reaffirmed our determination to combat modern cross-border threats like terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

On Iraq, we stand together. Saddam Hussein must know that we are determined to prevent him from threatening his neighbors and the world with weapons of mass destruction. The Prime Minister and I would both prefer a genuine diplomatic solution.

The best way to stop Saddam from developing an arsenal of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them is to get the inspectors back to work with full and free access to all relevant sites. But let me be clear: If Saddam does not comply with the unanimous will of the international community, we must be prepared to act, and we are.

On Libya, 10 years later, we haven't forgotten the victims of the bombing of Pan Am 103 in the skies over Lockerbie, Scotland, or their loved ones. We will not rest until Libya complies with the requirements of the world community and surrenders for trial in the United States or Scotland the two Libyans accused of that brutal crime.

We addressed our commitment to advance the cause of peace, and I welcome Britain's efforts as President of the European Union to spur greater cooperation in the Middle East peace process.

I also commend the Prime Minister for his courageous steps in cooperation with the Irish Government to promote a climate of confidence and hope in Northern Ireland. The multiparty talks provide the best chance for a real solution to that conflict. I urge all the parties to show the vision and the forbearance and the determination to succeed. I unequivocally condemn the recent sectarian killings and beatings and threats. Nothing worth having in Northern Ireland can be accomplished through violence. I told the Prime Minister that we will continue to do all we can to advance the cause of peace, and of course, I asked for and received his advice in that regard.

The recent financial crisis in Asia demands action from the international community. On our increasingly interconnected planet, trouble in the far end of town can easily become a plague in our own neighborhood. We agree that every affected nation must take responsibility for implementing tough reforms and that other nations, when they do that, when those nations that are affected do their part, other nations should support helping them through the International Monetary Fund.

We also looked at ways that we could work together to benefit our people at home. As President of both the European Union and the G–7, the United Kingdom will host two important summits in Birmingham this May. The Prime Minister has told me he wants these summits to take action that really will make a difference in our people's daily lives, that lift their horizons and their dreams, stepping up our efforts to combat drug traffickers, and helping every child to grow up in a safe community.

Shielding our planet from the threat of global warming and bringing our people the benefits of a growing economy and a clean environment are important to us as well. It's also important that we give our people the tools to make the most of their lives through world-class education and training; help people to move from welfare to work—and I applaud the efforts that the Prime Minister is making on that—give them access to the wonders of the information age—that's something we talked about yesterday at the Montgomery Blair High School in Maryland—and dealing with the question of how to provide greater security in the retirement years when the baby boom generation retires.

We finally know that our two nations must continue to work and to lead the world for security, prosperity, and peace. In 1942, in the midst of the Second World War, President Roosevelt sent a message to Mr. Churchill that said as follows: "When victory comes, we shall stand

shoulder to shoulder in seeking to nourish the great ideals for which we fight." Today, on the verge of a new century and a new millennium, that prediction has proved right. America is proud to stand with the United Kingdom and with Europe and to work with its leader, Prime Minister Tony Blair, to build an even brighter future.

Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, the floor is yours.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you, Mr. President. And can I begin by saying how grateful we have been for such a wonderful and warm welcome here in the United States of America.

As the President has just indicated, we discussed obviously a range of different topics. At top of the list, of course, was the situation in respect to Iraq. And what we agreed was that we had to do three things in particular. We have first of all to make sure that our own public opinion was properly educated as to why it's so essential that the U.N. inspectors are able to do their work, the amount of weapons that they have already uncovered in the 6 or 7 years that they have been doing this task, and why it is therefore absolutely essential that Saddam Hussein is brought back into line with U.N. Security Council resolutions and the inspectors can go about their tasks unhindered.

We, ourselves, a couple of days ago in Britain, published a document where we listed precisely all the various weapon finds the inspectors have made. And when you go through that list and see all the various attempts there have been to try and prevent the inspectors carrying out their functions, then I think people can understand why it is so necessary, so important for us to be prepared to take whatever action is necessary to ensure those inspectors can go back in and fulfill their tasks.

Secondly, though, in relation to Iraq, it is important that we stress all the time, of course we want a diplomatic solution, but it must be a diplomatic solution based on and fully consistent with the principles that we have set out. The question of whether there is such a diplomatic solution rests ultimately with Saddam Hussein. He has the choice. He can bring himself back into compliance with the agreements he entered into, and then that diplomatic solution can be fulfilled.

Thirdly, however, we have of course to prepare in case diplomacy cannot work. In view of the situation, we in Britain have been looking at our own military readiness in case a diplomatic solution does not, in the end, prove possible. We have decided to base eight Tornado GR–1 aircraft in Kuwait, with the full agreement of the Government of Kuwait. These are ground attack and reconnaissance aircraft. Their deployment is a precautionary measure, and it will take place over the next few days.

So all the way through, in respect to Iraq, we've agreed that we must educate; we must engage in diplomacy; but we also must prepare.

In respect of Ireland, I want to place on record yet again my thanks to the President for all the support he has given us in searching for a lasting and peaceful political settlement in Ireland. As I've found when I've addressed many Members of Congress, the Senate here in Washington, there is tremendous interest in the United States of America in this process, and there is a great, much-appreciated willingness on your part to have that process succeed.

It isn't going to be easy. These things never are. But we do believe that we have the best chance that we've had for many generations to secure peace. And I wanted to emphasize yet again to you our total and complete determination and commitment to find a peaceful way through. With good will and with proper cooperation and with some trust on all sides, I think it is possible.

And I thank the President for his condemnation of those sectarian killings that have so disfigured the process over the past few weeks. And I say yet again, what we must ensure is that those random, brutal, unjustified acts of violence perpetrated by a small minority must not in the end frustrate the wishes of the overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland to secure a peaceful and stable future for themselves.

We discussed, of course, the Middle East peace process and Bosnia and our commitment there. We discussed, as the President has mentioned a moment ago, the global economy, the Asian crisis, and what measures we should take in order to ensure that such crises are mitigated and do not happen again.

We also laid out for the President and his colleagues our strategy as President of the European Union, our commitment to ensure that monetary union is successfully launched, our commitment to the enlargement process bringing into the European Union those countries in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

And we discussed as well, and agreed, that it was important that Europe strengthened its relationship with Turkey and that we build a strong relationship with Turkey—between Turkey and the European Union for the future.

As good and interesting as anything else has been also the possibility of exchanging ideas, ideas about how government meets the economic and social and political challenges of the future. As I said in my speech this morning at the breakfast hosted by the Vice President, there is a new Britain being shaped today. It is a Britain of confidence, dynamism; it is a Britain that is proud of its past but is not living in it and is shaping a future of which we can be proud, also. And I think in exchanging ideas and in seeing how much there are common themes and common ideas for government between us, we can gain strength in Britain and the United States from that partnership and relationship.

Finally, I would like to say personally how tremendously grateful I've been, as I say, not merely for the warmth of the welcome extended to us here but for the great comradeship and partnership between the United States of America and Great Britain that I know will strengthen and strengthen evermore in the future.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you. Now, here's what we're going to do. We're going to alternate; so I'll call on an American journalist, and the Prime Minister will call on a British journalist. Of course, you're free to ask whomever whatever you please.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Witnesses in Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, despite the ongoing investigation, you've felt no constraint in saying what your relationship with Monica Lewinsky is not, was not. So it seems by logic that you ought to be able to say here and now what was your relationship. Her lawyer says—called it "colleagues"; is that an apt description?

The President. Well, let me first of all say, once again, I never asked anybody to do anything but tell the truth. I know about the stories today. I was pleased that Ms. Currie's lawyers stated unambiguously this morning—unambiguously—that she's not aware of any unethical conduct.

But this investigation is going on, and you know what the rules for it are. And I just think as long as it is going on, I should not comment on specific questions, because there's one, then there's another, then there's another. It's better to let the investigation go on, and have me do my job and focus on my public responsibilities, and let this thing play out its course. That's what I think I should do, and that's what I intend to do.

Q. Why leave people in the dark?

The President. Well, I am honoring the rules of the investigation. And if someone else is leaking unlawfully out of the grand jury proceeding, that is a different story. I am going to do—I have told the American people what I think is essential for them to know about this and what I believe they want to know. What I'm doing is going on with my work and cooperating with the investigation. And I do not believe I should answer specific questions. I don't think that's the right thing to do now.

Prime Minister Blair. Michael [Michael Brunson, Independent Television Network].

Personal Integrity and Public Responsibility

Q. Is it not time, though, to drop the pretense that this is simply business as usual? Have we not seen, with the allegations that surrounded the British Foreign Secretary but to a much greater degree yourself, Mr. President, that this does affect the conduct of public business? And far from dodging the point, as you did, Prime Minister, yesterday when you were asked about the private lives of public figures, should you not both be saying that the public have the right to expect the very highest standard in the private lives of public politicians?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, Michael, I hope we do that, but what I would say to you is that what is essential is that we focus on the issues that we were elected to focus upon. And in the discussions that we have had over this past 2 days, we've been focusing on issues like Iraq, where we are considering if diplomatic solutions fail taking military action. We've been focusing on the peace process in Northern Ireland that gives the chance for the first time in generations, after centuries of conflict, for people to find a way through. We've been focusing on the problems of the world economy, that if they're not tackled could have a serious impact on the living standards of people here and people in Britain, as well as people out in Asia.

These are the important questions for me, schools, hospitals, crime, living standards, jobs that people want us to focus upon. And I believe that it is absolutely essential that we stay focused upon those things and that we deliver for our people what we were elected to deliver. Now, that is what I intend to do, and I think that that is, in the end, what the British people would expect me to do.

The President. Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, switching to Iraq, the Prime Minister said that you had to educate the public about Iraq. But I think the American public is largely in the dark about what to expect about a military attack on Iraq. Are you talking about something that lasts a day or two, or something that lasts for weeks or months? And on a diplomatic note, you've got France and China and Russia opposing this. Boris Yeltsin says that it could lead to world war III. What gives Britain and the United States the right to go it alone on this?

The President. Well, you asked about five questions there in one. Let me try to unpack it. First of all, the most important thing, the best thing that could be done, what we hope will happen, is that there will be a diplomatic solution to this which will result in the inspection teams from the United Nations being able to return and have unfettered access to the appropriate sites, because—the Prime Minister I think put out a paper just a couple of days ago pointing out the incredible work that's been done by the inspection teams. That's the best thing.

Now, whether there is a diplomatic solution or not is entirely up to Saddam Hussein. If he decides that he wants to continue to have the freedom to rebuild his weapons program, then I believe that the clear mandate for the world community, based on not only the resolutions of the United Nations but the danger this would present to the interest and values of the United States, the people of Great Britain, the people of the region, is to do what we can to weaken his ability to develop those weapons of mass destruction and visit them on his neighbors.

You know I never discuss operational plans. I wouldn't do that. I think the important thing is that you know that I don't want this. Nobody wants this. We want a diplomatic solution. It's up to him.

The second thing I would say is, the Secretary of State has been working very hard in the last several days, has traveled, as you know, widely. I have been on the phone a lot. I believe there is more agreement than at first it appears about the necessity to push this thing through to the end.

And I will continue to talk with President Yeltsin and President Chirac and others, but consider the alternative. After all, this man is the only repeat offender around with chemical weapons. He used them on his own people. He used them on the Iranians. And I believe it's a very serious thing. And I think that the American people will understand that.

Q. World war, as President Yeltsin said?

The President. I don't understand what chain of circumstances would lead to that development. I don't believe that will happen.

Prime Minister Blair. Peter [Peter Riddell, London Times].

Q. On Iraq, you said we need to educate, Prime Minister. It isn't entirely clear what the objective of military action would be. Is it intended as a punishment for Saddam Hussein? Is it intended as a substitute for the work of the weapons inspectors to strike? Or would it continue until Saddam said, "All right, I'll let them in." And also, you've announced the deployment of some aircraft. Is there any intention to deploy ground troops at all, British ground troops?

Prime Minister Blair. No, the deployment that we have made is the deployment that I have described of the aircraft. And in respect to the objectives, well, the objectives are very clear. That is to ensure either that the weapons inspectors can come in and finish their task or that the capability that Saddam Hussein undoubtedly has and wants to develop for weapons of mass destruction is taken out. And it is absolutely essential that what we do is focus upon the best way possible that we can do that.

Now obviously, as the President was saying a moment or two ago, it is not sensible or serious to start discussing the details of the military options available to us. But the purpose of this the whole way through, the reason we are in this situation, is because he has been developing weapons of mass destruction. The only barrier to that has been the inspectors. If the inspectors are prevented from doing their work, then we

have to make sure by the military means of which we are capable that, insofar as possible, that capacity ceases. And that is the objective. And it's an objective that I think is fully in line, as I say, with the original agreements under which Saddam Hussein undertook—remember, he agreed—he undertook to destroy any weapons of mass destruction capability, whether nuclear, chemical, or biological. Now, he's in breach of that. We've got to make sure that he complies one way or another with it.

The President. Larry [Larry McQuillen, Reuters].

Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, just to go back to the controversy that's been surrounding you lately. There have been various reports that in some ways have come to be accepted as fact. And I just want to give you an opportunity. One of them is that in sworn testimony to the lawyers for Paula Jones, that you changed your version of your relationship with Gennifer Flowers. And I just wondered if you can tell us, I mean, do you——

The President. Let me just say this, again, even though the judge's order has been routinely violated by the other side in the case—the judge has issued strict orders in the case that covers everybody, including me, not to discuss it. I can tell you this—and I'm confident as this thing plays out it will become more apparent in the future—if you go back, I told the truth in my deposition with regard to that issue, and I also did in 1992 when I did the interview, which I think was rerun the other night, the interview that Hillary and I did on "60 Minutes."

You just have to know that, and I think it will become apparent as this case plays itself out that I did in fact do that, but I am not going to discuss that. The judge has given us strict orders not to discuss anything related to that case. The other side has violated it on a regular basis. I don't intend to do that; I'm just not going to do it.

Prime Minister Blair. John [John Sopel, British Broadcasting Corporation].

Situation in Iraq

Q. Prime Minister, Mr. President, is it possible for you to launch an attack if you don't have on board the French, the Russians, the Chinese?

Prime Minister Blair. I think, John, you have to distinguish very carefully between what of course are, I accept, varying degrees of enthusiasm or commitment for the military option, with the complete unanimity there is in the world community that Saddam Hussein has to comply with the resolutions and that his capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction must be halted.

Now, it is difficult for us to see—and for me to see, quite frankly—that if you take that as the position, how diplomacy, unless it is backed up at least by the threat of force, is ever going to work and succeed. But it would be wrong, I think, to think that either, for example, our French or our Russian colleagues were not absolutely insistent that Saddam Hussein comply with these resolutions, and they are making diplomatic efforts in order to ensure that that happens. I wish those efforts well, provided they are fully consistent with the principles that have been set out.

It is just that we take the view—and I think experience teaches us that this is the only realistic view of Saddam Hussein—that unless you back up whatever diplomatic initiatives you're taking with saying quite clearly, "Well, if diplomacy doesn't work, the option of force is there," then those diplomatic initiatives are unlikely to succeed. But it's important that we realize that it is in that area that any difference lies, not in the insistence of the world community that he must come into line with those U.N. resolutions.

The President. Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio].

Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, your spokesman this morning described to us, in his words, a very dangerous environment following these alleged leaks. What's your own assessment of the legal atmosphere? And we understand that your attorneys are planning to take some action about this. What action do they intend to take?

The President. I think you should talk to them. I don't want to comment on what they're going to do. They're fully capable of speaking for themselves and for me in this case.

Q. And your comment, sir, on the effect of the leaks?

The President. I don't have anything to add to what has already been said about that.

Prime Minister Blair. Bill [Bill Murphy, Press Association].

Clinton-Blair Relationship

Q. Can I ask the Prime Minister, you could have come here and simply talked about serious politics, but some people are being struck by the warmth of the personal statements of support that you've given to the President. Could I ask, have you ever considered that that might be a politically risky strategy? And could I ask the President, have you appreciated those comments from Mr. Blair?

Prime Minister Blair. To be quite honest, Bill, I've said it because I believed it and because I think it is the right thing to do. And I've worked with President Clinton now for some 9 months as British Prime Minister. I have found him, throughout, someone I could trust, someone I could rely upon, someone I am proud to call not just a colleague but a friend. And in the end, you either decide in politics, when you're asked about people, you're going to say how you actually feel or you're going to make a whole series of calculations. And my belief is that the right thing to say is what you feel.

And I happen to think, whether this is my place to say it or not, that if you look at the American economy, if you look at the respect with which America is held right around the world today, if you look at the standing and authority of the President, it's a pretty impressive record for anyone.

The President. You ask do I appreciate it? No, I—[*laughter*]—he should have come here and jumped all over me. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Blair. Do you want me to come back in now? [*Laughter*]

The President. Of course I do. But you know, I think it's also a testament about—there's been—a lot of people bandy about the word "character" in sometimes loose and uncertain contexts. I think, the people who stand up and say things that they believe, when it would be just as easy to walk away, show a certain kind of character that I think is essential in a public leader. And I'm very gratified that Tony Blair has done that, not only for personal reasons but because I think it will strengthen his authority as a world leader.

Yes, go ahead, Mike [Mike Frisby, Wall Street Journal].

Possibility of Resignation

Q. Mr. President, all these questions about your personal life have to be painful for you and your family. At what point do you consider that it's just not worth it, and do you consider resigning from office? [*Laughter*]

The President. Never. You know, I was elected to do a job. I think the American people know two or three things about me now that they didn't know the first time this kind of effort was made against me. I think they know that I care very much about them, that I care about ordinary people whose voices aren't often heard here. And I think they know I have worked very, very hard for them. And I think they know now, more often than not, the ideas I had and the things I fought for turned out to be right in terms of the consequences for the American people. I think they know all that.

And I'm just going to keep showing up for work. I'm going to do what I was hired to do. And I'm going to try to keep getting good results for them. The pain threshold, at least for our side, being in public life today has been raised. But to give into that would be to give into everything that I've fought against and what got me into this race in 1991, to try to run for President in the first place.

I have tried to bring an end to this sort of thing in our public life. I've tried to bring the American people together. I've tried to depersonalize politics and take the venom out of it. And the harder I've tried to do it, the harder others have pulled in the other direction. That doesn't mean I'm wrong. And I would never walk away from the people of this country and the trust they've placed in me.

Prime Minister Blair. Robert [Robert Peston, Financial Times].

United Kingdom Domestic Reforms

Q. This morning you said that the U.K. faced 2 painful years. Could you expand on what you meant by that?

Prime Minister Blair. Yes. As I was saying to people this morning, I mean, there are some very tough decisions that we have had to take in order to deal both with the structural budget deficit with the inflation that was back in the system that we inherited when we came to power, and with an educational and welfare system that, frankly, is just nowhere near where

it needs to be for the 21st century. And making those changes is going to be tough.

Welfare reform isn't going to be easy. It will be unpopular in certain quarters. Taking the measures to cure the budget deficit has been hard when people want more money spent or more public services. And we're saying, "Look, we can't go on. We'd have a higher level—debt levels and borrowing; we've got to act." So we've taken the action on interest rates and giving the Bank of England independence. We've cut the structural deficit. A balanced budget is something we'll be able to talk about on the other side of the water as well, in a few years' time.

We're putting through a massive program of reform on education and welfare. But it will be tough, and it will take us some time to get it through. But as I said this morning, I am an unashamed long-termist. I believe in making sure that the decisions that we take aren't based on the next day's headlines but are based on where we really want the country to be come years down the line.

And particularly when we're facing such enormous global economic challenges, we can't afford either to lose a grip on monetary or fiscal prudence or to leave our education and welfare system in the state they're in. So, yes, it will be tough, but it will be worth it in the end.

The President. Let me just make one comment to support something the Prime Minister just said, when he said he was an unashamed long-termist. In a funny way, when societies change as fast and as much as our societies are changing today, when the pace of events and their variety make it more difficult to predict what will happen next week or next month, it is even more important to be oriented toward the long term, because you have to figure that, if you lay in a structure of opportunity for a free people, they'll get it right and they'll overcome all these unpredictable developments in the meanwhile. That's why I think the approach that he has taken is so wise and so right, not only for Great Britain but for any other country as well.

Yes, Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio]. Go ahead.

Rightwing Conspiracy

Q. I'm wondering if you could elaborate on something that the First Lady said recently about a rightwing conspiracy who's working against you. Could you explain how that conspiracy works? And specifically, are Linda Tripp, Ken Starr, and Monica Lewinsky part of that conspiracy?

The President. Now, you know I've known her a long time, the First Lady, and she's very smart. And she's hardly ever wrong about anything. [*Laughter*] But I don't believe I should amplify on her observation in this case.

Q. Do you agree with her?

Prime Minister Blair. Yeah, Adam [Adam Boulton, SKY News].

Personal Integrity and Public Responsibility

Q. One of your common shared themes you keep on telling your voters is this matter of their rights go with responsibilities. Now, you, as elected leaders, have extraordinary rights and privileges, yet you seem to be saying that there's no extension of responsibilities as far as personal integrity is concerned. Is that what you're really saying: If you're delivering on the job, the big picture, it doesn't matter what you get up to in your private life?

Prime Minister Blair. No, nobody is saying that you don't have obligations of personal integrity. Of course that's right. But what we are trying to say to you is the responsibilities with which we were asked by our people to discharge, those responsibilities are in the issues where we can affect them as leaders of the country.

If you go to Britain today and you talk to the British people—and I do ask—it just could be that sometimes you guys in the media are not in exactly the same place as a lot of public opinion in terms of the priorities people have. But if you go out there and you talk to British people and you say, "What do you want this new Labour government to do," they will talk to you about ensuring we don't have boom and bust but that we have steadily rising living standards. They'll talk about job security. They'll talk about the state of their schools. They'll talk about the national health service. They'll talk about the welfare system and the crime in their streets. They'll talk about security in old age. They will talk about these things, and they will care about these things. And they will expect us to deliver those responsibilities. And of course, it's a great privilege for us to occupy the positions that we do. But in the end, the judgment that the people make of us is a judgment based on what we said that we would

do and whether we fulfilled the promises that we made. And that's certainly what we intend to do.

And I do think also that people understand and want political leadership that addresses these fundamental questions in a way that means something to them. When I was at the Montgomery Blair High School yesterday with the President and the President got up and addressed the young men and women and the teachers and staff and the parents that were there and started going through the education program that he was unveiling and had formed part of the State of the Union Address and everything, some of those things in terms of class sizes and new technology in the schools were very familiar to the British contingent here as things that we're trying to do in Britain.

I mean, the enthusiasm and the delight with which those things were greeted, because those people knew that in the end that's what they elected their President to do; that's what they elected me to do. And those are the things that they want from us, and we've got to make sure, all the time, that we're focusing on that big picture. And you know, whatever other issues come along and distract us, in the end, the judgment of history upon us will be pretty poor if those weren't the things that when we go to bed at night we're thinking about, those weren't the things that we're worried about and concerned about throughout the entirety of our society, because those are the things which really make a difference to their lives.

The President. Go ahead, Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Monica S. Lewinsky

Q. Mr. President, Monica Lewinsky's life has been changed forever. Her family's life has been changed forever. I wonder how you feel about that and what, if anything, you'd like to say to Monica Lewinsky at this minute.

The President. That's good. [*Laughter*] That's good. But at this minute, I am going to stick with my position of not commenting.

U.S. Aircraft Accident in Italy

Q. While relations with—between Britain and the United States appear to be splendid right now, there is a darkening cloud over the relations with Italy. The Prime Minister, the President, the Defense Minister has issued some very harsh statements about the accident the other day when a low-flying Marine plane severed a cable and the car fell. There's a lot of anger. Some people in Italy are even asking for the closing of the Aviano base. What do you have to say to them?

The President. Well, first of all, what happened was horrible. And when I heard about it, I was very shaken. As you know, there was a period of a few hours there where it wasn't clear how many people had died and where there was another whole gondola suspended, where many more people could have died, and thank God they were rescued. The whole thing has been an agony for the people of Italy—there were a substantial number of Germans killed—and, I'm sure, for the pilot of the plane and the people in our military base in Aviano, where I have been on more than one occasion.

I can tell you what I think should be done. I called Prime Minister Prodi, and I told him that I was heartsick about it, that I would make absolutely sure there was a no-holds-barred full investigation of what happened, that the Italians would be kept fully informed and be a part of it, and that we would work with them in every way possible to make sure that they knew that we tried to get to the bottom of it and to handle it in the appropriate way.

You know, in our military every year—I say this to the American people all the time, but let me just say this. It is an inherently dangerous business. Now, we don't know what the facts are here; maybe somebody made a careless mistake. We don't know. I do not know what the facts are, and I will not render judgment until I do. But we lose about 200 people every year in military service in America on training exercise or otherwise on duty. And those planes fly very fast. And I don't know what the description of the mission was. I want to wait until I see exactly what the facts are. But we—it is inherently more dangerous than I think we think from time to time.

Now, I told the Prime Minister of Italy, and I'll tell you: I will do everything I can to find out exactly what happened and take appropriate action and to satisfy the people of Italy that we have done the right thing. I understand why they are hurt and heartbroken and angry. And they are entitled to answers, and we'll try to give them to them.

Go ahead, the gentleman in the back. I promised one more. Last question, go ahead.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that airstrikes alone are going to remove the threat of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons from Saddam Hussein? Is that a fair thing to expect from military action, should push come to shove in the Gulf?

The President. Well, there have been many thoughtful public pieces—a lot of very thoughtful articles which have been written about the limits, as well as the possibilities, of any kind of military action. I think the precise question should be—that I should have to ask and answer—is could any military action, if all else fails, substantially reduce or delay Saddam Hussein's capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and to deliver them on his neighbors. The answer to that, I am convinced, is yes. I am convinced there is a yes answer there.

But you have to understand that those are the criteria for me. I've told you before, I don't believe we need to refight the Gulf war. It's history. It happened. That's the way it is. I don't believe we need to get into a direct war with Iraq over the leadership of the country. Do I think the country would be better served if it had a different leader? Of course I do. That's not the issue.

The issue is that very sharp question, if the inspection regime is dead and therefore we cannot continue to make progress on getting the stuff out of there in the first place, and then—keep in mind there are two things about this regime. There's the progress on getting the stuff out of there in the first place, and then there is the monitoring system, which enables people on a regular basis to go back to high-probability sites to make sure nothing is happening to rebuild it.

So if that is dead, is there an option which would permit us to reduce and/or delay his capacity to bring those weapons up and to deliver them? I think the answer to that is yes, there is an option that would permit that.

Do you want to ask one more question?

Personal Integrity and Public Responsibility

Q. Prime Minister, as a man who understands the pressures of public life and also a friend and a religious man, I wonder what words of advice and support and comfort and sympathy you might have been able to offer personally to the President during these difficult times when he's under investigation?

Prime Minister Blair. That's what, in the British media, is called a helpful question. If I can—I don't presume to give advice at all. All I think that is important, which is what we have managed to do, is to discuss the issues that we set out and listed for you. And as I say, I think we would be pretty much failing in our duty if we weren't to do that. And I've actually noticed since I've been here and I've talked to many people here, that there is, of course, huge concern at the moment at what is happening in Iraq; there's huge interest in Britain, in the new government, and what we're trying to do in Northern Ireland. And, you know, I think the best thing is for us to concentrate upon those issues for the very reasons I've given, that that's what we were elected to do, and that's what I intend to do. And that's what President Clinton is doing, and I think he's quite right.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 155th news conference began at 11:08 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Pan Am 103 bombing suspects Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah; Betty Currie, the President's personal secretary; and U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright.

Statement on the United States-Mexico Binational Drug Strategy

February 6, 1998

I welcome the release today, with the Government of Mexico, of the U.S.-Mexico Binational Drug Strategy. This strategy lays out the concrete actions our two governments will take to fulfill the 16 goals set out in our Alliance Against Drugs, including dismantling the criminal organizations that purvey these poisons, sustaining our success in reducing drug demand, and removing obstacles to even closer law enforcement cooperation with Mexico.

This strategy is guided by the principle that drug trafficking and drug abuse are shared international threats and that we can only defeat them by acting in common, with our other international partners. Our common efforts will uphold the sovereignty and rule of law which drug trafficking organizations seek to erode.

We are making great progress in the fight against drugs, but we cannot let up our efforts now. The fiscal year 1999 budget I proposed contains an increase of nearly $500 million, to over $5.8 billion for drug demand reduction, the largest total ever. I have also asked Congress to fund an additional 1,000 law enforcement officers for our borders, so we can slam the door on drugs where they enter. Working with Mexico and our other partners in the hemisphere, we are developing new ways to strengthen multilateral efforts against drugs, to promote the synergies that can bolster our success.

The test of this strategy will be its results. I am pleased that the U.S.-Mexico High Level Contact Group Against Drugs, chaired on our side by General Barry McCaffrey, is proceeding immediately to develop agreed measures of performance that will tell us if and how well our strategy is succeeding, and how to continue strengthening our counternarcotics partnership with Mexico.

Statement on Signing Legislation Designating "Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport"

February 6, 1998

Today I have signed into law S. 1575, a bill passed to change the name of the Washington National Airport to the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. As the Nation celebrates President Reagan's 87th birthday, we wish him and his family well. He is in our thoughts and prayers.

NOTE: S. 1575, approved February 6, was assigned Public Law No. 105–154.

The President's Radio Address

February 7, 1998

President Clinton. Good morning. Today I am pleased to be joined by an honored guest of our Nation, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. We are speaking to you from the Map Room in the White House, where more than half a century ago President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill charted our path to victory in World War II.

As Eleanor Roosevelt said, that was no ordinary time. But neither is the new era we are entering. At home, we must prepare all our citizens to succeed in the information age. And abroad, we must not only take advantage of real new possibilities but combat a new nexus of threats, none more dangerous than chemical and biological weapons and the terrorists, criminals, and outlaw states that seek to acquire them.

As we face the challenges of the 21st century, the alliance between the United States and the United Kingdom remains unshakable. I'd like to ask Prime Minister Blair to say a word about what we have achieved together this week.

Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. Thank you. And thank you for asking me to share in your weekly address to the American people.

Britain and America have so much in common: language, values, belief in family and community, and a real sense of national pride. We share many problems, too, and it has been clear from our discussions that we are agreed, in general terms, about some of the solutions.

You took the tough decisions needed for long-term economic stability. We are doing so. You have focused on education, welfare reform, a

new approach to crime. So are we. Together, we are breaking down boundaries of left and right and creating a new politics of the radical center.

But no issue has been more pressing in our discussions than the threat to world peace and stability posed by Saddam Hussein. I stand four-square with you in our determination to bring Saddam into line with the agreement he made at the end of the Gulf war. This is a man who has already compiled sufficient chemical and biological weapons to wipe out the world's population.

When he invaded Kuwait, people could see easily a wrong being committed. But what he is doing now, in continuing to defy the international community, in continuing to develop his program for weapons of mass destruction, is potentially far more dangerous. Simply, he must be stopped.

We are pursuing all the diplomatic avenues open to us. But if they fail and force is the only way to get him into line, then force must be used. If that happens, Britain will be there, as we have been in the past, at the forefront in our determination to uphold international peace and security.

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. On Iraq, as on so many issues, the United States and Britain speak with one voice.

Since the end of the Gulf war, the United Nations inspectors in Iraq have done a remarkable job. They have found and destroyed 38,000 chemical weapons, more than 100,000 gallons of the agents used in those weapons, 48 missiles, 30 warheads specially fitted for chemical and biological weapons, and a large plant for producing deadly biological agents on a massive scale.

But their job is not yet done. Iraq continues to conceal chemical and biological weapons and missiles that can deliver them. And Iraq has the capacity to quickly restart production of these weapons.

The United States and Britain are determined to prevent Saddam Hussein from threatening the world with weapons of mass destruction again. Now, the best way to do that is to get the inspectors back on the job, with full and free access to all the sites, so they can root out whatever else needs to be destroyed and then continue to monitor suspect sites. It's up to Saddam to make that happen. If he doesn't, we must be—and we are—prepared to act. As we speak, the British aircraft carrier *Invincible* is patrolling the waters of the Persian Gulf with America's 5th Fleet. United with our allies abroad, we are also united here at home. I thank the many Republicans and Democrats who have expressed strong support for our stand against this menace to global security. No one should doubt our resolve.

Throughout the 20th century, the alliance between the United States and Britain made all the difference between tyranny and freedom, chaos and security. Now, we are turning to face the challenges of a new century. And together, we will again prevail.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:40 p.m. on February 6 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 7. In his remarks, the President referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Statement on the Accident Involving United States Aircraft in the Persian Gulf

February 7, 1998

Defending America's interests is difficult, dangerous work—and our men and women in uniform bear that burden every day. Nowhere is their service more important than in the Persian Gulf.

I was saddened to learn that one of our Marine Corps F/A–18 pilots, Lieutenant Colonel Henry G. Van Winkle II, lost his life yesterday in the skies over the Persian Gulf. Lieutenant Colonel Van Winkle was there as part of America's commitment to back up our determined diplomacy with force as we work to prevent Saddam Hussein from threatening the world with weapons of mass destruction.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his loved ones—and with all our men and women in uniform around the world as they serve and sacrifice every day to keep Americans safe and America strong.

Remarks at the Festival at Ford's Theatre
February 8, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. First let me say that Hillary and I, as always, have had a wonderful evening. We look forward to this every year.

I want to thank my special friend Whoopi Goldberg. God's Property was wonderful. I thank all the other magnificent performers who were here tonight. I thank Tricia Lott and Peatsy Hollings, for the work that they do, and all the other sponsors of this extraordinary evening. And a special thanks to you, Frankie, for giving 30 years of your life to a worthy and great American cause.

I also want to thank you for honoring the First Lady tonight. She has worked very hard for the last 5 years and continues to work for the arts and for the preservation of our national treasures, like Ford's Theatre. That's a special focus of our millennium project. And she convinced me that it's something all Americans should do for the 21st century.

President Kennedy once wrote that art is the great unifying and humanizing experience. We are here in Ford's Theatre in the shadow of President Lincoln's memory, a President who gave his life for the unity and the fundamental humanity of our Nation. And these wonderful young people have just sung a song that, for everyone my age, will live forever. John Kennedy was killed when I was a senior in high school; Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy when I was a senior here at Georgetown. Those of us who grew up as children in a time when our national life meant unity and humanity will be forever grateful for the spirit of Abraham Lincoln and what is embodied in this magnificent theater.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:45 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to comedienne Whoopi Goldberg; gospel music group God's Property; event cochairs Tricia Lott, wife of Senator Trent Lott, and Rita L. (Peatsy) Hollings, wife of Senator Ernest F. Hollings; and Frankie Hewitt, producing artistic director, Ford's Theatre Society. The festival was videotaped for later broadcast on the ABC Television Network as "A Gala for the President."

Remarks at Georgetown University
February 9, 1998

Thank you very much. A special thanks to those of you who had to wait all night to get in. [*Laughter*] Hope you won't be disappointed. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Vice President, Father O'Donovan, to all the groups here who are concerned with Social Security, especially to Congressman Penny and the Concord Coalition and John Rother and the AARP, I thank you all for being here.

I thank Senator Bob Kerrey, who when he cast the decisive vote for our budget in 1993 said that he would do so only if I were also committed to dealing with the long-term structural problems of Social Security, to heal the deficit there as well. I thank Gene Sperling and the members of my staff who've worked with us on this. And thank you, Mannone Butler, for embodying what this struggle is all about. Weren't you proud of her? She did a great job, I think. [*Applause*] Thank you very much.

When I first ran for President 6½ years ago now, I came to this hall to set out my vision

for 21st century America and a strategy for achieving it. Often in the years since, I have come back here to discuss our Nation's most demanding challenges. And on many occasions, but none more relevant than today, I have recalled the assertion of my freshman professor in the history of civilization course, Carroll Quigley, that the distinguishing characteristic of Western civilization in general and the United States of America in particular is what he called, "future preference": the idea that the future can be better than the present or the past; that each of us has a personal, moral responsibility to work to make it so, to plan for it, to work for it, to invest for it.

There is no better example of that principle for the strength of America than the opportunity and the duty all of us as Americans have now to save Social Security for the 21st century. So today I return to discuss what we have to do to achieve that and why it is so important.

You know, there was a recent poll which said that young people in the generation of the students here felt it was far more likely that they would see a UFO than that they would draw Social Security. [*Laughter*] And others may think that it's a long way off, as Mannone said, and the Vice President said he thought it was a long way off.

A couple of days ago I went to New Mexico to visit our national labs; you may have seen the story. And our national labs at Los Alamos and Sandia and Lawrence Livermore, where we do a lot of the research that not only helps us to preserve the security of our smaller and smaller nuclear arsenal but helps us to deal with our environmental questions and a lot of other fascinating challenges of the future—but anyway—after I finished this, I had lunch with a few of my friends, including a man that I went to Georgetown with. And at the end of the lunch, he whipped out this photo and gave it to me, and we were sitting in a park together, about a week after I graduated in 1968. And I looked at that photo, and I said, "My goodness, where did all the time go? It seems like it was yesterday to me."

I say that to make this point: It may seem a long way away from the time you now—where you are until you need retirement. It may seem a long way away before most of your parents need retirement, but it isn't. And great societies plan over long periods of time so that individual lives can flower and take root and take form. And that is what we have to do today.

Social Security is a lot more than a line in the budget. It reflects some of our deepest values, the duties we owe to our parents, the duties we owe to each other when we're differently situated in life, the duties we owe to our children and our grandchildren. Indeed, it reflects our determination to move forward across the generations and across the income divides in our country, as one America.

Social Security has been there for America's parents in the 20th century, and I am determined that we will have that kind of security for the American people in the 21st century. We are entering this new millennium, the new century, with restored confidence; the information age, a growing global economy, they're changing the way we live and work. And the scope and pace of change, well, it may seem commonplace to those of you who have grown up with it, but to people my age it is still truly astonishing. And I can tell you, it is without historical precedent.

For a long time, our country failed to come to grips with those changes, and we paid the price in a stagnant economy and increasing inequality among our working families, in higher child poverty, in record welfare rolls, higher crime rates, other deepening social problems. Before the present era, we had only run budget deficits, and the deficit, I think, came to symbolize what was amiss with the way we were dealing with the changes in the world. We had only run budget deficits for sound economic reasons, either because there was some overwhelming need to invest or because there was a recession that required stimulation of the economy or because there was a national emergency like war. The idea that we would just simply have a structural deficit and run one year-in and year-out was unheard of. But that is exactly what has happened throughout your lifetime.

And it got so bad in the 1980's that between 1981 and 1992 the total debt of the country was quadrupled—quadrupled—in a 12-year period, over and above the previous 200 years. That raised interest rates. It took more and more tax money away from investments in education, for example, or the environment to pay interest on the debt. It slowed economic growth, and it definitely compromised your future.

Five years ago I determined that we had to set a different course, to move past the debate that was then paralyzing Washington and, frankly, didn't have much to do with the real world, between those who said Government was the enemy, those who said Government was the solution, and as long as you can fight about something, then you don't have to get down to the nitty-gritty of dealing with the real problems.

When the British Prime Minister was here last week, Tony Blair, we stressed that we both think, and many other leaders increasingly around the world are beginning to think, that this debate is fruitless and that there has to be a third way, that 21st century government, information age government, must be smaller, must be less bureaucratic, must be fiscally disciplined and focus on being a catalyst for new ideas and giving you and all other Americans the tools they need to make the most of their own lives.

For 5 years we have reduced the size of the deficit, reduced the size of Government, dramatically reduced the budget deficit by over 90 percent, but continued to invest in your future. And in very dramatic ways that's changed the experience of going to college.

Student loans that are guaranteed by the Government have been made less expensive and easier to repay. There are hundreds of thousands of more Pell grant scholarships, 300,000 more work-study slots. AmeriCorps has allowed 100,000 young people to earn money for college while serving in their community. There are now tax-free IRA accounts for college education. Last year we enacted the HOPE scholarship, which is a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college. And then there's a lifetime learning tax credit for junior and senior years, for graduate schools, and for adults who have to go back for further training. For the first time in history, while reducing the deficit by 90 percent, we can honestly say, "If you're willing to work for it, whatever your circumstances, you can go on to college in the United States," and that is a very important achievement.

Now, all of these things have worked together to give us the strongest economy in a generation, almost 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, average incomes rising again. I've submitted to Congress for 1999 the first balanced budget in 30 years. All that is a remarkable achievement, but as I said, we have to be thinking about the future. And all of you know to a greater or lesser degree of specificity, every one of you know that the Social Security system is not sound for the long term, so that all of these achievements, the economic achievements, our increasing social coherence and cohesion, our increasing efforts to reduce poverty among our youngest children, all of them are threatened by the looming fiscal crisis in Social Security.

Today I want to talk about what it is and how we propose to deal with it. And as the Vice President said, we should use the economic good times. That old saying that you don't wait for a rainy day to fix the roof is good for us today; it's very sunny outside. And on this sunny day, we should deal with Social Security.

In very specific terms, we've got a great opportunity because it is projected that if we stay with the present budget plan, that taking account of the fact that we won't always have the greatest economic times as we've had now—there will be times when the economy will grow faster, times when it will grow slower, we may have recessions—but structurally, we have eliminated the deficit, so that over time we should have a balanced budget, and over time, most times we should be running a surplus now if we stay with the discipline we have now over the next couple of decades.

Now, if that's so, it is now estimated that with normal ups and downs in economic growth, over the next 10 years, after 30 years of deficits, the United States will have a budget surplus of somewhere in the range of a trillion dollars in the aggregate over the next 10 years. I have said, before we spend a penny of that on new programs or tax cuts, we should save Social Security first. I think it should be the driving principle of this year's work in the United States Congress: Do not have a tax cut; do not have a spending program that deals with that surplus; save Social Security first.

That is our obligation to you and, frankly, to ourselves. And let me explain that. This fiscal crisis in Social Security affects every generation. We now know that the Social Security Trust Fund is fine for another few decades. But if it gets in trouble and we don't deal with it, then it not only affects the generation of the baby boomers and whether they'll have enough to live on when they retire; it raises the question of whether they will have enough to live on

by unfairly burdening their children and, therefore, unfairly burdening their children's ability to raise their grandchildren. That would be unconscionable, especially since if you move now, we can do less and have a bigger impact, especially since we now have the budget surplus.

Let me back up just a minute, mostly for the benefit of the young people in the audience, to talk a little bit about the importance of this effort. It's hard for even people in my generation to understand this, much less yours, but early in this century, to be old meant to be poor—to be old meant to be poor. The vast majority of people over 65 in America early in this century were living in poverty. Their reward for a lifetime of work, for doing right by their children, for helping with their grandchildren, unless their kids could take care of them, was living in poverty.

If you ever have a chance, you ought to read some of the books that have the thousands of letters that older people sent to President Roosevelt, begging him, in the words of one typical letter writer, to eliminate, and I quote, "the stark terror of penniless, helpless old age." That's what prompted President Roosevelt to launch the Social Security system in 1935, to create what he called the cornerstone of a civilized society.

Now, for more than half a century, Social Security has been a dramatic success. If you just look at the first chart over here on the right, you will see that in 1959—I don't see as well as I once did—[*laughter*]—the poverty rate among seniors was still 35 percent. As recently as 1959, still over a third of seniors lived in poverty. By 1979, it had dropped to 15.2 percent. By 1996, it had dropped to 10.8 percent.

To give you an idea of the profound success of the program over the last 30 years—as you know, there have been increasing number of children being raised in single-parent households, where the incomes are not so high—the child poverty rate in America is almost twice that. But no one can begrudge that. So the first thing we need to say is, Social Security has succeeded in ending the stark terror of a penniless old age. And that is a terrific achievement for the American society.

Now, it's also known, however, that the changes that are underway today will place great stresses on the Social Security safety net. The baby boomers are getting gray. When my generation retires—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers; I was born in 1946, so I'm 51—and the generation is normally held to run for the 18 years after that; that's normally what people mean when they talk about the baby boomers—it will dramatically change the ratio of workers to earners, aggravated by increasing early retirements and other things, offset by gradual increase in the Social Security retirement age enacted back in 1983. So if you look at that, that's the second chart here.

In 1960 there were 5.1 Americans working for every one person drawing Social Security. In 1997 there's still 3.3 people working for every one person drawing Social Security. In 2030, the year after the Social Security Trust Fund supposedly will go broke unless we change something, at present projected retirement rates—that is, the presently projected retirement age and same rates—there will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security.

Now, if you look at that plus the present investment patterns of the funds of which are designed to secure 100 percent security and, therefore, get a somewhat lower return in return for 100 percent security for the investments, that's what will cause the problem. So if you look at the presently projected retirement and the presently projected returns, that will cause the problem.

It's very important you understand this. Once you understand this, you realize this is not an episode from "The X-Files," and you're not more likely to see a UFO if you do certain specific things. On the other hand, if you don't do anything, one of two things will happen: Either it will go broke, and you won't ever get it; or if we wait too long to fix it, the burden on society of taking care of our generation's Social Security obligations will lower your income and lower your ability to take care of your children to a degree most of us who are your parents think would be horribly wrong and unfair to you and unfair to the future prospects of the United States.

So what's the bottom line? You can see it. Today, we're actually taking in a lot more money from Social Security taxes enacted in 1983 than we're spending out. Because we've run deficits, none of that money has been saved for Social Security. Now, if you look at this little chart here, from 1999 forward we'll be able to save that money, or a lot of it, anyway. We'll be

able to save a lot of it that will go into pure surplus in the budget. It can be invested. But other things will have to be done, as well. That will not be enough. And if nothing is done by 2029, there will be a deficit in the Social Security Trust Fund, which will either require, if you just wait until then, a huge tax increase in the payroll tax or just about a 25 percent cut in Social Security benefits.

And let me say today, Social Security—I want to put that in, too, because I want you all to start thinking about this—Social Security was conceived as giving a floor for life. It is not enough to sustain the standard of living of almost any retiree retiring today. So you also will have to make provisions for your own retirement savings, and you should start early when you go out and go to work, with a 401(k) plan or whatever.

But this is what is going to happen unless we change. If we change now, we can make a big difference.

I should also point out that Social Security also goes to the spouses of people when they're widowed. Social Security also goes to the disabled. There's a Social Security disability program. Cassandra Wilkins, who's here with us, who the Vice President recognized, ran the Social Security disability program for me when I was Governor. It's a very important program. But all of these things should be seen in terms of these economic realities.

Now, again I say, if we act soon, less is more. If we can develop a consensus as a country to act soon, we can take relatively modest steps in any number of directions to run this 2029 number well out into the future in ways that will keep Social Security's role in providing some retirement security to people without unfairly burdening your generation and your ability to raise your children to do that. And I can tell you, I have had countless talks with baby boomers of all income groups, and I haven't found a single person in my generation who is not absolutely determined to fix this in a way that does not unfairly burden your generation. But we have to start now.

We have to join together and face the facts. We have to rise above partisanship, just the way we did when we forged the historic balanced budget agreement. This is—as you can well see, this is reducible to stark mathematical terms. This need not become a partisan debate. Oh, there ought to be a debate, a good debate on what the best way to invest the funds are; there ought to be a good debate on what the best tradeoffs are between the changes that will have to be made. But it ought to be done with a view toward making America stronger and, again, preserving the ties that bind us across the generations.

I have asked the American Association of Retired Persons, the AARP, a leading voice for older Americans, and the Concord Coalition, a leading voice for fiscal discipline, to organize a series of four nonpartisan regional forums this year. The Vice President and I will participate. I hope the Republican and Democratic leadership will also participate. I was encouraged that Speaker Gingrich said the other day that he felt we should save the surplus until we had fixed the Social Security first.

The first forum, which will set out before the American people the full nature of the problem—essentially, what I'm doing with you today with a few more details—will be in Kansas City on April 7th. Then in subsequent ones we will hear from a variety of experts and average citizens across all ages. It is very important to me that this debate involve young people—very important—because you have a huge stake in it, and you need to imagine where you will be and what kind of investment patterns you think are fair for you and how you think this is going to play out over the next 20, 30, 40 years. We want people of all ages involved in this.

This national call also will spread to every corner of the country, to every Member of Congress. There are other private groups which have to play a role. The Pew Charitable Trust has launched a vital public information campaign, Americans Discuss Social Security. On March 21st, I will help kick off the first of many of their townhall meetings and teleconferences.

Now, when we go out across the country and share the information and get people's ideas, then, at the end of the year in December, I will convene a historic White House Conference on Social Security. And then, in a year, I will call together the Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate to begin drafting comprehensive, bipartisan landmark legislation to save the Social Security system.

This national effort will require the best of our people, and I think it will get the best of our people. It will ask us to plan for the future. It will ask us to be open to new ideas, not to be hidebound and believe that we can

see the future through the prism of the past, but it will ask us to hold on to the old values that lifted our senior citizens from the burden of abject poverty to the dignity of a deserved good, solid old age.

Keep in mind, most of you who are sitting out here can look forward to a life expectancy well into your eighties. Most of you, by the time you get to be my age, if you live to be my age, your life expectancy will probably be by then 90 or more. We're going to have to rethink this whole thing. But we have to do it with a view towards preserving the principles and the integrity of our society, binding us together across the generations and across the income divides.

We can do this. President Roosevelt often called us to the spirit of bold, persistent experimentation. We will have to do that. But he also reminded us that our greatest challenges we can only meet as one Nation. And we must remember that. With our increasing diversity, in the way we work and live, in our racial and ethnic and other backgrounds, religious backgrounds, we still have to be, when it comes to treating people with dignity, in fulfilling our obligations to one another, one Nation.

Acting today for the future is in some ways the oldest of American traditions. It's what Thomas Jefferson did when he purchased the Louisiana Territory and sent Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition. It's what Abraham Lincoln did when, at the height of the Civil War, he and the Congress took the time to establish a system of land grant colleges, which revolutionized the future of America. It's what we Americans did when, in the depths of the Depression, when people were only concerned about the moment, and 25 percent of the American people were out of work, our Congress and our President still took the time to establish a Social Security system that could only take flower and have full impact long after they were gone.

That is what we do when we do best, what Professor Quigley called "future preference." What I prefer is a future in which my generation can retire, those who are not as fortunate as me can retire in dignity, but we can do it in a way that does not burden you and your ability to raise our grandchildren, because I believe the best days of this country lie ahead of us if we fulfill our responsibilities today for tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in Gaston Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Father Leo J. O'Donovan, president, Georgetown University; former Congressman Timothy J. Penny, board member, Concord Coalition; John Rother, director of legislation and public policy, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); and Mannone Butler, Georgetown Law School student, who introduced the President. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Departure for Capitol Hill
February 10, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, and good morning. Let me begin by saying how very pleased I am for the support we are receiving from all around the world for our stand against Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program. Friends and allies share our conviction that Saddam must not be allowed to develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons or the missiles to deliver them.

Yesterday the Governments of Canada and Australia announced that they are prepared to join the United States, Great Britain, and other allies in a military operation should one prove necessary. As I have said before, I hope we can avoid the use of force. The choice is up to Saddam Hussein. Let the weapons inspectors back on the job with free and unfettered access. But if Saddam will not comply with the will of the international community, we must be prepared to act. And I am very grateful that others are prepared to stand with America.

Now, today, as has been said, I am transmitting to Congress the annual "Economic Report of the President." Let me begin by thanking

the Council of Economic Advisers for their hard work in preparing the report. I also want to thank our wonderful economic team for all they have done to promote prosperity for the American people. As the "Economic Report of the President" makes clear, our economy is strong; our prosperity is deep; our prospects are bright.

For 5 years our Nation has pursued a new economic strategy for the information age. We have reduced the deficit to slash interest rates and spur private sector investment. We've opened markets to create high-wage jobs. We've invested in the skills and education of our people so that every American has the chance to reap the benefits of the new economy. All around us we see the results in revitalized basic industries, thriving new industries, an investment boom, a vibrant American economy.

In this report, the Council of Economic Advisers projects continued growth through at least the next year. That would mark the longest peacetime expansion in the history of the United States. As this report makes plain, the expanding economy is producing wider opportunity and rising incomes for American families. Since 1993 the income of a typical family has increased $2,200 beyond inflation. We've seen the fastest growth in real hourly wages in 20 years, after 12 years in which real wages actually fell.

The standard of living is rising faster than the cost of living now. And America has grown together, not apart, with the poorest fifth of our families seeing the largest percentage jump in their income. While incomes are rising, taxes are falling. A typical family earning $50,000 a year now has the lowest tax burden in two decades; families earning $25,000 a year, the lowest tax burden in three decades.

This economy is the envy of the world. But the progress was not predestined. We must press forward with the strategy that is now expanding opportunities for American families, not abandon it. Above all, we must maintain our fiscal discipline. It is the foundation of our prosperity. My view is clear: Every penny of any projected budget surplus should be reserved until we have taken all the steps necessary to save Social Security for the 21st century.

I am heartened by the strong support this approach has gained from the American people, including the young people to whom I spoke yesterday at Georgetown University. And I am pleased by the strong support Members of Congress of both parties have given for saving Social Security first.

In the past week, some have said that before we save Social Security, we should repeal the iron laws of fiscal discipline. They want to weaken the longstanding pay-as-you-go rule for taxes, which says that any spending proposal or any new tax cut must be paid for in the budget. This rule has been a key to our drive to balance the budget.

Let me be clear: Fiscal irresponsibility gave us 12 years of exploding deficits, division, declining wages. Fiscal responsibility has given us the strongest economy in a generation. I will not allow a return to the policies that have failed us in the past. Let us maintain fiscal responsibility, save Social Security first, and prepare for an even brighter future for our people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of David Satcher as Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health

February 10, 1998

I am extremely pleased that the Senate, with strong bipartisan support, voted to confirm Dr. David Satcher as the Nation's next Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health. I commend the Senate for voting to make Dr. Satcher the leading voice for our Nation's public health.

No one is better qualified than Dr. Satcher to be America's doctor. He is a mainstream physician who is an eloquent advocate for the health of all Americans. As Director of the Center for Disease Control, David Satcher has helped lead our fights to improve the safety of our food,

wipe out the scourge of infectious disease, expand access to vital cancer screening, and increase child immunization rates to an all time high.

As Surgeon General, Dr. Satcher will continue to fight to improve health for all Americans. He will speak directly to the American people—giving us straight talk and sound advice. He will engage us in an ongoing conversation about physical activity, good nutrition, prevention, and responsible behavior. He will guide our Nation on the most important public health issues of our time, including tobacco. This year Dr. Satcher will be a leading voice as we work to pass comprehensive legislation that will help to free our children from the grip of tobacco. I look forward to working with him on this and other important challenges that lie before us.

I would like to thank the Republican and the Democratic leadership for shepherding this nomination through the Senate. I would also like to add my thanks to Senators Jeffords, Frist, Kennedy, Mack, and Hatch for their strong support for this extremely qualified nominee. I also commend the representatives from physicians, nurses, other health professionals, and the public health community for their steadfast support of Dr. Satcher's nomination. Their combined leadership made a vital contribution toward improving the health of all Americans.

Joint Statement on the United States-Bulgarian Partnership for a New Era

February 10, 1998

President Clinton and President Petar Stoyanov met at the White House today to discuss the strengthening of U.S.-Bulgarian relations as well as mutual efforts to enhance cooperation in Southeast Europe and advance Bulgaria's integration into the European and transatlantic communities, including NATO.

President Clinton noted the historic changes that have taken place in Bulgaria over the last year and the key role played by President Stoyanov. During his tenure, Stoyanov's Bulgaria has aligned itself firmly with the family of democratic nations, moved forward with difficult economic reforms, strengthened its civic institutions, stepped up its fight against organized crime and enhanced cooperation with its neighbors. The two presidents committed themselves to building a partnership that reflects a new era in Bulgarian-American relations.

President Clinton reaffirmed America's commitment to NATO's "Open Door" policy and welcomed Bulgaria's aspiration to NATO membership. The two Presidents agreed that Bulgaria's engagement in the Partnership for Peace, enhanced dialogue with NATO and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council were key tools to making Bulgaria the strongest possible candidate for NATO membership.

The United States will continue to support Bulgaria's efforts to consolidate its democratic and free market reforms, including Bulgaria's engagement with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The United States and Bulgaria are committed to reinforcing implementation of the Dayton Accords. They also have a common interest in expanding mutual trade and investment and encouraging the development of multiple routes for energy from the Caspian Basin.

The centerpiece of the visit was the announcement of a new U.S. Action Plan for Southeast Europe. The Action Plan will give further dynamism to U.S. cooperation with countries in the region in such areas as promoting peaceful resolution of disputes, combating organized crime and consolidating democratic and economic reforms. President Stoyanov expressed full support for the Action Plan and committed Bulgaria to doing its part.

U.S.-Bulgaria Work Program

The two presidents noted with approval the detailed U.S.-Bulgaria work program that will translate the Southeast Europe Action Plan into concrete projects in the areas of economic and commercial concerns, political-military affairs and law enforcement cooperation.

President Stoyanov welcomed continuing U.S. assistance which plays a key role in facilitating Bulgaria's transition to democratic and free market structures. President Clinton applauded Bulgaria's commitment to accelerating privatization and affirmed continued U.S. support through

various bilateral assistance programs. Over the past seven years, the United States has provided Bulgaria with over $235 million in assistance under the Support for East European Democracy Program (SEED) to advance fundamental economic and political reforms.

- The program for this year, budgeted at $31 million, will focus on ensuring the development of a free-market economy and strengthening democratic institutions.

In view of the improved reform environment in Bulgaria, the United States and Bulgaria have identified several new priority areas for cooperation: reinforcing the rule of law, strengthening financial markets and encouraging the development of civil society. In this regard, the two Presidents agreed to:

- Deepen cooperation between their countries' respective law enforcement agencies in the struggle against terrorism, narcotics trafficking, money laundering and illicit arms transfers. The United States announced an increase in funds dedicated to providing criminal law enforcement training.
- Project intellectual property rights, including a commitment by President Stoyanov to seek strict enforcement of Bulgarian legislation and strengthen cooperation among relevant Bulgarian institutions in the fight against intellectual property piracy.
- Develop a new education curriculum in Bulgaria to promote democratic values with a grant of $250,000 from the United States Information Agency.
- On the military front, the Department of Defense has developed a number of programs to support the reform of the Bulgarian military along Western lines, including for this year:
- A $900,000 International Military Education and Training program that has eleven Bulgarian cadets studying at U.S. military academies;
- A $3.2 million dollar Foreign Military Financing program; and,
- A military liaison team resident in the Bulgarian Ministry of Defense to organize staff and information exchanges.

Regional Cooperation

In an effort to breakdown barriers and encourage regional cooperation, the United States and Bulgaria, together with several other stable democracies, are engaged in a number of cooperative efforts such as the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, the South Balkan Development Initiative and the annual Southeastern European Defense Ministerial.

- The Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) aims to enhance regional cooperation, commerce and development. It is pursuing plans for improvement of operations at border crossings, models to finance energy efficiency projects, and promotion of small and medium-sized enterprise development.
- The $30 million South Balkan Development Initiative (SBDI) seeks to energize the efforts of Albania, Bulgaria and the FYR Macedonia to upgrade their transportation systems and develop a regional approach to transport planning.
- The Southeastern European Defense Ministerial brings the Defense Ministers of the region together with other interested countries to discuss issues of common concern and develop projects for the year aimed at promoting regional cooperation and confidence building. Bulgaria hosted the last Ministerial in October 1997, which resulted in 27 follow-on activities.

These bilateral and multilateral initiatives will advance our shared goal of a Europe whole, free and at peace. They will also promote the integration of Bulgaria and the other stable democracies of Southeastern Europe into the European and transatlantic mainstream.

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

Remarks on Presenting the Ron Brown Award for Corporate Leadership
February 11, 1998

Thank you very much, Secretary Daley, Secretary Herman, Mr. Woolard, Mr. Barnette; to Alma, Michael, Tammy, and Tracey Brown, welcome, and thank you for your continuing efforts. To Lou Gerstner and Bob Haas, congratulations. And also, I want to recognize representatives of our other three companies that have been recognized for their achievements: Al Koeppe of Public Service Electric and Gas Company; Roger Brown and Linda Mason of Bright Horizons; Dr. Wilson Hershey of Lancaster Labs. I'll say more about them in a moment.

Ron Brown was one of the most visionary, optimistic, confident people I ever met in my life. As he saw it, there should never be any losers, only winners, if we simply bridged our differences and worked together. He was a very forceful advocate for American business, but he was also committed to building a future for all Americans. And he believed, and I think helped more and more Americans to understand, that being pro-business and pro-worker and in favor of workers' families not only did not have to be mutually exclusive but, in the world in which we're living and the one toward which we're moving, can never be mutually exclusive again.

He understood the most fundamental responsibility for a business is to make a profit by competing and growing in the marketplace. But he also knew that the ingenuity, the skill, the work, and the morale of American people in their workplaces fuel our economy and that helping employees to succeed at work and at home helped the companies in the end more than anything else: first, creating jobs and giving employees fair raises, providing affordable health care, training, partnerships, safe workplaces; standing up for the idea that we needed everybody to have a fair chance to participate at every level in all American companies. All these things can be good for the bottom line.

The Corporate Leadership Awards bestowed today for the first time in Ron's memory embodies these beliefs. Just as the Baldrige Award honors companies who succeed by meeting the needs of their customers, the Ron Brown Award honors companies who succeed by meeting the needs of their employees and their communities.

I'm pleased that the award itself, encouraged by Government but privately funded and administered, reflects the new vision of Government Ron and I both worked so hard to bring to our Nation. America has now moved beyond the tired debate of Government should do everything or Government should do nothing. We have found a third way: Our vision is that Government should be a partner with the private sector, with State and local government, with community groups, with individual citizens, to provide Americans the tools to make the most of their own lives, to act as a catalyst to shine the spotlight on innovations that work in one place so they have a chance to be embraced everyplace in America.

Today we shine a spotlight on five American companies who have proven that business can do well by doing right by their employees and their communities. To millions around the world here and at home, a pair of Levi's and an IBM computer are as American as baseball and apple pie. I had a pair of Levi's on last night. [*Laughter*] I don't wear my computer. [*Laughter*]

I was laughing when you told the story about—when Alexis said the story about Ron wearing Levi's; I was remembering when I was in high school the neatest thing you could do was to buy a pair of Levi's and take the stitches out of the "v" on the back pockets. Now you have to be pretty old to remember when that was cool. But I do. [*Laughter*]

These companies represent the best American creativity in marketing, of craftsmanship and manufacturing, and with these first-ever Ron Brown Awards we recognize they represent the best of our corporate citizenship. We honor these companies for the leading role they have played in ensuring America's growing diversity becomes our greatest strength in the 21st century as we strive to become truly one America.

Through a longstanding commitment to work force diversity, IBM has fostered a corporate culture that values, cultivates, and recruits the talents of all our people to boardrooms, laboratories, and factories.

We commend Levi Strauss for refusing to turn a blind eye on the racism that undermines the quality of life in the communities in which

their plants are located. Through Project Change, Levi's has worked with local leaders all across the country—and some of them introduced here today—to fight old hatreds and fill the opportunity gaps between the races. From increasing access to credit and capital in Albuquerque to raising awareness about hate crimes in Knoxville, these two companies' efforts on behalf of diversity and against racism are models which we hope by this award to have followed by more companies all across the United States.

I also want to pay tribute to the three companies that received honorable mention. I mentioned their representatives earlier: Bright Horizons children's centers, Lancaster Laboratories, Public Service Electric and Gas Company. I thank them for their leadership and innovation in strengthening their communities, helping their employees meet the responsibilities of parenthood and at work. I hope their successes will also inspire more companies to follow in their footsteps.

I still miss Ron Brown a lot, and I think of him often. It's hard for me to believe that in a few weeks we'll celebrate—or mark—the second anniversary of his passing. In a very special way, every time we present these awards to deserving businesses, we will keep alive the mission that Ron Brown was on nearly two Aprils ago in the Balkans: to promote the idea that business can do well by doing good, that they can profit by bringing hope and prosperity to people.

I know Ron is smiling down on us today. I know he's proud of the five companies we've honored. I know he's looking forward to the day when companies in every community in our Nation will have earned the distinction of being Ron Brown Award winners.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Edgar S. Woolard, Jr., chair, and Curtis H. Barnette, member, board of directors, Ron Brown Award for Corporate Leadership; Alma Brown, widow of former Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, and their children Michael, Tammy, and Tracey; Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., chief executive officer, IBM; Robert O. Haas, chief executive officer, Levi Strauss & Co.; Alfred C. Koeppe, vice president, Public Service Electric and Gas Company; Roger Brown and Linda Mason, owners, Bright Horizons; and J. Wilson Hershey, president, Lancaster Laboratories.

Remarks on Signing the Transmittal to the Senate of the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

February 11, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President, Madam Secretary, Senator Roth, Senator Biden, Senator Lieberman, Senator Mikulski, Senator DeWine, Congressman Solomon, Congressman Gejdenson, Deputy Secretary of Defense Hamre, NSA Adviser Berger, and the other distinguished military and diplomatic and citizen guests who are here. I especially thank the retired members of the Joint Chiefs who have endorsed NATO expansion. And thank you, Secretary Haig and Mr. Brzezinski and Mr. Sweeney, for being here. To all the diplomatic corps and especially to Minister Kovacs, Minister Geremek, and Minister Sedivy, we are pleased that all of you are here today.

This building has seen many negotiations and the signing of many pacts to end bloodshed. Now we come together not to sign another agreement to end a war but instead to begin a new era of security and stability for America and for Europe. In just a moment, I will transmit to the Senate for its advice and consent the documents that will add Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO. Their addition to the alliance is not only a pivotal event in the quest for freedom and security by their own people; it is also a major stride forward for America, for the alliance, and for the stability and unity of all Europe, a big part of our dream that we can in the 21st century create for the first time in all history a Europe that is free, at peace, and undivided.

As the Senate takes up consideration of these agreements, the question the Members of the

Senate must answer is, how does adding these states to NATO advance America's national security? I believe there are three compelling reasons.

First, the alliance will make NATO stronger. The cold war has passed, but dangers remain. Conflicts like the one in Bosnia, weapons of mass destruction, threats we cannot even predict today, require a NATO that is strong. A NATO that embraces Europe's new democracies will be more capable of carrying out the core mission of defending the territory of its members, as well as addressing new kinds of conflicts that threaten our common peace.

These three states will add some 200,000 troops to the alliance. A larger NATO will be a better deterrent against aggressors of the future. It will deepen the ranks of those who stand with us should deterrents fail. I am pleased that just last week 60 of America's top retired military leaders, including 5 former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, underscored that message when they said these 3 states will make NATO stronger. They are right, and we have already seen the proof.

As we speak, Czech, Hungarian, and Polish troops are participating in NATO's peacekeeping effort in Bosnia. They served beside us in the Gulf war, where they made a significant contribution to our success. And they recognize the threat to the world posed today by Saddam Hussein and by his efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction. I am pleased that all three countries have announced that they are prepared to serve and support with us as appropriate, should military action prove necessary.

We all hope we can avoid the use of force. But let's face it, in the end, that is up to Saddam Hussein. He must let the weapons inspectors back with full and free access to all suspect sites. If he will not act, we must be prepared to do so.

The second reason NATO must grow is that it will make Europe more stable. NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West after the Second World War, provide a secure climate in which democracy and prosperity can grow. Enlarging NATO will encourage prospective members to resolve their differences peacefully. We already see evidence of that. Already, the prospect of NATO membership has helped to convince countries in Central Europe to improve ties with their neighbors, to settle border and ethnic disputes, any one of which could have led to a conflict. Enlargement, therefore, will make all of Europe more stable.

Finally, NATO's growth will erase the artificial line in Europe drawn by Joseph Stalin. Behind me is a picture of the wall that for so long represented the false and forced division of the European continent. It has been nearly 10 years since that wall was torn down by brave people on both sides. Countries once confined by it now are truly free, with strong democracies, vibrant market economies, a proven track record of standing up for peace and security beyond their own borders. NATO cannot maintain the old Iron Curtain as its permanent eastern frontier. It must and can bring Europe together in security, not keep it apart in instability.

In the 20th century, we have learned the hard way here in America just how vital Europe's security is to our own. Enlarging NATO will make us safer.

Our goal is and remains the creation of an undivided democratic and peaceful Europe for the first time in history. Bringing the three nations into the alliance will advance it; so will NATO's new Founding Act with Russia and the broad new relationship we are building with Moscow, helping us to move forward on arms control, building the peace in Bosnia, achieving progress on a wide range of issues; so will the Partnership For Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Charter with Ukraine, and the Charter of Partnership I signed just last month with the presidents of the three Baltic States, and our Southeast Europe Action Plan, which I announced yesterday with President Stoyanov of Bulgaria.

Our effort to build a new Europe also depends upon keeping NATO's door open to other qualified European democracies. History teaches us that the realm of freedom in Europe has no fixed boundaries. The United States is determined that the visions of the past not circumscribe the boundaries of the future.

As the Senate begins it deliberations, I want to salute the indispensable role that leading members of both parties and both Houses of Congress have already played in bringing us to this day. The two Senators from Delaware have already been acknowledged, and, Mr. Vice President, I'm prepared to vote to move NATO headquarters to Wilmington. [*Laughter*] I thank the Senators and the Members of the House who are here today. And there are others, who

know who they are—and we know who they are—who have played a very constructive role in this process.

I was especially pleased that a bipartisan group of Members joined me last summer at the NATO Summit in Madrid. The wide-ranging debate on this issue within Congress and across our Nation is indeed a model of the kind of thoughtful, nonpartisan discussion we must have, and I commend Congress for helping to lead it.

Now the decision rests in the hands of the Senate, and I believe it's in good hands.

This room is named for Benjamin Franklin, one of America's first envoys to Europe after independence. I'm reminded of the comment he made at the close of our Constitutional Convention. He noted that on the chair of the Convention's President, George Washington, was a painted figure of the Sun, a symbol, he thought, of our new Republic. Mr. Franklin said, "I have the happiness to know it is rising and not a setting Sun." In the wake of the cold war, some wondered whether our alliance faced a rising or a setting Sun, whether it had just a brilliant past or perhaps an even brighter future. With the step we take today, and the decision I am confident the Senate will take in the near future, I know that our historic partnership of nations is a rising Sun and that its ascendance will bring a more stable, more democratic, more peaceful, more unified future for all of us who live on both sides of the Atlantic.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr.; former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL–CIO; Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs of Hungary; Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek of Poland; Foreign Minister Jaroslav Sedivy of the Czech Republic; and President Petar Stoyanov of Bulgaria.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

February 11, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. These Protocols were opened for signature at Brussels on December 16, 1997, and signed on behalf of the United States of America and the other parties to the North Atlantic Treaty. I request the advice and consent of the Senate to the ratification of these documents, and transmit for the Senate's information the report made to me by the Secretary of State regarding this matter.

The accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will improve the ability of the United States to protect and advance our interests in the transatlantic area. The end of the Cold War changed the nature of the threats to this region, but not the fact that Europe's peace, stability, and well-being are vital to our own national security. The addition of these well-qualified democracies, which have demonstrated their commitment to the values of freedom and the security of the broader region, will help deter potential threats to Europe, deepen the continent's stability, bolster its democratic advances, erase its artificial division, and strengthen an Alliance that has proved its effectiveness during and since the Cold War.

NATO is not the only instrument in our efforts to help build a new and undivided Europe, but it is our most important contributor to peace and security for the region. NATO's steadfastness during the long years of the Cold War, its performance in the mission it has led in Bosnia, the strong interest of a dozen new European democracies in becoming members, and the success of the Alliance's Partnership for Peace program all under score the continuing vitality of the Alliance and the Treaty that brought it into existence.

NATO's mission in Bosnia is of particular importance. No other multinational institution possessed the military capabilities and political cohesiveness necessary to bring an end to the fighting in the former Yugoslavia—Europe's worst conflict since World War II—and to give the people of that region a chance to build a lasting peace. Our work in Bosnia is not yet complete, but we should be thankful that NATO existed to unite Allies and partners in this determined common effort. Similarly, we should welcome steps such as the Alliance's enlargement that can strengthen its ability to meet future challenges, beginning with NATO's core mission of collective defense and other missions that we and our Allies may choose to pursue.

The three states that NATO now proposes to add as full members will make the Alliance stronger while helping to enlarge Europe's zone of democratic stability. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have been leaders in Central Europe's dramatic transformation over the past decade and already are a part of NATO's community of values. They each played pivotal roles in the overthrow of communist rule and repression, and they each proved equal to the challenge of comprehensive democratic and market reform. Together, they have helped to make Central Europe the continent's most robust zone of economic growth.

All three of these states will be security producers for the Alliance and not merely security consumers. They have demonstrated this through the accords they have reached with neighboring states, the contributions they have made to the mission in Bosnia, the forces they plan to commit to the Alliance, and the military modernization programs they have already begun and pledge to continue in the years to come at their own expense. These three states will strengthen NATO through the addition of military resources, strategic depth, and the prospect of greater stability in Europe's central region. American troops have worked alongside soldiers from each of these nations in earlier times, in the case of the Poles, dating back to our own Revolutionary War. Our cooperation with the Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs has contributed to our security in the past, and our Alliance with them will contribute to our security in the years to come.

The purpose of NATO's enlargement extends beyond the security of these three states, however, and entails a process encompassing more than their admission to the Alliance. Accordingly, these first new members should not and will not be the last. No qualified European democracy is ruled out as a future member. The Alliance has agreed to review the process of enlargement at its 1999 summit in Washington. As we prepare for that summit, I look forward to discussing this matter with my fellow NATO leaders. The process of enlargement, combined with the Partnership for Peace program, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and NATO's new charter with Ukraine, signify NATO's commitment to avoid any new division of Europe, and to contribute to its progressive integration.

A democratic Russia is and should be a part of that new Europe. With bipartisan congressional support, my Administration and my predecessor's have worked with our Allies to support political and economic reform in Russia and the other newly independent states and to increase the bonds between them and the rest of Europe. NATO's enlargement and other adaptations are consistent, not at odds, with that policy. NATO has repeatedly demonstrated that it does not threaten Russia and that it seeks closer and more cooperative relations. We and our Allies welcomed the participation of Russian forces in the mission in Bosnia.

NATO most clearly signaled its interest in a constructive relationship through the signing in May 1997 of the NATO-Russia Founding Act. That Act, and the Permanent Joint Council it created, help to ensure that if Russia seeks to build a positive and peaceful future within Europe, NATO will be a full partner in that enterprise. I understand it will require time for the Russian people to gain a new understanding of NATO. The Russian people, in turn, must understand that an open door policy with regard to the addition of new members is an element of a new NATO. In this way, we will build a new and more stable Europe of which Russia is an integral part.

I therefore propose the ratification of these Protocols with every expectation that we can continue to pursue productive cooperation with the Russian Federation. I am encouraged that President Yeltsin has pledged his government's commitment to additional progress on nuclear and conventional arms control measures. At our summit in Helsinki, for example, we agreed that once START II has entered into force we will begin negotiations on a START III accord that

can achieve even deeper cuts in our strategic arsenals. Similarly, Russia's ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention last year demonstrated that cooperation on a range of security matters will continue.

The Protocols of accession that I transmit to you constitute a decision of great consequence, and they involve solemn security commitments. The addition of new states also will entail financial costs. While those costs will be manageable and broadly shared with our current and new Allies, they nonetheless represent a sacrifice by the American people.

Successful ratification of these Protocols demands not only the Senate's advice and consent required by our Constitution, but also the broader, bipartisan support of the American people and their representatives. For that reason, it is encouraging that congressional leaders in both parties and both chambers have long advocated NATO's enlargement. I have endeavored to make the Congress an active partner in this process. I was pleased that a bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives accompanied the U.S. delegation at the NATO summit in Madrid last July. Officials at all levels of my Administration have consulted closely with the relevant committees and with the bipartisan Senate NATO Observer Group. It is my hope that this pattern of consultation and cooperation will ensure that NATO and our broader European policies continue to have the sustained bipartisan support that was so instrumental to their success throughout the decades of the Cold War.

The American people today are the direct beneficiaries of the extraordinary sacrifices made by our fellow citizens in the many theaters of that "long twilight struggle," and in the two world wars that preceded it. Those efforts aimed in large part to create across the breadth of Europe a lasting, democratic peace. The enlargement of NATO represents an indispensable part of today's program to finish building such a peace, and therefore to repay a portion of the debt we owe to those who went before us in the quest for freedom and security.

The rise of new challenges in other regions does not in any way diminish the necessity of consolidating the increased level of security that Europe has attained at such high cost. To the contrary, our policy in Europe, including the Protocols I transmit herewith, can help preserve today's more favorable security environment in the transatlantic area, thus making it possible to focus attention and resources elsewhere while providing us with additional Allies and partners to help share our security burdens.

The century we are now completing has been the bloodiest in all of human history. Its lessons should be clear to us: the wisdom of deterrence, the value of strong Alliances, the potential for overcoming past divisions, and the imperative of American engagement in Europe. The NATO Alliance is one of the most important embodiments of these truths, and it is in the interest of the United States to strengthen this proven institution and adapt it to a new era. The addition to this Alliance of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic is an essential part of that program. It will help build a Europe that can be integrated, democratic, free, and at peace for the first time in its history. It can help ensure that we and our Allies and our partners will enjoy greater security and freedom in the century that is about to begin.

I therefore recommend that the Senate give prompt advice and consent to ratification of these historic Protocols.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 11, 1998.

Statement on Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt

February 11, 1998

I have known Bruce Babbitt for many years. He is a man of the highest integrity and a dedicated public servant. I am convinced that when this matter is concluded he will be vindicated. I look forward to his continuing service to the American people.

Remarks at the First Millennium Evening at the White House
February 11, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, Professor Bailyn, for that wonderful, wonderful lecture. I thank the First Lady and Ellen Lovell for conceiving this entire Millennium series. The others will have a hard act to follow.

I can't think of a better way to inaugurate this series of lectures than with one on the founding of our Republic, also the first White House cyberspace lecture. We are truly imagining—honoring the past, not by imagining the future but through the prism of the future.

I thank Bernard Bailyn for what he said and the way he said it and for a lifetime of work. We received the distilled wisdom tonight of more than four decades of hard thinking and work about what it means to be an American and what America means to Americans and to the rest of the world.

I was rather amused—he said, "You know, when we started, we had all these people who came from a lot of different places; they moved around a lot; they disagreed a lot; they were disdainful of Government"—I thought, what's new? [*Laughter*] But they were also, as Professor Bailyn said at the end of his remarks, at their best moments profoundly idealistic and always, always appropriately suspicious of untrammeled power in the hands of anyone in the Government.

They were very wise about human nature, our Founders. They understood that there was light and dark in human nature. They understood that we are all imperfect, but society is, nonetheless, improvable. And in some ways, I think their most important charge to us was to always be about the business of forming a more perfect Union. As I said in my State of the Union Address, they understood it would never be perfect but that we always had to try to make it more perfect. And that is what they always tried to do, and when they left the scene, they instructed us to follow suit. And we've been at it ever since.

We have a lot of questions that we have to face about the new millennium: We're more diverse than ever before; can we really be one America? How do we have a Government that is flexible enough and strong enough to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives and still avoid the abuses that the Founders understood would always be there when people were too driven by power, instead of the larger purposes of America? How can we widen the circle of opportunity to include everyone in a market system that seems inherently exclusive in some ways?

There are lots of other challenges facing us, but I think our ability to meet the challenges of the 21st century rest in no small measure on our understanding of the constant values and insights with which we began. By honoring the past, we know there were forebears there who were always imagining the future. By imagining the future, we must do so with the hope that all of our successes will honor our past, for it is there, in the depth of our values and the genius of our system, that we began the long journey that has brought us to this day and that I am convinced will take us to better days ahead.

Thank you again, Professor Bailyn. And now I'd like to turn the discussion over to the Director of the White House Millennium Council, Ellen Lovell, and we will begin with the questions.

[*At this point, the question-and-answer portion of the program proceeded.*]

The President. I'll just give you a couple of examples. I agree with you on this. I do think that we're very patriotic if patriotism means loving country and caring about its future more than you care about your immediate self-interest. I think we're still capable of that. And I could give you two or three examples.

I think the enormous response we've had to the idea that we have to save the Social Security system for the 21st century before we go around spending this first surplus we've had in 30 years on tax cuts or spending programs is an example of patriotism. I think the enormous reservoir of interest we've had in this whole issue of climate change and how we can preserve the environment for 21st century America is an example of patriotism, because selfishness is just going ahead and gobbling up whatever was here before us. I think all these young people all over America that are responding to the call to serve in their communities is an example of patriotism.

So I think—why I am so glad you're here—I think that it's not because we're not patriotic, but I think a lot of the basic patriotic elements of America—that is, the things that make us go—we do tend to take for granted, which is why I think it's so important that we take the occasion of entering a new millennium and a new century to think about the basic things again, so we'll be more sensitive to them. Why do we have a Bill of Rights? Why do we have a Government with certain powers to unify us as well as certain limits so that it can't abuse us? What does all this mean?

I think that we've been around so long now, and Americans get up every day just expecting the country to work, and so we tend to take for granted what's really best about our country. And I think that can be bad. But I do think that the country is fully capable of patriotic action, if patriotism means sacrificing today for something greater tomorrow.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. I was just going to say, following up on that, I think you can look at basically all the big turning points of American history, all of them, and say that we survived and sort of went on to a higher level of achievement because two things happened: one, we reaffirmed the Union in new circumstances instead of letting it become weaker and divided, obviously, in the Civil War; and secondly, we expanded the meaning of liberty in a new and different time but in a logical way.

And I think if you go back throughout the entire history of the country and you look at every major turning point in history, it was a triumph for the idea of union and for the idea of liberty. And I hope that that will always be the case. But I believe that to be true.

I also—we had a cyberspace question here about, should we learn anything from 1900? It may just be pure accident, but it's interesting that in 1800, when Thomas Jefferson was elected, when the century changed, we were essentially—we began the movement from being essentially a colonial society to a continental one. In 1900, when William McKinley was reelected and Theodore Roosevelt soon thereafter became President when Mr. McKinley was killed, we began to come to terms fully with the implications of the industrial revolution on our society. And in 2000, we will be still about the business of fully coming to terms for the implication of the technology and information revolution in our society.

So I think there—you might be able to go back and see how people were dealing with it, what principles were there, whether they are relevant to today, and it might also be interesting to see what some of the predictions were in 1900 that turned out right and what turned out wrong, as a way of adding a grain of salt to whatever all the rest of us are going to be saying in 3 years. [*Laughter*]

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. First of all, let me say to all of those who have followed us in other sites, thank you for joining us. Technology really has turned out to be a wonderful thing. We had 4,000 hits on our website after the State of the Union. So Americans really are tuning in in positive ways on the Internet.

Professor Bailyn, thank you for reminding us of the things that are profoundly, essentially American about our Nation, about our past, and, therefore, critical to our future.

I want to thank Hillary again and Ellen Lovell for conceiving of this idea and executing it. I want to welcome you all to leave Abigail Adams' washroom here—[*laughter*]—and go down to the State Dining Room where we'll all be able to visit for a few moments now, and ask everyone to tune in when in about 3 weeks we have the next one of these.

Thank you very much, and good evening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bernard Bailyn, professor emeritus of Harvard University, who gave the first lecture in the Millennium series, entitled "The Living Past—Commitments for the Future." This lecture was the first Internet cybercast originating from the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Annual Certification of the Nuclear Weapons Stockpile
February 11, 1998

Dear _____*:*

In my September 22, 1997, message to the Senate transmitting the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) for advice and consent to ratification, I announced that I would provide to the appropriate committees of Congress the annual certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile by the Secretaries of Defense and Energy and accompanying report. Attached is a copy of that certification and report.

I am pleased to note the Secretaries' conclusion that the nuclear stockpile has no safety or reliability concerns that require underground testing at this time. Problems that have arisen in the stockpile are being addressed and resolved without underground nuclear testing to ensure the stockpile remains safe and reliable. In reaching this conclusion, the Secretaries obtained the advice of the Directors of the National Weapons Laboratories, the Commander in Chief, United States Strategic Command, and the Nuclear Weapons Council.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate; President pro tempore of the Senate Strom Thurmond, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on National Security. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 12.

Remarks to the Joint Democratic Caucus
February 12, 1998

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, the minute I get back to the White House I am going to sign an Executive order mandating the widest possible dissemination, for free, of whatever it is the Vice President had for breakfast this morning. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for what you said and for all the work you have done over these last 5-plus years to help make our country a better place.

I want to thank Dick Gephardt and Tom Daschle, the Members of the Senate and the House who are here, the members of our team, Mr. Bowles and others. I want to thank Barbara Turner and Judith Lee and Kate Casey for reminding us of why we're all here.

You know, I—as we have established in painful and sometimes happy ways over the last 5 years, I'm not exactly a Washington person, you know. I just sort of showed up here a few years ago for work. [*Laughter*] And sometimes I really get lonesome for why I came here. You can go for days, weeks here, and hardly ever spot a real citizen. [*Laughter*] I mean somebody that's just out there living, trying to do the right thing, showing up every day, trying to make this country a better place by making their lives and their families and their workplaces and their communities better places.

These women reminded us today of why we are all here, what our charge is, why we are here. And we should draw two lessons from what they all said. Number one, we should never, ever, ever believe that what we're doing here does not make a difference and is just some personal power trip or some political party's power trip. That is not true. What we do here makes a difference, and you've just heard it. The second lesson we should draw is that

we shouldn't spend too much time patting ourselves on the back because we still have a lot more to do to make this country what it ought to be in this new century. And they gave us that. And for me, it was a real jolt of adrenalin, and it touched my heart and engaged my mind, and I know you all felt the same way. And I think we should give them another hand. Thank you very much. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Let me just say to all of you, I am very proud to be a member of the oldest political party in this country, and maybe in any free democracy. I am proud to work with all of you not only to strengthen that party but, more importantly, to make our country a better place. I want to say a little bit more about the Democratic Party at the end of my remarks, but I'd like to say a couple of words about our leaders, Dick Gephardt and Tom Daschle. And I could say many things about both of them, but two things strike me because they, in different ways, reflect them at their moment of greatest challenge.

In 1993 and 1994, we were in the majority, all right, but Dick Gephardt knew that we were risking that majority by having to pass a Democrats-only budget and passing a crime bill which, along with the Brady bill, not only put more police on the street but took more guns off the street and out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them. And he was well aware that, if we did those things, the problem for the House was they had to run every 2 years and that we would be doing the right thing, but people would not be able to feel the right thing by the next election, but they could hear all the fears—"the Democrats are taking your guns away; the Democrats are taxing you"—all things that were wrong. But he did it anyway.

And by the narrowest of margins, we prevailed on the budget; by a very narrow margin, we prevailed on the crime bill. The crime bill was written, in effect, by police officers and community anticrime activists. And 5 years later we're going to have a balanced budget, and we've got safer streets, and there are all kinds of people like the three women who talked here today who have different stories to tell because Dick Gephardt did the right thing when it was required. And I appreciate that.

Now, consider Tom Daschle's plight: He becomes the Senate Democratic leader when we're in the minority, and he has to deal with the almost unbelievable roll of bad luck—because, you know, a third of the Senate comes up every year—that even though we're now in the majority, we have two more elections where we have more people running than they do. You couldn't—no mathematical statistician could sit down and figure out a bigger nightmare for a party.

Now, you go into the minority for the first time in a while, and by the way, you've got two more elections where you have to put more people up to bat than they do. They'll have more money, but you've got to have more candidates. And, oh, by the way, you have to show up for work tomorrow and figure out how to get something done for the American people consistent with what your members believe in and consistent with what you know is in the interest of the American people.

But he did it. I defy you to find a time in the last 20 years when more Democratic ideas have made their way into the lifeblood of America than they have through the balanced budget, raising the minimum wage, and the other things that were done. Many of them came right out of Senate Democratic ideas, in no small measure because Tom Daschle proved that he could stand up for our party and reach out a constructive hand to the other party and get something done for the American people. And I thank him for that.

We have taken our party in a new direction for the 21st century to help our country go in a new direction, a new direction rooted in the future, not the past, bound by fiscal discipline but unlimited in imagination and dreams and hopes for our people, determined to invest in their future, grounded in our traditional values.

We've shaped a new kind of Government, as the Vice President said. It is leaner. It's more flexible. It's a catalyst for new ideas. It's determined to give the American people the tools they need to solve their problems and make the most of their own lives. It may be the smallest Government in 35 years, but in many ways it is more progressive because of all the things we are trying to do. And it is giving us a stronger nation.

You know, of course, that we have the lowest unemployment in 24 years. And I think it's important to say, because of what we care about, we have rising incomes again, and we have diminishing inequality. Child poverty is now lower

than it was in 1989 at the top of the last recovery. Why? Because of the earned-income tax credit that these Democratic caucuses insisted on, saying "We are not going to tax hard-working people who do go out there and work full-time. We're not going to use the tax system to put them into poverty. We're going to use the tax system to lift them out of poverty so their children can have a dignified and successful childhood." And I thank you for that.

So what we're doing is working, but what the American people want us to do is to keep showing up for work—to spend precious little time celebrating what has been done. That's what we got hired to do. I remember one time when I was thinking about running for a fifth term as Governor, and I went out to the State Fair. I used to have Governor's Day at the State Fair. And this old boy showed up in overalls to the booth where I was sitting there talking to people. And he said, "Well, Bill, you going to run again?" And I said, "I don't know, I might." I said, "If I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yeah, I will. I always have." But he said, "I don't know if you can win." He said, "You've been in an awful long time." But he said, "I'll vote for you." And I said, "Well, don't you think I've done a good job?" He said. "Well, of course, but that's what we hired you to do." [*Laughter*] He said, "You picked up a paycheck every 2 weeks, didn't you?" [*Laughter*] We should all remember that.

Our citizens are focused on the future, in their own lives and in our lives. And we're here today not to talk about the past but to talk about that future. We're here today not to talk about the positions our party seeks to take against the Republicans in Congress but the positions our party seeks to advance in the debate with the hope that we can write them into law and change the lives and the futures of the American people, so we can have more stories like the three we heard from these distinguished Americans today.

Now, most of this has been talked about, but let me say the things that I think are most important and what I hope will be our common agenda. First of all, we've got to stay the path of fiscal discipline. We've got to stay the path, because the reason this economy is booming is that it's clear that we are serious about running a disciplined shop here. And we've got interest rates down, investment up; it's creating jobs, almost 15 million new jobs. We can't back off of that.

If I had told anybody, any economist, 5 years ago, "Look, 5 years from now we'll have 14.7 million new jobs, an unemployment rate for months on end under 5 percent, and the lowest inflation in 30 years, and the highest homeownership rate in 30 years, the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate on record, the lowest black unemployment rate in nearly 3 decades," they would have said that I needed to see someone for my sense of reality. That has all happened because we began first with discipline, and we dare not abandon it.

Now, that means, among other things, we have to recognize that this balanced budget which is about to happen will maintain itself for many years, but only because of the high receipts we're getting from Social Security taxes, and yet Social Security is not all right for the long run. That's why we have to say as a party, before we spend any of this surplus, even a penny of it, we ought to have a commitment and a plan that we will implement to save Social Security first.

The baby boom generation, when we retire, there will be less than three people working for a every one person drawing. Sometime in the middle of the next century, in about the, oh, fourth decade of the next century, there will be only two people working for one person drawing, if present retirement rates and work force participation rates continue.

I am the oldest of the baby boomers. I can tell you, all of my friends at home—I'm talking about my middle class friends, people that—even people that didn't have a college degree or anything—they're all worried about, number one, will they have a retirement, and number two, if they have one, will it be so costly to our children that their ability to raise our grandchildren will be compromised. None of us want that. None of us need that. That would be a wrong result. And we must save Social Security in a way that binds us together across the generations and across our income differences, instead of tearing us apart. So we must say as a party, we want to save Social Security first.

Now, Judith pointed out she had a 401(k) plan. I'm really proud of a lot of the work we've done in this Congress, going back to '94, to stabilize and save private pensions and to make it easier for people to take out their own private

retirement. That must be a part of this. Whatever we do with Social Security, most people won't be able to maintain their living standard on it. And that's good, because they've got a higher living standard. But that means we have to do more to enable people to save for their own retirement. We have to make it easier. We have to make it more secure. We have to make them more options. We have to tailor the plans to the economy that they're living in, not the one that existed 10 or 20 years ago.

The second thing we have to do is to do more to preserve the quality of health care. This has already been mentioned by the previous leaders, but I want to say I think it's imperative that the Democratic Party work in this Congress to actually pass—and there are members of the Republican Party who want to do this with us; this need not be a partisan issue. We ought to pass a consumer bill of rights that establishes baseline protection for people.

We have 160 million Americans in managed care plans now. They ought to be entitled to the benefits of those plans without giving up quality health care and the right to have a doctor make the best prescription for them. We ought to pass it, and we ought to work and work and work until it becomes the law of the land.

We are now working, we in the administration, to implement the law that you passed, that you generated out of this caucus, to extend health care coverage to 5 million more children. And that will be very important. Child poverty is down in the last 5 years. Visits to the doctor are up in the last 5 years. That is good. But we also have to recognize there are a lot of other populations that still don't have health insurance. And people between the ages of 55 and 65, people who lost their jobs and can't get hired again, people who retired early and were promised health coverage but their companies broke the promise, people who have a spouse that's old enough for Medicare, and they're not, and they're ill—those people—all we want to do is let them buy into the Medicare program.

Now, there are some who say, well, they can't afford it—$300 a month. I'll tell you what: That's a lot of money; it's a lot less than one trip to the hospital. One trip to the hospital will cost them 3 times as much as the annual premium will.

Secondly, we cannot afford to do anything that undermines the stability of the Medicare fund. We've got a Medicare Commission—thank you, Senator Breaux—that's going to try to figure out what to do about the long-term financial problems of Medicare. So we have to let people buy in in a way that doesn't affect the stability of the fund. A lot of these people have children who will help them pay these premiums. They may have brothers and sisters who will help them pay these premiums. What have we got to lose by trying? It is wrong to leave all these people out there between 55 and 65 at a vulnerable time, when we can simply give them the option to pay into the fund at the real cost in a way that will not upset the stability of the Medicare Trust Fund. I implore you to get behind that, and let's pass it for the benefit of the people.

We have a great agenda. We have to finish hooking up every classroom—a great agenda for education—we have to finish hooking up every classroom to the information superhighway. We have to finish our work to raise standards and have these basic exams in the basics. We are offering now—I seek, at least, to offer new options for schools to follow the Chicago model, not just to end social promotion but to give all these kids that are being left behind there an actual chance to learn and the tools with which they can learn.

But perhaps the two most important things we have proposed that I hope all of us will be united behind, are the idea of putting 100,000 teachers out there to lower our average class sizes in the first 3 grades to 18 kids a class, and then helping either build or repair classrooms in 5,000 more schools, so we can actually lower class size, improve the physical conditions, and improve education in those early grades. It will make a dramatic difference to American education, and I hope that we will be out there fighting for that.

Lastly, let me say I want to join the chorus of those who believe we should raise the minimum wage. Now, every time we have raised the minimum wage in my lifetime there have been those who say, "If you do this, it will cost jobs." The last time we did it, it didn't cost jobs. We continued to create jobs at a very brisk pace. But we know that the real value of the minimum wage today is actually less than it was 20 years ago. We know that.

We know that there is a limit to how much we can do with the earned-income tax credit, in terms of giving people back money through the tax system to lift working people and their kids out of poverty, without running a risk of having the system abused and having people take advantage of it. But we know if people just get a fair wage for the work they do, they're not going to get paid if they don't do the work.

So I believe it's time to raise it again. And again I say, with our economy the strongest in a generation, our prospects bright, but with our efforts to overcome 20 years of increasing inequality among working people just beginning to take hold, I think we should raise it again, by a dollar in two equal steps by the turn of the century. That will raise the living standards of 12 million hard-working Americans.

I thank Senator Kennedy. I thank you, Congressman Bonior, for your leadership on this. I think we ought to reach out a hand just like we did before. We raised the minimum wage once in this Congress. We can do it again, and the economy will support it. We just have to look at the statistic of what's happened to these working families over the last 20 years, and let's just simply say—we say we favor work over welfare; we've set up a system to promote that; now, if people are going to show up for work, they ought to be able to raise their children in dignity. And we ought to say this. [*Applause*] So—thank you. Save Social Security first; establish the Patients' Bill of Rights; let people buy into Medicare; reduce average class size and build more schools and schoolrooms; raise the minimum wage.

I also want to associate myself with what has already been said and with the proposals I've already made on child care, on campaign finance, on the tobacco legislation, on environmental protection, and medical and other research, on making our streets safer by passing the funds I've asked for through the Justice Department and the Education Department to keep these schools open late hours. All these kids that are getting in trouble, a bunch of them will never get in trouble in the first place if you give them something positive to do after school and before the parents get home from work. I hope you will pass the community empowerment initiative to bring free enterprise and jobs and investment to poor neighborhoods in urban areas and rural areas where it still hasn't reached. We have a lot of other things to do.

And let me just say this. You know the American people agree with this agenda because you saw the response to the State of the Union. I urge all of us to resist the temptation to have the whole agenda to take to them next November. Let's pass every bit of it we can into law. Let's make every bit of it we can real in the lives of our people. Believe me, we have enough honest disagreements with our friends in the Republican Party that some of this agenda is going to be left for us to take to the American people in November and debate about it. You know that. If they make their best efforts to honestly work with us based on what they really believe, and we make our best efforts to honestly work with them based on what we really believe, there will be some things left on the table next November that we can probably go to the electorate with. And we don't have to be ashamed of that.

But we owe it to our people to make sure that if any of these things that could become law and could change their lives and could make more stories like these three we've heard—that if it doesn't happen this year, we owe it to the American people to make sure that it is not our fault, that we showed up and we did the work here. We owe it to them.

What is the purpose of a political party? I spent a lot of time last year reading about the 19th century and about places in the 1800's, periods of time that most Americans don't know much about anymore. I've spent a lot of time studying the history of our party. I believe the purpose of our Government and, therefore, the purpose of any political party, at every important period in our history, if you look back through it, has been threefold: to widen the circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of freedom, and to unify the Nation.

Now, that's what Thomas Jefferson did with the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, and then became President, and he bought Louisiana—thank you very much, that put Arkansas in the Union—[*laughter*]—and sent Lewis and Clark out west. Right? Widened opportunity, deepened freedom, unified the country.

Now, any honest Democrat will say that the Republicans did more of that than we did from Abraham Lincoln through Theodore Roosevelt. And frankly, I'm sure we had a lot of nice people in our party during a lot of that period, but they were asleep at the switch. But from

Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman to John Kennedy to Lyndon Johnson to Jimmy Carter to the present day, through all of our leadership in Congress in the 20th century forward, our party—we haven't always been right; we haven't always been up to date; but we have always been for widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of liberty and freedom, and uniting and strengthening the United States of America. That is what we ought to be about here. That is what we ought to be about. And if we do it, the American people will respond.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Barbara Turner, founder, Boscart Construction Co., Inc., and Washington, DC, chair, Women's Leadership Forum; Judith Lee, comptroller, Older Women's League; and Kate Casey, student, Trinity College, Washington, DC.

Statement on the United States District Court Decision on the Line Item Veto

February 12, 1998

The line item veto provides an important tool for the President to strike unnecessary spending and tax items from legislation. Congress took the correct step giving the President this authority, and I was pleased to sign the line item veto into law. It has worked well, saving the American taxpayers more than $1 billion already. Although I am disappointed with today's ruling, it is my belief that, ultimately, the line item veto will be ruled constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Message on the Observance of Presidents' Day, 1998

February 12, 1998

Warm greetings to all Americans as we observe Presidents' Day, 1998.

On this day we remember with pride the history of the American Presidency and the achievements of the many extraordinary leaders who have guided our nation's course over the past two centuries. Each President in his own time has faced unique challenges in striving to fulfill the purpose of our Constitution "to form a more perfect Union."

For George Washington, that challenge meant sustaining and strengthening the fragile Union he had helped to establish. During the eight years of his Presidency, he carried out the awesome responsibilities of his office with such care and wisdom that he confirmed the trust of his fellow Americans and proved to a watching world that our new republic would survive and flourish.

Abraham Lincoln's great challenge was to preserve the Union. Taking the oath of office after seven states had already seceded, President Lincoln resolved to keep our country united, even at the cost of civil war. With courage and tenacity, he led America through four years of bloody conflict and, in victory, reached out to begin the healing that would bring us together again as one nation. "With malice toward none," he said less than two months before his death, "with charity for all . . . let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace . . . ."

Today we face our own challenge to build a more perfect Union, a Union that must now be forged from one of history's most racially and culturally diverse societies. We can do so by widening the circle of opportunity for all our people: opportunity for a good education, opportunity for good jobs, opportunity to reach our own great potential. If we do so, we will

keep faith with these great leaders whose memory we honor today and enter the 21st century with our Union stronger than ever.

Best wishes for a memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for David Satcher as Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health and an Exchange With Reporters

February 13, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President; Secretary Shalala, thank you for your heroic efforts in this regard. To the Satcher family, Senator Kennedy, Senator Jeffords, Senator Frist, Congressman Stokes, Congressman Waters, to the members of the Satcher family and friends, and all the people who've worked so hard for this nomination, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Medical Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the National Medical Association. Dr. Sullivan, it's nice to see you back here.

This is a good day for America. It should be a happy day for America, and it bodes well for the health of the American people and especially of the American children.

I am very, very grateful to the bipartisan majority of the United States Senate who made it possible for us to swear in David Satcher as the next Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary of Health. Besides being superbly qualified, I can't help noting, he also looks good in his uniform. [*Laughter*]

Only once before has the President had the honor and the opportunity to appoint one person to fill two of the most demanding public health positions in the Nation. Dr. Satcher is more than capable of meeting this challenge. From the overwhelming bipartisan support he received, and the strong support he received from professional organizations, it is clear that we have found the right advocate for America's public health.

He takes on his role at a pivotal time in American health care. Stunning medical breakthroughs, new treatments for some of our most deadly diseases, a rapidly changing health care system make it more important than ever that our Surgeon General truly be America's family doctor and guide us through this time of change.

As Surgeon General, Dr. Satcher will give us plain talk and sound advice about what each of us can do to live healthier lives. He'll guide our Nation on the most important public health issues of our time, from increasing public awareness on how to prevent some of our most devastating diseases, to helping free our children from the deadly grip of tobacco. Later today in Philadelphia, I will be talking to some of America's premiere scientists about what we as a nation can do to protect our young people from tobacco. And I know that Dr. Satcher will continue to lead our efforts.

This is a time of great opportunity and great challenge. We are also going to try this year to pass in the Congress a 21st century research fund to make unprecedented efforts to find cures for diseases from diabetes to Alzheimer's to AIDS. We are going to do our best to deal with the challenge of cloning by securing legislation that would ban the cloning of human beings but permit necessary medical research to go forward. We are going to try to pass a health care consumer bill of rights, increasingly important with over 160 million Americans in managed care plans. We are going to try to expand coverage—and the law is already enacted—to 5 million more children and to increase opportunities for people between the ages of 55 and 65 to have health care coverage.

All those things are important, but in the end, the decisions the American people make day-in and day-out about their own health care, collectively, will have a bigger impact, certainly in the near and medium term on the welfare of their families, the health they enjoy, and therefore, the strength of our country. David Satcher is taking a very important job, and I am very, very glad that he is doing it.

When I nominated him, Dr. Satcher told me how proud his mother would have been that

a boy whose parents never had the chance to finish elementary school, and who nearly died from whooping cough, could grow up to become Surgeon General. Well today, Dr. Satcher, we here, and indeed, all Americans, share that pride.

Under your leadership, an old-fashioned, genuine, honest-to-goodness, all-American dream story will go forward to lead America into the 21st century stronger and healthier than ever.

Now I'd like to ask the Vice President to swear Dr. Satcher in.

[*At this point, Vice President Gore administered the oath of office, and Dr. Satcher made brief remarks.*]

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, the Russian Defense Minister very publicly, yesterday, ripped the—[*inaudible*]—Secretary Cohen. How big an obstacle to the policy that you're pursuing, which might have to use military force, is this?

The President. Let me say, first of all, to the members of the Satcher family who aren't from Washington, when all the people from Washington started smiling when Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News] asked the question, you should understand that proves that this is a truly important event. [*Laughter*]

Q. Flattery will get you everywhere. [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm just trying to do it an inch at a time. [*Laughter*]

Let me say that's a very important question because of the reports of the meeting. I have talked at some length with President Yeltsin about this matter. This is a difficult thing for the Russians because they have long had—going back decades—a relationship with the nation of Iraq that long predates Saddam Hussein.

The Russians agree with us that they are not in compliance with the United Nations resolutions. They agree with us that they must let the inspectors go back to work, do their job, open the sites. They want a diplomatic solution; I want a diplomatic solution. I have bent over backwards for months now to try to achieve a diplomatic solution. I am still working with the Russians, the French, the United Nations, anybody, to try to find a diplomatic solution.

The difference here is that I simply do not believe it is acceptable to permit Iraq to walk away from its obligations, because what we want to do is to significantly diminish the capacity of the Iraqis to reconstitute, to develop, to deploy their weapons of mass destruction, and to threaten their neighbors. That is the difference. We don't believe it is acceptable, if diplomacy fails, to walk away.

And our relationship with Russia is very important to us. My relationship with President Yeltsin has been very productive, and I believe we have advanced the cause of world peace in substantial ways and advanced our future partnership. But I don't think you can have a United Nations set of resolutions about something this important to the future of the world and simply walk away if diplomacy fails. And so, that's the rub. But we're going to keep working with the Russians and with everybody else. We're trying to find a diplomatic solution. And I hope that whatever happens, that our relationships with Russia will continue to be productive and constructive and strong because that's very important to the future of our people.

Q. When push comes to shove, are you going to be able to go forward—if Russia says *nyet*?

The President. I don't believe—*nyet* is not "no" for the United States under these circumstances.

Q. Sir, if *nyet* is not "no," how close are we to having troops in harm's way in Iraq?

The President. Well, what—we are simply doing what we always do under circumstances like this. We're taking the necessary steps that you would expect the United States to take. But I will say again, if there is military action over this matter in Iraq, it will be Saddam Hussein's decision, not mine. It's up to him to make that decision. And I hope and I pray that he will permit qualified, honest, nonpolitical, technically competent inspectors to have access to those sites which have been forbidden and then to permit the monitoring system to go.

Just look at the volume—look at the sheer volume of stocks and weapons in the chemical and biological area. Look at the nuclear work that's been done since the end of the Gulf war. The inspection system works. It has made the world safer. If he would let that inspection system be completed and accept the offer of the international community, which the United States strongly supports, to sell more oil and have more funds for food and medicine and for reconstituting the basic, fundamental necessities of human life in this country, we would be well on the way to resolving this.

This is not a complicated thing. A country like Iraq can be a great country and succeed without having a chemical and biological weapons program and the means to visit those weapons on their neighbors. And this is a decision for him to make. I think it is a no-brainer in terms of what's right for the people, the children, and the future of Iraq. But the rest of us have to worry about the children and the people and the future of all the people that are around Iraq or might someday find their way in harm's way if those weapons of chemical and biological destruction are more widely disseminated.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan; and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. A reporter referred to Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev of Russia.

Remarks to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

February 13, 1998

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, to all the young people in the audience, I thank you all for that warm welcome. Thank you, Dr. Dresselhaus, for making me feel so welcome; Dr. M.R.C. Greenwood, Dr. Jane Lubchenco, and over 5,000 members of the AAAS. I'd like to recognize the presence here of Congressman Chaka Fattah of Philadelphia, my friend and Congressman from Philadelphia—thank you for being here; General Barry McCaffrey, the head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy; Dr. Neal Lane, the Director of the National Science Foundation; Dr. Harold Varmus, the Director of the National Institutes of Health.

There are very many other people in this audience, and I hesitate to mention any of them for fear of omitting some who have helped this administration in some way or another to advance the cause of science and technology. But I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge, because of their unique support for us in the last 5 years, Dr. David Hamburg and Dr. John Holdren. Thank you especially for what you have done for us and for our country.

I want to thank Jack Gibbons for that wonderful introduction. You know, just as there are laws of science, there are laws of politics. That introduction reflects Clinton's fourth law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [*Laughter*]

I had to—you may find this hard to believe, but I actually had to fight the highest people in my family, both my family and my larger family, to get to give this speech. The First Lady wanted to give this speech. [*Laughter*] She said, "Look, it was my idea to create this research fund for the 21st century and have this idea that we should celebrate the new millennium by imagining the future and preserving our past treasures, like the Star-Spangled Banner and the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights."

And the Vice President, he really wanted to give this speech. [*Laughter*] This is all he ever thinks about, you know. [*Laughter*] This is a guy who goes absolutely rhapsodic when contemplating the Spallation Neutron Source. [*Laughter*] We had this huge fight, but I won it fair and square. I pulled rank. [*Laughter*]

You should know, on a more serious note, that the Vice President did have one honor that I am not given by the Constitution. Today he got to swear in a world-renowned public health leader and a great doctor, Dr. David Satcher, as America's new Surgeon General.

Before I get into my remarks, I'd like to make another couple of announcements about important changes in our science and technology team. First of all, with great regret, I have accepted the resignation of Dr. Jack Gibbons as my science adviser. His ability to build bipartisan coalitions on contentious issues from nuclear testing to cloning to climate change has strengthened our Nation immeasurably. And I thank him for those contributions, as well as for his work in our initiative on race. I know this afternoon he will chair a panel discussion

on the ways we can diversify the science and technology community. I hope you will join me in expressing our appreciation to Jack Gibbons for his service to the United States. [*Applause*]

To replace him and ensure that our work goes forward without a hitch, I intend to nominate a fellow of the AAAS, the Director of the National Science Foundation, Dr. Neal Lane, to be the new Presidential science adviser. Neal, please stand up. [*Applause*] Neal has placed the National Science Foundation at the center of our science and technology policy in many ways. And to maintain that momentum I intend to nominate as his replacement Dr. Rita Colwell, the first life scientist chosen to head this organization. Rita, stand up. [*Applause*]

I also want to salute your board of directors, which yesterday approved a resolution urging the Senate to provide its advice and consent as soon as possible for the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Thank you very, very much for that.

Today, at the edge of a new century, the dawn of a new millennium, at a sunlit moment of prosperity for our people, we see before us an era of unparalleled possibilities. Our restless quest for knowledge, which has been one of America's defining traits since we got started right here in Philadelphia, will quicken. And more than ever before, the strength of our economy, the health of our environment, the length and quality of our lives—in short, the success of our continuing pursuit of happiness—will be driven by the pursuit of knowledge.

We must seize this moment to strengthen our Nation for the new century by expanding our commitment to discovery, increasing our support for science, pressing our progress in the war against cancer and other diseases, protecting our children from public health dangers—most especially from the deadly addiction of tobacco.

We've come a long way in the last half of the 20th century. Fifty years ago, when President Truman addressed your 100th anniversary meeting, Bardeen, Brattain, and Shockley had just created the first transistor; Mauchly and Eckert had recently powered up the seminal ENIAC computer right here in Philadelphia; Pauling and Franklin were developing techniques that would help to unravel the mystery of our DNA.

Things are moving much more quickly now. Today, the store of human knowledge doubles every 5 years. Soon, every child will be able to stretch a hand across a computer keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever composed. We'll be able to carry all the phone calls on Mother's Day on a single strand of fiber the width of human hair.

Now, where will we be 50 years from now? By the year 2048, when a future President of the United States addresses your bicentennial meeting, fusion and solar power may yield abundant energy. In any case, I am absolutely convinced that by then we will have discovered how to grow the economy by restoring, not depleting, our planet. By then, telephones may translate foreign languages in real time. We may well have a permanent space station on the surface of Mars.

And some of the greatest victories in the next 50 years doubtless will be in the ancient battle against human disease—its prevention, its detection, its treatment, and its cure. Sophisticated new AIDS therapies already have given HIV-positive men and women a new lease on life. And if this progress continues, I believe we'll have an effective vaccine within a decade.

New treatments are slowing the development of Alzheimer's and lifting people up from the dark depths of depression. Researchers have begun to regenerate nerve cells, raising the prospect that victims of spinal cord injuries will be able to rise up and walk again. Within a few years, the human genome project will have traced the very blueprint of human life.

And I think it is important to remember, as Americans tend to focus on the health miracles that can come from scientific progress, that advances in health research and prevention and treatment depend upon the entire scientific enterprise, including engineering efforts. For example, the MRI, a diagnostic tool that has benefited many of us in this audience today, originally came from research in nuclear physics. Space research today has vast implications for human health, which is one of the reasons I am so excited about Senator John Glenn going back into space.

If we act now, we can catalyze the process of discovery and create even more dramatic progress. I have submitted the first balanced budget in 30 years. It is the result of 5 years of efforts based on a governmental philosophy that says we have to have fiscal discipline and greater investment in our people and our future

by a Government that is both smaller and more progressive.

We, I believe, have now established beyond doubt that we can have a smaller Government, larger investment, and a stronger Nation. We have worked hard to increase investments in education, to open the doors of college to all and, increasingly, to increase the quality of education at the elementary and secondary levels.

I take it that hardly anyone in this room would disagree with the proposition that we have the finest system of higher education in the world. It is America's great blessing. And my passion for the last 5 years, with more Pell grant scholarships and hundreds of thousands of work-study positions, and education IRA's, and cheaper student loans that are easier to repay, and a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, and tax credits for the junior and senior year and graduate school, my passion has been to be able to say with a straight face to every American family, if your child works hard, money will not keep your child out of a first-class college education.

Now we must prove that we can have the best elementary and secondary education in the world. And we're working on a lot of fronts: more technology, better teacher training, smaller class sizes, more classrooms, higher standards, and greater accountability. But one of the most promising approaches that we have embraced, that is also a part of our balanced budget, is the one first brought to me by the Congressman from Philadelphia who is here with us today, Chaka Fattah.

Under our approach, which is part of this balanced budget, we want to have colleges go in and start working with children as early as the seventh grade, to be able to say to them and their parents, if you will stay in school, if you will learn, if you will perform, if you will be held accountable, we can tell you in the seventh grade how much college aid you can get when you get out. You can know right now you can go to college. You can know how much you can get. And we're going to help you for 6 years to make sure you are ready to succeed in the 21st century. And we thank you, Congressman, for your leadership.

But there is probably no better example of this new approach, this so-called third way, than the proposal we have in the balanced budget for a 21st century research fund, part of our gift to America in the millennium, providing for the first time a strong, stable, multiyear source of funding for research that will enable you to engage in long-term planning as never before.

This commitment represents the largest funding increase in history for the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. It will provide substantial budget increases for basic and applied research at NASA, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Agriculture. It will spur technological innovations that will help us to combat global climate change, a growing threat that the journal Science warned us about more than 30 years ago now.

Perhaps most important to American citizens in the moment, the 21st century research fund will give us the means to win the war on cancer. For the first time, cancer death rates have begun to fall. The 21st century research fund will build on this progress, with new classes of smart drugs that target specific molecules found in cancer cells. It will help those of you in this field to discover within a decade every single gene and protein that contributes to the conversion of a normal cell to a cancer cell. It will create new opportunities for prevention, new technologies for earlier and more accurate diagnosis.

Today, we can cure 80 percent of the patients with certain kinds of cancer; let us work to ensure that within the next generation we will cure 80 percent of the patients with all forms of cancer. Thank you, Dr. Varmus, for your work in this regard. We appreciate it.

But let me say this. As I was reminded today when we swore in Dr. David Satcher, the public health responsibility must be more broadly shared among our people. It cannot be the sole province of medical researchers and medical doctors. The rest of us have a job to do, too, on our own lives, the lives of our friends and neighbors and, most importantly, the lives of our children.

We can take one major leap forward right away. We have an historic opportunity to curtail the deadly epidemic of teen smoking. More than three decades ago, responsible peer review journals, including Science, presented our society with a stark conclusion: Smoking causes cancer. We now know it is also linked in a deadly chain with emphysema, heart disease, and stroke. For years, our efforts to reduce smoking have been outmatched by billion-dollar industry ad campaigns targeted at our children. Now we have

the opportunity to save millions of those children from a life of addiction and a premature and very preventable death.

I have asked the Congress to enact comprehensive legislation to raise the price of cigarettes by up to $1.50 a pack over the next 10 years, to give the FDA full authority to regulate tobacco products, to change forever the way tobacco companies do business, to further public health research, and to protect tobacco farmers and their communities in the transition which will come.

Now, just today, the Treasury Department will release an analysis of the probable effects of this comprehensive approach. The analysis projects that the price increase and other measures we have proposed will cut teen smoking by almost half over the next 5 years.

Now, let me tell you what that means in real people. In Washington, in a different way, we sometimes maybe do what you do; we get into talking statistics and numbers and things that don't often grab people. Let me tell you what that means. That means if we act this year—instead of having a year-long political debate and doing nothing—if we act this year, by the year 2003 we can stop almost 3 million young people from smoking and save almost 1 million lives as a result. We ought to save those lives, and you should demand that we save those lives.

On Wednesday Senator Kent Conrad from North Dakota introduced a strong bill in Congress that meets all the objectives I just mentioned. I look forward to working with him and with other Members to enact comprehensive and bipartisan legislation. But I ask for your support, as well. The scientific community can speak with a very loud voice. Speak loudly for our children. Tell people you're going to do all this research. Tell people we're going to do unbelievable things. Tell people there will be miracles they can't imagine in the 21st century. But tell people, in the 21st century, parents will still have to take responsibility for their children, and people will still have to take responsibility for doing sensible things if we want a healthy, strong America. Help us lead the way in this fight.

Let me say on one other point, the extraordinary promise of science and technology carries with it, as all of you know, extraordinary responsibilities for those who seek to advance the promise. It is incumbent upon both scientists and public servants to ensure that science serves humanity always and never the other way around.

Last month, like most Americans, I learned the troubling news that a member of the scientific community claims to be laying plans to clone a human being. Now, human cloning raises deep ethical concerns. There is virtually unanimous consensus in the scientific and medical community that attempting to use known cloning techniques to actually create a human being is untested, unsafe, and morally unacceptable.

Two days ago the Senate voted to take the time necessary to carefully craft a bill that will ban the cloning of human beings while preserving our ability to use cloning technology for morally acceptable and medically important purposes. Already, you have given us the scientific foundation for this debate. I thank you for that, and I urge you to continue to play an important role as the Senate, and then the House, considers this very significant issue in the coming year.

You know, in spite of the pitfalls and the perils, our Nation has always believed that what you do in the end would always transform our world for the better. Benjamin Franklin, the father of our scientific revolution, once wrote, and I quote: "The progress of human knowledge will be rapid and discoveries made of which we at present have no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known in years hence."

I have been so struck by the contrast between Ben Franklin's vision and the depiction of the future now we see in so many books and on television and in these "Road Warrior" movies and other things that are made. The world is so often portrayed in the future as a terribly frightening, primitive, brutal place, a world where science has run amok or where the community and government have withered away, where people have to wear a gas mask to walk around and the entire Earth has been completely devastated by craven greed; where life is once again, as Thomas Hobbes once said it was in the state of nature, "nasty, brutish, and short."

I don't think you believe that's what it's going to be like. And I think it's important that we all accept the responsibility to imagine and invent a very different kind of future, and then to tell our fellow Americans that that is the

future we are working toward. We need never run away from the dangers of our work run amok. We need never run away from our innate fear of the abuse of power, whether political or scientific. Indeed, the whole genius of our creation here in Philadelphia was the understanding that human nature is a mix of elements and all of them must be restrained. But we must never for a moment be afraid of the future. Instead, we must envision the future we intend to create.

Your bicentennial meeting can convene in a world where climatic disruption has been halted, where wars on cancer and AIDS have long since been won, where humanity is safe from the destructive force of chemical and biological weapons wielded by rogue states or conscienceless terrorists and drug runners, where the noble career of science is pursued and then advanced by children of every race and background, and where the benefits of science are broadly shared in countries both rich and poor. That is what I pray it will be like, 50 years from now, when my successor stands here before your successors and assesses how well we did with our time.

Let me say, I believe in what you do. And I believe in the people who do it. Most important, I believe in the promise of America, in the idea that we must always marry our newest advances and knowledge with our oldest values, and that when we do that, it's worked out pretty well. That is what we owe our children. That is what we must bring to the new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at the Philadelphia Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mildred S. Dresselhaus, president, M.R.C. Greenwood, president-elect, and Jane Lubchenco, chair, board of directors, American Association for the Advancement of Science; David Hamburg and John Holdren, members, President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology; and human cloning advocate Richard Seed.

Statement on Signing the Holocaust Victims Redress Act

February 13, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1564, the Holocaust Victims Redress Act. This bill enables the United States Government to provide further assistance to needy Holocaust survivors and also strengthens current U.S. efforts aimed at encouraging countries that possess gold looted from Holocaust victims to donate those assets to the Nazi Persecution Relief Fund. It further recognizes the need for long overdue archival research and translation services to set the historical record straight.

My Administration has worked hard to bring whatever measure of justice might be possible to Holocaust survivors, their families, and the heirs of those who perished. We have pressed for restitution of property and for the full declassification of archives so that confiscated assets can be traced and restored to their rightful owners. To speed progress toward that goal, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in conjunction with the Department of State will co-host in June an international conference on Nazi assets.

As I sign this bill into law, I note that section 102(a), which purports to direct the President on how to pursue negotiations with foreign states, raises constitutional concerns. Article II of the Constitution confers on the President alone the Executive powers of the United States, which includes special authority over foreign affairs. Although I support the policies underlying this provision, it can be read to interfere with my discretion over matters of foreign policy, and I will therefore construe the provision as precatory.

There can be no way to deliver full justice for the many millions of victims of Nazi persecution, and we know that the unspeakable losses of all kinds that they suffered will never be made whole. Yet it is my hope that with this bill, we can help provide some dignity and relief to those who were subjected to the ultimate barbarism of the Holocaust, and that it will hasten the restitution that they undeniably deserve.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: S. 1564, approved February 13, was assigned Public Law No. 105–158.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Reception in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

February 13, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Martin; thank you, Diane. I think that it was so easy to raise money for this because everybody wanted to come see your place, myself. [*Laughter*] It is a truly beautiful, beautiful home, and we thank you for having us here.

I thank Congressman Klink and Congressman Fattah and Congressman and Mrs. Holden for being here. And Joe Hoeffel, I thank you for being here and for having the courage to run again. This time I think you will be rewarded. Thank you very much.

I've had a wonderful day in Philadelphia, and the mayor has painted a rosy picture of it, but I'd say it was fairly accurate. The people of Pennsylvania have been good to me and to my family and to the Clinton-Gore administration. The people of Philadelphia have been especially good. In the last election, I think, we won the city by more than 300,000 votes. And I am very, very grateful.

I also want to thank Ed Rendell for always being there, for helping us raise money for Democrats across the country, as well as for me and for the Vice President. And I want you to know I really appreciate Martin Frost because in good times and bad times he's been willing to get out here and try to stick up for what he believes in and help his colleagues to be funded. And that's hard. And, you know, I never saw anybody any better at it than Martin Frost. He is just like a dog, to the bone, man. [*Laughter*] Every time—when I wake up in the morning and I start throwing bones to my dog, Buddy, that's the way Martin is when it comes to raising money. [*Laughter*] Martin lives in Texas. A lot of you know that Martin lives in Texas, and unfortunately, because our Coast Guard and other military personnel have gotten so good at apprehending drugs that used to come by air and by sea into the United States, more and more of the cocaine traffic has shifted overland from Mexico with this huge volume. And I thought to myself, if Martin Frost had the same sense of finding illegal drugs he has of finding campaign contributions, he alone could shut off the flow of illegal drugs through the Mexican border. [*Laughter*] I've never seen anything like it.

But—so, I'm very grateful to all of you. And of course, I'm grateful for this turnout tonight. I'd like to just say a few words—I really didn't prepare any remarks tonight, but I have thought—I've asked myself, why was the response to the State of the Union this year, even more than other years, particularly strong? That is—we had 400,000 hits on our website for information about the State of the Union, after the address. And I think part of it is that Americans are now—it's sort of sinking in that the country is working again.

And all the Democrats here in the House will tell you, we had to work very hard for the first 4 or 5 years to make the country work again. I mean, so much was dysfunctional. When I was elected they told me that this year, if nothing happened, this year our deficit would be $370 billion. It was supposed to be $295 billion the first year of my Presidency. And the crime rate was going up and the welfare rolls were exploding. They reached an all-time high in February of 1994—all-time high. And we had all kinds of other real difficulties. And the country seemed to be dividing—and for 20 years—Ed talked about closing the inequality—for 20 years, average wages of people with a high school education or less had been dropping compared to inflation and inequality had been increasing among working people. And people just had the feeling things weren't working.

So we brought a new approach to Washington, and we said the Democrats may be the progressive party, but we've got to be economically responsible. You have to understand, any given time more people are working than are

unemployed, you have to make the economy work for people who can take care of themselves if the economy works.

So we went first for reducing the deficit. Then we said that it was fine for us to be an open market to other people's products, but we wanted to do more to open other markets to our products. Because, with 4 percent of the world's people and 20 percent of the world's income, we obviously have to sell more of our products abroad if we're going to maintain our standard of living.

And we recognized that no matter how much we tried to cut unnecessary spending to balance the budget, we still had to invest in our people and our future. So we worked at it for 5 years.

Your mayor, as much as anybody in the country, I think, had a lot to do with passing a crime bill in 1994 that put 100,000 police on the street and take assault weapons off the street and begin to give young people something to do other than get in trouble. And we've just been working at it.

And we were able, in this last State of the Union Address, as a Nation—not me but as a Nation—to celebrate what had happened. The deficit, instead of $370 billion, would be somewhere around $10 billion this year. And if we can repeat what's happened—we're in the fiscal year that began last October 1st—if the next 8 months are like the first 4, we'll actually have a balanced budget or a small surplus this year, not even next year.

So we're moving in the right direction. The crime rate has gone down every year for 5 years in all major categories. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years. We have the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded since the unemployment rate has been measured by race; the lowest black unemployment rate in 25 or 26 years. We have—last year we began to really turn around this income inequality problem—the highest percentage gained in income last year was among working people in the lowest 20 percentile of our population, which is very important, closing those opportunity gaps.

But beyond that, I think the response was good because we said, you know, the time to prepare the future is when the sun is shining, not when you're up to your ears in quicksand. And so I tried to lay out to the American people a program to really prepare this country for the new century, to invest in science and technology. I came here to talk to the American Academy of Scientists today about the recommendations we made for a 21st century research fund. It was an idea that I first heard from Hillary, that we ought to give a gift to the new millennium that says we're going to imagine the future and respect the past. So we proposed a fund, first of all, to dramatically increase medical research, to focus on cancer especially, to increase other scientific research, as well as to preserve our most important heritage. We've got—believe it or not, the Star-Spangled Banner is in danger of total destruction. We have to save it. It costs $13 million to do it. We need to repair the way we maintain the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution. These are very important things to us.

And all over the country there are people who have their own treasures. In Philadelphia, where the Nation began, it may be easy to overlook, but every little rural county in Pennsylvania has some part of America's past, some part of their roots that is very much worth saving. And people I think see that as a way of bringing the country together and moving forward.

We have important missions in education. I really do believe we have succeeded now with all the things we've done in opening the doors of college to all. And we know we've got the best college system in the world, but no one believes we've got the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And we have to make that the best now. And then we have to get these kids who come from a difficult background and let them know they can go on to college.

Believe me, if you want to lower the inequality in America, the only way to do it over the long run is to get more kids and more adults to get higher levels of education. And Chaka Fattah came up with this proposal and worked with a lot of the rest of us, and I mentioned it in the State of the Union, where we're going to go into—we're going to get colleges all over America to go into junior high schools or middle schools, starting with seventh graders, and tell them, "We're prepared to give you somebody to work with you for the next 6 years to make sure that you succeed in school. You learn, you perform, and you can go on to college, and we'll tell you right now, right now, in the seventh grade, how much college aid you can get.

We'll guarantee it to you if you do your part." This will be an astonishing thing. This can revolutionize what we're trying to do.

We want to lower class size in the early grades and help cities like Philadelphia, where the average school building is 65 years old, to repair school buildings. If you're going to have smaller classes, you've got to have more classrooms. If you're going to have more teachers, you're going to have more classrooms to teach them in.

We want to help places like the place I visited in Jupiter, Florida, the other day, where they've got a school building, and then out back they've got 17 trailers with children in classrooms. We want to help them. This is a place where both the urban areas and the suburban areas that are growing have a common interest in building a better education system.

We want to continue to improve the health care system—160 million Americans now in managed care, and it will be more. And there are lots of benefits to that. Every single living American has benefited from lowering the inflation rate in health care—every one of us has. It's one of the reasons we have a stronger economy. And all the people in the medical profession who participated in it, trying to provide quality health care with lower inflation costs, deserve our thanks, and the responsible people in managed care deserve our thanks.

On the other hand, we do not want to get to a position where any American, because of the health care plan that he or she is in, is having the decisions about what's best for their health care made by someone other than a physician based on what's best for the patient. So we have to strike the proper balance here, and we want to do that.

We want to continue to deal with the problem of coverage. We still have 40 million Americans without health care. We're trying to cover 5 million more children. We want to let people between the ages of 55 and 65, who lose their health insurance, just buy into the Medicare program at the real cost of the insurance policy or Medicare. And I believe that a lot of people will do this, hundreds of thousands, maybe even more than a million, often with the help of their children. We have a mission there.

We have an environmental mission. We have got to find a way to continue to grow the economy and preserve the environment. We're working with Detroit to try to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants in cars without undermining our economy. We know now that there are lighting systems and glass systems and other building systems that are available that would enable us to build buildings, rehabilitate buildings, build factories, build electric generating capacity, grow the economy without increasing greenhouse gas emissions. We have to do that for our grandchildren. And we can think about that.

I'll just mention one other thing that I think is very important. I said the other night—and I've gotten the strongest response across America, and I didn't really know what the response would be when I said it—that it is now projected that after running 30 years of deficits, we're actually going to run surpluses for several years. Now the surplus may go up or down depending on economic growth, but structurally we won't have a deficit anymore, which means in any given 5-year period, even if you have a recession or something, we'll have surpluses for the predictable future. And I said, and I will say again, I don't think we ought to start projecting how we're going to spend the surplus, whether it's in a spending program or a tax cut, until we have saved Social Security.

You know, it is easy for us to forget, but it was not until 1985—now, think about this—in the whole history of the country, it was not until 1985 that senior citizens became less poor than the general population. In 1935, when Social Security got started, two-thirds of the people who were elderly in this country lived in poverty, most of them in abject poverty. Unless they had kids who could take care of them, once they were out of the work force they never made enough money to save. We didn't have, really, savings systems. And they were in terrible problems.

Social Security helped to change that. The disability program in Social Security helped to help those who were disabled. Adjusting the income every year with the cost of living increases, although it cost money, helped to give dignity to people.

Now, as the baby boomers retire—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers; I was born in 1946—and for the 18 years, from the end of World War II, 1946, for 18 years thereafter, to 1964, that group of people is the largest single group of Americans in our history, ironically, until the group that is now in high school—in grade school and middle school. We finally

have a group of schoolchildren bigger than the baby boom generation.

But there will be for several years—there will be, for several years after the baby boomers retire, a dramatic shift in the number of people retired compared to the number of people working. Not so long ago there were five people working for every person drawing Social Security. Now there are about four, I think. But by the time all the baby boomers get into the retirement system, if we retire at presently projected rates, there will be only two people working for everybody drawing.

Now, I don't know a single person in my generation that wants to give up the elemental security of Social Security. But neither have I ever met a person in my generation who wants to burden our children with higher tax rates and undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren. Therefore, if we start now, since the Social Security Trust Fund is okay until 2029—and actually I think soon we'll be a few years beyond that—we can take modest steps now that will take care of Social Security for a long time in the future.

Now, something else has happened that we all know. Since we're all earning higher incomes, hardly anybody can actually maintain their standard of living with Social Security alone. So in addition to reforming Social Security and saving it, we've been working very hard since 1994 to make it easier for people to save in 401(k) plans, to protect retirement more, to make it easier for people to carry their retirement around from job to job. We will have to do more of that. We will have to help people do more to save for their own retirement. But this is an incredible gift that we can give to the future. So in the next year we're going to have these forums around the country. Then we're going to try to pass legislation in 1999. Now, I think the American people want us to do that.

Now, let's get down to the political purpose of tonight. In every election in the 20th century, in off years, and especially in the second term of a President, the President's party always loses seats in one House of the Congress in an off-year election. We have a chance to beat that trend this year, and I honestly believe there is quite a good chance, not just a 30 percent chance, a very good chance that Martin Frost is right, that we could have a Democratic majority, that Mr. Gephardt could become the Speaker, that we could go forward—a very good chance. Why? Because for one thing, this is not a typical second term. That was not a rest-in-the-shade agenda that I gave the American people. [*Laughter*] And I don't believe in resting in the shade. I intend to work till the last minute of the last hour of the last day in January of 2001. I intend to be hitting it. I don't believe in that.

Audience member. That sounds like something our mayor said.

The President. And if we can stay united, as we are, and if we can be positive and if we can not play politics—that is, I think it is imperative that we do everything we can to work with the Republicans to pass every single thing we can this year, because we know that in good faith, no matter how hard we work with them, no matter how hard they work with us in good faith, there will be enough honest disagreements in this agenda I've outlined, that by November, Joe will still have something to campaign on. [*Laughter*]

But we have to recognize that people elect you to govern. So, if we can stay together, we've got a good agenda; we've got good candidates; the only other thing we have to do is to make sure that we are properly funded. In the last 2 weeks of the last election, when we were 11 seats short of taking Congress, in the 20 closest races our people were outspent about four to one—about four to one in the last 2 weeks—in the closest races. We are determined to see that that won't happen this time. And you are helping. But I believe that we are best served by a positive campaign, working, bringing out the best in the American people, and getting people to look to the future.

Everybody knows that this new approach is working. All the things they used to say about the Democrats are not valid anymore—our opponent. They can't say we're fiscally irresponsible because we balanced the budget. They can't say that we are weak on crime because we've had policies that were in effect written by the law enforcement community, implemented, and are working. They can't say that we don't care about work over welfare because we've moved record numbers of people from welfare to work and still tried to do more to support their children.

So a lot of these hits that used to be put on the Democrats don't hold water anymore.

Now we are free to debate the future, to envision the future, to work for the future. And if we'll do that, we can achieve it.

Let me just leave you with this last point. I spent a lot of time in the last year reading the history of the 19th century, because I came to realize that, like most Americans, I knew a fair amount about our founding and what happened in Philadelphia, I knew a fair amount about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War, and I knew a fair amount about what had happened from Theodore Roosevelt forward. Most Americans don't know much about what happened after Andrew Jackson until Abraham Lincoln, and what happened after Abraham Lincoln until Teddy Roosevelt—they just don't.

And what I got out of that study was a more unified picture of the history of America. And if you go back to our founding and study the history of America, I think you'll see that, at its best, our progress through time has always been about three things: widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of our freedom and our liberty, and strengthening our Union, our sense of national union.

Thomas Jefferson's greatest achievements—well, he wrote the Declaration of Independence. He changed us from being a colonial country to a continental country when he bought Louisiana—giving me a chance to become President, thank you very much—[*laughter*]—sending Lewis and Clark on their great expedition.

Abraham Lincoln strengthened the Union and deepened liberty. But also—a lot of people forgot about it—he signed the bill in the middle of the Civil War to establish the system of land grant colleges, widening the circle of opportunity.

In the 20th century our party—we haven't always been right, as I've said, we've been wrong from time to time, and we haven't always been up to date, but we have always, from the time of Woodrow Wilson forward, been in the vanguard of widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of freedom, strengthening the Union of the United States. And if we will do that all year, on the stump, but also at work, then I believe that the chances that the American people will say, "We like this, and we will elect people who believe this," are quite extraordinary. And you have made it possible for us to have a chance to do that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia; dinner hosts Martin and Diane Weiss; Gwen Holden, wife of Representative Tim Holden; Joe Hoeffel, candidate for Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District; and Representative Martin Frost, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

The President's Radio Address
February 14, 1998

Good morning. Our most important task in the coming years is to strengthen America for the 21st century. Nothing weakens our families and the fabric of our Nation more than the use, abuse, and sale of drugs.

Today I want to talk about what we all must do to protect our children and keep our communities safe from drugs. I'm very pleased to be joined by the leader of our antidrug efforts, General Barry McCaffrey. Let's begin by recognizing that the fight against drugs must be waged and won at kitchen tables all across America. Even the world's most thorough antidrug strategy won't ever do the job unless all of us pass on the same clear and simple message to our children: Drugs are wrong; drugs are dangerous; and drugs can kill you. That is our most powerful antidrug strategy.

We've had some very encouraging news in recent months. We're finding that more and more of our young people are saying no to drugs, and we can all take great pride in the fact that the number of Americans who use drugs has fallen by one-half since 1979. But that number is still too large. That's why I'm proposing a new 10-year plan to meet one unambiguous goal: We can and must cut drug use in America by another 50 percent. This plan

builds on our strategy of tougher punishment, better prevention, and more partnerships to shut down the international drug trade. It proves that we can balance the budget and win our fight against drugs.

First, we must keep our children from ever trying drugs in the first place. We'll send prevention educators to 6,500 schools nationwide. Our national youth antidrug media campaign will ensure that every time our children turn on the TV, listen to the radio, or surf the Internet they'll get the powerful message that drugs destroy lives. Because most young people get in trouble after school and before their parents get home, we'll expand after-school programs dramatically to help keep our children off the streets, away from drugs, and out of trouble.

Second, we'll hire 1,000 more Border Patrol agents, work closely with neighboring countries, and use the latest technologies to keep more drugs from coming into America in the first place.

Third, we will strengthen law enforcement by finishing the job of putting 100,000 more community police on our streets, hiring 100 more DEA agents to crack down on methamphetamines, and launching a new effort against heroin.

And finally, we will stop the revolving door between drugs and crime by expanding testing and treatment of prisoners and parolees. Our prisons simply must not be allowed to become finishing schools for a life of crime.

A study released by the Justice Department today confirms that our policy of testing and treatment is working. It shows that Federal inmates who received drug treatment were 73 percent less likely to be re-arrested and 44 percent less likely to test positive for drugs in the first 6 months after their release than those who did not receive treatment. Not too long ago, there were some who said our fight against drugs and crime was hopelessly lost. Well, crime has fallen every year for the last 5 years, and now the tide is turning against drugs.

With this comprehensive strategy, I am confident that we can build a stronger drug-free America for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:20 p.m. on February 13 at the Wyndham Hotel in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 14.

Remarks at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia

February 17, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President, for your remarks and your leadership. Thank you, Secretary Cohen, for the superb job you have done here at the Pentagon and on this most recent, very difficult problem. Thank you, General Shelton, for being the right person at the right time. Thank you, General Ralston, and the members of the Joint Chiefs, General Zinni, Secretary Albright, Secretary Slater, DCI Tenet, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Berger. Senator Robb, thank you for being here, and Congressman Skelton, thank you very much, and for your years of service to America and your passionate patriotism, both of you, and to the members of our Armed Forces and others who work here to protect our national security.

I have just received a very fine briefing from our military leadership on the status of our forces in the Persian Gulf. Before I left the Pentagon I wanted to talk to you and all those whom you represent, the men and women of our military. You, your friends, and your colleagues are on the frontlines of this crisis in Iraq. I want you and I want the American people to hear directly from me what is at stake for America in the Persian Gulf; what we are doing to protect the peace, the security, the freedom we cherish; why we have taken the position we have taken.

I was thinking, as I sat up here on the platform, of the slogan that the First Lady gave me for her project on the millennium, which was "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." Now, for that project, that means preserving the Star-Spangled Banner and the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

and the Bill of Rights, and it means making an unprecedented commitment to medical research and to get the best of the new technology. But that's not a bad slogan for us when we deal with more sober, more difficult, more dangerous matters.

Those who have questioned the United States in this moment, I would argue, are living only in the moment. They have neither remembered the past nor imagined the future. So, first, let's just take a step back and consider why meeting the threat posed by Saddam Hussein is important to our security in the new era we are entering.

This is a time of tremendous promise for America. The superpower confrontation has ended on every continent; democracy is securing for more and more people the basic freedoms we Americans have come to take for granted. Bit by bit, the information age is chipping away at the barriers, economic, political, and social, that once kept people locked in and freedom and prosperity locked out.

But for all our promise, all our opportunity, people in this room know very well that this is not a time free from peril, especially as a result of reckless acts of outlaw nations and an unholy axis of terrorists, drug traffickers, and organized international criminals. We have to defend our future from these predators of the 21st century. They feed on the free flow of information and technology. They actually take advantage of the freer movement of people, information, and ideas. And they will be all the more lethal if we allow them to build arsenals of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. We simply cannot allow that to happen.

There is no more clear example of this threat than Saddam Hussein's Iraq. His regime threatens the safety of his people, the stability of his region, and the security of all the rest of us.

I want the American people to understand, first, the past: How did this crisis come about? And I want them to understand what we must do to protect the national interest and, indeed, the interest of all freedom-loving people in the world.

Remember, as a condition of the cease-fire after the Gulf war, the United Nations demanded—not the United States, the United Nations demanded—and Saddam Hussein agreed to declare within 15 days—this is way back in 1991—within 15 days his nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them, to make a total declaration. That's what he promised to do.

The United Nations set up a special commission of highly trained international experts, called UNSCOM, to make sure that Iraq made good on that commitment. We had every good reason to insist that Iraq disarm. Saddam had built up a terrible arsenal, and he had used it, not once but many times. In a decade-long war with Iran, he used chemical weapons against combatants, against civilians, against a foreign adversary, and even against his own people. And during the Gulf war, Saddam launched Scuds against Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Bahrain.

Now, instead of playing by the very rules he agreed to at the end of the Gulf war, Saddam has spent the better part of the past decade trying to cheat on this solemn commitment. Consider just some of the facts. Iraq repeatedly made false declarations about the weapons that it had left in its possession after the Gulf war. When UNSCOM would then uncover evidence that gave lie to those declarations, Iraq would simply amend the reports. For example, Iraq revised its nuclear declarations 4 times within just 14 months, and it has submitted six different biological warfare declarations, each of which has been rejected by UNSCOM.

In 1995, Hussein Kamel, Saddam's son-in-law and the chief organizer of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program, defected to Jordan. He revealed that Iraq was continuing to conceal weapons and missiles and the capacity to build many more. Then and only then did Iraq admit to developing numbers of weapons in significant quantities and weapons stocks. Previously it had vehemently denied the very thing it just simply admitted once Saddam Hussein's son-in-law defected to Jordan and told the truth.

Now, listen to this. What did it admit? It admitted, among other things, an offensive biological warfare capability, notably 5,000 gallons of botulinum, which causes botulism; 2,000 gallons of anthrax; 25 biological-filled Scud warheads; and 157 aerial bombs. And I might say, UNSCOM inspectors believe that Iraq has actually greatly understated its production. As if we needed further confirmation, you all know what happened to his son-in-law when he made the untimely decision to go back to Iraq.

Next, throughout this entire process, Iraqi agents have undermined and undercut

UNSCOM. They've harassed the inspectors, lied to them, disabled monitoring cameras, literally spirited evidence out of the back doors of suspect facilities as inspectors walked through the front door, and our people were there observing it and have the pictures to prove it.

Despite Iraq's deceptions UNSCOM has, nevertheless, done a remarkable job. Its inspectors, the eyes and ears of the civilized world, have uncovered and destroyed more weapons of mass destruction capacity than was destroyed during the Gulf war. This includes nearly 40,000 chemical weapons, more than 100,000 gallons of chemical weapons agents, 48 operational missiles, 30 warheads specifically fitted for chemical and biological weapons, and a massive biological weapons facility at Al Hakam equipped to produce anthrax and other deadly agents.

Over the past few months, as they have come closer and closer to rooting out Iraq's remaining nuclear capacity, Saddam has undertaken yet another gambit to thwart their ambition by imposing debilitating conditions on the inspectors and declaring key sites which have still not been inspected off limits, including, I might add, one palace in Baghdad more than 2,600 acres large. By comparison—when you hear all this business about "Presidential sites reflect our sovereignty; why do you want to come into a residence?"—the White House complex is 18 acres, so you'll have some feel for this. One of these Presidential sites is about the size of Washington, DC. That's about—how many acres did you tell me it was—40,000 acres. We're not talking about a few rooms here with delicate personal matters involved.

It is obvious that there is an attempt here, based on the whole history of this operation since 1991, to protect whatever remains of his capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction, the missiles to deliver them, and the feedstocks necessary to produce them. The UNSCOM inspectors believe that Iraq still has stockpiles of chemical and biological munitions, a small force of Scud-type missiles, and the capacity to restart quickly its production program and build many, many more weapons.

Now, against that background, let us remember the past, here. It is against that background that we have repeatedly and unambiguously made clear our preference for a diplomatic solution. The inspection system works. The inspection system has worked in the face of lies, stonewalling, obstacle after obstacle after obstacle. The people who have done that work deserve the thanks of civilized people throughout the world. It has worked.

That is all we want. And if we can find a diplomatic way to do what has to be done, to do what he promised to do at the end of the Gulf war, to do what should have been done within 15 days—within 15 days of the agreement at the end of the Gulf war—if we can find a diplomatic way to do that, that is by far our preference. But to be a genuine solution and not simply one that glosses over the remaining problem, a diplomatic solution must include or meet a clear, immutable, reasonable, simple standard: Iraq must agree, and soon, to free, full, unfettered access to these sites, anywhere in the country. There can be no dilution or diminishment of the integrity of the inspection system that UNSCOM has put in place.

Now, those terms are nothing more or less than the essence of what he agreed to at the end of the Gulf war. The Security Council many times since has reiterated this standard. If he accepts them, force will not be necessary. If he refuses or continues to evade his obligation through more tactics of delay and deception, he, and he alone, will be to blame for the consequences.

I ask all of you to remember the record here: what he promised to do within 15 days of the end of the Gulf war, what he repeatedly refused to do, what we found out in '95, what the inspectors have done against all odds.

We have no business agreeing to any resolution of this that does not include free, unfettered access to the remaining sites by people who have integrity and proven competence in the inspection business. That should be our standard. That's what UNSCOM has done, and that's why I have been fighting for it so hard. That's why the United States should insist upon it.

Now let's imagine the future. What if he fails to comply and we fail to act, or we take some ambiguous third route which gives him yet more opportunities to develop this program of weapons of mass destruction and continue to press for the release of the sanctions and continue to ignore the solemn commitments that he made? Well, he will conclude that the international community has lost its will. He will then conclude that he can go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. And some day, some way, I guarantee

you, he'll use the arsenal. And I think every one of you who has really worked on this for any length of time believes that, too.

Now, we have spent several weeks building up our forces in the Gulf and building a coalition of like-minded nations. Our force posture would not be possible without the support of Saudi Arabia, of Kuwait, Bahrain, the GCC States, and Turkey. Other friends and allies have agreed to provide forces, bases, or logistical support, including the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and Portugal, Denmark and The Netherlands, Hungary and Poland and the Czech Republic, Argentina, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, and our friends and neighbors in Canada. That list is growing, not because anyone wants military action but because there are people in this world who believe the United Nations resolution should mean something, because they understand what UNSCOM has achieved, because they remember the past, and because they can imagine what the future will be, depending on what we do now.

If Saddam rejects peace and we have to use force, our purpose is clear: We want to seriously diminish the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program. We want to seriously reduce his capacity to threaten his neighbors. I am quite confident from the briefing I have just received from our military leaders that we can achieve the objectives and secure our vital strategic interests.

Let me be clear: A military operation cannot destroy all the weapons of mass destruction capacity. But it can and will leave him significantly worse off than he is now in terms of the ability to threaten the world with these weapons or to attack his neighbors. And he will know that the international community continues to have the will to act if and when he threatens again.

Following any strike, we will carefully monitor Iraq's activities with all the means at our disposal. If he seeks to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction, we will be prepared to strike him again. The economic sanctions will remain in place until Saddam complies fully with all U.N. resolutions.

Consider this: Already these sanctions have denied him $110 billion. Imagine how much stronger his armed forces would be today, how many more weapons of mass destruction operations he would have hidden around the country if he had been able to spend even a small fraction of that amount for a military rebuilding.

We will continue to enforce a no-fly zone from the southern suburbs of Baghdad to the Kuwait border and in northern Iraq, making it more difficult for Iraq to walk over Kuwait again or threaten the Kurds in the north.

Now, let me say to all of you here, as all of you know, the weightiest decision any President ever has to make is to send our troops into harm's way. And force can never be the first answer. But sometimes it's the only answer.

You are the best prepared, best equipped, best trained fighting force in the world. And should it prove necessary for me to exercise the option of force, your commanders will do everything they can to protect the safety of all the men and women under their command. No military action, however, is risk-free. I know that the people we may call upon in uniform are ready. The American people have to be ready as well.

Dealing with Saddam Hussein requires constant vigilance. We have seen that constant vigilance pays off, but it requires constant vigilance. Since the Gulf war we have pushed back every time Saddam has posed a threat. When Baghdad plotted to assassinate former President Bush, we struck hard at Iraq's intelligence headquarters. When Saddam threatened another invasion by massing his troops in Kuwait, along the Kuwaiti border in 1994, we immediately deployed our troops, our ships, our planes, and Saddam backed down. When Saddam forcefully occupied Irbil in northern Iraq, we broadened our control over Iraq's skies by extending the no-fly zone.

But there is no better example, again I say, than the U.N. weapons inspections system itself. Yes, he has tried to thwart it in every conceivable way. But the discipline, determination, the year-in, year-out effort of these weapons inspectors is doing the job. And we seek to finish the job.

Let there be no doubt, we are prepared to act. But Saddam Hussein could end this crisis tomorrow, simply by letting the weapons inspectors complete their mission. He made a solemn commitment to the international community to do that and to give up his weapons of mass destruction a long time ago, now. One way or the other, we are determined to see that he makes good on his own promise.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq reminds us of what we learned in the 20th century and warns us of what we must know about the 21st. In this century we learned through harsh experience

that the only answer to aggression and illegal behavior is firmness, determination, and, when necessary, action. In the next century, the community of nations may see more and more the very kind of threat Iraq poses now: a rogue state with weapons of mass destruction, ready to use them or provide them to terrorists, drug traffickers, or organized criminals, who travel the world among us unnoticed.

If we fail to respond today, Saddam and all those who would follow in his footsteps will be emboldened tomorrow by the knowledge that they can act with impunity, even in the face of a clear message from the United Nations Security Council and clear evidence of a weapons of mass destruction program. But if we act as one, we can safeguard our interests and send a clear message to every would-be tyrant and terrorist that the international community does have the wisdom and the will and the way to protect peace and security in a new era.

That is the future I ask you all to imagine. That is the future I ask our allies to imagine. If we look at the past and imagine that future, we will act as one together. And we still have, God willing, a chance to find a diplomatic resolution to this and, if not, God willing, a chance to do the right thing for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:37 p.m. in the auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, USMC, commander in chief, U.S. Central Command; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks to the 1997 World Series Champion Florida Marlins

February 17, 1998

The President. Well, welcome to the White House. Mr. Smiley; Mr. Leyland; glad to be joined by the executive director of the players association, Don Fehr; Congressman Deutsch; Congressman Foley; Congressman Wexler. I think I should also say—I see my EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, here. You should know that this administration has three members—along with Carol Browner, Attorney General Janet Reno and the Secretary of the Treasury, Bob Rubin—who all grew up in south Florida. They're fairly happy about the outcome of the World Series.

You can tell that I am not running for office anymore; I might not have said that here. [*Laughter*] But we are delighted.

When I was first elected President, I never could have dreamed that a lot of the things that would occur in the last 5 years have occurred. I didn't imagine then that millions of people would be using the Internet every day. When I was first elected President, there were only 50 sites, and they were all the province of physicists. I couldn't have imagined that the deficit would come from $300 billion to zero in 5 years. And I could not have predicted that the Florida Marlins would be here because they hadn't even played a game yet. [*Laughter*] That is a truly astonishing achievement.

But what you did in a short time was a gift to your magnificent leader, Jim Leyland, for a lifetime in professional baseball. And all of us who are baseball fans of whatever team had to be happy about that.

And of course, a manager can't win without talented players and without teamwork. Livan Hernandez dazzled us with his pitching and became only the second rookie ever to win the World Series MVP Award. Charles Johnson's defense earned him the Gold Glove as catcher for the third year in a row. Edgar Renteria's name will live in baseball history forever for ending one of the most exciting World Series in history with his two-out single in the bottom of the 11th. You know, those games got so long, some of us really did want them to go on forever after a while. [*Laughter*]

Baseball, I think, made a huge comeback as America's national pastime in this World Series, thanks to the magnificent competition which you won deservedly.

You know, a lot of the players on this team are newcomers to our country, and so are many of the fans of the Florida Marlins. I suppose it's only right that the capital of the Americas

would take its turn as the baseball capital of the world. But even more importantly, we should be proud of the example this team set, proving once again that people of very different ethnic backgrounds can play together and win together. Now, it may not be the precise same Marlin team that played the Indians last year that takes the field on opening day, but if the players keep the same spirit they'll be sure to be in the hunt again when the season comes to a close.

Congratulations. For all of us who grew up with baseball as a national pastime, you gave America a great gift last year that none of us will ever forget. Thank you.

[*At this point, Florida Marlins president Don Smiley, manager Jim Leyland, and third baseman Bobby Bonilla made brief remarks. Mr. Leyland noted that the President was the most important person he had ever played golf with, and Mr. Bonilla presented the President with a World Series jersey.*]

The President. Thank you. Since you mentioned our golf game, I want to make two brief points before we adjourn—[*laughter*]—we're going to take a picture. Number one is, I want you to get another ring so you can quit about the time I quit, and then we'll go on the senior tour together. [*Laughter*]

Secondly, if you really thought of that line about the budget, we have a position open in the speechwriting staff that you'd be welcome to anytime. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:42 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Donald Fehr, executive director, Major League Baseball Players Association; and shortstop Edgar Renteria.

Remarks on the Children's Health Care Initiative

February 18, 1998

Thank you. Didn't she do a good job? Give her a hand. [*Applause*] Thank you, Linda. Ned Zechman, thank you. Thank you, Secretary Shalala, for your wonderful work. And I thank the First Lady for what is now a more than 25-year crusade to bring quality health care to children. We're delighted to be joined by Mayor Barry and members of the DC City Council; Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton; and Congresswoman Diana DeGette, from Colorado; and many, many child advocates in this audience who have been working on these issues a long, long time.

Last month in the State of the Union Address, I asked the American people to work together to strengthen our Nation for a new century and especially to build the right kind of future for all our children, with world-class education and quality, affordable health care.

Let me begin by thanking the men and women who work in this hospital for their efforts to restore our most fragile children to health, to give many of them second chances at life. This is a place where medicine shines and miracles happen every day. But it should not take a miracle to ensure that children like Linda's children have the care and insurance they need to stay healthy and to be treated when they're sick.

I still have a hard time believing that this country, with the finest health care system in the world, cannot figure out how to give affordable, quality health insurance coverage to every single child in America.

Step by step, we are working hard to make sure all Americans get the health care they deserve. Two years ago we passed a law, and I signed a law, to make sure every American could keep his or her insurance when they change jobs or when someone in the family is ill. Last year, in the historic balanced budget agreement, we extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for more than a decade. We also made this unprecedented $24 billion commitment to provide health care to up to 5 million more children, and I want to say more about that, obviously.

In addition to implementing the provisions of the balanced budget law to cover children, this year we're also going to attempt to pass a health care consumer bill of rights, which is

all the more important since 160 million Americans are now in managed care plans. We want to extend Medicare to Americans age 55 to 65 who have lost their health insurance who can buy into the program. And of course we want to protect all our children from the dangers of tobacco, and we're hoping and praying for a comprehensive resolution of that issue.

But let's go back to the question of covering children. Congress appropriated the money, $24 billion over 5 years, with the goal of insuring 5 million of the 10 million children who don't today have health insurance. Now, 3 million—as the First Lady said, 3 million of the 10 million kids who don't have health insurance are eligible for the Medicaid program today. If we could get 100 percent of those children into the Medicaid program, we could actually insure more than 5 million children for the $24 billion. But if we don't get any new children into the Medicaid program, or very few, then we're going to have a very hard time meeting that 5 million goal.

So this issue of not only helping the children and their families but also the hospitals and the providers who have to be reimbursed for the care they give, with expanding the Medicare program to the children who are eligible, is profoundly important if we are to reach what I know is the goal of every person in this audience, which is to provide affordable health insurance coverage to our children.

Now, this children's health initiative, that was part of the balanced budget agreement, is part of the kind of the vision of Government that has driven our administration from its first days. I always believed that we had to get rid of the deficit and balance the budget, because otherwise the economy wouldn't work right, we couldn't get interest rates down, we couldn't have new investment for businesses to create new jobs, people couldn't afford to buy homes—we'd have all kinds of problems. But I also always believed that we had to do it in a way that left more money to invest in our future, particularly in education and health care and the environment and the things that will shape the quality of life. So that's what we're trying to do.

But I want to say again, just the fact that this money has been appropriated is not enough. We cannot let the appropriation of money just sit there. We can't just have laws on paper that say we're going to cover 5 million more people. Those of you who work in these programs understand that this is a complex and challenging task.

Most of these children are like Linda's children. Most of these kids that we're trying to cover are the children of working people who are working hard and doing their very best every day and paying their taxes and simply cannot afford a traditional health insurance plan. One of the ways that we have to deal with this is to expand Medicaid coverage to the 3 million who are already eligible under the law. One of the most shocking things to people who don't have this problem is to find out that huge numbers of these kids are prevented from getting medical care simply because their parents don't know they're eligible.

Therefore, all of us have an obligation to see to it that every child who can take advantage of this historic investment in health care does so, and does it now, beginning with the Medicaid program. The Federal Government must do its part. States and businesses and individuals must step up to the plate. And our message to parents and to teachers, to preachers and to coaches must be: What you do not know can hurt your children. You have to find out if your child is eligible for the Medicaid program.

Today I am launching an all-out effort to let every family know about health insurance, whether it's Medicaid or another State program that is currently or soon will be available, because there are now new children's health programs coming on line under the program passed in the balanced budget bill.

In a few moments, I will sign an Executive memorandum directing the eight Federal agencies who run our children's programs, such as WIC and food stamps, to cooperate in a comprehensive effort to make sure that every family gets the information they need to enroll their children, whether from an agency employee or from pamphlets, toll-free numbers, or simplified application forms. And I call on Congress to pass the new funds I am requesting in this balanced budget to help States publicize their new child health programs and their child centers and enroll the children in Medicaid automatically, even as they wait for final approval of their applications.

Next, and most important, every State must take responsibility for ensuring that every eligible child within its borders gets insured. Medicaid is one of the best ways to expand health insurance to more children, and it is a State-run program. I'm pleased to announce that Colorado and South Carolina will join Alabama as the first States to expand insurance coverage to more uninsured children under the bill we passed last year.

But you should know that over 40 more States are well on their way to expanding their own insurance programs. I applaud the Governors for their commitment and their innovative efforts to enroll more children. And I thank Ray Scheppach from the Governors' Association for being here today. We can't rest until every State has a program and a commitment to implement it.

Finally, the private sector has to help us get the job done. Many businesses and foundations have already joined in. Bell Atlantic will provide the leadership to establish a new 800 number that will direct families to State agencies in charge of Medicaid. Safeway has agreed to put the 800 number on their shopping bags. The National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association will help us get the word out whenever parents pick up prescriptions. Pampers has agreed to include a letter in parent education packages that go to millions of new mothers in the hospital. I thank all of them for being exemplary corporate citizens.

And I'm pleased to announce the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Kaiser Family Foundation have committed more than $23 million to finding better ways to expand coverage and outreach efforts. America's Promise, the outgrowth of the Presidents' Summit on Service, made a healthy future for all children one of its five goals. And along with the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Hospital Association, the National Association of Education, all have launched their own efforts to target and enroll uninsured children. And I thank them.

This is an extraordinary partnership to make sure that every child gets the health coverage he or she needs to have a fair and healthy shot at life. But it is only the first step. We need every parent, every grandparent, doctor, nurse, health care provider, teacher, business leader, foundation, every community all across America to work until they find the ways to reach all our children who can be covered by Medicaid or by the new children's health insurance program.

Like all parents, Hillary and I know from experience that nothing can weigh more heavily on your mind than the health of your child. The slightest cough, the most minor accident can cause enormous worry. I can barely imagine what it would be like to also have to worry about finding the money to pay for your children's health care in the first place.

Too many parents live with these worries every day. Millions of our fellow Americans—people who are dedicated citizens, people who get up every day and go to work, people who pay the taxes they owe to the Government, people who do everything that is expected of them and still have to worry about the health care of their children for lack of insurance coverage. This is wrong. If we really want to make America strong for the 21st century, we will correct it. We have the tools; it is now up to us to use them.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:43 p.m. in the atrium at Children's Hospital. In his remarks, he referred to Linda Haverman, mother of two boys who had received health insurance through Medicaid, who introduced the President; Ned Zechman, president, Children's Hospital; Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., of the District of Columbia; and Raymond C. Scheppach, executive director, National Governors' Association.

Memorandum on Children's Health Insurance Outreach

February 18, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Education, the Commissioner of Social Security

Subject: Children's Health Insurance Outreach

Over 10 million of our Nation's children are currently uninsured and, as a consequence, often cannot afford much-needed health care services such as doctor visits, prescription drugs, or hospital care. Last year, with bipartisan support, we took a major step toward solving this problem. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 that I signed into law enacted the largest single expansion of children's health insurance in 30 years. The new Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides $24 billion over 5 years to cover millions of uninsured children in working families. It builds on the Medicaid program, which currently covers nearly 20 million poor children across the country.

We now face the serious task of enrolling uninsured children in both Medicaid and State-administered children's health programs. We know that well over 3 million uninsured children are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid. This is largely due to a lack of knowledge about Medicaid eligibility and the difficulty of the enrollment process. These same problems could limit the potential of CHIP to successfully enroll millions of uninsured children.

To ensure that both Medicaid and CHIP fulfill their potential, I am calling for a nationwide children's health insurance outreach initiative involving both the private and public sectors. As illustrated by my announcement today, foundations, corporations, health care providers, consumer advocates, and others in the private sector are already responding to our challenge to make every effort to enroll uninsured children in Medicaid or CHIP. In the public sector, my FY 1999 budget proposal includes policies to give States the flexibility and funding they need to conduct innovative outreach activities. The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) should continue their focused efforts to promote outreach through administrative actions.

There is clearly more that the Federal Government can do to help the States and the private sector achieve our mutual goal of targeting and providing coverage to uninsured children. Many children who lack health insurance are the same children who benefit from programs your agency now administers. Eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP is often similar to that for WIC, Food Stamps, Head Start, tax programs, job training, welfare to work, Social Security, public housing, and homelessness initiatives. Thus, a coordinated Federal interagency effort is critical to providing greater health care coverage for children.

Therefore, to increase enrollment of uninsured children in Medicaid and CHIP, I hereby direct you to take the following actions consistent with the mission of your agency. First, I direct you to identify all of the employees and grantees of your agency's programs who work with low-income, uninsured children who may be eligible for Medicaid or CHIP.

Second, I direct you to develop and implement an educational strategy aimed at ensuring that your agency's employees and grantees are fully informed about the availability of Medicaid and CHIP to our Nation's children.

Third, I direct you to develop an agency-specific plan as part of our Administration-wide, intensive children's health insurance outreach effort. Your agency's plan should include distributing information and educating families about their options; coordinating toll-free numbers and other sources of information on public programs; simplifying, coordinating, and, where possible, unifying the application process for related public programs; and working with State and local agencies on broadening the locations where families can apply for Medicaid and/or CHIP.

Fourth, I direct you to identify any statutory or regulatory impediments in your programs to conducting children's health insurance coverage outreach.

Finally, I direct the Department of Health and Human Services to serve as the coordinating agency to assist in the development and integration of agency plans and to report back to me

on each agency's plan in 90 days with recommendations and a suggested implementation timetable. In so doing, I direct the Department to ensure that Federal interagency activities are complementary, aggressive, and consistent with the overall initiative to cover uninsured children.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Reception for Representative James P. Moran
February 18, 1998

Thank you very much. First let me join, I know, all of you in thanking Dr. D'Orta for opening this beautiful, beautiful house to us tonight. It's especially nice for me to come back here because I was involved for a long time with Pamela Harriman and with her late husband, Governor Averell Harriman, and their good friend and former great support, Janet Howard, is here tonight. My mind has been reliving a lot of precious memories in this wonderful home.

I'm also grateful to Dr. D'Orta for helping Jim Moran, who is one of the finest people I have ever known in public life. I'm here for him tonight for a lot of reasons, but if you think back to where our country was in 1992, when I was running for President—that the economy was weak, that we were growing apart economically, that our social problems were getting more severe, that our steps seemed more and more uncertain—and you look at where we are today, I can tell you without reservation that one of the reasons we're where we are today is that at very critical junctures, Jim Moran was always willing to stand in the breach and do what was right for our country.

In 1993, we passed our economic program to bring the deficit down by only one vote in the House. If Jim Moran had taken the easy way out, if he'd said, "Well, there are a lot of people in my district who will attack me over this," we wouldn't be here tonight having this celebration. Just Jim Moran could have walked away and changed the future of the country. But because he didn't walk away, before we saved the first dollar from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the deficit had been reduced from $295 billion a year to $22 billion a year, over 90 percent. That alone should get Jim Moran reelected for the rest of his life if he wants it.

When we passed the Brady bill and the crime bill to put 100,000 police on the street and ban assault weapons, the people in the NRA and their allies actually defeated a number of our Congressmen in the '94 election by terrifying people and saying we were taking their guns away. But Jim Moran stood in the breach. We didn't win by many votes on the crime bill, and 5 years later, as we've now put over two-thirds of those police on the street and taken a lot of the assault weapons off the street, hundreds of thousands of people with criminal records or adverse mental health histories have not been able to buy handguns because of the Brady bill. This is a safer country. Crime has gone down for 5 years in a row in all major categories.

In 1994, when the other party won the House and proclaimed that they had a revolutionary contract—we Democrats said, on America—[*laughter*]—and they were prepared to shut the Government down to try to force me to accept that contract, the only way we were able to reverse it was that there were enough hearty souls in the Congress who said, "Wait a minute. There's something wrong with this picture. We are reducing the deficit. We're going to balance the budget, but we don't have to give up on our commitment on education or our commitment to the environment or our commitment to health care or our commitment to senior citizens or our commitment to trying to expand the circle of economic opportunity to the people who haven't felt anything in this recovery yet." And we said no.

And in the face of the shutdown we defeated the contract on America, thanks to Jim Moran and the people like him who stood with me. If they hadn't done it, I could not have done it alone. So Jim Moran has done a lot of good things.

In 1997, we passed the balanced budget law, which, as Jim said, had the biggest increase in child health care in a generation, the biggest increase in investment in education in a generation, and still balanced the budget. This year we estimate the deficit will be $10 billion. But if we get fortunate, if the challenges in Asia with the economy don't slow us down too much, we'll actually probably balance the budget this year. And if we don't, next year we will because of the balanced budget I've submitted to Congress.

None of this would have been possible if we hadn't laid the framework, the foundation. And Jim Moran was a critical part of that, because he realized that we had to be responsible with the deficit; we just couldn't go on having high interest rates and high deficit and quadrupling the debt every 12 years, but there was a way to reduce the deficit, reduce the size of Government, and increase our investment in the future of our children.

And in the last 5 years, we sort have gotten America to working again. And I think people feel that. And now, as I said in the State of the Union, what we need to be asking ourselves, if the country is working well again what do we have to do now to look at the long-term? What are we going to do to prepare this country for the 21st century to make sure that it's as strong as it can be? And that's what we're going to be working on in this year—and again, why it is so important that he win reelection.

If we have, as is projected, not only a balanced budget but several years of surpluses, the easy thing to do in an election year is to go out and promise the people a tax cut or some new spending program that sounds nice. I say we should do neither unless we pay for it, and all the surplus should be resolved until we have saved the Social Security system for the 21st century. That is very important. That is the right thing to do.

We have 10 years left on the Medicare Trust Fund, but we have to reform Medicare for the 21st century. It's important how that's done and whether it's done consistent with our most basic values.

We have the money, in addition, to continue to open the doors of college education to all; to lift the standards in education; to try to encourage schools in areas that are underperforming; to end social promotion but give children a second chance; to lower class sizes to 18 in the first three grades; to rehabilitate 5,000 schools or build new ones in places where the kids don't have a decent place to go to school; to let people who are between the ages of 55 and 65 who don't have any health insurance buy into the Medicare system if they, or with help from their children, can afford to do so; to have the biggest increase in medical research in the history of the country to help us to solve the problems that are still facing us; to use the wonders of technological advances to deal with our part of the responsibility to fight climate change and global warming. We have all these challenges before us, and they're significant, but they are wonderful opportunities for us.

Hillary has sponsored a project for the millennium—you know, we sat around and talked for a long time, and I asked her to think about what gifts we ought to give the millennium, and she calls her project, basically, "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." And I talked about it in the State of the Union. We're trying to raise the funds and get the funds to save the Star-Spangled Banner—we need $13 million in restoration; it would be a tragedy if it were lost—to save the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights and make sure they're perfectly preserved; to get every community in the country to go out and save their own historic element. There's a house at the Old Soldiers' Home here in Washington, where Abraham Lincoln used to go to work in the summertime. The house is in terrible condition. It ought to be saved.

But we also are imagining the future. That's what the medical Trust Fund is about. That's what our international space station is about and sending Senator John Glenn at the age of 77 back into space. Don't worry about him. He's in better shape than I am. He'll be fine.

And that is what a lot of our challenges in foreign policy are all about. I'm going to try to pass a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty this year to discourage other countries from becoming nuclear powers and to slowly let the whole nuclear threat recede. And we have to do that. We are actively pursuing our peace efforts, from Bosnia to the Middle East to Northern Ireland. I'm about to leave on a trip to Africa, which I have looked forward to for a long time. Then I'm going down to Latin America, where every country in the hemisphere

but one is a democracy. We are working hard on these things.

One of the things that I want you to understand—I have not much to add at this moment to what I have already said yesterday in my speech at the Pentagon about the situation in Iraq, but I want you to think about this. There will never be a time as long as we're on this Earth when there won't be people who seek absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. This country was established by people who were fleeing absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. That's how we all got started. And we have been jealous about that from the beginning.

One of the things we know is that the more open our global society gets, the more we can all get on the Internet and share information with people around the world, the more we can get on an airplane and fly around the world, the more we can hop from continent to continent to continent, the more we get in touch with each other, the more vulnerable we are to one another's problems and the more open we are to the organized forces of destruction.

That's why I tried to take such a hard line against terrorism. That's why I tried to take such a hard line against the development of chemical and biological weapons and very small-scale nuclear weapons. Why? Because you don't want people to carry stuff like that around from airport to airport. You don't want to have any unnecessary exposure when people can get on the Internet and find a webpage that will tell them how to make a bomb like the bomb that blew up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

We cannot make the world perfectly safe, but we have to do everything we can in our time to imagine what the security problems will be like when this young lady here is grown, and she has children of her own. That is our obligation.

So what all of this is about at bottom, it is about what kind of world our children will live in and what we have to do, not to make it perfectly risk-free—we can't do that—but we have to do everything we possibly can to minimize the risks that we and our children and our grandchildren will be exposed to as we move into a globalized society where the organized forces of destruction will cause us enough trouble anyway, whether they're narcotraffickers, criminal syndicates, or terrorists. Anything we can do to minimize the chance that anyone will be able to put into play chemical and biological weapons against civilized people, wherever they live, we should do. That is the animating principle here for me.

I am doing the best I can with a difficult situation, because I'm thinking about what we have to do to strengthen America and the world for the 21st century.

We've got a lot to do. We're going to get a lot done this year. The thing I like about Jim Moran is that he will work with members of the Republican Party whenever they'll work with him in good faith. We know we're hired here to get things done for the American people, but we also know that when November rolls around, there will still be plenty of things on which we honestly disagree in good faith. What we want is to have honest disagreement and to see upright, honest, and truly courageous people like Jim Moran return to public office. America needs it. It's good for our future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:03 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Jim D'Orta, reception host.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner
February 18, 1998

Thank you very much. First of all, thank you, Ron and Beth, for having us here, and thank you for being such wonderful friends to me and to Hillary and to our administration and our party. Thank you for the wonderful words. A couple of days ago I actually got a picture of one of those billboards in Israel—not a particularly great picture of me—and that wonderful, wonderful message.

Let me thank all of you for being here. Most of you I have now known a long time, and you've heard me give a lot of speeches, so I

won't really give much of one tonight. But I would like to make just two or three very brief points.

When I came here in 1993, I did not come to the White House in probably the normal way, and in many ways I was not the normal person who came to the White House. I had never sought to live my whole life in Washington or, indeed, to be in the circle of Washington influence for my whole life. I came here with a determination to change the country, to change the direction of the country, to try to change the way we were living and working, and to try to make America work again. And I think the record is pretty clear that the approach we have taken has worked. And for all of you who played a part in that, I am grateful. I am grateful to Governor Romer and Steve Grossman and Carol and Cynthia and all the officers of the Democratic Party and the staff and all of you who have helped all along the way, those of you who helped me and Al Gore.

The State of the Union Address got an unusual response, even for the State of the Union Address, partly because more people watched it than normal, maybe. [*Laughter*] There are blessings everywhere you don't expect. [*Laughter*] But I think the thing I would like to say about that is that I really feel that I spent 5 years working very hard to try to fix things that weren't functioning very well. And we got the deficit down over 90 percent. And I presented a balanced budget. I think the budget will be balanced this year if the economy isn't slowed by the difficulties in Asia. And we're working hard on those to try to help our friends and, in the process, help ourselves.

And the crime rate has come down for 5 years and we now have a strategy that works, born of what people were doing in community after community—all we're doing is supporting that. We have the lowest welfare rolls in almost 30 years. And we have—now finally, last year, the lower 20 percent of our working people had their income increased by a higher percentage than American income went overall. So we're coming back together again after 20 years of drifting apart. So there's a lot to be grateful for.

And what I tried to do in the State of the Union was to say, "Okay, now if we have things going right and the country is essentially working, we should"—to use Hillary's phrase—"we should be imagining the future. We should be asking ourselves, what do we have to do to strengthen this country for the 21st century, so that when we get there, we really will have the kind of country we want?" And that's what the agenda I outlined was about.

And the thing that all of you can do that would be most helpful is to demonstrate to the American people every day in every way that the Democrats are committed to a public agenda that changes their lives for the better, that we do not believe that politics is about power, nor do we believe politics is about personal advantage, nor do we believe politics is about all the things that some people seem to think it's about. We think it's about bringing them a better future.

And that's what the—that's why I don't want to spend any of the surplus until we save Social Security for the next generation. Easy thing to do is—it's election year; give people a tax cut; spend a little more money. It would be a mistake. That's why I'm determined to reorder, do whatever we have to do to preserve the Medicare program in a way that works for the 21st century and honors our, sort of, intergenerational compact, why I think we have to keep working until we have not only—now we've basically opened the doors of college to anybody who will work for it. But we can't say—and everybody takes it for granted that we have the best system of higher education in the world. No one believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world, and until we do, we can't rest.

It's why I think we have to keep working until we have closed the remaining holes in our health care system. It's why I believe we have to prove one more time that we can deal with any environmental challenge and still grow the economy. We have within our grasp the technological means to reduce global warming, or at least do our share of it, and still continue to grow the economy. We have to prove we can do that. It's why I am committed to proving that the increasing diversity of America will be a blessing, not a curse, amidst all the troubles of the world based on ethnic and religious differences.

So I want you to keep going out there and talking to people about America in the 21st century. If you think about the present difficulty we're having with Iraq—I don't want to talk about it in any great detail tonight, but I want

to say it has—it is not a replay of what happened in 1991. It is a forerunner of what could or could not happen in 2010, in 2020, in 2030.

The very things we love about the world we're moving into—all this interconnection—we had 400,000 hits on our website after the State of the Union. We had a 650 percent increase in hits on the millennium website when we had our first lecture, when Bernard Bailyn talked the other night about how our country got started, and shut the thing down briefly. We can all get on a plane tonight and fly anywhere; we can do anything. The more open the world is, the more interconnected it is, the more vulnerable we will be to the organized forces of destruction, whether they come from drugrunners or crime syndicates or terrorists. And it is very important that we do everything we can to make the risk that those kinds of people can bring chemical and biological warfare into the lives of ordinary people anywhere in the world, including this country—we need to reduce those chances as low as we possibly can, whenever we can, however we can, as soon as we can.

And there are very often no easy answers because of the way the world is working now. But I want you to know that's what's driving me. I want tomorrow to be good for America. And to do it, you not only have to seize the opportunities, you have to try to create a structure that will minimize the challenges and the threats as well.

The last thing I'd like to say is this. I had a wonderful day 2 days ago. The Vice President and I went up and spoke to the Democratic caucuses, the Senators and House Members, and it was a great thing. We talked about our agenda for '98 and how excited we all were. And the Vice President was in overdrive that day; I said I was going to find out what he ate for breakfast and give it to everybody—[*laughter*]—for free, give it to everybody. [*Laughter*] But I was thinking, trying to explain to people, you know, we've talked a lot about finding a third way between believing Government was the solution and Government was the problem, using Government as a catalyst, Government as a tool to give people—a means to get people the tools to make the most of their own lives. We've talked a lot about the new Democratic Party. But I said something to them I'd like to close with you. I believe at every profound moment of challenge in the history of this country, the party that was doing the most for America has always stood unfailingly for three things: for widening the circle of opportunity, for deepening the meaning of freedom, and for strengthening the Union.

If you go back to the beginning of America, when people fled other countries to come here—why were they coming here? Because they despised absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. And they wanted to live in a country where there was a rule of law that restrained people and where no one was unaccountable. And they had to decide, can we do this with a collection of little States, or do we have to be a nation? And they decided that we had to be a nation. And then George Washington and all of his allies, and especially Chief Justice John Marshall, created a nation for us. They said it will take one nation to protect freedom and to provide opportunity or to allow, in Thomas Jefferson's words, the pursuit of happiness. Abraham Lincoln, that's what he did; he died to preserve the Nation and to deepen the meaning of freedom, stop making a mockery of the Constitution. The industrial revolution comes along, Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson basically applied those central values to the changes that were going on then.

Now, from the beginning of our party, we always said we believed in those things. But frankly, as a party, we didn't perform all that well from the end of Andrew Jackson's Presidency until Woodrow Wilson got elected, with minor interludes. As a result of that, we didn't have the Presidency very often either. [*Laughter*] But I think it is fair to say, even though I have tried to modernize the party and point us towards the future, from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman to John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter and our administration, we have not always been right; we have not always been moderate; but in the 20th century, we have been the party that pursued not power for its own sake but was always dedicated to widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the reach of freedom, and strengthening our National Union.

And now that we are doing the right things in the right way, those old-fashioned, eternal elements of America's mission are more important today than ever before. You should be proud to be here, and I hope you can find a way to share that with as many of our country men and women as possible.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:43 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Ronald I. and Beth Dozoretz; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Steve Grossman, national chair, and Carol Pensky, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Cynthia Friedman, national cochair, Women's Leadership Forum; and Bernard Bailyn, professor emeritus, Harvard University.

Remarks on the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange With Reporters
February 19, 1998

The President. Good morning. I have just had a very good conversation with the President of France, Jacques Chirac. We agreed that U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's mission to Baghdad is a critical opportunity to achieve the outcome that all of us would prefer, a peaceful and principled end to this crisis.

The Secretary-General is backed by the unambiguous position of the Security Council. Saddam Hussein must give the weapons inspectors full, free, unfettered access to all suspected sites anywhere in Iraq. That is the clear standard which Saddam himself agreed to at the end of the Gulf war and that the Security Council has reiterated on many occasions since. He simply must adhere to that standard.

Let me also say that I have asked Vice President Gore to postpone his planned trip to South Africa. In the coming days I want my full national security team on hand to take part in our deliberations and decisions on this vitally important issue.

We hope the Secretary-General's mission will succeed. But let me be clear: If diplomacy fails, we must be—and we are—prepared to act. The choice is Saddam Hussein's. We hope he will accept the mandate of the world community. He has, after all, agreed to it already, years ago. If not, he must bear the responsibility for the consequences.

Q. Mr. President, what did you learn, sir—sir, what did you learn from the divided town meeting yesterday?

The President. Well, I thought it was a good old-fashioned American debate. But I would say, I was, first of all, very proud of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and Mr. Berger. I thought they answered the questions well. And I believe strongly that most Americans support our policy. They support our resolve. I think an overwhelming majority of Americans also want a peaceful resolution of this, but if it's necessary for us to act, I believe America will do what it always does. I believe it will unite, just as we did in 1991. I believe it will unite behind taking the necessary action.

Q. Mr. President, do you think Saddam Hussein is emboldened to stiff-arm the international community based upon what happened in Columbus yesterday?

The President. Not if he understands the first thing about America.

Q. Mr. President, are you ready to deal with a deadline if Saddam Hussein——

Q. Does that mean you're going to start bombing next week?

The President. I've made no decision about a deadline.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, are you prepared to assert executive privilege in connection with the testimony of Bruce Lindsey and John Podesta, other of your top assistants before the grand jury?

The President. It's my understanding that the White House Counsel is trying to resolve that issue today, and while he's working on it, I don't think I should comment about it.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, are you considering delivering a more formal address to the American people about the need to deal with Saddam—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, if further action becomes necessary, I will obviously speak directly to the American people about it.

Q. Mr. President, do you feel like you have articulated the goals of this policy, if we do indeed have to attack Iraq?

The President. I believe that the speech I gave at the Pentagon was quite clear about that. We want to significantly reduce his capacity to produce chemical and biological weapons and his capacity to delivery them and to visit them on his people, his neighbors, and people throughout the world. I believe the more the American people learn about the dangers of chemical and biological warfare, the kinds of problems they can present to us now and in the future, the stiffer their resolve will be.

And so I feel that time is on our side. And I believe that 10 years from now, not in the heat of this moment, 15 years from now, when people look back at this time, they will want to look back at a period when those of us in positions of responsibility fulfilled our responsibility by trying to rid the world of this danger.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Baltimore, MD. In his remarks, he referred to White House Counsel Charles F.C. Ruff.

Exchange With Reporters in Baltimore, Maryland
February 19, 1998

Living Classrooms Water Quality Experiment

Q. Tell us, what does it mean?

The President. Well, this water is from here. So they wanted to test the water to see if it could accommodate life. And you had to put this free agent in the water, and then you shake it up, and then you match it up with these colors here, to see which one it's like. So we put it in here, and the color is most like this one—7.5 to 9, and then here's the chart. It's around neutral; this way it will accommodate life. If it's too acidic, obviously it won't. But if it gets way out here, it's too basic, it won't. So anywhere in this range, right, 7 to 10 is okay. And you see the color here is like in between these two.

I learned all that from Brandon here, my science instructor—[*laughter*]—my marine biology instructor here. You did a great job.

Brandon Hunter. Any time.

The President. And so did you, Aaron.

The Vice President. Aaron did a great job, too.

Brandon. This was fun.

The President. Was it fun for you?

Brandon. Yep.

The President. It was fun for us, too. Thanks.

Vice President's Travel

Q. Mr. President, if you're grounding the Vice President, will you be skipping some of your trips over the next couple of weeks, too?

The Vice President. We're going to go do this event now, and then we'll——

The President. I didn't ground him. Don't get too carried away with the school metaphors here. I just asked him to stay around.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the Living Classrooms Foundation. In his remarks, he referred to Brandon Hunter and Aaron Hunt, Middlesex Elementary School students who participated in a water quality experiment. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Announcing the New Clean Water Initiative in Baltimore
February 19, 1998

Thank you very much, Thank you. I don't know about you, but I thought that Larry Simns did a terrific job. Can we give him a hand? [*Applause*] I've been in public life long enough to know when a guy throws a sucker punch. When he got up there and said, "Oh, I'm just

this lowly president of'—[*laughter*]—I thought this guy is fixing to give us a heck of a good talk. [*Laughter*] And sure enough, he did.

I thank you for providing as much as anything else, Larry, a historic perspective, going back through generations of your family's life, and also reminding us that we all have a stake in clean water one way or another, and all of us who depend upon you and the people like you to provide us with good, clean, safe seafood have sometimes a bigger connection than even we're aware of.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for your leadership and your inspiration to me over these last 5 years. Thank you, Secretary Glickman and Administrator Browner. I thank Senator Sarbanes, a truly remarkable person, for all the many wonderful things he has done for Maryland and with our administration. I thank Senator Mikulski, who doubles the energy of any room she is in. [*Laughter*] Barbara couldn't see me, but I was rolling my eyes when she said, well, she never dreamed she could get the President to come, and maybe it just happened to be—if you believe that—[*laughter*]. When she makes up her mind to do something—you're just like my dog, Buddy, grabbing a bone. [*Laughter*] I mean, you might as well go and say yes, because sooner or later you're going to do whatever it is she's decided that you're going to do. [*Laughter*] So I'm honored to be here.

Congressman Cummings, thank you for your friendship and your leadership. Thank you, Governor. I was especially impressed by how you handled this recent pfiesteria outbreak and by what you said about it. And I thank you for all you've done. And, thank you, Lieutenant Governor Townsend. And, Mr. Mayor, thanks for your long friendship and your leadership here in Baltimore. I want to thank the Secretary of State and the city council members and all the others who are here. But especially I want to thank James Bond and his vice president, Mr. Rockefeller—[*laughter*]—and the AmeriCorps people and all the others.

The Vice President and I had a wonderful time before we got out here. I know we were late, but we were having a good time. We saw these young people working in a woodworking shop. They made us two beautiful, beautiful rocking chairs. And I love rocking chairs. I got all kinds of different rocking chairs I've collected over the last 30-odd years, maybe more now. And I'll have theirs up at Camp David this weekend if I can possibly get there. If not, I'll have it at the White House. Anyway, I'm going to do my best to spend the weekend in this rocking chair that I was given today. [*Laughter*]

And we saw young people testing the water, young people rebuilding the shoreline. We saw a lot of work being done in the classrooms and on the computers following the ship around Cape Horn in South America today. And we saw them playing that computer game, "Who Killed Rocky Rockfish?," which two of your teachers have developed, which was utterly fascinating to me. I never did find out who did it—[*laughter*]—but the students promised to let me know when they do.

This whole day has been a wonderful way of illustrating the point I want to make to America, which is that our concern about the environment—our concern for clean water in particular, but environmental matters in general—needs to be folded into the fabric of our daily life. It needs to be a part of how all of our children learn, how they learn science, how they learn about computers. It needs to be a part of how we think about the economy, as the Vice President said. And especially, we need to focus, for the next few years, on this whole issue of water quality.

Now, I grew up in a landlocked State, so I didn't get to see a lot of bays when I was a boy. But I grew up in a town surrounded by three lakes. And when I was a child, some of the happiest days of my life were spent in the remote regions of the Arkansas Ozarks on the Buffalo National River, which was the very first river Congress set aside, over 20 years ago, under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. And the character of our relationship to the water is one of the unique things about America that you can find going all the way back to the beginning and that you can see in the present day. I don't know what the numbers are, but there's this absolutely breathtaking percentage of the American people when they go on vacation every year, go looking for some kind of water.

And the Governor was telling me on the way over here how when this project got started, the Living Classroom got started, one of the most troubling things to him was to see that some of the children in Baltimore had never even been to the bay and how they started—you know, you all say, taking the kids to the

bay—so everybody could see these things. I think that is terribly important.

Some of you know that not very long ago I went home to Arkansas to bury my 91-year-old uncle, a man after who I named my beloved little dog—and I did that because he was an avid outdoorsman. When I ran for Governor of Arkansas, 20 years ago this year, I called my uncle, who had about a sixth grade education and about a 160 IQ, and I said, "What do you think I ought to campaign on?" He said, "Heck, I don't care." He said, "All I want you to do is keep the rivers clean enough for me to fish in and for the kids to swim in." He said, "You fix that, and the rest of it will be all right."

There are an awful lot of people in this country who still feel that way. You heard what Larry said in his introduction—for 25 years we have made great progress in cleaning our waters. Largely this progress has come by controlling pollution from point sources, from factories and sewage plants. Yet, 40 percent of our Nation's waters are still too polluted for fishing and swimming—25 years after the Clean Water Act. That is unacceptable.

That's what I was talking about in the State of the Union Address; that's what I'm here to talk about today in some greater detail. We must address the largest remaining challenge to cleaning our waters. We must curtail the runoff from farms, from city streets, from other diffuse sources of pollution that get into our waterways and pollute them.

Every child deserves to grow up with water that is pure to drink, lakes that are safe for swimming, rivers that are teeming with fish. We have to act now to combat these pollution challenges with new protections to give all our children the gift of clean, safe water in the 21st century.

Of course, it matters how we do this, but I want to say, every time we have taken a big step like this, always somebody says, "There they go again. They're going to hurt the environment." I heard it again last year when we tried to take economy—well, we did take very strong standards—steps to clean the air more. But I would just remind you, in the last 25 years every single environmental step we have taken has unleashed a new round of technological renovation which has helped us to grow the economy more rapidly, with new, higher skilled, higher paying jobs, opening up new careers and new vistas for people. It is simply not true that taking further steps to clean our water is a threat to the economy. As Larry said in a very immediate way, it is actually essential to ensuring the long-term stability of our economy.

And that is consistent with the approach we are taking. We want to give the American people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, including to safeguard our national resources. This is the approach the Vice President insisted on back in October when he directed the EPA and the Department of Agriculture to come up with a plan to ensure clean, safe water. And that's the approach embodied in the clean water action plan we unveil today.

Here's what we want to do. First, forge partnerships through an innovative approach that gets everybody to focus on entire regions—not just on individual factories or individual sewage plants or individual farms but an entire region—and come up with the most cost-effective way to meet the clean water goal.

Second, we want to work closely with States to identify the areas with the worst pollution problems and give local communities the tools and the resources they need to restore and protect those water resources.

Third, we want to provide incentives to our farmers to take the actions that are needed to reduce polluted runoff from their fields and their pastures.

And fourth, we have to protect public health through new strategies to safeguard the water we drink and the fish we eat. To help meet these goals, I have set aside in our balanced budget an additional $2.3 billion over the next 5 years, over and above what we were spending before.

Now, if Congress will approve this request, we will be able to finish the job set out in the Clean Water Act 25 years ago, restoring our waterways and providing clean, safe water to every American. I ask the Congress to work with us, as they did in passing the Safe Drinking Water Act, to provide new and more flexible tools to protect our water by reauthorizing an even stronger Clean Water Act this year. We have to do that.

In the last 5 years, one of the most encouraging things I have seen is a willingness on the part of Americans from different walks of life to sit down across the table and try to figure out how they can protect our natural resources in a way that's good and fair for everybody. The Vice President and I—I spent a day; he

spent 2 days recently in Lake Tahoe, which is one of the two most perfectly blue deep-water lakes in the world—very much stressed now. And we were amazed to see people who just a couple of years ago were barely on speaking terms, people who thought they were conservative, hidebound developers who thought all environmentalists were insane tree huggers, and people who thought they were pure environmentalists who thought all developers were one step short of criminals, had shed all that, were actually—sit down, working with each other, because they finally realized they had a common interest in figuring out a way to preserve the environment.

We've seen it in the Florida Everglades. We've seen it in the attempts to restore various wildlife, including the wolves, to Yellowstone Park. And we know we will have to see it if we're going to end this diffuse runoff problem that is polluting our water resources. We've seen it here in Maryland, where farmers are setting aside tens of thousands of acres to establish buffers between farms and waterways. We have just signed an agreement, interestingly enough, to provide some money to Minnesota so that they can have a program just like you have already implemented here. And in a State with 10,000 lakes, they need to follow Maryland's lead, and it will be good for America when this happens.

I believe the secret to making the preservation and enhancement and restoration of our environment a part of the fabric of life in America is to have more opportunities like the Living Classroom, is to have more people like Larry Simns, who will go and talk to people who don't know what he sees every day, to have more enlightened leadership at the local level. But we in Washington have our responsibility, too. If you want those children who are here working in all these classrooms to live out their promise, then we have to provide a framework within which all these efforts can succeed. We can afford over $2 billion for clean water. We can do it and balance the budget. What we cannot afford is to walk away from our responsibilities to give all the young people in this audience and all the people out across America they represent the clean water they deserve in the 21st century.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at the Living Classrooms Foundation. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Simns, president, Maryland Watermen's Association; Gov. Parris N. Glendening and Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; Maryland Secretary of State John T. Willis; James Bond, president, and Parker Rockefeller, vice president, Living Classrooms Foundation.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Luncheon in Baltimore
February 19, 1998

Thank you very much. Governor, I'll take that cuff off your hands, if you want me to. [*Laughter*] Thank you for the introduction. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. I thank Senator Mikulski and Senator Sarbanes for being a wonderful team for Maryland, for the United States, and for our administration. Mr. Mayor, it's good to be back in Baltimore. To State Democratic Chair Peter Krauser, thank you for your leadership in our party.

I'd also like to acknowledge the presence here of our national Democratic chair, Steve Grossman, and our new national finance chair, Len Barrack, from Philadelphia—this is his first noontime event. He just came on board. Stand up. [*Applause*]

We had a great day today looking at these living classrooms, seeing what the young people of Baltimore are doing, announcing the administration's clean water initiative. I'd like to just talk very briefly—Michael Bronfein was talking about how he had been fooling with me now for 6½ years. That's a big problem, you know, it's hard to give a new speech to a person every time you see him after 6½ years. And maybe that's not necessary.

Some of you may have heard me tell this story, but I once, several years ago—I can't remember—Hillary had to go out of town, and I was Governor. And the person who ran the fairgrounds where we had all of our concerts knew that Tina Turner was coming to town when she started her, what was it, "Private Dancer," or whatever that tour was. You know, when she came out with her new music, you remember? She was out of the limelight, and she came back. I remember she had a saxophone player who was a weightlifter—I don't know why I remember that. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, so this guy who was my friend called me and said, "I'll give you six tickets, and I want you to come to the concert." And so I told Hillary—I said, "Can you cancel the trip?" She said, "No, no, no. Here's who I want you to take." So we got this crowd of people, and we went to this concert. And normally, he put me inconspicuously back in the middle of the crowd, but he knew that I liked Tina Turner so he put me right up on the front row, which is fairly embarrassing if you're an elected official. But I loved every minute of it.

Anyway, Tina Turner sings the whole concert, sings all her new songs. In the end, she starts singing her first hit, "Proud Mary." And the band plays the introduction, she comes up to the microphone, people scream, so she backs off. The band plays the introduction again, she comes up to the microphone, people scream. The third time she came up, and she said, "I have been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it." [*Laughter*]

So, Michael, that's what I'll try to do today.

In the beginning, for the first 5 years here, I really felt that a lot of what we were doing was trying to fix things that weren't right about the way America worked, to try to make the country work again, just to try to get the shackles off the American people. And that's what the attempt to balance the budget while increasing our investment in the future was about; the attempt to open new markets around the world to America's products—still a major issue for our country.

We only have 4 percent of the world's people, and we have over 20 percent of the world's wealth. And we want to continue to maintain our standard of living; we have to sell something to the other 96 percent. And when times are tough for them and they can't buy it, we see it back in our own balance sheets.

I wanted to try to help local communities that were dealing with crime problems. I wanted to try to help break the cycle of welfare dependence and prove that people on welfare really wanted to go to work and could go to work given the right supports for their children and for education and for training. And so we went about this work. I think one of the reasons there was such a good response to the State of the Union is that people could finally feel that life had changed in America and that things were working.

A person in this audience said one of the nicest things a man like me could ever hear. When we were shaking hands, she said that I was the only President in her lifetime that had ever done anything that affected her personally in a positive way. That meant a lot to me. But now we should be looking to the future. I think it's very important that we not be complacent.

You know, the fisherman that introduced me earlier today at the clean water event—I was so impressed—he said, "You know, when times are going pretty good, the tendency is to be complacent," and, he said, "That's the worst thing you can do." And that's what I would say to you. Times are going pretty good for America. Things are in pretty good shape for us. But this is a very dynamic time, and the worst thing we could do is to be complacent.

What I attempted to do in the State of the Union was to say, fine, I'm glad things are going good; I'm glad we're going to have a balanced budget; I'm glad we're going to be able to continue to grow; I'm glad crime is down; and I'm glad we've got the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years. I'm really grateful for all that. But this is not the time to sit around and think about this. This is the time to take advantage of this moment to try to meet the remaining challenges we have, to seize the remaining opportunities, to imagine what America is going to be like in the 21st century, and try to do the things that will maximize the chance that our dreams can come true.

And that's what we're going to spend 1998 working on. The Governor mentioned the education initiatives. If we want an economy that offers opportunity—and you'll say, well, what else do you have to do? You've got the lowest unemployment rate in a generation, the lowest inflation in a generation, consistently high growth. What else do you have to do? I would

say to you that there are in my view at least three things still that we have to do.

First, we have to dramatically improve the education and skill level of the American people. Finally, we're seeing wages start to rise again and incomes start to grow together again after 20 years of increasing inequality. But the only way we can all rise together is if everybody's got a decent education.

We know we've got the best system of higher education in the world, so I spent the first 5 years trying to open the doors of college to everybody. And if you look at what's been done with the Pell grants, the work-study positions, the AmeriCorps positions, the student loan changes, and the education IRA's and then the $1,500 tax credits for the first 2 years of college and then further tax credits for junior and senior year and graduate school, I think you can really say that we've opened the doors of college education to everybody who will work for it.

But no one believes, having said that, that our elementary and secondary education is the best in the world. And we can't stop until it is. Now, one of the proposals that I have put forward to the Congress and to the American people this year is a proposal that would permit us to take some of the funds that will come out of a comprehensive resolution of the tobacco issue—funds which should by rights go back to State and local government anyway, that should not be kept by the Federal Government, and spend those funds so that we can lower the class sizes in the first 3 grades to an average of 18 throughout the Nation. That will dramatically improve the learning of young children in America. And I hope we can do it.

The second thing we have to do is to continue selling more of our products around the world. That's one of the reasons we're working very hard to try to help work through this Asian financial crisis and help our friends and partners sort of get righted over there, because it's not just in their interests, it's in our interests. A third of all of our exports go to Asia now. An enormous part of our export growth goes there. We have a vested interest in doing what is also the right thing to do, which is to be a good neighbor, and try to help work that situation out for the countries that are willing to help themselves, and to do other things which will continue to open new markets.

And the third thing we have to do is to bring the opportunities of free enterprise, which have brought so many of you to this room today, to the neighborhoods and the places where it hasn't reached yet. That's why I was so glad that one of you put a corporate headquarters in Baltimore's empowerment zone. I thank you for that. I want more people to do that all across America. We want to triple the number of empowerment zones.

We want to create a development bank under Secretary Cuomo at HUD that can help to spur more business development in inner-city areas and isolated rural areas. We want to do some other things that will basically focus on the fact that the biggest untapped market for American growth now are the unemployed and the underemployed people in the isolated neighborhoods of inner-city America and some of our rural areas.

Those are the three things that have to be on the economic agenda.

What should we do with our social policy? Crime is down; welfare is down; drug use is down; out-of-wedlock births are down. What do we have to do? Well, a lot. First of all, we have to recognize that we have larger responsibilities on the health care front. I want to pass a health care bill of rights. I want to let people who are over 55 and have lost their health insurance through no fault of their own buy into Medicare if they can afford to do that on their own or with their children's help. We want a comprehensive tobacco settlement. We want to make child care more affordable and of higher quality in America, more available to more people. And perhaps most important of all, we want to do something profound and, if I could use a Government word, structural about the problem of juvenile crime by helping kids stay out of trouble in the first place. Perhaps the most important items in the budget that haven't received a lot of notice are the funds through the Justice Department and the Education Department to give to communities to set up after-school programs. Most kids get in trouble between the time school lets out and the time their parents get home at night. If you can keep kids involved in constructive activities between 3 o'clock in the afternoon and 7 at night, we're going to be in good shape in this country. So we've got a good program there.

And finally, let me say we have to have a community approach to the future. That means we have to be committed to the environment. It means we have to do our part with global

warming. It means we have to reform our basic systems, like Medicare and Social Security, that are profoundly important to the future generations, of all ages.

And I will just end on that point. I think that—you know, we hadn't had a surplus in 30 years, so we don't quite know what to do. And a lot of people have good ideas for it, and they are good ideas. There is always another good tax cut. There is always another good spending program. I don't think we ought to spend any of the surplus until we have secured Social Security for the 21st century. That's a big mistake for us not to do that. So that's what we're doing.

And what I would like to ask all of you to think about—just to step back a minute—I have tried to modernize our Democratic Party in this administration and to build an alliance for the 21st century that would make people think that we could be trusted to govern and get good results. But I have also tried to be faithful to the oldest obligations of citizens in this Republic. This is a time of great change. At every time of great change in our country's history, we have come through it stronger and better than ever before because the leaders of America and the people—most importantly the people—have accomplished three things. You go back and think about it—from the founding to the Civil War to the industrial revolution to the Depression to World War II through the cold war to the present day—at every time of challenge and change, three things have been done to make America stronger.

We have at every turn always widened the circle of opportunity, give more people a chance to pursue happiness. At every turn, we have always deepened the meaning of our freedom. Freedom, you could argue, had a very narrow meaning when we started out. It only fully applied to you if you were a white, male property owner. We have deepened the meaning of our freedom. And the third thing we've done is we've strengthened our Union against all the arguments that it was a bad thing for us to draw closer together as one nation. We have rejected them all and gone forward. Over 200 years later, it looks like we did the right thing at every time.

That's what we have a chance to do now. These are good times. It is not the time to sit around and pat ourselves on the back and think about how good times are. This is a time to prepare for a 21st century that will be America's greatest time if we spend these days, when we have been given the luxury, the opportunity, and the responsibility to do so, preparing for that kind of tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the Harbour Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and Michael Bronfein, owner, Neighborcare Pharmacies.

Statement on Federal Law Enforcement Efforts in the Nevada Biological Materials Case

February 19, 1998

I have been briefed by the Attorney General on today's arrests in Nevada, and we will continue to monitor the situation. I cannot comment on the details of this ongoing law enforcement effort, but let me say this:

All Americans should be deeply grateful to the brave law enforcement officers, especially the agents of the FBI, for their excellent work in this case. It is important for the American people to understand that their law enforcement officials have this situation under control. All materials have been seized and are being analyzed to determine if they are in any way threatening.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in West Orange, New Jersey

February 19, 1998

Thank you very much. I'd like to begin by thanking David and Sylvia for welcoming us to their humble little home here. [*Laughter*] This is a beautiful place. It was worth the trip to see you and your family and your beautiful home and your art and to see you here with your friends. You didn't have to do this tonight, and we're very grateful to you.

I'd like to thank Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Pascrell for being here and for their support in the Congress for our agenda and our attempts to move this country forward. Thank you, Tom Giblin, for leading the Democratic Party in New Jersey. Thank you, Mayor McGreevey, for a wonderful race. I was honored to be a small part of it, and there will be another one up the road.

I'd like to thank the leaders of our national party who are here: our chair, Steve Grossman; and Len Barrack from Philadelphia, who just took over as the national finance chair of the Democratic Party. I'm afraid that he's going to think that every day is going to be like the last 24 hours. We've had three wonderful encounters with people around the country. He thinks this is no heavy lifting. [*Laughter*]

You know, there are just a little over 650 days, 700 days maybe, to the 21st century. And I feel very good about where America is—David talked about a little of it. I feel very grateful to have had the chance to serve as President in these last 5 years. But I think that the most important thing I could say to you tonight is that it would be a real mistake for our country to be relaxed about where we are instead of to feel that this is an enormous opportunity for us to take care of the long-term needs of America and to basically shape a structure of opportunity and a structure of security for ourselves and our friends around the world that will last us well into the next century.

They used to say when I was a boy growing up in Arkansas that the time to fix the roof is not when it's raining. And so I would say, I think—I feel that I've spent the last 5 years trying to fix things in America so that the country would basically work again and so that people would have the confidence to believe that we really could be the masters of our own fate, that if we worked together and did the right things in the right way, we actually could move forward. And I don't think anyone questions that now.

So now what we should be doing is, instead of patting ourselves on the back for nearly now 15 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate and the lowest inflation rate in a generation, the lowest welfare rolls in a generation, lowest crime rate in a generation, we should be thinking about how we can use this moment to look to the future and to build it. And I think that is the most important thing I could say to you.

And I'd just like to mention three or four things. With regard to the economy, we've changed the image of the Democrats with a bunch of tough votes, most importantly, the economic program in 1993, which reduced the deficit by over 90 percent before the balanced budget came in. Then we had a balanced budget bill last year, a lot of which was engineered by your Senator, Frank Lautenberg—you should be very proud of him for that—which not only will give us a balanced budget and a surplus in the next few years but will do so while giving us the biggest investment in children's health and education in a generation and literally opening the doors of college to all Americans who will work for it. That is a very, very important thing.

What still needs to be done? I would argue there are two or three very important things that still need to be done. Number one, we have to recognize that there are still a lot of Americans who have not been caught up in this economic prosperity. They are either unemployed or they're underemployed, largely because they have limited skills and they live in areas where there is no investment. I spent a lot of time trying to get Americans to invest in other parts of the world—a lot of you invested in various parts of the world. Now we need to bring this spark of enterprise to our isolated inner-city neighborhoods and to rural neighborhoods. And it's a great opportunity for us to continue to grow without inflation. And

we have a program as a part of this year's budget to do that.

Secondly, we need to continue to fight against the impulse to withdraw from the rest of the world in terms of trade. I suppose it's the last remaining ideological battle within the Democratic Party about what kind of party we're going to be going into the future. There are people who lose when we expand trade, but that's going to happen whether we have new agreements or not. Most countries have trading systems that are more closed than ours. We have 4 percent of the world's people; we have 20 percent of the world's income. If we want to keep 20 percent of the world's income when the rest of the world, the developing world, is going to grow 3 times as fast as the developed world, we—the math is not difficult—we have to sell more to other people. And so I hope we can continue to expand trade and really do more with it.

The third thing we have to do is to continue to work until we have the finest education system in the world. One reason Americans all over the country were thrilled—I could see it; I could feel it when I was giving the State of the Union Address and I was going through the list of things that the Congress has already done: the $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; credits for the junior and senior year and for graduate school; bigger Pell grants; more work-study positions; cheaper loans that are easier to repay; IRA's for education. One reason everybody is so excited about that is that no one in America doubts that we have the finest system of higher education in the world, and that if you can access it, whether it's at a community college or an Ivy League school, whether it's undergraduate or graduate school, that you will not only be more fulfilled and be a better citizen, but you'll have a better life. No one questions that. By the same token, I don't think any of us can say with a straight face that we believe we have the best system of undergraduate education in the world—I mean, elementary and secondary education in the world. You know that it's not the best system in the world, and you know that the quality varies dramatically. That's why I've been working for national standards. That's why I've been working to connect every classroom in the country to the Internet by the year 2000. That's why we have a program now to lower class sizes in the first three grades to an average of 18 students. If we can pass this program, it will dramatically change the future of education.

All the educational research shows that children who come from difficult backgrounds who have a chance to get personal attention from teachers and to work with their fellow students because the classes are small enough in those early grades have a big leg up in the rest of their learning careers. So I think all of that is very, very important. And I hope you will support that. That's going to be a big part of what we're trying to do. We want to rehabilitate or build 5,000 more schools, and we have a program to do that.

So those are the things that I would like to work on in the economy: Give us a world-class system of elementary and secondary education; give us an economic system where free enterprise can reach the areas that have been left behind; and keep reaching out to the rest of the world—an economy based on opportunity.

What do we have to do with our society if we want it to be a truly responsible society where every citizen does his or her part and we work together? Let me just mention two or three things there. I think the most important thing we can do, more important than anything else, is helping every citizen to reconcile the competing pressures of work and family. Most parents work now. Most parents with children under the age of 5, or 4, or 3, or 2 work now. And most of them have to do that.

That's why I supported the family and medical leave law and why I'd like to see it extended to cover more firms. All the research shows that small firms have had just as easy a time as larger firms in meeting the family and medical leave law. And giving people a little time off when their babies are born or their parents are sick bolsters the morale of families and makes people more productive in the workplace. I think it's important.

That's why I think we ought to raise the minimum wage again. Finally—finally—we are seeing income gains among people in the lower 40 percent of the earners. For 20 years, our incomes began to split apart in America, from about the mid-seventies on. Those of us with good educations tended to have our incomes grow more than the economy as a whole, and people who didn't have as much tended to have their incomes not grow at all or even fall behind. Inflation—that's beginning to turn around again.

But no one who works 40 hours a week and raises kids should be in poverty in this country. We shouldn't tax them into poverty. And one of the things we did in 1993 that David mentioned was with the earned-income tax credit. The average family now with an income of $30,000 a year or less that has at least two children is paying $1,000 less in taxes than they would have paid under the old system before 1993. I think that's important.

I think it's important that we implement this child health program to extend health insurance to 5 million more kids. There's nothing more—every parent in this room has known what it is like to worry about your child's health. There's not a single, solitary parent here who hasn't had at least one sleepless night at some time during your children's childhood over your child's health. Imagine how much worse it would be if you didn't think you could afford to take your kid to the doctor or if you thought the only way you could do it would be to show up at the emergency room and then you would be bankrupt. So I think this is important. I think it is terribly important.

I think it's important that our child care initiative pass, which will make child care more affordable to millions of Americans—and safer. And I think that it's important that we pass this comprehensive tobacco settlement that will give us the tools we need to protect our children from tobacco. Every year—still the biggest public health problem in America—every day, 3,000 kids illegally start to smoke; a thousand of them will die sooner because of it. It dwarfs the threat of cancer. It dwarfs the threat of alcoholism. It dwarfs the threat of getting killed in a car when you get your driver's license. It dwarfs everything. It will cost more young people bigger parts of their future than anything else. So we're going to try to pass that this year. And if we do, it will open up a whole new vista. That's very important.

Now, the other thing I want to talk about a little on this is the future of health care. Hillary had an idea that we should basically give a gift to the country, that our generation should give a set of gifts to the country for the millennium. And we thought basically of two things. One was that—literally a millennial trust, which she helped to put together with all the rest of our people, with the theme of "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." And so one of the things that we're trying to do is to put some of the money, if we can get a tobacco settlement, put a big chunk of the money into a research fund that will double funding for the National Cancer Institute, have a huge increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health, have a big increase in funding for the National Science Foundation, support the international space station, just do a whole range of things that will help to prepare the future for our people.

In addition, we want to, with public and private money, save the Star-Spangled Banner, which, by the way, is in tatters and needs $13 million to be saved. And our precious documents, all of which—the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution—all of them need serious work. That's a very important part of building the kind of society we want. We have to both respect our past and always be investing in the future.

The second biggest thing we can do, I think—and this leads to the last topic I wanted to mention. I've done everything I could in a world which is constantly being torn apart by people's differences to build one community in America. I have tried to take the venom out of political life, with mixed results. [*Laughter*] I have done my best to bring people together across racial and religious lines.

And I've also tried to bring us together across generational lines. And the most important proposal that we have on the table for this year is the proposal that we couldn't even have imagined even a year ago. It looks like we're going to balance the budget this year if the economic difficulties of Asia don't slow our growth too much. If it does, we'll still balance the budget next year. And it is then projected that we will have a structural surplus for quite a long time. That is, the economy will go up and down, and some years we may have it, and some years we may not. But over any multi-year period, if we stay with the discipline we have now we're going to start running big surpluses.

And this is an election year so it's tempting for people to say, "Well, here's what I'll promise you with my surplus, I'll give you a tax cut," or "I'll give you a spending program" or whatever. I think it is a terrible mistake. I don't think we should spend a penny of the surplus until we have secured Social Security for the 21st century.

And everybody knows—there are surveys which show that young people believe it is more

likely that they will see a UFO than that they'll ever draw Social Security. [*Laughter*] But it's not a big, mysterious problem. When Social Security was set up, you couldn't draw until you were 65, and the average life expectancy was less than 65. Now the average life expectancy for Americans is way up in the seventies. For a young girl born today, it's about 80. And for people who live to be 65, it's into the eighties today. The fastest growing group of Americans are in their eighties.

Meanwhile, the baby boomers, and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, meaning when I retire, from that year, for 18 years after when people my age retire, will be the biggest group of retirees ever put into the system. The people coming along behind us in the 18 years thereafter are a much smaller group. The people behind them are a smaller group. Only now do we have people in school, in kindergarten through the 12th grade, that are a bigger group than the baby boomers for the first time ever. But it's going to take a while before all of them are in the work force. So this is arithmetic. In 1959 there were five people working for every one person drawing Social Security. In 2019 or 2029, there will be two people working for every person drawing Social Security unless we all start working a lot longer or there's a huge influx of immigrants or something unforeseen happens.

But if we make small changes now, and if we husband our money now, and if we look at some options for what we can do to make sure we're getting the best possible rate of return as long as it's a secure and safe return, then we can look at people like the people who have served us here tonight who are going to work their whole lives and say, "You may be young, but at least you'll have this basic thing for security when you retire."

The other thing we have to do, though, is to level with people. People retiring now—almost nobody retiring now can maintain their standard of living on Social Security. So we also have to do more to help people save for their own retirement and to be honest with them and level with them and say, "You're going to have to do this, but here is an attractive way to do it," and make it as easy as possible. I think that's very, very important. We should save Social Security before we go about spending this surplus that hasn't even materialized yet. We were in a financial wilderness for 30 years; we're out of it. Let's not get back in it just because it's election year.

And the last point I would like to make is this: The United States has an unbelievable opportunity to sort of sail against the tide of all the ethnic and racial and religious conflict that seems to be dominating the world now, as the cold war recedes to a distant memory and the world is not divided into big blocs. You know that people used to worry about—little countries used to worry about being treated like little specks of metal. And the United States and the Soviet Union were the big magnet, and they were all going to be swallowed up into some bloc. Now we have to worry about disintegration. You know, everybody wants to be separate.

What we have worked for here in this country always, with increasing levels of success, is a way of appreciating the differences between people and still being united because we were able to articulate values that were more important to us than the differences. So we could celebrate our differences because we all knew we were still Americans.

Now that's become more important than ever before. There are—in the school district which is across the river from the White House in Virginia, in Alexandria—Fairfax County school district—there are people from 180 different national and ethnic groups speaking over 100 different languages, in one school district.

The world is coming into America. If we can figure out a way to continue to strengthen our Union, to be one America, to celebrate all these differences and say, but here are the things that we all agree to—read our Constitution, read our Bill of Rights—this is what we all agree to, then we are going to have an enormous leg up in the global society of the 21st century.

How much time have we spent around here at the table tonight talking about the Middle East or the travails of my people in Ireland and other places around the world? But I'm telling you, we're on the right side of history, and we have to keep fighting for these things.

Just today we had the new leader of the Republic of Srpska, the new premier, in Washington. And here's a man leading the Serbs saying, "We have to find a way to reconcile the different ethnic groups. We have to come to grips with the war crimes. We have to do all these things." Unheard of—no one could have imagined it just a year ago. We are on the

right side of history, and we have to keep fighting for these things.

And the last point I want to make is this: I have tried to change the Democratic Party, to modernize it. I have tried to create what you might call a new Democratic Party. And I have caused a little bit of controversy along the way in doing that. But I have to tell you that the longer I go on in this job and the more time I spend reading American history, as well as trying to think about the future, the more I realize that there are two or three basic functions that a political party has to fulfill at every point in our history.

If you go back through the whole of American history, I believe you will conclude, as I have, that there are three great challenges that confront the American people at every moment of real change. And the party which serves the American people best is the party which embraces those challenges and pushes them hardest.

Now, if you go back to the beginning, you look at that, you look at the Civil War, you look at the industrial revolution, you look at all the crises of the 20th century, you will see that at every point in time we have been asked for ourselves—and increasingly in the 20th century for people around the world—to do three things: to widen the circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of freedom, and to strengthen the Union.

The Republican Party, in fairness, was born out of a desire to save the Union. And Abraham Lincoln gave his life to save the Union and to make the Constitution mean something when it came to freedom for black Americans. And they were the party of the Union and of widening the circle of opportunity and of deepening the meaning of freedom all the way from Abraham Lincoln through Theodore Roosevelt. And our party had a pretty weak record in that period, I'm ashamed to say, and not so good in the years just before.

But if you look at the beginning and if you look at our record from Woodrow Wilson forward, I think you would have to conclude, we weren't always right on everything, but on balance our party has the stronger record when it comes to widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of freedom, and standing up for a stronger Union.

And that, in a fundamental way, is what my administration has been all about—looking toward the 21st century. I'm proud to be a Democrat. I'm proud of your support. And I thank you for your help tonight.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:57 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts David and Sylvia Steiner; Thomas P. Giblin, chairman, New Jersey State Democratic Committee; Mayor James E. McGreevey of Woodbridge, NJ; Steve Grossman, national chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Republika Srpska, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Remarks at the Holiday Park Senior Center in Wheaton, Maryland
February 20, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. I want to thank all of you for being here today and particularly those of you who have been active in health care. I thank Secretary Shalala and Deputy Secretary Higgins and Secretary Herman, who worked very hard on this; and Hershel Gober, the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and Janice Lachance and Nancy-Ann Min DeParle, all the people who are here from the administration. General Hill, thank you for being here.

I'd like to thank County Council President Leggett and all the local officials who are here. A special word of thanks to Chris Jennings in the White House. You know, the staff people who work on these things never get enough credit. This is great—the Vice President and I get up here, and we give these speeches, and you think how wise we are. [*Laughter*] And the truth is, there is always somebody making us look smarter than we are. [*Laughter*] And I'm very grateful to all the people who worked on

this, who passionately care about you and people like you all over this country who never get the acknowledgements they deserve.

I thank Beth Layton and all the people here at Holiday Park for the work you're doing. I've been feeling very sentimental here. Twenty-one years ago, I'm almost sure it was 21 years ago this month, when I was a very young public official in my very first office of service, I had the State's first conference on senior citizens affairs. I never will forget it. I had it in the same place where I had my high school prom. [*Laughter*] And now I have my AARP card. [*Laughter*] I'm amazed at how farsighted I was back then to be concerned about this.

I thank Marty Wish for his remarkable statement and for reminding us why we're working so hard. The first person I heard tell that story about "As Good As It Gets" was the Vice President. And every time anybody sees that movie, they always cheer. I understand it's going to be disqualified for an Academy Award because it's too close to real life. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Representative Morella and Representative Stark for being here and for their efforts to make health care quality a bipartisan American issue, not a partisan political issue. And I thank you both for being here. Thank you very much.

We were going to have one other person here today, a woman named Dian Bower from California, whose son has a very serious illness that's being treated in a veterans military—excuse me, a military managed care program. And she's very well satisfied with it but passionately committed to the concept of a Patients' Bill of Rights. But because of the very difficult weather our fellow Americans in California have been experiencing—I'm sure you've been keeping up with it—she was unable to come. But I would like to thank her for efforts to be here.

I'm pleased to accept this report from the Vice President. I just have to say one word about him. I asked the Vice President to undertake a very—what appeared to be a completely thankless job. When we took office, we had a deficit of $290 billion, and I said, "Look, we have to find a way to reduce the Federal payroll by a minimum of 100,000, and we have to do it without throwing anybody in the streets, and we have to do it without losing the confidence of Federal employees or breaking their morale. They have to feel good about this." In other words, I was asking him to take two and two and make three or five or something other than four. And he worked with the Federal employees groups. Five years later, with the strong support and work and partnership of the Federal employees organization, the Federal payroll is 300,000 smaller than it was the day I took office. And—and—we have had good early retirement programs for the Federal employee. We have worked with them in a constructive way. The Government is working better, and it has freed up money to invest in putting another 100,000 police on the street, in improving education and advancing the environment and doing all these things.

But as part of our philosophy of government, we want a Government that is both smaller and more active, that gives people the tools to make the most of their own lives and acts as a catalyst for new ideas. And that's what we're doing here today. And this is perhaps the best example of all the wonderful work the Vice President has done in 5 years of reinventing Government, of how you can have a Government that's smaller and still does more to meet the real needs of the American people. So I want to thank him for that.

What this report does is point out that we are quite close to making sure that our Federal health plans actually comply with the Patients' Bill of Rights that I have proposed. And today after I speak I am going to sign a directive over here on this desk which directs all our Federal agencies to finish the job by taking the necessary steps outlined in the Vice President's report to me.

Now, I want you to understand clearly what this will mean—just this action will mean to the lives of the American people. With the authority of the Federal Government, we will ensure that a third of all Americans—a third of all Americans—are protected by a Patients' Bill of Rights. Now, that's every person on Medicare, every person on Medicaid, including children and people with disabilities, all of our Federal employees and their families that are covered, all of our military personnel, and members of the biggest health care system in America, all of our veterans and all their families.

A third of the American people will have now a Patients' Bill of Rights that says this: You have the right to know all your medical options, not just the cheapest; you have a right to choose a specialist for the care you need; you have the right to emergency room care wherever and

whenever you need it; you have the right to keep your medical records confidential—very important; you have the right to bring a formal grievance or appeal of a health care decision with which you disagree.

And we are proving we can make these rights real now for nearly 90 million Americans. That's how many people we're talking about. And we can do this without increasing the deficit, without burdening the system or consumers. With this step we are setting a standard for the Nation.

But we must not stop here. And that's why I am so glad to see Congresswoman Morella and Congressman Stark here, because now the Congress must pass national legislation to protect all Americans with a Patients' Bill of Rights. We are doing all we can do here with the stroke of the President's pen, but it should be an example that the rest of America should follow.

I know there will be voices of opposition in the Congress and in the health care industry. But every American deserves the protection of a Patients' Bill of Rights. Those of you who are retired Federal employees who are still under a plan, you will be covered today. I bet you feel just as strongly as you did before I came here to sign this that everybody whose not in a plan you're in deserves the same protection. And we need to be clear and unambiguous about that.

I look forward to working together with Members of Congress in both parties who have shown the determination to do something about this. This Patients' Bill of Rights is in keeping with our profoundest obligations to our parents, to our children, to the neediest, to the most vulnerable among us, in keeping with our oldest ideals enshrined in the Bill of Rights, and it is an essential part of our effort and our obligation to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

We want the benefits of managed care. We all like it when health care inflation is not going up at 3 and 4 and 5 times the rate of inflation. It gives all of you who are on fixed incomes more disposable income for other things that are terribly important to you. But we must never, ever, ever sacrifice the fundamental quality of care and the security that gives people, knowing that they live in a country that not only has the best health care system in the world in theory, it's the best in the world, in fact, in their lives.

Now, the Vice President talked about some of the things we have been doing in the last several years. A couple of years ago, Congress passed a law I strongly supported that says you can't lose your health insurance if you change jobs because someone in your family has been sick. The balanced budget amendment that I signed into law last year extends the Medicare Trust Fund until 2010. And we now have a Medicare commission meeting and working on how to preserve and protect Medicare well into the 21st century.

The balanced budget law also contains an unprecedented $24 billion over the next 5 years to add up to 5 million more children to the ranks of the insured. And we're working with the States to do that. And Secretary Shalala is doing a great job in working with the States to make sure that we pick up more of these kids that don't have any health insurance. And just last week, I directed Federal agencies with programs with children to do more to enroll children as quickly as possible.

This Patients' Bill of Rights is the next important step to make sure every American family has the quality health care all families need to thrive. It's especially important as our health care system continues to change.

Now, 35 years ago, President Kennedy proposed a consumer bill of rights to protect Americans from unsafe products. He said, "We share an obligation to protect the common interests in every decision we make." Those rights are still protecting us today, those consumer rights, every time we rent a car or use a credit card or buy a toy for a child. The rights we are helping here to establish with the Patients' Bill of Rights will protect our children and our grandchildren 35 years from now and beyond.

This is a good day for America, and I am proud to sign the executive memorandum to ensure the Patients' Bill of Rights to nearly 90 million of our fellow citizens.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Mack C. Hill, USA, U.S. Army Assistant Surgeon General for Force Management; Isiah Leggett, president, Montgomery County Council; Elizabeth Layton, vice chair, Holiday Park Senior Center Advisory Council; and Martin Wish, former chair, Montgomery County Commission on Aging.

Memorandum on Federal Agency Compliance With the Patient Bill of Rights

February 20, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Federal Agency Compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights

Last November, I directed you to review the health care programs you administer and/or oversee and report to me on the level and adequacy of the patient protections they provide. Specifically, I asked you to advise me on the extent to which those programs are in compliance with the Health Care Consumer Bill of Rights (the "Patient Bill of Rights") recommended by the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry ("the Quality Commission").

Yesterday, you formally conveyed your reports to me through Vice President Gore. He advises me that each of your agencies is well on its way toward full compliance with the patient protections recommended by the Quality Commission. By doing so, your agencies will serve as strong models for health plans in the private sector.

Under your leadership, we are showing that it is possible and desirable to ensure that patients have the tools they need to navigate through an increasingly complex health care delivery system. We are showing that common sense solutions for all too common problems in our health systems are the right prescription not only for beneficiaries of Federally administered programs, but for our private sector colleagues as well. Your efforts illustrate that patient protections can be accomplished without excessive costs or regulations.

While the news is encouraging, your reports also indicate that we have not completed the job. Although Federal health programs are taking a leading role in providing protections to patients, your report indicates we have the regulatory and administrative authority to come into substantial compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights, and I believe that this should be one of my Administration's highest priorities.

Therefore, I hereby direct you to take the following actions consistent with the missions of your agencies to come into compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall:

- take all appropriate administrative actions to ensure that the Medicare and Medicaid programs come into substantial compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights, including access to specialists and improved participation in treatment decisions, by no later than December 1999; and
- notify all State Medicaid directors that emergency room care protections should be consistent with the Patient Bill of Rights.

The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall:

- ensure that all 350 Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) participating carriers come into contractual compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights, particularly with regard to access to specialists, continuity of care, and access to emergency room services by no later than December 31, 1999; and
- with respect to participating carriers, propose regulations to prohibit, within 90 days, practices that restrict physician-patient communications about medically necessary treatment options.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall:

- take the necessary administrative action to ensure that a sufficient appeals process is in place throughout the Veteran's Health System by September 30, 1998; and
- issue a policy directive to ensure that beneficiaries in the Veteran's Health System are provided information consistent with the Patient Bill of Rights by September 30, 1998.

The Secretary of Defense shall:

- establish a strong grievance and appeals process consistent with the Patient Bill of Rights throughout the military health system by September 30, 1998;

- issue a policy directive to promote greater use, within the military health system, of providers who have specialized training in women's health issues to serve as primary care managers for female beneficiaries and to ensure access to specialists for beneficiaries with chronic medical conditions by September 30, 1998; and
- issue a policy directive to ensure that all patients in the military health system can fully discuss all treatment options. This includes requiring disclosure of financial incentives to physicians and prohibiting "gag clauses" by September 30, 1998.

The Secretary of Labor shall:

- propose regulations to strengthen the internal appeals process for all Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) health plans to ensure that decisions regarding urgent care are resolved within 72 hours and generally resolved within 15 days for non-urgent care; and
- propose regulations that require ERISA health plans to ensure the information they provide to plan participants is consistent with the Patient Bill of Rights.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Videotaped Remarks on Expansion of United Nations Security Council Resolution 986 Concerning Iraq

February 20, 1998

No people have suffered more at the hands of Saddam Hussein than the Iraqi people themselves. I have been very moved, as so many others around the world have been, by their plight. Because of Saddam Hussein's failure to comply with U.N. resolutions, the sanctions imposed by the U.N. at the end of the Gulf war to stop him from rebuilding his military might are still in place.

As a result, the people of Iraq have suffered. They are the victims of Saddam's refusal to comply with the resolutions he promised to honor. The United States strongly supports the U.N. Secretary General's recommendation to more than double the amount of oil Iraq can sell in exchange for food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies. We will work hard to make sure those funds are used to help the ordinary people of Iraq.

Since the Gulf war, our policy has been aimed at preventing Saddam from threatening his region or the world. We have no quarrel with the Iraqi people who are heirs to a proud civilization and who have suffered for so many years under Saddam's rule.

From the beginning, the international sanctions that are aimed at denying Saddam Hussein the funds to rebuild his military machine have permitted food and medicine into Iraq. The United States has led the way in trying to make sure Iraq had the resources to pay for them. In 1991, with our leadership, the U.N. Security Council encouraged Iraq to sell oil to pay for these critical humanitarian supplies. Saddam Hussein rejected that offer for 4 years, choosing instead to let his people suffer. What resources he had went not to caring for his people but to strengthening his army, hiding his weapons of mass destruction, and building lavish palaces for his regime.

In 1995 America led a new effort to aid the Iraqi people. After refusing the proposal for a year, Saddam finally accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 986, which permits the sale of oil for food. Then he engaged in delay and bureaucratic wrangling for yet another year before allowing the resolution to take effect.

Perhaps worst of all, Saddam deliberately and repeatedly delayed the pumping of oil, which held up shipments of food and medicine to the Iraqi population. Even so, the international community has managed to deliver to the Iraqi people more than 3 million tons of food.

Just as Saddam deprives his people of relief from abroad, he represses them at home, brutally putting down the uprisings of the Iraqi people after the Gulf war, attacking Irbil in 1996, and draining the marshes of Southern Iraq.

Saddam's priorities are painfully clear: not caring for his citizens but building weapons of mass destruction and using them—using them not

once but repeatedly in the terrible war Iraq fought with Iran, and not only against combatants but against civilians, and not only against a foreign adversary but against his own people. And he's targeted Scud missiles against fellow Arabs and Muslims in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.

Now, he is trying to rid Iraq of the international inspectors who have done such a remarkable job in finding and destroying his hidden weapons—weapons he himself promised in 1991 to report and help destroy. If Saddam is allowed to rebuild his arsenal unchecked, none of the region's children will be safe.

America is working very hard to find a diplomatic solution to this crisis Saddam has created. I have sent my Secretary of State, my Defense Secretary, and my Ambassador to the United Nations literally around the world to work with our friends and allies. If there is a way to resolve this peacefully, we will pursue it to the very end.

But from Europe to the Persian Gulf, all agree on the bottom line: Saddam must allow the U.N. weapons inspectors to complete their mission with full and free access to any site they suspect may be hiding material or information related to Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs. That is what Saddam agreed to as a condition for ending the Gulf war way back in 1991.

Nobody wants to use force. But if Saddam refuses to keep his commitments to the international community, we must be prepared to deal directly with the threat these weapons pose to the Iraqi people, to Iraq's neighbors, and to the rest of the world. Either Saddam acts, or we will have to.

Saddam himself understands that the international community places a higher value on the lives of the Iraqi people than he does. That is why he uses innocent women and children as human shields, risking what we care about—human lives—to protect what he cares about—his weapons. If force proves necessary to resolve this crisis, we will do everything we can to prevent innocent people from getting hurt. But make no mistake: Saddam Hussein must bear full responsibility for every casualty that results.

To all our Arab and Muslim friends, let me say America wants to see a future of security, prosperity, and peace for all the people of the Middle East. We want to see the Iraqi people free of the constant warfare and repression that have been the hallmark of Saddam's regime. We want to see them living in a nation that uses its wealth not to strengthen its arsenal but to care for its citizens and give its children a brighter future. That is what we'll keep working for and what the people of Iraq deserve.

NOTE: These remarks were videotaped at approximately 4 p.m. on February 18 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for later broadcast, and they were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

February 20, 1998

Today's decision to suspend Sinn Fein from the Northern Ireland peace talks shows that the UK and Irish Governments are committed to an inclusive process but one that reaffirms that it is unacceptable to mix politics and violence.

Peace in Northern Ireland is best served if all the political leaders of Northern Ireland work to find common ground to make common cause for peace. The United States stands with those who support peace and against those extremists on both sides who will use all the means at their disposal to sabotage a peaceful settlement that the vast majority of both communities, and countries, support. I call on Sinn Fein to take the necessary steps to rejoin the talks and for all parties to reject violence and demonstrate in word and deed commitment to the Mitchell principles that exclusively peaceful means are the only way forward.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting Budget Rescissions
February 20, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report 24 proposed rescissions of budgetary resources, totaling $20 million.

These proposed rescissions affect programs of the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, and Transportation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The report detailing the proposed rescissions was published in the *Federal Register* on February 27.

Letter to Members of the Senate on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation
February 20, 1998

Dear _____:

Next week, the Senate is scheduled to debate campaign finance legislation. You will have an important opportunity to cast a vote for real reform of our electoral process. Today, I am writing to urge you to support legislation that will make our democracy work better for all Americans.

The campaign finance laws were last rewritten twenty-three years ago. Those laws have served us well, but they have been overwhelmed by a flood of money and the rising cost of campaigns. Politicians have talked about reform for years. Now it is time to act. The McCain-Feingold bill puts an end to the soft money system, expands disclosure requirements, increases penalties for election law violations, and strengthens the rules for so-called independent campaign expenditures. Make no mistake: a vote against McCain-Feingold is a vote for soft money, for unlimited backdoor campaign expenditures, for the status quo.

For these reasons, I have supported and will continue to support the McCain-Feingold Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act and I urge the Senate to pass it. I also urge the Senate to reject any attempts to attach an amendment that would make this bill unpalatable to one party or another. Such an attempt is nothing less than an effort to defeat campaign finance reform.

A critical mass has been reached for campaign finance reform. Citizen groups, spurred by business executives and civic leaders, have gathered one million signatures on a petition to Congress calling for reform. Presidents Ford, Carter, and Bush have been joined by dozens of former lawmakers in calling for reform.

Today the responsibility rests in the hands of the Senate. If you want to strengthen our democracy, vote for the McCain-Feingold Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to all Members of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 21.

The President's Radio Address
February 21, 1998

Good morning. February is Black History Month, the time when we celebrate the rich heritage of the African-American community and rededicate ourselves to the value of equal opportunity for all Americans that is at the heart of the American ideal. Today I want to talk

about an important step we're taking to make sure all Americans, no matter what their background, have a better opportunity to live healthier lives.

In the last 6 years, we've worked hard to make quality health care more accessible and affordable and to place more emphasis on prevention. And this approach is working. Since 1993, our Nation's health has greatly improved. Infant mortality has reached an all-time low, childhood immunization levels are at an all-time high, and AIDS death rates are falling for the first time in the history of the epidemic. Americans are living longer and are in better health than ever before.

This is good news we should all celebrate. But we must not be blind to the alarming fact that too many Americans do not share in the fruits of our progress, and nowhere are the divisions of race and ethnicity more sharply drawn than in the health of our people.

Consider: Infant mortality rates are twice as high for African-Americans as for white Americans; African-American men suffer from heart disease at nearly twice the rate of whites; African-Americans are more likely to die from breast cancer and prostate cancer. Overall, cancer fatalities are disproportionately high among both Latinos and blacks. Vietnamese women are 5 times as likely to have cervical cancer; Chinese-Americans, 4 to 5 times as likely to have liver cancer. Hepatitis B is much more prominent among Asian-Americans than the rest of the populations. Native Americans suffer higher rates of infant mortality and heart disease. And for diabetes, Hispanic rates are twice the national average, and Native American rates, 3 times the national average.

Research shows that, overall, all these groups are less likely to be immunized against disease, less likely to be routinely tested for cancer, less likely to get regular check-ups. We do not know all the reasons for these disturbing gaps. Perhaps inadequate education, disproportionate poverty, discrimination in the delivery of health services, cultural differences are all contributing factors. But we do know this: No matter what the reason, racial and ethnic disparities in health are unacceptable in a country that values equality and equal opportunity for all. And that is why we must act now with a comprehensive initiative that focuses on health care and prevention for racial and ethnic minorities.

This is our national goal: By the year 2010, we must eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality, diabetes, cancer screening and management, heart disease, AIDS, and immunization.

My balanced budget plan devotes an unprecedented $400 million to spur promising prevention and outreach programs to help us meet this challenge. I'm asking our top public health officials, led by Secretary Donna Shalala, to convene a task force to find new ways of targeting existing Federal programs to reduce racial and ethnic disparities. Our new Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, will launch a comprehensive campaign to educate the public and work with community leaders and health professionals to reach more Americans.

These steps, along with our drive to give 5 million more children, many of them minorities, health insurance and our huge increase in overall medical research, will bring us closer to our goal. But to truly eliminate these disparities and ensure better health for all Americans, all Americans must do their part.

I'm pleased to announce that Grant-Makers in Health, a major coalition of over 136 philanthropic foundations across the country, is joining our efforts. Together, we'll host a national conference this spring to help solve this national problem, community by community.

Above all, Americans must take more responsibility for our own health and the health of our children, for good health is the greatest gift God can bestow, and it is each of our duty to protect it. America has the best health care system in the world, but we can't take full pride in that system until we know that every American has the best health care in the world. With these steps, I'm confident that we can meet the challenge and go forward as one America into the 21st century, stronger and healthier than ever before.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision Not To Review New Jersey's "Megan's Law"

February 21, 1998

This morning the Supreme Court declined to review a challenge to the community notification provision of New Jersey's "Megan's Law," thus leaving intact a crucial tool to protect children from known sexual predators. Because of the importance of this law to families and communities, my administration has defended its constitutionality, enacted a similar Federal Megan's Law, and worked with States to establish a national sex offender registry. We will continue to do everything we can to make sure that community notification and sex offender registration laws are enforced and upheld throughout the country.

Remarks at the National Governors' Association Dinner

February 22, 1998

Good evening. Governor and Mrs. Voinovich, Governor and Mrs. Carper, ladies and gentlemen, welcome again to the White House. Hillary and I always look forward to this night every year. It brings back a lot of happy memories. And I'm especially glad to have you here this year.

I want to begin by thanking you, all of you, for the contributions that you have made to the success that the United States is now enjoying. The American people have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years. And a lot of that credit goes to you and the people with whom you work and the commitments that you have made to forge the right kind of government for this new era in which we live. A lot of you work every day at building a government that is smaller but more effective, that works as a catalyst and a partner, does actually give our people the tools they need to make the most of this remarkable time in which we're living.

I also want to say I looked at the document you prepared for your meeting; I read it this afternoon while I was thinking about a few other things, but I enjoyed it very much. And I think it shows that you agree with me that these good times impose upon us a special obligation to make the most of them, to strengthen our country for the century ahead.

You know, this country was founded by people who came here seeking relief from the arbitrary exercise of absolute power. They thought they had a better idea. They thought that when free people were able to pursue happiness and work to form a more perfect Union, they could build a truly remarkable society. And more than 200 years later, I think we'd all have to admit that they were right.

I have said many times, but I would like to say again, that it seems to me that at every important time in our country's history we have been faithful to the basic ideas of our Founders, no matter what the challenge was. We have always improved America when we deepen the meaning of our freedom, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our Union.

For your contributions to that, I am profoundly grateful. I hope you enjoy this evening. I look forward to tomorrow. And I'd like to ask everyone here to join me in a toast to the Governors of the 50 States and all the territories—[*laughter*]—and everybody else who is here.

[*At this point, a toast was offered.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George V. Voinovich of Ohio, association chairman, and his wife, Janet; and Gov. Tom Carper of Delaware, association vice chairman, and his wife, Martha.

Remarks at the National Governors' Association Meeting
February 23, 1998

Good morning. Governor Voinovich, Governor Carper, Mr. Scheppach, and to the members of the administration that are here and all the Governors, let me welcome you back to the White House. Before I begin, let me say what I know is on all of our minds: Our thoughts and prayers are with the people in central Florida where tornadoes have now killed 28 people. Governor Chiles is going to visit with our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, the area today, and they will have our concerns with them.

I'd also like to say I'm sorry we're starting a little late, but I've been working on the situation in Iraq. The Vice President and I met with National Security Adviser Berger this morning. Last night, just before our dinner, I spoke with the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and I have called Prime Minister Blair this morning; we had a long talk about the situation. I still have to talk to President Yeltsin and President Chirac, and I may have to leave the meeting and then come back. But that's all I have to say now, but I'm sorry we're starting a little late.

I'd like to confine my opening remarks—and I'll try to truncate them since we're starting late—to education. For 20 years now, Governors have been in the forefront of education reform in the United States. In the late seventies, I was working with Governor Riley and now-Senator Bob Graham and Governor Hunt and others in the South who were trying to raise the standard of living in the Southern States to the national average, in part through an improvement in education.

In '83, when President Reagan was here, Secretary Bell issued the "Nation at Risk" report. In '89, we had the education summit—some of you were there then—which produced the national education goals. In '93, we passed Goals 2000 here and the school-to-work program—I might say both of which have been implemented without a single new Federal regulation, something I'm very proud of.

Last year, in my State of the Union, I outlined a 10-point program in education and asked that we leave politics at the schoolhouse door. And most of that program has now been implemented. I won't go over all of it, but I would just mention three or four issues that I think are important because they relate to many concerns that the Governors have.

First of all, with the increases in Pell grants and 300,000 more work-study positions, with the education IRA's finally giving interest deductions for payments on college loans, the direct loan program, the HOPE scholarship—named after Governor Miller's program in Georgia—and the lifetime learning tax credit, which also applies to the 2d, the 3d, and 4th years of college and graduate school, I think we can finally say for the first time in the history of the country, we've opened the doors of college to all Americans. And that's an astonishing achievement for America. And I'm very proud of that. Secondly, we are well on our way to hooking up all the classrooms and libraries in the country to the Internet by the year 2000. And many of you have been very active in that. Thirdly—I'll say a little more about this in a minute—the national standards movement is alive and well. Fourth, we had the America Reads program, which has several thousand college students in all your States going into elementary school classrooms to teach kids to read. And finally, we funded a huge expansion in the master teacher program, which Governor Hunt has been so active in, and which I think is critically important to the future of education. If we can get a master teacher, a certified master teacher in every school building in America, it will change the culture and content and results of American education.

Now, in '98, in the State of the Union Address, I asked the American people to focus on the fact that we could be happy that we'd opened the doors of college to everybody, because everyone accepts the fact that we have the best system of higher education in the world; everyone accepts that. No one believes America has the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And it seems incongruous. We know that we can have, and I think that should be our goal.

So with a view towards standards, accountability, and expectations all being lifted, our budget in this year makes the largest commitment to K through 12 education in the history

of the country, focused largely on reducing class size in the early grades to an average of 18—there are still a lot of classes with 30 kids or more in them—therefore, to do that, achieving—helping the States and helping local school districts to hire 100,000 teachers, and helping to build or remodel 5,000 schools.

It focuses on more emphasis on teachers, money for teacher training, and more money to develop a master teacher program. It focuses on standards and the continuation of the voluntary national test development for eighth grade math and fourth grade reading.

I know that later today—and all of you may or may not know this—but I know later today Secretary Riley is going to appoint Governor Engler to the NAGB, the independent board that is supposed to develop a test and that guarantees that the States' concerns will be taken into account. I thank Governor Engler for his willingness to serve. I think it is important that we say, whether we use national tests that are somehow evaluated by a national standard or State tests that are evaluated by a national standard, that we do believe that learning the basics is the same in every State in America, and we want to raise the standards in every State in America. I think that is terribly important and I think we can do it. And I thank you, Governor, for your willingness to serve.

One other thing I'd like to say about standards. There's an interesting effort underway in America in many States, and in some cities like Chicago, to find a way to end the practice of social promotion in a way that lifts children up instead of putting them down. In Chicago, they have mandatory summer school, for example, for children that don't perform at grade level. And it's, among other things, led to a dramatic drop in juvenile crime in the summer in Chicago, that more and more people are involved in constructive activities.

Before the next school year starts, Secretary Riley will issue guidelines on how schools can end social promotion and boost their efforts to ensure that more students learn what they need to learn the first time around, and then to help those who don't with extra tutoring and summer school.

I also will send to Congress this year legislation to expand the Ed-Flex program. That's the program that frees the States from Federal regulations so long as they set high academic standards, waive their own regulations for local schools, and hold schools accountable for results. There are, I think, a dozen of you now who are part of the Ed-Flex program. The legislation that I will send would make every State in the country eligible to be a part of it, which would dramatically reduce the regulatory burden of the Federal Government on the States in the area of education.

One last thing I'd like to mention; as all of you know, we have been involved now for about 8 months in a national conversation on race. This race initiative, I think, has produced a number of results both in terms of specific programs and in terms of elevating the dialog in the country about how we can deal with our increasing diversity as one America in the 21st century. I'm delighted that this initiative is also working with the YWCA and with Governors to convene statewide days of dialog on race on April 30th. And I want to thank the YWCA—the CEO, Dr. Prema Mathai-Davis, is here today with us this morning—for helping us to launch these dialogs.

Several of the Governors have already agreed to participate in this, and I hope all the Governors will support the days of dialog. Judith Winston, who is the Executive Director of my initiative on race, is also here today and will be happy to talk with you or your representatives more about this effort.

Now, there are a lot of other issues that I know that you want to talk about, but I'll just end where I tried to begin. I think if we get education right, the rest of this will all resolve itself. As I look at where we are with the unemployment rate in the country, with the growth rate, and I ask myself how can we continue to grow, how we can lower the unemployment rate, how can we do it without inflation, the only answer, it seems to me, is to provide higher skill levels to the people in the places that have not yet fully participated in the good times America is enjoying.

I think it is a democratic obligation on us—small "d"—to make our democracy work, and I think it is an economic imperative. So I hope that we can focus on that, but I'm more than eager to talk about whatever else you'd like to discuss.

Governor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George V. Voinovich of Ohio,

chairman, Gov. Tom Carper of Delaware, vice chairman, and Raymond C. Scheppach, executive director, National Governors' Association; Gov. Lawton Chiles of Florida; United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; President Jacques Chirac of France; Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina; former President Ronald Reagan; former Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell; Gov. Zell Miller of Georgia; and Gov. John Engler of Michigan. The President also referred to the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB); the Education Flexibility (Ed-Flex) Partnership Demonstration Program; and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

Remarks on United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Mission to Iraq and an Exchange With Reporters

February 23, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Let me say first that I welcome U.N. Secretary-General Annan's mission to Baghdad. I thank him and his team for their hard work on behalf of the international community. I also want to commend each and every one of our men and women in uniform and our coalition partners for their steadfastness. Once again, we have seen that diplomacy must be backed by strength and resolve.

The Government of Iraq has made a written commitment to provide immediate, unrestricted, unconditional access for the UNSCOM weapons inspectors to all suspect sites in Iraq, as called for by the United Nations Security Council resolutions. If fully implemented—and that is the big "if"—this commitment will allow UNSCOM to fulfill its mission: first, to find and destroy all of Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons; second, to find and destroy the missiles to deliver those weapons; and third, to institute a system for long-term monitoring to make sure Iraq does not build more.

The Secretary-General has made clear that Iraq's commitment applies to all sites anywhere in the country, including eight so-called presidential sites, which are among the areas to which the weapons inspectors had previously been denied access.

Senior diplomats appointed by the Secretary-General will accompany the UNSCOM experts as they inspect these sites, with repeat visits and no deadlines to complete their work. And Iraq has committed that all other areas, facilities, equipment, records, and means of transportation shall be open to UNSCOM under existing procedures. Again, this includes sites that were previously closed.

There are issues that still need to be clarified to our satisfaction and details that need to be spelled out. We will hear from the Secretary-General tomorrow on these questions, and we will work with him and with UNSCOM to make sure the inspections are rigorous and professional. What really matters is Iraq's compliance, not its stated commitments; not what Iraq says, but what it does. In the days and weeks ahead, UNSCOM must test and verify.

After two crises in the last 4 months, Iraq's failure to allow UNSCOM to do its job would be a serious, serious matter. If Iraq fails to comply this time to provide immediate, unrestricted, unconditional access to the weapons inspectors, there will be serious consequences.

I have ordered our military to remain in the Persian Gulf. Our soldiers, our ships, our planes will stay there in force until we are satisfied that Iran is complying—Iraq is complying with its commitments.

If the inspectors are allowed to inspect where and when they want, then they are the most effective tool we have to monitor Iraq's compliance with the commitment it made at the end of the Gulf war to give up all of its biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons, the missiles to deliver them, and the capacity to rebuild its arsenal.

I hope today's agreement will prove to be the step forward we have been looking for. But the proof is in the testing. The United States remains resolved and ready to secure, by whatever means necessary, Iraq's full compliance

with its commitment to destroy its weapons of mass destruction.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, what makes you think that you will be—you won't be in this position a year from now, 2 years from now, 3 years from now? What in the preliminary details makes you comfortable, or at least somewhat comfortable at this stage?

The President. Well, I've already said I don't know whether we'll be in a position of breach by Iraq within a year. All I said is that I think it is now clear, based on my conversations with Prime Minister Blair, President Chirac, President Yeltsin, and what we in our own team believe, no one seriously believes that there can be a breach of this agreement by Iraq without serious consequences.

But I will say, this is the first time—at least since 1991—that Iraq has made a commitment to unconditional, open, unfettered access to all the sites, not only these presidential sites there's been so much talk about but also some other so-called sensitive sites that have been off limits.

So if the inspection system is allowed to go forward—we know from the record that the UNSCOM inspectors have compiled in the last 7 years that the system works. And if we can find a peaceful means for the system to work to secure the safety of the people in the region, the neighbors of Iraq and others that might be menaced in the future by its weapons of mass destruction, that is what we have been seeking.

Q. Mr. President, if Iraq does not keep its word this time, do we go through this exercise of weeks and weeks and weeks again?

The President. I believe if it does not keep its word this time, everyone would understand that then the United States and hopefully all of our allies would have the unilateral right to respond at a time, place, and manner of our own choosing. And I think that's enough for me to say about that at this time.

Q. Mr. President, you said before that he's lied, and he's cheated. Do you think that you can trust him this time? What's your expectation? I know that you say you're going to take a wait and see attitude.

The President. First of all, that is true. But I've also said before that when the UNSCOM inspectors have been allowed to do their job, even when there's been some cat-and-mouse games over there, they have succeeded beyond anyone's expectations. You just have to look at the volume of stuff they've uncovered and destroyed to know that. Therefore, this should not be a question of trust. First, we need clarity. We need to clarify some of the remaining questions about the agreement to our satisfaction. Clarity is important. And in fairness, all parties, even Saddam Hussein, all the parties are entitled to that—clarity. Then we need to test the agreement and verify that the commitments which are made in writing are kept in fact. So trust should not have to be an issue here. If you have clarity, then you can verify.

So over the next 2 days we have a very—all Americans should have a positive reaction to the fact that we finally have a commitment to open all these sites and to let the inspectors finish their job. We need clarity; we need verification; and I intend to keep our forces at high levels of preparation in the Gulf in the near-term to see what happens in terms of honoring these obligations.

Yes.

Q. Mr. President, Senator Lott says you lack a long-term strategy for handling Iraq. How do you respond to that, sir?

The President. Well, since 1991, our strategy has been to keep the sanctions on, keep Iraq from rebuilding its military might and threatening its neighbors, but to pursue this inspection system to end what is the biggest threat both to its neighbors and to others by indirection, which is the chemical, the biological, and the nuclear weapons program. That has been our strategy all along. Whether that should continue to be our strategy depends in no small measure, I believe, on whether this agreement is honored.

Q. Sir, is there any wiggle room——

Q. Has Saddam capitulated, sir?

The President. I'll answer both questions.

Q. Has Saddam Hussein capitulated?

The President. Well, I think he has admitted that he has to honor commitments he made back in '91. You know, I think that our tough response was essential to getting him to admit that. The Secretary-General has conducted a hard mission. I am satisfied that he has done the best he can. And I am satisfied that we would not have this commitment to open all these spots had not the United States and our allies—and there were lots of them, don't forget—been prepared to go further and to take whatever actions were necessary.

But the main thing we need to do now is to focus on clarifying the details of the agreement to our satisfaction, then going ahead and testing it and verifying the commitment. I think that is the most useful thing. What we want here is to secure the safety of the people who would be exposed to chemical and biological weapons and to whatever nuclear capacity that he might still have.

You know, the United States—I think I should point this out, it's not been part of my statement, but the United States—and Ambassador Richardson was there carrying the ball for us—we strongly supported expanding the program under Resolution 986 in the Security Council to let Iraq sell even more oil to go for food, to lift the Iraqi children above the minimum caloric requirement for all growing children in the world, to build 5,000 more schools, to put a lot more medicine into that country, to rebuild the water and sewer systems and the agriculture system. We care a lot about the people of Iraq, and we want them to have a decent life. But we all—we must still be vigilant and steadfast about this regime.

This is—and I say again, one of you asked me this question—this is not about trusting. First, we need to be clear on what it means, and he needs to be clear on what it means. And then we need to see whether it is enforced. And if it is, fine. If it's not, then the alternative will be a clear course of action to everyone in the world.

Q. Is there any wiggle room in this agreement? Because even before you spoke, some of your critics predicted that you would buy an agreement that was not airtight simply as a way out.

The President. Well, I think it's obvious that I haven't looked for a way out here. What I have looked for is a way forward. The United States, because of our position in the world, is called upon to bring its power to bear when it's important to do so. But we also should have the self-confidence and the conscience to show forbearance as well as strength, and to do what is right.

The objective is unassailable, and he has agreed to the objective, which is full and free and unfettered access. I have told you—not my critics, I have told you—that there are details in this agreement that still have to be flushed out, and there are provisions in it which require greater clarity, and we have to have those things resolved to our satisfaction in order to go forward.

But my instinct is, talking to the Secretary-General and talking to our partners, that we can resolve those things to our satisfaction. I'm hoping that we can, but I am not prejudging it. Ambassador Richardson has got his work cut out for him tomorrow, and the rest of our team will be working closely with him. We'll see what we're doing.

Q. Can you give us examples of those things where maybe you need clarification that could provide a problem?

The President. Well, we'll do that at the proper time. The Secretary-General has asked to have the opportunity—and I think he's entitled to it—to present the memorandum of understanding to the Security Council before the rest of us comment on the details. And I think that he is entitled to that. He's worked very hard; he's had very little sleep in the last several days. And I'm going to honor his request to that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The President also referred to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM).

Memorandum on Helping Schools End Social Promotions
February 23, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Education

Subject: Helping Schools End Social Promotions

The linchpin of our efforts to strengthen public education has been to raise standards and expectations for all students. As a result of State and local efforts, and with the support of Goals 2000 and other Federal education programs, students in every State in the country are beginning to benefit from higher academic standards and a more challenging curriculum.

If our efforts to promote higher standards are to lead to increased student achievement, the standards must count. Students must be required to meet them, and schools must provide each student with adequate preparation.

At present, too often standards don't count. Students are passed from grade to grade often regardless of whether they have mastered required material and are academically prepared to do the work at the next level. It's called "social promotion." For many students, the ultimate consequence is that they fall further and further behind, and leave school ill equipped for college and without the skills needed for employment. This is unacceptable for students, teachers, employers, and taxpayers.

That is why I have repeatedly challenged States and school districts to end social promotions—to require students to meet rigorous academic standards at key transition points in their schooling career, and to end the practice of promoting students without regard to how much they have learned. As every parent knows, students must earn their promotion through effort and achievement, not simply by accumulating time in school.

This is especially important in the early grades, where students must acquire a firm foundation in reading in order to learn other subjects in later grade levels. Students should not be promoted past the fourth grade if they cannot read independently and well, and should not enter high school without a solid foundation in math. They should get the help they need to meet the standards before moving on.

Neither promoting students when they are unprepared nor simply retaining them in the same grade is the right response to low student achievement. Both approaches presume high rates of initial failure are inevitable and acceptable. Ending social promotions by simply holding more students back is the wrong choice. Students who are required to repeat a year are more likely to eventually drop out, and rarely catch up academically with their peers. The right way is to ensure that more students are prepared to meet challenging academic standards in the first place.

Schools must implement those proven practices that will prepare students to meet rigorous standards the first time. Schools must provide smaller classes, especially for the most disadvantaged students. They must be staffed with well-prepared teachers. Schools should use specific grade-by-grade standards and a challenging curriculum aligned with those standards. They must identify those students who need extra help early on, and provide it immediately. There must be after school and summer school programs for students who need them. The entire school staff must be accountable for results, and must work together as a team to achieve them for every child.

If steps such as these are taken in every school as part of an overall effort to require students to meet academic standards, we would see a dramatic rise in student achievement and a decline in student retention rates. My Administration must help States, school districts, and schools take these steps.

A growing number of States and school districts is responding to the challenge of ending social promotion. A recent study by the American Federation of Teachers shows that seven States now require school districts and schools to use State standards and assessments to determine if students can be promoted at key grades. We must encourage more States to take this step.

Chicago has also ended social promotions, and instituted a program that provides after school programs for students who need extra help and mandatory summer school for students who do not meet promotion standards. In Cincinnati, student promotion is now based on specific standards that define what students must know and be able to do. The standards are designed to prepare students to pass the State's ninth-

grade proficiency test. My Administration's proposal to establish Education Opportunity Zones in high poverty urban and rural communities will help more local school systems take these and related steps to help students meet challenging standards.

As more States and localities move to end social promotions, we must help them design and implement approaches that will succeed. Therefore, I am directing you to take the following actions within 6 months:

1. *Produce and Widely Disseminate Guidelines for Educators and Policymakers on Effective Approaches to Ending Social Promotions*. Drawing on the lessons from research and practice, these guidelines should provide educators and policymakers with practical advice on how to design and implement policies that require students to meet academic standards at key transition points before being promoted. The guidelines should help schools:

- implement strategies that will prepare all students to meet the standards on time;
- end the use of remedial strategies that have been shown to be ineffective;
- provide students who do not meet the standards with immediate and effective extra help—such as after school tutoring programs and summer school—so they can be promoted on time;
- implement effective interventions for students who must be retained; and
- make appropriate use of tests and other indicators of academic performance in determining whether students should be promoted.

2. *Help States and School Districts Use Federal Education Resources to Implement Effective Practices*. The Department of Education should develop a plan to inform States, school districts, and schools how Department of Education programs and resources, such as Title 1, Goals 2000, the 21st Century Schools Program, the Comprehensive School Reform Program, and others, can be used to implement the recommendations in the guidelines described above.

Together, these initiatives can help ensure that our students receive a solid foundation in the basic skills of reading and math, and master advanced subject matters as well. They can help improve the quality of teaching and learning in our schools, and ensure that students who need extra help get it without delay. They can help strengthen our public schools by raising standards, raising expectations, and restoring accountability.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at the Democratic Governors' Association Dinner

February 23, 1998

Thank you very much for that wonderful, wonderful welcome. Thank you, Governor Rossello, for your remarks and your leadership. It's good to see you and Maga here. And let me say it's a great tribute to you and to Governor O'Bannon and Judy O'Bannon and the other Governors here that this is the most successful DGA fundraiser in history. Thank you. And thank Katie Whelan and all the staff; you did a wonderful job tonight.

I'm delighted to be here with all the Governors and a lot of former Governors who came back to see me. We all had our pictures taken together—ex-Governors. And I began to think about the "ex" thing. [*Laughter*] I don't know how many of you saw the wonderful movie "Amistad," but it's a fabulous movie. But I went to the Washington premier, and I was sitting back in the audience and Anthony Hopkins, who is a magnificent actor, was portraying John Quincy Adams, who after he left the White House, served 8 terms in the Congress, and made the argument before the Supreme Court in behalf of the people who were turned into slaves on the ship and brought over here. But when he was preparing—there's a great line in the movie where John Quincy Adams says of himself—he said, "There is nothing in life more pathetic than a former President." [*Laughter*] So I got to thinking, I hope that's not true. [*Laughter*]

I like being a former Governor. I was the chairman of this group in 1980, 18 years ago. I'm the only person who ever served as chairman of this group who was not yet old enough to vote. [*Laughter*] And that's because Jim Hunt made me do it. [*Laughter*].

But for nearly 20 years now, I have followed the fortunes of the Democratic Governors. And I want to try to emphasize tonight one of the points that Governor Rossello made about the importance of the '98 elections and why it matters what the party affiliation, but more importantly, what the philosophy, the values, the direction of the Governors is and will be as we move quickly into a new century.

I'd like to begin with a kind of a representative issue that is rather unique in American public life, the issue that Governor Rossello's whole career embodies, that of Puerto Rico. This is the centennial year of Puerto Rico's affiliation with the United States. And I think that it is time that we responded to the aspirations of the 4 million U.S. citizens who live there and allow them to determine their ultimate political status.

The people in Puerto Rico have local self-government, but they do not have votes that are fully votes in their National Government. My colleague, when I was a Governor, was Carlos Romero-Barcelo, who now represents Puerto Rico in the Congress, and he does a great job. I'm glad to see him back there.

I have always said that the people of Puerto Rico should decide for themselves, and Congress ought to give them a chance to do that, what they want their relationship to the United States to be. There is now a bipartisan bill making its way through the Congress to establish a process for resolving this issue that gives Puerto Ricans the powers to vote on the long-discussed options of statehood, commonwealth, or national sovereignty, independent or linked with the United States.

Some people question the option of statehood because of the Hispanic culture of Puerto Rico. And with all respect, I disagree with them. After all, this is an issue for the 21st century for America.

Consider the history: We have made Puerto Ricans citizens. We have drafted them into the Armed Forces. We extend most laws to them, especially those that are convenient to us—the rest of us. To use their culture, to bar them from voting rights or responsibilities in our country if they so choose to seek them by majority vote is wrong. And this is not primarily about Puerto Rico, but about the rest of us. What are our values? What is our culture? How can we make one America in a world and a nation ever more diverse? We have to begin by saying, "It doesn't matter what your ethnic or racial or religious heritage is; it matters only if you embrace the ideas of the Founders as embodied in the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights.

I say that because I think tonight I want to bring you back to first principles. I've spent a lot of time over the last—well, going back to at least to 1984 trying to modernize the Democratic Party, trying to get rid of all the things that people used to be able to say about us that would keep us from winning the White House, that would keep us in an almost defensive position constantly in the national political debate. I have constantly argued that we had to go beyond the debate that paralyzed Washington in the 1980's between those who said Government was the problem and those who said Government was the solution, to embrace nationally a philosophy that was embedded in the work of every Democratic Governor I ever worked with, going back to the 1970's—the belief that Government ought to be no bigger than necessary, ought to be as little inefficiency, and ought to be as little bureaucracy in the Government as possible, but that Government should be progressive, should be committed to being a good partner, should be a catalyst for new ideas at work, and most important of all, should be absolutely unequivocally committed to giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives and to making sure everyone had a fair chance at their version of the American dream.

So I spent a lot of time on that, and I think there's a lot of evidence that it works. The Government is the smallest it's been since President Kennedy was here, but we have done more to open the doors of college to all Americans, for example, than ever before. We are making the biggest investment in child health in a generation, as Governor Rossello said. My present balanced budget has the largest effort to improve kindergarten through 12th grade education in the history of the Republic. So I spent a lot of time talking about how we have modernized our party and how there is a third way that broke the logjam of the eighties. But what I

want to say to you tonight is—the most important thing is, all modernizing our party did was to give us a way of being true to the oldest ideals of both our party and our Nation.

Who came here and why in the beginning? A bunch of folks came here who had suffered all kinds of persecution, political persecution, religious persecution. And what did they want to do? They wanted to be rid of the arbitrary, abusive exercise of unlimited power by people in Government. Why? Because they thought free people, who could direct the Government instead of being directed by it, could do a good job of, first, protecting liberty; second—go back and read it at the beginning—pursuing happiness; and third, forming a more perfect Union.

And I would argue to you that at every important time in the history of this country, our country's greatness has depended upon our willingness to reaffirm those three missions. We had to deepen the meaning of our freedom, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our Union.

Now, the Democratic Party may not have always been right. But in the 20th century, from Woodrow Wilson through Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter to the present day, I don't think you have any doubt which party was more constantly standing up for always, always deepening the freedom of the American dream and broadening it to more people, and expanding the circle of American opportunity, and trying to hold this Union together and make it stronger and stronger instead of letting it be thrown apart. I don't think you have any doubt.

So I say to you tonight, if we're going to strengthen this country for the 21st century, we at the national level have to create an economy based on opportunity for all. That means we have to bring the light of free enterprise to the neighborhoods and the urban areas and the rural areas that haven't felt it yet. It means we have to give our country the best system of K-through-12 education in the world for everybody, not just a few. It means we have to do a lot more to continue to grow the economy.

Now, if we already have 4.7 percent unemployment—the lowest in 24 years—the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, which party is most likely to finish America's mission? And you know as well as I do, those of you who are Governors or who work for Governors or who have been Governors, a great deal of the remaining work of building this economy has to be done community by community, State by State.

If we want, as I said in the State of the Union, a society based on responsibility—what does that mean? It means people ought to be able to have health care if they're good, responsible citizens and they're willing to do what they can for it. We ought to let people who are over 55, who have been cast aside by their employers, buy into the Medicare system and not be bereft for 10 years when they're very vulnerable. We ought to pass the health care Patients' Bill of Rights. We ought to do more to make child care safer and more affordable and more accessible. We ought to do more not only to protect our streets from juvenile crime but to open our schools between the time the learning in the classroom is over and the parents get home, so we give kids something positive to do and keep them out of trouble in the first place. These are the missions of building a society based on responsibility.

Now, I can do some things with the Congress to achieve those goals. But how all these programs are implemented along with welfare reform—will welfare reform be a way of empowering people to move from welfare to work so that people can succeed at work and succeed as parents and take care of their children, or will it be just a back-handed way to save money?

Now, there are a lot of Governors in the other party who have done some things I agree with. But, on balance, who do you think is more likely to build a society based on opportunity, that tries to lift everybody up and give everybody a chance and rescue the kids that have been left behind and build strong families and strong communities? I think you know the answer to that. And I think you're proud to be here tonight, just like I am, because of the answer to that question.

If we want to build a nation that lives by community—what does that mean? It means we have to continue to improve the environment even as we grow the economy—cleaner water, cleaner air, safer food, fewer toxic waste dumps. It means we have to meet our challenge of doing our part on the issue of global warming. And it means we have to do it in a way that uses technology and common sense and creativity to continue to create jobs and grow the

economy as we improve the environment. Now, which party is more likely to do that?

If we want to be one community, we have to be willing to reach across the divides of America. Look at the last 20 years. Which party has tried to win elections by bringing people together and which has tried to win elections by driving a wedge through the heart of the American electorate? I'm proud to be here tonight with all of you, and I think you know the answer to that question.

So, as I have said many times, I want to say one more time, we have to give it to our friends in the Republican Party. From the time Abraham Lincoln was elected until the time Teddy Roosevelt left office, if we are honest, we will say they did a better job than we did of standing for deeper freedom, wider opportunity, and a stronger Union. Those were not our best years. But from the time of Woodrow Wilson to the present day and toward the 21st century, we may not have always been right, but we were always on the right side.

And so, I ask you to think about that. I'm proud of the fact that our administration has done more than my two predecessors of the Republican Party in giving more power to the States. I'm proud of the fact that we have waived more Federal rules in more areas in 5 years than they did in 12 years. I'm proud of all that because I trust the concept of the States as laboratories of democracy. But the more responsibilities the Governors get, the more it matters who the Governor is.

And I want you to think about that. And when you go home tonight, I want you to ask yourself if you agree with my definition of what it means to be an American and to meet our challenges and to do the right thing at every moment of challenge and change. This is a big change time. This is huge.

You know, the other night after the State of the Union Address, our webpage had 400,000 hits on the Internet. One webpage. And, of course, there are millions upon millions of webpages. You know how many places there were on the Web when I was elected President? Fifty—50—5 years ago. And they all belonged to physicists. [*Laughter*] So if you could have gotten in, most of you would have been like me and you wouldn't have understood it. [*Laughter*] That is just a metaphor for how the world is changing. Knowledge, the whole volume of knowledge, doubling every 5 years.

Hillary came up with this idea that we should honor the end of our service here after 2 terms with a gift to the millennium entitled "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." We want to save Old Glory and the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, those four things, and get communities all over America to do the same. And we want to have the biggest investment in the future in medical and other research in the history of America to look toward the future.

But in the end, all this newfangled stuff and all this change will only work to make us a happier, healthier, stronger people if we end where we started. That great line from T.S. Eliot, "the end is in our beginning"—we have to end where we started. You be proud when you leave here tonight, because you belong to a party that is fighting to expand and deepen the meaning of freedom and to widen the circle of opportunity and to make this a stronger United States of America. I'm proud, and I'm proud of you for being here.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:07 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Governors' Association chairman Gov. Pedro Rossello of Puerto Rico and his wife, Maga; Democratic Governors' Association Vice Chairman Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana and his wife, Judy; Democratic Governors' Association Executive Director Katie Whelan; and Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina.

Remarks to the National Council of Jewish Women
February 24, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Nan did such a good job, I could resort to that old parliamentary device; I can say I associate myself with the previous speaker's remarks and sit down. [*Laughter*]

I thank all of you for making me feel welcome. I'm delighted to be here with a number of members of our administration today, including my Director of Communications, Ann Lewis; my Director of Public Liaison, Maria Echaveste, and her aide, Debbie Mohile, and Lynn Cutler, who is known to many of you I know; and our HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, Olivia Golden. I thank all of them for coming with me.

This has been a very busy week in Washington, and I think that there are a couple of issues I ought to make a remark or two about before I begin what I came here to visit with you about. First, let me say a few words about Iraq. As you know, yesterday the Government of Iraq agreed to give the United Nations inspectors immediate, unrestricted, and unconditional access to any site they suspect may be hiding weapons of mass destruction or the means to make or deliver them. If fully implemented, this means that, finally, and for the first time in 7 years, all of Iraq will be open to U.N. inspections, including many sites previously declared off limits. This would be an important step forward.

I'm proud of all of our men and women in uniform in the Gulf. Once again we have seen that diplomacy backed by resolve and strength can have positive results for humanity. We have to be watching very closely now to see not just what Iraq says, but what it does; not just the stated commitments, but the actual compliance. Let there be no doubt, we must remain committed to see that Saddam Hussein does not menace the world with weapons of mass destruction.

I think that there has been a lot of talk, pro and con, about this issue in the last several days. I would just tell you that I think that many of you are in a position to launch an effort to educate all the people of our country about the potential future dangers of chemical and biological warfare: how such weapons can be made, how they can be delivered, how easy it is to disseminate them to irresponsible groups in small quantities that do large amounts of damage. And because you are in a position to know that, and because all of you have friends, many family members in Israel that feel vulnerable to such things, and because you understand that every civilized community in the world could be exposed to them in the 21st century, I ask you as citizens just to share what you know with your friends and neighbors back home so that we can continue, as a nation, to remain vigilant on this issue wherever we have to stand against it.

I'd also like to say a word about campaign finance reform, an issue of concern to many of you. We've been working on this for years now, and finally we may have a chance to actually have a vote in the Senate. During my first term, every single year, a vote on campaign finance reform was put off in the House to see what would happen in the Senate. And then the leaders of the other party always killed it with a filibuster in the Senate. Now, this year, the McCain-Feingold bill, which has—obviously, it's supported by Senator McCain, the Republican, Senator Feingold, the Democrat—every Member of the Democratic caucus has endorsed the McCain-Feingold bill which ends soft money and imposes other limits on the present system of campaign finance.

There was a difficulty with the bill which was keeping us from generating any more Republican support. Senator Snowe of Maine and Senator Jeffords of Vermont have brokered a compromise. Just before I left to come over here, I was told that all the Democrats are going to vote for that. So we're doing our best to do our part to get campaign finance reform. If a majority will back the Snowe-Jeffords compromise, then once again you will see that it is a minority keeping the country from getting it. So when you go up to the Hill today, if you can put in a plug for a meaningful campaign finance reform bill, I would appreciate it. And we need it.

I have a lot to be grateful to the National Council of Jewish Women for. Many of you have participated in White House conferences

on hate crimes, on early childhood learning and the brain, on child care. You've been involved in our national initiative on race. And I'm grateful for all of that. I was talking to Hillary late last night about my impending visit here, and she reminded me that the thing that I should be most grateful for is that in 1986—I can hardly remember it, it was so long ago—[*laughter*]—Nan Rich came to Arkansas to talk to Hillary and me about the HIPPY program. And we embraced it. We were the first State in the country—there were a lot of communities that had embraced it, but we were the first State that ever tried to go statewide with the program. It was a resounding success there, and now I believe there are 28 States which have statewide efforts for the home instruction program for preschool youngsters. It has been a wonderful thing.

And I might say I don't think I ever did anything as Governor that was more moving to me than to go to those HIPPY graduation programs and talk to the mothers and see the kids. And so I want to say on behalf of the First Lady and myself again, thank you, Nan, and thanks to all of you for supporting that. If every child could be in that kind of program, it would do as much to strengthen families and later success of children who are otherwise at risk as anything we could do. And I want to urge you to stick with it and keep going.

These are good times for America. We have almost 15 million new jobs in the last 5 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the highest homeownership in history. Today we learned some more good news. First, that in spite of the growth of the last year, the inflation rate and Consumer Price Index remained absolutely stable and very low.

So we are doing something that I was told after I got elected President we could not do. They said we could not grow consistently at 3 percent or more a year without inflation, and that is not so. We are doing that. And I'm very grateful for everybody who is involved in that.

We also learned just today that the American people are upbeat about their prospects not only in the moment but in the future. There are two major measurements of consumer confidence in America: one put out by something called—a group called the Conference Board; the other put out by the University of Michigan. In the figures that will be released today, the Conference Board Index is the highest it's been in 30 years, and the University of Michigan measurement the highest ever recorded in the confidence of the consumers in the United States of America in our prospects. And that's good, too.

But I'd like to reiterate something I said in the State of the Union. Good times are a blessing, and they should be enjoyed. But we all know, in the nature of humankind and the rhythm of human affairs, no condition endures forever without interruption. And therefore, the good times impose upon us an opportunity and an obligation to prepare for the future, to create a framework within which long-term prosperity and health and well-being will be supported. That's why I said in the State of the Union that before we spend a penny—a penny—of the surplus that we estimate will materialize over the next 5 years, we should make sure we have secured Social Security in the 21st century so that the baby boom generation does not bankrupt the system.

And that is why we have to tend to the health care of our people. We have to continue the work and actually finish the job of insuring 5 million more children. I hope that Congress will pass my proposal to allow people over 55 who, for one reason or other, have lost all their health insurance to buy into the Medicare system. We can do that without imposing any financial burdens on Medicare, and even though the premiums are fairly high, a lot of these folks have children who will help them pay the premiums and they're much, much cheaper than just one trip to the hospital. So I hope we can do that.

I hope that we will pass the Patients' Bill of Rights this year, because we have 160 million people now in managed care programs, and even others in nonmanaged care situations, who don't have the elemental rights and protections that I think everyone in the health care system should have. I hope that we will continue to move forward with environmental protection with the new clean water initiative and with the anti-global warming initiatives that I have recommended to help us deal with the problem of climate change, which a lot of you, depending on where you live, may have been experiencing over the last decade and even in this winter, if we can call it a winter.

I hope that we will continue to make this a safer world. I have asked the Congress to vote for the expansion of NATO, to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention to give us some teeth to deal with the kind of problems we've been discussing in Iraq throughout the world. And I hope that the idea that was inspired by the First Lady of a gift to the millennium that honors our past and imagines the future will find favor in Congress where we save our precious historical documents and the Star-Spangled Banner, and also devote the largest amount of money in history to medical and other research, scientific research to the future.

But if you think about what the leading indicator—you know, economists—if you ever listen to any of these talk shows where these economists are talking and they always are talking about what the leading indicators are, which means they're always trying to figure out what happened. And they're kind of like me, half the time they're guessing, and they don't want you to know it. [*Laughter*] So they talk gravely about leading indicators as if that will pave the way. But there are some leading indicators I think that will tell us something about our future. For me, perhaps the most important leading indicator of where we'll be 10, 20, or 30 years from now is where our children are right now in terms of educational attainment. Now, that I think is clearly a leading indicator.

And I believe, if we are being honest, we would have to say the leading indicators are mixed. That's what an honest assessment would be. Now, we can do one of two things when we look at the bad news as well as the good news. We can say, "Well, what do you expect? America is a big, diverse country; we're the most ethnically, religiously, racially diverse democracy in the world, and besides that, there's so much difference in the incomes in America and so much difference in the neighborhoods, and what do you expect?"

We can do that, or we can do what we ought to do and just say, "Most of this is not rocket science." Way over 90 percent of the people are capable of learning 100 percent of what they need to know to function well in a modern society. And if our children don't do it, it's our fault, and we're going to do something about it. This is not rocket science, and we can do better.

Let's just look at where we are. For the last 5 years—and I'll speak more about the specifics later—but for the last 5 years, I have tried to bring to bear what I learned in 12 years as a Governor to the work of having the United States Government do what we could to help improve the educational enterprise in America, to raise standards, to promote reforms, to increase accountability, to improve teaching, to improve quality of education.

Now, let's start with a certain premise here. I think everybody in America believes, and rightly, that we are blessed with the finest system of higher education in the world. I don't think anyone in America believes that, for all of our children, we have the best system of education, kindergarten through 12th grade, in the world.

Therefore, it has been easier, in my judgment, to do the best things in higher education because you don't have to do so many hard things. All I tried to do in college when it came to college education was to open the doors of college to all, because college costs were the only thing that went up more than health care costs in the 1980's, in percentage terms. So what have we done? We passed the HOPE scholarship, a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, a lifetime learning tax credit for the junior and senior years and graduate schools and for adults going back for job training; education IRA's; interest on students loans as tax-deductible; direct college loans that cost less money and are easier to repay; 300,000 more work-study positions; a lot more Pell grant scholarships; the biggest increase in aid to college since the GI bill. We can actually say we have opened the doors of college to any American who is willing to work for a college education. That is a very important achievement of which we can be proud.

[*At this point, a child in the audience cried.*]

The President. That child obviously doesn't understand that yet. [*Laughter*] But in time.

Now, when you back up from there, the going gets harder. And let me just give you one example. And I want you to ask yourselves as I go through this list what do you think caused this. Today our administration is announcing the results of the Third International Math and Science Study. And I talked about it last year and the year before. This is—the TIMSS test, it's called—the Third International Math and

Science Study, are tests given in math and science to 4th, 8th, and 12th graders to a relatively large and representative sample—we believe representative sample—of students not only in our country, but throughout the world.

Now, the past TIMSS tests showed that the fourth graders in America do very well; that in the eighth grade we begin to fall back to the middle. And we believe it's in no small measure because as kids go through school, children in other parts of the world begin to take harder courses than our kids do and undergo a more rigorous learning pattern. And a lot of the problems associated with the socioeconomic difficulties begin to manifest themselves.

Today we learned that by the 12th grade, our children trail far behind in math and science. Of the 21 countries measured, our 12th graders outperformed only 2. So we start near the top, we fall to the middle, and we come out at the end.

Now, let me say, first of all, there's some good news in this. The 4th graders represent the same socioeconomic diversity and indeed they are more diverse because of the changing patterns than the 12th graders. Therefore, there is something wrong with the system that we are using to teach them. I do not believe these kids cannot learn. I am tired of seeing children patronized because they happen to be poor or from different cultural backgrounds than the majority. That is not true. That is not true.

And let me tell you, just a couple of days ago—I can't remember exactly what day, the days fly by up here—but a couple of days ago I went to Baltimore, and I visited something called Living Classroom. And I walked along the waterway there in downtown, and I watched some kids rebuilding wetlands. And literally on the inland harbor, they've got egrets now coming back to a wetland site. And I watched inner-city kids, many of whom had never focused on a harbor before, seen a waterway, measuring water quality, having very sophisticated conversations with me about the acidic content of the water and what caused it, and what the various sources of pollution in seawater are and what could be—what that might do to various kinds of fish and other life in the water.

I watched inner-city kids working a fairly sophisticated computer program, monitoring a sailboat race, the Whitbread Race, and monitoring the American boat they were watching as it went around Cape Horn. So I don't believe all this business about how some kids are just so burdened down with their background they just can't learn all this modern stuff; that's just not true. But it is true that too many people are not learning. And so, I recommend that we take another look at this. Now, in '97 in the State of the Union Address, I outlined a 10-point plan to help education and ask that politics stop at the schoolhouse door, and then in 1998, just a few weeks ago, I talked again about what I thought we ought to do about education. And I would like to briefly review the list of things that I think are important.

First of all, I still believe we have to start with the basics. We need smaller classes, better teaching, harder courses, higher standards. We have smaller classes, better teaching, harder courses, higher standards, greater accountability, and more reform. That's basically what I think we should be focused on. Even though we do pretty well in the fourth grade international tests, I think you know as well as I do there are still too many kids that don't get off to the start they need. And I appreciate what Nan said about the child care initiative. I ask for your support.

We have substantially increased the number of kids in Head Start. We've increased our investment in Federal child care supports by 70 percent in the last 5 years. We have doubled the earned-income tax credit, and that's lifted more and more children out of poverty. But we have to do more.

The budget that I have presented on child care would double the number of low-income children receiving Federal assistance subsidies to 2 million; it would give 3 million more working families an expanded child care credit. It would actually mean that a family of four with an income of $35,000 a year or less that had high child care costs would actually not pay any Federal income tax.

It would improve the safety and quality of child care. It would also provide scholarships for good providers to help to train them. And it recognizes that we need to do more on the educational component of child care. As we learned at the White House conference on early learning and the brain, which the First Lady put together, an enormous amount of the development of the infrastructure of learning is done in the first 3 years. So I'm proposing an early learning fund that would help to reduce child-to-staff ratios and also help to educate parents

more so that we could increase the learning component of the preschool years.

I guess what I'd like to say is that I want to believe that if this plan passes, the lessons that are taught through the HIPPY program could be taught in homes all across America and all kinds of programs. That's what I want.

One more thing I'd like to say about this, sort of about the out-of-school hours; another big part of our budget contains funds, through both the Educational Department and the Justice Department, to help schools stay open after hours. An enormous percentage of the kids who get in trouble, juveniles who commit serious offenses, do so after the school day is over, but before their parents get home. Literally, if there were no juvenile offenses between like 2 to 3 in the afternoon and 6 to 7 in the evening, the juvenile crime rate would be cut by way over 50 percent. So I think it's important to give these children something to say yes to. And these after-school programs that we propose would help about a half a million children to say yes to soccer and computers, and no to drugs and crime. And I think that's a very important thing.

Now, let's talk about what I hope the Congress will do this year to help to deal with the K through 12 years and what we have to continue to build on that has been started already. First of all, we need a national commitment to reduce class size in the early grades. Our budget would enable local school districts to hire 100,000 more teachers and lower the class size to an average of 18 in the first, second, and third grades and also to modernize or rebuild 5,000 schools so there would be classrooms for that to occur in. I think that's important.

Second, we would continue the America Reads program, which now has literally tens of thousands of college students and other volunteers now going into elementary schools every week to make sure that no child gets out of the third grade without being able to read independently. That is very important.

Next, we would continue our movement toward national academic standards and voluntary national exams to measure how our children are doing according to high national standards. Last year we took the first steps toward a fourth grade reading and an eighth grade math test, and I hope that eventually we will have every State testing their children in these basics and measuring them by a common national standard, so that we can continue on up the ladder academically to deal with the courses and the measurement.

Next, I think it is very important that we support better teacher development. One of the problems is in a lot of these later years—and you have to pay the teachers well, too—in a lot of these later years in these senior-level courses is you have a lot of schools who have to offer courses that are taught by people who did not have sufficient academic background in the math or science course at issue. And I think that is very, very important.

One of the most important developments potentially over the long run in American education in the last few years and gets almost no publicity—it's called the National Board for Professional Teacher Certification. And it basically is a national board set up to certify master teachers in a way that specialists in medicine and other professionals get certified. But the teachers are basically picked not only because of their substantive knowledge but because of their teaching ability, and they are trained. And the idea is that we will try to have a core—and there's just a few hundred of them now—a core of these teachers all across America. In my budget there's enough money to identify, train, and certify 100,000 master teachers. If you put one of these people in every school building in America, I believe it can revolutionize the culture of learning, and the quality of teaching has got to be a big part of what we're trying to do.

The next thing I'd like to do—I want to talk about two other things that I think would really help performance in the later grades. I think it's important that we encourage the school districts to end the process of social promotion, but to do it in a way that lifts kids up, not puts them down. That is, if you look at what Chicago is doing now—an example which is truly astonishing—I mean Chicago used to be known by the annual teachers' strike. We all saw a picture in the paper of the Chicago teachers' strike every year. They have adopted a policy that basically says—and it's school by school, supported by grassroots parents groups—if the children do not perform at grade level, they cannot go on. But they have mandatory summer school, which also, by the way, has done wonderful—wonders for juvenile problems.

They have mandatory summer school. So nobody just gets held back for spite or because of carelessness or callousness. There's a serious, disciplined comprehensive effort to give all the kids a chance to learn at grade level. I think that's very important. The Secretary of Education got a directive from me this week to come up with, basically, a plan and a program to help every school district in the country adopt a similar approach, particularly those that have a significant problem.

Now, in addition to that, we are trying to pass in Congress this year some funds that will help universities comprehensively adopt schools where there are large numbers of disadvantaged children, starting in the sixth grade. So we can go to sixth and seventh graders, and not only give them college students as models and mentors but say to them in the sixth or seventh grade, look, here's the deal: If you make your grades and you take these courses and you learn these things, we'll be able to tell them now, here is the amount of college aid you can get. You will be able to go to college; this is the aid you will get; and this is what the college that is working with you is prepared to do.

Now, this has the chance, I think, to dramatically lift learning levels in inner-city schools and other isolated schools with large numbers of poor children. And it's based on a number of different programs that have been bandied around in America over the last 20 years, and especially the work of a Congressman from Philadelphia named Chaka Fattah. So I'm very excited about it. I hope you will support it.

You just think, if every troubled school in America or every school with a lot of kids who are poor in America had a college adopting it, with kids in that school from the sixth grade on from the college, and at the same time actually contracting with the children and their parents, saying, this is the amount of college aid you're going to get if you do what you're supposed to do for the next 6 years, I believe you would see these scores begin to go up dramatically. And I hope that we can get a lot of support for that.

Finally, let me say, we have to continue to support the reforms that are already underway, more school choice, more charter schools, and we have to finish the job of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. That will enable more stories like the one I told you about Baltimore, because once you get everybody on the Internet, we can use technology to dramatically increase the quality and quantity and sophistication of material pouring into every school in America without regard to its resources and wealth. The Federal Communications Commission is helping us with an E-rate which will save the schools a couple of billion dollars a year in hookup costs and payment for time used. So that's very, very important.

I say all these things to you again to point out that it is not inevitable that we have low scores on comparative exams, but it is a leading indicator. There's a coalition of schools in northern Illinois called the First in the World Coalition, and they take these 10 steps; they prepare for them; they work on them, and they do well with them. Now, most of the schools are in upper income neighborhoods. That's not why the kids do well. They do well because they prepare. They take hard courses, they work hard at it, and they believe they're going to do well. And if we do that for every school in America, if we can give them the hard courses taught by well-qualified teachers in an environment that's supportive, and convince them that they can do well, they will do very well.

Our present levels of performance are unacceptable. They are not a good leading indicator. But we have lots of indicators that we can do what we need to do.

So I want—I ask you again; you have to really think. You clapped when I said this before; you have to think about whether you believe this. Do you believe all children can learn? The HIPPY program shows that's right. The Israeli experience of the HIPPY program shows that's right. If you believe that, and if it's not happening, then there is something wrong with the systems. And it is our generation's responsibility to fix it. You cannot blame the schoolchildren. And if their parents don't have a lot of education and don't know what to do, you sure can't blame them. We have to—this is—this cannot be rocket science. There is no excuse for this. So again, I say, I am hoping and praying that we can continue to put aside partisan politics when it comes to education and continue to move forward on these things, because it's so important for our future.

If you think about it, a lot of the challenges we're facing today are not so different than they were back in 1893 when this organization was founded. Think about it, right? [*Laughter*]

We've got a new economy. And there was a new economy in 1893. And we've got to figure out how to make it work for everybody instead of just a few people.

We are overwhelmed by a big influx of immigrants from different kinds of countries, and so were we in 1893, and we have to bring everybody into the American mainstream. We are about to enter a new century with a lot of confidence but a lot of challenges. We have to do what we've always had to do at such times as Americans. We have to make sure we deepen the meaning of our freedom, we widen the circle of opportunity, we strengthen the Union of our people.

The Talmud says every blade of grass has its angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, grow." Our children are blades of grass. You must be the angels.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Nan Rich, national president, National Council of Jewish Women; the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY); and the First in the World Consortium. The President also referred to his memorandum of February 23 on helping schools end social promotions.

Statement on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

February 24, 1998

Today a clear, bipartisan majority of the Senate voted for campaign finance reform. Now, only the obstruction of a minority stands in the way of a law that would strengthen our democracy. The opponents of reform are seeking to block this measure with partisan, unacceptable amendments, even an amendment to block the Federal Communications Commission from providing free air time to candidates. Let's be clear: A vote for these amendments is a vote for soft money, unregulated campaign contributions, and backdoor campaign spending. And that vote would be very difficult to explain to the American people.

Message to the Congress on Ordering the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces to Active Duty

February 24, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to title 10, United States Code, section 12304, I have authorized the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard, when it is not operating as a Service within the Department of the Navy, to order to active duty Selected Reserve units and individuals not assigned to units to augment the Active components in support of operations in and around Southwest Asia.

A copy of the Executive order implementing this action is attached.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 24, 1998.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense
February 24, 1998

Dear _____*:*

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense, submitted pursuant to Condition 11(F) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Strom Thurmond, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Arlen Specter, chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on National Security.

Remarks After Touring Tornado Damage in Kissimmee, Florida
February 25, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, first let me say a word of thanks to all of those who have given me this tour and who have been working so hard since Monday. I brought down here with me our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, who's already been here; Attorney General Reno; Administrator of the EPA Carol Browner—both of them are from Florida, as I'm sure you know—and our Small Business Administrator, Aida Alvarez.

I want to thank Senator Graham and Congresswoman Brown and Representative Mica for coming down with me today, and to say that Congressman Boyd and Congresswoman Thurman also wished to come and could not because of their work requirements, but they expressed their concern and support.

I thank Governor Chiles and Lieutenant Governor MacKay, the leaders of the legislature who are here, Speaker Bronson, Minority Leader Senator Dyer, Senator Webster—I mean Senator Bronson, and—Representative Bronson and Speaker Webster.

Mayor Atkinson, thank you for making us feel at home today and for introducing us to some of your citizens and some of your winter visitors. I thank the Osceola County commissioners with whom I've met, Chairman Dunnick and others; General Harrison and the Florida National Guard; all the people who have been working on this. I had a chance to meet a number of them. I want to thank them for what they have done.

Some of you know that James Lee Witt, before he became the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, was the director of our State emergency program in Arkansas when I was Governor. Our State has the highest number of tornadoes per capita every year. But no matter how many of these I have seen over the last 20 years, I don't think anybody can fail to be moved and awestruck by the amount of damage that can be done, and the lives and the treasures that can be taken away in a matter of just a few seconds.

And I think we all acknowledge here today that what took just seconds to destroy will take weeks and months and, in some cases, maybe even years to rebuild. Some of you may have lost precious pictures, letters, service medals,

other mementos of loved ones and family members that may never be able to be replaced. We know that. But it's also important for you to know that we understand that you'll be going through a period in which you'll feel all different kinds of emotions. You may be in shock. You may feel like crying. You may feel angry. And some of the people that are supposed to help you may or may not do as good a job as they should the first time you ask for it or need it.

What I want to say today is that, all over this country, your fellow Americans are praying for you and pulling for you. And whatever it is within our power to do to help you return to normal lives, we will do.

I have already designated Federal assistance to 34 Florida counties affected by the tornadoes. Twelve will now be able to receive aid to restore public facilities and infrastructure and to take protective measures: Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Duval, Hamilton, Hardee, Highlands, Marion, Nassau, Osceola, Suwannee, and Union Counties. And we are also providing today $3 million from the Department of Labor for temporary jobs for workers to assist in the disaster recovery work so that we can complete it more quickly.

My experience has been that the efforts you see going on around you to just clean out the debris and help people look at a place as nearly as possible as it once was before the tornado is psychologically one of the most important things that can be done to help the healing process and to get people back to normal.

We'll also continue under FEMA's direction to provide the resources necessary to meeting the immediate disaster needs. Already FEMA staffers, the SBA, the Department of Labor, the Corps of Engineers, and some of our young AmeriCorps volunteers are here helping in the effort.

Let me say again a special work of commendation not only to the State and local emergency management officials and the search and rescue teams and the volunteers who have been working for 72 hours, but I'd also like to say a word of appreciation to Governor Chiles and to Lieutenant Governor MacKay with whom, unfortunately, I have had the opportunity to work now through more than one disaster. Florida has seen a lot of its natural disaster shares. I think you've used up your quota for the next 20 or 30 years in the last few years. But I've had an opportunity to see a caring team of State leaders who work hard, work fast, and stay after us at the national level to do our part, and I want to thank them for that.

Let me also just say, for a moment, you may have seen in the news media that California, which has been beset by unusual amounts of raining and flooding because of El Nino, yesterday was badly hit by storms. People died there, and our thoughts are with their loved ones. I've asked Mr. Witt to go with me to California today so that he can go to the impacted area and see what is going on there.

Again, let me say that the thoughts and prayers of the American people are with you. In the Book of Isaiah in the Bible there is this chapter—I'd like to read it to you: "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with you in stones. The sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars." We want to see you do that, brick by brick, home by home, street by street. You can do it, and we want to be there to help.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:56 a.m. at the Ponderosa Park Campground. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Lawton Chiles and Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay of Florida; State Senators Charlie Bronson and Florida Senate Minority Leader Buddy Dyer; Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives Daniel Webster; Mayor Frank Atkinson of Kissimmee; Chuck Dunnick, chair, Osceola County Commissioners; and Maj. Gen. Ronald O. Harrison, adjutant general of Florida. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program

February 25, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

The attached report to the Congress on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program was completed on December 31, 1997. Since then there have been several key, positive economic developments in Israel that I wanted to communicate to the Congress.

The Israeli Knesset passed its 1998 budget on January 5. The final budget adhered to the deficit target of 2.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) set by the Israeli Cabinet in August 1997, and established a spending target of 46.3 percent of GDP (down from 47.3 percent in 1997), without resorting to additional taxes. Furthermore, due partially to the mid-year spending cuts discussed in the report, the Government of Israel over-performed the 1997 deficit target of 2.8 percent of GDP by a significant margin; the 1997 budget deficit came in at 2.4 percent of GDP. These events demonstrate the commitment of the Israeli government to fiscal consolidation and reform.

Second, the Israeli consumer price index (CPI) for 1997 rose by only 7 percent, at the bottom of the 7–10 percent 1997 target range and a 28-year low. This indicates that the battle being waged by the Bank of Israel and the Israeli government against persistent inflation is succeeding. The Israeli Ministry of Finance is reportedly considering lowering the 1998 inflation target (currently set at 7–10 percent) in order to consolidate the strong inflation performance registered in 1997.

This information will be included in the 1998 report to the Congress on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 25, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Reception in San Francisco, California

February 25, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, first for the warm welcome and second, and very importantly, for your support for these fine candidates for Congress.

I think I should begin by expressing my profound concern and support for all the people in California who have been suffering from the effects of El Nino. And tomorrow I'm going to Oakland to have a meeting with a lot of the folks about that. I also want to express my gratitude to the people of California and especially the people of San Francisco for the incredible support that Hillary and I and the Vice President and Tipper and our administration have received.

When Nancy Pelosi almost drank my water—[*laughter*]—I thought to myself, she has carried so much water for me, she ought to drink some of it. The thing I find—I really admire Nancy Pelosi, and I like her a lot, even when she disagrees with me—but the thing I find remarkable—and I think this is important—is that after all these years in Washington, every time I talk to her about anything, if I didn't know, I would have thought she came yesterday because her passion, her energy, her intensity never fails. And believe me, even from this far distance, you've seen enough about how Washington works to know that anyone who can work there as long and as hard as she has and never become cynical and never lose their passion or their idealism is a truly remarkable public servant.

Senator Thompson, first, thank you for running. Thank you for running. And thank you for being willing to give up what must be an immensely rewarding career in the California State Senate, and certainly, almost certainly a more congenial lifestyle than the one you are

about to embrace—[*laughter*]—for your willingness to be part of this great national adventure as our country goes through these profound changes into a new century and new millennium. Congratulations on getting your main opponent not to run. I never was very good at that myself—[*laughter*]—but I certainly am impressed.

And to my good friend Lois Capps, thank you for running. It took a lot of courage and a lot of depth and a lot of conviction. I was standing up here listening to Lois talk about the issues that I'm pushing in Washington in terms of the people who live in her district. That's another thing we need more of in Washington; we need a lot more concern about people and less concern about power. Power is the instrument through which you do things for people, but the power belongs to them. All of us, every single one of us, we're just hired hands for a fleeting period of time in the broad sweep of our Nation's odyssey. And apart from the love and affection I felt for Walter Capps, the enormous admiration that Hillary and I have for Lois, the love we have for Laura who now has the longest leave of absence in history from the White House—[*laughter*]—I'd like to see her in Congress because she understands that politics is about people, and power is a temporary, limited instrument through which they can advance their dreams. Believe me, we need more of that in Washington.

And I think she's going to win. She has a big fight, she's being out-spent, but she will never be out-worked. And there will be no one who will connect with people that they seek to represent, not a single person, as well as Lois Capps. And I'm thrilled at the prospect of her victory.

Let me just say very briefly, we know in America that our country is having good times. We see that even California, with all the troubles you had in the years of the late eighties and the nineties, has made an astonishing comeback which will not be deterred by the natural disasters that you seem to face on a regular basis here. [*Laughter*]

But what I want to say to you is, I come here grateful for the fact that we have the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in the history of the United States. But that imposes on us a special obligation, because we know, looking to the future, that the country and the world in which we will live both are changing very rapidly in ways that are quite profound, not all of which we can fully understand but many of which we do clearly know.

And at times like this, when it's easy to sort of relax, that's the last thing we ought to do. And the purpose of my State of the Union Address this year was to say, "Don't relax. Bear down. Look to the future. Let's be confident. Let's be happy." Yesterday the indexes of consumer confidence came out, the two main ones, and one of them was the highest in 30 years; the other one was the highest ever recorded. That confidence should not be grounds for complacency; it should be a spur to action.

And we have a lot to do. Yes, our economy is in good shape, but if we want to keep it there, we have to more broadly share the benefits of it. That's not only why I favor raising the minimum wage but why I want to do more to bring the spark of enterprise and jobs to the neighborhoods in this country, principally in inner cities and in rural areas, which have not yet felt it. And that's a big part of our agenda.

We have an education agenda because we know that is the key to broadly shared prosperity and the key to America's future. I think 30 years from now, when people look back on the last 5 years, they may well say that even more important than balancing the budget was the work we did to open the doors of college education to all Americans, with the tax credits, the IRA's, the Pell grants, the work-study positions, all the things that have been done—the interest deductibility on student loans.

We can literally say for the first time in our country's history that if you're willing to work for it and somebody will take you, you can go. But now we know that while—the one reason we're so happy about it is that we really believe, and we're right, that America has the best system of higher education in the world. Indeed, our colleges and universities and graduate schools are filled with people from all over the globe because of that. No one believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world, but we know we can have, and that must be our next goal. That's why I want the smaller classes. That's why we want the smaller classes and the better-trained teachers and why we're working with the people

from California to hook up every classroom in the country to the Internet by the year 2000.

We have to have a children's agenda. The crime rate has dropped dramatically in America for 5 years but not nearly so much among juveniles and only began to go down among juveniles a year or so ago. We now have the biggest group of young people in our schools in the history of the country. Finally, we've got a group, as of last year, bigger than the baby boom generation.

Now, that's good news for us in many ways, but it's troubling news unless we keep more of them out of trouble. We have to begin by helping more parents to succeed at home as well as at work. That's what this child care initiative is all about, not only to provide millions of more people the chance to access child care but to make it better child care, with a stronger education component, and safer, so that parents can feel more secure and their children will do better.

That's also why I think it's very important that our initiative to provide more funds for schools to stay open and for community centers to stay open after school are important. You know, we've been filling our jails in this country for the last 15 years with younger and younger people. Most juvenile trouble starts when school lets out and ends when the parents get home at night. So if we would just spend a little money to help our schools and our community centers stay open after school until the parents get home so kids would have something to say yes to, we wouldn't have to worry about their tomorrows, and we could keep them out of trouble in the first place. And I hope very much—[*applause*].

Lois talked about our health care agenda. It is important; we're trying to insure 5 million more kids in this country. We've still got a lot of work to do on that, but the funds have been set aside. I want to let people between the ages of 55 and 65 buy into Medicare if they can afford it or their children can help them, because there are hundreds of thousands of people in this country who through no fault of their own have lost their health insurance. And if they buy in at the cost of the program, it will not do anything to undermine the stability of the Medicare program, which is now secure for more than a decade. I think it's important.

The Patient Bill of Rights is important because we've got 160 million now in managed care programs. And on balance, it's done a lot of things we like. The inflation rate in health care has finally come down, almost to the inflation rate of the economy generally. But people are still entitled to certain rights, which when you boil them all down, you take all the specifics—the right to have a specialist, the right to know what the options are for your care, the right to get emergency room care regardless if you need it—all those things, and the other things in the bill, when it comes right down to it, people have a right to know that they're not sacrificing quality to save money. We have to maintain that.

We do have an environmental agenda and it has many parts. But the most important I would mention for this coming year are the new clean water initiative and our attempts to do America's part to meet the challenge of global climate change. Now, when you see the El Nino and you see that it's particularly severe this year, what it—it should give you a glimpse of what could happen if we permit the temperature of the globe to rise one or two or three degrees more than is absolutely necessary over the next few decades. And we can do this and grow our economy.

Every time we take on an environmental challenge, the naysayers say, "Oh, my goodness, it's going to bankrupt the economy." And every time we have raised our environmental sights and cleaned our environment and preserved the Earth for our children, it has generated untold numbers of new, high-tech jobs that actually diversified and strengthened the American economy because we were doing the right thing to try to preserve the Earth, the water, the air, and our natural resources for our children.

We have an agenda for the future. It begins with saying quite simply, as Nancy said earlier, that both Republicans and Democrats should resist the temptation to try now to spend the surplus we think we're going to have. We had 30 years of deficits. We'll almost—unless the Asian economic problems slow our economy so much that the next half of the year is different from what we think the first half will be, we'll probably have a balanced budget this year, if not, certainly next year. And we haven't had one since 1969. The last thing in the world we need to do is to start spending the surplus that hasn't materialized on tax cuts or on spending programs we would like.

The Social Security Trust Fund is all right until 2029; that's the year that basically all the baby boomers will be in. And when all the baby boomers get in, which is a troubling thought to me—[*laughter*]—as I am the oldest of the baby boomers, we'll only have about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security if we continue to retire at present rates and if immigration continues at present rates and birth rates continue at present rates. That's basically the estimate. Now, if we begin now, we can make modest changes that will secure that program as an important backstop for people's retirement.

Keep in mind, it's only been a little over a decade that the poverty rate among senior citizens has been lower than the overall poverty rate in the country. It was an astonishing achievement of the World War II generation, an astonishing achievement. And what we have to do now is to modernize that system so we can preserve it. We also have to say very few Americans can maintain their present lifestyle on Social Security alone, so we not only have to secure Social Security, we have to find more and better ways to get the American people also to save for their own retirement.

And finally, looking toward the future, I would just mention two other things. Hillary—with whom I talked right before I came here tonight, by the way—she said to me—she said, "You know, I will never love politics as much as you do, but I am actually jealous that you're going to be there tonight, and I'm not." [*Laughter*] So that's a great compliment to the people of San Francisco.

I want to say two things. She came up with this idea that we ought, as a nation, to have gifts to the millennium this year and that there ought to be two parts to it: first, honoring our past, and second, imagining our future. So we have this project. The first thing we're trying to do is to save the relics of the country. And they actually need a lot of work, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the documents themselves need some work to be saved, and the Star-Spangled Banner, which needs $13 million to be preserved. And it would be a tragedy if we let it go. But in San Francisco, in every other community in this country, there are important parts of our national story that we hope every community will save.

And looking to the future, we have proposed the largest increase in research and development in the country's history, concentrated, but not exclusively, in medical research, but with a doubling of the National Cancer Institute, a huge increase to the National Institutes of Health. This is important.

And the last thing we have to do for the future is to make sure that we have more crowds like this one that all get along. [*Laughter*] We have the most diverse democracy in human history. There are other countries that are equally diverse if you look at them from statistical points of view. India, for example, has even more diversity if you look at it from a statistical point of view. Russia has phenomenal diversity. But this is the only place where we actually all live together. [*Laughter*] I mean, physically, we all live in the same places, and we rub elbows, and we work in the same places, and we have this idea that no matter what our differences, we can, if we adhere to a certain set of values, get along together.

Nancy mentioned Jim Hormel. I have just one question, the only question the United States Senate should ask, and there is only one answer: Will he, or will he not, be a good Ambassador? And any member of either party that might be considering voting against him, I ask you to ask a second question: Have I ever voted for anybody I thought was less qualified? That is all we should ever ask. [*Laughter*]

And let me close with this point. I've spent a lot of time and been criticized in some quarters for trying to modernize the Democratic Party, for trying to break the old logjam of the eighties between the pro-Government and the anti-Government debate. We now have a smaller Government than we had when President Kennedy was in office, but it's very active and very progressive.

And we proved that you could grow the economy and have a social conscience, that you could be tough on crime but intelligent and humane as well; that if you reduced the welfare rolls, you had to give people education and child care and give them the chance to succeed at home as well as at work because that's what we want for everybody else.

And I say that to close with a word for the political party to which I proudly belong. Ideas are important, and it's very important to be modern and to be right, and you have to get it right. People can demean the importance of

the economy, but when people don't have economic opportunity, it's hard to get them to think in broader terms about their fellow men and women. But in the end, it is the core ideas and values that we believe and live by that really count.

Today, when I was in Florida touring the tornado damage, the last man I came to was sitting in a chair, and he had his arm in a sling, and he stood up and saluted me. And he told his name, and he said, "Retired Master Sergeant U.S. Air Force, 21 years." And this man now lives alone. He spends half the year in Pennsylvania, where he works at a trailer park, and then comes down to Florida for the winter. He lives with his little dog; he has a dog—he and the dog. And he lost everything in the world he had in that tornado, including the bicycle with the basket that he took the little dog around in, except his little dog. But he's still got his country. And, thank God, we've still got him.

To me that's what politics is about. You think about all the people who came over here and started this country; they had a lot of problems by modern standards. You had to be a white male property owner to amount to much. Given my family's background, I probably couldn't have voted in the beginning. We probably wouldn't have had enough to own any property. But we had the right ideas.

The people who started this country said that power can only be good if it's limited and accountable. They came here fleeing the arbitrary exercise of absolute power. They said, "We have a different idea. We think freedom is good." Freedom for what? Freedom, first of all, to pursue happiness. Not a guarantee, but the freedom of the pursuit of happiness, along with the obligation to form a more perfect Union.

Now, if you think about freedom, the pursuit of happiness, and a more perfect Union, and then you think about every important period in this country's history, I think you would have to say that it always involved one or more of those three things. At every time of challenge and change we have been called upon to deepen the meaning of freedom, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our Union.

Now, in the 20th century, I don't believe anyone could say that the Democratic Party had not stood for those things. We may not have always been right, but we have always been on the right side. And the reason I want these folks to succeed is that we have shed ourselves of the shackles of things people said were wrong, all the things they used to say about the Democrats—they can't manage the economy; they're weak on crime and welfare; they tax and spend; bad on foreign policy—all that stuff, you know. That's all just rhetoric now, yesterday's rhetoric.

Now, our challenge is to take this country into a new century in which we deepen the meaning of our freedom and extend to everybody who lives in this country, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our Union. I don't think you have a doubt—a doubt—about which party is more likely to fight for those things, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

So I want you to try to help Lois Capps a little more before March 10th. [*Laughter*] I want you to see that Lois and Mike succeed in November. And I want you to remember that it's part of a great national enterprise. A lot is riding on it, and it is very much worth the effort.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. at the Fairmont Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Mike Thompson, candidate for California's First Congressional District; Lois Capps, widow of the late Representative Walter H. Capps and candidate for California's 22d Congressional District, and her daughter, Laura; and James C. Hormel, nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in San Francisco

February 25, 1998

Thank you. You know, that was a better speech than the one I was going to give. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Bill. Thank you, Sally. I am delighted to be here; this is a beautiful, beautiful place. It's been a great dinner, interesting people. Thank all of you for being here and supporting these fine candidates.

Thank you, Congressman Miller, and thank you, Nancy Pelosi, for being here and for your leadership. I told some people—we were just at a larger reception over at the Fairmont, and I told the people there that the thing I really liked about Nancy Pelosi was she'd been in Washington a long time, and she still had not managed to become cynical. She's still full of energy and passion and conviction. And we need more of that there.

I want to thank Mike and Lois for running for Congress. They are prepared to make a not insignificant sacrifice in the quality of their life to go there and serve you. And they will serve us well.

Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for coming here, and thank you for going on "Politically Incorrect" and sticking up for me tonight. [*Laughter*] It's truly strange that that would be politically incorrect to do, but that's all right. [*Laughter*]

I have a lot of friends here, but I want to say I'm especially glad to see Bill and Lee Perry. Bill Perry is one of the finest public servants that has served the United States in my lifetime, one of the greatest Secretaries of Defense we've ever had, and I thank him for being here.

I'd also like to thank all of you in this room who have helped me and Hillary and Al and Tipper in our wonderful journey these last several years. And the people of California and the people of this community, in particular, have been very, very good to us, and I'm profoundly grateful. And to those of you who've helped us, especially on the technology issues over the last 5 years, I thank you, too.

I was trying to think of what I ought to say tonight that you haven't already heard. One thing I thought, when Bill talked about what a meritocracy Silicon Valley was, and it didn't matter where you came from as long as you could program a computer, you know, you could become a partner. I thought, my God, if I had made my career there, I'd be starving now. [*Laughter*] Never has one so technologically challenged tried so hard to do so much for high technology in America.

Our country is in good shape tonight, and I'm very grateful for that. When you made that crack about how could you still be a Republican—I used to kid Bob Dole about every time the stock market would go up another 100 points, I'd say, "Here I am working to get you more money for your campaign." [*Laughter*] It was against my self-interest, but I did it anyway. It was good for the country.

The country is in good shape. I hope that doesn't mean that we are feeling complacent or that we're going to take our eye off the ball and become more small minded when we ought to become more large minded and more visionary. And that's basically what I was trying to say in the State of the Union. And I feel—I'm glad that my fellow Democrats can go into this election cycle and say we proved that you could reduce the size of Government and balance the budget and still invest more in education and health care and the environment. We proved that you could have a partnership with business and still be compassionate toward working people. We proved that you could be for creating more jobs and still for giving people the support they need to succeed with their families at home, with child care and things like that. I'm glad we can say that. Or we can just reel the numbers off and say we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest, smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history.

But all that means is that more people have good life stories to tell. And yet, if we think about the dynamism of this time, it's not true that the society is changing as fast or as profoundly as the Internet is growing, for example. But it's changing about as fast or as profoundly as a human organism can change. And therefore, we need to be thinking always about the future and what we're doing to prepare for this new

century we're about to enter. And I'd just like to mention three or four things tonight that I think are terribly important.

First of all, it's important to keep the economy growing. It may be that technology with good economic conditions will permit a higher level of growth for a longer period of time at lower levels of inflation than previously we had thought. That may be true. It will only be true if we are responsible. And one of the things that to me has been most gratifying has been the public response to my insistence that we not start spending the surplus before it materializes. We've had a deficit for 30 years, and you know, as soon as the new year came around everybody had great ideas for how to spend the projected surplus.

Now, I do believe we have eliminated the structural deficit, and I believe we'll get a balanced budget this year—if not this year, certainly next year. And then it's projected that we'll have surpluses for several years thereafter, more than a decade. And I hope that happens. And because there's no structural deficit in the budget—that is, even if the economy slows down, and you know, when the economy slows down, you get less tax money, and you have to put more out because there are more people unemployed—but over time, if there's no structural deficit, we'll still have a balanced budget to a large surplus, depending on how much we're growing.

There are a lot of people who want to start spending that right now in tax cuts or spending programs, and we should do neither. We certainly shouldn't do it (a) until it materializes—the bird is not in hand yet—and (b) we should not do it until we have dealt with the long-term financial problems with the Social Security system. We have some significant decisions to make. And I think it's very important.

Now, what my goal is, is to spend this year having a nonpartisan national process by which we discuss all the alternatives that are out there available, and then early next year we'll pass legislation which will basically take care of the long-term stability of the system. Simultaneously, no matter what option we choose, by 2029, when the present Trust Fund is expected to run out of money and start costing more money than the people are paying in every year in taxes, we will have to do some significant things. But no matter what we do, not now and not then will Social Security be enough for most Americans, the vast, vast majority of Americans, to maintain the standard of living they enjoy, once they retire. Therefore, we also have to find ways for people to save more and to prepare more for their own retirement. So we're going to be looking at a lot of interesting ideas in the Social Security system. And I hope all of you will enter that debate.

But as I said in the State of the Union Address, it's literally true, there was a public opinion survey done last year which showed that most people under 25 thought it was more likely that they would see a UFO than that they would ever draw a penny of Social Security. I don't want to discourage young people from watching "The X–Files"—[*laughter*]—but I think we have to somehow reverse that perception. So that's the first thing I want to say.

And by the way, we have a simultaneous effort going on now with Medicare. We have more than a decade of life on the Medicare Trust Fund. But again, the pure demographics of the baby boom retirements and the fact that we're living longer and accessing more high-tech medicine mean that we're going to have to make some changes in Medicare if we expect it to sustain itself well into the next century.

It is well not to underestimate the good these programs have done. In 1985, for the first time in the history of our country, the poverty rate among people over 65 was lower than the poverty rate of people under 65. When Social Security was inaugurated, over 70 percent of the American people over 65 were living in poverty. Many of them were living in abject poverty. This is a terrific achievement for our country. And while I have emphasized putting more emphasis on the children in this country in poverty and more on their health care, their education, their nutrition, their well-being, we do not want to give up this signal achievement that is really a mark of a decent society. And yet, in order to avoid it, we're going to have to plan for it and deal with the fact that my generation, the baby boomers—and I'm the oldest of them—when everybody from my age to 18 years younger crowds into the Social Security system, the Medicare system, all this is going to change everything substantially.

And we owe it—and I don't know anybody—and most of the people I grew up with are middle class people; more than half of them don't have college educations, the people I went to high school with. And I was with a bunch

of them not very long ago, and we all sat around the table, and every one of them is haunted by the idea that when we retire we would have to impose an unwarranted financial burden on our children and on their ability to raise our grandchildren in order to take care of us. Nobody wants that. And we have an opportunity now, by acting now, to make relatively modest steps that will have relatively huge impacts in the years to come if we do it. So that's the first and very important thing I want to say.

The second point I'd like to make is that we have a lot of work to do in this country on education. And many of you have helped us in our goal of hooking up every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. We're making good progress on that. But consider the anomaly in the United States—one of the things that I could just feel, during the State of the Union, resonating with people at home was when I went through all the things we'd done to increase aid to people who go on to college. Basically, now, most Americans qualify for a $1,500 tax credit, tax reduction for the first 2 years of college and a tax credit for junior and senior year and graduate school. And there are more Pell grant scholarships at higher income levels. There are education IRA's. You can deduct the interest on the student loan. The people that are in our direct loan program can get cheaper college loans with better repayment terms. All of these things—there are 300,000 more work-study slots out there.

It's literally true today that if you're willing to work for it, you can go to college. And community college is virtually free now. For people who go to community colleges, that $1,500 tax deduction covers all the tuition for about 80 percent of the community colleges in the country. And there's a great sense of achievement there. Why? Because people know it really means something to have higher education in America. And they know we have the best system of higher education in the world.

No one believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. We just got the results of the Third International Math and Science Survey, which is given to several thousand—I think about 20,000—but a representative sample of our high school seniors. And of 21 countries, we scored 19th. Now, in the eighth grade we're in the middle; in the fourth grade we're near the top now; we tied for second in the fourth grade test.

What happens? There are lots of reasons for what happens. But we've been trying to unpack that. But I do not believe it is any longer acceptable to say, "Well, what do you expect, because we have so many poor kids. Twenty percent of our kids are in poverty, and we have so many minority kids," and all that. That is all a bunch of bull. This is not rocket science. I mean, Sally just introduced us to that magnificent young woman who's a student at Stanford. I believe all kids can learn. I believe 90 percent-plus of us can learn 100 percent of what we need to know to make a society go; otherwise democracies would all fail. And it would have happened long ago.

I have supported the charter school movement and school choice and a lot of other things. But we have got to have also more standards and more emphasis on teaching and a lot of other reforms in the schools. We've got a big program out there now to lower class sizes and do a number of other things in this session of Congress. But I intend to spend a huge amount of effort in the next 3 years to do what I spent the 20 years before I became President working on in public life, and that is trying to give us the best elementary and secondary system in the world. Because we're kidding ourselves if we think we can really build a truly meritocratic society if a bunch of people are stunted coming out of the blocks.

The next issue I'd like to mention that I think has great relevance to the future is the environment. This year the two major—I'm very proud of this; I didn't mention this before, but compared to 5 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; there are fewer toxic waste dumps; and the food supply is safer. And we have set aside more land in trust to be saved than any administration in the history of the country, except the administrations of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt. And I'm very proud of that. We're working on saving Lake Tahoe now, and I'm very proud of that.

But there is still a great deal to be done and on two issues in particular which will affect the quality of life in California. The first is with regard to clean water. The Clean Water Act, which was passed 25 years ago, was designed to deal with pollution mostly coming out of sewage systems and out of industrial activities, so-called point source pollution. Bad stuff comes

out of a pipe, goes in the water. Clean it up. Forty percent of our waterways in America are still not pure enough to swim and fish in because of non-point pollution, things that run off from the land. We have got to do more on that. We have a major initiative on that, a new clean water initiative.

The other thing that I think is imperative that we get on is—and you're dealing with it right now with El Nino—the climate change phenomenon is real, and we must do what we can to meet America's responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We can do that and still grow the economy. Every time we've had to face a clean air or clean water issue people have said, "Oh, if you do this, it's going to shut the economy down." And every time we've done it, it has given the economy a boost because it's opened up a whole new area of high-tech jobs that we didn't have before.

Now basically, a third of all these CO_2 emissions come from transportation, a third come from buildings, homes, and office buildings, and a third come from manufacturing plants and electric generators. And the technology is now available, right now, to reduce substantially our greenhouse gas emissions, with available technology that pays out in 2 to 3 years, with regard to buildings, office buildings, homes, manufacturing facilities, and electric generators. And with the new fuel injection engines that are being developed for automobiles, with the hybrid electric and fuel and gasoline engines and a lot of the other things that are going on, within 2 or 3 years you're going to look at automobiles that have literally one-fourth to one-fifth the greenhouse gas emissions of today's automobiles. This is an imperative thing to do, and I hope all of you will support this, because we have a good program going through Congress, and I think we'll pass it. But it's important.

The last thing I'd like to say is, Bill talked about research. Hillary gave me the idea of trying to have a part of our program this year be a gift to the millennium that would be part respecting the past and part imagining the future. The respecting of the past part, we're going to try to restore the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Star-Spangled Banner and get people in every community in the country to do an inventory of what they have.

For example, there's a place called the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington, DC, that was built before the Civil War. And on the Old Soldiers' Home there is a cabin which is almost totally dilapidated now, where Abraham Lincoln's family lived every summer—and other Presidents. It wouldn't cost that much to restore it. It's a Washington, DC, facility. Every single community in this country has places in it that tell the part of America's story, and they have to be preserved.

But we also have to recognize that in the years we were running these huge deficits, we wound up underinvesting in a lot of things we should have invested more in, principally research. So we've also offered the biggest research budget in the history of the country in this balanced budget. And I hope we can pass it, and I hope all of you will help us pass it because it's a big part of our future.

The last thing I'd like to say is this: I have tried very hard to change the political culture of Washington with, you would have to charitably say, mixed results. [*Laughter*] I don't even understand it half the time. I realize I'm afflicted by the fact that I had a real life for too long.

But I will say this: I think that the work we're doing in this race initiative, the campaign against the employment nondiscrimination—for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," the efforts to bring America together across all the lines that divide us and to have everybody judged based on their merit and to give everybody a chance and to build an America that basically is a stunning contrast to the racial and ethnic and religious conflicts that are beleaguering the world—how much of your time as President—because my time is really yours—has been spent in my Presidency on the problems of my people in Northern Ireland, my people, still arguing over things that happened 600 years ago, or the continuing torment in the Middle East or what happened in Bosnia or trying to save all those children from the horrible fate they were facing in Rwanda and all these places? We're supposed to be living in this great modern world—you can hook everybody up to an Internet—but if they still have primitive impulses, then they just have modern technology to give greater vent with greater intensity to primitive impulses.

I want us to have a strong economy, and I want us to always be on the forefront of every

new thing that happens. But in the end, we have to prove that we can be one nation together. And I try to end all my talks now by just reminding everybody that the people that came here to start this country came here because they literally deplored the unlimited, arbitrary, abusive exercise of power over the lives of citizens. And they had a better idea. They said, "We want to be free, and we want to be free to pursue happiness—not have it guaranteed to us; free to pursue it—and in the process, we will work to form a more perfect Union."

Now these people you're supporting here and the party we represent—yes, we've modernized the Democratic Party. Thank you, Bill. And yes, they can't say all those bad things about Democrats they used to say. But if you look at the whole 20th century, if you go right back to Woodrow Wilson forward, our country has always been for those things. We've always been for more freedom, more opportunity, and a stronger Union. Which means, even when we haven't been right on the issues, we've been on the right side of America's history. And I'm proud to be here with you, Mike. I'm proud to be here with my good friend Lois. And I'm proud to be here with a party that I think can lead America to a better place in the new century.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to William and Sally Hembrecht, dinner hosts; State Senator Mike Thompson, candidate for California's First Congressional District; Lois Capps, widow of the late Representative Walter H. Capps and candidate for California's 22d Congressional District; Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., of San Francisco; and William J. Perry, former Secretary of Defense, and his wife, Lee.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba

February 25, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 25, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

February 25, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 19(3) of the Public Telecommunications Act of 1992 (Public Law 102–356), I transmit herewith the report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 25, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.

Remarks to the Technology '98 Conference in San Francisco
February 26, 1998

Thank you very much. I also want to thank whoever turned the lights on. [*Laughter*] When Sandy and I first came out, you were all in the dark, and the lights were very bright. And I thought there was something rather anomalous about my coming to a high-tech conference and you being in the dark. [*Laughter*]

Actually, I had to fight with the Vice President to see who would get to come here today. Here's a guy who lives and breathes to talk about teraflops and gigabytes. But I pulled rank. [*Laughter*] And so here we are.

Thank you, Sandy, for your leadership and your kind remarks, and thank you for your friendship and your wise counsel. I'm very grateful.

I am delighted to be here. In many ways, I think my trip here today would be sort of like a President going to Pennsylvania in the 1890's to see the people who first struck oil, or transformed iron ore into steel, the people who built our great industrial-revolution America, for you have mined the myriad possibilities of the silicon chip and, likewise, have transformed America.

For those of us, like Congresswoman Pelosi and others who serve in the National Government, it's a very interesting challenge trying to assess where we are, where we're going, make the right decisions, and do it in a way that enables us to make the most of all this change while being true to our most fundamental values.

These are good times for America. Sandy talked about it. We are almost now up to 15 million new jobs in the last year and one month. We have the lowest unemployment in 24 years; the lowest crime rate in 24 years; the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years; the lowest inflation in 30 years; we're about to have our first balanced budget in 30 years; the highest homeownership in the history of America. These are good times.

The economic strategy that we have embraced, to balance the budget but to invest more in our people and their future and to trade more around the world, is working. But I think everyone who has studied this economy believes that at the dawn of a new century the strength of our economy, the health and prosperity of our people, indeed, the very security of our Nation will depend more than ever on the scientific and technological revolution that so many of you have helped to set in motion.

Today, over 4 million Americans work in technology-related industries, earning 70 percent above average incomes. There are 70 new companies a week that start here in northern California alone in high-tech areas. There are new industries, biotechnology, super computers. But some of the most profound revolutions have occurred in old industries. Indeed, a great deal of information technology research and development is taking place in real estate, in services, in wholesale and retail trade, in construction, in transportation. The Ford Taurus that you drive today has more computer power than the Apollo 11 did that Neil Armstrong took to the Moon. It's an interesting time.

I came today to talk about what we can do to build on this progress by, in particular, promoting and expanding the fastest growing social and economic community in history: the Internet. Ten years ago, it was still the province of scientists, an obscure project developed by the Defense Department. Five years ago, the World Wide Web barely existed; I think there were about 50 sites. Today, there are 1 1/2 million new webpages created every day, 65,000 every hour. This phenomenon has absolutely staggering possibilities to democratize, to empower people all over the world. It could make it possible for every child with access to a computer to stretch a hand across a keyboard, to reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever composed.

The next big step in our economic transformation, it seems to me, is the full development of this remarkable device and the electronic commerce it makes possible. One of the things that I have focused on very much lately is with the unemployment rate at 4.7 percent and the inflation rate very low and stable, the question arises from all conventional economic analysis, can we continue to grow robustly without new inflation? The answer is, if we're productive enough and we have enough technological advances, we probably can.

The second thing is, can we grow and finally extend the benefits of this explosion of enterprise to the isolated communities and people who have not yet felt this remarkable economic upsurge, the inner-city neighborhoods, the remote rural areas? I am convinced that the answer to both those questions can be yes if, but only if, we maximize wisely the potential of our technological revolution.

A new study, soon to be released by our working group on electronic commerce, documents the remarkable growth of the Internet. Within a single year Amazon.com, an on-line bookstore, increased its sales nearly 10 times selling 6 1/2 million books in 1997. In a year's time, Internet airline ticket sales nearly tripled and is expected to grow sixfold, to $5 billion a year, by the year 2000. By 2002, electronic commerce between businesses in the United States alone will exceed $300 billion. And of course, as with everything on the Internet, that is just the beginning.

This explosion of real commerce has the potential to increase our prosperity, to create more jobs, to improve the lives of our people, and to reach into areas that have not yet felt prosperity. But it raises new and serious issues as well: How can we further its growth and foster its magnificent freedom without allowing it to be used as a tax haven that drains funds our States and cities need to educate our children and make our streets safe?

Thirty thousand separate taxing authorities in the United States—I'll say that again, there are 30,000 separate taxing authorities in the United States—all struggling to come to grips with this phenomenon, with only their existing old tax methods to apply to a very new world. There should be no special breaks for the Internet, but we can't allow unfair taxation to weight it down and stunt the development of the most promising new economic opportunity in decades.

I think America should adopt a moratorium on discriminatory taxation so that a bipartisan commission of elected officials, business leaders, consumers, and representatives of the Treasury Department can carefully study the matter and come to a resolution. Therefore, I support the "Internet Tax Freedom Act" now before Congress, because it takes into account the rights of consumers, the needs of businesses, and the overall effect of taxation on the development of Internet commerce. The legislation does not prevent State and local governments from applying existing taxes to electronic commerce, as long as there is no discrimination between an Internet transaction and a traditional one. It does give us time to work through what is a very, very complex issue.

I'm committed to listening to the concerns of the Governors, the mayors, other officials and businesses, and to achieve a consensus that will establish rules that are progrowth, nondiscriminatory, but will provide appropriate revenues our communities need to meet vital public purposes. I think this legislation will have the support of both parties. And I look forward to working with many of you to pass it and, along the way, to reach a greater consensus in our Nation about how to go forward from here.

To ensure that electronic commerce can flourish across international borders, I've also asked the Secretary of the Treasury to work with our international trading partners to block new or discriminatory taxes on global electronic commerce. Already, we've fought off a bit tax, a tax on every unit of data consumers download from the Internet. And we're working with the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development to prevent such discrimination and streamline tax administration in cyberspace.

There are other ways our Nation must work to harness the potential of the Internet. We want to work with you to meet our goal of connecting every classroom and library in America to the Internet by the year 2000. Just this morning in Washington, Vice President Gore announced that we have now connected nearly 80 percent of our schools to the Internet; more than twice as many as were connected in 1994 when we had the first NetDay here in California under the leadership of many of you in this room. He also announced new private and nonprofit efforts to connect underserved communities to 21st century technology, bringing us closer to ensuring that a child from the poorest

inner city, the most isolated rural area, or the most affluent suburbs all will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge in the same real time.

We want to work with you to make certain that cyberspace is a healthy place for our children in a way that does not overregulate the Internet or stifle the growth of electronic commerce. We will work with you to make sure that consumer protections and laws that promote competition remain strong in the new economy at the dawn of the new century, just as we built competition into the old economy at the turn of the last century.

We will work with you to make sure that the Internet never becomes a vehicle for tax evasion or money laundering. We will work with you to build a new Internet that operates up to a thousand times faster than it does today. My balanced budget includes $110 million to develop the next generation Internet in partnership with leading U.S. high-tech companies and universities. Today I'm pleased to announce new National Science Foundation grants that will connect 29 more universities to help create the next generation Internet, bringing the total now to 92. And we will work with you in every way we can to lift our eyes to the remarkable potential of the Internet for learning, for the arts, as a means to spread our shared values.

The First Lady and I launched the White House Millennium Program to help our Nation honor our past and imagine our future as we come to this new millennium. In the State of the Union Address, I announced a public-private partnership to preserve our historic treasures for future generations and to help make them more accessible to more Americans, including the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, the Star-Spangled Banner. Putting our treasures on-line will help us to do just that. Our balanced budget will make 3 million objects from the Smithsonian Institution, the National Archives, and other collections available on the Internet by the year 2000. And together with the private sector, we'll help museums and libraries and communities all around our country to do the same thing.

Two weeks ago, thanks to Sun Microsystems, we launched the first-ever cybercast from the White House, when historian Bernard Bailyn from Harvard gave the first in a series of our Millennium Lectures. We started this special program to bring some of our greatest thinkers, writers, historians, and scientists to the White House to talk about our Nation's history and our future at this pivotal time. Next week, the world-renowned physicist Stephen Hawking will be with us to talk about human knowledge in the 21st century and the innovations it will create. I hope you will join us on-line at www.whitehouse.gov. [*Laughter*] We'll be there. And this time, we will have the capacity not to shut down like we did last time.

This is a truly exciting time to be an American. The qualities of the digital revolution, its dynamism, its curiosity, its flexibility, and its drive, they're at the core of our character and the legacy of our original revolution. By once again adding the fuel of interest to the fire of genius, as Abraham Lincoln once said, our country is leading the world to new heights of economic and human development.

I ask you to think about these things together. The economic development is largely the means by which we seek to expand the quality of human life, not only for the people who directly participate in it but for those who benefit indirectly.

As I think more and more about a new century and a new millennium, I also think more and more about how we began. All of you are here today committed to an incredible entrepreneurial way of life and work as the descendants of a group of people who came here believing that free people would nearly always get it right. They came fleeing societies where people like you, with good ideas in the 18th century, were subject to absolute, arbitrary, abusive government power. And they forged a Declaration of Independence, a Constitution, and a Bill of Rights based on the simple idea that freedom worked better and that people ought to be free to pursue happiness within the context of a more perfect Union.

If you look at the whole history of this country, that's what it has been about. You think about every single period of change and crisis, whether it was the Civil War, the industrial revolution, the civil rights era, or the present information age, and the advances have come when we have deepened the meaning of freedom and expanded it to more people, widened the circle of opportunity and prosperity, and found a way across all of our myriad diversities to be a stronger, more united nation.

That is really what you are a part of, to a degree that would have been unimaginable to

the people who founded this Nation. But I believe it would make them very, very proud.

Thank you for what you do and for what, together, we will do to make our country stronger in this new era. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the ballroom at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sandy Robertson, chairman, Robertson Stevens.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Disaster Assistance in Oakland, California

February 26, 1998

The President. First, let me thank all of you for meeting with me today. I'm very interested in this project. One of the things that I promised myself when I ran for President was that if I got elected, I would give this country a first-rate disaster response operation through FEMA. When I was the Governor of my home State, Mayor Harris' other home State—[*laughter*]—and Mr. Witt was my State emergency services director, we had the highest frequency of tornadoes in the country. And we had some very serious flooding and a lot of other natural disaster problems. And it seemed to me that the United States Government owed it to the American people, basically in a completely nonpolitical way, to have the highest level of confidence, as well as common sense and humanity, in response to emergencies. And we have worked very hard to give that to the American people, and unfortunately, we've had more opportunities to practice in California than any other place in the country because of all the difficulties that the people here have faced. But it's terribly important.

Yesterday I was in Florida dealing with the worst tornado there in 50 years and had, as you know, almost 40 people killed there. And we are very well aware of all the difficulties of El Nino here. But I just wanted to begin by saying I think this is an important part of our national obligation to one another, to deal with these things in the proper way.

Now, I want to talk a little bit about the project here, but first let me say that the people of California and now the people of Florida are giving the people of the United States some very painful examples of the excesses of this El Nino, which is apparently the strongest one in this century. We are doing what we can to help. Mr. Witt and I have been talking about this now ever since we were in Florida yesterday and flying up here.

Based on his recommendations, we're adding four more California counties to the disaster list: Los Angeles, Orange, Stanislaus, and Trinity. We're announcing that all 35 counties are available for public assistance, and they will be eligible also, the ones on the disaster list, for individual assistance and for help with debris removal and other emergency proceedings.

The Federal Highway Administrator is here. We are releasing another $20 million, in addition to the $20 million announced last week by the Vice President, to help rebuild the road system. FEMA has already sent about $5 million for disaster housing assistance. And SBA, HUD, and Labor are also providing support. But we are going to provide another million and a half dollars for emergency watershed funding from DOA to repair flood damage in Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties. So we're going to do the very best we can to help deal with these problems now.

The thing that I think is important as I have seen Californians deal with flooding, earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, you name it—I told somebody after the Northridge earthquake that California had been through so much I kept waiting for the pestilence to appear. [*Laughter*] But one of the things that I've been most impressed by is how quickly some visionaries in California have moved from dealing with the disasters to trying to prevent them and trying to accept the fact that there is a high probability of natural hazards in this area but that with enough work they might be prevented, or at least some significant number of them might be prevented from becoming devastating disasters.

For every dollar we spend on prevention, we save two or more in future disaster cost. We know that. Therefore, the balanced budget plan that I presented contains $50 million to launch this Project Impact to build disaster-resistant communities through partnerships with the private sector, volunteer groups, community organizations. FEMA has already launched seven of these pilot projects, and we will have a Project Impact community in every State by this fall. So I think that's very good news.

I'm glad that Harris Wofford is here. Our AmeriCorps volunteers are going to be joining our efforts by the spring break initiative, coordinating disaster reduction efforts in communities of Project Impact. And in Oakland, the Collaborative Agencies for Responding to Disasters is joining the Corporation for National Service and FEMA to mobilize hundreds of high school students to carry out preventive measures in over 500 low-income and elderly housing complexes. That's very, very good news.

It seems to me that Project Impact can become a real model for every community in the country. And it's an example of my idea of the proper role of Government as partner, as catalyst, as giving people the tools to deal with their own challenges and make the most of their own lives.

In Seattle, the business community has matched a million dollars that we put into Project Impact with $6 million in private money. And they're undertaking a really very impressive comprehensive effort. We'll have 50 Project Impact communities, and we need 500 business partners by the end of this year. I hope we will get them. I think we will.

Let me say I look forward to the discussion today. I want to hear from you. I want to get the best ideas I can about what else we can do. We want common sense, innovative opportunities to help people deal with profoundly human challenges.

Mr. Witt, you might want to give us a little update on where we are in southern California, and then we'll just go around the table. I'd like to hear from everybody here.

[*At this point, the roundtable discussion began.*]

The President. One of the things that I hope will happen is that Project Impact and all the communities where it operates will be able to get a higher percentage of people who are willing to basically continue to be prepared, continue to train, and then continue to do things like you just talked about on the gardening on a systematic basis.

Interestingly enough, this is a problem that is common to all human affairs. If you think about the last time something bad happened to you in some way, the longer ago it was the less likely you are to worry about it anymore. It's just human nature in all human affairs. And one of the big challenges we have in maintaining the readiness of our military forces is the fact that, since the cold war, the general perception is that, well, there are all these things we don't have to worry about.

And then you say, "Well, why don't you have to worry about it?" Well, because you have this military force. But if all of a sudden you forget it and you act like you don't have to worry about it, then one day you don't have it anymore.

So this is a common problem in all human affairs. And one of the things that I was so excited about this thing was that maybe we could actually get a high density of people, real citizens in every community in all these various walks of life we've been hearing about here, who will at least maximize the chance that people will be ready the next time something bad happens, and that they will have done as many things as you can possibly do to minimize the damage of whatever it is that occurs.

That's all you can do in human life. The rest of it's up to the good Lord. That's something we just—there aren't any guarantees. But I think it's very important what you're saying, and I just hope that this project will get more people either like you or to listen to you.

[*At this point, the roundtable discussion continued.*]

The President. One of the things I was going to suggest—and it may be a hair-brained idea; wouldn't be the first one I had—but the position you're in with this mudslide business, it's not as if you deliberately ignored a clear and present danger. For example, the last time we had a big flood at home in the 1990's, we had all these little towns just flooded out along the Arkansas River. Now, there were some people who had built in the 100-year flood plain and some people who built below that, that basically, reasonably should have known that every 25 years that was going to wipe out. I don't think we had three 100-year floods in about 10 years,

so I guess we can wait 300 years before we have another one. [*Laughter*]

But anyway, it's not that sort of situation. It's just a question of what happens if you have a vulnerable ecostructure, as you do in California, and you have a lot of people that have to live somewhere; there always may be kind of unforeseen circumstances. And one of the things that I was kind of interested in was whether you might be able to devise some partnerships with insurance companies where you get all the people involved in litigation, all the people involved in all this and then you say, okay, give me the laundry list of things everybody in this neighborhood has to do, but if they do it, then you can get kind of a blanket insurance policy. Even if it's got a fairly sizable deductible, it would protect you against what you're worried about now.

And I think that in a place like California where—see, all these things relate to one another. For example, if you have an earthquake that doesn't damage your home profoundly, but loosens the foundation a little bit, then you're more vulnerable to a mud-slide that may come along 6 years later. I mean, all these things reinforce one another. And so if there could be some way that, growing out of this Project Impact, there could be some more comprehensive look at insurance plus prevention plus mitigation plus all these things going together, I think it might bring a lot of peace of mind to all those people on your block now, for example, that are worried to death they're going to have a study and the study's going to say, come up with 3 times your annual income if you want to save your house. That's like saying if I were 25, I could jump higher. [*Laughter*] It's nice to know, but you've got a pretty good idea before you do the study.

Let's talk a little more about mitigation, though. I know a lot of you have been involved in this.

[*At this point, the roundtable discussion continued.*]

The President. Well, let me say this. One of the things—I would like to ask you all to think about this, and I want to call on our host mayor here in a minute to close, but I—one of the things that I would like to see come out of this—keep in mind, I have asked for a substantial amount of money but spread across the Nation the $50 million is not a great deal of money—what we want to do is help get as many of these projects put together as possible. And if they work, then you can, coming up out of this project here and in other places like it, kind of give us a sense and provide evidence that if we shifted some of our spending programs priorities—whether it's in housing or highways or whatever—to do more prevention, this is something that would not only meet with widespread public support but actually that the money would be well spent because you've actually gone through a grassroots planning process, and you know kind of what needs to be done; you've identified the things and you can guarantee that we will get that 2 to 1 return we were talking about.

So I hope you'll all be thinking about this. As you go along, you do all this work you're going to do anyway just think about—just for example on this whole business of vegetation. You know, in addition to planting gardens, there are plenty of places that, if they were more properly vined, you'd have all kinds of other stuff going: You would reduce soil erosion; you would reduce the impact of a flood. Now, if the flood is big enough, it will wash anything away, but we're talking about within range.

All these things there are possibilities for, should this be part of the conservation reserve program, for example, the agriculture program, all these kind of things. There's a gazillion options we could have here that will present themselves to us as you work through this.

[*At this point, the roundtable discussion continued.*]

The President. This has been very interesting to me, and it's a wonderful reaffirmation of the citizenship of all of you, not only our AmeriCorps people, but all this is really ultimately about citizen service. I thank you very much. And we'll try to do our part, get this going, and get it going across the country.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. in the auditorium at the Scottish Rite Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Elihu Mason Harris of Oakland.

Statement on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation
February 26, 1998

I am disappointed that the Senate Republican leadership today killed campaign finance reform. Given a chance to strengthen our democracy, an obstructionist minority instead chose to preserve the system of soft money and unlimited backdoor campaign expenditures.

I am pleased that all 45 Democrats and a majority of the Senate supported the bipartisan McCain-Feingold legislation. I will support their attempts to bring this legislation up for a vote again this session. Just as the need for change has not gone away, campaign finance reform will not go away.

In the meantime, I will redouble my efforts to push campaign finance reform through other means. I ask the members of the Federal Election Commission to take the step supported by a majority of Members of the Senate and ban soft money. And I continue to call upon the Federal Communications Commission to act to provide free or discounted airtime to candidates, and I will strongly oppose any efforts by Congress to block this reform. I believe these petitions offer us the most realistic hope for real reform this year.

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation
February 26, 1998

Last month I unveiled my child care initiative to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. Today I am pleased that Congresswoman Kennelly has introduced comprehensive child care legislation that is also designed to meet the needs of America's children and families. Congresswoman Kennelly's bill is a strong package that, like mine, significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides greater tax relief to help low- and middle-income families pay for child care, creates a tax credit for businesses that provide child care for their employees, increases after-school opportunities for children, promotes early learning, and improves child care quality.

This proposal is a testament to Congresswoman Kennelly's leadership on this issue and her commitment to the future of our Nation's children. I look forward to working with her and other Members of Congress to enact bipartisan child care legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and, even more important, as parents.

Statement Announcing Grants Under the Violence Against Women Program
February 27, 1998

Today the Justice Department is awarding more than $135 million in grants under the Violence Against Women program to help State and local authorities combat domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault. This money will be used to train police, hire prosecutors, and provide assistance to victims. Since I signed the Crime Act in 1994, we have begun to transform the way law enforcement deals with domestic violence. We should be proud of the efforts underway in communities across our Nation to stop these serious crimes. These funds will help every State build and expand on the programs they have developed to ensure that abusers are captured, prosecuted, and punished.

Letter to the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission on Campaign Finance Reform

February 27, 1998

Dear Chairman Kennard:

Yesterday's defeat of comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation in the Senate makes it even more imperative that the Federal Communications Commission act to provide free and reduced rate airtime to candidates and take any other steps that would reform political debate over the public airwaves.

I applaud your previous decision to take the next steps toward providing such free and reduced rate time. The issues surrounding such a proposal are complex; there are a variety of ways to proceed, and the views of all interested parties should be considered. But I continue to believe that providing such airtime is the critical next step to strengthen our democracy, improve our political system, and give voters the loudest voice.

I strongly oppose any effort in the Congress to block your ability to take the next important steps for reform. Yesterday's defeat means that it will be virtually impossible for the Congress to move forward on campaign finance reform. The Congress should not make matters worse by actively blocking your progress.

The most realistic next steps for reform will come from the actions of regulatory agencies, acting within their legal authority, to renew our democracy. I thank you for your leadership and pledge to work with you as you move forward.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Letter to Members of the Federal Election Commission on Campaign Finance Reform

February 27, 1998

To the Members of the Federal Election Commission:

Yesterday's defeat of comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation in the Senate makes it even more imperative that the Federal Election Commission (FEC) act to end the soft money system.

On June 4, 1997, I petitioned the FEC to act within its current statutory authority to end the soft money system. Your General Counsel, Lawrence Noble, has concluded that the FEC does, in fact, have the legal authority to act. This would be a major breakthrough for reform. I understand you have asked the General Counsel to explore other options—but the inability of the Congress to act on this vital public matter underscores how urgent it is that the FEC proceed without delay.

The rules governing soft money are principally the legacy of decades of decisions by the FEC. You have it in your power to act now to end this system. If no action is taken, then in coming years the fundraising arms race that has consumed both parties will only worsen.

The Senate's failure to pass campaign finance reform legislation means the most realistic next steps for reform will come from the actions of regulatory agencies, acting within their legal authority, to renew our democracy. I thank the FEC for the steps it has taken thus far and urge you to press forward to end the soft money system.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The President's Radio Address
February 28, 1998

Good morning. This morning I want to talk to you about one of the most important ways we can help all children live up to their God-given potential: giving them the tools they need to master the fundamentals of reading.

This week America got a wakeup call on education. We learned that our high school seniors are lagging behind those in most other industrialized nations in math and science. In a global economy that is increasingly powered by information and technology, this is a very sobering fact. It tells me we can have no higher priority than to transform our K-through-12 classrooms in every community. We need smaller classes, better teaching, higher standards, more discipline, greater accountability.

And clearly, we must give our children more help with reading. Currently, 40 percent of our Nation's 8-year-olds are not reading even at the basic level. And those students are far more likely to get discouraged and drop out of school or never to learn what they need to know while they're in school. Failing to read early on is a burden that can bog down a child for life. That's why I launched the America Reads challenge, to make sure all our children can read on their own by the end of the third grade.

Thanks to an amazing outpouring of support, tens of thousands of volunteer tutors are already at work in our communities, giving our children the intensive reading help they need. More than 900 colleges have committed to give their students work study credit for devoting after-school hours to tutoring children. And this year 3,000 new AmeriCorps members and thousands of new senior volunteers will recruit more than 100,000 volunteer reading tutors for our children. We are on track to give extra reading help to 3 million children at risk of falling behind.

But we need Congress' help to meet this goal. This past November, the House of Representatives voted with bipartisan support to promote literacy efforts in the home, the school, the community. Legislation with these goals is now awaiting action in the Senate, which means $210 million in targeted assistance is now on hold in Washington, not at work in our communities. So today I call on the Senate to pass this legislation without delay. We need it. Our children need it.

This coming Monday, reading out loud to children will be the talk of the Nation. To celebrate the birthday of the late Dr. Seuss, whose much beloved books have sparked the imaginations of children and parents alike for generations, the National Education Association and many other groups are sponsoring the first Read Across America Day. Thousands of people, from baseball star Cal Ripken to the leaders of the Cherokee Nation to the sailors of the U.S.S. *Austin*, will read favorite books and share the joy of reading with children in every part of our country. I encourage parents and grandparents to get involved. Read with your child on Read Across America Day and every day.

Scientists have now shown reading to your children every night before bed can help lay the foundation for his or her life and, in turn, for our Nation's future. Literacy is the key to all learning. Without it, history is a haze, math is a muddle, the Internet is indecipherable, the promise of America is a closed book. But we can change all that. With an army of reading tutors, well-trained teachers, and involved parents, we can make sure every child can read by the third grade. And if we do that, there is no limit, in the words of Dr. Seuss, on the places our children will go.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:22 p.m. on February 26 at the Spanish Rights Center in Oakland, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 28.

Remarks on Disaster Assistance in Los Angeles, California
February 28, 1998

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to begin by thanking Congressman Gallegly, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, Congressman Sherman, and Gloria Molina and Zev Yaroslavsky for joining me here.

I have just met with some of the people who were hurt by the terrible weather you've had in southern California over the last week, as well as a number of the people who were involved in the rescue effort. Let me begin by saying that our hearts and prayers are with the families who lost their loved ones. I especially want to send our condolences to the families of Officer Rick Stovall and Officer Brit Irvine who gave their lives in the line of service as they responded to the emergency in Santa Maria.

There were many people of all ages who lost their lives in this terrible tragedy. I received a fax from a friend of mine yesterday whose son lost a childhood friend of his, a young fellow student. I met a young woman in there in the meeting who lost her fiance after he had saved the lives of a woman and her three young children.

There is very little that anyone can say at this moment to ease the human loss. We do know that the weather we are experiencing now has been dramatically aggravated because of El Nino. I have visited with families in Florida where 39 people were killed in the worst tornadoes in 50 years, in northern California, and now here today.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has spent a lot of time in southern California in the last 5 years and couple of months since I've been President. I talked with James Lee Witt in some detail before I came down here today. We are determined to do all we can. FEMA is responding swiftly to provide disaster relief funds in 35 counties, including over $2 million more for Glenn County. The SBA has an outreach office in Orange County, and Federal Highway Administration personnel have already released $40 million to California for road repairs.

There will be a lot more to be done. The Members of Congress and the local officials have talked to me about other things that we need to do to deal with the particular problems of people who lost everything or who are still at risk of further natural calamities.

Let me just say today, I want more than anything else to praise the courage of those who worked so hard during this disaster—the fire, the police personnel, the emergency personnel, all the others who were involved; many of them risked their lives, and as we know, two lost their lives—and to praise the courage of the people who have lost everything they have but still have their lives. I want to encourage them, to tell them their fellow Americans are thinking about them, and to pray for tranquil weather as we begin the rebuilding process.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. on the tarmac at Los Angeles International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gloria Molina and Zev Yaroslavsky, members, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; and California Highway Patrol officers Rick Stovall and Brit Irvine.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senator Barbara Boxer in Los Angeles
February 28, 1998

Thank you very, very much. First I want to thank all of you for being here for Senator Boxer and for your country. Thank you, Senator Torricelli, not only for being here and for your leadership on behalf of your fellow Democrats in the Senate and some of the people we hope will be joining us, but for always being willing to stand up and fight for what you believe in and not just standing—[*applause*]—thank you. The longer I stay in Washington, the more I come to appreciate people who will stand up and fight. And I thank you, Senator. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Ron and Jan for having us here. I don't believe, if I live to be 100, I don't believe I'd ever get tired of coming to this magnificent place. I'm sure they would get tired of me coming—[*laughter*]—and are doubtless glad that I am term-limited, but I love coming here.

I want to say just a couple of things tonight—and I've already eliminated all the stories I was going to tell, because all the entertainers will be downgrading me if I tell a joke. Whoopi told me a funny story once; I think it's the funniest joke I ever heard, but I certainly can't tell that. [*Laughter*] It's not that bad, it's just too bad for me to tell in front of all of you, but it's really funny. If you file by the front table on your way out, she'll be glad to—[*laughter*]. That's the best I could do.

Hillary and Chelsea actually wanted to be here tonight. We love Barbara Boxer, and she is now a member of our family, or we are a member of her family, or however it works, but anyway, we're all here together. And that's one of the reasons I came. But there are a couple of other reasons I wanted to talk about.

I asked, when I came in, I asked Sim to talk to me about the race and Barbara to talk to me about the race, and they said one of the members of the Republican Party who wishes to oppose Senator Boxer had already spent almost $6 million on television ads and that a lot of these television ads are trying to convince the California voters that she has not been a good Senator. Now, you be the judge.

When I introduced the bill in 1993 that reduced the deficit 92 percent before—before—a single dollar had been taken out from the balanced budget bill last year, we didn't have a vote to spare in the Senate—not a single one. Al Gore had to vote for it; it was a tie vote. And as he says, whenever he votes, we win. [*Laughter*]

You know, being President has had all kinds of humbling experiences. [*Laughter*] And I'm sure you all have your top-10 list. But if anybody had ever told me 5 years ago I'd wind up being a straight man for Al Gore, I never would have believed that. Such are the burdens of office. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, we didn't have a vote to spare—one vote. California—you know what it was like in 1992, 1991, 1993. Barbara Boxer voted yes knowing she had a difficult campaign, knowing it would be easier to walk away from, knowing that they'd be pounding the drums and saying all kind of terrible things. Five years later, we're on the verge of the first balanced budget in 30 years. The stock market went from 3,200 to over 8,000. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. I think that's a pretty good record.

I don't believe that $6 million in negative television ads, or $60 million, or $600 million should be allowed to wipe away that fundamental truth. That one vote—that one vote—should get her the support of a huge majority of the people of California for reelection to the United States Senate. It's that important.

But that's not all that happened. We also—you heard Senator Boxer talking about the decline in the crime rate now—we put more community police on the street. We were ridiculed for that bill by people like the folks that are advertising against her—ridiculed. Why? Because we also said, "Okay, we'll put more police on the street and put them back on the beat, but we think we should take assault weapons off the street and we ought to spend some money to give kids something positive to do so that they have something to say yes to in life." And we were ridiculed. They said, "Oh, this bill will be a failure; it's pork barrel; it's terrible"; and besides that, we're "trying to take everybody's guns away from them." Well, 5 years later the Brady law has kept over 300,000 people with criminal records from getting handguns. I don't know how many people are alive because of it, but a lot of people. And juvenile crime is going down again, and it's going down most in the communities where the kids are being dealt with as people and being given a positive future. So I think that's enough to justify reelecting Senator Boxer.

And I could give you lots of other examples. I also believe you can just see, watch her standing up here—and she has to stand on this box that then they have to move away for me. But don't kid yourself, it's just a prop. [*Laughter*] It's designed to disarm the enemy. [*Laughter*] She's a very large person—a very large person. [*Laughter*]

Washington is a place where too many people take themselves too seriously, where a lot of people profess to be profoundly religious but

actually worship power, and where having a person who shows up every day more interested in people and interested in power as an instrument of doing good, not as an end in itself, is a very precious commodity. For that reason, Barbara Boxer should be reelected to the United States Senate.

And finally let me say, as I said in the State of the Union Address, Hillary had this idea that we ought to honor the passing of the century and the coming of a new millennium with a set of gifts that she sort of—she gave me this idea, she said we ought to call it "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." And Barbara Boxer has a good imagination, and she thinks about her children and her grandchildren and the world we want to leave to them. And when the world is changing as fast as it is now, it's really actually rather difficult to predict what is going to happen next month, and it's difficult to know with absolute precision what's going to happen 30 years from now. But we know what challenges we have to face if we want the world to be a positive place 30 years from now.

So all those things that Senator Torricelli talked about—the efforts that we can now make because we do have a strong economy, because we do have budgetary discipline, because things are going well, we can now make an effort we need to imagine that future and to make it come true. That's what the education and the child care and the health care initiative is about; that's what the environmental initiatives are about. I don't think people will be making fun of us much longer when we talk about climate change and global warming. You look at what El Nino has done this year in America, in southern California; can you imagine what can happen to our climate if the average temperature over the next 50 years went up another couple of degrees? People ask you what global warming is about—it's about that hole in the interstate here. It's about mud rushing down and carrying away the lives of innocent people. It's about malaria rising to the highest known altitudes on other continents and people carrying infections into airports and giving it to other people so now there's a phenomenon called "airport malaria."

We like to believe that technology and intelligence and everything just defies all the laws of gravity and nature; it's just not so. The good Lord has a way of bringing us back to Earth, and we must return to Earth on this. We've got to meet our responsibilities to future generations. We do not have to give up economic prosperity. Every time we faced an environmental challenge in this country for the last 30 years, when we've been working on it seriously, every single time people say, well, if you do this you'll hurt the economy; if you do that it will cost you jobs; if you do the other thing, you'll set everybody back and people won't be able to make a good living. It's been wrong every time; it is wrong now. We will find a way to find greater prosperity if we honor our obligations not only to preserve but actually to restore the planet and reverse this process of climate change that I believe is very destructive. And I hope you will support it.

So there is a lot of stuff to do. We want to establish a medical research fund that will double funding for the National Cancer Institute, dramatically increase funding for the National Institutes of Health, increase overall scientific research spending, establish a space station in the sky that I think is very, very important for what happens here on Earth. And all of that is great and important, and all these issues I hope will be out there. But remember the second half of what we're trying to do for the millennium. We're trying to imagine the future, but also remember and honor the past.

And I would just close with this, because it really does matter who these Senators are, what their values are, what kind of memory they have, how they look at the world. They have enormous influence. And, yes, I want to do all these specific things I said. But all these specific things that we should do have to be seen against the background of our progress as a nation from the beginning into the future for, I hope, as long as human beings exist on this planet.

That's why we want to preserve the Star-Spangled Banner. Believe it or not, we need $13 million to save the flag that led to our national anthem. We've got a lot of work to do just to save the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. And it's worth doing. There's a house where Abraham Lincoln and his family used to spend the summer, by the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington, DC—this little cabin, it's just about to go to pieces—we ought to save that. People pay a big price when they forget where they came from. And here in this county, there are parts of your past I hope you will find a way

to save as a part of celebrating a new millennium.

But if you go back through American history and you say, what were we all about when we started—at least what did we say we believed, and where did we fall short, and how do we do better; what was the Civil War about, where did we fall short, and how do we do better; when all these people quit working on the farm and moved to the cities, and all these immigrants came to America around the turn of the century and started working in the factories, were we falling short of our ideals, and how do we do better? What happened in the Depression; what happened in World War II; what happened in the civil rights movement; how did we fall short, and how do we do better? You look at all of it, and think about—just go home tonight and think about this: Why did people come here in the first place? They wanted to get away from arbitrary, abusive, unaccountable power, to be free—remember the Declaration of Independence—to pursue happiness, and to form a more perfect Union so their children could do an even better job of being free to pursue happiness, to form a more perfect Union. Go back and read it; that's what it says.

Now, did we live that way? Of course not. You had to be a white male property owner to have any influence in the beginning. And given my family's history, that means that I wouldn't have been much better off than Whoopi, because we wouldn't have had any property. No, we weren't there. But it was the right idea. Freedom is better than oppression. Freedom, what? Not to have a guaranteed outcome but pursue your own dream, and to form a more perfect Union so your children after you will do even better, not just materially but spiritually as well. That was the idea. You go back and think about every single turning point in the whole history of this country, and you will see that we had to ask ourselves the same old questions: How can we deepen the meaning of our freedom; how can we widen the circle of opportunity; how can we form a more perfect Union?

I've had the chance to say many times now in the last several months; I want to say it one more time: The Republican Party represented the dominant party in America for deepening the meaning of our freedom, broadening the circle of opportunity, and forming a more perfect Union from the time Abraham Lincoln laid down his life to save this country until Theodore Roosevelt served as President. But from the time of Woodrow Wilson through Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter down to the present day, we have not always been right, we Democrats, but we have always been on the right side of those three great issues in the 20th century.

If you think about all of these great challenges we face and you listen to the rhetoric and you listen to the arguments that are made, strip it all away and take every single issue, and go home tonight and look at your kids, think about your grandkids or your nieces and nephews or all the people you care about, and ask yourself, "What should I do as a citizen to deepen the meaning of freedom in my country, to widen the circle of opportunity so it embraces everybody, to give us a chance with all this diversity—this brilliant, blazing, confusing, complex diversity—to form a more perfect Union" there may be more than one answer. But surely one answer is electing the people to public office like Barbara Boxer.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Ron and Janet Burkle; comedienne Whoopi Goldberg; and Sim Farar, finance chair for Senator Boxer's reelection campaign committee.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on International Agreements
February 27, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

Pursuant to subsection (b) of the Case-Zablocki Act, (1 U.S.C. 112b(b)), I hereby transmit a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 2.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Trade Policy Agenda and Trade Agreements Program Report
February 28, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C 2213), I transmit herewith the 1998 Trade Policy Agenda and 1997 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

February 28, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 2.

Remarks to the Mortgage Bankers Association of America
March 2, 1998

Thank you all so much. Thank you, Marc, and Paul Reid and Mike Ferrell and all the officers and staff of the Mortgage Bankers Association; to our national Treasurer and members of the National Association of State Treasurers. I'm delighted to be here, along with Frank Raines, my OMB Director, who used to spend some time with some of you, and Gene Sperling and others on our staff.

I have looked forward to this day for a long time, just to be able to thank you for the work that all of you have done in giving America the highest homeownership rate in the history of the Republic. It means a lot to a lot of people out there in the country, and I appreciate your role in this historic achievement. And I thank you very much.

In my State of the Union Address, I called upon all our people to strengthen our country for the new century ahead. Historically, that has always meant deepening the meaning of America's freedom, strengthening our Union, and drawing our people closer together across all the lines that divide us, and clearly, always widening the circle of opportunity.

Now, we are seeing a remarkable increase in the circle of opportunity. In addition to reaching the highest level of homeownership in history, millions of Americans have been able to refinance their mortgages, which has amounted to billions and billions of dollars in tax cuts for families, putting more money in their pockets, freeing up more for investment and savings. Access to capital has spread to minorities who for years have been locked out of the economy.

And I appreciate what Marc said about going to New York. We do see increasing homeownership rates for minorities now, and I hope it will continue. Our capital markets are the strongest in the world, and clearly, they have played a major role in helping us to do well in this new economy.

Today what I'd like to do is talk to you just for a few minutes about why we have to follow a consistent strategy of fiscal discipline and investment in our future and our people. The strategy that has worked for the last 5 years we must continue into the next century. I also want to talk about how all the discussions surrounding the tax system and the IRS fit into this: what is the right way to cut taxes; what is the right way to reform the IRS; what is the wrong way to do it? I especially want to comment on what I believe strongly is a misguided scheme recently introduced in the Congress that I believe could take us back to policies which have failed us in the past.

These are good times for our country, with a new economy powered by technology, nurtured by the ingenuity of the human mind, enlarged by our newfound fiscal discipline at home, and increasing trade among all nations. Over the past 5 years our new economy has produced now almost 15 million new jobs, with the highest percentage of those jobs in the private sector of any recovery in memory. Unemployment is the lowest in 24 years; business investment is growing at 11 percent, the fastest pace in 30 years; since 1993, family incomes are up about $2,200.

Today we have fresh new evidence that the economy continues to grow. Personal income rose six-tenths of one percent last month alone. Our social problems, from crime to welfare, are bending to our efforts. The welfare rolls are the lowest in 27 years; the crime rate the lowest in 24 years. We now have, literally, a system in which we have opened the doors of college education to all people in this country who are willing to work for it, with tax credits, with IRA's, with better student loans and tax deductibility for the interest on those loans, more Pell grants, more work-study positions. We are adding 5 million children from working families to the ranks of those with health insurance. Combined with our record levels of homeownership, the American dream is clearly within reach for more and more American families.

This did not happen by accident, but no one alone can claim credit for it. It was the product of a remarkable concerted endeavor by tens of millions of Americans. But it also was supported by the economic policies that we have followed with discipline and consistency over the last 5 years. We moved beyond the sterile debate between those who said Government was the problem and those who said it was the solution to a new way, a new Government for the information age that gives our people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, that is unashamedly a catalyst for new ideas where the old ones don't work, that is a good partner with the private sector.

We have the smallest Government here in Washington since President Kennedy was in office. But it is still more progressive, more active. It is smaller, but the Nation is stronger. We put in place a three-part economic strategy, rejecting these false choices from the past: first, restoring fiscal discipline and conquering the deficits that hobbled growth, spiked interest rates, and robbed our economy of capital for investment throughout the 1980's; second, investments in our people, in science and technology, in education and job training, and health care, so that everyone has a chance to reap the rewards of growing prosperity; and third, we responded to the global nature of the new economy by opening new markets to our goods and services.

The strategy is clearly working. There is renewed confidence in the American economy. Its stability, its strength, its steady growth are the envy of the world. More than ever we are also investing in the future. A record two-thirds of Americans almost—as Marc said, almost two-thirds—now live in their own homes, and we must finish the job. I agree with you that the most important thing we can do in this session of Congress is to support Secretary Cuomo's plan to raise the FHA loan limit. We can pass it, and we must.

Now, last month I submitted to Congress the first balanced budget in a generation. If we are fortunate and if we can work together with our allies around the world to minimize the impact of the recent difficulties in Asia on our own economy, Mr. Raines says that we'll probably have a balanced budget this year. Instead of deficits, America can now look forward to about a trillion dollars in surpluses over the next 10 years.

Now, that is a tempting target in an election year in Washington. But, first of all, let me remind you they have not materialized yet. And we shouldn't count those chickens before they hatch. Secondly, we should remember what we did to the long-term strength of America when we quadrupled the debt of this country in the 12 years from 1981 through 1992. And we should not repeat that error again. Finally, we shouldn't use the surplus for any new tax cuts or new spending programs until we have confronted the challenge of saving Social Security first. I think that is very important.

All of you are generally familiar with the problem. It's projected that the Social Security Trust Fund will not cover payments starting in the year 2029. That's the year when all the baby boomers will finally be in the Social Security system, and at presently projected birth and immigration rates and labor force participation rates, it means that there will be only about two people working for every person drawing Social Security.

Now, those things could all change to some extent, but no matter what, it is clear that the generation of the baby boomers entering the Social Security system will be quite larger than the generation just following it. Indeed, the generation now in public schools, starting last year, is the first generation in American history larger than the baby boom generation. I do not know a single person my age or younger—because I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—I hate that, but it's true—[*laughter*]—I don't know a single person who doesn't think about the problems we could create for our children if we don't make the changes now in the Social Security system we need to. No one wants to burden our children and our ability—their ability to raise our grandchildren.

On the other hand, it is important to remember that it's just since 1985 that senior citizens have been less poor than the rest of us. That is an astonishing achievement for a country that 60 years ago had 70 percent of its seniors living below the poverty line, many of them in abject poverty. Now, if we make small changes today with discipline, we can deal with this issue. And I also want to point out something all of you know, which is that hardly anybody—even though Social Security helps people keep body and soul together—hardly anybody in America can retire and maintain his or her standard of living on Social Security alone. So we must also do more to help Americans save for their own retirement. We've done a lot of work with the 401(k) plans and other things; we need to do more.

So we're going to work in this next year very hard, in what I hope will be a completely nonpartisan way, to acquaint the American people with the details of the challenge before us, to explore all the alternatives, and then to come up with a solution, which I hope the Congress will pass early next year to deal with this. You say, well if you pass it in 1999, 2029, that's 30 years away. First of all, those of you in the audience who are my age or older know that 30 years can pass in the flash of an eye. But secondly, I would remind everyone that the longer we wait to deal with this, the more severe actions will be required to deal with it. If we move now, with modest but disciplined changes, we can do a great thing to ensure the financial strength of America in the 21st century and to preserve the compact that binds us together across the generations. I cannot emphasize how strongly I feel about this.

Now, there are other economic challenges we face as well, and I'll just mention two very briefly. One is, how do we extend the benefits of enterprise that have brought so much to America in the last few years to those who still have not felt the impact of the economic recovery, principally in the inner cities and isolated rural areas? We have a whole range of proposals in that regard, a lot of them coming out of Secretary Cuomo, a lot of them coming out of the Vice President's community empowerment initiative, but I think it is very important that we recognize that these people who are still unemployed or underemployed are the great target we have for the rest of us to keep the economy growing with low inflation, so we can do what is morally right to try to expand opportunity to people who still don't have it and help the overall American economy as well.

The second point I'd like to make is that if we want to continue to see this economy grow, we have to have people who are skilled enough and well trained enough and well educated enough to take positions in tomorrow's economy, not yesterday's economy. There was a study which came out a couple of weeks ago, I can't remember the exact number, but there was something like nearly 400,000 openings in America today for people in information technology related jobs. And when you go to some

of our larger inner-city neighborhoods where the unemployment rate is still 10 percent, you say, well, what is wrong with this picture? Well, we got one indication of what is wrong with this picture last week when we saw that our 12th graders in the International Math and Science Survey scored 19th among 21 countries in their performance in math and science.

So the other big economic issue before America is how to make our system of elementary and secondary education as good as our system of higher education. No one doubts that we have the best system of colleges and universities in the world; we should not rest, and we cannot rest, until we have the best elementary and secondary education in the world. It is a major economic issue for our country.

Anyway, it's against this background that I think you have to see the emerging debate, or, if you will, the continuing debate, on the tax system—what taxes should be cut and how? And the IRS, how should we go about collecting taxes? This is a hazardous discussion that it's easier for me to enter into maybe because I'm not on the ballot anymore—[*laughter*]—since there's no such thing as a positive thing anyone ever wants to say about this.

But we need to think about it. This debate can be a very healthy thing. We should always be examining, you know, whether there are changes in the tax system we could have which would either be fairer or which would achieve our common objectives more or which would grow the economy faster. And we should always be looking for ways that, through either common sense or new technology, we can ease the burden on our people of paying taxes—always. The door should never be shut to reform, and there will always be more to do no matter what system we adopt. I think all of us know that.

But the point I want to make today is that this debate must occur within the context of our commitment to a long-term economic strategy that will work for our people. It should occur within a context of our commitment to maintain economic confidence in the future. There is a right and a wrong way to do reform. And the right way must involve our continued commitment to fiscal discipline, to investing in our people, and to making the future a predictable and confident one in terms of our economic policy.

Now, within that context, over the last 5 years we've worked hard to reform our tax laws. We've honored our responsibilities as parents with the $500-per-child tax credit. We've rewarded work by more than doubling the earned-income tax credit, which basically is designed to say if you're a parent and you work 40 hours a week, your child ought not to be in poverty. Over 2 million children have been lifted out of poverty because of the changes in the earned-income tax credit.

We've recognized the importance and the cost of college education with the HOPE scholarship tax credit, which is worth $1,500 a year for the first 2 years of college, lifetime learning credits for junior and senior years and graduate school, the tax deductibility of student loan interest payments, and other initiatives.

We've encouraged homeownership by eliminating capital gains on almost all home sales. And we've helped Americans save for their retirement, for their education, and health care costs, by expanding IRA's. At the same time, billions of dollars in tax loopholes that were more wasteful have been closed.

This year, the balanced budget proposal I presented to Congress continues to help working families with new tax cuts to make child care more affordable, our economy stronger, and our environment cleaner by meeting the challenge of climate change.

We also had to continue our work to improve the operations of the IRS. Like every American and the majority of IRS employees, who are trying hard to do their jobs well, I get outraged when I hear about abuses in the IRS. But we are making changes, and we must continue to do so. I've already signed into law 40 tax simplification measures and a new Taxpayer Bill of Rights.

As of February 20th, less than 2 weeks ago, 10.7 million Americans had filed their tax returns electronically for this year; that's a 19 percent increase over last year. Three-point-eight million Americans have filed by telephone; that's a 25 percent increase over last year. The average telephone conversation is 10 minutes. I think that's pretty good, and I hope more will continue to do that.

We are having problem resolution days, which have been widely publicized by the media, and I thank them for that. In every IRS district, at least once a month, where the IRS employees are open—they open the offices at night or on the weekends—people come in with their tax

problems, and we try to resolve them in a quick and informal way.

I think all these things are very important. We just approved new regulations to protect so-called innocent spouses who are left with tax liabilities by their spouses, that they had no role in undertaking. Now, there's more to do, but a lot has been done. Among the new reforms proposed are new citizen advocacy panels, new systems to file taxes by phone or computer to make it even more easy and more widely used, stronger taxpayer advocates, phone lines open 24 hours a day, further relief for innocent taxpayers.

Late last year the House passed these reforms almost unanimously. I think there were over 400 votes for them and only 3 or 4 against. So again let me say, I hope that the Senate will quickly pass this legislation and send it to me for my signature. It's a good bill, and it will do a lot of good for Americans.

Now, we need to continue to do these kinds of things, and we need to be open to broader reforms of the tax system. But there are some people in Congress who have made a proposal that I think would not fit within the formula of economic discipline and confidence that I believe we have to stay with. Under the guise of reform, they have proposed what, to me, is an irresponsible scheme—to eliminate our tax laws without any system to replace them.

Now, at first glance, this might look good. "Sunset the Tax Code. When everybody knows there will be no more Tax Code, that will shake everyone up, and then they will come forward with a responsible alternative. And trust me, everything will be fine." That's the message. Once you know that the old code is gone and on a date certain it won't be there, well, everyone will surely have to come up with something, and it must be something that will be better. "Don't worry about the details." That's what this proposal is, and it has a lot of appeal. It's like saying you can't go on a diet until the refrigerator is empty. But if you think about it, it only works if you know that you can fill the refrigerator up again and what will be in there.

Now, instead of proposing reform, this proposal is really economic uncertainty. What we have done is to restore some confidence and predictability to the American economy. When you knew that we were going to stay on a path of fiscal discipline and the deficit was not going to go to $300 billion a year, was not going to go to $370 billion a year—which was what it was predicted to be for this year when I took office—instead of $10 billion or zero, which is what it's going to be, this is a way of going back to that era—a total economic uncertainty.

What would it do? Think about your business. It would cripple families' and businesses' ability to plan and save for the future while the uncertainty existed. It would undermine the fiscal progress of the last 5 years. No one concerned about fighting crime would even think about saying, "Well, 3 years from now we're going to throw out the criminal code, and we'll figure out what to put in its place." No one would do that. That is what this proposal is. That is exactly what some people in Congress are proposing to do.

Now, think about what repealing the tax laws with no known alternative would mean. It would mean that you would know there would be no home mortgage deduction, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. There might be no charitable contribution deduction, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. We would repeal the Roth IRA, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. All that would be certain about this proposal is uncertainty. And again I say, as all of you in this room well know, uncertainty is the enemy of economic growth.

We live in a world where there is a lot of change and unpredictability and uncertainty by definition in the nature of this new economy. But to do well, you have to at least know what the rules are. Our economy is growing because consumer confidence and business investment are at record highs. Last week the two indexes of consumer confidence came out. One was at a 30-year high; the other was at an all-time high. What people think is going to happen, as all of you know, in an economy is just as important as what, in fact, is happening today.

Almost every business investment has tax consequences. With no ability to predict the consequences, businesses might decide to postpone, cancel, or pare back on plans to buy new computers, build a new factory, hire new workers. How could you plan, construct, or finance a new apartment complex or shopping center if you couldn't calculate the return on investment, because you couldn't determine the tax consequences? Business growth would stall in that kind of uncertainty.

And economic uncertainty is no friend to families. The scheme to abolish the Tax Code could threaten nearly every American family's best laid plans for the future. For example, mortgage rates are low now. People are refinancing their mortgages all the time. This has been a wonderful thing for America. What would happen to family behavior with regard to homeownership if people thought the home mortgage deduction might disappear? Would students be as serious about going to college if they thought the HOPE scholarships and the other tax credits and interest deductions wouldn't be there? Would families think twice about how much they were going to give to their church or their synagogue or their favorite charity if they thought there would be no tax deduction for it?

We were just talking about the Social Security reform and how no matter how we reform Social Security, people have to save more for their retirement. Will young families who have a hard enough time paying their bills really be setting aside money for their retirement if they think the tax incentives or pensions or 401(k)'s and IRA's are about to evaporate? In other words, I just think it's wrong to shut down the old tax system and tell people it's going to be shut down by a date certain without saying, at the same time, what is going to be in its place.

None of us would say that no one on Earth couldn't devise a better tax system than we have. There may be better options. But I think before we say we're going to get rid of the one we have on a date certain, we need to know what we're going to replace it with. And I would implore you, if you agree with me, to make that case to your Member of Congress without regard to party.

Again, I don't see this as particularly a partisan issue. I just think it sounds great. I will vote for a bill to get rid of this cursed Tax Code. Thank you very much. [*Laughter*] It's almost irresistible, you know, but so was the siren's song. We must continue to have predictability in the investment climate. We must continue to have predictability when it comes to savings. We must continue to have a framework, which will keep us doing what we've been doing for the last 5 years.

And that means, by the way, it means we have to continue to be open to changes in the tax law and in the way the IRS operates, and in all these systematic things that we have to continue to modernize. Of course, we must. But we mustn't buy a pig in a poke. We have to continue to proceed with discipline. Scrapping the home mortgage deductions, scrapping other middle class tax cuts without presenting a clear alternative is simply reckless for the economy, reckless for businesses, reckless for families' budgets. I will not permit it if I can stop it. But it shouldn't pass in the first place, and I hope you will help us on that.

Now, again I say, Congress should pass the IRS reforms that are before it. It should pass further tax cuts. But we should balance the budget, do nothing with the surplus until we have saved Social Security, not abolish the Tax Code until we know what we're going to replace it with.

We're going to change around here. This system has proved that we are capable of change. No one should stand in the way of constructive change, but we should stay with the plan that we know works. You look at where we are today in your business compared to where we were 5 years ago. Look at where we are today with the people that you work to serve compared to where we were 5 years ago. Imagine where you want to be 10 years from now. Imagine what you want the future to look like for your children and your grandchildren, to do those things, which will build that future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in the Columbia Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Smith, president, Paul Reid, executive vice president, and Michael Ferrell, senior staff vice president/ legislative counsel, Mortgage Bankers Association of America; and Mary Ellen Withrow, Treasurer of the United States.

Statement on the United Nations Security Council Vote on Iraq
March 2, 1998

Tonight's unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council sends the clearest possible message: Iraq must make good on its commitment to give the international weapons inspectors immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any suspect site, any place, any time. All of the members of the Council agree that failure to do so will result in the severest consequences for Iraq.

In the days and weeks ahead, the inspectors will renew their mission to find and destroy Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capacity and the missiles to deliver them. Iraq now has the responsibility to turn the commitment it has made into full compliance.

Remarks at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Foundation Dinner
March 2, 1998

Thank you very much, Senator, Vicki, Caroline and Ed, other members of the Kennedy family, Paul Kirk. And I say a special word of thanks to all of you who have made this evening possible. I thank Senator Jeffords and Senator Thurmond and Senator Hatch for being here tonight to restrain the partisan impulses that might otherwise overtake Senator Kennedy and me. [*Laughter*] I thank Yo Yo Ma and Jill and all the other musicians who have come here. Mr. Secretary General, thank you for the wonderful job you do here at the OAS.

I think I should begin by saying that for me this is not an obligation, it is an honor, not only because like every other member of my generation I was inspired by President Kennedy but because Hillary and Chelsea and I have been profoundly moved by the uncommon kindnesses of this family to ours.

In 1991 I had an event in New York when no one in New York knew my name, and I looked up and John Kennedy was there. I think it would be fair to say that his name recognition was 5 times higher than mine among all in attendance. [*Laughter*] Early in 1992 Mrs. Kennedy came to an event for me and later went out of her way to be helpful and kind to Hillary and to Chelsea in ways that are difficult to relate but impossible to overestimate.

The other day we were spending a weekend in Camp David, and I went out with a couple of Members of Congress, cavorting around in the lousy weather. Hillary stayed home with her friends and watched Jackie Kennedy's White House special, marveling again about the incredible work that was done to preserve America's house by Mrs. Kennedy.

And I do believe that, no matter who writes the history books, when people look back on this century, they will say that Edward Kennedy was one of the ablest and most productive, most compassionate, and most effective men who served in the United States Senate in the entire history of the country.

The JFK Library and its museum are national treasures, but I would like to talk about three things that are to some extent both more intangible and more tangible in the legacy of President Kennedy that will be enshrined forever if all of us do our job and keep this great enterprise going.

First, the spirit of citizen service, most clearly embodied in the Peace Corps. President Kennedy said that he wanted to speak to those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery. We pledged to them our best efforts to help them help themselves. Five weeks later, 37 years ago yesterday, the Peace Corps was born. In 3 weeks, when I travel to Africa, my first stop will be Ghana, the first place President Kennedy's Peace Corps volunteers went to serve. Now they have gone, over the years, to 132 nations.

Tomorrow America will celebrate these accomplishments during the first ever Peace Corps Day, when thousands of former Peace Corps volunteers, including Secretary Shalala, who was

a volunteer in Iran, and I might add has volunteered to go back if it will help our new efforts. [*Laughter*] Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers have agreed to talk with students around our country about their life-changing experiences.

The JFK Library also has a Library Corps, perhaps not as well known as the building itself, started by this foundation, which is inspiring young people in Roxbury, Dorchester, South Boston to work after school on community service projects.

Inspired by President Kennedy's example, I have done what I could to advance the cause of citizen service. I just asked for the largest funding increase for the Peace Corps in history, in the hope that we can put 10,000 volunteers overseas by the turn of the century.

Our national service project, AmeriCorps, has already given 100,000 young people a chance to earn some money for college while they serve in their communities. One of my happiest days as President was when we walked up the South Lawn of the White House with all the first group of young people, and I met Senator Kennedy, and we signed the bill.

Soon, tens of thousands of those young people will be working with elementary school students, to teach them to read, and middle school students, promising to stay with them throughout their careers to make sure they get a chance to go to college, too.

So we thank President Kennedy and all of you for the spirit of citizen service.

The second thing that I would like to say in appreciation to the legacy of President Kennedy is that he did a lot to remind us all that we owe it to ourselves, to our children, and to our future to cherish and proliferate exposure to the arts. The First Lady and I have tried to do that in our celebration of the millennium. We have been having these Millennium Evenings. We had the great Harvard historian Bernard Bailyn the other night, and this Friday night we will have the brilliant cosmologist Stephen Hawking. A week from tonight we will also highlight four vernacular dances that have entered our unique dance: tap, Lindy-hopping, jazz, and—so help me, I didn't organize this—Irish step dancing. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Yo Yo Ma for the work that he has done to try to bring the arts, and music in particular, to so many Americans who might otherwise have never had a firsthand experience with what can lead us all to a higher level of understanding and enjoyment of life.

Finally, and most personally, I am here because President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, their generation, made me admire and believe in public service and made me understand that it could be fun but that it also carried with it certain responsibilities. They made me believe that it was not a bad thing but a noble thing to want to exercise power but only if it were exercised for some larger purpose. There are many people in this room tonight who could be standing here making exactly the same statement.

Just before I came over here, I finished a magnificent new biography of Theodore Roosevelt by H.W. Brands called "The Last Romantic." It's a terrific book, and it's only 820 pages long. [*Laughter*] But I was thinking—because President Roosevelt died right after the close of the First World War, I was thinking about the whole sweep of the century that President Kennedy's life marked and that his service marked in such a profound way.

This century we are about to leave was dominated by the consequences of the industrial revolution, the growth of very big organizations—economic organizations, governmental organizations—and the attendant wealth and power and possibility and threat that revolution spawned. So that for most of this century, Americans in positions of responsibility and ordinary American citizens have both had an incredible opportunity to find wealth and personal fulfillment and greater expression of freedom because of the organized development of this time. But they have also had an enormous responsibility to stand up against the new horrors that vast organized power presented to them, whether in greed or bigotry or outright totalitarian oppression.

John Kennedy made us believe that in public service you could fight for the things that ought to be fought for; you could fight against the things that ought to be fought against; and that the sole purpose of power, fleeting though it is, was to be applied to the best of your God-given ability to those worthy goals.

Now, we're about to enter a new century with problems and opportunities unparalleled in history, speeding along at a pace and with a complexity that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. There is a lot of good in the fact that the knowledge of the world is now doubling—sheer facts are doubling every

5 years. We see in the human genome project miraculous health discoveries being made almost weekly now.

But we also know that in this new world, where the Internet is exploding and 65,000 new sites are being added every hour of every day, that there will be new ways that people who are organized for the abuse of their power will present new threats, perhaps terrorists or organized criminals or narcotraffickers, perhaps in the forms of chemical or biological or small-scale nuclear weapons, perhaps unwise leaders being too greedy in the short run, forcing poor people off their land into the teeming cities of poor countries, devastating the environment, leading to the spread of disease.

So we will now live in a new area where humankind will have all kinds of new possibilities for good and all manner of new things that need to be fought against. I hope that the children of this age will find a way to believe in America the way President Kennedy helped me to believe in America and to believe that the political process leaves the ultimate power in the people and gives its elected Representatives a precious chance just to bring out the good and stand against the bad. It is the eternal human obligation. He made it seem fun and noble and good. The least we can do is to keep the torch burning.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the Hall of the Americas at the Organization of American States. In his remarks, he referred to Victoria Kennedy, wife of Senator Edward M. Kennedy; Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg and her husband, Edward; John F. Kennedy, Jr.; Paul G. Kirk, Jr., chair, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Foundation Dinner; Jill Horner, wife of cellist Yo Yo Ma; and Secretary General Cesar Gaviria of the Organization of American States.

Remarks on Signing a Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving

March 3, 1998

The President. Thank you, Brenda, and I thank the other members of the Frazier family and the friends who are here in support of you. Attorney General Reno, Senator Lautenberg, Congresswoman Lowey, Senator DeWine, Chief Flynn, thank you for your work and your support. I thank Secretary Slater, Senator Dorgan, Senator Hollings, Senator Moseley-Braun, and Congressman McGovern for their presence and their support. And I thank the Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Students Against Destructive Decisions, the organizations for highway safety, all of you who are here in this noble endeavor.

Let me say that after hearing Brenda Frazier's story, there is very little that needs to be said. After seeing the photograph of Ashley, there is very little that needs to be seen. Every parent in this country, every single one, who has ever put his or her child in a car with someone else to go off to some destination, has felt that sense of loss of control, that fear that something might happen. Every parent of a teenager has spent some moment on every weekend of the teenager's life, when the teenager was out, wondering, hoping, and praying that nothing would ever happen.

To be reminded that these things do happen should be all the reminder any Member of Congress or any American ever needs. We've heard Brenda's story, but there is hardly a family or community in America that hasn't been touched by drunk driving. Senator Dorgan, we thank you especially for being here today, because you lost your mother, Dorothy, to a drunk driver. And we know that this is a national problem. Senator DeWine reminded us that in 1984 President Reagan signed into law the legislation to help make 21 the national drinking age. Senator Lautenberg fought for that law in Congress because he knew that, most of all, our young people were threatened.

Eleven years later, I was proud to sign into law the zero tolerance legislation that is helping to make it illegal for a person under 21 to drive in any State after drinking any measurable amount of alcohol, no matter what the legal limit is. I say to you, if we win this battle and you want to come back for a lower limit, I'll

be glad to stand here with you under those circumstances as well. The "Safe and Sober Streets Act" takes the next step to lower the legal limit to .08 in every State. When Congress passes it, I'll sign it. And we'll work hard to pass it.

Today there is something else I'd like to do. I am instructing Secretary Slater to report back to me in 45 days with a plan to make .08 the legal limit on all Federal property, from National Parks to military bases, so that the United States can lead the way in making .08 the law of the land all over the land.

Lowering the legal limit to .08 will not prevent adults from enjoying alcoholic beverages. But lowering the limit will make responsible Americans take even greater care when they drink alcohol in any amounts if they intend to drive.

To people who disregard the lethal threat they pose when they drink and drive, lowering the legal limit will send a strong message that our Nation will not tolerate irresponsible acts that endanger our children and our Nation. We will, meanwhile, continue to do all we can to protect our young people from harm, fighting to keep drugs and guns and alcohol out of our schools and our children's lives, fighting to shield them from the deadly harm of illegal exposure and use of tobacco.

With the steps we take today, we will build on that progress to help to ensure that the lives of Ashley Frazier, Dorothy Dorgan, and thousands of others cut short by drunk driving will not have been lost in vain.

Now, in a few moments I want to ask Ashley's classmates who are here, members of my Cabinet, and the Members of Congress who are here to join me as I sign the Presidential directive on Federal property. But before I do, if you will indulge me, because of the action of the United Nations Security Council with regard to Iraq and because this is the only chance I have to appear before the press and therefore the American people today, I would like to make a brief statement.

Iraq

The unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council last night sends a clear message. Iraq must fulfill without obstruction or delay its commitment to open all of the nation to the international weapons inspectors—anyplace, anytime, without any conditions, deadlines, or excuses.

All the members of the Security Council agree that failure to do so will result in severest consequences. The Government of Iraq should be under no illusion. The meaning of "severest consequences" is clear. It provides authority to act if Iraq does not turn the commitment it has now made into compliance.

As the Secretary-General told the Security Council yesterday, Iraq's complete fulfillment of these obligations is the one and only aim of the agreement. No promise of peace and no policy of patience can be without its limits. Iraq's words must be matched by deeds. The world is watching.

Now, I would like to ask Ashley's classmates, the members of the Cabinet, and the Members of Congress, as well as Chief Flynn, would you all join us up here now, and Brenda, please.

[*At this point, the President signed the memorandum.*]

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brenda Frazier, mother of Ashley Frazier, who was killed by a drunk driver; Edward Flynn, chief of police, Arlington County, VA; and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving
March 3, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Standards to Prevent Drinking and Driving

We have made progress in improving highway safety through a variety of innovative and aggressive initiatives, including our "Buckle Up America" campaign to increase safety belt usage and improve child passenger safety, and the formation of a ground-breaking public-private partnership on airbags. We have also taken important steps to reduce the deaths and injuries brought about by alcohol use and driving. In November 1995, I signed into law legislation to help ensure that States adopt "Zero Alcohol Tolerance" laws by October 1998 for young drivers. To date, 46 States and the District of Columbia have enacted such laws.

However, drunk driving remains a serious highway safety problem. Over 40 percent of all motor vehicle deaths in 1996—17,126—were alcohol-related, and nearly 3,000 of these fatalities were young people under the age of 21. Moreover, alcohol-related automobile accidents cost our society $45 billion every year, not including the pain and suffering endured by the victims.

We must do more to prevent the many tragic and unnecessary alcohol-related deaths and injuries that occur on our Nation's roads. That is why my Administration has called on the Congress to pass legislation helping to ensure that a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 becomes the national legal limit. Research shows that, at a BAC level of .08, drivers are impaired with regard to critical driving tasks such as braking, steering, lane changing, and exercising good judgment. The risk of being involved in a crash increases substantially when drivers have a BAC level of .08 or above. In fact, the relative risk of a driver being killed in a single-vehicle crash at .08 BAC has been estimated to be at least 11 times higher than it is for drivers who have no alcohol in their system. Yet 33 States and the District of Columbia continue to use .10 BAC as the legal limit. It is estimated that if all States were to lower their limits to .08 BAC, there would be 600 fewer alcohol-related traffic deaths every year.

I hope the Congress will enact legislation as soon as possible to help to ensure State passage of .08 BAC laws. Even before the Congress acts, however, we can take action to promote .08 BAC as the appropriate standard across the country, including on Federal property.

I therefore direct you, working with appropriate Federal agencies, the Congress, the States, safety groups, and other concerned Americans, to report back to me within 45 days with a plan to promote the adoption of a .08 BAC legal limit. Among other things, the plan should consider:

(1) setting a .08 BAC standard on Federal property, including in national parks and on Department of Defense installations, and ensuring strong enforcement and publicity of this standard;

(2) encouraging tribal governments to adopt, enforce, and publicize a .08 BAC standard on highways in Indian Country that are subject to their jurisdiction; and

(3) developing an educational campaign to help the public understand the risks associated with combining alcohol consumption and driving.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on the Decision of Representative Esteban Torres Not To Seek Reelection
March 3, 1998

Throughout his distinguished career in the United States Congress, Representative Esteban Torres has dedicated himself to bettering the lives of his constituents and Hispanic-Americans

across the country. Representative Torres has shown true leadership in the area of civil rights and has stood steadfast in an effort to bring our country together amid all of our diversity to build a stronger community.

Congressman Torres has led efforts to provide people with the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. He has set the standard for excellence in public service, and his retirement after over 15 years will be a loss felt across the country.

Statement on Senate Support for NATO Enlargement

March 3, 1998

I welcome today's strong endorsement by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO. By adding these countries as our newest allies, we will make NATO stronger, Europe more stable, and America more secure.

The United States has led the way in building an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe. I hope we will be among the first to ratify NATO's historic enlargement. I look forward to the full Senate vote on this issue in the weeks ahead.

Memorandum on Conducting "Conversations With America" To Further Improve Customer Service

March 3, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Conducting "Conversations with America" to Further Improve Customer Service

This Administration has made significant progress toward reinventing Government to improve customer service since I issued Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," on September 11, 1993, followed by my memorandum of March 22, 1995, "Improving Customer Service." For the first time, the Federal Government's customers have been asked what they want and have been told that they have a right to expect first-class service. Now they can see the results achieved against the customer service standards that have been set in place.

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the establishment of my Administration's reinventing Government initiative, it is time to increase efforts to engage customers in conversations about further improving Government service. This initiative—"Conversations with America"—will enable your agency to discover what is most important to its customers and what the Federal Government can do to meet their expectations. As your agency learns what Americans care about, use this information to provide service that will equal the best in business and serve as a model for others.

To carry out this effort and assure that Government works better and gets results Americans care about, I am now directing the additional steps set forth below.

Actions. The agencies covered by Executive Order 12862 are directed as follows:

1. Agencies shall create activities and programs, continuing throughout the year, that will engage customers in a discussion about how to improve Government service by determining the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services.

2. By no later than March 16, 1998, agencies shall designate a person within the agency to serve as the primary liaison to coordinate information and programs dealing with the "Conversations with America" initiative. Agencies shall then provide the National Partnership for

Reinventing Government (NPR) with their agency's primary liaison and a list of events the agency will conduct to engage Americans in conversations about improving Government service. This monthly report should provide the date and a brief description of each event.

3. Agencies shall engage the largest number of customers possible in these conversations. The use of all forms of media is encouraged to reach the largest possible audience. Particular emphasis should be placed on conducting these conversations in the areas where agency customers live and work.

4. In 1998, agencies shall put in place a process to address customer complaints. Agency customers should be provided opportunities for finding solutions to problems, such as "Problem Solving Days" and other venues. Agencies shall track and analyze the data they receive and use it to change processes that do not serve customers well. As your agency identifies individual problems, work to solve them quickly and systemically.

5. Agencies shall use the information from "Conversations with America" and continue to track customer service measurements, then take necessary actions to change or improve how the agency operates, as appropriate. Integrate what your agency learns from its customers with your agency's strategic plans, operating plans, and performance measures required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, reporting on financial and program performance under the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, and the Government Management Reform Act of 1994.

6. As required by my memorandum on improving customer service of March 22, 1995, each agency shall, on at least an annual basis, report on the customer service results they have achieved in terms readily understood by individual customers. Agencies shall continue actions required by Executive Order 12862 as well, including, but not limited to surveying employees and conducting benchmarking studies to assure we achieve customer service for the American people that is equal to the best in business.

Independent Agencies. Independent agencies are requested to adhere to this directive.

Judicial Review. This directive is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Congress Transmitting the 1998 National Drug Control Strategy

March 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

On behalf of the American people, I am pleased to transmit the *1998 National Drug Control Strategy* to the Congress. The *1998 Strategy* reaffirms our bipartisan, enduring commitment to reduce drug use and its destructive consequences.

This year's *Strategy* builds upon the 1997 *Strategy* and is designed to reduce drug use and availability in America in half over the next 10 years—a historic new low. This plan has been developed under the leadership of General Barry McCaffrey, Director of National Drug Control Policy, in close consultation with the Congress, the more than 50 Federal agencies and departments involved in the fight against drugs, the dedicated men and women of law enforcement, and with stakeholders—mayors, doctors, clergy, civic leaders, parents, and young people—drawn from all segments of our society.

I am also proud to report that we have made real and substantial progress in carrying out the goals of the 1997 *Strategy.* Working with the Congress, we have begun the National Anti-Drug Youth Media Campaign. Now when our children turn on the television, surf the "net," or listen to the radio, they can learn the plain truth about drugs: they are wrong, they put your future at risk, and they can kill you. I thank you for your vital support in bringing this important message to America's young people.

Together, we enacted into law the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, which will help build and strengthen 14,000 community anti-drug coalitions and brought together civic groups—ranging from the Elks to the Girl Scouts and representing over 55 million Americans—to form a Civic Alliance, targeting youth drug use. By mobilizing people and empowering communities, we are defeating drugs through a child-by-child, street-by-street, and neighborhood-by-neighborhood approach.

We have also helped make our streets and communities safer by strengthening law enforcement. Through my Administration's Community Oriented Police (COPs) program, we are helping but 100,000 more police officers in towns and cities across the Nation. We are taking deadly assault weapons out of the hands of drug dealers and gangs, making our streets safer for our families. We have taken steps to rid our prisons of drugs, as well as to break the vicious cycle of drugs and crime. These efforts are making a difference: violent crime in America has dropped dramatically for 5 years in a row.

Over the last year, the United States and Mexico reached agreement on a mutual *Threat Assessment* that defines the scope of the common threat we face; and, an *Alliance* that commits our great nations to defeating that threat. Soon, we will sign a bilateral *Strategy* that commits both nations to specific actions and performance benchmarks. Our work to enhance cooperation within the hemisphere and worldwide is already showing results. For example, Peruvian coca production has declined by roughly 40 percent over the last 2 years. In 1997, Mexican drug eradication rates reached record levels, and seizures increased nearly 50 percent over 1996.

We are making a difference. Drug use in America has declined by 50 percent over the last decade. For the first time in 6 years, studies show that youth drug use is beginning to stabilize, and in some respects is even declining. And indications are that the methamphetamine and crack cocaine epidemics, which in recent years were sweeping the Nation, have begun to recede.

However, we must not confuse progress with ultimate success. Although youth drug use has started to decline, it remains unacceptably high.

More than ever, we must recommit ourselves to give parents the tools and support they need to teach children that drugs are dangerous and wrong. That is why we must improve the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, and other after school initiatives that help keep our kids in school, off drugs, and out of trouble. We must hire 1,000 new border patrol agents and close the door on drugs at our borders. We must redouble our efforts with other nations to take the profits out of drug dealing and trafficking and break the sources of supply. And we must enact comprehensive bipartisan tobacco legislation that reduces youth smoking. These and other efforts are central elements of the *1998 National Drug Control Strategy.*

With the help of the American public, and the ongoing support of the Congress, we can achieve these goals. In submitting this plan to you, I ask for your continued partnership in defeating drugs in America. Our children and this Nation deserve no less.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 3, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Department of Housing and Urban Development

March 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 3536, I transmit herewith the 32nd Annual Report of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which covers calendar year 1996.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

March 3, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee
March 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 108(b) of Public Law 98–373 (15 U.S.C 4107(b)), I transmit herewith the Seventh Biennial Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (February 1, 1996 to January 31, 1998).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 3, 1998.

Remarks at the Time Magazine 75th Anniversary Celebration in New York City
March 3, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you Walter, Jerry Levin, and all the people at Time. Tonight Time has paid tribute to the time it not only observed but helped to create, the stunning years your founder, Henry Luce, so unforgettably called the American Century.

To me, one man above all others is the personification of our American Century: Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Now, that choice might have pained Henry Luce—[*laughter*]—but surely he would not be surprised.

The story of this century we're about to leave is really many stories: the ascendance of science and technology, the rise of big Government and mass media, the movements for equality for women and racial minorities, the dynamic growth and disruptive force of the industrial age. But when our children's children look back, they will see that above all else, the story of the 20th century is the story of the triumph of freedom.

Freedom: the victory of democracy over totalitarianism, of free enterprise over state socialism, of tolerance over bigotry and ignorance. The advance of freedom has made this the American Century, for in this century America has made freedom ring. The embodiment of the triumph, the driving force behind it, was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Today, with the happy outcome known to all, it is tempting to look back and say the victory was assured, inevitable. But it wasn't. In the face of the 20th century's greatest crisis, decisively, irrevocably, President Roosevelt committed America to freedom's fight. Because of that commitment and its embrace by every American leader since, today we can say, for the very first time in all of human history, a majority of the world's people live under governments of their own choosing, in freedom.

Winston Churchill said that Franklin Roosevelt's life was one of the commanding events in human history. He was born to privilege, but he understood the aspirations of farmers and factory workers and forgotten Americans. My grandfather came from a little town of about 50 people. He had a fourth grade education. He believed that Franklin Roosevelt was his friend, a man who cared about him and his family and his child's future. Polio put him in a wheelchair, but he lifted our troubled Nation to its feet, and he got us moving again.

He was a patrician who happily addressed the Daughters of the American Revolution as "my fellow immigrants." He was a master politician, a magnificent Commander in Chief. Yes, his life had its fair share of disappointments and failures, but they never broke his spirit or his faith in God or his people. Because he always rose to the occasion, so did we. FDR was guided not by the iron dictates of ideology but by the pragmatism of what he called bold, persistent experimentation. "If one thing doesn't work," he said, "try another thing, but above all, try something." It drove his critics crazy, but it worked.

He brought joy and nobility to public service as he completed the mission of his kinsman

Theodore Roosevelt, forging a progressive Government for the industrial age, taming the savage cycle of boom and bust, giving our citizens the economic security and the skills they needed to build the great American middle class.

In our century's struggle for freedom, President Roosevelt won two great victories. By confronting the gravest threat capitalism had ever faced, the Great Depression, he strengthened economic liberty for all time, teaching us that free markets require effective Government, one in which individual initiative and the call of community are not at odds, but instead are woven together in one seamless social fabric.

By confronting and defeating the gravest threat to personal and political liberty the world has ever faced, he forever committed America to the frontlines of the struggle for freedom. He taught us that even the expanses of two great oceans could not shield America from danger or absolve America from responsibility. He taught us that our destiny, forever, is linked to the destiny of the world, that our freedom requires us to support freedom for all others, that humanity's cause must be America's cause.

Now we know what came of Roosevelt and his generation's rendezvous with destiny. What will come of ours? To this generation of the millennium, in President Roosevelt's words, "much has been given and much is asked." When Roosevelt ran for President in 1932, he said new times demand new responses from Government. He saved capitalism from its own excesses, so it could again be a force for progress and freedom. Now we work to modernize Government, saving it from its excess of debt, so that again it is a force for progress and freedom in a new era.

As Roosevelt gave Americans security in the industrial age, now we work to give Americans opportunity in the information age. As Roosevelt asked us to meet the crushing burden of the Depression with bold, persistent experimentation, now we must bring the same attitude to the challenges and unrivaled opportunities of this era to our schools, our streets, our poorest neighborhoods, to the fight against disease, the exploration of space, the preservation of the environment.

As Roosevelt established that security and opportunity for ordinary Americans required our leadership and cooperation with like-minded people throughout the world, now we must commit ourselves to the common struggle against new threats to the security and prosperity of ordinary people everywhere. For even more than in President Roosevelt's time, our prospects are bound to the world's progress. Like FDR, we look around us and see a world that is not yet fully free. The advance of democracy has been steady, but it isn't irreversible.

For our generation, what does freedom mean? Well, at least, the long-delayed achievement of President Roosevelt's dream of a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. What does freedom from fear mean? Well, at least, freedom for our children from the worry of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. What does freedom from fear or freedom from want mean? Well, at least, for the world, a fair chance for people in every land to develop their minds, find reward in honest labor, and raise their children in peace according to the dictates of their conscience.

America must work to secure this kind of freedom with our allies and friends whenever possible, alone if absolutely necessary. We work today through the United Nations, which FDR helped to create and which he named. I salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan tonight for what he has done. Bearing an unequivocal message from the international community, backed by the credible threat of force, the Secretary-General obtained Iraq's commitment to honor United Nations resolutions on weapons inspection. Now the Security Council clearly and unanimously has supported the agreement. Iraq must match its words and its deeds, its commitment with compliance.

In the tradition of FDR, America and its partners must make sure that happens. And in the tradition of FDR, America must support the United Nations and other institutions for global security and prosperity, and that means we ought to pay our fair share.

In the darkest hours of the Second World War, Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed, "We have faith that future generations will know that here in the middle of the 20th century, there came a time when men of good will found a way to unite and produce and fight to destroy the forces of ignorance and intolerance and slavery and war."

More than any other 20th century American, Franklin Roosevelt fulfilled the mandate of America's Founders. When everything was on the line, he pledged our lives, our fortunes, our sacred honor to the preservation of liberty, the

pursuit of happiness, the creation of a more perfect Union. The next century is now barely 700 days away. It will be many things new: a time of stunning leaps of science; a century of dizzying technology; a digital century; an era in which the very face of our Nation will change.

Yet in all the newness, what is required of us still is to follow President Roosevelt's lead, to strengthen the bonds of our Union, widen the circle of opportunity, and deepen the reach of freedom. That is the tribute we ought to pay to him. God willing, we will. And if we do, we will make the 21st century the next American Century, and a Happy Warrior will be smiling down on us.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:59 p.m. at Radio City Music Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Walter Isaacson, managing editor, Time magazine; and Gerald Levin, chief executive officer, Time/Warner.

Memorandum on the President's Community Empowerment Board

March 3, 1998

Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Education, the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Administrator of the General Services Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

Subject: President's Community Empowerment Board

In order to advance the efforts of the President's Community Empowerment Board (CEB) and to facilitate interagency coordination and cooperation, I hereby order the following:

The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality will become members of the CEB.

With these additional members, I am confident that we will be able to better provide distressed communities with a single Federal forum dedicated to helping them address their economic and community needs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

Message to the Congress on United States Armed Forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina

March 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby certify that the continued presence of U.S. armed forces, after June 30, 1998, in Bosnia and Herzegovina is required in order to meet the national security interests of the United States, and that it is the policy of the United States that U.S. armed forces will not serve as, or be used as, civil police in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This certification is presented pursuant to section 1203 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, Public Law 105–85, and section 8132 of the National Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal year 1998, Public Law 105–56. The information required under these sections is in the report that accompanies this certification. The supplemental appropriations request required under these sections is being forwarded under separate cover.

America has major national interests in peace in Bosnia. We have learned from hard experience in this turbulent century that America's security and Europe's stability are intimately linked. The Bosnian war saw the worst fighting—and the most profound humanitarian disaster—on that continent since the end of the Second World War. The conflict could easily have spread through the region, endangering old Allies and new democracies alike. A larger conflict would have cast doubt on the viability of the NATO alliance itself and crippled prospects for our larger goal of a democratic, undivided, and peaceful Europe.

The Dayton framework is the key to changing the conditions that made Bosnia a fuse in a regional powder keg. It is decisively in American interests to see Dayton implemented as rapidly as feasible, so that peace becomes self-sustaining. U.S. leadership is as essential to sustaining progress as it has been to ending the war and laying the foundation for peace.

I expect the size of the overall NATO force in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain similar to that of the current SFOR. However, the U.S. contribution would decline by about 20 percent, as our Allies and partners continue to shoulder an increasing share of the burden.

Although I do not propose a fixed end-date for this presence, it is by no means open-ended. Instead, the goal of the military presence is to establish the conditions under which Dayton implementation can continue without the support of a major NATO-led military force. To achieve this goal, we have established concrete and achievable benchmarks, such as the reform of police and media, the elimination of illegal pre-Dayton institutions, the conduct of elections according to democratic norms, elimination of cross-entity barriers to commerce, and a framework for the phased and orderly return of refugees. NATO and U.S. forces will be reduced progressively as achievement of these benchmarks improves conditions, enabling the international community to rely largely on traditional diplomacy, international civil personnel, economic incentives and disincentives, confidence-building measures, and negotiation to continue implementing the Dayton Accords over the longer term.

In fact, great strides already have been made towards fulfilling these aims, especially in the last ten months since the United States re-energized the Dayton process. Since Dayton, a stable military environment has been created; over 300,000 troops returned to civilian life and 6,600 heavy weapons have been destroyed. Public security is improving through the restructuring, retraining and reintegration of local police. Democratic elections have been held at all levels of government and hard-line nationalists—especially in the Republika Srpska—are increasingly marginalized. Independent media and political pluralism are expanding. Over 400,000 refugees and displaced persons have returned home—110,000 in 1997. One third of the publicly-indicted war criminals have been taken into custody.

Progress has been particularly dramatic since the installation of a pro-Dayton, pro-democracy Government in Republika Srpska in December. Already, the capital of Republika Srpska has been moved from Pale to Banja Luka; media are being restructured along democratic lines; civil police are generally cooperating with the reform process; war criminals are surrendering;

and Republika Srpska is working directly with counterparts in the Federation to prepare key cities in both entities for major returns of refugees and displaced persons.

At the same time, long-standing obstacles to inter-entity cooperation also are being broken down: a common flag now flies over Bosnian institutions, a common currency is being printed, a common automobile license plate is being manufactured, and mail is being delivered and trains are running across the inter-entity boundary line.

Although progress has been tangible, many of these achievements still are reversible and a robust international military presence still is required at the present time to sustain the progress. I am convinced that the NATO-led force—and U.S. participation in it—can be progressively reduced as conditions continue to improve, until the implementation process is capable of sustaining itself without a major international military presence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 3, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

Remarks Supporting Legislation To Ensure the Safety of Imported Food
March 4, 1998

The President. Thank you very much for the terrific remarks. Let me—first I want to move Senator Mikulski's box. [*Laughter*]

Senator Barbara A. Mikulski. I don't want it to be a public health hazard. [*Laughter*]

The President. Put it on some of those little germs. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Senator Mikulski, Senator Kennedy, Congresswoman Eshoo, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, and Congressman Pallone, thank you, sir. I'd also like to thank Secretary Shalala, Secretary Glickman, and Ambassador Barshefsky for the work they have done, and the Vice President for the work he has done on this issue over the last, now, more than 5 years.

Last night I went to New York to the celebration of Time magazine's 75th anniversary, and a number of us were asked to do portraits of heroic figures of the 20th century. I talked last night about Franklin Roosevelt, and we're in the Roosevelt Room here. But today I'm thinking more of Theodore Roosevelt, for it was Theodore Roosevelt at the beginning of this century who made an unprecedented national commitment, for that time, to protect America's families from unsafe food.

It was at the dawn of the industrial age, when Americans were moving from farm to city, for the first time buying their food from other people instead of growing it themselves. Roosevelt ensured that for that time the rules we had made our food as safe as we could make it. President Roosevelt set a high standard nearly, now, a century ago. It has been a personal commitment of mine and of this administration to update that standard for the 21st century. As the world changes, new challenges arise, it takes new methods to do the old job right.

The Vice President has told you about some things our administration has done to modernize food safety, to keep our food supply the safest in the world. I was literally stunned when I came here to find out that we were inspecting meat in the United States in the same way we had inspected it since 1910, and in the same way that dogs inspect it today, by smelling it and touching it. We're doing a little better now. [*Laughter*]

But as has been made painfully apparent today by the remarks of our two Members of Congress and by you, ma'am, there is still a lot we still have to do to meet the challenges to food safety posed by new patterns of trade and commerce in food.

It wasn't long ago that you could walk to the produce section of a grocery store, look around, and find no more than a dozen items that would be there all year round. Today, thanks to this global food market, it's not uncommon to find up to 400 varieties, almost all of them year around. You can get summer squash in the chill of winter and winter squash

in the heat of summer now. And the farmer who grows these vegetables most likely no longer lives down the road from you. He might live across the ocean or on the other side of the world.

It's more important than ever under these circumstances, now that we're getting the benefits of these new patterns, which are manifold, it's more important than ever that the food we eat be inspected and protected, from orchard to fruit basket, from farm to table, wherever the orchard or the farm may be. And when families join us—and millions and millions of Americans are joining us—as they walk through the produce section, we know that none of them should have to worry about where the food comes from or whether it's safe.

Food safety really is part of the basic contract now between the consumers of our country and their Government. Any food that doesn't meet clear and strict standards should not come into the United States. It's that simple.

Last fall, I announced a new initiative to ensure that fruits and vegetables coming from abroad are as safe as those grown here at home and to halt at the border or the dock any food that fails to meet those standards. I directed the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture to report on our progress in improving food safety at home and abroad. This is their report; they've just given it to me before we came in here. It is a good and thorough one. It underscores my belief that while we have done a lot, more must be done, and we need the help of Congress to do more.

The next important step to protect America's families from food-borne illnesses requires Congress to enact the bill introduced by Senator Mikulski, Senator Kennedy, and others in the Senate, by Representatives Eshoo, Pallone, and others in the House. This is not a political issue. It's not a Democratic or a Republican issue. It is simply an issue whose time has come. We are getting all the benefits of global agriculture. We have to rise to the challenges of the same trends. By giving the FDA the tools and the technology it needs, the legislation will give Americans the extra protection they deserve.

At the beginning of the century, Theodore Roosevelt recognized that new challenges demand new Government, in this case, a Government that demands responsibility from industry and producers, but also provides clearer, stricter standards of safety and the means to enforce them. Our families enjoy the greatest bounty and variety of food in the world. We have to ensure that it will also be the safest food in the world.

The 21st century will be interesting for many reasons. Among them will be the increasing variety of food from all over the world that all kinds of Americans will be able to buy in their neighborhood stores. It will be one more way that people, I hope, will have a more enjoyable life in the next century. It will only happen if the food is safe and people know it's safe, so they're not worried when they shop.

Again, I want to join the Vice President, if I might in closing, in thanking the Senate for passing the bill yesterday to reduce the standard of drunk driving to .08. I think it's very important, it will save hundreds of lives a year. I hope the House will follow suit, and I hope that's an indication that these kind of public safety issues will be high on the agenda of Congress and that the bill that our Members who are here today are pushing so hard will find a speedy and positive reception in the Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gloria Doyle, a victim of acute cyclospora food poisoning attributed to imported fruit in May 1997, who introduced the President.

Statement on the Death of Fred Friendly

March 4, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened today to learn of the death of Fred Friendly. One of the giants of American journalism, Fred started his career in radio, forming a partnership with Edward R. Murrow on the radio series "Hear It Now," which became the landmark television

series "See It Now." To this day, the programs Fred produced four decades ago rank among the finest journalism of the century, exposing the demagoguery of Joe McCarthy, the poverty of migrant farmers, and so many other social ills.

Fred was always willing to challenge the powerful. He led CBS News at a time when television was just beginning to demonstrate its power to the world. When he left CBS, Fred became a pioneer in public television and public television documentaries. In more recent years, he has served as the conscience of his industry, exploring the ethics of journalism and teaching and training journalists to come. Through his many writings and television productions, he succeeded in his goal: to force the American public to think.

Our prayers today are with Fred's wife, Ruth, and their children.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Future Political Status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

March 4, 1998

I am pleased that the House of Representatives has passed a bill which establishes a process for determining the future political status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The bill does not impose onerous, unworkable, unprecedented, or unconstitutional language requirements on the citizens of Puerto Rico, unlike some proposals that were advanced in Congress.

I have always called for enabling Puerto Ricans to choose among options available for their future: continuing the Commonwealth arrangement, independence, or statehood—whatever future decided by majority choice. The House action is a victory for democracy and against exclusion. It is consistent with our country's repeated commitment to Puerto Rican self-determination, and consistent with the pride all Americans can take in the contributions those of Hispanic descent have made to all America.

Statement on the Accord on a New Railroad Station for New York City

March 4, 1998

Last October, at the request of Senator Moynihan, the White House began meetings with the Department of Transportation, the U.S. Postal Service, the General Services Administration, Amtrak, the Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation, and local officials to find a way to designate the James Farley Post Office Building in New York City as the new home for Penn Station.

Today I am happy to announce that an accord has been reached on Penn Station and plans to restore the James Farley Post Office Building are now underway. I applaud Senator Moynihan's leadership and those involved in creating this magnificent opportunity.

In 1993, I asked Congress to act on a vision to build a new, beautiful railroad station in Manhattan worthy of the future and worthy of New York City. Today that vision has become a reality.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
March 4, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication. This emergency is separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the Iranian hostage crisis and therefore requires separate renewal of emergency authorities.

The factors that led me to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, have not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad programs I have authorized pursuant to the March 15, 1995, declaration of emergency.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 4, 1998.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
March 4, 1998

Dear _____:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organization and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Message to the Congress Reporting on Telecommunications Services Payments to Cuba

March 4, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

This report is submitted pursuant to 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6) (the "CDA"), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104–114 (March 12, 1996), 110 Stat. 785, 22 U.S.C. 6021–91 (the "LIBERTAD Act"), which requires that I report to the Congress on a semiannual basis detailing payments made to Cuba by any United States person as a result of the provision of telecommunications services authorized by this subsection.

The CDA, which provides that telecommunications services are permitted between the United States and Cuba, specifically authorizes the President to provide for payments to Cuba by license. The CDA states that licenses may be issued for full or partial settlement of telecommunications services with Cuba, but may not require any withdrawal from a blocked account. Following enactment of the CDA on October 23, 1992, a number of U.S. telecommunications companies successfully negotiated agreements to provide telecommunications services between the United States and Cuba consistent with policy guidelines developed by the Department of State and the Federal Communications Commission.

Subsequent to enactment of the CDA, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) amended the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 515 (the "CACR"), to provide for specific licensing on a case-by-case basis for certain transactions incident to the receipt or transmission of telecommunications between the United States and Cuba, 31 C.F.R. 515.542(c), including settlement of charges under traffic agreements.

The OFAC has issued eight licenses authorizing transactions incident to the receipt or transmission of telecommunications between the United States and Cuba since the enactment of the CDA. None of these licenses permits payments to the Government of Cuba from a blocked account. For the period July 1 through December 31, 1997, OFAC-licensed U.S. carriers reported payments to the Government of Cuba in settlement of charges under telecommunications traffic agreements as follows:

AT&T Corporation (formally, American Telephone and Telegraph Company)	$11,991,715
AT&T de Puerto Rico	298,916
Global One (formerly, Sprint Incorporated)	3,180,886
IDB WorldCom Services, Inc. (formerly, IDB Communications, Inc.)	4,128,371
MCI International, Inc. (formerly, MCI Communications Corporation)	4,893,699
Telefonica Larga Distancia de Puerto Rico, Inc.	105,848
WilTel, Inc. (formerly, WilTel Underseas Cable, Inc.)	5,608,751
WorldCom, Inc. (formerly, LDDS Communications, Inc.)	2,887,684
	$33,095,870

I shall continue to report semiannually on telecommunications payments to the Government of Cuba from United States persons.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 4, 1998.

Remarks Announcing the Selection of Lieutenant Colonel Eileen M. Collins, USAF, as the First Woman Space Mission Commander

March 5, 1998

I'm getting my facts straight. [*Laughter*] First of all, let me say that Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here. The story Hillary told about her fascination with space is not apocryphal; it is real. I heard it a long time before I ever thought she would be telling it before a microphone. And so this is a thrilling day for us.

I want to thank Dan Goldin and all the people at NASA for doing an absolutely superb job. Thank you, Colonel Collins, for your remarks and your example. To the Members of Congress who are here, Congressman Houghton and Representatives Jackson Lee, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and Zoe Lofgren, thank you for your support. I want to thank my Science Adviser, Jack Gibbons, as well as Sally Ride and Jean Phelan, a pioneer aviator, who are here.

Let me also say that Colonel Collins' husband is also a pilot, and when she introduced him to me, she said, "He's not only a pilot, he's a scratch golfer; he's better than you are." [*Laughter*] And after a brief conversation, we actually concluded it was more likely that I would go into space than that I would ever be as good as he is. [*Laughter*]

Forty years ago, Life magazine introduced America's first astronauts to the world, noting that the seven *Mercury* astronauts were picked from, quote, "the same general mold." They were all military pilots. They were all in their thirties. They all had crewcuts. [*Laughter*] They were all men. And they really were all true American heroes. But heroes come in every size and shape and gender. Today we celebrate the falling away of another barrier in America's quest to conquer the frontiers of space and also to advance the cause of equality.

I'm proud to be here to congratulate Colonel Eileen Collins on becoming the first woman to command a space shuttle mission. She may not fit the exact mold of 40 years ago, but she clearly embodies the essential qualities of all our astronauts, then and now, the bold, restless, pioneering spirit that had made our Nation great. And as we've already heard, the story of her life is a story of challenges set and challenges met. That is also the story of our space program.

When it comes to exploring space and the unknown, the word "impossible" is not in our vocabulary. We have always recognized the limitless possibilities of seemingly impossible challenges.

A generation ago, President Kennedy said within a decade we would send an American to the Moon and bring him safely back to Earth. By 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin had left their footprints on the Moon. We said, in our time, that we would visit the planets of the solar system. And last Fourth of July all Americans, with the help of a robot called *Sojourner,* got a chance to rove the surface of Mars and meet red rocks named Scooby Doo and Barnacle Bill.

Thirty-six years after John Glenn made his history-making space flight in a capsule the size of a compact car, he's not only going back into space, but we are poised to build an international space station the size of a football field. America has indeed become, as President Kennedy hoped, the world's leading spacefaring nation, a distinction we must keep in the 21st century.

Colonel Collins will lead us in this effort, commanding a mission to launch a telescope that will allow us to peer into the deepest reaches of outer space. Our balanced budget for 1999 will support, in fact, 28 new space missions, missions that will help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes, of ancient stars, and of our Earth itself. Indeed, later today NASA will be making some exciting new announcements on the results of the *Lunar Prospector* mission, currently orbiting the Moon.

The knowledge we gain from our space missions could help us treat diseases here on Earth, from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer. It could make our farms more productive. It could help us meet the challenge of global climate change. And perhaps help us to uncover the very origins of life itself.

All Americans, especially our young people, have important roles to play in making these plans a reality. They have to begin by taking

their studies, especially their studies in math and science, seriously.

Last week we learned that our leading spacefaring Nation is not faring very well when it comes to achievement of high school seniors in math and science. This is unacceptable. As we prepare for an information age that will require every student to master not just the basics of reading and math but algebra, geometry, physics, and computer science, I call on every parent, every school, every teacher to set higher expectations for our children. And I call upon all of our students—and I know that Hillary and Eileen will today—to take these challenging courses, so that we can all be prepared for the known and still unknown challenges of the future. And I call on all young girls across America and their parents to take inspiration from Colonel Collins' achievement.

Let me remind you of something she was too modest to say. She has a distinguished degree from Syracuse University. She came up through the ROTC program. She began her high school education in community college. I want every child in this country to know that we have opened the doors of college to all Americans, that community college is virtually free for all children now, that everybody can make this start and nobody needs to put blinders on their aspirations for the future. She is proof.

I want to say, especially to the little girls who will hear Eileen Collins and these who will see her and to their parents, let's remember that at a time when very few girls were taking the hardest math and science courses, Colonel Collins was taking them and mastering them. She did in part because of the unfailing support of her parents who set high expectations and told her she could do anything she set her mind to. She never gave up, and one by one her dreams came true.

I think our country owes a great debt of gratitude to her parents, and I hope that more will follow her direction. And perhaps with her well-justified new fame, notoriety, the greatest mark Colonel Collins will make will not just be written in the stars but here on Earth, in the mind of every young girl with a knack for numbers, the gift for science, and a fearless spirit. Let us work to make sure that for every girl and every boy, dreams and ambitions can be realized, and even the sky is no longer the limit.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:34 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Colonel Collins' husband, J. Patrick Youngs, and her parents, James and Rose Collins; former astronaut Sally K. Ride; and aviation pioneer Jean Ross Howard-Phelan.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare and an Exchange With Reporters

March 5, 1998

The President. Good day, everyone. I am glad to be joined here by members of the Medicare Commission. In a few moments we will talk for the very first time about what we have to do as Americans to preserve Medicare, a system that has served our country so well for 33 years now. It's more than a program; it is a way we honor our duty to our parents and build a future for our children. It has been one of the great achievements of American society in the 20th century.

We've already done a lot in the last few years to strengthen Medicare: The balanced budget will extend the Medicare Trust Fund for at least a decade; $20 billion has been saved by reducing fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the system; we're giving people on Medicare a wider range of health plan choices and preventive services, including mammograms and diabetes management.

When Medicare was first passed into law, President Johnson said, and I quote, "It proved that the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times." I'm confident that the Medicare Commission will help us to build a new consensus to meet the challenges of a new era, strengthening Medicare for the 21st century

and giving our people the security they need to thrive.

I'd like to thank Senator Breaux for agreeing to chair the Commission. He has a longstanding record, both in his work on the Aging Commission and the Finance Committee—the Aging Committee and the Finance Committee—of working to develop consensus on important issues affecting our senior citizens.

I'd also like to thank Congressman Thomas for his leadership on this issue and on the Commission. He is well known for his expertise on the Medicare program. He shepherded the Medicare provisions in the Balanced Budget Act through and helped to assure that we could achieve bipartisan agreement on these reforms. And for that I am very, very grateful.

So I'd like now to give the Vice President and Senator Breaux and Congressman Thomas a chance to say a few words.

[*At this point, the Vice President, Senator John B. Breaux, and Representative William M. Thomas made brief remarks.*]

Deposition in Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, are you upset by the leaking of your Jones deposition—or did your people actually do the leaking?

The President. Well, let me say, the court has made it absolutely clear that it is illegal to leak or to discuss it. And I think, Mr. Donaldson [Sam Donaldson, ABC News], I should follow the law. And so I don't have anything else to say. I know you've got to ask the question; it's your job. But I'm going to just do my job. That's what I'm doing here. And I'm going to follow the law. That's what I wish everyone else would do.

Q. Sir, you never answered the important questions that I think a lot of people out there would like to hear you on.

The President. Well, I believe I have given all the answers that matter. And I don't have anything else to say at this time. I'm just going to go back and do my job.

Q. Mr. President, do you stand by the facts in the deposition as reported by the newspaper?

Senator John D. Rockefeller IV. Do you care what Medicare is, Sam? Do you care what Medicare is?

Q. We all care, sir. Mr. President, it says in the deposition as reported that you asked Betty Currie to see if she could help Monica Lewinsky get a job.

The President. For one thing, I haven't read the article. For another thing, I don't know whether the article is accurate or not. Finally, whether it is or not, it is against the law. The judge has ordered us neither to release such materials or to discuss them. Somebody in this case ought to follow the law. I intend to be that person, so that I can go back to work about these things. I have nothing else to say.

Q. Things seem to have gotten very personal between you and Kenneth Starr, Mr. President. It seems to have gotten very personal between you and Kenneth Starr, Mr. President. I'm asking a question not about the deposition.

The President. Sam never quits. He never quits.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright. A reporter referred to Betty Currie, the President's personal secretary, and Monica S. Lewinsky, former White House intern and subject of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's expanded investigation.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Funding for the International Monetary Fund

March 5, 1998

I want to congratulate members of both parties in the House Banking Committee who have voted to give the International Monetary Fund the resources it needs to deal with the risks to financial stability around the world. This bipartisan legislation will help ensure that the IMF has the funds it needs to protect American jobs and exports.

The American economy continues to demonstrate its remarkable strength, and we must do everything we can to keep it on a path of steady growth. That is why we will work to build broad bipartisan support for this legislation as it moves forward in Congress. It is vital that the Congress move as quickly as possible to support full funding for the IMF.

Remarks at a Screening of "From the Earth to the Moon"
March 5, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to all. Thank you, John Kennedy, for those wonderful remarks. Thank you, Jeff Bewkes, for taking a chance on this project. I know it's a big, big project. I predict it will get a big, big response from the American people. Thank you, Tom Hanks, and thank all of you who were part of this.

I'd also like to thank the people at NASA, with whom you worked—I'm sure many of them are here—for the work they do every day. I thank all the astronauts who are here. And we're especially proud of Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Collins, who will be our first woman mission leader very soon.

There's not much more that needs to be said. But as one of the graduates of the class of 1968, I want to thank all of you for saving 1968 all over again. [*Laughter*]

Hillary, today, when we honored Eileen Collins, pointed out that when she was a young girl she wrote off to NASA and asked for information about how to be an astronaut. And she was told that, at the time, women were not welcome in the program. Today, we see that change.

The growth of the space program and the way it's changed and strengthened is in many ways evidence of the growth of America over the last three decades. And I think any of us who had anything to do with it have been profoundly proud of it. Hillary mentioned the Mars mission that seemed, once again, to sort of spark the popular imagination in our Nation for the space program with the wonderful *Sojourner* looking around for red rocks with wonderful names like Scooby Doo. [*Laughter*]

You know, the international space station will be up before long, and it will literally be the size of a football field. Now, the vehicle John Glenn went up in over 35 years ago was about the size of a compact car. And when the space station is there, it will change forever the way people can relate to the Earth and to the other planets in the solar system. All of this has happened for a lot of reasons.

There are Members of Congress here, and I thank them for their presence. Congress continued to support the space station and space program against the kinds of criticisms that are still current today that John so eloquently chronicled from the 1960's. President Kennedy wanted us to become the world's leading spacefaring nation, and we have. I want us to continue that distinction well into the 21st century. It is profoundly important to us. Colonel Collins, for example, will lead us in an effort to launch a telescope that will allow us to peer into the deepest reaches of outer space. The new balanced budget will support 28 more space missions, to help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes, of ancient stars, of the Earth itself.

The knowledge we gain from these missions will help us to solve problems here on Earth, from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer. It will help to make our farms more productive. It will help us to deal with the crisis of global warming. And as the distinguished scientist Stephen Hawking, who will be in this place tomorrow night, has pointed out, it may well help us uncover the very origins of human life itself.

I hope all of you who are part of this project will be able to look back 10, 20, 30, 40 years from now with immense pride that you have once again sparked the imagination, the dreams, the hopes, and the courage of the American people to follow our astronauts into space and to follow our imaginations wherever they lead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

There are so many wonderful people here tonight, I hesitate to acknowledge anyone. But someone who helped us all get through that

era is here: Walter Cronkite, thank you very much for your presence.

And now Hillary and I would like to invite you all into the State Dining Room for a reception, where we will try to stay on both feet, on the ground. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and bless you. Let's go in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the East Room at the White House, following the screening of an episode of the Home Box Office production. In his remarks, he referred to John F. Kennedy, Jr., son of President John F. Kennedy; Jeff Bewkes, chairman, Home Box Office; actor Tom Hanks; and former CBS News anchorman Walter Cronkite.

Remarks on the National Economy
March 6, 1998

Good morning. Today we received more good news for our workers and our families. Our economy added another 310,000 new jobs last month; real wages continued to rise; unemployment fell to 4.6 percent, the lowest level in a quarter century; and more Americans are sharing in the prosperity. Hispanic unemployment, for example, fell to a record low.

The American economy has now added more than 15 million new jobs since I took office. Inflation has remained low and stable. We continue to have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment in a quarter century, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. We're on track to have the longest peacetime recovery in the history of our country. These are good times for America.

But how shall we maintain this momentum? We must first press forward with this new economic strategy. It is working. We must do more also to continue to create high-wage jobs. And finally, we must make sure that our people have the skills to fill them.

The new economy is increasingly driven by creativity, innovation, and technology, with high-skill jobs growing at nearly 3 times the rate of other jobs. In the field of information technology, the hunt for employees with high-tech skills is becoming more and more intense. There are hundreds of thousands of vacancies out there in America right now.

The key to expanding opportunity is education and training. Through our new HOPE scholarships, the lifetime learning credits, education IRA's, expanded Pell grant scholarships, better student loans, we've opened the door to college for all people of all ages who are willing to work for it.

Recently, we learned that our high school seniors lagged behind the rest of the industrial world in math and science. We must do more there. We must work to raise standards, reduce class size, improve teaching, have people taking more challenging courses, and increase accountability.

But we also, to look at the immediate situation, must do more to reform our job training system. For more than 3 years, I have called on Congress to consolidate the tangle of training programs we have today into a "GI bill" for workers, to create a network of one-stop career centers, to increase accountability, to ensure results, to empower people to gain the skills that are in greatest market demand. Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley, who are here with me today, are working in particular to address the job shortage in the information technology area.

Now, last year a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed a bill that would achieve the goals that I have called for for years now. A similar bill has attracted bipartisan support in the Senate. I'm encouraged by reports that the Senate is likely to take up this legislation. In the wake of these employment numbers, with unemployment low and the crying demand for higher skills and still people in some of our inner-city neighborhoods and rural areas unemployed, I ask the Senate to pass this bill and send it to me so that I can sign it into law. The legislation is essentially to help more Americans win in today's economy and to keep our recovery going.

Unemployment is low, job growth is strong, our economy is expanding at a healthy pace. We are uniquely poised now to widen the circle of opportunity for the 21st century. Passing the "GI bill" for America's workers is one of the best ways we can continue to grow.

Thank you, and thank you to the economic team, and congratulations to the American people. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on Senate Action To Continue the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Initiative

March 6, 1998

I am pleased that the Senate, in a strong bipartisan vote of 58 to 37, today retained the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program within the ISTEA bill, which provides expanded economic opportunity for women- and minority-owned businesses. This program was enacted into law under President Reagan in response to extremely low participation rates by women and minorities in federally assisted highway and transit construction projects.

In particular, I want to applaud Senators Baucus and Chafee, who garnered widespread support for the continuation of this important program.

Today's vote reaffirms my administration's "Amend it; don't end it" approach to affirmative action and promoting equal opportunity. We are now one step closer to getting an important, multi-billion transportation bill enacted into legislation.

Remarks at the Second Millennium Evening at the White House

March 6, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. And Dr. Hawking, you'll have to forgive me, I'm a little hoarse. I hope for some genetic improvement sometime in the next year or so. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, this was a stunning event for me and, I hope, for all of you. Yesterday Stephen and Elaine came by the White House to see Hillary and me and, as you can imagine, like Hillary, I had reread "A Brief History of Time," and I was utterly terrified—[*laughter*]—that he would say something like, you know, "I went to University College Oxford, too," and then he would ask me some incredible comparative academic question about our experiences there. Instead, he said, "Was the food just as bad when you were there?"—[*laughter*]—which was a wonderful relief. [*Laughter*]

Albert Einstein once said, because politics is for the present but an equation is something for eternity, equations were more important than politics. I don't know about the politics part, but Professor Hawking's insights into equations have altered our notions of time and the very nature of eternity itself. Tonight he's given us a lot to think about, even the ability to imagine a future in which we as humans will have finally captured the holy grail of physics, reconciling the infinitesimal with the infinite, presenting the world with the ultimate theory of everything. Now, when a physicist does that, he can totally ignore politics and buy a newspaper. [*Laughter*]

The one thing I liked most about thinking about the future in Professor Hawking's term is that even when we reach the era of "Star Trek," which will make a lot of our children very happy, it won't be so static. It will still be human and dynamic. And according to the visuals accompanying the lecture, it will still matter whether you can bluff at poker, which is encouraging. [*Laughter*]

I want to get on with the questions now. And again, I want to thank Professor Hawking

for the extraordinary clarity and vigor of his presentation and for sharing his time with us tonight and for placing this particular moment in the larger spectrum of time—which I think if we all could do more and more clearly every day, we would live happier, more productive lives.

Thank you, Professor.

Ellen, would you like to take over and bring in the questions?

[*At this point, the question-and-answer portion of the program proceeded.*]

The President. Dr. Hawking, our position is we have repealed that law. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first of all, in defense of my Vice President, you will all understand that he would love to be here, but there is a peculiar gravitational force in New Hampshire that manifests itself with a remarkable regularity. [*Laughter*] Let me also say that in the visual presentation accompanying Dr. Hawking's lecture, there was that remarkable project stamped "canceled" on it. This administration opposed the cancellation of it, I'm proud to say. [*Laughter*] But we hope that the Swiss project will take up the slack.

There's so many questions I know you would all like to ask. We have hundreds of questions coming in, and one of the questions I wish there were time to explore is, if we do, in fact, acquire a general understanding that time and space are more multidimensional than we had imagined, and computers become ever more sophisticated, even if people will never be able to travel at the speed of light, will we be able to communicate some day in some ways that destroy our common notions of time?

I've thought about it a lot, and I'm not smart enough to know what the answer is, but I'd love to—that's one of the reasons I enjoyed re-reading the book.

Let me also say one other thing to close—since our Nobel laureate talked about his faith about how the world began—the First Lady started tonight by talking about the marvels of technology which enable this astonishing man to communicate with us. And it is true that he is here and we did this because of the marvels of technology. It is also true, in my mind, that he is a genuine living miracle because of the power of the heart and the spirit. And we can only hope that all the advances that he has foreseen for us tonight in human knowledge will serve to amplify the heart and the spirit that we have humbly witnessed this evening.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:17 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Stephen W. Hawking, Lucasian professor of mathematics at Cambridge University, who gave the second lecture in the Millennium series, entitled "Imagination and Change: Science in the Next Millennium"; Professor Hawking's wife, Elaine; Ellen Lovell, Director, White House Millennium Council; and William D. Phillips, 1997 Nobel laureate in physics. The President also referred to the canceled superconducting super collider project. Professor Hawking, who suffers from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, spoke with the aid of a computerized voice synthesizer.

The President's Radio Address
March 7, 1998

Good morning. Since I took office I've done everything in my power to protect our children from harm. We've worked to make their streets and their schools safer, to give them something positive to do after school and before their parents get home. We've worked to teach our children that drugs are dangerous, illegal, and wrong. This week we took a major step to protect our children, indeed all Americans, from the dangers of drunk driving by proposing bipartisan legislation to lower the legal limit to .08 in every State.

Today I want to talk to you about the historic opportunity we now have to protect our Nation's children from an even more deadly threat, smoking. Smoking kills more people every day

than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, drugs, and fires combined. Nearly 90 percent of those smokers lit their first cigarette before they turned 18.

Today, the epidemic of teen smoking is raging throughout our Nation as, one by one, our children are lured by multimillion dollar marketing schemes designed to do exactly that. Consider this: 3,000 children start to smoke every day illegally, and 1,000 of them will die sooner because of it. This is a national tragedy that every American should be honor-bound to help prevent.

For more than 5 years we've worked to stop our children from smoking before they start, launching a nationwide campaign with the FDA to educate them about the dangers of smoking, to reduce their access to tobacco products, and to severely restrict tobacco companies from advertising to young people. But even this is not enough to fully protect our children.

To put an end to the epidemic, Congress must act. Last fall I called on Congress to put aside politics and pass comprehensive bipartisan legislation to reduce teen smoking by raising the price of cigarettes by up to a dollar and a half a pack over the next 10 years, imposing strong penalties if the tobacco industry keeps selling cigarettes to our children, affirming the FDA's full authority to regulate tobacco, to prevent children's access to tobacco products, and to restrict tobacco ads aimed at young people, so that our children can't fall prey to the deadly threat of tobacco. Now, we learned last month that if we do this, we'll cut teen smoking by almost half over the next 5 years. That means if we act now, we have it in our power to stop 3 million children from smoking and to save a million lives as a result.

Today there are as few as 70 working days left before this Congress adjourns. On every one of those days, 1,000 adults will die from smoking. On every one of those days, 3,000 children will light their first cigarettes. On every one of those days, this Congress has the opportunity to stop it.

Will this Congress be remembered for putting politics aside and protecting our children from tobacco or for letting the public health opportunity of a lifetime pass us by? There will be no greater measure of your commitment to the health of our children or the future of our Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Death of James B. McDougal

March 8, 1998

I am saddened to learn about Jim McDougal's death today. I have good memories of the years we worked together in Arkansas, and I extend my condolences to his family.

Remarks to the American Medical Association National Leadership Conference

March 9, 1998

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. And thank you, Dr. Wootton. He was giving his talk, and I was listening, and I was thinking: I agree with all that; there's nothing left for me to say. If I knew a couple of funny stories, I could just tell them and leave and thank you for the opportunity. [*Laughter*]

Dr. Dickey, congratulations on being the president-elect. Dr. Reardon, thank you for serving on the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality. Dr. Smoak, thank you for telling me there's nothing incompatible between a doctor named "Smoke" and a campaign

against tobacco. [*Laughter*] Dr. Jensen, ladies and gentlemen.

I am honored to be here and to be working with the AMA on so many important fronts. We have, in the past, sometimes had honest differences on policy but have always agreed on our profound obligation to the health of our Nation's families. We're walking together in a step-by-step approach to health care reform, expanding the promise of new medical technologies, extending health care opportunities to the most vulnerable Americans.

Together we've helped Americans to keep their health coverage when they change jobs or someone in their families gets sick. And in last year's balanced budget agreement we helped to make sure that up to 5 million uninsured children will get the medical coverage they deserve and the help they need, with the biggest increase in health coverage for children since 1965.

We have worked to increase medical research and to support greater efforts at preservation and care for conditions from breast cancer to diabetes. Last year, in our balanced budget plan, the diabetes component was said by the American Diabetes Association to be the most important advance in the treatment and care of diabetes since the discovery of insulin.

We found the right family doctor for America, Dr. David Satcher, our new Surgeon General. Last month your voices were strong and united in support of his nomination, and I thank you, and America's families thank you. The lesson of these endeavors is that when we work together, we can get things done.

This is a very great moment for America on the edge of a new century, a new millennium, and a completely new economy and new global society. We see dramatic changes in the way our people work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. Our economy is the strongest it's been in a generation. In 5 years, we have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership rate in the history of the country. Our social problems are on the mend. Crime is at its lowest rate in 24 years. The welfare rolls are the lowest in 27 years. Teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births are declining. Our leadership is unrivaled around the world as we work for peace and freedom and security.

Still, as I said in the State of the Union Address, these good times do not give us the opportunity to rest or withdraw. Instead, if we are wise, we will use this as a time to act and to build, to secure our prosperity and strengthen our future, first of all, by not spending this budget surplus we waited 30 years for before it exists and putting Social Security first, saving Social Security for the 21st century so that the baby boom generation does not either bankrupt Social Security or bankrupt their children and their retirement. That's what we should do before we spend that surplus.

This is a time to widen the circle of opportunity. That's what we're doing with adding 5 million children to the health care rolls. In spite of the fact that we have a 4.6 percent unemployment rate, there's still neighborhoods, mostly in urban America, sometimes in rural America, where the recovery has not yet been felt. And our greatest opportunity to continue to grow the economy with low inflation is to bring the miracles of free enterprise and high technology into these neighborhoods that have not yet felt them.

We also have to look at our long-term challenges. And I'll just mention two or three that go beyond health care but will affect you, your children, and your grandchildren. First, as the recent international math and science test results for seniors showed, we may have the best system of college education in the world, and we have now opened the doors of college to everyone with tax credits and scholarships and work-study provisions and community service provisions, but no one seriously believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And we must keep working to raise standards and increase accountability and increase performance until we do have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world.

Second, we have to recognize that what you do for a living, worry about people's health, is going to increasingly be affected by global development. Global travel patterns have given us something called "airport malaria" now, a phenomenon no one ever knew about. And we have to recognize furthermore that a lot of what we deal with in health care will be affected by the overall condition of the environment. That's why the issue of global climate change is so important. We have malaria now at higher altitudes than ever before recorded because of

climate change. A lot of you are probably noticing, as you hear from me, that your allergies are a little worse in the springtime with El Nino—even in Washington, when you don't think it could ever be any worse than it is normally. So we have to deal with the climate change issue.

We have to deal with the problems of weapons of mass destruction. Even as we reduce the nuclear threat, we see on the horizon the prospect that small-scale nuclear weapons or biological or chemical weapons in the hands of terrorists, drug traffickers, organized criminals, rogue states, could change the whole future of security for our children. We have to cooperate more with other countries for peace and prosperity around the world.

In a few days, I'm going to Africa, and I will be the first sitting American President ever to visit the nations in Africa where I'm going to visit. But they're a big part of our future, economically, politically, and in terms of our shared concerns over health and environmental matters.

Now, I'd like you to see the particular issues I want to discuss today in this larger context. Are we doing what we should be doing to prepare this country for a new century, to widen the circle of opportunity, to strengthen the bonds that unite us together, to reinforce our values, to make our freedom mean more in the future? All of these issues should be seen against that background.

This is a moment of great promise, but it's also a moment of great obligation. Every American decisionmaker, including all the Members of the Congress but all the rest of us as well, must decide whether we believe that, because when times are good, the easiest thing to do is to relax, enjoy it, express relief.

If anybody told me the day I took office as President that in 5 years the stock market would go from 3200 to 8500 and we'd have 15 million new jobs and almost two-thirds of the American people would be in their own homes, and all the other things, I would have said, "Maybe, but probably not." Having achieved that, and having stepped on all the hot coals that were necessary to get from where we were then to where we are now, it is easy for people to say, "Well, let's relax." That would be a terrible mistake. That's the number one message I have today. We have to move. Prosperity and confidence give us the freedom of movement that we have to seize. We have to move. This is not a time to sit still. It's a time to bear down and go forward, and we need your help.

Now, there are fewer than 70—70—working days left in Washington before Congress adjourns. Now, this is an election year, and the work schedule is always somewhat shorter in an election year, and that's understandable. But it's unusually limited this year. How will the 105th Congress go down in history? I want it to go down in history as a Congress that saved lives by passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, by passing tough and sweeping tobacco legislation, by passing the Research Fund for the 21st Century with its big increase in medical research, and extending health care coverage to those who presently are uninsured. That's what I want this Congress to go down with.

The next 70 days will tell the tale. Will this Congress go down in history as one that passed landmark legislation to save lives and strengthen America for the new century, or one that was dominated by partisan election year politics?

The calendar tells us that this is an election year. That's a good thing; we need one every now and then. [*Laughter*] Have the debates and have the discussion. But as I have told every Member of Congress in both parties with whom I have discussed this, no matter how much we get done this year there will still be things at the end of the year on which honorable people in both parties disagree, more than enough over which to have an honest, fruitful, meaty election. This election should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the American people want it to be not only an election year but a productive legislative year for the health and welfare of our country and our future.

Dr. Wootton has already talked about the Patients' Bill of Rights, but I want to say a few things about it. Because my mother was a nurse anesthetist, I grew up around doctors from the time I was a little boy. They were the first professional people that I ever knew. Most of them were the kind of people we'd all like our children to grow up to be. They were hard-working, able, kind, caring people. Most doctors today are, as well. But the world of medical practice is very different today than it was 40 years ago, when I first started looking at it though the eyes of a child—not altogether worse, of course. There are many things that are better. We have higher life expectancy, the lowest infant mortality rate we've ever recorded,

the highest rate of childhood immunization, dramatic advances in medicines and medical technologies and all kinds of treatments.

We also have more than 160 million Americans in managed care plans. And while there have been some problems with them, all of us have to be glad when health care costs don't go up at 4 or 5 times the rate of inflation.

Still, it's often harder for you just to be doctors. When a doctor spends almost as much time with a bookkeeper as with a patient, something is wrong. If you have to spend more time filling out forms than making rounds, something is wrong. And most important to me, when medical decisions are made by someone other than a doctor and something other than the best interests of the patient is the bottom line, then something is wrong. I think we should have a simple standard: Traditional care or managed care, every American deserves quality care.

We all have our stories, and yours are more firsthand and perhaps fresher than mine. But I never will forget reading a few weeks ago about a woman who worked in an oncologist's office to verify insurance coverage and get authorizations for medical procedures, who told us the story of a 12-year-old boy with a cancerous tumor in his leg. The doctor wanted to perform a procedure to save the boy's leg, but the health plan said no. It seems that for that condition, the only approved procedure was amputation. And that was the only procedure the plan would pay for. The child's parents appealed the decision, but they were turned down. They appealed again and were turned down again. Only when the father's employer weighed in did the health plan change its mind. By then, it was too late, the boy's cancer had spread, and amputation was the only choice left. Of course, it was covered by the health plan.

That is a choice no family should have to make. If the doctor had been able to do the right thing, the child would have been better off, and the system would have been better served.

We have the best trained, best skilled doctors in the world, the best medical education, the best medical technology. We're all getting a lot smarter than we used to be about prevention. The first thing your president said to me is, "I'm a cardiologist. Take this golf club, and stay in good shape." [*Laughter*] We're getting better at it. But it is madness to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. And it happens, over and over and over again.

There are no fewer than 500 stories that could come up in this audience right now, within a half an hour, not all that different from the one I just told. That is what we seek to address. That's what the Patients' Bill of Rights is all about, to put medical decisions back into the hands of doctors and their patients. I have already acted, as your president said, to ensure that Federal employees and their families, military personnel, veterans and their families, everyone on Medicare and Medicaid, altogether about a third of our people, are covered by the Patients' Bill of Rights.

And across our Nation, State legislators and Governors, both Republican and Democratic, are doing what they can. Forty-three States have enacted into law one or more of the basic provisions of the Patients' Bill of Rights. But State laws and the patchwork of reforms can't protect most Americans. At least 140 million of them are without basic protection. That's why we need the Federal Patients' Bill of Rights with the full force of Federal law.

The Hippocratic oath binds doctors, and I quote, "to follow that method of treatment which according to my ability and judgment I consider for the benefit of my patient." That is your responsibility, and should be your patient's right: to know all the medical options, not just the cheapest; primary care when possible, specialists when necessary. That's why the Patients' Bill of Rights lifts the gag order on our Nation's doctors and allows patients to follow your best recommendations by appealing unfair decisions by managed care accountants.

Patients also should have a right to keep their medical records confidential. Doctors must feel free to write down the whole truth without it ending up on the Internet or in the hands of employers and marketing firms or increasing a patient's insurance rates. Again, the Hippocratic oath says, "all such shall be kept secret." That's why the Patients' Bill of Rights safeguards the sanctity of the doctor-patient relationship.

Patients have a right to emergency services wherever and whenever they need it. And when the EMT's are wheeling a new arrival into the emergency room, the last thing you or the patient should have to worry about is the fine print on the health plan.

Again I say, there are less than 70 days remaining in this legislative session, but there is

broad bipartisan support in this Congress for this legislation. We have acted in our administration; States have acted; the AMA has acted. You must impress upon the Congress the urgency of passing this legislation. Believe me, a majority of the Congress, a huge majority in both Houses and Members of both parties, are for this. It is just a question of mustering the will to get the job done and going through some of the very difficult issues around the edges that have to be resolved. But there is utterly no reason not to do this this year. You can get it done if you work at it.

The other great issue before the Congress in health care is, of course, tobacco. Now, you're right, Dr. Wootton, I did read "The Journal of the American Medical Association" special edition on tobacco. I read it all from start to finish. And it was a great service to me and to the American people, and I thank you very much for it.

Again, you can argue about some of the fine print, but the big picture is clear: Every single day, even though it is illegal in every State in America, 3,000 kids start to smoke; 1,000 of them will die earlier because of it. This amounts to a national epidemic and a national tragedy. You know as well as I do that more people die from smoking-related illnesses every year than from most other things that cause death in America put together. As physicians, you also know that in the end, the only way that we have to deal with this today with absolute conviction is with preventive care: Don't do it in the first place.

Now, for more than 5 years, we have worked to stop our children from smoking before they start. We launched a nationwide campaign with the FDA to educate children about the dangers of smoking, to reduce access of children to tobacco products, to put a stop to tobacco companies that spend millions mass-marketing to our young people.

Last fall I asked the Congress to pass comprehensive, bipartisan legislation to reduce teen smoking by raising the price of cigarettes up to a dollar and a half a pack over the next several years, imposing strong penalties on tobacco companies that keep on advertising to children, and giving the FDA full authority to regulate children's access to tobacco products.

If we do this, we can cut teen smoking by almost half in 5 years. We can stop almost 3 million children from taking that first drag. We can prevent almost 1 million premature deaths. But again, the clock is ticking.

And yes, there are lots of complicated issues. You know, because this is a five- or six-part package, there are several committees and subcommittees involved. And because there is some controversy around the edges about how much money should be raised how quickly from the tobacco tax and what it should be spent on, there are some difficult issues to be resolved. And yes, I know that there are only 70 days. But if we know that the lives of 1,000 children a day are at stake, how can we walk away from this legislative session without a solution to the tobacco issue?

There are two other issues I'd like to mention to you. The first relates to Medicare. This week—or, excuse me—last week, I attended the first meeting of the Bipartisan Medicare Commission appointed by the leaders of the House and the Senate and the White House to look for long-term reform for Medicare for the 21st century. As you know, we have secured the Medicare Trust Fund for another decade with some very difficult decisions. But there are a lot of unresolved issues out there, and in some ways the complexity of the Medicare problem is greater than the complexity of the Social Security problem. At least it has to be dealt with sooner in time. So I want to urge your support for the Medicare Commission and your involvement in it.

I also have made a specific proposal with regard to Medicare that I believe should be passed this year without regard to the work of the Medicare Commission, and I ask you to carefully review it, and I hope you'll support it. It would give a vulnerable group of Americans, displaced workers 55 and over—people who either voluntarily take early retirement and they're promised health care but the promise is broken, or people who are laid off and they can't find another job and they lose their job-related health insurance—and other seniors, principally people who are married to folks who lose their old health insurance because they start being covered by Medicare, but they're not old enough to be on Medicare so they lose the family coverage and they don't have anything—it would take this group of Americans and give them the chance to buy into Medicare at cost.

The Congressional Budget Office just reported that the policy will cost even less and will benefit even more people than we in our

administration had estimated, and agreed with us that it will have no burden whatever on the Medicare Trust Fund. It will not shorten the life of the Trust Fund, nor will it complicate in any way our attempts at the long-term reform of Medicare. We're talking about somewhere between three and four hundred thousand people that are just out there, that had health insurance and now don't have any, at a particularly vulnerable time in their lives. So I hope you will support that.

The second thing I'd like to ask for your support for involves a project that Hillary has worked very hard on to sort of leave some gifts for our country in the new millennium. The project motto is "Honoring our past, and imagining our future." Among other things, we're working with the Congress to get the funds necessary to save, for example, the Star-Spangled Banner, which is in terrible shape. We need to spend, believe it or not, $13 million to restore the flag, and to make sure that the 200 years of lighting don't destroy the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and to try to get every community in the country to find those things in each community which are most important to their history and save them.

But we're also looking at the future. And perhaps the most important thing about the future-oriented nature of this project is the Research Fund for the 21st Century, which has a huge increase in research for all forms of scientific research and development but especially have the largest increase in funding for the NIH in history and doubling the funding for the National Cancer Institute.

We are on the verge of unlocking a number of medical mysteries, as you know. Last year, for example, we had the first sign of movement in the lower limbs of laboratory animals with severed spines. The human genome project is proceeding at a rapid pace, with implications which still stagger the imagination. Again I say, we have the money to do this. We can do this within the balanced budget. And while there may not be time to resolve every issue I'd like to see resolved in this Congress, we should nail down now this Research Fund for the 21st Century. There has been terrific support in the Republican as well as in the Democratic caucuses. This has not been a partisan issue. It is just the question of getting the job done in the next 70 days.

So while you're here, let me say again, a big part of building America for the 21st century is building a healthier America and building an America where people feel secure with the health care they have, and they feel it has integrity. We need the Patients' Bill of Rights. We need action on the tobacco front. We need reform of Medicare, long term. We need to help these people that are falling between the gaps because they're not old enough yet. And we need to continue in an intensified way our commitment to research. Let us take the benefit of our prosperity and finally having a balanced budget and invest the kind of money in research that we know—we know—will ensure benefits beyond our wildest imagination.

We can do all this in the next 70 days, but to do it we'll have to do it together. I need your help. Your patients need your help. Your country will be richly rewarded if you can persuade the Congress to act in these areas.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to the following American Medical Association officers: Dr. Percy Wootton, president; Dr. Nancy Dickey, president-elect; Dr. Thomas Reardon, chairman of the board; Dr. Randolph D. Smoak, Jr., vice chairman of the board; and Dr. Lynn E. Jensen, chief executive officer and interim vice president.

Remarks at Housatonic Community-Technical College in Bridgeport, Connecticut

March 10, 1998

Thank you very much. First of all, I think Pamela did a terrific job with her speech. And secondly, when Anthony stood up, I thought to myself, in a few years Congressman Shays

will be retiring, and I—[*laughter*]—may be looking at his successor right there. He was great. [*Laughter*] I love it. Senator Dodd, you might want to hire him as a consultant this year. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Mayor, I'm delighted to be back in Bridgeport with you and Jennifer and the officials of the city government. I thank Senator Dodd and Congressman Shays and Representatives Barbara Kennelly and Rosa DeLauro for joining us today; Attorney General Blumenthal, Treasurer Paul Sylvester, Speaker Ritter and members of the legislature.

Like Senator Dodd, I want to extend my condolences on behalf of Hillary and myself to the families of the victims of the shooting incident in Newington, and our prayers are with them.

And like Senator Dodd, on a happier note, I want to congratulate Connecticut for getting both its teams into the NCAA. [*Laughter*] So did Arkansas. [*Laughter*] Thank goodness we don't have a contest anytime soon. And what Senator Dodd didn't say is that UCONN's men's team is actually playing in Washington this week. And so I think you all should keep score and see which Members of your congressional delegation show up to root the home team on. [*Laughter*]

I'm glad to be back in Bridgeport. I really like this community, and I have admired the courage with which the people here have struggled in the tough years and moved to move the community forward. I should tell you, whenever I come to a place you all notice that there are a few members of the press who come with me. [*Laughter*] And sometimes it seems that we're on opposite sides of the line, but you should know that one member of the press, Larry McQuillan, who works for Reuters News Service and is actually the president of the White House Press Corps this year, is from Bridgeport. He will write a totally biased, favorable story—[*laughter*]—about this wonderful college and child care program today, I can assure you.

I want to thank President Wertz for showing me around the school and the unbelievable art collection here, which you should be very proud of.

And I want to thank Marie Nulty for taking me through the wonderful preschool program. In the Early Childhood Lab School's parent handbook, there is the following quote: "A child is like a butterfly in the wind. Some can fly higher than others, but each one flies the best it can. Each one is special. Each one is different. Each one is beautiful." After going through this child care center, it seems to me that that is a motto that every teacher I saw lived and worked by, and that every child I met was made to feel special every day.

The reason I came here today is twofold: First of all, because of the extraordinary leadership for children, and especially on the child care center issue—child care issue, of Senator Dodd, along with the Members of your House delegation who are here who have been terrific on this issue; and second, because what I see here today is what I believe every child in America needs, and it's important that we graphically demonstrate to the country that with so many parents in the work force or going back to school, there is a crying unmet need—which the mayor graphically and numerically demonstrated in his remarks just here in Bridgeport—all over the country for the kind of high quality child care that you offer here.

Today we have to make a commitment to extend that option to every family in America that needs it. I want to talk about what we in the Federal Government can do on our own to improve child care at Federal centers, but most importantly I want to talk about what Congress should do in the next 70 days to help every working family give their children the kind of child care we see here.

As has been said already, these are good times for America. We have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership rate in history, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years. And I'm proud of it. These numbers only matter insofar as they reflect differences in the lives of ordinary Americans, a different life story that can be told. The reason I was proud to be introduced by Pamela Price is that she embodies the changing story of America over the last 5 years, and that's what we want for every American who's willing to work for it.

In last year's historic balanced budget agreement we provided a child care tax credit of $500 per child for families; expanded health care coverage to 5 million more children in lower income working families who don't have access to it now; and perhaps most important, have virtually opened the doors of college to all Americans. For example—and you can compare

it, what it means here at Housatonic—in the last years we have added 300,000 work-study slots, hundreds of thousands of more scholarships; we've made the interest on student loans tax deductible; 100,000 young people have worked their way through college or earned money for college by serving in AmeriCorps in community service projects. You can now save for a college education in an IRA and withdraw from the IRA tax-free if the money is used for a college education. But most important, now there is a $1,500 tax credit—that's not a deduction, a credit—a reduction of your tax bill for the first 2 years of college, and a lifetime learning credit that is substantial but not quite that large for junior and senior years, for job training programs, for graduate schools. I think we can really say that insofar as community-based institutions like this are concerned, we have opened the doors of college to all Americans who are willing to work for it. And that is a profoundly important achievement for our country.

Senator Dodd talked about what the Family and Medical Leave Act means. The American dream is now in reach for more and more families, and that is a very, very good thing. But as you heard Pamela say, what made all this work for her as she was struggling to put her life on track was knowing that her child would be in a safe, healthy, positive child care environment. And if we really want to open the doors of opportunity to all Americans, we not only have to finish our agenda of bringing job opportunities and business opportunities into every neighborhood and every city like Bridgeport in America, we have to make sure that if the jobs and the educational opportunities are open, the parents can actually go without having to worry that they're neglecting their children.

We can never have a country that is fully successful if millions of people every day get up and look forward to a day in which they are terrified that they will have to make a choice between being a responsible parent and a good worker or a good student. If we have to choose, we lose. Society has no more important work than raising children. If everyone did that successfully, I think we would all agree we'd have less than half the problems we have today.

On the other hand, this economic boom we celebrate was fueled by having nearly two-thirds of the American adults in the work force, the highest percentage of people in the work force in history. That's how you get a low unemployment rate. Well, by definition, a lot of those folks are parents with children who have to be supervised and nourished and supported and helped.

So when you think about this child care issue, if you look at it the way I do, not just as President but as a parent and as someone who's worked all his life, I say to myself, we cannot have a country that asks people to make a choice between succeeding at home and succeeding at work, and insofar as we have to choose, we lose. When we know we can succeed at home and at work because of an effective child care center, every American wins. The country wins. We're stronger in the 21st century; our families are stronger; our economies are stronger; they reinforce each other. That's really what this child care issue is all about.

Now, we've worked hard on this for the last 5 years. We've helped a million more parents to pay—or the parents of a million more children to pay for child care. But obviously—remember the mayor's numbers for Bridgeport—there is a huge amount of work to be done here. And today we're releasing a report that confirms the overwhelming need still existing all across America. The report shows that States have come up with a lot of innovative ideas, and the Congress allocated $4 billion more to States for child care as a part of welfare reform. But even with all that, it is clear that the resources are simply not there yet to meet the needs of all the families in America. States have been forced to turn away literally thousands upon thousands of low-income families.

In Connecticut, the State Child Care Bureau has to restrict its aid to families on welfare or teen parents in high school. They've actually stopped taking applications from families that are so-called "working poor" altogether.

So here we are at a time of unprecedented prosperity, when people at the lower end of the income scale are finally beginning to get pay raises and have some security in their jobs, but we know they can't afford quality child care without help. So here we are at a time—the best of times for our country, and yet we still have millions of people getting up every day going to work worrying about their children. We are forcing them to make choices that no family should have to make, that no country should tolerate, and that we will pay for down the road sooner or later. So what we want to

do is pay for it now, the right way, and have a good, positive environment.

Now, let me say some of the things that I intend to do with the Federal child care centers. We care—the Federal Government cares in its child care centers for some 215,000 children, quite a few. We want them to be a model for the Nation. Today I'm going to direct my Cabinet to do four things:

First, to make all the centers fully accredited by the year 2000. Now, what does that mean in terms of quality of facilities, training for workers, and child-to-staff ratios? Today, believe it or not, 76 percent of our military child care centers are already accredited, but only 35 percent of our nonmilitary centers are. We'll make both categories 100 percent in the next 700 days.

Second, we have to make sure that all the centers conduct thorough background checks on workers. In too many States there is no checking to see if the people we trust with our children are even trustworthy in the eyes of the law. Connecticut is one of the few States that actually does require a criminal background check of child care workers. Every State should do it, and the Federal Government should certainly do it.

Third, we have to make sure that all Federal workers know about all their child care benefits and options in the first place.

And finally, we're going to do more work with the private sector to make Federal child care better and more affordable. If we do all that, there will still be millions of kids out there and their parents who need help. In the balanced budget I have presented to Congress for this year, I've proposed a comprehensive and responsible plan to strengthen child care. There will be other proposals to do the same thing.

Now, Congress is only going to meet about 70 more days this year. I know you say, "Well, it's only March," but anyway that's—in Washington, Congress plans to only sit about 70 more days. Now, there is enormous support, I believe, among people in both parties in our country and, I believe, among people in both parties in the Congress for taking action on child care. I have a plan, and there are others, which would double the number of children receiving child care subsidies, at a million or more new kids, give tax cuts to businesses which provide child care, expand child care tax credits to 3 million working families, and improve the standards of child care centers and provide more funds to train—adequately train—workers in child care centers.

Now, we're not talking about peanuts here. Let me tell you what we're talking about. The tax credits that we will offer, if Congress would pass them, would mean that a family of four living on up to $35,000 a year that has high child care bills would not pay any Federal income tax. That would be a terrific incentive to help working families afford quality child care. And for lower income working families who don't owe any Federal income tax anyway, if we increase the block grant going to the States, it goes to subsidized care for lower income working families, plus the money that we have given the States for people moving from welfare to work—we will be able to make a huge dent in this problem.

If Congress acts, we can make child care safer as well as more affordable. We can even give scholarships under our plan to talented caregivers to train more people. We also can expand after-school programs to keep 500,000 more kids, when they get a little older, off our streets and out of trouble after school. I think that's very important. As I said, there are only 70 days left. There are always, with something this big, some controversy around the edges of the issue. But all these things can be resolved if the Congress will make up its mind to act. Because these 70 days of meetings where they can vote will be spread over most of the year. There's still time for committee meetings, for staff to do their work, for all that kind of stuff to happen. We can do this. We do not need to wait another year just because this is an election year to pass this. We need to do this now.

The other thing I want to say that's related to this, is that Congress must pass comprehensive tobacco legislation to reduce teen smoking and raise the price of cigarettes by up to a dollar and a half a pack, impose strong penalties on companies that continue to advertise to children, and give the FDA full authority to regulate tobacco products and children's access to them. The revenues we raise from the tobacco company would help to make a partial contribution to the child care plan that I have proposed as well.

Again I say, there's some controversy—there's some issues that have to be resolved in this tobacco settlement, to get the legislation. But I want to, again, graphically illustrate—I just

watched all those little kids in that room, those two rooms, these beautiful children—every single day, even though it is illegal in every State in America, 3,000 more children begin to smoke; 1,000 of those 3,000 children will die sooner because of that decision. Hardly anybody becomes a chronic, lifetime smoker who does not start in their teenage years.

So I know there are only 70 days left, and I know this is a big bill. But I know that there are Democrats and Republicans in substantial numbers who want to do this. We should not let the calendar get in the way of the urgent need for action. We can pass the child care reforms, and we can fund them. And we can pass the tobacco legislation, and we must. Just think about it: 1,000 kids every day that wants—just like all these children did in here. Just think about it, every single day. There is no need to wait. There is no excuse for waiting. The time to act is now.

I leave you with this thought. I'm glad you clapped when I said these are good times for America. And you ought to be proud of yourselves, because the whole country helped to create these good times. And the efforts that we make in different areas, from the economy to crime to welfare reform to early childhood to health and education, they all reinforce each other. But sometimes when times are good and people clap and they feel good, they relax. I tell you, when times are good but challenges are large and the future is coming at you like a fast train down a track—and that's how the 21st century is coming at you, with things changing more rapidly than ever before—then an obligation is imposed to use the good times to act, not to relax.

So I say to all of you, the Members of Congress who are here are ready to act, so give them all a pat on the back, but do everything you can to send a clear and unambiguous signal that you do not want the election year to be a relaxation year; you want it to be a legislating year for the children of this country to make them stronger in the new century. After all, it's only 700 days away. Let's spend 70 days to make sure that in 700 days we'll have the healthiest, strongest children in the history of our Nation.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Performing Arts Building. In his remarks, he referred to Pamela A. Price, a student with a young daughter in the college's child care program, who introduced the President, and her teenage son, Anthony; Mayor Joseph P. Ganim of Bridgeport, and his wife, Jennifer; State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal; State Treasurer Paul Sylvester; Thomas D. Ritter, speaker, Connecticut House of Representatives; Janis M. Wertz, president, Housatonic Community-Technical College; and Marie Nulty, director, Early Childhood Laboratory School. The President also referred to a March 6 incident in which a Connecticut State Lottery employee killed four coworkers at the headquarters building in Newington before killing himself.

Memorandum on Steps To Improve Federally Sponsored Child Care
March 10, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Steps to Improve Federally Sponsored Child Care

Now more than ever, America's working parents are struggling to balance their obligations to be good workers—and their more important obligations to be good parents. By choice or by financial necessity, millions of Americans rely on child care to care for their children for part of each day. Parents deserve to know that their children are safe and nurtured in child care.

One of my highest priorities is to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. That is why my balanced budget includes the most significant investment in child care in our Nation's history and proposes specific measures to improve child care quality.

As a supplier of child care and as an employer that must recruit and retain a strong workforce, the Federal Government should lead the way

in improving child care. I am proud that our military has developed one of the finest child care delivery systems in the world, and that the Department of Defense, at my request, is sharing its expertise with the public and private sectors. Still, we need to do more. The executive branch of the Federal Government has responsibility for over 1,000 child care centers—788 through the military, 109 through the General Services Administration, and 127 through other Federal departments. In addition, the military oversees nearly 10,000 professional family child care providers. In total, approximately 215,000 children are in our care.

Today I am directing my Administration to take significant new steps to improve the quality of Federally sponsored child care in the executive branch by (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers; (2) achieving 100 percent independent accreditation of all eligible centers; (3) exploring partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensuring that all Federal workers become better informed of child care benefits and the options available to them.

First, all child care workers in Federally sponsored centers should undergo thorough background checks to make sure that our children are safe. The vast majority of child care workers are caring people who have dedicated their lives to teaching and nurturing children. But one tragedy in child care is too many, and criminal and civil background checks are necessary to determine whether the people caring for our children are fit for this responsibility. The military already has a model system to conduct background checks of child care workers. I now want to guarantee that workers at all nonmilitary, Federal child care facilities undergo such background checks in a thorough and timely fashion.

I therefore direct the Administrator of General Services ("Administrator") to report to me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure complete and timely background checks, to the fullest extent possible, for all child care workers in nonmilitary, Federally sponsored child care settings. Agencies with oversight of nonmilitary child care settings will report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Second, all Federally sponsored child care centers should receive nationally recognized, independent accreditation as soon as they are eligible to do so. Currently, only 76 percent of military centers, and 35 percent of other Federally sponsored centers, are accredited. By the year 2000, 100 percent should be accredited. I therefore direct the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator to provide me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, independent, nationally recognized accreditation of all eligible, Federally sponsored child care by the year 2000. Agencies with oversight of non-military child care settings shall report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Third, partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector are an increasingly important way to maximize existing resources and improve child care. I therefore direct the Administrator to work with the heads of all Federal departments and agencies to explore opportunities for collaboration both within Government and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability in Federally sponsored settings.

Finally, employers have a responsibility to make sure that their workers are better informed on child care and the options available to them at the national, State, and local levels. I therefore direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management ("Director") to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, all Federal workers receive full information about child care benefits available to them on the Federal, State, and local levels, including information on resource and referral networks, available tax credits such as the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, as well as public subsidies. The Director shall also host a nationwide summit designed to showcase model public and private sector solutions to child care needs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Luncheon in Westport, Connecticut

March 10, 1998

Thank you very much. Bob and Yvette and all the others, all of you who are here, I can't thank you enough for coming and for your support. Mayor Farrell, I'm glad to be in Westport. Mayor Ganim, I enjoyed our visit in Bridgeport. Governor Romer and Len Barrack and Fran Katz, thank you for all the work you do for the Democratic Party. And Barbara Kennelly, thank you for having the courage to run for Governor. I want you to win. I'll do what I can to help you, and certainly you deserve it.

I'd also like to say to all of you, I remember that night in 1991 when I came to Westport the first time. My name recognition was less than 50 percent among the people in the room to meet me that night. [*Laughter*] You know how those things start—I mean, more than half the people showed up because somebody they knew asked them to, and they couldn't think of a convenient excuse to get out of it. [*Laughter*] So I do remember.

When I announced for President I was running fifth in New Hampshire. My mother was the only person I knew who thought I was going to win. [*Laughter*] So it has been a long road since I first came here as a candidate to Westport. I can't imagine why only George Washington and Franklin Roosevelt have been here, however. The others must not have known what they were missing.

I feel a great deal of debt to the people of Connecticut. Connecticut voted for Al Gore and me twice, and by a much bigger margin in '96 even than in '92. The people of Connecticut have supported the efforts of the last 5 years, and I believe now support the agenda for the 21st century that I outlined in the State of the Union speech.

I know you've all heard a lot of political speeches, but we're here at a Democratic Party event, so I will give you a very brief one. If you had to go home today when you left here and someone asked you, "Why did you go to that lunch," you don't have the excuse that you might have had in December of '91. You knew exactly what you were doing when you showed up. Why did you come here? Why do you belong to our party? Why do you support it?

I have spent a lot of time thinking about my mission as President. I think about it every day. What do I want? I want our country to go into the 21st century with the American dream alive for every person who will work for it, with our leadership in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity unquestioned, and with our country coming together as one great community across all the lines that divide us. That's what I want. That's what I've wanted every day since I first took the oath of office, and that is what I have worked for.

What is being a member of my political party got to do with that? Even though I have often enjoyed, both as Governor and as President, working with Republicans, sometimes more, apparently, than they wanted to enjoy working with me—[*laughter*]—and I believe that our country's greatest causes go beyond party and that we ought to be able to find common ground. It is a good thing, too, that we have generally had over the last 220 years two different political groups. They gave us stability and honest, helpful debate and the ability to come together in principled compromise.

So why are you here, and why are you a Democrat? And does it really have anything to do with Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson? And if George Washington were alive today, what would he be? The Federalists are long gone; the Whigs are long gone. You know, we had virtually a one-party system—Thomas Jefferson was such a good politician that after he became President, in order for John Quincy Adams to get elected President, after following Madison and Monroe, Quincy Adams virtually had to become a member of Jefferson's party even though Jefferson had beat his daddy for reelection—just to get elected.

Does any of that have anything to do with where we are today? I spent a lot of time in 1997 reading the history of America from, let's say, Andrew Jackson to Abraham Lincoln—I'm reading a great biography of Daniel Webster right now; I recommend it to you—and then reading the history of America from after Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt, because most people don't know much about it. And

what I basically concluded is this: At every important time, from the founding of the country through the Civil War through the growth of the industrial revolution through the Depression and World War II and the cold war, at every time there have always been three great questions—always—that defined America.

Start with the Declaration of Independence: We pledge our lives, our fortunes, our sacred honor to the proposition that all people are created equal and entitled to liberty, entitled to the pursuit of happiness—not the guarantee but the pursuit—and to form a more perfect Union. That's the whole story of America, every time: What can we do to widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the meaning of freedom, strengthen the bonds of our Union?

I'm ashamed to tell you that more or less from the time of Martin Van Buren until way after Abraham Lincoln became President, our party did not carry those elements most strongly; the Republicans did. But from the time Theodore Roosevelt handed the progressive mantle in this country over to Woodrow Wilson, or—throughout the 20th century, and then going back to our roots in the beginning, I think you can honestly say that the Democratic Party may not have always been right on every issue, but we were always on the right side of history. We were for widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of our freedom, strengthening the bonds of our Union.

That's what we need to be thinking about today. Why? Well, look ahead to the 21st century. We have a strong economy; some people want to give away the surplus now. I say, no, let's fix Social Security because when the baby boomers retire, we don't want to bankrupt the country or bankrupt our kids to take care of us. That's what we represent.

We have a very successful economy, but there's still neighborhoods and people who haven't participated in it. That's why we have to be the party of economic empowerment in devastated areas and higher standards in education for all. We have an increasingly diverse society. That's why we have to be the party for genuine racial harmony and strength out of our diversity. We have new challenges abroad, and we have to be the party working for peace and security from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, against weapons of mass destruction. That's what we represent. But when you go back to the beginning, you'll see that's what we've always represented.

Go home today and see if you can write down in two sentences why you came here. And if you can, then you can come again, and you'll want to.

This country is going through a lot of great changes, but where we need to come out will require the leadership of people who honestly believe we have a permanent mission to widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the meaning of freedom, and strengthen the bonds of our human Union.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the dining room at the Inn at National Hall. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Bob and Yvette Rose; Westport First Selectman Diane Goss Farrell; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, and Fran Katz, national finance director, Democratic National Committee; and Representative Barbara B. Kennelly, candidate for Governor of Connecticut.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Alaska's Mineral Resources

March 10, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the 1996 Annual Report on Alaska's Mineral Resources, as required by section 1011 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96–487; 16 U.S.C. 3151). This report contains pertinent public information relating to minerals in Alaska gathered by the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Bureau of Mines, and other Federal agencies.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 10, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Agency Climate Change Programs and Activities
March 10, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 580 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998, I herewith provide an account of all Federal agency climate change programs and activities.

These activities include both domestic and international programs and activities directly related to climate change.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 10, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Dinner in Cincinnati, Ohio
March 10, 1998

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you can all tell I'm a little hoarse tonight, and I don't know if I can shout over the machine back there, but I'll do my best.

[*At this point, dinner host Stanley M. Chesley asked that a heater be turned off.*]

The President. Well, if you all start to turn blue—[*laughter*]—I promise to end the talk. I don't know if you can turn it off or not. But let me say first to Stan, thank you for having me here; thank you for having all of us here in your beautiful home, in this modest little tent. [*Laughter*] You know, it reminds me of the ones I used to camp out in when I was a Scout—[*laughter*]—pitch a little tent; get in your sleeping bag.

Thank you, Dick Lawrence, and all the other cohosts. Thank you, Governor Romer, for your passion and your commitment and your wonderful remarks. I think Len Barrack is here, too, our new national finance chair of the Democratic Party—thank you. I want to thank Mary Boyle and Lee Fisher and Roxanne Qualls for running for public office. It's not so easy to do these days. They tell me I'm sort of impervious now. [*Laughter*] I'd also like to acknowledge a candidate for the Congress just across the State border in Kentucky, Ken Lucus, who is here. Ken, stand up. [*Applause*] Thank you for running. These are two of the people that, when they win, will give us a net gain of four seats, because we expect to change from Republican to Democrat in their seats. And we thank them. I want to thank David Leland for leading the Ohio Democratic Party.

And again, let me say to all of you, your presence here, your support, means a lot to me. The people of Ohio have been very good to Al Gore and Bill Clinton. We won here in 1992, and when I won the primary, it put me over the top. At the Democratic Convention in New York, the votes of Ohio put me over the top. On election night in November in '92, when they announced Ohio, they said Governor Clinton had enough electoral votes to be President. Then in 1996, our victory margin here was more than 4 times what it had been in 1992. So for all of you who are from Ohio, I thank you so very much.

For those of you who come from other States, I thank you for the effort you made to come here. We've got a lot of people here from Louisiana, my neighboring State. They gave me a huge victory this last time, and I'm very grateful to them for that, and elected another Democratic Senator.

I want to give a little bit of a different talk tonight to kind of play off something Governor Romer said. I presume that most of you heard my State of the Union Address, so just imagine that I just said it to you again—that's what I want to do—all the details. What I want you to think about is the big picture for our country and then where you fit in and why you're here.

When I became President it was apparent to me that we were going through a period of not only dramatic change in how we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world but that it was change that was so different it was almost impossible to comprehend the full dimensions of it, and that Washington was essentially paralyzed by an antiquated view of Government that only worked for people that were playing power games in Washington. And in all candor, those who were telling us about it I think kind of liked the way it worked, because it was easy to explain: Democrats never met a program they didn't like, and Republicans thought Government was the source of all evil. And so they fought.

Now, for those of us who live out here in the real world, like Mayor Qualls, for example, I didn't know many Republicans who felt that way, and I didn't know any Democrats who felt that way, and I didn't know any real people who thought you could run a country that way. And if we tried to run any organization, from our families to our businesses to our local governments, by spending all of our time maneuvering for power and personal destruction of our opponent and wondering about how we would look in the paper tomorrow morning instead of what we would do for our children and grandchildren, our families, our communities, and our businesses would all break down. And so I basically asked the people to give me a chance to serve in '92 to try to build a country for the 21st century, to try to imagine what we wanted America to look like, take account of all these changes, and then figure out what the role of the Government ought to be and what kind of Government it would take to achieve that mission. That is simply all we've tried to do. And I tried to get good people together, and I suggested we show up for work every day and good things would happen. And that's what has happened.

Now you don't hear people engaging in this old "Government is the salvation; Government is the enemy" argument. We know that the role of Government is to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, to create the conditions in which they can succeed, to provide for the security of our people, and to do what we can to be a catalyst for ideas in the future.

Your Government now is the smallest it's been since John Kennedy, but it is a far more progressive Government than it was 6 years ago. And I'm proud of what's been done. I'm glad that we are going to have the first balanced budget in 30 years, that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, and the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, and the highest homeownership in history, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, and the lowest crime rate in 24 years, and 15 million more Americans have jobs. I am very proud of all that. But what I want to say to you is the American people did that in no small measure because we did things in Washington that made sense and sort of acted as a catalyst to make it possible.

What we need to do now is to take these good times and to imagine the future we want for our children and then go build it and recognize that we're living in a time where knowledge is doubling every 5 years—literally, every 5 years. Medical discoveries at NIH that used to take 9 years, now because of the human genome project can be done in a matter of 9 days. Just in the health field alone, when we finish mapping the human gene and complete the kinds of things that are going on now with nerve transfers, it is conceivable that we will be able to solve health care problems that were once thought completely fatal. It is conceivable, if the rest of us will do our part, that we'll be able to get genetic maps that will enable us, if we have the discipline, to prevent all kinds of diseases and problems and the conditions we used to worry about. It is conceivable that people who have had their spinal cords severed will walk again. It has already happened in laboratory animals with their spinal cord severed, that had movement in their lower limbs.

If you look at the environment, where I'm very worried about the problems of global warming, we now know that we have the technology to reduce pollution and grow the economy to a greater degree than ever before. Our ability to do that depends, in my view, on two things. We've got to be committed to modernizing relentlessly the Government to do what works; and second, and far more important,

we've got to be committed to being faithful to the things that got us started as a country in the first place.

You want to make peace in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, fight the weapons of mass destruction, stand up against chemical and biological weapons, create an environment of global prosperity? You want to figure out how to make one America out of an ever more diverse country? A school district across the river from me in Virginia has people, kids from 180 different countries, speaking 100 different languages in one school district. You want to figure out how to give us the best system of education in the world? Everybody knows we've got the best system of college in the world; now we've opened the doors to everybody. Nobody thinks we've got the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. You name an American problem; I argue you not only have to be modern in your thinking and willing to change, you've got to be faithful to how we got started. Roy talked about it in referencing Selma.

Why did you come here tonight? Because we've got a good economy and I have high numbers, or because you believe in the principles that got us here? I hope the answer is the latter. I hope the answer is the latter.

We've got a huge agenda. I mean, we're trying to finally pass comprehensive legislation to resolve the tobacco issue. We're trying to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. We're trying to pass a bill that will lower class sizes in the first 3 grades of elementary school to 18 and help 5,000 schools be built or renovated. We've got a thousand things to do.

Let me just talk to you about three big things. How did this country get started? All these people came over here because they hated arbitrary power—unlimited, arbitrary power. And they said, "We believe freedom works better." Freedom to do two things: freedom to pursue happiness and freedom to get together to form a more perfect Union—freedom, opportunity, union. If you look at the whole history of America, look at Abraham Lincoln, what was he about? Freedom, union, and oh, by the way, he signed the Morrill Land Grant Act, which is the greatest thing that ever happened to higher education, built all the State universities in America.

Theodore Roosevelt—from Abraham Lincoln through Theodore Roosevelt, I hate to admit it, the Republican Party represented, more than we did, opportunity, freedom, and union. But from Woodrow Wilson through every single Democratic President down to the present day, the Democratic Party may not have been right on every issue, but we have been on the right side of history. It has been our party that has consistently stood for widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of America's freedom, and bringing this country together and the world together around a union of civilized people, based on civilized principles.

That's why I'm here. That's why I hope you're here. That is what is going to take us into the 21st century, and that is why these people should be elected to the offices they seek in Ohio and Kentucky. That's why I hope you're here tonight.

You ought to try this every now and then—you made a significant investment to come here tonight, and I'm going to hush now before you get pneumonia and sound worse than I do. [*Laughter*] But every now and then, you ought to do what I do every day; every day since I have been your President I have asked myself, what do I want my country to look like when we start the new millennium? What do I want my country to be like when my daughter has children her age? And for the last several months, as I have read more and more of the history of our country in periods where Americans don't know much about it, and before the Civil War and after the Civil War, for example, I have asked myself, why, really, am I a Democrat? Why do I belong to this party? Why am I proud to be here? It's more than my granddaddy remembering that Franklin Roosevelt cared about him. It's because of what we stand for. And what we stand for is what got us started, what has carried us through, and what will make the next century another American Century.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:24 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to attorney and dinner cohost Richard D. Lawrence; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Mary Boyle, Ohio candidate for U.S. Senate; Lee Fisher, Ohio gubernatorial candidate; Mayor Roxanne Qualls of Cincinnati, candidate for Ohio's First Congressional District; Ken Lucus, candidate for Kentucky's

Fourth Congressional District; and David J. Leland, chairman, Ohio Democratic Party.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Waiver on Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for Vietnam

March 9, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 402(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act"), I have determined that a waiver of the application of subsections 402(a) and (b) with respect to Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402. A copy of that determination is attached. I also have received assurances with respect to the emigration practices of Vietnam required by section 402(c)(2)(B) of the Act. This message constitutes the report to the Congress required by section 402(c)(2).

Pursuant to subsection 402(c)(2) of the Act, I shall issue an Executive order waiving the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act with respect to Vietnam.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

March 9, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 11. The related memorandums of March 9 and the Executive order of April 7 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and an Exchange With Reporters

March 11, 1998

President Clinton. Let me begin by saying that I'm delighted that the Secretary-General is here. We share a strong commitment to curtailing the threat of weapons of mass destruction in general and to continuing the work in Iraq. And again let me say how pleased I am at the agreement that he worked out with Iraq to continue the inspections, as well as the access which has been provided to the UNSCOM inspectors which was previously denied. All that is encouraging.

Now, I think we have to remain vigilant. The last 6 days is not the same as the next 6 months, but it's all very hopeful. And the Secretary-General deserves a lot of appreciation from the United States and from all Americans for the work that has been done.

Secretary-General's Agreement With Iraq

Q. Mr. President, are you both on the same wavelength in terms of what would happen if there is a breach in the agreement in the aftermath of that implementation? We understand there's some little friction.

President Clinton. Well——

Secretary-General Annan. Between the President and me, or the President and someone else?

Q. Between the President and you.

Secretary-General Annan. I see. Okay.

President Clinton. Well, over the weekend the Secretary-General said he thought that under the resolution there would have to be some consultations before any military force could be taken or used. We believe that the resolution gives us the authority to take whatever actions are necessary. But of course, we would consult. It would be unthinkable that we wouldn't do that. We do that all the time anyway. I spent an awful lot of time on the telephone with large numbers of world leaders in the last several weeks as this difficulty has unfolded, and so

I'm not sure there is a conflict between our positions.

Q. What do you think, Mr. Secretary-General?

Secretary-General Annan. I think what the President has said is exactly what I said on television on Sunday. And not only was the President himself informed, as you will recall, Mrs.—the Secretary of State Albright consulted Council members, Ambassador Richardson, Secretary of Defense Cohen—and so there was consultation even this time around. So the consultation is an ongoing process and part of the way we do business in the international community. And I agree with what the President has said.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about Senator Lott's criticism that this agreement is a sellout?

President Clinton. I just don't believe it is. The agreement on its own terms is clearly not a sellout. The agreement on its own terms preserves the integrity of the UNSCOM inspections. It does add some diplomats to the inspection process in the Presidential sites, but if the agreement is complied with—and again, I think the Secretary-General did a good job working through these issues over the weekend—then we will be able to do what the United States has always wanted, which is to complete the inspection process.

Again, let me say—I know I don't need to beat this dead horse, but I think it's worth repeating one more time. I see this issue with Iraq in the larger context of the threat I believe will be presented to the world for the next few decades from biological and chemical and perhaps even, God forbid, small-scale nuclear weapons—a different sort of weapons of mass destruction threat than we have faced in the past. And world leaders simply have to come to grips with the potential that is out there for organized groups—not just nations but terrorist groups, narcotraffickers, international criminals—to make and deploy such weapons for their own purposes, so that this is very important on its own merits. But it's also very important as the first of what I believe will have to be a many, many year effort by all peace-loving people to deal with this issue.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, how would you feel about testifying or talking to the grand jury and in some way giving your side of the story in the ongoing controversy?

President Clinton. Well, you know I'm not going to talk about that today. I can't. I've got to do the work that the people of this country hired me to do, so I can't—I'm not going to discuss that.

Q. Sir, with your pledge to cooperate fully, as you mentioned when this story first broke——

Secretary-General Annan. I wish you would concentrate on my issues.

President Clinton. I just don't have anything else to say about it.

Tobacco Legislation/Kosovo

Q. Sir, are you going to embrace the Conrad bill for tobacco, sir?

President Clinton. Let me say—I'd like to answer that question and then, if I could, I'd like to make one comment about Kosovo before you leave.

I have said that the Conrad bill embraces the principles that I feel strongly about. I haven't reviewed all of its provisions, and I'm not sure exactly what it does, for example, on the tobacco farmer issue, but in general I think Senator Conrad has put out a very good bill. And what I hope will happen is that either his bill will attract bipartisan support or that it will lead to a bipartisan bill reflecting the principles that I've outlined in the tobacco settlement—for the tobacco settlement.

I personally believe, even though there are now less than 70 scheduled work days left in this year, that Congress ought to have no higher priority than to get this done. We need to do this and get this behind us. There are a thousand lives a day on the line. We do not need to wait until next year.

Let me just make one comment if I might about Kosovo, because the Secretary of State has just returned from an arduous trip. The United States and I condemn in the strongest possible terms excessive violence that has led to the death of innocent civilians there. We believe the cause of it is the inadequate response by the Serbian Government to the legitimate concerns of the Albanian minority in Serbia, but majority in Kosovo.

I believe that the decision that the Secretary and other world leaders reached in the last few days, the reimposition of the sanctions, and the strong statements that were made coming out of the Contact Group, and the unity of the

countries gives us some hope that we can resolve this. But this is a matter of great concern to me; I know it's of great concern to the Secretary-General. We do not want the Balkans to have more pictures like we've seen in the last few days, so reminiscent of what Bosnia endured. And I just want to make it absolutely clear that to me it's a very serious issue.

Secretary-General Annan. I agree.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—consider military action, sir, as your Secretary of State has said in the past, and others?

President Clinton. We believe that no option should be ruled in or out now. But the Secretary of State, along with all of her colleagues—and there's been remarkable unanimity on this—they've taken a position that gives us a chance to avoid further bloodshed by all parties under all conditions. That's what I want.

Q. Have you been in touch with Milosevic?

President Clinton. Not directly, I have not.

President's Planned Visit to Africa

Q. Will you have some travel tips on Africa for the President?

Secretary-General Annan. I think I'll be discussing a few interesting things, and I have one or two ideas that I would want to put to the President. I think it's great that he's going to Africa, and I think it's good for U.S.-African relationship, and the entire continent is excited that for the first time a sitting U.S. President is doing this. And it's a sign that U.S.-African relationship is on the upswing. And I'm very pleased about that.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, will the American people hear your version in the Lewinsky matter?

Press Secretary Mike McCurry. Thank you, everyone. We're done. And the President has already answered that question. Good-bye.

Q. Do you all——

Press Secretary McCurry. No, we're done.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Middle East—[*inaudible*]?

President Clinton. Well, we're going to discuss that. I hope it will. We're working very hard on that. We're doing everything we can to get it back on track. And I hope we can have a chance to talk about it.

Q. Will this visit have helped in some way?

President Clinton. It certainly can. It certainly can.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Observance of International Women's Day
March 11, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much, Doctor. And to all our distinguished guests here today, let me welcome you and say that I have rarely enjoyed anything in this room as much as I have what has already happened.

I've told this story before, but I feel just like I did the first time I gave remarks, a speech, as a public official. It was at one of these civic banquets, and it started at 6 o'clock in the evening. Everyone in the audience was introduced, hundreds of people—except three people, and they went home mad. [*Laughter*] Five people spoke before me. I got up to speak at a quarter to 10, and the man who introduced me did not do nearly as good a job as our distinguished guest from Thailand—he said, "You know, you could stop here and have had a very nice evening." [*Laughter*] Well, we could certainly stop here and have had a very fine occasion.

Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for being here. We've had a very good meeting, just before we came over here, to talk about our shared goal of preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and of securing Iraq's compliance with its obligations under the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The Secretary-General deserves the thanks of all Americans for securing the agreement with

the Iraqi Government to open all sites for inspection. The commitments made to him, as well as last week's successful U.N. inspections in sites that had previously been closed, are quite significant. They must be carried out. The last 6 days must be replicated in the coming 6 months. And the United States must remain vigilant to see that that occurs.

Let me say, since we're honoring women today, in case you all missed it and you want to be reminded of what the stakes are and what is going on now, I commend to you the op-ed article from the distinguished British physician in the hometown paper here today, discussing the consequences of the use of chemical weapons. Mr. Secretary-General, your work is important, and we intend to see that you succeed.

Let me also say that the United Nations is an invaluable partner in an increasingly interdependent world where we have to work together on things, as evidenced by the presence here today of members of the diplomatic corps, the Russian Health Minister, our distinguished physician from Thailand, and so many people from the U.N., and those of you in NGO's who work around the world. If the United States expects to continue to exercise a leadership role in a way that benefits our own people in the 21st century, we have got to pay our U.N. dues and fulfill our responsibilities.

The Secretary-General has supported the reform of the U.N. in positive ways, and I'm doing my best to get legislation through the Congress which will fulfill our responsibilities to the United Nations, to the IMF, to the cause of U.N. reform.

I'm very proud to be here with all of you today to celebrate your progress and to chart our course to the future. I especially thank the Members of Congress who are here and those whom they represent who couldn't be present for their support and leadership. I thank the First Lady, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General for the accomplishments of the last 5 years. I think it's fair to say, that as long as I live, I will always look back on the First Lady's speech at Beijing as one of the high watermarks of our public service in this White House.

You know, we always say that human rights must be a central pillar of America's foreign policy, but that is meaningless if those rights are not fully enjoyed by half the people on the planet. Secretary Albright has already discussed our assistance to Afghan women and girls who have suffered much under the Taliban. Today I want to announce some further actions to advance your cause and our cause.

First, I'm instructing Secretary Albright and our AID Administrator, Brian Atwood, to expand our international efforts to combat violence against women. All too often, we know violence limits the choices open to women and young girls, damaging their health, disrupting their lives, obstructing their full participation in society. We will provide $10 million to strengthen partnerships with governments and NGO's to help them to fight violence against women everywhere.

Second, I am launching a variety of steps to combat the inhumane practice of trafficking of women. I've asked our Attorney General to make sure that our own laws are adequate to the task we face here at home, that trafficking is prevented, victims are protected, traffickers are punished. And we will use our consular and law enforcement presence in other nations to combat trafficking worldwide, to assist victims, improve legislation, train judges and law enforcement officials in other lands. We will step up our public education campaigns abroad in an attempt to stop trafficking at its source.

Secretary Albright has already discussed her partnership with the Government of Ukraine to jointly develop a comprehensive strategy to fight trafficking to and from that country with the hope that our cooperation will become a model for other nations across the globe.

Finally, I have asked my Interagency Council on Women to convene an international conference to cast a spotlight on this human rights atrocity and develop new strategies to combat it. One important tool, as the Secretary-General has reminded us, for making progress on these issues is the women's human rights treaty, the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It has the cumbersome acronym of CEDAW, but its message is very simple.

Again, I thank the Secretary-General for his leadership. I ask you to think about this convention and its impact. It has a proven record of helping women around the world to combat violence, gain economic opportunity, strike against discriminatory laws. Its provisions are consistent with United States law, which already provides strong protections for women. It offers a means

for reviewing and encouraging other nations' compliance.

Yet, because of our historic and often manifest allergy to joining international conventions, we remain alone in our hemisphere, alone among the industrialized nations of the world, apart from 161 other nations alongside nations like Sudan and North Korea in not ratifying this treaty.

This is not an issue of party but of principle. Today I am sending a letter to the Senate leadership asking them to ratify the treaty, and I ask the Senate to do so this year. We signed this treaty in the late 1970's. Finally, after we took office, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted the treaty out of committee with a bipartisan vote in 1994. If we are going to be true to our own legacy of leadership in human rights, we must ratify this treaty.

When you look ahead to this new century and new millennium and you ask yourselves what you would like the story of the next 100 years to be, surely all of us want one big chapter to be about how, finally, in all nations of the world, people of all races and ethnic groups, of many different religious persuasions and cultural practices came together to guarantee that every young girl got a chance to grow up to live up to the fullest of her abilities and to live out her dreams. Let that be our mission as we leave today.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:47 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Saisuree Chutikal, Senator, Parliament of Thailand, who introduced the President; Dr. Christine Gosden, professor of medical genetics, University of Liverpool, whose editorial-page commentary on Iraqi use of chemical weapons appeared in the Washington Post on March 11; and Minister of Health Tatyana Dmitriyeva of Russia.

Memorandum on Steps To Combat Violence Against Women and Trafficking in Women and Girls

March 11, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Administrator of the Agency for International Development, the Director of the United States Information Agency

Subject: Steps to Combat Violence Against Women and Trafficking in Women and Girls

As we celebrate International Women's Day today, we highlight the achievements of women around the world. We also acknowledge that there is much work yet to be done to ensure that women's human rights are protected and respected. The momentum generated by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 continues to encourage our government, as well as nations around the world, to fulfill our commitments to improve the lives of women and girls.

I have, once again, called upon the Senate to give its advice and consent to ratification to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, thus enabling the United States to join 161 other countries in support of the Convention. This Convention is an effective tool that can be used to combat violence against women, reform unfair inheritance and property rights, and strengthen women's access to fair employment and economic opportunity. Ratification of this Convention will enhance our efforts to promote the status of women around the world. As we look at Afghanistan and the egregious human rights violations committed against women and girls at the hands of the Taliban, we recognize that this is an issue of global importance.

My Administration is working hard to eliminate violence against women in all its forms. Our efforts help to combat this human rights violation around the world and here in the United States. As part of the 1994 Crime Bill, I signed into law the Violence Against Women Act. This legislation declares certain forms of violence against women to be Federal crimes and provides for critical assistance to States, tribes, and local communities in their efforts

to respond to this problem. The Department of Justice is implementing the Violence Against Women Act and working with communities across the country to promote criminal prosecution and provide services to victims. Through the Department of Health and Human Services, we have established for the first time a nationwide domestic violence hotline, so that women throughout the country can call one toll-free number and be connected to a local domestic violence support center. We have come a long way since 1994, and I am proud of our efforts.

Each day recognition of the importance of this issue grows around the world. In recent years, many countries have begun to respond to calls for legislation and government programs addressing violence against women. The international community increasingly regards violence against women as a fundamental human rights violation, an impediment to a nation's development, and an obstacle to women's full participation in democracy.

Today I am directing the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, and the President's Interagency Council on Women to continue and expand their work to combat violence against women here in the United States and around the world. We have made great progress since the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, but there remains much to be done. We must continue to work to implement the Act fully and to restore the Act's protection for immigrant victims of domestic violence here in the United States so that they will not be forced to choose between deportation and abuse.

The problem of trafficking in women and girls, an insidious form of violence, has received a great deal of attention from the world community. This is an international problem with national implications. Here in the United States, we have seen cases of trafficking for the purposes of forced prostitution, sweatshop labor, and exploitative domestic servitude. The victims in these cases often believe they will be entering our country to secure a decent job. Instead, they are virtual prisoners, with no resources, little recourse, and no protection against violations of their human rights. My Administration is committed to combating trafficking in women and girls with a focus on the areas of prevention, victim assistance and protection, and enforcement. Our work on this issue has been enhanced by a strong partnership with nongovernmental groups and the U.S. Congress.

I am also directing the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, and the President's Interagency Council on Women to increase national and international awareness about trafficking in women and girls. I want to ensure that young women and girls are educated about this problem so that they will not fall prey to traffickers' tactics of coercion, violence, fraud, and deceit.

I also want to provide protection to victims. And finally, I want to enhance the capacity of law enforcement worldwide to prevent women and girls from being trafficked and ensure that traffickers are punished.

Therefore, I direct:

I. The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the Agency for International Development, to strengthen and expand our efforts to combat violence against women in all its forms around the world. These efforts should be responsive to government and nongovernment requests for partnerships, expert guidance, and technical assistance to address this human rights violation.

II. The President's Interagency Council on Women to coordinate the United States Government response on trafficking in women and girls, in consultation with nongovernmental groups.

III. The Attorney General to examine current treatment of victims of trafficking including to determine ways to insure: the provision of services for victims and witnesses in settings that secure their safety; precautions for the safe return of victims and witnesses to their originating countries; witness cooperation in criminal trials against traffickers; and consideration of temporary and/or permanent legal status for victims and witnesses of trafficking who lack legal status.

IV. The Attorney General to review existing U.S. criminal laws and their current use to determine if they are adequate to prevent and deter trafficking in women and girls, to recommend any appropriate legal changes to ensure that trafficking is criminalized and that the consequences of trafficking are significant, and to review current prosecution efforts against traffickers in order to identify additional intelligence sources, evidentiary needs and resource capabilities.

V. The Secretary of State to use our diplomatic presence around the world to work with

source, transit, and destination countries to develop strategies for protecting and assisting victims of trafficking and to expand and enhance anti-fraud training to stop the international trafficking of women and girls.

VI. The Secretary of State to coordinate an intergovernmental response to the Government of Ukraine's request to jointly develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking in women and girls from and to Ukraine. The U.S.-Ukraine cooperation will serve as a model for a multi-disciplinary approach to combat trafficking that can be expanded to other countries.

VII. The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General, to expand and strengthen assistance to the international community in developing and enacting legislation to combat trafficking in women and girls, to provide assistance to victims of trafficking, and to continue to expand efforts to train legal and law enforcement personnel worldwide.

VIII. The Secretary of State and the Director of the United States Information Agency to expand public awareness campaigns targeted to warn potential victims of the methods used by traffickers.

IX. The President's Interagency Council on Women to convene a gathering of government and nongovernment representatives from source, transit, and destination countries and representatives from international organizations to call attention to the issue of trafficking in women and girls and to develop strategies for combating this fundamental human rights violation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

March 11, 1998

Dear _____*:*

I write to seek your support in obtaining Senate consent to the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW is the most comprehensive and detailed international treaty developed to date relating to the rights of women. The United States actively participated in the drafting of CEDAW and signed the treaty in 1980. Although the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted in favor of ratification in 1994, the Senate has not formally considered the treaty since that time.

The rights of women are an issue of global importance—and one that is integral to our foreign policy. The success of any government depends ultimately on ensuring that all its citizens can participate fully in the decisions that affect their lives. Too many societies continue to shunt women to the sidelines, limiting their access to education, health care, and economic opportunity. Moreover, violence against women remains a widespread problem. I think you would agree that, as we enter the next century, we must address these issues. CEDAW provides us with an effective tool for doing so.

I believe that the ratification of CEDAW is critical to our efforts to advance the status of women throughout the world. To date, 161 countries have ratified CEDAW, including all our European allies and most of our important trading partners. The United States is one of the few countries that has not. This impedes our efforts to ensure that women everywhere are treated fairly and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

As you know, U.S. state and federal law already provides strong protections for women and is largely consistent with the provisions of CEDAW. In 1994, the Administration submitted a detailed analysis of the consequences of CEDAW ratification for U.S. law. All concerns at that time were addressed by the small number of reservations, understandings, and declarations upon which the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the State Department agreed. These include an explicit understanding that the treaty does not create a right to an abortion.

Today, in celebration of International Women's Day, I am announcing that obtaining Senate advice and consent to the ratification of CEDAW is a top Administration priority during

this session of Congress. I am also announcing my goal of having the full Senate act on CEDAW this year, which marks the 150th anniversary of the first women's rights convention at Seneca Falls, New York.

I would very much like to have your support in ratifying CEDAW and look forward to working with you on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; and Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Telephone Remarks Congratulating Representative-Elect Lois Capps
March 11, 1998

President Clinton. Hello, Lois?

Representative-Elect Capps. Hello, Mr. President.

President Clinton. Oh, I didn't know you were on the phone. Congratulations!

Representative-Elect Capps. Well, thank you so much.

President Clinton. I'm so thrilled for you.

Representative-Elect Capps. It was a tremendous experience, and I owe a lot to all of the people who are listening.

President Clinton. Well, you made a great grassroots campaign, and I think you really persuaded people that you would be a strong, independent voice for them. And of course, we were all thrilled that you ran on the issues that I think are critical to the future of the country, on education and the Patients' Bill of Rights and the tobacco issue. I'm just ecstatic. But I know how hard you worked, and you must be so proud today.

Representative-Elect Capps. I'm very proud and very grateful. It's an affirmation of Walter as well.

President Clinton. Certainly it was. It certainly was.

The Vice President is on the phone with me. I know he wants to say something.

Vice President Gore. I'll wait until Dick Gephardt goes. Go ahead, Dick.

Representative Richard A. Gephardt. Thank you, Al. I thank you, Mr. President, for having this call. And Lois, we all here in the House congratulate you on this wonderful victory. It's a real testimony to you and the kind of campaign you ran and the way you related to the issues that people really care about in your district, education, health care, pensions. We believe this campaign, your campaign, is the formula by which we will win the majority back in the House in 1998.

So, congratulations. God love you and your family. And you're going to carry on in the spirit of your dear, wonderful husband, Walter. And we look forward to having you here next week.

Representative-Elect Capps. Oh, thank you, Mr. Gephardt.

Representative Martin Frost. And Lois, this is Martin Frost. If I could just say a brief word, because Dick and I have to go vote in a minute—something you'll be doing very shortly—this was an extraordinary victory. In fact, we're watching you on television right now; we see you on CNN. The fact that you won by such a significant margin, the 53 to 45, the 13,000-vote margin, is more than any of us had hoped for. We knew you were a terrific candidate, but we were just overwhelmed with your victory. And everyone here is talking about it in the cloakrooms and in the halls and everywhere up here on the Hill today. It is the number one topic, and people can hardly wait for you to get here next week.

Representative-Elect Capps. Could I now say, this is all music, sweet music, to my ears. And I want to thank you, all of you, and that which you represent, for the support that you gave, actually, for the freedom that you all allowed us to have here to run a local race. And that began in the very beginning, when I felt no undue pressure as a grieving widow to make

a decision before I was ready to. And that carried through in the kind of support that you gave us here and the kind of interest you showed then and do show now and in kind of letting us take the lead and listen to what people on the central coast of California were telling us about what are their important issues.

And you remember, Mr. President, I said when—in the midst of the campaign when I heard the State of the Union speech, I said to someone with whom I was with, it sounded as though you were walking among the people here on the central coast with us. And that's how much this resonates here. The issues of child care, the issues of our local schools and health care and the economy staying strong and keeping Social Security solvent, these are the refrains that we have heard and responded to.

And I believe, you know, it's across party lines. It's what the mainstream of, I can tell you for sure, one district in California, the 22d, really has compelled me to carry to Washington. And I'm so thankful that now I can do that, having paid attention to them and able to listen and join in the conversation there that you all have going.

President Clinton. Well, thank you. You know, we've only got 68 days left.

Representative-Elect Capps. Okay.

President Clinton. We need you.

Representative-Elect Capps. We'd better get busy.

Vice President Gore. Lois, this is Al Gore.

Representative-Elect Capps. Hello.

Vice President Gore. This is Al Gore, Lois. And I also want to congratulate you on running a fantastic race. And it was about the issues that Americans really care about and the future of education, the environment, technology and schools, child care, the others that you mentioned. And we all look forward to working very closely with you on those issues and on improving the lives of the American people. And God bless your family and Walter's memory.

Representative-Elect Capps. Thank you.

Vice President Gore. And we miss Laura. She did a great job for you.

Representative-Elect Capps. Well, she has. She's coming back soon. She's excited to get back there, as well. And Mr. Gore, thank you. You just touched on all of the issues that we are going to be working on together.

Vice President Gore. Great. God bless.

President Clinton. Lois, we need you. We'll be glad when you get here.

Representative-Elect Capps. I'm hurrying up. We'll be there soon.

President Clinton. Give our love to Laura. I'll see you.

Representative-Elect Capps. Thank you so much. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:57 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative-Elect Capps' daughter, Laura, Staff Director for the Office of Speechwriting at the White House. Lois Capps was elected Representative of California's 22d Congressional District in a special election on March 10, to succeed her husband, Representative Walter Capps, who died on October 28, 1997.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Promote African Growth and Opportunity

March 11, 1998

In this year's State of the Union Address, I asked Congress to support an initiative to strengthen economic ties to Africa. Today, I am pleased that Congress has taken an important step forward on legislation that will open a new era of U.S.-African trade and investment relations. The strong bipartisan vote in the House in support of the "African Growth and Opportunity Act" offers the way for a brighter future for Africa.

The United States has a vital stake in a stable, prosperous Africa. Later this month, when I travel to Africa, I will deliver the message that the United States stands ready to be a partner in Africa's prosperity. A majority of sub-Saharan Africa's 48 countries have adopted market-oriented economic and political reforms in the past

seven years. A stronger, stable, prosperous Africa will be a better economic partner, a better partner for security and peace, and a better partner in the fight against the new transnational threats of drug trafficking, crime, terrorism, the spread of disease and environmental degradation. This bill—by significantly broadening market access, spurring growth in Africa, and helping the poorest nations eliminate or reduce their bilateral debt—would help African nations that are committed to undertake difficult economic reforms to build better lives for their people.

We have an historic opportunity to support the renaissance in Africa. I want to commend Speaker Gingrich, Chairman Archer, Congressman Rangel, Congressman McDermott, Congressman Crane, Chairman Gilman, Congressman Hamilton, Congressman Payne, Congresswoman McKinney, Congressman Jefferson, Congresswoman Jackson Lee, Congresswoman Waters, Congressman Royce, Congressman Menendez, and all those who have devoted themselves to helping that transformation. I look forward to working with the Senate to enact this landmark legislation as quickly as possible.

Remarks to the National Association of Attorneys General
March 12, 1998

Thank you very much, Attorney General Doyle. Attorney General Reno, thank you for joining us here today and for the work you have done with the States' attorneys general and local prosecutors on domestic violence and to reduce the crime rate and a whole host of other issues. I want to thank Fred DuVal for the work he does on my behalf with you and this association. And I'd also like to thank the two former attorneys general that are working for me: Bonnie Campbell, who heads the Attorney General's effort on violence against women; and Chuck Burson, who was formerly president of NAAG, now the Vice President's Counsel.

I've really been looking forward to coming over here today. I have had the opportunity to know and work with most of you personally, and I see some former attorneys general out in the audience who were my colleagues and friends. I thank them for being here.

It used to be a staple of all my speeches that the best job I ever had was being an attorney general, and to me it was. I didn't have to hire or fire anybody—[*laughter*]—except the people on the staff. I didn't have to appoint or disappoint anybody. [*Laughter*] Every unpopular thing I did I blamed on the Constitution. [*Laughter*] Now, I'm just a punching bag from time to time—[*laughter*]—who's grateful to have an Attorney General. It's a very interesting thing. [*Laughter*]

On a more serious note, I loved the job that you now hold. And I suspect that I ran for it for the same reason you did: I wanted to protect families and consumers and enforce the law. And you have been very strong allies of our administration and good partners in those endeavors, and I thank you for that very much. In many ways, we are still colleagues, whether it's on domestic violence or reducing crime or giving our young people a more positive future.

Now we're working together to bring our country to the verge of one of the greatest public health achievements in the history of our Nation, a historic triumph in our fight to protect our children from the deadly threat of tobacco. Together we have waged a great struggle in the courts, in the Congress, across the negotiation tables and in our communities, where our children have been the targets of mass-marketing schemes and where you have been on the frontlines to protect them from this effort to get them involved in addiction to tobacco.

We've made a lot of great strides in just a few years. And whenever I talk to any of you who are involved in this, naturally enough, we're always talking about what the present state of play is and what all the various issues are and what's going to happen tomorrow or what happened yesterday. And we can talk about that some more, too. But what I'd like to do is take just a few moments to see how far we've come and then to visualize the outcome that I believe we will achieve—first, to look back and see why we ever took on the tobacco companies in the first place when, when some of

you filed your suits, it was laughable, people said it was a fight that was unwinnable; and second, to look ahead to the end of the day, what we have to do to win the fight to ensure a healthier, stronger America for our children in the new century.

We are poised to enter this new century stronger than we have been in decades. This is a great moment for our country, full of opportunity. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years. It is a great moment of opportunity.

We have a chance to open vistas of peace and prosperity and freedom that our people have never before known. Because most of the next century will belong to our children and grandchildren instead of to ourselves, we, all of us together, have worked these last 5 years to give them a future of safety, health, and security. We've done a lot of specific things in addition to the economic and crime and welfare statistics that I talked about. Here in Washington we have worked with many of you to implement a zero tolerance policy to keep guns and drugs out of schools. The V-chip and the television ratings and educational television have helped parents to strengthen the values as well as the minds of our children.

We've worked to bring order and discipline to our children's lives by supporting community reform efforts like curfews, school uniforms, tougher truancy laws; and to bring hope into their lives by supporting higher educational standards and keeping schools open after hours, because, as all of you know, most juvenile crime is committed when the school doors close for the day but before the parents get home from work. We've worked to support community service, from America Reads to AmeriCorps to America's Challenge. And now we're helping to get millions of uninsured children the health insurance they need.

This is a moment of great opportunity but also of great obligation. And we have to build on this powerful momentum to make the future we want for our children. To me, that's the most important thing that you are doing in the tobacco litigation.

It is so easy in good times to relax, but you and I both know that the world is changing so rapidly that whatever is happening today, there will be something different happening tomorrow. The sheer volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years now. We are literally—because of human genome research, we are literally solving problems in a matter of days that took years to solve not long before I took office. The World Wide Web is growing by something like 65,000 websites an hour now. When I took office, there were 50—[*laughter*]—50. Think about that. Just a little over 5 years ago the Web was the province of a handful of scientists, physicists, started by a Government research project in the Defense Department. The Government, quite properly, having done the basic research and getting it up and going, got out of the way, and now it's the fastest growing organ of human interaction ever, in all of human history.

I say that again to hammer home the fact that when people have confidence because times are good but leaders know times are changing, there is a heavier-than-normal responsibility to do the hard things for tomorrow. That is why it is so important that you have engaged this tobacco issue. I cannot overstate it. You know quite well that smoking kills more people every day than AIDS, alcohol, auto accidents, murders, suicides, drugs, and fires combined and that nearly 90 percent of smokers lit their first cigarette before they turned 18. David Kessler, the former FDA Commissioner, called smoking a pediatric disease. Today and every day, 3,000 children start smoking illegally, and 1,000 will have their lives shortened as a result. This is a national epidemic. It is a national tragedy. We must struggle to end it until we prevail.

Just last month, the Journal of the American Medical Association concluded that advertisements and promotions were even more crucial than peer pressure in getting teens to start smoking. Now, the law says that they can't advertise tobacco products on television or radio, but you can't escape the ads anywhere else, in our magazines, our sports centers, on billboards. Tobacco is one of the most heavily advertised products in America.

In the early 1990's, Joe Camel alone had an advertising budget of $75 million. He could have run for President. [*Laughter*] And that's a pretty good investment from the tobacco companies' point of view. More 3- to 6-year-olds could recognize Joe Camel than Mickey Mouse.

The advertisements have taken a deadly toll. That's why you began to bring your lawsuits. That's why in 1995 I launched a nationwide

effort to prevent our tobacco companies from advertising to children, to educate children about the dangers of smoking, to reduce children's access to tobacco products. Working with the FDA, we made it the law of the land, essentially what was already the law in your States: no sale of products to anyone under 18; required ID showings for anyone under 27 to make sure teens don't buy cigarettes. And I'm very proud that last year the courts upheld this authority.

Without the foresight and courage and determination of the attorneys general, the progress would not have occurred. You put tobacco companies on the stand in courtrooms across America. You brought them to the bargaining table. You extracted important concessions. You raised awareness of tobacco's tragic cost to our economy and our children. You got documents out that needed to be out. Your work has been essential, and the American people owe you an eternal debt of gratitude.

The worst part of this epidemic is that it isn't the product of deadly natural forces raging out of control but a sophisticated, deliberate marketing campaign targeted at our children.

I don't know how many of you saw it over the weekend, but there was a story that I saw on at least two different networks about this deadly virus that gets into small rats in the Southwest, and because of El Nino and the warming, the area of influence of this little animal is larger. And the couple hundred people that have gotten this infection from the mice, the small mice, in the last 4 years—the fatality rate has been 50 percent.

We spend a lot of time in our administration trying to make sure that the National Institutes of Health and the CDC has the investment they need both to do the research and then to set up the mechanisms to deal with the spread of disease. And as more and more of us travel to faraway places and more and more people from faraway places travel to us and we meet strangers in the airport, one of the great challenges of the 21st century will be the spread of disease. One of the things that global warming has done is to raise mosquitoes bearing malaria virus to higher and higher altitudes now, so more and more people are exposed to it. Then they travel, and more and more people come in contact with it. There is now an actual public health phenomenon called airport malaria.

I'm saying that not to scare you—we'll figure out how to handle it, we'll deal with it—[*laughter*]—but the point is that this is what we ought to be worried about; that is, we ought to be worried about those things that are arising out of the natural course of events over which we have no control, that require a public health response. We should not have to worry about things that are the deliberate result of calculated decisions to make money. We shouldn't do that.

If it hadn't been for your efforts, we might have had to wait another 30 years for the documents that have confirmed our worst suspicions. You did that. For years we've known cigarette makers study kids' habits and tastes, preying on them with targeted marketing. Joe Camel T-shirts, Virginia Slims rock concerts, toy race cars emblazoned with tobacco company logos, the free giveaways tell the tale.

Just last year some tobacco companies wanted to market what some called a kiddie-pack, smaller, more affordable packs of cigarettes, sort of a starter kit. And I was in a community last week in which a person concerned about this told me that more and more cigarettes were being sold to children one by one, for a quarter a piece.

Now, as the documents are released, we begin to learn the whole story. In an internal document, one company proudly described its brand as "the brand of choice among teenagers." Another described its plan to flavor cigarettes with apples, honey, or Coca-Cola because, "it's a well-known fact that teenagers like sweet products." Another company memorandum put it even more bluntly: "The 14 to 24 age group," it says, "represent tomorrow's cigarette business"—and tomorrow's Medicare and Medicaid bills and hospital wards and premature funerals.

This avalanche of evidence is bringing down the walls of deceit. Now we know the facts. Now you have acted. Now Congress must act. Congress must pass comprehensive tobacco legislation that gets the industry out of the business of marketing cigarettes to our children. Thirty years of deception—now Congress must act to bring it to an end. Thirty years of manipulation—Congress must now act to bring it to an end. And it must act now.

Most Americans have 200 days left in their work calendar this year. But the work calendar schedule in Washington is only 68 days, partly because it's an election year, partly because of things that are scheduled for holidays, partly

because Members do have to go home, legitimately, and work in their home States and districts. I say that to say 68 days is not a lot left this year, but it's more than enough to get this job done. The attorneys general have proved that this is not an issue of party but an issue of principle. It's not an issue that divides America but one that can unite us.

I was in Utah the other day, not exactly the strongest Democratic State in America. [*Laughter*] And I was with Senator Bennett and Governor Leavitt and the two House Members, and I said, "It's wonderful that I'm here in Utah with my family just as this tobacco fight is opening. It's the only issue I can think of that all of Utah is to the left of me on"—[*laughter*]—"and praise the Lord for the Mormon Church." [*Laughter*]

But it's a funny story, but it illustrates a very serious and sober point. This is an American issue. This is not about politics. Believe me, there is a solid majority of Congress in both Houses, comprised of members of both parties, who want to do this and do this right. Now, it's a complicated issue; there are complicated questions of the jurisdiction in the Congress, which committees and subcommittees should have this piece or that piece of the legislation. A lot of people are having trouble with how you work out the future liability of the tobacco companies, and how much to give up in return for the advertising fix that we want, which otherwise may not prevail in the courts. You know, there are all these questions out there.

But what I want to tell you is that we can do this. And you have to help us do this. You have to go to the Congress and say, "A thousand kids a day is too high a price to pay for another year's delay." [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you very much. I think we should say clearly and simply that Congress should not go home until it passes comprehensive tobacco legislation. This is one thing that has to be done this year.

Now, I have said I would support any comprehensive bipartisan legislation if it meets five principles: I believe it must raise the price of cigarettes by up to $1.50 a pack over the next decade and impose tough penalties on companies that continue to sell to kids; it must reaffirm the FDA's authority to regulate tobacco products; it must get the tobacco companies out of the business of marketing to our children; it must further our other public health goals; and it must protect the tobacco farmers and their communities. And I take it we're all agreed on that; I think that is very important.

Today I'm happy to report that Senators John Chafee, Bob Graham, and Tom Harkin are introducing the first bipartisan bill that meets all five of these principles, and I strongly support their effort. It is a good, tough bill. I hope it gets wide support. The evidence is clearer than ever that this legislation will save lives. We have now a recent study that says if Congress acts, we can cut teen smoking by almost half in the next 5 years alone. That means we can stop almost 3 million children from beginning. That means we can prevent almost 1 million premature deaths.

Again, I say, sure, there will be important issues to be worked out, even among allies. Even among yourselves, you have to worry about that. I know that. But if you decide that you have to act, then you figure out a way to work out the issues. This 30-year struggle also, I will say, is not about money. There are some budget and spending issues in Congress between me and the Democrats and the Republicans—three or four or five different ideas. But if we just remember this is not about money, it's not about the size of the prize we can extract from the tobacco industry; it is about fulfilling our responsibilities to our children as parents, as a Government, as a Nation.

You have shown enormous courage and foresight in helping us get where we are today. Again I would say, in the heat of the moment do not forget how far we have come. If someone had told you just a couple of years ago we would be here today, hardly a one of you would have believed it. Be proud of what you have done, but bring all your influence to bear on the Congress. It's not a question of party; it's a matter of principle. And it will have a very great deal to do with what your country looks like when your children are sitting where you are today.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jim Doyle, president, National Association of Attorneys General; Fred DuVal, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs; Bonnie Campbell, former Iowa attorney general; and Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 1998
March 12, 1998

Warmest greetings to everyone celebrating Saint Patrick's Day. On this day dedicated to Ireland's great patron saint, I join millions of other Americans across our country in remembering with pride the roots of our Irish heritage.

As it has been for so many immigrants, America has always been a beacon of hope for the Irish people. And the Irish people have always been a source of light and energy to keep that beacon shining brightly. They arrived with little. But the Irish did not come to America empty-handed. They brought with them strong arms and an even stronger spirit that would help to build our nation's great canals, bridges, and railroads; that would wrest coal from Pennsylvania's mines and raise the skyscrapers of New York City. They brought with them a love of words that enriched American journalism and literature. They brought a great reverence for education and built schools across the country renowned for their scholarship and social conscience.

Perhaps their greatest gifts to America have been an abiding love of liberty and a patriotic spirit. Irish Americans have served with distinction in every American conflict, from the Revolutionary War to the Persian Gulf, and their keen sense of social justice made them among the first and most effective voices for labor reform. Generations of Irish Americans entered public service to reach out to those in need—to feed the poor, find jobs for the unemployed, fight for racial equality, and champion social reform.

The United States continues to draw strength and vision from our multicultural, multiracial society. As we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day once again, we remember with special pride the gifts of Irish Americans: faith in God, lilt and laughter, love of family and community, and an unswerving commitment to freedom and justice that continues to enrich our nation.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Senator Ernest F. Hollings
March 12, 1998

Thank you very much. First of all, on behalf of Senator and Mrs. Hollings, myself, and all the southerners present at this dinner—[*laughter*]—I want to thank Esther Coopersmith for serving okra and cornbread. I don't know what the rest of you thought about it, but I felt good about it. [*Laughter*]

Esther, I thank you for your friendship to me and to Fritz and Peatsy, and for opening your home and bringing your whole family together; especially thank you for Connie, who's done such wonderful work for me.

Don't you love to hear Fritz Hollings talk? You know, one night back in 1985—this is a true story—I was a lowly Governor—[*laughter*]—or as my predecessor said, a Governor of a small Southern State. And I was sitting at home one night, and I decided I would do something responsible, so I flipped on the television, and instead of turning to HBO, I turned to C–SPAN. And it was more entertaining than HBO because it was a roast of Senator Hollings.

One of the speakers was Senator Kennedy, who commented on Senator Hollings' campaign in 1984, and said that he was the first non-English-speaking person ever to serve in the Senate and a great inspiration to non-English-speaking Americans everywhere. [*Laughter*] And every time some of my friends get all upset about these English-only referendums, I thought to myself, you know, if Fritz didn't have to run for reelection, they could send him to California; he could beat it all by himself. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, I'm glad to be here speaking for a man who Strom Thurmond believes is too young to serve the people of South Carolina. [*Laughter*] But I think he's about to get the hang of it.

I also want to say that one of the things—this is serious now—there are several things I

like about Senator Hollings. Number one, he's smart. Number two, he works hard, and he's not—he is just as dogged today as he was the first day he showed up here, the first time he took the oath of office, which I think is important. Number three, he believes that when people elect or reelect him, they have given him, for a while, their power to do something with.

You heard him say that. You know, sometimes I feel like a person that's really out of his time here. I keep telling people to think about the future, but sometimes I feel like an artifact of the past. When I come to Washington and I read and hear what people say about politics, it looks to me like people are in love with power and positioning for it. I thought the whole purpose of democracy was to give people power in a limited fashion for a limited time so they could do something with it for the benefit of the public at large. That is the way Fritz Hollings has lived his entire public life and another reason he should be elected in this election year. And I really appreciate it.

Let me just say one other thing about the past. He's already talked about the vote to reduce the deficit in 1993. It was a very hard vote. It was an agonizing vote for a southern Democrat. It's one of the reason that we lost the Congress in '94, because people had not yet felt the benefits of it.

But we had to do something. The deficit was $290 billion; it was projected to be $370 billion this year. It's now projected to be $10 billion this year. And if the Asian financial difficulties don't hurt us too much, we will, in fact, balance the budget this year, may even have a small surplus—if not this year, certainly next year. None of that would have happened if, in my opinion, if he hadn't been willing to stand up and take a strong position, because everybody knew that there was not another Member of Congress that had as much at risk as he did. And he did it anyway because it was the right thing to do.

And 15 million jobs later, we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. I don't think it would have happened if we hadn't brought the deficit down beginning in 1992.

Now, let me make one last point about Senator Hollings. It's true that I was 2 years old when he first got elected. [*Laughter*] But I was having to pay the adult ticket price at the movies when he got elected Governor in 1958, because I was 12. [*Laughter*] But he is a very young person. Peatsy is a very young person. They make you happy to be around them because they're always full of life and always thinking about tomorrow.

What really—sometimes younger people in our business are at a disadvantage because sometimes they're thinking a little bit too much about today and a little bit too little about tomorrow. And I think all of us would admit that as we've grown older in life, as long as we have our health and our mind is working well and we are engaged, the older we get, as long we're functioning properly, the more likely we are to be thinking further into the future, the more likely we are to be concerned about grandchildren as well as our children.

And if you think about the time in which we live and the speed with which things are changing—not least in the telecommunications business, which, has a lot of representatives here, and I thank them all for being here—this is a time when we need someone who is not only smart and active but someone who is literally capable of thinking about the long-run interests of the country. Fritz Hollings wanted to save Social Security when most people didn't know it was in danger. Now it's become part of the mantra of official Washington. I'd like to say I thought of it first, but I didn't. He was preaching to me about it for 3 years before I ever made the first speech about it.

And I think that this is a time when—if you think about the kinds of questions we have to face here, the speed with which things are changing, the complexity of the problem, and the way we are likely to totally reshape the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world in the next decade, it is probably more important that he be elected this time than in any of the previous elections in which he has run.

I hope the people of South Carolina, like people of my native State and the whole South who have been leaving the Democrats in droves, will see a better economy, a lower crime rate, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, a people coming together instead of being driven apart, and think, you know, maybe old Fritz was right all along.

He was, and he's right for the future, too. And I thank you for being here for him.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Rita L. (Peatsy) Hollings, wife of Senator Hollings; and Esther Coopersmith, dinner host, and her daughter, Connie.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner
March 12, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, Steve, and thank you all for being here. I would just like to briefly make a few points. I've seen almost everybody around this table in the last few weeks, and I wouldn't think of putting you through another speech. [*Laughter*] But I would like to say a couple of things.

First of all, I want to thank you for your extraordinary labors on behalf of our party. Second, I want to say that I believe the upcoming 150th anniversary of our party is a great opportunity for us to send a signal to America that we expect to be around for another 150 years by continuing to press our country forward into the future together.

I spent a lot of time in the last few weeks reading about the beginning of the Democratic Party and Andrew Jackson's Presidency and all the things he did right—and one or two things he probably did wrong in the light of history. [*Laughter*] But I have very strong convictions now, that are stronger than they were when I came here even, that our party has shed a lot of the baggage that was holding us back in public perception. We have proved that together we can take the country into the future with a strong economy, a declining crime rate, a mending social fabric, a strong position in the world, and that we have a great obligation at this good time for our country to bear down and press forward. And I hope we can all do that around the 150th celebration.

Steve mentioned the victory of Lois Capps in California in the remarkable special election for Congress. Let me say it was a truly remarkable victory because I think that that seat, which was previously occupied by her husband, was one of only three Democratic seats in the country where Al Gore and I did not win in '96. I think we lost by a point because of the Ralph Nader vote, but nonetheless, we didn't quite win it.

The overwhelming lion's share of credit goes to Lois Capps, who is a remarkable person. Many of you know that her daughter, Laura, works for me and has for some time. A lot of the credit goes to the feelings that the voters in that district have about her late husband, Walter, who was also an astonishing human being. But I think that she ran the race in the way that I think that the Democrats ought to run their races. She ran a grassroots campaign, a local campaign. She did not ask for it, nor seek any outside politician to come in and tell the people of her district how to vote.

In so doing, she did exactly what I did when I was Governor of my State. For nearly 12 years, I felt the same way. But she embraced the issues that were reflected in my State of the Union Address and that our party is advancing this year. And she was able to do it because that's what she heard people talking to her about. In political terms in the way people write about these races up here, perhaps one of the most significant things is that she was able to win with a torrent of so-called independent third party expenditures against her on any number of issues. But she did it with old-fashioned grassroots campaigning, common sense, a great heart, and a real fidelity to the kinds of issues that I think we have to continue to press, including the Patients' Bill of Rights, the whole range of educational issues, and the resolution of the tobacco litigation in a way that helps to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco.

It was a very impressive campaign. It is a mark, if you will, of the future of what we could do all over the country this year. But if we want to do it, we have to do what she did. We have to have good candidates. They have to be closely tied to the people. They have to be interested in grassroots work and not ashamed to get out there and really hustle and listen to people and work with them. They don't have to have more money than their opponents,

but they have to have enough money to have their message heard and to answer whatever onslaught is put against them. And if we do that, I believe we have a good chance to win, because I think the tide of public opinion is moving our way because of the level of confidence people have in our country and where we are, and the sense that they have, notwithstanding that confidence, that we have great challenges to face and we need to embrace them.

So I feel wonderful about this race, both personally because Hillary and I care so much for Laura, Lois's daughter, and because I cared so much about her husband as well as our new Congresswoman from California. But I think it bodes well for the Democrats if we are prepared to realize that politics is not about what has been said and done in Washington, politics is about what is said and done and felt passionately in the neighborhoods of this country.

Finally, let me say that this is an interesting time for me. We are trying to—and for our country now—we are trying very hard to work out an agreement that would pass comprehensive tobacco legislation. I know you're all seeing the press reports of it. There are obstacles. There are differences, but I think we've got a good chance to pass it. And there are only 68 days left, work days left in this session of Congress. And that doesn't sound like a lot of time, and it isn't. But I think it would be unbelievable neglect for the Congress to leave this year without passing that tobacco legislation.

A thousand children a day have their lives shortened because, illegally, they began to smoke in response to advertising campaigns and other inducements—1,000 a day. That's too high a price to pay to fool around and wait until next year just because this is an election year and people have other things to do. So that's the first thing I wanted to say; we're working on that.

Secondly, I am about to leave on a trip for Africa, and I'm going to countries that no sitting President has ever visited before. No President's ever made a serious trip to Africa. And I think it is very important for our economy, very important for our foreign policy, very important for our efforts to protect the global environment and to deal with the spread of disease and other major global issues we'll all be facing together. We can build a great partnership there. I'm excited about that.

When I get back, I then have to go on a long-planned trip to South America to the second Summit of the Americas. We had the first one in Miami 4 years ago, and we are looking forward to continuing to work in our hemisphere. Every country but one is a democracy. Our fastest growing trading partners are our neighbors in our hemisphere. And the fact that the United States has reached out and tried to build economic and other partnerships with these good people who share our part of the globe is an important thing.

I'm then going in May to meet with the other leaders of the largest seven economies, and our political partnership with Russia, in England. And then I just announced that I have moved up my trip to China for late June because of the strong recommendations of our people and the progress we're making in working with the Chinese on a whole range of subjects. And obviously, the welfare of the American people in the 21st century will be shaped in large measure by the partnerships we have with the largest country in the world.

So this is a good time. We're working; we're doing remarkably well as a country. But I want to say, as I say every time, the Democratic Party is not the party of self-congratulation; it is the party of forward motion. We have no business engaging in self-congratulation except to cite it to the voters as evidence that we can be trusted to do more, even better, if we're given the chance to do it. We should be worried about the future; that's what elections are about. We should be grateful for the conditions that exist today. We should recognize there are a whole range of challenges out there, and we should be intensely focused on meeting them. Because of your help, that's exactly what we're going to be able to do.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 p.m. in the Balcony Room at the Sheraton Luxury Collection. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; and Laura Capps, Staff Director for the Office of Speechwriting at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Chuan Likphai of Thailand and an Exchange With Reporters

March 13, 1998

President Clinton. Let me just begin by welcoming Prime Minister Chuan here to the United States. We have had a remarkable friendship with Thailand over a long period of time. It is our oldest security alliance in the region. We have obviously been very concerned about the challenges facing the Thai economy but very, very impressed with the leadership of this Prime Minister, his willingness to make difficult decisions to bring his country back to a full and robust financial health. And we want to do whatever we can to be a good friend and a good partner, because we have confidence in the Prime Minister's leadership and because we value our partnership with Thailand.

We welcome you here, sir.

Q. What are you going to do?

President Clinton. Would you like to say anything?

Prime Minister Chuan. I thank President Clinton for inviting me and the Thai delegation to visit the United States. Thailand and the United States have enjoyed a long history of relations for the past 165 years. My visit is aimed to reaffirm and underline the friendship that exists between the Thai and American people and between our two countries.

Thailand is undergoing a period of financial and economic crisis. During this time of need, we appreciate the help and support of our friends. We, the Thai people, will do whatever we can to overcome our crisis, and we are confident that we will be able to regain economic stability and be a force that can contribute to world peace and progress.

The people of Thailand wish to thank President Clinton for the concern that he has displayed for the crisis in Thailand, the concern that he has displayed for the situation in Southeast Asia. We thank him for his sincere engagement in that region.

President Clinton. To answer your question, I will make an announcement later today. But I think in fairness, the Prime Minister and I should have a chance to speak first because we haven't discussed it, and I want to have a chance to hear from him on any ideas he has. But we will have one or two things to say later in the day after we've had a chance to visit.

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, is the worst of the Asian financial crisis now behind us?

President Clinton. Well, I hope so, but it's hard to say. I think what we're beginning to see is a differentiation on the part of the markets in dealing with these different countries. And that's what, first and foremost, I would like to see; that is, we don't want to see the whole region thrown into a long-term recession because of a perception that everything is the same everywhere. I think that what we want is at least to get the investors where they're making individual judgments about nations and about particular investments within nations and then get everybody on a path to recovery and reform.

We've worked hard with Indonesia, with South Korea, with Thailand. We want to support the efforts of the IMF and others in Malaysia, the Philippines, all these countries that have had either a temporary or longer term difficulties. So I hope the worst is over, but I think that every leader is going to have to do what this Prime Minister has done, which is to try to follow a rigorous path that will build confidence in the investment community, get the flows going back into the country of the money necessary to get business going and strengthen the lives of ordinary people.

Future Visits to Russia and China

Q. Are you going to China and Russia this spring? Have you moved up a travel schedule?

President Clinton. I do not have a definite schedule for Russia. Prime Minister Yeltsin—I mean, President Yeltsin and I agreed a long time ago, probably a year or so ago, that I would come to him for the next visit, but that it would occur after the Russian Duma ratified START II so that we could begin to work on START III and really get the—take the next big step in lowering the nuclear weapons arsenals of both countries.

Q. They haven't done that?

President Clinton. Not yet. That's something that I talked to Prime Minister Chernomyrdin about when he was here, and the Vice President did. If the Russian Duma should decide to do that, then I would attempt to respond, as I promised President Yeltsin over a year ago I would.

Now, on the China issue, let me explain why this trip was moved up. Ambassador Sasser and other advisers of mine have been arguing for months, literally for months, that I should move up the trip to China. Because we had such a successful summit here with President Jiang, a lot got done. Much has happened since then. I felt that, after listening to them, that they were probably right, that even though we had a lot of trips this year, so we tried to space them out, that our relationship with China is so important that we needed to try to build on it and make some more progress.

Now, just yesterday the Chinese announced their intention to sign the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. This is a very significant step forward in our attempts to work within to establish rational legal systems and to elevate the cause of democracy and human rights. So I was very pleased by that. And I expect that they will sign it soon. So we will continue to work on that, and we're trying to work out the details of the trip now.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Sir, what about Belfast?

President Clinton. Well, as you know, we're about to celebrate St. Patrick's Day here, and we expect that many of the major players in the Irish peace process will be here. I will do my best to see them all. I am—I've been very involved in this from the beginning. I think that the next 60 to 90 days are very, very important, and we have to do everything we can to try to get the parties together to move in a timely fashion.

Whether I would go to Belfast or not when I'm going to—more or less around the time I'll be in England for the G–8 meeting would depend upon what the posture of things is then with the peace process and, after consultation with Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Ahern, whether I could make any kind of constructive contribution.

There's been absolutely no decision and hardly any discussion of that. I am far more—that's a very premature thing. The more important thing is when the parties are here next week, can the United States play a positive role in trying to push the Irish peace process forward? It's a very—that's a very important thing and, in a way, much bigger in terms of its potential impact than a question of an Irish trip.

China

Q. Are your confident that China is living up to the nuclear agreement?

President Clinton. You're referring, I think, to the story in the paper this morning. Let me say that when I made the agreement with President Jiang, sometime after that information came to us that indicated that there was a low-level discussion—not a high-level one in the Chinese Government, a low-level discussion—about the possibility of some transfers which would have been inconsistent with that agreement. We followed through on it. The Chinese followed through on it and kept their agreement to the letter.

So I think that the revelation in the paper this morning is further support for the proposition that we should be engaged with China. The Prime Minister and other Asian leaders who are friends with the United States have urged us to build a stronger, constructive partnership with China. And so I'm well pleased, actually, with the way that issue came out.

Legislative Agenda

Q. Sir, do you think the Patients' Bill of Rights is going to pass, sir?

President Clinton. Do I believe it will?

Q. Do you believe the Patients' Bill of Rights will pass, given that you're to receive the report of the quality care commission today?

President Clinton. I do. I hope it will pass this year, and I think there are relatively few differences. The difference between the business and the insurance community on the one hand, and the medical and patient community on the other, about many things, but there's, you know, there's some discussion about the litigation issues and all that. We have to resolve some of the differences. I have been impressed with the number of Republicans who have agreed with what I think is an almost unanimous position of the Democratic Caucus in the House, and I think there's a similar sense in the Senate that it is urgent that we do something on this. So I'm hopeful that we can do it this year. If we—I'm hopeful that that will happen.

I hope we get the tobacco settlement. Obviously, I'd like it if my entire legislative program could be adopted this year, as well as some of their ideas, but at a minimum we shouldn't leave without dealing with the tobacco issue.

Q. Are you going to keep Congress in until it passes, sir?

President Clinton. Well, I would certainly consider that. I don't think they should leave without resolving the tobacco thing. You know, passing over from one year to the next is understandable in a measure of this size and magnitude, but we're talking about 1,000 children a day who are going to have their lives shortened. You can't justify taking another whole year to deal with this. The issues are somewhat complicated, but they're not that difficult, and they ought to be dealt with this year.

Q. Once the Paula Jones case is resolved——

NCAA Basketball Tournament

Q. Did you see the tournament?

President Clinton. It's a great tournament. It's the most interesting tournament we've had in some time, really.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia; President Jiang Zemin of China; James M. Sasser, U.S. Ambassador to China; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Final Report of the President's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry and on Establishment of the Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force

March 13, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, thank you for your work on this issue and your interest in it. I thank Secretary Shalala, Secretary Herman, Secretary West, the members of the White House staff who worked on this. But especially let me thank the members of the Commission and the Executive Director of the Commission, Janet Corrigan. They have done a remarkable citizen service for the people of the United States of America, and we're all very grateful to them.

As we approach a new century with all its stunning advances in science and technology, we know that many of them will come in medicine and health. We must act now to spread these breakthroughs and improve the quality of health care for every American. I accept the Commission's report. I endorse your recommendations.

For 5 years we have worked to expand access to quality health care for the American people, step by step: health insurance coverage for people who move between jobs; expanded health care coverage for millions of children; strengthened Medicare with more preventive benefits. Last year, as the Vice President said, this Commission recommended a Patients' Bill of Rights. Last month I acted to ensure by Executive order that one-third of all Americans—those in Medicare, Medicaid, veterans health care systems and other Federal plans—enjoy the benefits of this Patients' Bill of Rights. Now these protections must be extended to all Americans. And in the remaining 68 days of this congressional session, Congress must take the next step and make the Patients' Bill of Rights the law of the land.

Now, as you have told America in this report, we must also seize this moment of opportunity to improve the quality of health care for all our people. For all its strengths, our health care system still is plagued by avoidable errors, overused and underused procedures and gaps in the quality of care. For example, when hundreds of thousands of Americans are needlessly injured while in the hospital, when 18,000 Americans die of heart attacks that did not have to be fatal, when 80,000 women undergo unnecessary hysterectomies every year, surely we can do better.

This Commission has drawn a road map for higher quality across American health care.

Above all, our Nation must develop uniform national standards so that health plans can compete on quality, not just cost, and so that health care consumers can judge for themselves. This is the best way to assure quality health care for all Americans.

We can take three steps to advance these high health care standards. First, health care quality standards should be set at a forum bringing together providers, business and labor, consumers, insurers, and Government. I've asked the Vice President to convene this health care quality forum this June.

Second, I'm ordering Federal agencies to create a task force to find ways to improve quality in the health care systems that we operate. The Federal Government must lead the way in lifting health care quality for all our people.

Third, I support this Commission's recommendation to create a permanent Health Care Quality Council to set new goals and track our progress in meeting those goals. A council should be established by any health care quality legislation enacted this year.

We can make this year a time of real achievement in our mission to improve health care for every American. The American health care system has been the best in the world in the 20th century. If we press forward with medical research, enact a Patients' Bill of Rights, insist on high quality everywhere in America, continue to expand quality affordable coverage, protect and preserve Medicare and Medicaid, we can make American health care the best in the world in the 21st century.

Now I intend to sign an Executive order to all the relevant agencies to make sure they work together to develop the standards you recommend for quality health care, first for those whom we reach and hopefully as a model for all Americans.

Again, I thank this Commission. I ask the people and the members of the press here present to remember just the single instances I cited from the Commission's report of examples where we still have serious quality challenges. And I ask you all to rededicate yourself to this purpose on this day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to his memorandum of February 20 on Federal agency compliance with the Patient Bill of Rights.

Memorandum on Establishment of the Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force

March 13, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Establishment of the Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force

Last November, I endorsed the "Patient Bill of Rights" recommended by the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry (the "Quality Commission"). On February 20, 1998, after receiving your encouraging reports from the Vice President about the degree to which your agencies are in compliance with these rights, I directed you to take all administrative actions under your authority to come into compliance.

As a result of my February 20 memorandum and your commitment to implement the Patient Bill of Rights, the Federal Government will be taking the lead in ensuring patient protections. By holding the Federal Government accountable, we are strengthening our call on the Congress to pass patient rights legislation that exceeds these protections to all Americans.

Yesterday, in their report to me through the Vice President, the Quality Commission took the next logical step. Building on the Patient Bill of Rights, which is explicitly designed to ensure quality, the Commission's final report includes

recommendations that I am confident will actually improve quality care. Specifically, the Commission called for the development of national health care quality improvement goals and the use of measurement standards that will empower consumers and businesses to make informed purchasing decisions based on health plans' quality performance records.

The Quality Commission recommends establishing "two complementary entities, one public and one private, to provide ongoing national leadership in health care quality improvement." The Commission recommends the creation of a broadly represented, publicly administered "Advisory Council for Health Care Quality" and a privately administered "Forum for Health Care Quality Measurement and Reporting." The Commission's approach represents a creative balance to achieve constructive involvement from all the parties that have important expertise and experience in this area.

It is my strong belief that we must ensure that all relevant agencies within the Federal Government build on their leadership role in health care quality. As the Quality Commission report makes clear, the lack of coordination and uniform quality standards in both the public and private sectors has created conditions that fall "short of fully meeting users' needs, and often are duplicative and unduly burdensome on health care providers, plans, and others." To that end, the Federal Government must use improved standards and goals to better inform and empower health care consumers and purchasers under Federal jurisdiction. Moreover, we must do a better job of collaborating within and across the Federal Government to most efficiently and effectively ensure we achieve the national goal of improving quality and health outcomes.

Therefore, I am directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to immediately establish a "Quality Interagency Coordination" (QuIC) task force to ensure better coordination among the executive agencies with jurisdiction over health programs. I hereby direct you to take the following actions consistent with your authority and the mission of your agency to meet or exceed the recommendations of the Quality Commission.

First, I direct that all participating agencies shall have equal standing on the QuIC task force.

Second, I direct the task force to, wherever feasible, collaborate on goals, models, and timetables that are consistent with the Quality Commission's six "National Aims for Improvement": reducing the underlying causes of illness, injury, and disability; reducing health care errors; ensuring the appropriate use of health care services; expanding research on effectiveness of treatments; addressing oversupply and undersupply of health care resources; and increasing patient participation in their care.

Third, I direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to serve as the convener of the QuIC task force and to schedule the first task force meeting to order by no later than March 27, 1998.

Fourth, I direct the task force to improve cooperation by the participating agencies on the development and utilization of quality measurement mechanisms for public sector programs; these efforts should be flexible enough to respond to changing needs, technology, and information, while being sufficiently standardized to be comparably measured.

Fifth, I direct the task force to work to increase the development and dissemination of evidence-based health care information to help guide practitioners' actions in ways that will improve quality and potentially constrain costs.

Sixth, I direct the task force to consult with health care workers and their representatives, as well as other affected parties, in developing models for quality improvement.

Seventh, I direct the task force to enhance efforts to develop user-friendly information for both consumer and business purchasers that facilitates meaningful comparisons of quality performances of plans, facilities, and practitioners.

Eighth, I direct all participating agencies, where feasible and appropriate, to seek to avoid inefficient duplication of ongoing quality improvement efforts and resources.

Finally, I direct the task force, to every extent possible, to endeavor to coordinate the Federal programs' quality reporting and compliance requirements to reduce administrative burdens on private entities who administer, oversee, or participate in the Nation's Federal health programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on the Decision of Representative Joseph P. Kennedy II Not To Seek Reelection
March 13, 1998

For 12 years in the United States House of Representatives, Joe Kennedy has proven himself to be a dedicated advocate for the Nation's working families. His efforts on behalf of his Massachusetts constituents, as well as underprivileged people across America, will be sorely missed in Washington. As one of the foremost voices in the Congress for low income housing opportunities for needy families, Representative Kennedy worked to expand the availability of credit to working Americans to buy homes and to open businesses.

I know that Representative Kennedy will continue his family's long tradition of public service on behalf of our Nation. I wish him well in all of his future endeavors, and on behalf of the Nation I thank him for his dedicated service.

The President's Radio Address
March 14, 1998

Good morning. This is a time of great promise for America, and it should be a time of great achievement as we work to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

There are only 68 work days remaining in the congressional session. Yet, we still have a lot of work to do: maintaining fiscal discipline by setting aside any budget surplus until we save Social Security first, protecting our children with comprehensive tobacco legislation, strengthening families with the Patients' Bill of Rights and child care legislation, honoring our parents by letting more people buy into Medicare, improving education with higher standards and smaller classes and more funds to build and repair schools, preserving our environment with a new clean water initiative and incentives to have new technologies meet the challenge of global warming.

This is a full agenda for the future of our Nation. But we must act now—not over the next 68 days but right now, in the next several days—to advance our security around the world and rebuild communities hit by natural disasters here at home.

I have asked Congress for an emergency bill to fund these pressing security and natural disaster needs. Here's what's at stake. The measure will pay for the deployment of America's Armed Forces in and around the Persian Gulf. Our Armed Forces must stand watch to make sure Saddam Hussein allows inspectors to detect and destroy his capacity for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. As long as Saddam Hussein continues to pose a threat, we must remain vigilant.

The measure would also pay our longstanding debt to the United Nations at a time when that organization continues to play a critical role in forcing Iraq to yield and in supporting peace and progress throughout the world. I don't think any American believes that America shouldn't pay its dues to the U.N.

The emergency measure will also support the brave men and women of our Armed Forces as they continue to help democracy and peace take root in Bosnia. It will promote our national economic security as well, supporting the International Monetary Fund as it reduces the harm to America's economy from the financial turmoil in Asia.

Perhaps most important of all, we need emergency action to help millions of families whose lives have been turned upside down by the natural disasters in the winter of 1998. Communities in California, New England, Florida, and Guam have seen flooding, ice, mudslides, and the savage force of El Nino. I visited with many of these families; I've seen how hard they're struggling. Our national community must help them. This emergency measure will rebuild roads, repair military bases, prevent future flooding, help family farmers, and help families in distress.

Now, these emergency measures are vital to the national interest. They have broad bipartisan support. But unfortunately, some in Congress are preparing to slip unrelated, controversial provisions into the bill, proposals guaranteed to produce gridlock and delay. One provision is a controversial issue related to family planning. Another would even block the Federal Communications Commission from offering candidates free TV air time which would cut the cost of campaigns and reduce special interest influence. Now, it's bad enough that Congress won't pass campaign financial reform; now some in Congress want to stamp it out anywhere it sees it.

These unrelated issues, whatever side you have on them, absolutely have no place on emergency legislation. Congress shouldn't hold emergency aid for families hostage to controversial provisions. Congress shouldn't demand ransom to maintain America's world leadership and meet America's responsibility to our own national security.

Last year, when Congress tried to attach partisan measures to similar disaster legislation, I said, no. Congress would be unwise to head down that same road again. Instead, let's work together to enact a straightforward emergency measure. No unacceptable provisions, no political gimmicks. Let's work together to meet the long-term needs of our families, our economy, our Nation. If we will once again put aside partisanship, reject narrow agendas, and focus on the national interest, the remaining 68 days of this congressional session can be a time of real achievement for our people and our future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:38 p.m. on March 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 14.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

March 14, 1998

Dear Mr. Leader:

The Senate will soon act on the proposed accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I want to thank you for the energetic and bipartisan leadership that you, Democratic Leader Daschle and many others have demonstrated on this historic initiative. The enlargement of NATO directly will benefit America's security, and I urge all members of the Senate to support its ratification.

The addition of these countries to NATO is an essential part of our effort to consolidate the stability and security that resulted from the end of the Cold War. The Alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. NATO's core mission will remain the collective defense of the territory of its members, and neither the addition of new members nor NATO's other adaptations to Europe's new security environment will change that.

The accession of these three countries also will help make Europe more stable; already the prospect of membership has encouraged states throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. In addition, adding these states to NATO—combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region's new democracies—will help to erase the Cold War dividing line and contribute to our strategic goal of building an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe.

The addition of these states to NATO, which will yield tremendous benefits to our own security, is also affordable. After extensive review of this proposal by NATO, our Administration, and the Congress, we now have strong basis to believe that the costs to the U.S. will be about $400 million for the United States over the next ten years, and that the total costs will be equitably shared with our current and new allies.

There are other steps we will need to take together in order to help ensure the security of the transatlantic area. We are moving ahead

with efforts to increase cooperation with the Russian Federation and to build on the openings for constructive dialogue created by the NATO-Russia Founding Act. I am committed to continue efforts with Russia and other countries to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and stabilize arms levels across Europe. We must continue working together to create the opportunity for a lasting peace in Bosnia and the Balkans. We will continue working with the European Union, which also is adding members, and which makes its own important contribution to Europe's stability.

NATO is the cornerstone of our transatlantic security efforts, however, and the Alliance is proving its value—through the Partnership for Peace program and many other efforts—in projecting stability throughout Europe. For that same reason, we must leave the door open to the addition of other qualified new members in the future. The "open door" commitment made by all the allies has played a vital role in ensuring that the process of enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just these first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance's enlargement at our next summit. At this point, however, neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about admission of these first three countries, and I pledge the same pattern of consultation before any decisions on these matters in the future. In any case, any future addition of members will require the advice and consent of the Senate.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise, for it would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

I am gratified by the outstanding cooperation between our two branches of government, and between both parties, that has been a part of the ratification effort. I commend you for the creation of the Senate's NATO Observer Group, which has worked closely with the Administration in development of this policy, and I commend Senators Helms and Biden and the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as other committees, for their thorough examination of the complex questions involved in NATO's enlargement.

That kind of bipartisan cooperation was indispensable to our successful efforts throughout the Cold War to sustain a strong Alliance, to defend our security, and to pursue the goal of freedom and democracy across Europe. In the same spirit, I hope the Senate will draw together on the question of NATO's enlargement. By doing so, the Senate can help signal America's continuing engagement in Europe, our commitment to a strong NATO Alliance, and our determination to build a foundation for transatlantic security into the next century.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. A similar letter with minor differences was sent to Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle. The letters were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16 but were not issued as White House press releases.

Opening Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on Education and an Exchange With Reporters in Silver Spring, Maryland

March 16, 1998

The President. First of all, let me welcome you all here. Let me thank you for coming. Many have made an extraordinary effort to come from a long way away, and I thank you so much for that. I want to make some brief opening remarks and ask Secretary Riley and Mr. Schmidt to make some remarks, and then we'll

just begin the roundtable. And I want to hear from everyone before we go.

Earlier this month, our country received a wakeup call. Our high school seniors ranked near the bottom in math and science achievement when compared with their peers around the world, according to the TIMSS test results. This must be a call to action for all of us. That's why I've asked some of America's top educators, advocates, political and business leaders here today, to mobilize our schools to raise standards, demand accountability, and specifically, to strengthen math and science education and performance all across America.

A little over 40 years ago—a lot of us are old enough to remember when America got another wakeup call—when the Soviets had just launched *Sputnik* and beat us into space. Then President Eisenhower said, if we were going to conquer the heavens, we had to strengthen math and science education here on Earth. Because we answered the call, in the years since, we have landed on the Moon, roved the surface of Mars, launched countless satellites that have revolutionized the way we live, work, and play here on Earth, and we're preparing to put the international space station into work.

The young people Eisenhower inspired are now fueling America's new economy. They work at NASA, at NIH, in high-tech labs in Silicon Valley, in Wall Street boardrooms, in classrooms all across our Nation. Now we have to strengthen math and science education for a new generation of Americans in the 21st century. We know that for our time we need a revolution in high standards, accountability, and rising expectations. We know the revolution works. A report released just today by the University of Minnesota has found that charter schools are meeting and sometimes exceeding their promises to raise academic achievement. Now we have to spread these lessons throughout the educational system.

In our balanced budget, I proposed a comprehensive strategy to help make our schools the best in the world: to have high national standards of academic achievement, national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, strengthening math instruction in middle school, providing smaller classes in the early grades so that teachers can give students the attention they deserve, working to hire more well-prepared and nationally certified teachers, modernizing our schools for the 21st century, supporting more charter schools, encouraging public school choice, ending social promotion, demanding greater accountability from students and teachers, principals and parents.

And we have to bring more mentors into our middle schools to inspire our students to prepare for college early. I am pleased that this strategy is already moving forward in many, many States, that our Nation's Governors and State legislators of both parties are choosing to make a solid commitment to boost education, to advocate high standards, and to take advantage of this era of budget surpluses and good times to make our schools better so that we'll have even better times in the future. We'll work hard with Congress to make sure this plan becomes a reality. I urge the Senate to take the first step by passing the proposals to modernize schools this week.

In this era of fiscal discipline, we have to recognize that Government alone cannot do the job. We also have to mobilize all other Americans in a concerted effort especially, let me say, on the topic we're here today—math and science education. States have to make sure that every math and science teacher is qualified to do the job. We have to insist that they've majored in their subjects in college.

Today, nearly one of every five science teachers, more than a quarter of all math teachers, more than half of all physics teachers has neither majored in nor minored in the subjects they teach. The typical elementary and middle school teacher has taken just three undergraduate math courses. We can and we must do better.

So I call on the States to require new math and science teachers to pass high-level competency tests in their subjects before getting licensed. The requirements must be vigorously enforced. School districts simply mustn't continue to hire people who don't meet the standards. Students must challenge themselves and take the most advanced math and science courses they can. Again, this is a big problem. Among college-bound seniors, half have not taken physics or trigonometry; three-quarters have not taken calculus. Around the world, middle students are learning algebra and geometry. Here at home, just a quarter of all students take algebra before high school. Our children must not glide through school without gaining these important skills. Business has to help us get the message out, too, so that they will hear

that young people who study and do well will do better in the future.

Today I want to say that later this year I intend to convene a group of business leaders specifically to discuss ways that they can contribute to raising student performance across our country. Universities can also help by strengthening their programs in math and science teaching so that more students will consider teaching as a career, and so that our newest teachers will be better prepared than ever for the classrooms of the 21st century.

Finally, we need help from our parents, who should encourage and insist on teachers and students who do their best. I think it is profoundly important that parents keep up not only with the progress of their children in the courses they're taking but also in whether they're taking the right courses.

If we all do our part, I'm convinced this is a challenge that we can clearly meet.

Secretary Riley.

[*At this point, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and William Schmidt, national research coordinator, Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), made brief remarks.*]

Deposition in Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, Kathleen Willey says that you made unwanted sexual advances toward her, and that directly contradicts your testimony. You can't both be telling the truth, can you?

The President. Well, I don't know what she said, because I didn't see the interview last night. But I can tell you this: Ever since this story came out months ago—and as you know, the story has been in three different incarnations—I have said that nothing improper happened. I told the truth then. I told the truth in the deposition.

I am mystified and disappointed by this turn of events. But it's been out there for several months, as well as conflicting stories from people who have discussed it with her. You'll have to find the answer to that riddle somewhere else. But I can just tell you that I have done everything I could do to clarify the situation. I have a very clear memory of the meeting, and I told the truth.

Q. Mr. President, do you stand by your full deposition—[*inaudible*]—in the Paula Jones case? And should that serve as your explanation to the American people of what went on—[*inaudible*]?

The President. I certainly stand by the deposition.

Q. Will you make a further explanation to the American people, as you suggested you would when this story first broke?

The President. Well, I did suggest that, but that was before the deposition was illegally released, and it basically states my position. Whether and what else will be said I think is something that we'll have to deal with in the future, depending on how circumstances unfold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Media Center at Springbrook High School. In his remarks, he referred to Kathleen E. Willey, former White House volunteer who gave testimony in both the Paula Jones civil lawsuit and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation, and who was interviewed on the CBS News program "60 Minutes" on March 15.

Remarks at Springbrook High School in Silver Spring
March 16, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Durso, thank you for welcoming me here to Springbrook. Secretary Riley, thank you for bringing me along. I want to introduce the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; the Secretary of Energy, Federico Pena. I thank Governor Glendening and Senator Sarbanes and Congressman Wynn and the Maryland State superintendent, Nancy Grasmick; your president of the school board, Nancy King, and all the other people from Maryland who have made us feel so welcome; the Governor of West Virginia, Governor Underwood; and the mayor of Los Angeles, Mayor Riordan; and other people who were on our panel are over there. I'd like for all the people who came from all over America to be with us to stand up—Rudy Crew, the superintendent of New York;

many other leaders there. Thank you all very much, Bob Moses and the others.

Those people came from all over America today to your school to discuss one very important thing for your future: How can we improve the learning of American students in math and science on the edge of a new century and a new millennium, where so much of the public welfare and so much of people's individual lives will be determined by whether they understand and can use and apply math and science? And I think you ought to give them a hand for doing that. [*Applause*]

Now, you may know all this, but I want to give you a few facts to try to demonstrate to you why whether you know anything about math and science, no matter what you do with your life, is likely to make a big difference. For example, in 1993, when I became President, and all of you were in an earlier grade—[*laughter*]—in 1993, now, just 5 years ago, there were only 50—50 sites on the Web, on the World Wide Web—50, total. Today, millions of Americans and millions of organizations have webpages, up from 50 in 1993. The White House has one. Your school newspaper has one. My cat has one! [*Laughter*] One and a half million new pages are created every day; 65,000 every hour.

Today, every one of you is just a click of a mouse away from some of the finest libraries in the world. And someday before long, you'll be able to reach every book, every symphony, every painting ever created, through the Web.

I know that Bill Nye talked to you about science in ways that were probably infinitely more entertaining than anything I could say, but I'd like to say a couple of serious things to you. Our scientists are on the verge of making dramatic breakthroughs in the treatment of cancer, spinal cord injury, other serious diseases. We have just had a rover on Mars. We're about to put an international space station in the sky the size of three football fields for, in effect, permanent human residence in space.

In the 1980's, it took 9 years for scientists to identify the gene that causes cystic fibrosis. Last year, because of improvements in genetic research, it took 9 days to identify the gene that causes Parkinson's disease. We're on our way to developing gene chips that will help us prevent illnesses in people even before they happen. A lot of you young people here today, by the time you have your first child and you bring your baby home from the hospital, you will actually be able to have a genetic map which will tell you what your child's genetic strengths are, and weaknesses, what the likely problems your child could have are, what kind of diet your child should follow, what kind of regime you should follow to guarantee your child has the healthiest possible future.

Now, I guess what I'm trying to say is something you doubtless already know, but science and technology and mathematics are profoundly important to the way we live. But they will be even more important to the way you live, you work, you relate to other people, you relate to people all the way around the world.

Now, I know here that preparing for that kind of future is a priority. You have more computers, more students taking computer science than any other school in the county. Congratulations. I hope more students around the country will follow your lead. I hope more of you will go on to college. And if you haven't thought of it, I hope you will decide to do it.

I have worked very hard to make sure that when we start this new century, the first 2 years of college will be as universal as a high school education has been in the latter half of the 20th century. Why? Because we know from all of our census data that young people who have at least 2 years of college education are likely to get a good job with a growing income. Young people who don't are likely not to get a good job with a growing income. And we know that more and more people have to be able not just to know facts but to understand how to use them, how to solve problems, how to think creatively.

That's why we've provided now a HOPE scholarship, a $1,500 tax credit, a reduction to help pay for tuition for the first 2 years of college, and tax credits for the junior year and senior year and graduate school as well. This is important. We've also simplified the student loan program; made interest tax deductible on student loans if your families or you can save money in an IRA and withdraw it to pay for a college education without having to pay any tax on it; we've increased the number of Pell grants and the number of work-study slots; and provided for more positions in AmeriCorps for people to earn money to go to college by doing community service. All of this is designed not only to help you individually but to make your country stronger, because we will need higher

levels of education among all our young people in the new century.

Every one of you—and I wanted to be able to look at every young person in America dead in the eye and say, I don't care what your family's income is, I don't care what your racial or ethnic background is, I don't care how many struggles you've had to overcome, you will be able to afford to go to college because we have created a system which makes it possible for you.

Now, here's the problem that we face today. Here's why all of these people came here. Not everybody in America has access to the same level of science and math and technology opportunities you do. And not everybody in America—and I'll bet you not even everybody in this school who should be taking these courses—is taking them. And that has given us a huge national headache.

Earlier this month, we learned that in the Third International Math and Science test, which compares performance of American students with students around the world, that our seniors ranked near the bottom, ahead of only 2 other countries out of 21, in math and science performance. Now, by contrast, we ranked right at the top in math and science performance at the fourth grade—right at the top. We ranked second in math and tied for second in science. By the eighth grade, we drop to about the middle of the pack. By the 12th grade, we're ahead of only two other countries.

This country is still the science and mathematics and technology and research capital of the world. But how long can we go on doing that when we need this knowledge to be more widely shared, and we know that only a few people have it? That is the challenge. So I say to you, it's not just important for you to know more math and science personally; it's important for your country and your future that people like you all over this country know more as well.

So what are we going to do about it? Listen to this: half of all college-bound seniors in America—forget about the people not going to college—half of all the people that are going to college have not taken physics or trigonometry. Three-quarters have not taken calculus. Students around the world have to take these courses to get out of high school, in country after country after country. So I say to you, whether you have to or not, you should take trig; you should take calculus; and you should take physics. No matter what you do for the rest of your life, it will help you, and you should take them.

Now, let me also say that we have some things to do. We have to make sure that all of our teachers have the chance to be properly trained. Let's face it—you know, there are almost 400,000 openings right now in America in computer science. The average entry-level salary is $48,000 a year. That ought to get you interested in taking them in college. [*Laughter*] The average teacher's salary in America—for all teachers, including those that have been teaching 30 years—the average salary is well below $48,000 a year, what a 22-year-old or a 23-year-old person can earn coming out of college with this kind of background.

So I want to say something else to you. You've got a good teacher, and you know your teacher is doing this. I've just told you that your teacher could leave, walk out tomorrow, and go make $50,000 doing something else. You ought to thank your teachers for being here and educating you and supporting you.

And I'll tell you what we're going to try to do. We are going to do our best to make sure that schools and school districts and States have the resources to train teachers properly. We're going to challenge all the States to require that the teachers who are teaching courses have real adequate academic preparation in the courses they're teaching. I'm going to urge more and more States and school districts to require you to take more math and science, just to get out of high school in the first place.

But before all that happens—well, you're seniors, it's too late—I don't mean we're going to impose something on you. I don't mean you have to stay. But you think about this. You think about this: if you have a little brother or a little sister in the ninth grade or the eighth grade or the seventh grade or the sixth grade, wouldn't you like to know that when your brother or sister gets out of high school if they want to go to college, they can? And wouldn't you like to know that everybody who gets out of high school 6 years from now will be able to compete with every body else in the world when they get out of high school 6 years from now? Isn't this something we owe each other, to make every succeeding year better and better and better?

So I say this, even though—if you're a senior and you think, "Oh, my goodness, I'm so glad that Bill Clinton didn't come to my school and give this speech 5 years ago—[*laughter*]—because they might have changed the rules and made me take all these courses," even if you think that, you should want your brothers and sisters coming up behind you to take all these courses, because it will be better for our country and for your future if we do it.

I've been told that the motto of this school is, "We expect; we believe; we achieve." Well, when I look at you, and I think of where we're going in math and science, I expect America to lead the way. I believe in you to be on the forefront of that. It's up to you to achieve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Michael A. Durso, principal, Springbrook High School; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; Nancy S. Grasmick, Maryland State superintendent of schools; Nancy J. King, president, Montgomery County Board of Education; Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Rudy Crew, chancellor, New York City public schools; Robert Moses, director, the Algebra Project; and William S. (Bill) Nye, host of the PBS children's television program "The Science Guy."

Statement on Proposed Tobacco Legislation

March 16, 1998

I congratulate the public health and tobacco producer communities for working together to promote bipartisan, comprehensive tobacco legislation that dramatically reduces youth smoking and protects American farmers and their communities. I am firmly committed to protecting farmers and their communities and have made this commitment one of the five key elements that I will insist upon before signing tobacco legislation. I hope you will continue your efforts to expand your coalition and to enact comprehensive tobacco legislation this year that protects our Nation's children.

Statement on the Death of Dr. Benjamin Spock

March 16, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Benjamin Spock. For half a century, Dr. Spock guided parents across the country and around the world in their most important job—raising their children. As a pediatrician, writer, and teacher, Dr. Spock offered sage advice and gentle support to generations of families, and he taught all of us the importance of respecting children. He was a tireless advocate, devoting himself to the cause of improving the lives of children. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the District of Columbia Courts' Fiscal Year 1999 Budget Request

March 16, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the District of Columbia Code, as amended, I am transmitting the District of Columbia Court's FY 1999 budget request.

The District of Columbia Courts has submitted a FY 1999 budget request for $133 million for its operating expenditures and authorization for multiyear capital funding totalling $58 million for courthouse renovation and improvements. My FY 1999 Budget includes recommended funding levels of $121 million for operations and $21 million for capital improvements for the District Courts. My transmittal of the District Court's budget request does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

I look forward to working with the Congress throughout the FY 1999 appropriation process.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 16, 1998.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

March 16, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, and matters relating to the measures in that order and in Executive Order 12959 of May 6, 1995, and in Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) (IEEPA), section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 and does not deal with those relating to the emergency declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the hostage crisis.

1. On March 15, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12957 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 14615, March 17, 1995) to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to IEEPA, and to prohibit the financing, management, or supervision by United States persons of the development of Iranian petroleum resources. This action was in response to actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. A copy of the Order was provided to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate by letter dated March 15, 1995.

Following the imposition of these restrictions with regard to the development of Iranian petroleum resources, Iran continued to engage in activities that represent a threat to the peace and security of all nations, including Iran's continuing support for international terrorism, its support for acts that undermine the Middle East peace process, and its intensified efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction. On May 6, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12959 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 24757, May 9, 1995) to further respond to the Iranian threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. The terms of that order and an earlier order imposing an import ban on Iranian-origin goods and services (Executive Order 12613 of October 29, 1987) were consolidated and clarified in Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997.

At the time of signing Executive Order 12959, I directed the Secretary of the Treasury to authorize through specific licensing certain transactions, including transactions by United States persons related to the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague, established pursuant to the Algiers Accords, and related to other international obligations and U.S. Government functions, and transactions related to the export of agricultural commodities pursuant to preexisting contracts consistent with section 5712(c) of title 7, United States Code. I also directed the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to consider authorizing United States persons through specific licensing to participate in market-based swaps of crude oil from the Caspian Sea area for Iranian crude oil in support of energy projects in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.

Executive Order 12959 revoked sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 12613 of October 29, 1987, and sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, to the extent they are inconsistent with it. A copy of Executive Order 12959 was transmitted to the Congressional leadership by letter dated May 6, 1995.

2. On August 19, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13059 in order to clarify the steps taken in Executive Order 12957 and Executive Order 12959, to confirm that the embargo on Iran prohibits all trade and investment activities by United States persons, wherever located, and to consolidate in one order the various prohibitions previously imposed to deal with the national emergency declared on March 15, 1995. A copy of the Order was transmitted to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate by letter dated August 19, 1997.

The Order prohibits (1) the importation into the United States of any goods or services of Iranian origin or owned or controlled by the Government of Iran except information or informational material; (2) the exportation, reexportation, sale, or supply from the United States or by a United States person, wherever located, of goods, technology, or services to Iran or the Government of Iran, including knowing transfers to a third country for direct or indirect supply, transshipment, or reexportation to Iran or the Government of Iran, or specifically for use in the production, commingling with, or incorporation into goods, technology, or services to be supplied, transshipped, or reexported exclusively or predominantly to Iran or the Government of Iran; (3) knowing reexportation from a third country to Iran or the Government of Iran of certain controlled U.S.-origin goods, technology, or services by a person other than a United States person; (4) the purchase, sale, transport, swap, brokerage, approval, financing, facilitation, guarantee, or other transactions or dealings by United States persons, wherever located, related to goods, technology, or services for exportation, reexportation, sale or supply, directly or indirectly, to Iran or the Government of Iran, or to goods or services of Iranian origin or owned or controlled by the Government of Iran; (5) new investment by United States persons in Iran or in property or entities owned or controlled by the Government of Iran; (6) approval, financing, facilitation, or guarantee by a United States person of any transaction by a foreign person that a United States person would be prohibited from performing under the terms of the Order; and (7) any transaction that evades, avoids, or attempts to violate a prohibition under the Order.

Executive Order 13059 became effective at 12:01 a.m., eastern daylight time on August 20, 1997. Because the Order consolidated and clarified the provisions of prior orders, Executive Order 12613 and paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), and (f) of section 1 of Executive Order 12959 were revoked by Executive Order 13059. The revocation of corresponding provisions in the prior Executive orders did not affect the applicability of those provisions, or of regulations, licenses or other administrative actions taken pursuant to those provisions, with respect to any transaction or violation occurring before the effective date of Executive Order 13059. Specific licenses issued pursuant to prior Executive orders continue in effect, unless revoked or amended by the Secretary of the Treasury. General licenses, regulations, orders, and directives issued pursuant to prior orders continue in effect, except to the extent inconsistent with Executive Order 13059 or otherwise revoked or modified by the Secretary of the Treasury.

The declaration of national emergency made by Executive Order 12957, and renewed each year since, remains in effect and is not affected by the Order.

3. On March 4, 1998, I renewed for another year the national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to IEEPA. This renewal extended the authority for the current comprehensive trade embargo against Iran in effect since May 1995.

Under these sanctions, virtually all trade with Iran is prohibited except for trade in information and informational materials and certain other limited exceptions.

4. There have been no amendments to the Iranian Transactions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 560 (the "ITR"), since my report of September 17, 1997.

5. During the current 6-month period, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) made numerous decisions with respect to applications for licenses to engage in transactions under the ITR, and issued seven licenses. The majority of denials were in response to requests to authorize commercial exports to Iran—particularly of machinery and equipment for various industries—and the importation of Iranian-origin goods. The licenses issued authorized certain financial transactions, transactions relating to air safety policy, and to disposal of U.S.-owned goods located in Iran. Pursuant to sections 3 and 4 of Executive Order 12959 and consistent with the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 and other statutory restrictions concerning certain goods and technology, including those involved in air-safety cases, the Department of the Treasury continues to consult with the Departments of State and Commerce on these matters.

The U.S. financial community continues to scrutinize transactions associated with Iran and to consult with OFAC about their appropriate handling. Many of these inquiries have resulted in investigations into the activities of U.S. parties and, where appropriate, the initiation of enforcement action.

6. The U.S. Customs Service has continued to effect numerous seizures of Iranian-origin merchandise, primarily carpets, for violation of the import prohibitions of the ITR. Various enforcement actions carried over from previous reporting periods are continuing and new reports of violations are being aggressively pursued. Since my last report, OFAC has collected six civil monetary penalties totaling nearly $84,000 for violations of IEEPA and the ITR.

7. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from September 15, 1997, through March 14, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Iran are reported to be approximately $1.3 million, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Commerce (the Bureau of Export Administration and the General Counsel's Office).

8. The situation reviewed above continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Iran contained in Executive Order 12957 and the comprehensive economic sanctions imposed by Executive Order 12959 underscore the United States Government's opposition to the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, particularly its support of international terrorism and its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. The Iranian Transactions Regulations issued pursuant to Executive Orders 12957, 12959, and 13059 continue to advance important objectives in promoting the nonproliferation and anti-terrorism policies of the United States. I shall exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 16, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Dinner
March 16, 1998

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you Tom, Steve, Len, Terry. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for being here tonight, for your support for the Democratic Party, and especially for the Business Council.

The two things that I really like, that have kind of flowered in the last 5 years since I've been here for our party, are this Democratic Business Council and the Women's Leadership Forum. And Hillary is in Georgia tonight at a WLF meeting. We really believe in what they have done to broaden the base of the Democratic Party—not just the financial base but also the political base of the party—bringing people in and giving them a voice and giving them a chance to be heard and bringing in new areas of expertise that have made a real difference to us. And so I thank you for that.

I was sitting here tonight wondering what I ought to say. One of you gave me this little cup of coffee with my name on it—a little cup. If this is the case, we won't have any small coffees at the White House. [*Laughter*] I thought that was pretty funny. [*Laughter*] Another one of you in the line said that your 96-year-old grandmother said to tell the President that he and that young man are doing a good job. I said, "Who's the young man?" And she said, "Al Gore." [*Laughter*] That really hurt. [*Laughter*]

Today I did two things that embody what I hope the next 3 years will be about, namely, taking advantage of these good times: first balanced budget in a generation and the lowest unemployment, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, highest homeownership in history, lowest inflation in 30 years—these good times, taking advantage of them and preparing for the long-term prosperity and success of the American people, and trying to advance the cause of peace and freedom and prosperity throughout the world.

I started the day by going out to a high school in suburban Maryland and meeting with two dozen other people, including the superintendent of schools in New York City, the mayor of Los Angeles, the Governors of West Virginia and Maryland, and any number of other experts who came together to sit and talk with me—educational experts—about a big part of one of our country's most profound challenges, and that is the low level of performance of our high school seniors on international math and science tests.

One example of the general problem, which is as follows: Everybody in this country and everybody in the world with an informed opinion would tell you that the United States is fortunate enough to have the best system of higher education in the world. No one with an informed opinion would assert that we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And yet we have a lot of wonderful people out there giving their careers to teaching. And we have example after example after example of schools that are succeeding against all the odds.

Now, this school that I visited in Maryland today had white and African-American and Hispanic and Indian and Pakistani students and Arab-American students. It was an amazing—a lot of Asian-American students—it was an amazing myriad of our country just up the road in Maryland. And they have quite high levels of performance in math and science. So I went there to talk about it. And two of the people on the panel were the teacher, a Japanese-American physics teacher; and a student, a Hispanic, a young woman who was a student there. And we talked about what we could do to improve math and science education. And I talked about our plans to hook up every classroom and library in every school in America to the Internet by the year 2000. When we started in '94 only 34 percent of the schools were hooked up; today 75 percent of the schools are hooked up. That's not every classroom in every school, but at least we've got some hookups to the Internet in 75 percent of the schools in America now. So we're moving.

We talked about the plan to certify 100,000 master teachers, to make absolutely sure that they are academically well qualified to the highest degree, and then to get those people paid more, so we can put one master teacher in every school building in America to try to change the culture of learning and the standards of learning. We talked about the need to give

teachers who are in the work force the ability to go back and train, get higher levels of training.

This is the only country in the world where you have large numbers of people teaching math and science courses that they did not major in or minor in in college, simply because of the shortage that exists. And if we don't do something, it's likely to get worse. There are over 350,000 vacancies in information technology today in America, with an average starting salary of $48,000 a year. The average salary of all teachers, including the most senior, in America, in the wealthiest school district—the average salary is not close to $48,000 a year. So this is a formidable challenge.

But the good news is, I had two dozen really smart Americans from all walks of life there in this wonderful American school. And we were working on it, and we believe we can do something about it. We know we have to have more courses offered; we know we have to train the teachers better; we know we have to find more funds for these shortage areas. But I also told the students, with whom I spoke later—and I actually didn't get booed when I said it—that I thought they should be required to take chemistry and physics and calculus and trigonometry, and that they would all need it—and that we had opened the doors to college to everyone with the balanced budget plan, with the HOPE scholarships, and all the other incentives, they needed to have to do this.

And once I assured the seniors that didn't mean they had to stay another year in high school—[*laughter*]—I got a pretty high level of support for this proposition. I think part of it is sibling malice: they liked the idea that their younger brothers and sisters might have a bigger burden than they did. [*Laughter*] But seriously, it was a very good thing. And I thought, this is what we ought to be doing. While we have the national self-confidence and the emotional room, we ought to be thinking about these big problems down the road, and we ought to be moving on them.

And tonight before I came over here, I began—true to my dear ancestors, I began what will be about a 30-hour marathon effort to close as many gaps as I can in the Irish peace process, because all the major players in the Irish peace process are coming to America for St. Patrick's Day, which will be tomorrow. And it's very good—my Cassidy relatives in Ireland sent my daughter an Irish cross, my wife an Irish pin, sent me green cufflinks to wear tomorrow and two green ties. I have to chide them; the two green ties were made in Italy, but they're beautiful nonetheless. [*Laughter*]

And I thought to myself, this is what we ought to be doing. Because the United States is fortunate that, at the end of the cold war, we don't feel our security immediately threatened, we need to be able to stand up for the long term. We need to imagine what Europe can be like if the Irish are at peace, what Europe can be like if the Bosnian peace process works, what Europe can be like if the difficulties in Kosovo are not allowed to engulf the Balkans in a new controversy. And we have the capacity to affect this.

Hillary and I are leaving on Sunday to go to Africa. It will be the first time an American President, a serving American President, has ever made a tour of sub-Saharan Africa. President Carter and President Reagan made brief stops in one country. No American President has been to these five countries where I'm going, in the way I'm going. The House of Representatives, in a bipartisan fashion passed the Africa Trade Initiative a few days ago, and I hope the Senate will pass it soon. A big part of our future will be caught up in what happens in Africa. If Africa succeeds in developing stable market-oriented democracies, then it's a big market opportunity for the United States. If Africa should become convulsed again in a whole round of political turmoil, civil war, economic degradation, there will be consequences that we will feel here.

So I thought to myself, as we were preparing for that today, this is what we ought to be doing. I met last week, late last week, with the Medicare Commission. We are now meeting for a year. We've got a Commission that I've appointed, along with congressional leaders, to try to look at the long-run health and viability of the Medicare program. Tomorrow Senator Moynihan and I and others are going to announce his support for our Medicare legislation to let people between the ages of 55 and 65 who don't have health insurance buy into Medicare if they can do it without burdening the Trust Fund. These are the kinds of things we ought to be doing.

I say this just to tell you that there is a direct connection between your support through this Business Council of our party and what

we are doing that will change the lives of the future of the American people. That's what you have to understand.

Lois Capps just won this great race in California—unbelievable victory. Now, in Washington, people tend to see every victory or defeat in great national terms. I basically spent enough time out there in the country to know that that's almost always wrong. It's against my self-interest to say it, probably, but it's wrong. She won because she's a magnificent person, because her late husband was a wonderful man, because she ran a great grassroots campaign. But the important thing is that the issues she ran on and won on are the issues that were embodied in the State of the Union or the issues that are embodied in the message of our party and the future we're trying to build for America. Don't squander the surplus until you save Social Security first, pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, focus on education, focus on the environment, focus on the long-run challenges of the country. That's what we are doing here. That's what you are a part of. That's what we want you to be a part of.

So when you go home tonight, you ought to ask yourself—and make sure you can give an answer—why did I go to that dinner tonight? Why did I write that check? You should know that because of your support, your country is stronger; we're moving in the right direction; and we're thinking about tomorrow.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council; Steve Grossman, national chair, Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, and Terence McAuliffe, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Rudy Crew, chancellor, New York City public schools; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; and Representative Lois Capps, widow of the late Representative Walter H. Capps.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

March 16, 1998

Thank you very much, Len and Steve. Ladies and gentlemen, a lot of you go to a lot of these dinners. I was sitting here thinking, what could I say to you tonight that you have not heard already? Then I thought, well, maybe I should say to you tonight what you have heard already.

You may have heard me tell this story, but one of my favorite insights into communications came not at a political speech but at a rock concert several years ago, where Tina Turner was singing when she made her great comeback. She finished this new album, "Private Dancer," and she was going around the country doing these concerts. And she sang all the new songs; all the young people in the audience loved the songs. At the end she started to sing "Proud Mary," which was her first hit, and all the old guys like me loved that. And so she started to sing it a couple of times, and the crowd was cheering so loud she backed away. And finally she said, "You know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I sing it." [*Laughter*] So maybe I should just say the same old thing.

Let me say today—I'd like to talk to you about what I did today, in two different ways, because I think it stands for what I believe we ought to be doing as a country. I started today by getting in a car and driving out to suburban Maryland to a high school to meet with two dozen people, including experts in national testing, other education experts, experts in science and math education, the mayor of Los Angeles, the mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the Governors of West Virginia and Maryland, the superintendent of schools in New York City, and the State superintendent in Kentucky, a number of others, to talk about math and science education and why Americans scored so low in the international math and science test for high school seniors when we were near the top of the scores of the international math and

science test for fourth graders. What happens between the 4th grade and the 12th grade?

Then tonight, before I started my rounds, I was meeting—having the first of a whole marathon set of meetings I'll be having over the next 30 hours or so with participants in the Irish peace process, trying to get it back on track and hopefully bring it to a successful conclusion this year. Two apparently disparate things, but they both represent—especially since the high school where we met in Maryland had students who were basically white students, students who were African-Americans, students who were Hispanic students, who were Asian, who were South Asian, Arab-Americans—I mean, it's an amazing student body—both things represent to me what we ought to be doing now, which is looking to the long-term interests of the country, preparing for the 21st century, thinking about the big issues.

And that's what I tried to talk about in the State of the Union Address. It's all very well to say—and, believe me, I am profoundly grateful that we have the lowest unemployment and crime rates in 24 years, 15 million new jobs, and all-time high homeownership, lowest inflation rate in 30 years, and the lowest welfare rolls in 20 years. I am profoundly grateful for that. And for all of you that helped me do any of that and helped the American people achieve that in your private capacities or as citizens, I'm grateful for that. But we need to take this time, which is highly dynamic, and imagine what we want this country to look like in 20 years and do what it takes to get us there.

And so I just mention those 2 examples because they're 2 of 10 I could mention. That's why I want us to reform Medicare and Social Security for the 21st century and the baby boom generation before we go about spending this budget surplus that is just now beginning to materialize. It's why I want us to take a serious look at our educational and environmental challenges and prepare for the 21st century.

You think about it. Everybody in this country knows we've got the best college system in the world, the best system of higher education in the world. No one in America believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And yet, we have wonderful people involved in it, teaching in it, being principals in it, trying to make it go every day.

There are systematic problems here that have nothing to do with the overwhelming difficulty of the task, because we have not put our minds to it: setting national standards and having some national measure of whether our kids are meeting those standards, whether they're in south Alabama or northeast Maine; making sure that when teachers teach math and science they have actually had the requisite academic background—this is the only advanced country in the world where people teach—regularly teach math and science to our children without not only a major or even a minor in the subject in school, because of the teacher shortage in these areas—requiring our students to take more courses if they want to go to college or even to have a high school diploma. It's breathtaking when you see what happens as more and more students go all the way through high school without taking algebra or trigonometry or calculus or physics or chemistry.

You know, we say this is an age of science and technology. We've done everything we could to hook up all the schools to computers—hook up computers to all the schools and classrooms. But unless we have trained teachers and students taking those courses, we are going to continue to fare poorly compared to other countries.

What is the practical matter? We have such a powerful economy; maybe if only half of our kids get it, we'll be able to keep the economy going, but the society will not be as strong as it should be if half of our young people drop out because they never got on the escalator when they were in the seventh grade, the eighth grade, the ninth grade. So anyway, it's a big issue.

The Irish peace process—I could talk about the Middle East or Ireland or anyplace else. I'm grateful for the fact that the United States could play the role it's played in Ireland, the role it's played in Bosnia, the work that the Secretary of State is doing now with our allies to try to keep Kosovo from causing a new turmoil in the Balkans, the fact that I will become the first President ever to take a real trip to sub-Saharan Africa ever in the history of the country, starting at the end of this week. Why? Because I'm thinking about what it's going to be like for us 20 or 30 or 40 years from now, as well as in the immediate future. I want to get a settlement and legislation passed in this tobacco case to end this whole chapter of our history in a way that will enable us to save a thousand lives a day and protect the health of our children in the future.

These are the things that we try to do. So when you go home tonight, before you go to bed, I want you to think about why did I come to this dinner? Why did I do that? Why did I show up there? Why didn't I stay home and watch pro basketball or whatever? And I hope that the reasons will be part of your vision for America in the 21st century.

I'm grateful for what we've achieved, but what we've achieved simply imposes on us an even greater obligation to use the success of the country, the confidence of the country, the elbow room that this kind of new prosperity gives us, to really look at the long-term challenges our people face and to meet them.

We've got 3 years to do it, and I am convinced that 3 years from now this country will be in even better shape than it is today thanks to the support of people like you.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 p.m. in the South Drawing Room at the Decatur House. In his remarks, he referred to Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, and Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Mayor Lee R. Clancey of Cedar Rapids, IA; Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; Rudy Crew, chancellor, New York City public schools; and Wilmer Cody, Kentucky commissioner of education.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

March 17, 1998

President Clinton. Good morning. Please be seated everyone. This is a wonderful day for all of us here at the White House. It's a great pleasure to welcome the *Taoiseach* here. Bertie Ahern has given great leadership to the people of Ireland and to the peace process. This is his first St. Patrick's Day here since assuming office, and we're very grateful for his presence. We welcome him.

And I want to turn the platform over to you. Thank you.

Prime Minister Ahern. Thank you very much, President and Vice President. It's a great honor for me to be here, my first opportunity as *Taoiseach* of the Irish people, to be at the White House on St. Patrick's Day. I'm delighted to participate in this wonderful ceremony and to present to you some shamrocks from the land of your forebears.

The presentation of shamrocks to the President of United States is a very apt symbol of very close and friendly relations between our two countries. St. Patrick used the shamrock as a religious symbol of unity and diversity, similar to the motto of the United States, *e pluribus unum*. And it remains a potent, unifying symbol, which is embraced by both traditions on the island of Ireland.

The United States and Ireland are countries which enjoy long-established bonds stemming from our intertwined history. And as you generously acknowledged, Mr. President, Irish-Americans historically and still today have enriched Americans' way of life with the values of their heritage: love of family, faith, and hard work, a devotion to community, and compassion for those in need. They are things that we still live dear to. And for its part, the United States has been a constant resource of inspiration and support as Ireland has navigated its sometimes difficult history.

And that solidarity is as vital today as it was during the Great Famine, which we've celebrated in the last few years, of 1845 to 1848, when the United States gave a new home and a new future to hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women. And the ties between our two countries, Mr. President, are now, of course, copper-fastened by an extremely vibrant economic relationship. And the flows of trade, investment, and tourism between Ireland and the

United States have reached unprecedented levels. U.S. investment has made a crucial contribution to Ireland's current prosperity. And equally, as a very profitable location for investment, Ireland has contributed to cooperate and to assist corporate wealth of many great U.S. companies.

Mr. President, I'm very conscious that the principle of unity and diversity has been one of the major domestic themes of your Presidency. The leadership that you have provided on this theme has been inspiring, not only within the United States but also internationally, where it has an immediate renaissance in places such as Bosnia and Middle East and, of course, in Northern Ireland.

And in Northern Ireland, your inspiring vision of peace, based on the acceptance of diversity, has been matched by your constant support for a process which has experienced its shares of ups and downs. And you've been true to your promise made here a number of years ago, that you would be a friend of Ireland, not just on St. Patrick's Day but every day. And your act of support for the process has not only been constant but also impeccably fair and balanced. And for that, I want to thank you.

The encouragement, the access which you and your administration have provided to all of the participants and that your administration has provided for all of us has inspired us all in good days and sustained us on bad ones. And perhaps the greatest resource that you have given us is Senator George Mitchell, who in his chairmanship of the talks so aptly represents the qualities of good will, of wisdom, impartiality, and tenacity which the United States has brought to the Irish peace process.

We're now entering, President, as we've spoken this morning, a decisive period in the talks. The core issues have been well and truly aired over the past months. As George has said recently, we are now in the end game; success will require courage, a willingness to compromise, and perhaps above all, a generous vision which transcended partnership, focuses on the common interest of all who are in the talks and all who share it.

Our task will be greatly assisted by the continued support and encouragement which we know that we can count on from you, Mr. President, and from Mrs. Clinton, from your administration, and from our friends on both sides of the aisle of Congress.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for everything you've done. I want to thank you for all that you've contributed to the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. And in presenting you with the unifying symbol of shamrock, I wish you and your family a very happy St. Patrick's Day.

[*At this point, Prime Minister Ahern made brief remarks in Gaelic and presented the President with a bowl of shamrocks.*]

President Clinton. Thank you very much, *Taoiseach*, and thank you for the bowl of shamrocks. We will proudly display it as a lasting symbol of our shared values and common heritage.

I think I should say, in the interest of full disclosure, that my Cassidy relatives in Ireland sent me these cufflinks and this tie to wear on this day, so that I would be properly attired for your visit. [*Laughter*]

Since last St. Patrick's Day, Ireland has chosen not only a new Prime Minister but also a new President, Mary McAleese of Belfast, the first Northerner to hold that office. We also share Ireland's pride in the fact that President McAleese's predecessor, our good friend Mary Robinson, now serves as United Nations Human Rights Commissioner.

I also want to acknowledge the announcement by a great friend of Ireland and great Ambassador, Jean Kennedy Smith, that she intends to leave Dublin this summer. We thank you for your dedicated principled service to our country.

Mr. Prime Minister, our cultures have enriched one another time and again as impassioned voices called back and forth across the Atlantic. Just as generations of American writers have been inspired by Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett, the great Irish musician Van Morrison sings of growing up in Belfast, reading Jack Kerouac while a distant radio signal played Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, and Hank Williams.

Last year an Irish-American, a retired high school teacher named Frank McCourt, won our Pulitzer Prize for his remarkable "Angela's Ashes," a memoir of growing up poor in Limerick and New York City in the 1930's and '40's. This writing pulls no punches, a fact admirers and critics in both of our countries have been quick to note. But his Limerick and his Ireland have changed. We are delighted that Ireland has enjoyed the best run of economic growth in the developed world during this decade, just

as America continues to profit from the labors of your sons and daughters.

This is a holiday, a day for laughter and celebration. But let me say something about which we are all very serious. Northern Ireland now has an unparalleled opportunity for a just and lasting peace. The *Taoiseach* and his government and Tony Blair and the British Government have gone the extra mile to create an atmosphere in which negotiations can succeed. George Mitchell has been a very distinguished chairman of the peace talks, and we thank you for your comments, *Taoiseach*.

During these St. Patrick's Day events, I will speak with the party leaders who have come here to Washington. I will tell all of them on all sides the same thing. I will say it as clearly and emphatically as I possibly can: This is the chance of a lifetime for peace in Ireland. You must get it done. You must do it for yourselves and your children. It is too late for those who have already been killed by the sectarian violence of the last three decades. But you can do it, and you must, now.

To get an agreement, there must be compromise. No party can achieve all its objectives. The party leaders must lead, and leading means looking forward. And it means being strong enough to make principled compromise. Concessions that today might seem hard to accept will seem so much less important in the light of an accord that brings hope and peace and an end to violence. No one will be the loser if agreement is reached. Everyone will benefit from a chance to build a peaceful future. The parties must look at the larger picture, to the ultimate goal: a Northern Ireland for all, free of cowardly acts of violence, free of the division and despair that have robbed too many children of their futures for too long.

Mr. Prime Minister, today you ask me to stay personally involved in the peace process. I will do everything I can. The United States will continue to stand firmly against extremists on both sides who want to use violence to thwart a peaceful, just solution that the vast majority of the people in Ireland, whom I was privileged to see in late 1995, clearly still want.

As they negotiate, the parties, too, must continue to demonstrate by words and deeds that they reject violence. They must do everything possible to prevent further bloodshed.

Here on the edge of the 21st century, there is a growing global community of people committed to peace, to democracy, to social justice, to putting the divisions of the past of religion and race, of ethnicity and tribe behind them. From Guatemala to Mozambique, even now to Bosnia, the unceasing desire of people for a peaceful, decent life is overcoming the forces of hate and bigotry and violence. Ireland, its leaders, and its peacekeeping forces have helped to contribute to the progress of this peace all around the world. There has not been a day in the last four decades when an Irish peacekeeper has not been somewhere on duty as a sentinel for peace in a distant part of the world.

Now, all the people on the island of Ireland can be sentinels for peace, if only their leaders will make the principled agreements necessary to give them that chance.

Again, let me say, the days I spent in Ireland in 1995 are perhaps the most memorable days of my life. As we rejoice today in the spirit of St. Patrick, the heritage of Irish and Irish-American people, let us remember what the spirit of St. Patrick was and how he became the first and only person ever to bring Christianity to a distant, alien place without the sword. And let us bring a future to Ireland worthy of that great achievement of St. Patrick.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks on Proposed Legislation To Expand Medicare
March 17, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Senator Kennedy is even more exuberant than normal today, but you have to forgive him and me and Senator Moynihan and isolated others—this is St. Patrick's Day, and we're feeling pretty good, the Irish are. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Congressman Stark, for your long leadership and your willingness to push this legislation. Thank you, Senator Moynihan, for making it utterly clear, so that no one can dispute it, that this legislation presents no threat to the integrity of the Medicare program or the security of the Trust Fund. Thank you, Sherrod Brown, for your initiative and your leadership. As always, thank you, Senator Kennedy.

And I'd like to say a word of thanks to one person who has not spoken here today, our Senate Democratic leader, Tom Daschle, who has worked so hard to help one particular group of Americans here: Americans who retired early, in part because they were promised health care benefits which were then denied to them. This will take care of them, and we can keep the promise that others made to them. And I think we have to do it. And thank you, Tom Daschle, for fighting for them.

I'd also like to thank Leader Gephardt and Congressman Dingell and all the Members of the House caucus who are here; thank you very, very much. And I can't help noting that this may be the first public appearance in Washington for the newest Member of this caucus, Representative Lois Capps from California.

Let me begin with a point I have made over and over to the American people since the State of the Union Address. This is a remarkable time for our country. I look out at all these young people who are working here, and I think how glad I am they are coming of age at a time when America is working, when we are making progress, economically; we're making progress on our social problems; we're making progress in our quest for peace and security in the world.

But everybody knows that the world is changing very rapidly. And so the question is, what should we be doing in the midst of good times? I believe the last thing we should be doing is sitting on our lead, if I could use a sports analogy. Good times give us the confidence, the resources, and the space not only to dream about the future we want in the 21st century but to take action to deal with it. It is wrong to sit idly by when we can be taking steps to prepare for that future. That's why I don't want us to spend a surplus that is only now beginning to materialize until we have saved Social Security for the 21st century. That's why I want us to work together to make sure we deal with the long-term challenges of Medicare.

But it's also why I think we should not let a single day go by when Americans have problems that we can remedy in ways that will not weaken our present success but instead will reinforce it. That's why I hope we get a comprehensive bill through to deal with the tobacco problem, because there are a thousand kids a day whose lives are at stake. And that's why I believe we should be dealing with this issue now.

President Johnson said, when Medicare was first enacted, that it proved the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times. That's what these leaders are doing here today.

You heard Senator Moynihan say most people don't wait till they're 65 to retire. But the fastest growing group of people are people over 65. There are huge numbers of people in this age group. There are people 62 and over who have lost their health insurance, but can't buy into Medicare. There are people under 65 who are married to somebody who's 65 or older who had the health insurance, and that person retired, got into Medicare, but the spouse lost the health insurance. There are people who are 55 and over who have been downsized, or who actually retired, early retirement, because their employer actually promised them they would have health insurance, and then the promise was not kept.

I want to say that this is not an entirely disinterested thing. In 2001, I will be 55 and unemployed, through no fault of my own. [*Laughter*] And this bill has a lot of appeal to me. [*Laughter*] I say that to make you laugh. I get a lot of letters from people that I've known a long time who are my age, who are middle class people, people I grew up with, whose spouses

are beginning to have the health problems that go along with just working your way through life, people who don't have a great health insurance coverage, like I've been privileged to have. And they are terrified that they will spend the years between 55 and 65 with maybe the most challenging health problems in their entire lives cropping up, with no insurance.

Now, I believe that this is an issue on which Democrats and Republicans should be able to unite. We ask the Republicans to come and help us on this. Let's don't play election year games on this. We don't want to, either. We want to do it in a bipartisan fashion and get it behind us. There are hundreds of thousands of people out there in America who need this initiative.

People say, "Well, why don't you wait until the Medicare Commission comes in and issues its report?" My answer is Senator Moynihan's answer: Because we have the Congressional Budget Office estimates. They told us that this will add nothing to the burden of the Medicare Trust Fund; it will cost less than we had originally thought, and we can insure more people.

But remember the human dimension. Remember Ruth Kain, who spoke when we announced this program in January. When her husband turned 65, her employer dropped their insurance benefits. He got Medicare; she didn't. But she had a heart condition, and they couldn't afford health insurance. So, she didn't get health insurance. She went to the hospital one time, and the bill was $13,000. Some people have said of our proposal, "Well, this bill costs a lot of money for retired people"—$300 a month or something. One trip to the hospital for anything will more than likely be more than twice as much in one pop as a whole year's annual premiums—the most minor trip to the hospital. The Kains and families like them, the families that Congressman Brown mentioned, they ought to have another choice.

Today I am releasing a report that shows State by State how many Americans need these protections—State by State. And we will see, State by State, the human lives we're talking about and the number of people that will be put at risk if we wait another year to do this.

Tomorrow the Kaiser Foundation will unveil a study that shows that the individual insurance market often denies coverage or charges excessive premiums to older, sicker Americans, the very people this policy would help to protect. Senator Moynihan said—I want to reiterate, because I have heard Senator Kennedy mention the criticisms of this program; I want to say this a second time—the Congressional Budget Office—not the administration's budget office, the Congressional Budget Office—reports this plan will cost individuals even less and benefit even more people than we first estimated. It will give somewhere between three and four hundred thousand Americans new options for health care coverage at a vulnerable time in their lives.

Let me say one other thing. The bipartisan Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation we adopted last year—or in 1996—was also designed to help Americans keep their health care when they changed jobs or when someone in their family got sick—a bill like this one, designed to give people peace of mind. But we now see on news reports today—another good reason why it's better for us to do this in this way—because just today we see that some insurers are finding ways around that law, giving insurance agents incentives to delay or deny coverage to vulnerable Americans. These practices have to be stopped. I am directing Secretary Shalala and the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a thorough review of the options for strengthening the protections of the Kennedy-Kassebaum law.

And tomorrow the Department will send a notice to every insurer in every State in our country affirming what we already know, that impeding anyone's access to health care in violation of this law is illegal. It's not just wrong; it's illegal. The law is vital to the health and stability of America's workers and their families. We intend to enforce it vigorously.

But let me say, you see the problems we have with that kind of approach. With this kind of approach, anybody who can afford the premium or whose children or relatives will help them to afford this premium won't have to worry about whether they have health care coverage. We won't have to worry about some regulation or waiting for a report to come in to tell us whether this or that or the other person is complying. We will know that we're helping hundreds of thousands of people who have worked hard all their lives and played by the rules and been good citizens to have the decent, secure time in a vulnerable period of their lives. We can extend this opportunity in a responsible way.

Medicare is one of the crowning achievements of this century for the American people. With this legislation and with the other challenges that we intend to face and overcome, we can make sure, as we become an older and older and older country—which is, I always say, a high-class problem—that Medicare will be one of the crowning achievements of the 21st century as well.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in Room 1100 at the Longworth Office Building on Capitol Hill.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Reception
March 17, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Every time Al Gore has a crowd like this, he always says, "Thank you for the standing ovation." [*Laughter*] *Taoiseach*, Miss Larkin, to all of our guests, all the ambassadors here, all the Members of Congress, distinguished guests from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and all across the United States.

There are so many Americans here who love Ireland and long for peace, I hesitate to mention any, but I must mention two: First, I would like to thank our distinguished Ambassador, who has just announced her resignation a few months hence, Jean Kennedy Smith. Thank you, ma'am, for everything you have done. And I have to thank one other person who is in his present position because on one late, very sad night in 1994, my legendary powers of persuasion fell flat, and I was unable to persuade George Mitchell to run for reelection. He is still trying to determine whether, as a consequence, I bestowed upon him a blessing or a curse. [*Laughter*] It's why I always tell him it is, after all, in his hands. Thank you, Senator Mitchell, for what you are doing. We appreciate that.

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy proposed a new approach to the cold war when he said, "Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those which divide us." He eloquently insisted civility is not a sign of weakness. If that was true for two great, distant, often alien superpowers like the United States and the Soviet Union, surely it is true for neighbors in Ireland.

Tonight we have here in this room representatives, leaders of all the parties to the peace talks. It is a great night. I was thinking in sort of my impish way that I almost wish I could give them a perfectly harmless—perfectly harmless—3-day cold, which would require them all to be quarantined in the Green Room. [*Laughter*] It's not a very big room, the Green Room—[*laughter*]—and we have a lot of parties to the talks. So in just 3 days of getting over a cold together, I think all these problems would be solved.

Well, the peace talks won't be that easy, but all of you, you have to seize this historic moment. Just think, in just a few weeks, you could lift this enormous burden from the shoulders of all the children of Ireland.

It has been said that St. Patrick's Day is the day when the entire world wishes it were Irish. Well, when lasting peace finally comes, the entire world will rejoice. When I heard the wonderful songs up here and Frank's wonderful reading, and all the eloquence of Irish passion and pain and joy came flooding out of the performers, young and old, I was reminded of that great line from Yeats: "In dreams begin responsibility." All the Irish are dreamers. In the next few weeks, if Irish responsibility measures up to Irish dreams, this next year's celebration here will be the greatest in the history of this great house.

God bless you.

[*At this point, the First Lady introduced Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, the Taoiseach, who then made brief remarks.*]

The President. We're about to leave. I feel duty bound, because there are so many people from Massachusetts here today—[*laughter*]—to tell you that in Massachusetts this is a dual holiday. This is also the day when over 200 years ago the British left Massachusetts, so it's called Evacuation Day. [*Laughter*]

Now, that means that you must evacuate the White House. [*Laughter*] I have to say that so

State Secretary Mowlam doesn't think I made an anti-British slur here. [*Laughter*] But you needn't leave until 11:59 p.m.—[*laughter*]—because it will still be Evacuation Day. [*Laughter*]

Enjoy. We love having you here. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Celia Larkin, who accompanied Prime Minister Ahern; George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt; and Marjorie Mowlam, United Kingdom Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Remarks at the Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Training Center in Las Vegas, Nevada

March 18, 1998

The President. Thank you. It's a good thing we've got a 22d amendment, or I would run again. Thanks for saying that. Let me begin by saying that when Maggie Carlton was talking, I leaned over to John Sweeney and I said, "John, I'd give anything if we could just get her speech on television tonight. That's the America we're trying to build for everybody."

I know that your husband and your daughters were proud of you, but I think every working man and woman out here was proud of you for what you said and what you represented. Your family is living proof that if we reward people for their work, if we enable people to succeed at work and at home raising their children, if we give them the chance to be good citizens, then America is going to do very well indeed.

I want to thank the others up here on this platform with me. I want to thank John Sweeney for his brilliant, energetic leadership of the labor movement. He has been terrific. I want to thank Doug McCarron for his leadership of the carpenters and his ever-present willingness to let me know exactly what he thinks I should be doing on every issue. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Bob Georgine for many things, but I want to congratulate him most recently on helping to bring about the major labor agreement in Nevada between building and construction trade workers, Bechtel, and the Department of Energy, and so many other triumphs on behalf of the working people he represents. Thank you.

I am especially indebted to Linda Chavez-Thompson, the executive vice president of the AFL–CIO, for her membership on the President's National Advisory Panel on Race in our attempt to build an America in the 21st century where we all get along and work together across all the racial and ethnic lines that divide us.

Let me also say I am profoundly grateful to my former colleague and longtime friend, Governor Bob Miller; and to Mayor Jan Jones who was such a great friend of my mother's, as well as a friend of mine, for their personal kindness to me, and their leadership here in this great city and State. You are very well served, and I know you know that.

I brought a lot of folks with me today from the administration, but three in particular work with the labor movement. I thank the Deputy Secretary of Labor, Kitty Higgins, and Maria Echaveste and Karen Tramontano coming from the White House. They've worked with a lot of you, and they do a lot of work for you, whether you know it or not, every day. And I'm very proud of them.

Now, you know, I took a tour of what goes on here before I came out, and I told some of the folks on the tour—I thanked Bill Howard and Paul Sonner, who was the instructor in the classroom I visited, and all the people who are in the Joint Apprenticeship Training Center today who helped to enlighten me about what you're doing. But I told some folks that 30 years ago I actually spent a summer building houses, and I decided I didn't want to work that hard, which is how come I got into politics. [*Laughter*] It didn't strike me as being any easier now than it was 30 years ago. [*Laughter*]

But there are a lot of interesting things going on in this program. I hope, for example, that just my presence here and the fact that so many members of the media came with us will lead

people to know that more and more construction is now being done with reprocessed steel instead of wood in homes and hotels and other things. And that has enormous environmental and energy implications for the future, if we can make that work, and that you are being trained to do that work.

I do feel that I learned enough today to go home and build a two-bedroom house for Socks and for Buddy, and that's what I intend to do. [*Laughter*] Unfortunately, when I do it, I won't earn the union wage, but I will have your knowledge.

Let me say to all of you that, first, I just want to thank you for giving me a chance to be here. You know, every now and then, you just have to get out here in the country; it helps the President to remember why he ran, what he's trying to do, and for whom he is really working. And I have seen all of that here today.

You here have shown me a model of two-by-fours and teamwork; a model for the Nation of cooperation between business and labor; cooperation of crafts across generations, adapting old-fashioned values to today's workplace. There are just 653 days left in the 20th century; there are just 653 days left in this whole millennium. This century will be remembered as a time when millions of working men and women fought for and won basic freedoms too long denied them: the right to safe workplaces; the freedom to organize; the ability to put an end to abusive child labor; the right to have health insurance and retirement and earn a decent wage for labor. Working families across our country gained their voice in the 20th century, and in so doing, they built the greatest middle class in human history.

Now, what will happen in the new century? Well, what will it be like; how will it be different? The first thing we know is that things will change more and faster for all of you in the new century than it did in the old one. The sheer volume of knowledge is changing—is doubling, doubling, every 5 years. When I became President there were 50 websites on the Internet—50—5, 0. Now, 65,000 are being added every hour. So your life is going to go by at a faster pace.

The second thing you know is that it will be more global. We will be in a global economy, but we will also be in an increasingly global society. If you doubt that, just look around the room here. If we had had this meeting 10 years ago——

[*At this point, a member of the audience interrupted the President.*]

Audience member. Shut up!

The President. Couldn't have said it better myself. You ought to run for office. [*Laughter*]

Now look around; if we had had this meeting 10 years ago, think how differently this crowd would have looked. So the world is changing. The way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other. What will happen in this new century? What will happen if technology dominates more? We won't run out of work; we'll have different kind of work. The unemployment rate today is very low, but there are almost 400,000 vacancies in America in computer-related jobs. So we know that things will change more and we'll have to educate and train more. And even old jobs will be done in new ways.

But we also know that, if we do it right, we've got a chance finally to include all working people in the American middle class. We've got a chance to bring dignity to the lives of all people. We've got a chance to give every child the chance to live up to his or her God-given abilities. In short, we've got a chance to bring the American dream home to everybody who will work for it. And we ought to seize that chance.

That's the American dream that the employees of Frontier Hotel spent 6 years, 4 months, and 10 days fighting to achieve. And this is important. But maybe even more important, it's the American dream that I learned again today up in that classroom I just visited. It's the American dream that I learned again today that union members want for all working families.

I see it in Washington. John Sweeney has a relatively small percentage of the membership of the AFL–CIO that will get a direct benefit when we raise the minimum wage again. But he works for it just as hard as if 100 percent of his members were going to be benefited by it, because he knows it's the right thing to do.

And today, when I was in that classroom upstairs, you know what the students were learning in the classroom? They were learning about how much of their base pay is in fringe benefits—what's retirement, what's health care, what's continuing education, what does all this money

go for? And they asked me questions about Social Security and how we were going to make sure that private pensions were secure. And I talked to them about what we've been doing on that the last 5 years.

And they asked about health care and how working families got along that didn't have any health insurance, and why we didn't have health insurance for every single working family. And I said, "If it had been up to me and the AFL–CIO, every working family would have health insurance today, and we ought to see it." I only wish my wife could have been upstairs to hear that conversation about health care.

And they asked me about how people got along who didn't make as much per hour as they earned in fringe benefits alone. One young man said, "There are people building houses in other places who don't make as much per hour as we get in fringe benefits. How do they get along?" And so we talked about how we try to help them with the family and medical leave, how we tried to help them with different changes in the health insurance laws, and how we tried to help them with changes in retirement systems.

But I asked that group of young people when I left, I said, "I just hope you'll never forget this, because we've got to make sure every family can succeed at home and at work, and as long as people like you care about people who aren't making as much per hour as you get in fringe benefits, we'll keep making it better for them." And I hope all of you will always feel that way.

Now, let me just say very quickly, I want to talk to you about what's going on in Washington that will affect your future and ask you for your help. These are good times for the country. We're going to have the first balanced budget in 30 years. And 15 million new jobs in 5 years, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the United States of America. That's the time we're living in.

But what I want to say to you is, you don't have to be a carpenter to know that you don't fix the roof when it's raining. You fix the roof when the sun is shining. The sun is shining on America. But as long as there are people who don't have jobs, as long as there are people who can't make a decent living, as long as we don't have a system which guarantees lifetime high quality educational opportunities, like I saw there today, to all working families, the roof of America's house is not as strong as it ought to be.

So what I came here today to tell you today is, this is a great time, but let me say again, it is changing fast. And we have to think about the challenges that all of you are going to face 5 years from now, 10 years from now; what will your children face 15 and 20 years from now? And we have to do those things today, while we have the confidence and the strength and the prosperity to do them, that will secure the future of our children tomorrow in a new century.

One of the main reasons I wanted to be here today is that I think all of you know instinctively that the most important thing we can do, in a world where the volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years, is to give every person a world-class education and every adult access to education and training for a lifetime.

Now, we've made a lot of progress in the last 5 years. When we started on—the Vice President and I started to try to hook up all the classrooms and libraries in the country to the Internet by 2000. We started in '94; only 34 percent of our schools were hooked up. Today, 75 percent are. We're doing better. We've got 900 colleges out there with young people earning work-study funds by going into our grade schools and teaching our kids to read, to make sure everybody can read independently by the end of the third grade. That's important.

And perhaps most important to all of you with children, we can literally say now—this is what we've done in the last year: We passed a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; tax credits for junior year, senior year, graduate school; adults going back for further job training; an IRA you can put money into, withdraw from for your kid's education with no tax penalty; tax deductions for interest on student loans; 300,000 more work-study positions. People can go through our national service program, AmeriCorps, and earn money to go to college. We can literally say now because of the changes we've made in loans, in scholarships, and tax breaks, we have opened the doors of college in America to everybody who's willing to work for a college education. That will revolutionize their future.

But let's be candid with one another. Everybody with an informed opinion knows that America has the best system of colleges and universities in the world. There are literally 300, maybe 400—maybe more—places you can go and get a world-class undergraduate education in this country. But no one thinks we have the best elementary and secondary education in the world. Now, we have a lot of great teachers; we have a lot of great schools; our students are just as smart as anybody anywhere. But nobody thinks it's the best in the world. One of the reasons is we have a very diverse student body; we have local control of the schools; we have three different sources of funding from the State, Federal, and local government; and we don't have any national standards of what people should know or measurements of it.

So I think we need more grassroots reform, but we ought to have national standards and voluntary national exams. We ought to spend more money to give smaller classes. We ought to make sure that in these places where they're overflowing with students and the school buildings are old and breaking down or the kids are out in housetrailers, they're in decent classrooms.

And I have offered a plan this year to hire 100,000 more teachers to take class size in the first 3 grades down to an average of 18 students per class; to make child care of higher quality and more affordable; to help schools stay open after instruction hours are over because most kids get in trouble after school closes down and before their parents get home from work; to rehabilitate or build 5,000 new schools in the country; and also to provide greater health and retirement security to people who have put a lifetime of work in.

Now, these are very important things. We have a balanced budget now; we can afford to do these things. But there are some troubling signals coming out of Washington that the Republican budget may not embody this commitment to education and our future. The budget they're talking about does meet my goal of achieving a balance and not spending any of the surplus until we fix Social Security. But it shortchanges our Nation's future. We're not fixing the roof for the 21st century, because from Head Start for young children to Pell grants, from job training for older workers, our commitment to education is under fire.

I need your help. This ought not to be a partisan political issue. I can remember a time when, on education, both parties were four-square for investing in the future of our country if we had the money. I'm telling you, we've got the money; it's time to invest in the future of our country and education.

And if the Republican budget says no to new teachers and smaller classes, no to modernizing our schools, no to investing in higher standards for our children, the American people should say no to that budget. Give us a budget that will prepare our children for the 21st century.

There are a lot of other things that I'd like to ask you to help me with, and I won't bore you with all of them, but just let me mention a few. We've got people in this country between the ages of 55 and 65 who worked hard all their lives and have lost their health insurance, and they're not old enough to get Medicare. And generally, they're in three categories. They are people who are married to folks who are old enough to be on Medicare, and so when their spouse got on Medicare the family lost their health insurance and the younger spouse has no health care and can't afford to buy any.

They are people who lost their jobs, and they're over 55, and they can't afford just a single person's health insurance. They're people who took voluntary early retirement who are over 55, who were promised by their employers they would have health insurance and then the promise was broken. I think we ought to let those people and their families—help them to buy into Medicare at cost. It will not hurt you; it will not hurt Medicare; it will help hundreds of thousands of people.

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage, and it was a good thing. And 2 years ago when we raised the minimum wage, people said, "Oh, this is terrible. It will bring on inflation, and it will slow down job growth." And in the 2 years since we raised the minimum wage, inflation has gone down, and job growth has gone up. It's good for America to pay people at a decent wage.

The minimum wage in real dollar terms is still lower than it was 20 years ago; it's still lower than it was 20 years ago. With our economy as strong as it is, with job growth as good as it is, we can afford to increase the minimum wage by a dollar over the next 2 years, and I think it's the right thing to do.

I also want you to know that we have to continue in Washington to fight for the right to organize and to function in a union that will permit you to have a life you enjoy. We know that workers in unions typically have not only higher pay, but have access to higher skills, better continuing education, which is good for the rest of the country. You make the rest of us stronger as you learn more new things and do more new things and continue to push us in the future. There is a bill now in Congress that would let businesses fire or refuse to hire union organizers. If it passes, I'll veto it. But you ought to help me do this in the first place. [*Applause*]

But let me say—I thank you for that cheer. But what you really want is to never even have to think about cheering for something like that again. Because what really works—what really works is when we all work together. You can help management make a bigger profit. You can help the owners of every enterprise earn more money. You can make the private sector stronger and help create more jobs if we will cooperate in a spirit that says we have to reaffirm the dignity of the people who work for us day-in and day-out. They ought to be able to raise their children in dignity. They ought to be able to educate their children. They ought to be able to know that when their kids get sick they can go to the doctor. They ought to be able to know that when they come of age, they can go on to college. We ought to live in the kind of country that says we are going to make the future better for our children, and we are going to honor our parents.

On my wall in my private office on the second floor of the White House, I have a letter written before I was born to my aunt in Texas by the man who was then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sam Rayburn—legendary Speaker of the House of Representatives from Texas. And he wrote my aunt a letter when my father was killed in a car wreck. My aunt gave me that letter last year, 50 years later. But I see that letter all the time, and it reminds me not only of my family ties but of Sam Rayburn and the kind of leadership he gave to our country. Sam Rayburn said something about politics that all of you especially should always remember. He said, "Any old mule can kick a barn down. It takes a carpenter to build one." And what I'm trying to do is to hold down the barn kickers—[*laughter*]—and lift up the builders. I want you to be with me.

Thank you. Bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the training center shop area. In his remarks, he referred to Maggie Carlton, member, Culinary Workers Union Local 226, who introduced the President; John J. Sweeney, president, Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president, and Robert Georgine, Building and Construction Trades Department president, AFL–CIO; Douglas J. McCarron, general president, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; Gov. Bob Miller of Nevada; Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; and Bill Howard, apprenticeship coordinator, and Paul Sonner, instructor, Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Training Center.

Remarks on the Safe Schools Initiative

March 19, 1998

Thank you very much, Superintendent Berg; Madam Attorney General; Senator Robb, thank you so much for your efforts. Congressman Castle, thank you. Mayor Donley, welcome; and I want to say a special word of welcome to all of the students. I'm glad you're here today, and I thank you for the example you're setting for students throughout our country.

I also want to commend the students who were the winners of the State math and science award earlier this month. This school is proving that by taking the right kind of action, working with law enforcement, enforcing zero tolerance for guns and drugs, involving parents, establishing discipline and order as primary goals, we can keep our schools safe and give our children the chance to reach their highest potential.

Now, in less than 650 days, all of us will enter a new century and a new millennium. At a time when we're doing everything we can to prepare our children for the opportunities of that new century, at a time when we know

that the body of knowledge that human beings have is doubling every 5 years, and therefore, education will be more important than ever before, we cannot let violence, guns, drugs stand between our children and the education they need.

For more than 5 years, we've worked now to make our schools places of learning, not fear. We have worked to strengthen and expand the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, to enforce zero tolerance for guns in schools, to encourage communities to crack down on truancies, to support those who wish to adopt school uniform policies. Wearing uniforms instead of gang colors in many places is helping to keep our children safe.

It was just a little over 2 years ago that I went to Long Beach, California, the first large school district to adopt a school uniform policy. Since then, Secretary Riley and the Department of Education have worked to help those schools that wanted to do that. Yesterday the New York City school board announced that it would adopt a school uniform policy in all its elementary schools. I applaud them for taking this important step, and I predict it will have very beneficial consequences.

Our budget makes an unprecedented commitment as we are moving into balance for the first time in 30 years to invest for our future, by raising standards and improving education for all our children and to make our schools safer. We know schools with the biggest discipline problems also have the highest rates of violence. Very often, there are simply too many students and too few classrooms with not enough teachers. Our budget, as Senator Robb said, will help to reduce class sizes to an average of 18 students per class in the first, second, and third grades, with 100,000 more teachers and funds to build or rehabilitate 5,000 schools.

Perhaps even more important in the short run, on the violence issue—and I was glad to hear Mr. Berg talk about this—it will quadruple Federal support for after-school programs to keep children in school, in wholesome, positive environments. We know that most children who get in trouble do so between the time school lets out and their folks get home from work. So I applaud you for what you're doing, and I hope now, if this budget passes, there will be many, many more schools, until every school in America will offer this kind of community support to our young people and their families.

The fundamental issue here is that we do not need to and we must not ever have to make a choice between safety and high standards, between crime-free schools and modern classrooms. We must do both. I regret that the present budget, reported out by the majority in Congress, does not embody that kind of commitment to education and our future, does not embody the recommendations I made in the State of the Union Address.

Today I ask the Republican leadership to join with the leaders of the other party, to get with the Democrats, and to work with the White House so that we can once again, as we have in the past, pass a bipartisan budget that puts education beyond politics and says yes to safer schools, yes to new teachers and smaller classes, yes to modernizing our schools, yes to investing in high standards. We need to have a budget that says yes to our children's future.

The Nationwide Report on School Safety that is being released today by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education shows clearly that the majority of our schools are safe, free of violent crime. That is good news. It also shows, however, that too many of our children face a far more frightening reality every time they walk through the schoolhouse door. In 1996 alone there were more than 10,000 physical attacks or fights with weapons in schools; 7,000 robberies; 4,000 rapes and sexual assaults. The threat of such violence hangs over children's heads and closes their minds to learning. When children have to worry more about guns and drugs than math and science, when teachers are more concerned with maintaining discipline than achieving excellence, when parents would rather keep their children at home than risk their safety at school, then we know we must do more. And if there is even one school in America where that is the case, we must all be committed to change it. We already know the difference community policing makes.

Since we began to help our local communities to put 100,000 more community police officers on our streets, crime has dropped to record lows all over our country. Indeed, in the Nation overall, crime is at a 24-year low. I thank Senator Robb for his sponsorship for the $17½ million in the balanced budget bill which is now being awarded today in grants to communities, parents, and law enforcement groups to put these community policing strategies to work in our schools, to stop violence before it starts.

The more we know about school violence, the more we can do to ensure our children's safety. Last December I asked the Attorney General and Secretary Riley to develop an annual report on school safety. Today I'm pleased to accept their framework for these reports. From now on, at the beginning of every school year, parents and principals, lawmakers and law enforcement will have a valuable tool that tracks school violence, gives examples of school programs that are working, and suggests actions parents can take to make their children's lives safer at school.

We know one of the best ways to reduce violence is to involve the young people themselves. In the last several years, AmeriCorps volunteers particularly have helped hundreds of students to resolve their conflicts peacefully. This adds to AmeriCorps' remarkable record of helping improve our schools and communities through volunteer service.

Parenthetically, I want to say that today we had an announcement up on the Hill, with the First Lady participating, that we are sending legislation to Congress to extend our national service program into the 21st century. I hope Congress will support AmeriCorps as it has in the past.

Let me say, finally, as Mr. Berg said so eloquently, we know that all of our schools need parents to play the primary role in their children's safety, both in the school and in the home, and when necessary, in the neighborhood. Today I ask all our parents who are concerned about this to become involved in your communities and your children's schools, to join a community policing partnership. Senator Robb got the budget; we're releasing the funds. We can talk about what works, but in the end, real live American citizens are going to have to show up in every school in this country to make this work.

You know, if you look at these young people here today, if you think about the remarkable achievements of this fine school we honor, if you imagine the interesting, fascinating lives they can have, and you remember that, as they have good lives, it will make all the rest of our lives better, it is clear that we all have a responsibility to ensure that their educations will be safe. We can do this, and America's future in the 21st century depends upon it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herbert Berg, superintendent, Alexandria City schools, Alexandria, VA; Mayor Kerry Donley of Alexandria, VA; and students from T.C. Williams High School, whose success at reducing violence and crime was accounted during the event.

Videotaped Address to the People of Africa

March 19, 1998

To all our friends in Africa, let met me say how very much I'm looking forward to my upcoming trip. I'll travel to Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal. It will be a real privilege for me to be the first American President to visit those countries.

This journey will be my opportunity, and yours, to help to introduce the people of the United States to a new Africa, an Africa whose political and economic accomplishments grow more impressive each month. I want to see for myself what America can learn from Africa and how we can work with you as partners to build a better future for all our children.

As I visit your countries and meet your leaders and citizens, I'll have in mind four central goals for us to work toward together. First, we want to support Africa's democracies, those with long and proud histories and those that are newly emerging. Together we can create a global community of nations that respect and promote human rights, tolerance, and broad participation in public life.

Second, we want to increase trade and investment with Africa. When it comes to economic development, America and Africa can help each other, opening markets, building businesses, creating jobs on both continents. A prosperous future awaits us if we strengthen the economic

ties between our countries and give all our people the education and training they need to succeed in this new global economy.

But democracy and prosperity are threatened where there is violence, so our third goal is to look for ways to work in partnership with the nations of Africa to prevent armed conflict. Ethnic and political violence continues to plague parts of Africa. Together we can, and we must, find solutions.

Fourth, the United States wants to play a role in preserving Africa's majestic natural beauty and wildlife and ensuring sustainable development of Africa's natural resources. The nations of the world must continue to cooperate and avoid environmental destruction and to leave a rich heritage to our children.

There are many other areas where we can progress as partners: improving nutrition and health care, eradicating diseases like AIDS and malaria, empowering women, fighting crime and drugs, expanding civic and cultural ties across the ocean. With the 21st century fast approaching, Africa, the cradle of human civilization, is forging a vibrant future for itself with new leaders, new opportunities, and new hope. The core values that are driving Africa's renaissance—democracy, diversity, free enterprise—those are the values that the United States shares.

My wife, Hillary, my daughter, Chelsea, the entire United States delegation, and I look forward to being with you and sharing our experience with the American people.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 2:30 p.m. on March 5 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on the Agreement on Internet Taxes
March 19, 1998

In my recent speech on the future of the Internet, I called for a short-term moratorium on new and discriminatory taxes that would slow down the growth of the Internet and a search for long-term solutions to the tax issues raised by electronic commerce. We cannot allow 30,000 State and local tax jurisdictions to stifle the Internet, but neither can we allow the erosion of the revenue that State and local governments need to fight crime and invest in education.

I believe that the agreement reached by groups representing State and local elected officials is an important and constructive step toward a long-term solution. I particularly want to thank Governors Leavitt and Romer for their bipartisan leadership on this important issue. I look forward to working with all parties with a stake in this issue to enact legislation this year.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Raise the Minimum Wage
March 19, 1998

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage to reward work and help millions of Americans raise their families with dignity. With our expanded earned-income tax credit and the higher minimum wage, we said to hard-pressed working families: If you work full-time, you should not have to raise your children in poverty. Without another minimum wage increase, too many of these families will fall through the cracks and back below the poverty line. That is wrong.

That is why I am pleased that Senator Daschle, Senator Kennedy, Representative Gephardt, and Representative Bonior are introducing legislation that includes another sound and prudent minimum wage increase. With our economy the healthiest in a generation and job growth strong, we can afford to increase the minimum wage by a dollar by the turn of the century. I strongly support raising the minimum wage. This legislation will help ensure that we pay people a decent wage and that parents who work hard and play by the rules can lift their children and themselves out of poverty. It's right for America and right for America's workers.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation on Community Service

March 19, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit for your immediate consideration and enactment the "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998." This legislative proposal extends and amends national service law, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. It builds upon the long, bipartisan tradition of service in our country, which was renewed in 1993 when I signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating the Corporation for National Service.

Service to one's community is an integral part of what it means to be an American. The Presidents' Summit for America's Future held in Philadelphia last April reinforced the role of programs supported by the Corporation for National Service as key vehicles to provide young people with the resources to maximize their potential and give back to their communities. Citizen service is also at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and to help those in need.

My Administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, the national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve their country. By tying opportunity to responsibility, we have given them the chance to serve and, in return, earn money for post-secondary education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proven that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs. For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped second graders jump three grade levels in reading. In Boys and Girls Clubs, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to recruit more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild lives and restore hope. AmeriCorps members are helping to mobilize thousands of college students from more than 800 college campuses in our America Reads program. In all of these efforts, AmeriCorps brings together people of every background to work toward common goals.

Independent evaluators have reviewed AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps programs, and Learn and Service America programs and have concluded that national service yields a positive return on investment. The proposed legislation that I am transmitting builds on our experiences with national service to date and improves national service programs in four ways: (1) by codifying agreements with the Congress and others to reduce costs and streamline national service; (2) strengthening partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations; (3) increasing States' flexibility to administer national service programs; and (4) expanding opportunities for Americans to serve.

Since the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993, and particularly since 1995, my Administration has worked with constructive critics of national service to address their concerns and improve the overall program. This proposed legislation continues that process by reducing the Corporation's average budgeted cost per AmeriCorps member, repealing authority for redundant or

obsolete national service programs, and making other improvements in the efficiency of national service programs.

National service has never been a substitute for the contributions made by the millions of Americans who volunteer their time to worthy causes every year. Rather, as leaders of volunteer organizations have often expressed, national service has proven that the presence of full-time, trained service participants enhances tremendously the effectiveness of volunteers. This proposed legislation will strengthen the partnership between the national service programs and traditional volunteer organizations; codify the National Service Scholarship program honoring exemplary service by high school students; and expand the AmeriCorps Challenge Scholarships, through which national service participants can access education awards. It also will authorize appropriations for the Points of Light Foundation through the year 2002.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 explicitly conceived of national service as a Federal-State partnership. The Act vested significant authority in bipartisan State Commissions appointed by the Governors. I promised that we would accelerate the process of devolution as the newly created State Commissions expanded their capacities. This proposed legislation fulfills that promise in a variety of ways, including providing authority for the Corporation for National Service to enter into Service Collaboration Agreements with Governors to provide a means for coordinating the planning and administration of national service programs in a State.

This proposed legislation will also provide additional service opportunities. By reducing the cost per AmeriCorps member, it will enable more people to serve; it will broaden the age and income guidelines for National Senior Service Corps participants, expanding the pool of older Americans who can perform results-oriented service in their communities; and it will simplify the administration of Learn and Serve America, so States and communities will more easily be able to provide opportunities for students to learn through service in their schools and neighborhoods.

This past January, I had the opportunity to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by engaging in service on the holiday commemorating his birth. I joined 65 AmeriCorps members and more than 300 community volunteers in repairing and repainting Cardozo High School in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Thirty-one years ago, Dr. King came to that very neighborhood and urged the people there to engage in citizen service to rebuild their lives, their community, and their future. That is what those national service participants, and the thousands more who were participating in similar projects across the country, were doing—honoring the legacy of Dr. King and answering the high calling of citizenship in this country.

Each of the more than 500,000 participants in the programs of the National Senior Service Corps and the 750,000 participants in programs supported by Learn and Serve America, and every AmeriCorps member answers that high calling of citizenship when they make and fulfill a commitment to service in their communities. This proposed legislation builds on the successes of these programs and improves them for the future.

I urge the Congress to give this proposed legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 19, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner
March 19, 1998

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to begin by thanking all of you, not only for your warm welcome in this magnificent Women's Museum, which I always love to visit and which is a real treasure of our National Capital, but for being here to support the Senators who are here and those whom we hope to add to their ranks.

I thank Senator Torricelli not only for his friendship and his kind words but for his fighting spirit. He has the heart of a lion. And when others feel weak, he feels stronger, and we are stronger because of what Bob Torricelli has done. And I thank him.

I thank Senator Kerrey, my longtime friend. We used to be Governors together, and we used to lament the condition of our country in the eighties, and the escalating deficits and what we saw as the irresponsibility of decisionmaking here. Bob Kerrey did cast the deciding vote on that budget bill, and I thank him for that. But in a real sense, so did all the other Democrats, because we didn't have a single Republican vote. And Al Gore even had to vote. And as he says, "Whenever I vote, we win." [*Laughter*]

But imagine how different the last 6 years would have been—5 years and 3 months—if we hadn't done that. And I want to thank Senator Kerrey for being willing to do this job for 2 years. It's not easy. It's easy to give the speeches. You know, he just asked me to show up every now and then at these events and smile and take a few pictures, see people I enjoy visiting with anyway, and give a talk. But he's had to go across the country and do all the work and see all of you and ask you to help. And it's often a thankless task. And when he took it, it was certainly a thankless task because we were down and our numbers were depleted. But he took it on, and I predict a stunning and historically unpredicted result in November of 1998. And you will have a lot to do with it, Senator Kerrey. We thank you very much.

Finally, I want to say that it would be impossible for me to do my job if it weren't for Tom Daschle. He is a magnificent leader of our Democrats in the Senate. Yes, let's stand up for him. [*Applause*]

I want to talk very briefly about what I believe to be at stake. First, just a little picture on the past. It is wonderful to stand up and say that these are good times for America, that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years and the lowest crime rate in 24 years and the smallest welfare population in 27 years and the lowest inflation in 30 years and the highest homeownership in history. That's wonderful to say. But we forget how hard it was to do.

Before the Balanced Budget Act ever saved a dollar, the deficit had been reduced by 92 percent because of the votes solely of Democratic Members of Congress in 1993. The crime rate is down in part because we moved beyond the hot rhetoric of tough talk to put 100,000 more community police officers on the street, to give our children something positive to do in their leisure hours, and to take assault weapons off the street. And many of our people gave up their jobs on those two votes.

And so I say to you, I am proud to be a member of my party, and I'm proud of every Senator and every Congressman who cast those votes. And the people who lost their jobs because they did it can at least go to sleep tonight knowing that this is a better, stronger, safer country because they were in the Democratic caucus, and they did what was right when the chips were down. And I'm grateful to them.

After a year of real, harsh partisan fighting back and forth in which the majority party in the Congress today shut the Government down, and we didn't shut down—and so the "Contract With America" was abandoned, and we moved on to bipartisan cooperation.

We passed a balanced budget bill. That bill did a lot to keep our recovery going, and I thank every Republican who supported it. But that bill had the biggest increase in child health care since 1965. It will add 5 million people—children to the ranks of those with health insurance. It had the largest increase in aid to education since 1965. It opened the doors of college to all Americans by giving a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; further tax credits; education IRA's; 300,000 work-study positions; finally, tax deductibility for the interest on student loans. Those education provisions and those health care provisions, you know who put them in the Balanced Budget Act: the Democrats in the United States Senate and in the United States House of Representatives. And I thank them for it.

And more importantly, I ask you to look to the future. We have a lot of challenging decisions. Senator Kerrey said we've got an ambitious agenda; we do. We now have virtual consensus in Washington that before we spend a surplus that hasn't even materialized, we should save Social Security for the 21st century and not allow the baby boomers to bankrupt their children or to live in abject poverty because

we failed to do it. It was because of the unanimous support of the Democrats in the Senate and in the House for that position that it is now the position of the entire United States Government. And that's another thing that the future will be able to thank Tom Daschle and all the other members of this caucus who are here tonight for, and I thank them for it.

We also have to save Medicare. We're going to have an election this year, and we're going to have a report at the end of the year to deal with Medicare changes and Social Security changes. Who do you trust to make those changes for the 21st century? Think about that when you think about how much support you're going to give Senator Patty Murray, for example. I think it's clear what the answer is: the Democratic Party.

We're in the middle—we have some money now, finally, at long last. And I have asked the Congress to put the money primarily into education and into research for the 21st century, to medical research and scientific research; but in education, to go down to a class size all across America that averages 18 kids a class in the first 3 grades, to rehabilitate 5,000 schools, and hire 100,000 more teachers.

In the Senate, the majority party voted to cut $400 million this year out of education. We don't agree with that. We think that the American people should be heard on that. And we believe they will agree with Tom Daschle and the members of the Democratic caucus and the people who will be running in the Senate elections this November. That's important. We need to stand up for that.

I could give you the same argument on the environment. You know as well as I do that the environment will be a more important issue 10 years from now than it is today. You know it will be. Who is more likely to stand up for responsible action that will permit us to preserve our environment, indeed to enhance it, as we continue to grow the economy?

You just go through these issues. Child care: Most American parents are in the work force, and I promise you that hundreds of thousands, even millions of them, go to work every day worried sick that their children do not have access to quality, affordable child care. We have a proposal to address that, to increase the child care tax credit for middle class families, to increase the support we give to lower income working families. That support, today at least, is not supported; that program is not supported by the majority party in the Senate.

I believe the American people agree with us, and every single Senate election will be a referendum on whether we really believe it when we say that parenting is our most important job, and everybody ought to be able to succeed at home and at work at the same time.

Let me close with a story. Beyond all the policies, there really is a question of whether we are committed to putting the interests of all our people first. Yesterday I went out to Las Vegas to meet with the executive committee of the AFL–CIO. But before I did that, I went to this wonderful training program that the carpenters union runs out there for people who are basically entry-level carpenters, trying to give them higher levels of skill. And in addition to the on-site, on-the-job training, they also have classroom time in which they try to make sure that all the working people understand what their health insurance is and how it works, what their retirement plan is and how it works, and how it all fits in and how they can manage their own finances better.

So I met with all these people; most of them I'd say were between 28 and 35 years old, very young by my standards. And the first question was, in this class—this young man said, "Well, I see I've got a good retirement, but have you people in the Government done what you should to protect it?" And I was able to proudly say that in 1994, when we were still in the majority, we passed a plan to reform the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation; we saved 8½ million pensions that were underwater; we stabilized 40 million more. And yes, we had done everything we responsibly could to protect the integrity of the pension systems of the country.

Then the next young man said—and this is what made me so proud of all these young people and proud to be a member of my party—the next young guy said, "Look up there at all of our fringe benefits, because we belong to the union and because we're working here in a State and a city with low unemployment and a lot of prosperity." He said, "Do you realize there are people who do what we do for a living who don't make as much per hour as we get in fringe benefits?" He said, "Mr. President, how are those people living? I think they ought to have health care, too. How are they

going to save for their retirement? How are they going to educate their children?"

And all of a sudden, all these other people, all these young people started saying, "Yes, we think in Washington you ought to be looking out for those people. You ought to be doing everything you can to make sure that anybody that's working as hard as we are, whether they are in a union, whether they make the kind of money we make, or not, at least have the basic things they need to succeed in raising their children and educating them and having a chance to own a home and succeed and live the American dream." And I thought to myself, this country is in pretty good hands. These people were there, grateful for their prosperity, but thinking about others.

This country has always done best at every time of change and challenge when we've tried to do three things. I say this over and over again, but I want you to think about this: When you go home tonight, ask yourself why you came here, and "Bob Torricelli made me" or "Bob Kerrey made me" is not an acceptable answer. [*Laughter*] Now, you ought to try this; try this on for size: Go home tonight, and before you go to bed—I'm dead serious—I'm dead serious—go home tonight and ask yourself, why did I go to that dinner tonight? And get out a piece of paper and a pen and write down an answer. Imagine you went home, and one of your children asked you, "Why did you go there," and you had to give an answer.

This country has met every challenge of the last 220 years because at every time of challenge and change we've done three things: We have widened the circle of opportunity; we have deepened the meaning of freedom and extended it to more people; and we have strengthened the bonds of our Union.

We are moving into an age where the volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years, a global society where we're drawing closer to people around the world and where all of our neighbors are more than ever likely to be from all around the world. We have to learn to live in ways that we never imagined, with people we couldn't have possibly understood just a few years ago. But what we have to do is what we've always had to do: widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the meaning of freedom, strengthen the bonds of our Union.

And when you go home tonight, you think about that. And you ask yourself, which party is more likely to do that? I rest my case.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:48 p.m. at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Senator J. Robert Kerrey, chair, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Remarks on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
March 20, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Albright, General Shelton, General Sandler, Mr. Berger, Senator Roth, to the members and representatives of the Joint Chiefs, members of the diplomatic corps, and other interested citizens, many of whom have held high positions in the national security apparatus of this country and the military of our country. We're grateful for everyone's presence here today.

I especially want to thank the Members of the Senate who are here. I thank Senator Roth, the chairman of the NATO observer group; Senator Moynihan; Senator Smith; Senator Levin; Senator Lugar; Senator Robb; and Senator Thurmond. Your leadership and that of Senators Lott, Daschle, Helms, and Biden and others in this Chamber has truly, as the Secretary of State said, made this debate a model of bipartisan dialog and action.

The Senate has held more than a dozen hearings on this matter. We have worked very closely with the Senate NATO observer group. And I must say, I was immensely gratified when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 16 to 2 in support of enlargement.

Now, in the coming days, the full Senate will act on this matter of critical importance to our national security. The admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO will

be a very important milestone in building the kind of world we want for the 21st century.

As has been said, I first proposed NATO enlargement 4 years ago, when General Joulwan was our commander in Brussels. Many times since, I've had the opportunity to speak on this issue. Now a final decision is at hand, and now it is important that all the American people focus on this matter closely. For this is one of those rare moments when we have within our grasp the opportunity to actually shape the future, to make the new century safer and more secure and less unstable than the one we are leaving.

We can truly be present at a new creation. When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in typically simple and straightforward language: to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future. The dream of the generation that founded NATO was of a Europe whole and free. But the Europe of their time was lamentably divided by the Iron Curtain. Our generation can realize their dream. It is our opportunity and responsibility to do so, to create a new Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the very first time in all history.

Forging a new NATO in the 21st century will help to fulfill the commitment and the struggle that many of you in this room engaged in over the last 50 years. NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: protect new democracies against aggression, prevent a return to local rivalries, create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish.

In January of 1994, on my first trip to Europe for the NATO summit, we did take the lead in proposing a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense, while preparing it to take on the new challenges to our security and to Europe's stability; second, by reaching out to new partners and taking in new members from among Europe's emerging democracies; and third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past 4 years, persistently and pragmatically, we have put this strategy into place. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces better prepared to provide for our defense in this new era, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies. Its military power remains so unquestioned that it was the only force capable of stopping the fighting in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Moscow, joining Russia and history's most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic, undivided Europe. We signed a charter to build cooperation between NATO and Ukraine. We created the Partnership For Peace as a path to full NATO membership for some, and a strong and lasting link to the alliance for others. Today, the Partnership For Peace has exceeded its mission beyond the wildest dreams of those of us who started it. It has more than three dozen members.

Now we're on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO. The alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO's core mission will remain the same, the defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will strengthen and enhance that mission. In pursuing enlargement, we have made sure not to alter NATO's core function or its ability to defend America and Europe's security.

Now I urge this Senate to do the same and, in particular, to impose no constraints on NATO's freedom of action, its military decision-making, or its ability to respond quickly and effectively to whatever challenges may arise. NATO's existing treaty and the way it makes defense and security decisions have served our Nation's security well for half a century.

In the same way, the addition of these new members will help NATO meet new challenges to our security. In Bosnia, for example, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian soldiers serve alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Remember, this was one of the largest, single operational deployments of American troops in Europe since World War II. It was staged from a base in Taszar, Hungary. It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly, or safely without the active help and support of Hungary.

As we look toward the 21st century, we're looking at other new security challenges as well: the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile technology, terrorism and the potential for high-tech attacks on our information systems. NATO must be prepared to meet and defeat this new generation of threats, to act flexibly and decisively under American leadership. With three new members in our ranks,

NATO will be better able to meet those goals as well.

Enlargement also will help to make Europe more stable. Already, the very prospect of membership has encouraged nations throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation.

Now, let me emphasize what I've said many times before and what all NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping the doors open to all of Europe's new democracies will help to ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just the first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of enlargement at our next summit in 1999. Neither NATO nor my administration has made any decisions or any commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I have consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about the admissions of the first three members. I pledge to do the same before any future decisions are made. And of course, any new members would also require the advice and the consent of the United States Senate.

For these reasons, I urge, in the strongest terms, the Senate to reject any effort to impose an artificial pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and, I believe, unwise. If NATO is to remain strong, America's freedom to lead it must be unfettered and our freedom to cooperate with our other partners in NATO must remain unfettered. A unilateral freeze on enlargement would reduce our own country's flexibility and, perhaps even more important, our leverage, our ability to influence our partners. It would fracture NATO's open-door consensus; it would undermine further reforms in Europe's democracies; it would draw a new and potentially destabilizing line, at least temporarily, in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that division from reemerging. We must continue to strengthen the Partnership For Peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give even more practical expression to the agreements between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine, turning words into deeds. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles—and we thank you, Senator Lugar, for your leadership on that—to combat the dangers of proliferation, to lower conventional arms ceilings all across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people to finish the job of bringing a lasting peace to their country. If you think about where we were just a year ago in Bosnia, not to mention 2 years ago, not to mention 1995, no one could have believed we would be here today. It would not have happened had it not been for NATO, the Partnership For Peace allies, the Russians, all of those who have come together and joined hands to end the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the Second World War.

Now we have to finish what America started 4 years ago, welcoming Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic into our alliance. If you look around at who is in the room today, you can see that they are more than willing to be a good partner. They will make NATO stronger; they will make Europe safer; and in so doing, they will make America and our young people more secure. They will make it less likely that the young men and women in uniform who serve under General Shelton and the other generals here, and their successors in the 21st century, will have to fight and die because of problems in Europe.

A new NATO can extend the blessings of freedom and security in a new century. With the help of our allies, the support of the Senate, the strength of our continued commitment, we can bring Europe together, not by force of arms, but by possibilities of peace. That is the promise of this moment. And we must seize it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:46 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Maj. Gen. Roger Sandler, USA (Ret.), executive director, Reserve Officers Association; and Gen. George A. Joulwan, USA (Ret.), former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

Statement on Cuba
March 20, 1998

Eight weeks ago, His Holiness John Paul II made an historic visit to Cuba. He spoke to and for the Catholic faithful who have for decades endured a system that denied their right to worship freely.

In anticipation and in support of that visit, my administration made a number of exceptions to our policy regarding travel and shipment of humanitarian supplies to Cuba. The response of the Cuban people to that visit has since convinced me that we should continue to look for ways to support Cuba's people without supporting its regime, by providing additional humanitarian relief, increasing human contacts, and helping the Cuban people prepare for a peaceful transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation.

Prior to the Pope's visit, we authorized direct charter flights for pilgrims to attend Papal services. We also authorized direct humanitarian cargo flights to Cuba in order to reduce the cost of getting these needed supplies to the Cuban people. The deliveries were carefully monitored to ensure that they reached the people for whom they were intended.

These measures were fully consistent with the letter and spirit of the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, which, in addition to sustaining tough economic sanctions, also enable and encourage the administration to conduct a program of support for the Cuban people.

I continue to believe in the validity of our policy built on four main components:

—pressure on the regime for democratic change;

—support for the Cuban people through humanitarian assistance and help in developing civil society;

—promotion of more concerted multilateral effort to promote democracy and human rights; and

—cooperative arrangements to move migration into safe, legal, and orderly channels.

I have been following carefully the various proposals put forward by Members of Congress and other interested groups for expanding humanitarian assistance to the people of Cuba, including food. I have asked Secretary Albright to work on a bipartisan basis with the Congress to fashion an approach to the transfer of food to the Cuban people.

To build further on the impact of the Pope's visit, to support the role of the Church and other elements of civil society in Cuba, and to thereby help prepare the Cuban people for a democratic transition, I have also decided to take the following steps:

—Resume licensing direct humanitarian charter flights to Cuba. Direct humanitarian flights under applicable agency regulations will make it easier for Cuban-Americans to visit loved ones on the island and for humanitarian organizations to provide needed assistance more expeditiously and at lower cost.

—Establish new licensing arrangements to permit Cuban-Americans and Cuban families living here in the United States to send humanitarian remittances to their families in Cuba at the level of $300 per quarter, as was permitted until 1994. This will enable Cuban-Americans to provide direct support to relatives in Cuba, while moving the current flow of remittances back into legal, orderly channels.

—Streamline and expedite the issuance of licenses for the sale of medicines and medical supplies and equipment to Cuba. Based on experience of the past several years, including during the Papal visit, we believe that the end-use verification called for in the Cuban Democracy Act can be met through simplified arrangements.

The Departments of Treasury, Commerce, and State will develop and promulgate new licensing arrangements in these three areas in the coming weeks.

The people of Cuba continue to live under a regime which deprives them of their freedom and denies them economic opportunity. The overarching goal of American policy must be to promote a peaceful transition to democracy on the island. Such a transition will depend upon the efforts of Cubans who seek to build a vibrant civil society and to secure respect for basic human rights. The presence of His Holiness John Paul II in Cuba inspired the Cuban

people, providing an important psychological boost to the Cuban Catholic Church, to Cuba's nascent civil society, and to the Cuban people. The measures I have announced today are designed to build upon that visit, to support the Cuban people through the hardships and difficulties ahead, to contribute to the growth of a civil society and to help prepare for a peaceful transition to democracy.

Statement on Andrew F. Brimmer's Service to the District of Columbia Financial Control Board

March 20, 1998

Dr. Andrew Brimmer has contributed his considerable skills, energy, and commitment to the effort to restore the District of Columbia to financial health. Today we can say the District has started down the path toward fiscal discipline and responsibility.

The First Lady and I, along with the entire administration, would like to thank Dr. Brimmer for all he has done on behalf of the District. We are pleased that he has been able to meet his commitment to the administration to serve a 3-year term. His work for the District is the capstone of a long and distinguished career of public service.

We are grateful for Dr. Brimmer's service in this endeavor, which, at times, has been a difficult undertaking. Having worked with him during this period, I personally would like to offer Dr. Brimmer my sincere thanks and appreciation for a job well done.

Statement on the Tornado Disaster in Georgia

March 20, 1998

Today I spoke with Governor Zell Miller to express my concern over the tornado that hit Georgia early this morning. Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the individuals who lost their lives in this tragic disaster.

I have asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to add the counties of Hall, White, Habersham, Dawson, and Rabun as disaster areas to the existing disaster declaration I issued for Georgia on March 11th. This action will allow victims of this tragedy to apply for Federal funds. I have also asked FEMA Director James Lee Witt to lead a Federal team to Georgia to inspect the damage and report back to me.

Labor Secretary Alexis Herman has approved a grant of up to $3 million to assist workers who lost jobs. The money will help to create temporary jobs to assist in clean-up, repair, and restoration efforts. In addition, FEMA has begun working on a long-term recovery plan for Georgia.

I want to assure the people of Georgia that this administration is committed to ensuring a speedy recovery from this tornado. Our thoughts and prayers are with those affected by this extraordinary natural disaster.

Statement on Signing the Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial Institutions Act

March 20, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3116, the "Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial Institutions Act."

This legislation calls upon Federal financial regulatory agencies to conduct seminars and provide guidance for financial institutions on the implications of the Year 2000 problem. It also extends to the Office of Thrift Supervision and the National Credit Union Administration statutory authority, similar to that of other Federal banking agencies, to examine the operations of contractors that perform services for thrifts and credit unions. These services include data processing and the maintenance of computer systems that are used to track everything from day-to-day deposit and loan activity to portfolio management.

Many thrifts and credit unions, particularly smaller ones, rely heavily on the services of outside contractors for the processing of critical business applications. This legislation will assist Federal regulators in better understanding the Year 2000 risks to which thrifts and credit unions may be exposed and will bolster efforts to work with them to ensure that they will be able to continue to provide services to their customers without disruption.

The Year 2000 problem is one of the great challenges of the Information Age in which we live. My Administration is committed to working with the Congress and the private sector to ensure that we minimize Year 2000-related disruptions in the lives of the American people.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 20, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3116, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 105–164.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Saint Kitts and Nevis-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

March 20, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Basseterre on September 18, 1997, and a related exchange of notes signed at Bridgetown on October 29, 1997, and February 4, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the Report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking of testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets; restitution; collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 20, 1998.

The President's Radio Address
March 21, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk about Social Security and how all of us can ensure that one of the greatest achievements of this century continues to serve our people well into the next.

These are good times for America. We have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest core inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. Over the past 5 years, we've reduced the size of Government and nearly eliminated the budget deficit, even as we've expanded opportunities for education, strengthened our families, invested in our people.

But this is no time to rest. It's a time to build. Last month I sent to Congress the first balanced budget in a generation. Instead of deficits, America can now look forward to $1 trillion in surpluses over the next 10 years. But as I said in the State of the Union, we must not spend a penny of this surplus until we have saved Social Security first.

For 60 years, Social Security has meant more than an ID number on a tax form, more than a monthly check in the mail. It reflects our deepest values, our respect for our parents and our belief that all Americans deserve to retire with dignity.

Social Security has changed the face of America. At the beginning of this century, to be old meant to be poor. As President Roosevelt said, "The aged worn-out worker, after a life of ceaseless effort and useful productivity must look forward in his declining years to a poorhouse." Even in 1959, more than a third of all seniors were poor. But today, thanks to Social Security, that number has dropped to 11 percent. But without Social Security, even in these times of prosperity, half our elderly would live in poverty.

Now, if we don't act, the Social Security Trust Fund will be depleted by the year 2029, and payroll contributions will only cover 75 percent of benefits. We mustn't break the solemn compact between generations. We must be guided by a strong sense of duty to our parents but also to our children. Now, if we act soon and responsibly, we can strengthen Social Security in ways that will not unfairly burden any generation, retirees, the baby boomers, their children, or their children's children.

So I challenge my generation to act now, to protect our children and ensure that Social Security will be there for them after a lifetime of hard work. I challenge young people to do their part, to get involved in this national effort to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century.

I'm pleased that so many Americans are already taking steps to meet this challenge. Later today I'll be discussing the future of Social Security with 1,200 Americans in a satellite meeting sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts. And in the coming months, the Vice President and I will attend a series of nonpartisan forums that will help us reach a national consensus on how to go forward. In December I'll convene a White House Conference on Social Security, so that by 1999 we can craft historic, bipartisan legislation to save Social Security for the 21st century.

In the darkest days of the Great Depression, Americans had the courage and the vision to commit to a daring plan whose full impact would not be known for a generation. Today, in the midst of the best economy in a generation, we must strengthen that commitment, our commitment, for generations yet to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Teleconference Remarks During a Discussion on Social Security
March 21, 1998

The President. Thank you. I'd also like to thank Rebecca Rimel. And I'm delighted to join The Pew Charitable Trusts and all of you for this important discussion of Social Security. The Pew Trust has done a great service to the country for making this possible. We have to discuss how we can ensure that one of the greatest achievements of this 20th century continues to serve our people very well into the next.

Before I start, let me tell you about—a little bit about my upcoming visit to Africa, because tomorrow I'm going to embark on the most extensive trip ever taken to that continent by an American President, where I hope to introduce Americans to a new Africa, a place where democracy and free markets are taking hold. I hope all of you will follow my travels closely.

These are good times for America. We have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest core inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in our history. Last month I was pleased to present the first balanced budget in a generation. Indeed, we can now look forward to $1 trillion of surpluses over the next decade. But I don't believe we should spend a penny of this surplus until we have saved Social Security first for the 21st century.

I am very pleased with the strong support the American people have shown for this meeting and for meeting this challenge. I thank Americans Discuss Social Security for leading the way. For 60 years, Social Security has meant more than a monthly check in the mail. It reflects our deepest values, our respect for our parents, our belief that all Americans deserve to retire with dignity.

We can't break this solemn compact between the generations. And if we act soon and responsibly, we can strengthen Social Security in ways that won't unfairly burden any generation. So I challenge my own generation to act now to protect our children, to ensure that Social Security will be there for them after a lifetime of hard work. And I challenge young people to do their part, as well, to get involved in our national effort to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century.

In the coming months, the Vice President and I will attend a series of nonpartisan forums to help reach a national consensus on how to go forward. In December I'll convene a White House Conference on Social Security, with a view to early 1999, when I hope and believe we can craft historic, bipartisan legislation to save Social Security.

In the darkest days of the Great Depression, Americans had the courage to commit to a daring plan whose impact would not be fully known for a generation. In the midst of these prosperous times, we must strengthen that commitment for generations yet to come. Your views will be vital to our work here in Washington, and I look forward to hearing your comments.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point, the discussion began.*]

The President. Let me try to respond a little bit to what all the folks said. Obviously, I don't know in the previous meetings exactly how much information was out there and how much not. And we're in the process, as I said, of a year-long dialog. But let me just offer a couple of observations.

In 1983, there was a bipartisan commission to deal with the problem in Social Security. And they came up with a whole set of changes which included, very slowly over a period of years, raising the retirement age to 67 for people drawing full Social Security benefits, which will happen sometime in the next century, because the average life expectancy is much longer. When Social Security was enacted and the retirement age was 65, the average American did not live to be 65 years old. So that happened. Then there was an increase in the payroll tax back in '83, and it was estimated that for a period of time Social Security would bring in more money than it paid out and that the money could safely be pledged, in effect, to buy Government bonds, to finance the deficit. And that's what has essentially happened.

Now, I've done my best to try to turn that situation around by getting us back to balance and now moving us into surplus so that we can recover some of these funds in the future to deal with the long-term challenge of Social Security.

But here's the basic problem, which I'm sure you understand. In 2029, all the baby boomers

will be 65 or over. Most of them will be in the retirement system. At that time, if we continue to work at present rates, retire at present rates, and grow our population at present rates, there will be only about two people working for every one person drawing. Even today, very few people can actually live on only their Social Security income. But it's important to remember that, if we didn't have Social Security income, nearly half the seniors in this country would not be above the poverty line.

So the trick is how to make this system last beyond 2029 without having undue new tax burdens on younger people who are trying to raise their children. What options are out there for doing that, and how can we also make it easier, as many of you said, to save for your own retirement? The one thing I think is very important is that young people understand especially what the realities are. I mean, I saw a survey the other day that said that some people—a lot of people in their twenties thought it was more likely that they would see a UFO than that they would ever draw Social Security. Now, that's not accurate. We can easily save this system. And we may be able to do a number of things, including some of the things that some of you suggested that would give a higher rate of return on the investment.

But under presently conceivable circumstances, no matter what we do with the Social Security system, Americans should be saving more for their own retirement. So we're working very hard right now to make it easier, for example, for more people in small businesses and more self-employed people to take out 401(k) plans, to take those plans with them when they move jobs, to have a system that would guarantee the security of that kind of retirement savings. And we've done a number of things in the last 2 years; there is some more legislation before Congress now. And some of you in these hearings may have even greater ideas about what we can do to make it easier for people to save for their own retirement.

But I always tell people that we actually have two things we have to do. We have to secure the safety, the soundness, and the salvation of Social Security into the 21st century and look at all the options that have been raised here by you. But we also have to educate the American people that they must save more for their own retirement, and then we have to make it easier for them to do so and to succeed in doing so.

The last point I'd like to make is this: Because of the reductions in the deficit, the reduction in interest rates, we may have already added a few years to the life of the Social Security Trust Fund. We can put a lot of years on the life of the Fund; we can stabilize the Fund. And now that we've eliminated these chronic, huge deficits of the last decade and a half, we can set this thing right. And if we can act now, meaning early next year, with the support of the American people across party lines and regional lines and income lines, we can make modest changes today that will have a huge impact in the next century.

So the last thing I'd like to say to all of you is, one of you said that you wanted us to do what we needed to do in a hurry and in a nonpartisan, fair way. That's the message I think that all of us need to hear, all the Members of Congress, all the members of our administration. We do not need to put this off. Many people are afraid that anything you do to Social Security is political dynamite. I think it's worse dynamite to walk away from a problem when we can solve it with disciplined, modest, farsighted actions now, that will have a huge impact 20 and 30 years from now.

So I thank you. I was profoundly impressed by what you had to say, and I wish I had more time to go through all your questions. I know now, in 2 hours, Ken Apfel, our Social Security Administrator, will be on this program, and he'll be able maybe to pick up some of the more specific questions you asked me and others that you doubtless will have for him.

And again let me thank The Pew Charitable Trusts. This is a wonderful public service.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. by satellite from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building, in a 10-city interactive video teleconference and webcast held as part of Americans Discuss Social Security (ADSS), a project of The Pew Charitable Trusts. In his remarks, he referred to Rebecca W. Rimel, president, The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana in Accra, Ghana
March 23, 1998

President Rawlings. Let me just take this opportunity to welcome each and every one of you to Ghana, and quite frankly, if I had the choice, I would have suggested that you visit a place like Ghana in the month of August when it's nice and cool. So while you're here under this hot, blazing African sun, do everything you can to—what do you call—put in as much fluid as you can in order to fight the dehydrative effect of the tropics. But at the same time, if you keep away from the shades, the wives and the husbands would be missing the chance of a nice suntan before you leave the tropics.

Let me say that as short as this visit is, I think what's most important is the content. And there's no doubt that the agenda that's been drawn out would be an issue that takes on the serious subjects that concern Africa, an issue that's been initiated by the President and members of his Cabinet. That's most welcome to this continent.

Let me remind you, ladies and gentlemen, 27 years from now, as I said to some of our colleagues in the CNN yesterday, that the population of this continent or sub-Saharan Africa will be doubling to about 1.5 billion. And if we don't take the appropriate measures, both from the economic standpoint and the political standpoint, to lay the foundation towards development and peace, I'm afraid we'll be running down the hill.

However, I feel very hopeful and very confident that the measures we've taken—and a good number of African countries—we're beginning to register a healthy economic upturn. The political stability that's returning to this continent, no doubt, I believe, is what must have encouraged the President and his colleagues to take on this issue to do what they can to assist the efforts that we're putting in Africa.

And for this, I would like to welcome him, his wife, his—our dear Chelsea—we'll talk about her later—and members of his Cabinet. And I'm so glad that we have Reverend Minister Jackson also as a member of the delegation.

And—what else? Talking about the 8-hour period, let me explain that in politics there are times I believe that we spend the least time with those who have the least problems. It's hot, naturally so, all the time. I mean, there are times when we can relax and spend a lot of time with those that we have so much in common. But quite frankly, the relationship between the U.S. and Ghana has been so healthy, so much foundation has been laid, that, quite frankly, I believe there's no turning back in terms of the progress that's been made. And I can only see a forward movement.

And let me simply end up by saying that please, you've come at the wrong time of the season, not in economic or political terms but the hot, blazing sun. So please do what you can to—not to dehydrate yourself. Do what you can to take in as much liquids as you can, and don't miss out on the sun.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President Clinton, have you spoken with——

President Rawlings. Can we make this just the one and only question, because—let's put it this way, I don't want to share the limited time that I have with the President. I have only, barely—no, about 8 hours from now. And our colleagues are waiting in the Cabinet for a meeting. Beyond that, our people have been waiting from 5 a.m., and there are hundreds of thousands, chiefs, elders, children, et cetera. I don't want anybody fainting. Neither do I think President Clinton would like to see that happen.

Q. It's only one, sir.

President Clinton. I'll take one question.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Thank you, sir. Have you spoken with President Yeltsin? Are you concerned about his dismissal of his Cabinet? Do you think you understand what is behind it or what the effect will be, sir?

President Clinton. Let me say, first of all, I have not spoken with him. I found out about it this morning when I woke up. And until I know more, I don't think I should say much, except that we don't interfere in the internal affairs of any country, and as President, he has to constitute the government as he sees fit. We hope that the general direction of policy will

be unaffected by this, and I have no reason to believe that it—that anything different will occur in a way that's at all adverse to the partnership we've been building with Russia. If I know anything else in the next few hours, I'll be glad to tell you.

Let me also thank President Rawlings for welcoming me here. I have very much looked forward to coming to Ghana, especially since the first time we met in the White House. I admire the direction this nation is taking under his leadership, and I want to make the most of this next 8 hours. So we better go to work, so we can get out there and see the people, too.

President Rawlings. Thank you very much, sir.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:25 a.m. in the garden at Osu Castle. President Rawlings referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to the People of Ghana in Accra
March 23, 1998

Thank you. President and Mrs. Rawlings, honorable ministers, honorable members of the Council of State, honorable Members of Parliament, honorable members of the judiciary, *nananom* [to the chiefs], and the people of Ghana. *Mitsea mu. America fuo kyia mo* [My greetings to you. Greetings from America]. Now you have shown me what *akwaaba* [welcome] really means. Thank you, thank you so much.

I am proud to be the first American President ever to visit Ghana and to go on to Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal. It is a journey long overdue. America should have done it before, and I am proud to be on that journey. Thank you for welcoming me.

I want to listen and to learn. I want to build a future partnership between our two people, and I want to introduce the people of the United States, through my trip, to the new face of Africa. From Kampala to Cape Town, from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, Africans are being stirred by new hopes for democracy and peace and prosperity.

Challenges remain, but they must be to all of you a call to action, not a cause for despair. You must draw strength from the past and energy from the promise of a new future. My dream for this trip is that together we might do the things so that, 100 years from now, your grandchildren and mine will look back and say this was the beginning of a new African renaissance.

With a new century coming into view, old patterns are fading away: The cold war is gone; colonialism is gone; apartheid is gone. Remnants of past troubles remain. But surely, there will come a time when everywhere reconciliation will replace recrimination. Now, nations and individuals finally are free to seek a newer world where democracy and peace and prosperity are not slogans but the essence of a new Africa.

Africa has changed so much in just 10 years. Dictatorship has been replaced so many places. Half of the 48 nations in sub-Saharan Africa choose their own governments, leading a new generation willing to learn from the past and imagine a future. Though democracy has not yet gained a permanent foothold even in most successful nations, there is everywhere a growing respect for tolerance, diversity, and elemental human rights. A decade ago, business was stifled. Now, Africans are embracing economic reform. Today, from Ghana to Mozambique, from Cote d'Ivoire to Uganda, growing economies are fueling a transformation in Africa.

For all this promise, you and I know Africa is not free from peril: the genocide in Rwanda; civil wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia, both Congos; pariah states that export violence and terror; military dictatorship in Nigeria; and high levels of poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, and unemployment. To fulfill the vast promise of a new era, Africa must face these challenges. We must build classrooms and companies, increase the food supply and save the environment, and prevent disease before deadly epidemics break out.

The United States is ready to help you. First, my fellow Americans must leave behind the stereotypes that have warped our view and

weakened our understanding of Africa. We need to come to know Africa as a place of new beginning and ancient wisdom from which, as my wife, our First Lady, said in her book, we have so much to learn. It is time for Americans to put a new Africa on our map.

Here in Independence Square, Ghana blazed the path of that new Africa. More than four decades ago, Kwame Nkrumah proposed what he called a "motion of destiny" as Ghana stepped forward as a free and independent nation. Today, Ghana again lights the way for Africa. Democracy is spreading. Business is growing. Trade and investment are rising. Ghana has the only African-owned company today on our New York Stock Exchange.

You have worked hard to preserve the peace in Africa and around the world, from Liberia to Lebanon, from Croatia to Cambodia. And you have given the world a statesman and peacemaker in Kofi Annan to lead the United Nations. The world admires your success. The United States admires your success. We see it taking root throughout the new Africa. And we stand ready to support it.

First, we want to work with Africa to nurture democracy, knowing it is never perfect or complete. We have learned in over 200 years that, every day, democracy must be defended and a more perfect union can always lie ahead. Democracy requires more than the insults and injustice and inequality that so many societies have known and America has known. Democracy requires human rights for everyone, everywhere, for men and women, for children and the elderly, for people of different cultures and tribes and backgrounds. A good society honors its entire family.

Second, democracy must have prosperity. Americans of both political parties want to increase trade and investment in Africa. We have an "African Growth and Opportunity Act" now before Congress. Both parties' leadership are supporting it. By opening markets and building businesses and creating jobs, we can help and strengthen each other. By supporting the education of your people, we can strengthen your future and help each other. For centuries, other nations exploited Africa's gold, Africa's diamonds, Africa's minerals. Now is the time for Africans to cultivate something more precious, the mind and heart of the people of Africa, through education.

Third, we must allow democracy and prosperity to take root without violence. We must work to resolve the war and genocide that still tear at the heart of Africa. We must help Africans to prevent future conflicts.

Here in Ghana, you have shown the world that different peoples can live together in harmony. You have proved that Africans of different countries can unite to help solve disputes in neighboring countries. Peace everywhere in Africa will give more free time and more money to the pressing needs of our children's future. The killing must stop if a new future is to begin.

Fourth and finally, for peace and prosperity and democracy to prevail, you must protect your magnificent natural domain. Africa is mankind's first home. We all came out of Africa. We must preserve the magnificent natural environment that is left. We must manage the water and forest. We must learn to live in harmony with other species. You must learn how to fight drought and famine and global warming. And we must share with you the technology that will enable you to preserve your environment and provide more economic opportunity to your people.

America has good reason to work with Africa: 30 million Americans, more than one in ten, proudly trace their heritage here. The first Peace Corps volunteers from America came to Ghana over 35 years ago; over 57,000 have served in Africa since then. Through blood ties and common endeavors, we know we share the same hopes and dreams to provide for ourselves and our children, to live in peace and worship freely, to build a better life than our parents knew and pass a brighter future on to our children. America needs Africa, America needs Ghana as a partner in the fight for a better future.

So many of our problems do not stop at any nation's border; international crime and terrorism and drug trafficking, the degradation of the environment, the spread of diseases like AIDS and malaria, and so many of our opportunities cannot stop at a nation's border. We need partners to deepen the meaning of democracy in America, in Africa, and throughout the world. We need partners to build prosperity. We need partners to live in peace. We will not build this new partnership overnight, but perseverance creates its own reward.

An Ashanti proverb tells us that by coming and going, a bird builds its nest. We will come

and go with you and do all we can as you build the new Africa, a work that must begin here in Africa, not with aid or trade, though they are important, but first with ordinary citizens, especially the young people in this audience today. You must feel the winds of freedom blowing at your back, pushing you onward to a brighter future.

There are roughly 700 days left until the end of this century and the beginning of a new millennium. There are roughly 700 million Africans in sub-Saharan Africa. Every day and every individual is a precious opportunity. We do not have a moment to lose, and we do not have a person to lose.

I ask you, my friends, to let me indulge a moment of our shared history in closing. In 1957 our great civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, came to Accra to help represent our country as Ghana celebrated its independence. He was deeply moved by the birth of your nation.

Six years later, on the day after W.E.B. Du Bois died here in Ghana in 1963, Dr. King spoke to an enormous gathering like this in Washington. He said these simple words: "I have a dream, a dream that all Americans might live free and equal as brothers and sisters." His dream became the dream of our Nation and changed us in ways we could never have imagined. We are hardly finished, but we have traveled a long way on the wings of that dream.

Dr. Du Bois, a towering African-American intellectual, died here as a citizen of Ghana and a friend of Kwame Nkrumah. He once wrote, "The habit of democracy must be to encircle the Earth." Let us together resolve to complete the circle of democracy, to dream the dream that all people on the entire Earth will be free and equal, to begin a new century with that commitment to freedom and justice for all, to redeem the promise inscribed right here on Independence Arch. Let us find a future here in Africa, the cradle of humanity.

Medase. America dase [I thank you. America thanks you]. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in Independence Square. In his remarks he referred to Nana Konadu Rawlings, wife of President Rawlings; and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Remarks at the TechnoServe/Peace Corps Project Site in Accra
March 23, 1998

Thank you very much, Alicia; you did a wonderful job. She said she was nervous, but she hid it well. Give her another hand. [*Applause*]

Let me thank again President and Mrs. Rawlings for their wonderful welcome. And I want to thank the President for his leadership for democracy, for economic reform, for the economic empowerment of women and the education of children, and for being willing to take a stand for peace in this area. For all those things, I thank him.

I thank Ambassador and Mrs. Brynn and the distinguished representatives of the Government of Ghana. I'd also like to, if I might, introduce the people who came with Hillary and me today, at least some of them I see there. First, the Members of the United States Congress: Charles Rangel, Ed Royce, Jim McDermott, Maxine Waters, Donald Payne, and William Jefferson. I think that's all of them. Thank you very much for being here. And members of the President's Cabinet: Secretary of Commerce Bill Daley, Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater, and our AID Director Brian Atwood and my Special Envoy to Africa, Reverend Jesse Jackson. And the man who keeps people all over the world entertained, the owner of Black Entertainment Television, Bob Johnson, is here.

You know, I have traveled all over the world on behalf of the people of the United States, and I think I can say two things without fear of being wrong. The welcome I received in Independence Square today is the largest welcome I have ever received anywhere. And all day long, this is clearly the warmest welcome I have ever received.

I am now on my second suit. At this rate, when I get off the airplane in Botswana, I'll be in my swimming trunks. [*Laughter*] And you

will say, "The President has taken African informality too far."

I want to thank all of you for taking the time to teach us about your accomplishments. TechnoServe celebrates its 30th birthday this year. Just like the Peace Corps, it also established its first field operation here in Ghana. The reason I wanted to be here is because both TechnoServe and our Peace Corps volunteers are working to help Africans help themselves to become healthier, better educated, more prosperous, simply speaking, better equipped to dream their own dreams and to make them come true.

You should also know that I strongly believe that the investments we make here are investments in America's future as well, because stronger and more dynamic African communities and African nations will be better partners for Americans in meeting the challenges and reaping the opportunities of this great new century that is just before us.

The friendships formed between Americans and Africans across the gaps of geography and culture benefit both of us and will do so even more as our Earth gets smaller and smaller and more and more interdependent.

Alicia mentioned that 2 years ago at the White House I had the pleasure of welcoming back many of the Peace Corps volunteers, including many who are serving here today. Now more than 3,600 Peace Corps volunteers have lived and learned in Ghana, and 57,000 in Africa. I want to say to all of you, your President and your country are proud of you and grateful to you. I thank you very much.

The Peace Corps volunteers, the TechnoServe workers, their Ghanaian partners, all of you demonstrate what we can do when we work together. I also want to say a special word of appreciation to Brian Atwood and to the people here in Ghana who worked for our Agency for International Development.

Our total assistance to Ghana this year is more than $50 million. But if our aid is going to have its greatest impact, we must also have more trade and investment. Today, opportunities are opening up for investors large and small. Projects like the ones I saw today can help new entrepreneurs, including women, master the skills to make the most of these opportunities.

I will say again, education will be more important to Africa in the 21st century than it was in the 20th century. And I especially commend TechnoServe for helping women learn the math and reading skills they need to run good businesses. I also want to thank the Peace Corps volunteers I saw teaching the science experiment to the young people. They understood it, even if I didn't. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say the President and I had a sobering but important visit today about the energy shortage that the drought has caused here in Ghana and the impact it can have on business, agriculture, and economic health and the stability of the society.

A generation ago, the vision of President Kennedy and President Nkrumah led to the construction of the Akosombo Dam that helped to power Ghana's growth. Today President Rawlings and I discussed how our two countries can work together to develop a comprehensive strategy for Ghana that will give you the energy you need and also preserve and enhance the natural environment that is so important to the future of the people here.

I am pleased to announce that we will guarantee a $67 million loan to the Ghanaian Government for the purchase of two barge-mounted powerplants built by Westinghouse. I also want to assure you that we will continue to promote the spirit of service that strengthens both our countries when you permit Americans to come here and work among you.

Now more than one generation of Peace Corps volunteers has returned, carrying a lifelong love for this continent and its people. And their service does not end when they come home. Now there are Peace Corps volunteers who are in the President's Cabinet, in our Congress, leading communities all across America. My own secretary, Betty Currie, who is here with me on this trip, used to work for the Peace Corps for the Director of the Africa Division. So I would say based on my personal experience, that it's pretty good on-the-job training for the rest of life.

Last month, as Alicia said, I did ask the Congress to join me in putting 10,000 Peace Corps volunteers abroad by the year 2000. That's a more than 50-percent increase from today's levels. Again I say, by extending a helping hand throughout the world, we lift the lives of Americans at home.

Let me say one final thing that I said to the President and Mrs. Rawlings and the others who hosted us at lunch. This is a great day

for me and for Hillary. My wife has been so interested in Africa, and she and our daughter made a wonderful trip to Africa not so long ago.

It's a great day for the Members of Congress like Congressman Royce, a Republican from California, and Congressman McDermott, a Democrat from Washington, who himself worked in the Peace Corps in Africa many years ago.

But I don't think you can possibly imagine what this day means to the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, to the African-American members of my Cabinet, and those who hold senior positions in the White House and in the departments of Government. It wasn't so very long ago in the whole sweep of human history that their ancestors were yanked from the shores of western Africa as slaves. Now they come back home to Africa and to Ghana as the leaders of America, a country that hopes to be a better model than we once were for the proposition that all men and women are free and equal, and that children ought to have an equal chance. And we hope that their successes will play a role in our common triumphs, the United States and Africa, the United States and Ghana, in the years ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Alicia Diaz, Peace Corps volunteer, who introduced the President; President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana and his wife, Nana Konadu Rawlings; Ambassador Edward Brynn and his wife, Jane; and J. Brian Atwood, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Angola (UNITA)

March 23, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments since my last report of September 24, 1997, concerning the national emergency with respect to Angola that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

On September 26, 1993, I declared a national emergency with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola ("UNITA"), invoking the authority, *inter alia*, of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) and the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 (22 U.S.C. 287c). Consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution ("UNSCR") 864, dated September 15, 1993, the order prohibited the sale or supply by United States persons or from the United States, or using U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles, equipment and spare parts, and petroleum and petroleum products to the territory of Angola other than through designated points of entry. The order also prohibited such sale or supply to UNITA. United States persons are prohibited from activities that promote or are calculated to promote such sales or supplies, or from attempted violations, or from evasion or avoidance or transactions that have the purpose of evasion or avoidance, of the stated prohibitions. The order authorized the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, as might be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order.

1. On December 10, 1993, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued the UNITA (Angola) Sanctions Regulations (the "Regulations") (58 *Fed. Reg.* 64904) to implement the imposition of sanctions against UNITA. The Regulations prohibit the sale or supply by United States persons or from the United States, or using U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles, equipment and spare

parts, and petroleum and petroleum products to UNITA or to the territory of Angola other than through designated points. United States persons are also prohibited from activities that promote or are calculated to promote such sales or supplies to UNITA or Angola, or from any transaction by any United States persons that evades or avoids, or has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, any of the prohibitions set forth in the Executive order. Also prohibited are transactions by United States persons, or involving the use of U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft, relating to transportation to Angola or UNITA of goods the exportation of which is prohibited.

The Government of Angola has designated the following points of entry as points in Angola to which the articles otherwise prohibited by the Regulations may be shipped: *Airports*: Luanda and Katumbela, Benguela Province; *Ports*: Luanda and Lobito, Benguela Province; and Namibe, Namibe Province; and *Entry Points*: Malongo, Cabinda Province. Although no specific license is required by the Department of the Treasury for shipments to these designated points of entry (unless the item is destined for UNITA), any such exports remain subject to the licensing requirements of the Departments of State and/or Commerce.

2. On August 28, 1997, the United Nations Security Council adopted UNSCR 1127, expressing its grave concern at the serious difficulties in the peace process, demanding that the Government of Angola and in particular UNITA comply fully and completely with those obligations, and imposing additional sanctions against UNITA. Subsequently, the Security Council adopted UNSCR 1130 postponing the effective date of measures specified by UNSCR 1127 until 12:01 a.m., eastern standard time, October 30, 1997, at which time they went into effect.

On December 12, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13069 to implement in the United States the provisions of UNSCRs 1127 and 1130 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 65989, December 16, 1997). Executive Order 13069 prohibits (a) the sale, supply, or making available in any form, by United States persons or from the United States or using U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft, of any aircraft or aircraft components, regardless of origin: (i) to UNITA; (ii) to the territory of Angola other than through a specified point of entry; (b) the insurance, engineering, or servicing by United States persons or from the United States of any aircraft owned or controlled by UNITA; (c) the granting of permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in, or overfly the United States if the aircraft, as part of the same flight or as a continuation of that flight, is destined to land in or has taken off from a place in the territory of Angola other than a specified point of entry; (d) the provision or making available by United States persons or from the United States of engineering and maintenance servicing, the certification of airworthiness, the payment of new claims against exiting insurance contracts, or the provision, renewal, or making available of direct insurance with respect to (i) any aircraft registered in Angola other than those specified by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, and other appropriate agencies; (ii) any aircraft that entered the territory of Angola other than through a specified point of entry; (e) any transaction by any United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, or has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, any of the prohibitions set forth in this order. Specific licenses may be issued on a case-by-case basis authorizing, as appropriate, medical emergency flights or flights of aircraft carrying food, medicine, or supplies for essential humanitarian needs. Executive Order 13069 became effective at 12:01 a.m., eastern standard time, December 15, 1997.

There have been no amendments to the Regulations since my report of September 24, 1997.

3. On December 31, 1997, OFAC issued an order to the Center for Democracy in Angola ("CEDA" or "CDA") to immediately close its offices in the United States as required by Executive Order 13069. The CEDA responded that it had closed its only U.S. office, located in Washington, D.C., in compliance with Executive Order 13069.

The OFAC has worked closely with the U.S. financial and exporting communities to assure a heightened awareness of the sanctions against UNITA—through the dissemination of publications, seminars, and a variety of media, including via the Internet, Fax-on-Demand, special fliers, and computer bulletin board information initiated by OFAC and posted through the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Government Printing Office. There have been no license applications under the program since my last report.

4. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from September 26, 1997, through March 25, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to UNITA are about $80,000, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel) and the Department of State (particularly the Office of Southern African Affairs).

I will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 23, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for Democracy

March 23, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the provisions of section 504(h) of Public Law 98–164, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4413(i)), I transmit herewith the 14th Annual Report of the National Endowment for Democracy, which covers fiscal year 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 23, 1998.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda in Kampala, Uganda

March 24, 1998

The President. Good morning.

President's Invocation of Executive Privilege

Q. Mr. President, we haven't yet had the opportunity to ask you about your decision to invoke executive privilege, sir. Why shouldn't the American people see that as an effort to hide something from them?

The President. Look, that's a question that's being asked and answered back home by the people who are responsible to do that. I don't believe I should be discussing that here.

Q. Could you at least tell us why you think the First Lady might be covered by that privilege, why her conversation might fall under that?

The President. All I know is—I saw an article about it in the paper today. I haven't discussed it with the lawyers. I don't know. You should ask someone who does.

President's Visit to Africa

Q. There is speculation, sir, you're glad to be out of Washington for a couple weeks. Is that the case?

The President. Well, I'm glad to be doing the business of the United States and the people. I've looked forward to this for years. And I think most Americans want me to do the job I was elected to do. And so I'm going to try to do what most people want me to do.

Q. What was your reaction to the crowd yesterday? We saw—the pictures were pretty dramatic.

The President. I thought it was wonderful. I've never seen so many people at an event. But what I was concerned about, there were two people there who were just wedged between the crowd and the barrier, and I was afraid they would be hurt or perhaps even killed

if we didn't get room for them. And they got them out, and it was fine. It was a wonderful day. I loved it.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Have you talked to Boris Yeltsin, Mr. President?

The President. No.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:12 a.m. at the State House Lodge. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Kisowera School in Mukono, Uganda
March 24, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you and good afternoon. President Museveni, Mrs. Museveni, Ms. Vice President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker; to Education Minister Mushega; to their Highnesses, the distinguished Kings here; the religious leaders and other distinguished leaders of Uganda; Members of our United States Congress, my Cabinet, and other important citizens and public servants from the United States. And most of all, I want to thank the principals, the teachers, the students for showing me this wonderful school, the wonderful young people who walked down with us today, and the wonderful dancing exhibit we saw here today. Let's give them a big hand, I thought they were quite wonderful. [*Applause*]

As Hillary said, she and our daughter, Chelsea, came to Africa and to Uganda last year. I have heard a great deal about Uganda since then, over and over and over again. [*Laughter*] In selecting countries to visit, I almost felt I didn't need to come here because I knew enough anyway from talking to Hillary about it. [*Laughter*] She has, I think, become your unofficial roving ambassador to the world.

But let me say I am profoundly honored to be here, honored to be on this continent, honored to be in this country, honored by the progress that has been made in these last few years in improving economic conditions, in improving political conditions. Thank you for what you have done, Mr. President, and to all of you.

Earlier today we talked about trade and investment. And President Museveni wants more of both, and he should. We talked about political cooperation and how we could work together for the future. And I listened very carefully to what the President said about the history of Africa, the history of Uganda, the future, what mistakes had been made in the past.

It is as well not to dwell too much on the past, but I think it is worth pointing out that the United States has not always done the right thing by Africa. In our own time, during the cold war when we were so concerned about being in competition with the Soviet Union, very often we dealt with countries in Africa and in other parts of the world based more on how they stood in the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union than how they stood in the struggle for their own people's aspirations to live up to the fullest of their God-given abilities.

And of course, going back to the time before we were even a nation, European-Americans received the fruits of the slave trade. And we were wrong in that, as well. Although, I must say, if you look at the remarkable delegation we have here from Congress, from our Cabinet and administration, and from the citizens of America, there are many distinguished African-Americans who are in that delegation who are making America a better place today.

But perhaps the worst sin America ever committed about Africa was the sin of neglect and ignorance. We have never been as involved with you, in working together for our mutual benefit, for your children and for ours, as we should have been. So I came here to listen and to learn, to offer my help and friendship and partnership. And I came in the hope that because all these good people up here in the media came with me, and they're telling the American people back home what we're doing——

[*At this point, someone raised an umbrella to shade the President.*]

The President. That's okay—I came in the hope—it's not raining, is it? [*Laughter*] It's been cold and cloudy in Washington; I need a suntan. [*Laughter*] I came here in the hope that the American people would see you with new eyes, that they would see the children dance, see the children learning, hear the children singing, and say, we should be part of the same future.

Today I want to talk very briefly about that future for our children. President Museveni and Education Minister Mushega have made education a top priority, especially through the universal primary education program, and I loved hearing the children sing about it.

But your leaders have done more than talk and sing; they have acted. In 5 years, education spending in Uganda has tripled and teachers' salaries have gone up 900 percent. I hate to say that; back home, they'll wonder why I'm not doing better. And more importantly, you're getting something for your investment: better trained teachers, higher test scores, improved performance in school attendance from girls. I know that Kisowera School is proud that it graduates as many girls as boys, because we want all our children to learn so that all of them can succeed and make us all stronger. In most African countries, however, far fewer girls than boys enroll in school and graduate. One-half the primary-school-age children are not in school, and that has led in many nations to a literacy rate among adults below 50 percent.

Africa wants to do better. Uganda is doing better. The United States wants to help. Through a new initiative, the Education for Development and Democracy, we want to give $120 million over the next 2 years to innovative programs to improve education. We want to widen the circle of educational opportunity, as is already happening here in Uganda. We want to make investments in primary education for those who will educate boys and girls, because that is critical to improving health, reducing poverty, raising the status of women, spurring economic growth. We want to promote girls' education with leadership training and scholarships, nutrition training, and mentoring. We also want to support efforts to reach out-of-school youths. This is a huge problem in parts of Africa where there are children who were soldiers and are now adrift and without hope.

Second, we want to help create community resource centers with schools that are equipped with computers linked to the Internet, along with books and typewriters and radios for more long distance learning. We want them to be staffed by Africans and American Peace Corps volunteers.

Third, we want more new partnerships among African schools and between American and African schools, so that we can learn from and teach each other through the Internet. We do this a lot now at home.

Let me give you an idea of how it might work. A student here in Mukono could make up the first line of a story and type it into the Internet to a student in Accra, Ghana, who could then add a second line, and they could go on together, back and forth, writing a story. A teacher in New York could give five math problems to students in Kampala, and they could send the answers back. One of the very first partnerships will link this school, Kisowera, with the Pinecrest Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. I want more of them.

Fourth, we want to support higher education with the development of business, health care, science, math, and engineering courses. These are absolutely essential to give Africans the tools they need to compete and win in the new global economy, and we want to help do that.

Finally, we want to build ties between associations and institutions within Africa and in America so that groups in your nations and ours concerned with trade and investment, consumer issues, conflict resolution, or human rights can connect with distant counterparts and learn together and work together. This will empower citizens on both continents.

This initiative will help more Africans, all right, to start school, stay in school, and remain lifelong learners. But Americans will learn a great deal from it as well.

We also want to support your efforts in health and nutrition. Uganda has suffered so much from AIDS, but President Museveni launched a strong education campaign with frank talk, and he has made a huge difference, as have all of you who have worked to turn around the AIDS problem in Uganda. We will continue to combat it with global research and health care and prevention efforts.

But these efforts are also essential to combat malaria, an even greater killer of Africans. Nearly 3,000 children every day, a million each year, are lost to malaria. By weakening as well as killing people, malaria contributes to poverty

and undermines economic growth. Ninety percent of all malaria cases arise on the continent of Africa, but with increasing globalization we are all at risk. We now fund in the United States half the research on malaria, but we want to do more. This year we've committed $16 million more to help African nations fight infectious diseases, including malaria, with an additional million dollars to the West African Malaria Center in Mali.

We also want to support good nutrition. There are troubling signs that without concerted efforts, Africa could face a major food and nutrition crisis in the coming years because of natural causes and social unrest. Children cannot learn if they are hungry. So we have proposed a food security initiative for Africa to ensure that more African families can eat good meals and more African farmers can make good incomes. Over the next 10 years, we want to stay with you and work at this. In the next 2 years, we propose to spend over $60 million in Uganda, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, and Ethiopia to increase food production, enhance marketing, expand agricultural trade and investment.

I've learned a lot, since I've been here, about Ugandan bananas, Ugandan coffee. I will be an expert in all these matters when I go home.

I want you to understand again what I said at the beginning. We want to do these things in education, in health care, and agriculture and nutrition because they will help you, because we want to see the light that is in these children's eyes forever, and in the eyes of all other children.

But make no mistake about it. The biggest mistake America ever made with Africa over the long run was neglect and lack of understanding that we share a common future on this planet of ours that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller. We do these things, yes, because we want to help the children. But we do it because we know it will help our children. For we must face the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century together. The next century, in a new millennium, will be the brightest chapter in all of human history if, but only if, it is right for all of our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, and his wife, Janet; Vice President Wandira Specioza Kazibwe; Prime Minister Kintu Musoke; Speaker of the House James Wapakabulo; and Minister of Education and Sports Amanya Mushega. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks in a Meeting With Village Business Owners and an Exchange With Reporters in Wanyange, Uganda

March 24, 1998

The President. You know, one thing I did not say in my remarks I think I should point out here, just because of the press here, in explaining this to people—all these people who get these loans, they don't have balance sheets, most of them. They don't have an asset and liability sheet for which they could get a normal commercial loan. What they have is proven skills and a good reputation for being responsible.

The repayment rate in this FINCA program and throughout all these programs across the world is 98 percent—98 percent of these loans are paid back on time. And that's why I say we do $2 million—I wish we were doing $100 million. I mean, I can't think of anything else where we have invested money that has a 98 percent success rate. It's a stunning thing, just because of this fine woman and people like her all around the world. It's an amazing thing.

Good for you.

We want to see your baby.

Hillary Clinton. Will you bring your baby down?

Janet Museveni. How old is he?

Betty Namugosa. Two days.

The President. My boy, Bill. Oh, he's beautiful. Look at all this hair. I was completely bald until I was 2.

Your fourth child? Thank you for doing this. Why did you name this child after me?

Ms. Namugosa. I was expecting two things this month, the baby and the visit of the President. And I got both.

The President. Look how beautiful he is. He just woke up. The smartest person here.

President's Visit to Africa

Q. Mr. Clinton, what else has impressed you today?

The President. About this stop? Well, the income that—these are people that start out borrowing $50 in American money. They pay it back; they get another loan; they pay it back; they get another loan. It's like they're making all these markets—or entrepreneurs—you can turn a country around doing this if you have enough. But it really proves that people should not be written off just because they happen to be born and grow up in a poor area. It proves that there are people of intelligence and energy and character everywhere in the world. All they need is a chance. And insofar as we give them a chance, we strengthen nations, and we strengthen our future. And in our case, the American people are better off. It's a fabulous thing.

And I got a little boy out of it. [*Laughter*] He's beautiful. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6 p.m. at the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA). In his remarks, he referred to shopkeeper Betty Namugosa and her son, Bill Clinton, who was named in honor of the President. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Foundation for International Community Assistance Women's Village in Wanyange

March 24, 1998

Thank you very much. I will try to say this right: *Khodeyo* [How are you]? [*Applause*] Thank you. I must say it is a great honor for me to be around a group of women who say they are willing to give jobs to men. Thank you very much. [*Laughter*]

It is a great honor for me to be here with the President and Mrs. Museveni. My wife and I like these loan programs very much. And Florence, we thank you for the fine job you did being the leader of this program today. I want to thank Milli Mukyala and Robinah Balidawa; thank you very much for being an example to women, not only throughout Uganda and, indeed, Africa but throughout the world. The United States is proud to support FINCA in these efforts. FINCA now has set up 3,400 banking groups, like the two of which you're a part, in Africa, in Latin America, in the former Soviet Union.

The United States, just in the last 2 years, has increased its support for such programs through our AID program, and now we are making over 2 million loans every year to people just like you—over 2 million. What that means is that women in villages like this all across the world are going to be able to meet the needs of their children, as Milli so eloquently describes, are going to be able to build the economies of their villages. It will make their nations stronger, and they will make the world a better place. So the song you sang today is a song for children everywhere. It's a song for women everywhere. It's a song for the future of the world everywhere. We will continue to support these programs as long as I am President.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to my wife, who introduced me to these programs now over 12 years ago. Twelve years ago she came to me and told me about what was happening in a far away country in Asia—Bangladesh. And she said this could be done everywhere. And you have shown through your media and ours—today you have shown the whole world what can be done in villages everywhere. So you have done a great service not only to yourselves and your own children but for women just like you all across the globe. And we thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:07 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, and his wife, Janet; Florence

Kangolo, master of ceremonies; Milli Mukyala, dairy distribution operator; and Robinah Balidawa, business owner. The President also referred to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA).

Statement on the Attack at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas
March 24, 1998

Like all Americans, Hillary and I are deeply shocked and heartbroken by this afternoon's horrifying events at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

We don't know now and we may never fully understand what could have driven two youths to deliberately shoot into a crowd of their classmates.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and the entire Jonesboro community.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Andrew Golden, 11, and Mitchell Johnson, 13, students at Westside Middle School, who fired on other students during a fire drill, killing four students and a teacher.

Remarks on Departure from Entebbe, Uganda, and an Exchange With Reporters
March 25, 1998

Jonesboro Incident

The President. Just before I left the hotel this morning, I talked to the Governor of Arkansas and extended my personal condolences and sorrow about the terrible incident in Jonesboro yesterday. I attempted to call the mayor who is an old friend of mine, but I haven't reached him yet.

I just want to say again how profoundly sad I am and how disturbed I am. I've been thinking about this for the last several hours. This is the third incident in the last few months involving young children and violence in schools, and I'm going to ask the Attorney General to find whatever experts there are in our country on this and try to analyze this terrible tragedy to see whether there are any common elements in this incident and the other two, and whether it indicates any further action on our part.

Today the people in my home State and a town I know very well are grieving. They're suffering losses. And we should focus on that. But I do think, in the weeks to come, we have to analyze these incidents and see whether or not we can learn anything that will tell us what we can do to prevent further ones.

Q. Do you have any thoughts about how to stop this? I mean, if you've been thinking about it, anything come to mind, sir?

The President. I don't want to say too much until we have a chance to analyze them. I don't know enough about the facts of this incident. The facts of this incident are just now coming out. I've read, obviously, all the latest wire reports I can get, and frankly I'm not sure I know enough about the other two to draw any conclusions.

I don't want the American people to jump to any conclusions, but when three horrible tragedies like this involving young people who take other people's lives and then in the process destroy their own, we have to see if there are some common elements. And we'll look and do our best to do the right thing.

Q. Do you suspect that there are some common elements, sir?

The President. Well, the circumstances certainly seem to have a lot in common. What we need to know is what's behind the circumstances. As I said, I think that the American people today should send their thoughts, their prayers, their hopes to the people in Jonesboro.

But in the weeks ahead, we need to look into this very closely and see what, if anything, we can find. And then, if we do find some patterns, we ought to take whatever action seems appropriate.

President's Visit to Rwanda

Q. Your trip to Rwanda, could you give us just a little advance word of what you hope to accomplish there, sir?

The President. Obviously, I hope that my trip there will help to avoid further killing along the ethnic lines and bring the attention of the world to this in a way that will have an impact on ethnic conflicts in other parts of the world. And then I'm going to come back here to the regional meeting that President Museveni has agreed to host, and I hope we'll come out with a statement there that will allow us to make further progress.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. at Entebbe Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas; Mayor Hubert A. Brodell of Jonesboro, AR; and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Genocide Survivors in Kigali, Rwanda
March 25, 1998

Thank you, Mr. President. First, let me thank you, Mr. President, and Vice President Kagame, and your wives for making Hillary and me and our delegation feel so welcome. I'd also like to thank the young students who met us and the musicians, the dancers who were outside. I thank especially the survivors of the genocide and those who are working to rebuild your country for spending a little time with us before we came in here.

I have a great delegation of Americans with me, leaders of our Government, leaders of our Congress, distinguished American citizens. We're all very grateful to be here. We thank the diplomatic corps for being here and the members of the Rwandan Government and especially the citizens.

I have come today to pay the respects of my Nation to all who suffered and all who perished in the Rwandan genocide. It is my hope that through this trip, in every corner of the world today and tomorrow, their story will be told; that 4 years ago in this beautiful, green, lovely land, a clear and conscious decision was made by those then in power that the peoples of this country would not live side by side in peace.

During the 90 days that began on April 6 in 1994, Rwanda experienced the most extensive slaughter in this blood-filled century we are about to leave: families murdered in their homes, people hunted down, as they fled, by soldiers and militia, through farmland and woods as if they were animals.

From Kibuye in the west to Kibungo in the east, people gathered seeking refuge in churches by the thousands, in hospitals, in schools. And when they were found, the old and the sick, the women and children alike, they were killed, killed because their identity card said they were Tutsi or because they had a Tutsi parent or because someone thought they looked like a Tutsi or slain, like thousands of Hutus, because they protected Tutsis or would not countenance a policy that sought to wipe out people who just the day before, and for years before, had been their friends and neighbors.

The Government-led effort to exterminate Rwanda's Tutsi and moderate Hutus, as you know better than me, took at least a million lives. Scholars of these sorts of events say that the killers, armed mostly with machetes and clubs, nonetheless did their work 5 times as fast as the mechanized gas chambers used by the Nazis.

It is important that the world know that these killings were not spontaneous or accidental. It is important that the world hear what your President just said: They were most certainly not the result of ancient tribal struggles. Indeed, these people had lived together for centuries before the events the President described began to unfold.

These events grew from a policy aimed at the systematic destruction of a people. The ground for violence was carefully prepared, the airwaves poisoned with hate, casting the Tutsis as scapegoats for the problems of Rwanda, denying their humanity. All of this was done, clearly, to make it easy for otherwise reluctant people to participate in wholesale slaughter.

Lists of victims, name by name, were actually drawn up in advance. Today, the images of all that, haunt us all: the dead choking the Kigara River, floating to Lake Victoria. In their fate, we are reminded of the capacity for people everywhere, not just in Rwanda and certainly not just in Africa, but the capacity for people everywhere, to slip into pure evil. We cannot abolish that capacity, but we must never accept it. And we know it can be overcome.

The international community, together with nations in Africa, must bear its share of responsibility for this tragedy, as well. We did not act quickly enough after the killing began. We should not have allowed the refugee camps to become safe havens for the killers. We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide. We cannot change the past, but we can and must do everything in our power to help you build a future without fear and full of hope.

We owe to those who died and to those who survived, who loved them, our every effort to increase our vigilance and strengthen our stand against those who would commit such atrocities in the future, here or elsewhere. Indeed, we owe to all the peoples of the world who are at risk because each bloodletting hastens the next as the value of human life is degraded and violence becomes tolerated, the unimaginable becomes more conceivable, we owe to all the people in the world our best efforts to organize ourselves so that we can maximize the chances of preventing these events. And where they cannot be prevented, we can move more quickly to minimize the horror.

So let us challenge ourselves to build a world in which no branch of humanity, because of national, racial, ethnic, or religious origin, is again threatened with destruction because of those characteristics of which people should rightly be proud. Let us work together as a community of civilized nations to strengthen our ability to prevent and, if necessary, to stop genocide.

To that end, I am directing my administration to improve, with the international community, our system for identifying and spotlighting nations in danger of genocidal violence, so that we can assure worldwide awareness of impending threats. It may seem strange to you here, especially the many of you who lost members of your family, but all over the world there were people like me sitting in offices, day after day after day, who did not fully appreciate the depth and the speed with which you were being engulfed by this unimaginable terror.

We have seen, too—and I want to say again—that genocide can occur anywhere. It is not an African phenomenon and must never be viewed as such. We have seen it in industrialized Europe; we have seen it in Asia. We must have global vigilance. And never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence.

Secondly, we must, as an international community, have the ability to act when genocide threatens. We are working to create that capacity here in the Great Lakes region, where the memory is still fresh. This afternoon in Entebbe leaders from central and eastern Africa will meet with me to launch an effort to build a coalition to prevent genocide in this region. I thank the leaders who have stepped forward to make this commitment. We hope the effort can be a model for all the world, because our sacred task is to work to banish this greatest crime against humanity.

Events here show how urgent the work is. In the northwest part of your country, attacks by those responsible for the slaughter in 1994 continue today. We must work as partners with Rwanda to end this violence and allow your people to go on rebuilding your lives and your nation.

Third, we must work now to remedy the consequences of genocide. The United States has provided assistance to Rwanda to settle the uprooted and restart its economy, but we must do more. I am pleased that America will become the first nation to contribute to the new Genocide Survivors Fund. We will contribute this year $2 million, continue our support in the years to come, and urge other nations to do the same, so that survivors and their communities can find the care they need and the help they must have.

Mr. President, to you, and to you, Mr. Vice President, you have shown great vision in your efforts to create a single nation in which all

citizens can live freely and securely. As you pointed out, Rwanda was a single nation before the European powers met in Berlin to carve up Africa. America stands with you, and will continue helping the people of Rwanda to rebuild their lives and society.

You spoke passionately this morning in our private meeting about the need for grassroots efforts, for the development projects which are bridging divisions and clearing a path to a better future. We will join with you to strengthen democratic institutions, to broaden participation, to give all Rwandans a greater voice in their own governance. The challenges you face are great, but your commitment to lasting reconciliation and inclusion is firm.

Fourth, to help ensure that those who survived, in the generations to come, never again suffer genocidal violence, nothing is more vital than establishing the rule of law. There can be no place in Rwanda that lasts without a justice system that is recognized as such.

We applaud the efforts of the Rwandan Government to strengthen civilian and military justice systems. I am pleased that our Great Lakes justice initiative will invest $30 million to help create throughout the region judicial systems that are impartial, credible, and effective. In Rwanda these funds will help to support courts, prosecutors, and police, military justice, and cooperation at the local level.

We will also continue to pursue justice through our strong backing for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The United States is the largest contributor to this tribunal. We are frustrated, as you are, by the delays in the tribunal's work. As we know, we must do better. Now that administrative improvements have begun, however, the tribunal should expedite cases through group trials and fulfill its historic mission.

We are prepared to help, among other things, with witness relocation, so that those who still fear can speak the truth in safety. And we will support the War Crimes Tribunal for as long as it is needed to do its work, until the truth is clear and justice is rendered.

Fifth, we must make it clear to all those who would commit such acts in the future that they too must answer for their acts, and they will. In Rwanda, we must hold accountable all those who may abuse human rights, whether insurgents or soldiers. Internationally, as we meet here, talks are underway at the United Nations to establish a permanent international criminal court. Rwanda and the difficulties we have had with this special tribunal underscores the need for such a court. And the United States will work to see that it is created.

I know that in the face of all you have endured, optimism cannot come easily to any of you. Yet I have just spoken, as I said, with several Rwandans who survived the atrocities, and just listening to them gave me reason for hope. You see countless stories of courage around you every day as you go about your business here. Men and women who survived and go on, children who recover the light in their eyes remind us that at the dawn of a new millennium there is only one crucial division among the peoples of the Earth. And believe me, after over 5 years of dealing with these problems, I know it is not the divisions between Hutu and Tutsi, or Serb or Croatian and Muslim and Bosnian, or Arab and Jew, or Catholic and Protestant in Ireland, or black and white. It is really the line between those who embrace the common humanity we all share and those who reject it.

It is the line between those who find meaning in life through respect and cooperation and who, therefore, embrace someone to look down on, someone to trample, someone to punish and, therefore, embrace war. It is the line between those who look to the future and those who cling to the past. It is the line between those who give up their resentment and those who believe they will absolutely die if they have to release one bit grievance. It is the line between those who confront every day with a clenched fist and those who confront every day with an open hand. That is the only line that really counts when all is said and done.

To those who believe that God made each of us in His own image, how could we choose the darker road? When you look at those children who greeted us as we got off that plane today, how could anyone say they did not want those children to have a chance to have their own children, to experience the joy of another morning sunrise, to learn the normal lessons of life, to give something back to their people? When you strip it all away, whether we're talking about Rwanda or some other distant troubled spot, the world is divided according to how people believe they draw meaning from life.

And so I say to you, though the road is hard and uncertain and there are many difficulties

ahead, and like every other person who wishes to help, I doubtless will not be able to do everything I would like to do, there are things we can do. And if we set about the business of doing them together, you can overcome the awful burden that you have endured. You can put a smile on the face of every child in this country, and you can make people once again believe that they should live as people were living who were singing to us and dancing for us today.

That's what we have to believe. That is what I came here to say. And that is what I wish for you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. at Kigali Airport. In his remarks, he referred to President Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda and his wife, Sarafina, and Vice President Paul Kagame and his wife, Janet. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Communique: Entebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity
March 25, 1998

JOINT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Entebbe Summit of Heads of State and Government

At the joint invitation of H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of the Republic of Uganda and H.E. President William Jefferson Clinton of the United States of America, their excellencies Mr. Daniel T. arap Moi, President of the Republic of Kenya, Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Benjamin William Mkapa, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Laurent Desire Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, met on Wednesday 25 March, 1998 at Entebbe, Uganda.

The exchange of views between the African leaders and the President of the United States marks a new beginning, launching a process of defining and building a U.S.-Africa partnership for the 21st Century. The Heads of State and Government reaffirm the historical bonds between the people of America and Africa. We pledge to deepen these ties through a lasting partnership rooted in common values and recognition of our interdependence, and built upon mutual respect and the sovereign equality of nations. The Leaders commit themselves to honor and execute agreements mutually concluded by all the parties to rigorously pursue Africa's economic growth and transformation, and full integration into the global economy.

Putting Partnership into Practice:

The Heads of State and Government recognize that to effect this new, genuine and transparent partnership, there is a need to commit ourselves to the identification and acknowledgment of both our mutual and divergent interests, the pursuit of free and frank discussions, and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

A Partnership Built on Principle and a Shared Vision:

The Heads of State and Government recognize that a lasting partnership must be built on the principles of shared ownership, joint responsibility, and full transparency.

The Heads of State and Government further acknowledge a shared vital interest in long-term meaningful engagement. We affirm that Africa and the United States hold a mutual interest: in fostering Africa's economic and political transformation and full integration into the global economy, and in promoting democratic participation and respect for human rights. We affirm that social, economic and political inclusion is the foundation for lasting peace and stability. The Leaders declared that African and American security interests alike will be advanced by a joint attack on the transnational problems of terrorism, disease, proliferation of weapons, drug trafficking and environmental degradation.

On Building a New Economic Future:

Recognizing that Africa's stability, and democracy's viability, are rooted in the alleviation of

poverty and the achievement of sustainable economic development, the Heads of State and Government commit themselves to a series of measures designed to speed Africa's transformation and full integration into the global economy, and to expand mutually beneficial trade and investment opportunities:

- The Leaders commit themselves to fostering an expanded African and international dialogue, aimed at defining strategies to facilitate Africa's global integration that are as flexible and creative as those applied to post-war Europe and Asia;
- The Heads of State and Government reaffirm the importance of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and East African Cooperation initiatives to facilitate regional economic integration and create a larger regional market, and commit themselves to identifying ways and means to accelerate these and other efforts;
- Endorsing the conclusions of the World Bank Summit convened in Kampala in January 1998, the Leaders agree to target their own efforts in four critical areas, and to encourage the multilateral institutions to also fully support:

  the development of a sustained international dialogue, based on mutual respect, on how to ensure that mandated economic reform programs reflect the specific circumstances of individual countries;

  the expansion of external resource flows, directed, in particular, at human resource development, infrastructure, rural development and research;

  increased investment in the physical infrastructure required to sustain regional trade and integration;

  building African capacity to lead the economic reform process through transparent and accountable political and economic institutions.
- The United States affirms the priority it attaches to speedy implementation of President Clinton's Partnership for Economic Growth and the enactment of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, legislation that will permit broader market access for African goods;
- The Heads of State and Government affirm the African Growth and Opportunity Act as a major step forward in U.S.-African economic relations, but acknowledge that this effort to provide greater market access for African goods must be complemented by efforts to increase African capacity to diversify economies and produce exportable goods;
- The Heads of State and Government pledge to work together to explore ways and means of ensuring that this Act, and other measures including but not limited to initiatives of the multilateral financial institutions, reflect and build upon the diversity, in both circumstances and approach, of Africa's national economies;
- The Heads of State and Government also emphasize the critical need to further strengthen, in particular, agricultural production and processing, including through the transfer of technologies;
- The Heads of State and Government welcome the decision of the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), to target $500 million for infrastructure investment in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- In the interest of further expanding U.S. private investment in the region and across Africa, the Heads of State and Government are committed to undertaking concrete measures aimed at promoting African investment opportunities, and to building African capacity to further enhance the economic policy environment;
- In recognition of the African desire for increased self-sufficiency and the dangers of aid dependency, the Heads of State and Government agree that an accelerated effort should be made to use foreign assistance as a tool for the enhancement of trade, investment and capital formation, as well as for sustainable economic development;
- The Heads of State and Government recognize the continuing obstacle that the debt burden poses to Africa's economic transformation, and reaffirm their collective determination to fully implement innovative approaches to the management and lessening of the debt burden;

- The Heads of State and Government commend ongoing African efforts, as well as those of Africa's partners, to increase transparency, fight corruption and support better business practices, and welcome regional and continental efforts to further these aims.

On Condemnation of Acts of Genocide

The Heads of State and Government recognize the accomplishment of the Government of Rwanda in halting the 1994 genocide, condemn all acts of genocide and pledge to undertake a concerted effort to prevent is resurgence. To this end:

- All Heads of State and Government condemn the continued atrocities of the ex-FAR, the Interahamwe and their allies, pledge to work together to prohibit future atrocities in the Great Lakes region, including those aided and abetted by external arms suppliers, call for the revitalization and expansion of the UN Arms Flow Commission, and are committed to publicize and duly consider its findings;
- African Heads of State and Government pledge to deny extremist networks the use of their territory, postal services, airports, financial institutions, passports, road networks and communications systems. The Summit calls upon all states to implement tight controls over these networks abroad;
- All Heads of State and Government pledge to support the efforts of the OAU Eminent Personalities Study of the Rwanda Genocide and the Surrounding Events, and to duly consider its findings and recommendations;
- The United States commits itself to working with regional partners and others to begin exploring, within one month's time, the creation of an international Coalition Against Genocide, the aims of which might include: fostering international coordination in support of regional efforts to enforce anti-genocide measures; providing a forum for high-level deliberations on long-term efforts to prevent genocide in the future; and ensuring international support for the findings of the OAU Study;
- The Heads of State and Government commend the Government of Rwanda for its efforts to render justice for the victims of the genocide and to prevent acts of revenge. We call upon the international community to redouble its efforts to work with the Government of Rwanda to achieve these goals;
- The Heads of State and Government recognize recent progress made by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, but express their concern about the slow pace with which the Tribunal's work has proceeded, urge the ICTR to do everything within its power to accelerate the processing of its cases, and call on all nations to cooperate fully and expeditiously with the Tribunal;
- The Heads of State and Government affirm that the restoration of regional peace and stability requires an end to the culture of impunity and the restoration of the rule of law, and pledge their best efforts to strengthening national systems of civilian and military justice. The United States commits itself through the Great Lakes Justice Initiative, to an expanded effort to help the public and private sectors in Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo develop justice systems that are impartial, credible, and effective, and to support efforts to promote inclusion, coexistence, cooperation and security;

On Fostering Democratic Participation, Human Rights and Regional Stability:

The Heads of State and Government affirm that the destiny and security of Africa rest primarily in the hands of Africans themselves. The Leaders pledge to seek additional resources and, in consultation with the OAU and UN, to build upon ongoing efforts, both regionally and internationally, to strengthen and sustain regional security and African peacekeeping capacity. The Leaders condemn, and pledge continued cooperative efforts to resist, all forms of cross-border terrorism directed against civilians.

Recognizing that the stability of the region also depends on the sustainability of African democratization, the Heads of State and Government endorse the core principles of inclusion, the rule of law, respect for human rights, the equality of all men and women, and the right of citizens to regularly elect their leaders freely and to participate fully in the decision-making which affects them. Further:

- The Heads of State and Government pledge to pursue a dialogue on democratization that: accepts these core principles; recognizes that there is no fixed model for democratic institutions or transformation; explores alternative approaches to the democratic management of cultural diversity; and takes into account differences in historical experience;
- The Heads of State and Government recognize the central role of freely-elected governments in leading Africa's economic and political transformation, the need to ensure that those governments attain the capacity to lead effectively and transparently, and the need to foster a healthy and mutually-accountable relationship between elected governments and a vibrant and responsible civil society;
- The Heads of State and Government affirm the vital role national organizations of civil society can play in easing the transition from conflict and authoritarian rule to participatory democracy, and in contributing to the region's social, political and economic development;
- Recognizing the critical roles local and national institutions of government play in providing a foundation for democracy, the Heads of State and Government urge all concerned that increased emphasis be given to building the capacity of these institutions;
- The Heads of State and Government underscore a shared commitment to respect for human rights, as articulated in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights;
- The Heads of State and Government urge the international community to take note of the lessons learned from the region's tragic past. We pledge to uphold humanitarian principles, including the right of civilians to assistance in situations of conflict, and the protection of refugees and noncombatants. We call on the international community and host countries to prevent any future delivery of humanitarian assistance to armed combatants; to work to insure that refugees are not subjected to political intimidation; and to work closely with regional actors, both governmental and non-governmental, to insure access by humanitarian providers to all populations in need;
- The Heads of State and Government applaud the commitment and effort made by the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, and by emerging sub-regional bodies, such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, to foster African-led approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution and pledge to work towards building further international support for these efforts.

On Pursuing the Partnership Into the Future:

The Heads of State and Government unanimously agree to explore mechanisms for regular consultations and encounters at the highest level between African and U.S. leaders. Noting the importance of mutual understanding between African and American citizens, we call for expanded cultural and educational exchanges.

The African leaders noted with appreciation President Clinton's historic visit to Africa and express the hope that his presence on the continent has opened a new chapter in Africa-U.S. relations. The Heads of State and Government recognize that the development of a lasting partnership, characterized by shared ownership and meaningful engagement, will require commitment, time and patience. The Leaders commit themselves to pursue this objective in the spirit of mutual respect, to deepen a frank and honest dialogue, to evaluate jointly progress made in the months ahead, and to secure a meaningful and lasting partnership for the 21st Century.

The President of the U.S.A. and the African Heads of State and Government express deep appreciation to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Government and the people of Uganda for the warm hospitality accorded to them during their visit to Uganda.

Done at Entebbe, Uganda on Wednesday 25 March, 1998.

WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON,
President of the United States of America.
DANIEL T. ARAP MOI,
President of the Republic of Kenya.
BENJAMIN WILLIAM MKAPA,
President of the United Republic of Tanzania.
MELES ZENAWI,
Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI,
President of the Republic of Uganda.
PASTEUR BIZIMUNGU,
President of the Republic of Rwanda.
LAURENT DESIRE KABILA,
President of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Entebbe, Uganda

25. March, 1998

NOTE: The joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at the Entebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity
March 25, 1998

President Museveni, President Moi, Prime Minister Meles, President Bizimungu, President Mkapa, President Kabila, Secretary General Salim, to our distinguished guests, all. Let me, first of all, thank the representatives of all the governments who are here and the leaders who have come to Entebbe to share a common vision of a brighter future for this region.

We seek to deepen the progress that has been made and to meet the tough challenges that remain. We came to Entebbe because we share a commitment to strengthen our cooperation, to build a partnership for the 21st century that will benefit all our people. We understand, and the last statement I made at our meeting was, that these goals will not be met in one meeting or one day or one year. But we have formed a solid foundation for progress in the future. Our challenge as we leave Entebbe is to bring to life the commitment in the remarkable document we have just signed.

What is in the document? First, we have agreed to deepen our efforts to promote democracy and respect for human rights, the precious soil in which peace and prosperity grow. When men and women alike are treated with dignity, when they have a say in decisions that affect their lives, societies are better equipped to seize the opportunities of the future.

We have emphasized the importance of freely elected, accountable governments, affirmed the vital role of civic organizations in building strong and vibrant societies, and pledged to uphold humanitarian principles, including the protection and care of refugees.

America knows from our own experience that there is no single blueprint for a successful democracy. We're still working in our country to create what our Founders called a more perfect Union. We've been at it for 222 years now. But we also know that while there is no single blueprint, freedom nonetheless is a universal aspiration. Human rights are not bestowed on the basis of wealth or race, of gender or ethnicity, of culture or region. They are the birthright of all men and women everywhere.

If we work together to strengthen democracy and respect human rights, we can help this continent reach its full potential in the 21st century, its true greatness, which has too long been denied. We can deepen the ties among our peoples. We can be a force for good together, and all our nations can be proud.

Second, we have agreed to work together to build a new economic future where the talents of Africa's people are unleashed, the doors of opportunity are opened to all, and countries move from the margins to the mainstream of the global economy. We committed to work on finding new strategies to hasten Africa's global integration. We pledged to speed the regional cooperation that is already underway, to encourage common standards for openness and anticorruption, to continue to be responsive to the burden of debt.

A key part of our effort is expanding the ties of trade and investment between our countries so that African development and Asian growth—and American growth, excuse me, reinforce one another. We want to reward each

other for working together. Before I left for Africa, I told the American people that it was in our interest to help Africa grow and blossom and reach its full potential. I believe that.

I want to thank the Members of the United States House of Representatives who are on this trip with me for their leadership in the passage in the House of the "African Growth and Opportunity Act." I am committed to the swift passage of that act in the United States Senate and to signing it when I return home. I am very pleased that our Overseas Private Investment Corporation will be targeting half a billion dollars for infrastructure investment in sub-Saharan Africa.

Third, we have agreed to work together to banish genocide from this region and this continent. Every African child has the right to grow up in safety and peace. We condemn the perpetrators of the continued atrocities in Rwanda and pledge to work together to end the horrors of this region. That means reviving the U.N. Arms Flow Commission; acting on the recommendations of the OAU study on the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath; encouraging accelerated progress in bringing criminals against humanity to justice; denying safe havens or services to extremist organizations; and developing durable justice systems that are credible, impartial, and effective. Our efforts come too late for yesterday's victims. They must be in time to prevent tomorrow's victims.

Here today—and this is very important—we have pledged to find new ways to work together to solve conflicts before they explode into crises and to act to stop them more quickly when they do.

We have pursued our discussion in a spirit of candor and mutual respect, and I want to thank all the participants for being honest and open in our conversations. America shares a stake in Africa's success, as I've said. If African nations become stronger, as they surely will, if they become more dynamic, as they clearly are, we can become even better partners in meeting our common challenges. Your stability, your security, your prosperity will add to our own. And our vitality can and must contribute to yours.

I've learned a lot here in Entebbe today, listening and remembering. The lessons I have learned on this trip I will carry back to Washington, as I'm sure the rest of our delegation will. We've agreed to build on this summit with regular, high-level meetings. We will look for results of our efforts not only in statements like this one today, with very high visibility, but in quiet places far from the halls of government, in communities and households all across our countries, where ordinary men and women strive each day to build strong families, to find good jobs, to pass on better lives for their children. They are the reason we are here. And it is because of them that we all leave Entebbe determined to put our partnership into practice, to make our dreams and ideals real.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. at the Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda; President Daniel T. arap Moi of Kenya; Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia; President Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda; President Benjamin William Mkapa of Tanzania; President Laurent Desire Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo; and Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim of the Organization of African Unity.

Remarks During a Visit to the Victoria Mxenge Housing Project in Cape Town, South Africa

March 26, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Madam Mayor, Patricia, thank you all for making us feel so welcome.

I really didn't have a choice about coming here because my wife said to me when she got home one year ago from South Africa, she said, "You will not believe this housing project I visited. These women are building their own houses. They're saving their own money. They're moving out of shacks and shanty villages into nice neighborhoods with good houses and a

good future for their children, and they're helping themselves. And I want you to go and see it."

And perhaps you have this situation in your family, but when Hillary says she wants me to go and see something, that means: You are going to see this at the first moment. [*Laughter*]

So we got in late last night, and we got up this morning, and we came out here. I thank Mrs. Mbeki back there for showing us her home. Thank you, ma'am, and congratulations to you on your nice home. And I thank the ladies who are here who let me visit their construction project. And I said almost 30 years ago I actually spent the whole summer building houses. And when I was out helping you I realized it's pretty hard work, and that's why I went into politics, so I wouldn't have to work so hard anymore. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say, on a serious note, I believe what you are doing here—building your homes, saving for them, taking a small amount of money, and building a very nice house—should be a model for people who don't have a lot of money all over Africa and all over the world. If you can do it here, then in villages all over the world, people can do the same thing.

And I came here today partly in the hope that through the coverage from——

[*At this point, there was a gap in the transcript due to an incomplete audiotape. The balance of the President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

The President. ——that all over the world people will see what you are doing in this neighborhood and say, "I want my neighborhood to be like that. I want my children to live in good homes. I want them to have a good future. I want people to believe that they can do better with their lives." And we intend to support you.

Today I'm pleased to announce that our United States AID program, which supports projects like this, will spend another $3 million this year to try to help build more houses to make more success stories so we can see more people like Mrs. Mbeki and her family.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11:45 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Theresa Soloman of Cape Town; and Patricia Matolengwe, director, and Veliswa Mbeki, founding member, Victoria Mxenge Housing Project. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Deputy President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa in Cape Town

March 26, 1998

President's Visit

Q. Mr. President, what did you discuss, sir?

President Clinton. First of all, I thanked Mr. Mbeki on behalf of the United States for the remarkable work that he and Vice President Gore have done on their Binational Commission on a whole range of issues affecting the economy, the environment, education, and a lot of our foreign policy issues. It's been a remarkable partnership, and it owes a lot to the leadership of Mr. Mbeki—a remarkable relationship.

So we talked about that. We talked about some of the progress we are making in our long-term objectives for Africa. I reviewed my trip for him, talked about the declaration that the heads of government and state made yesterday in Entebbe.

I pointed out that the United States has just made its first purchase—the Department of Defense has—from South Africa of a mobile demining equipment which has the interesting name of Chubby—named after me maybe. [*Laughter*] But it will help us a lot. We are increasing our budget this year for demining around the world, taking up these landmines. And President Mandela and South Africa have been leaders in the world of the movement to rid the world of landmines, and I think it's quite fitting that they have produced this great piece of equipment that we'll be able to use to take even more of the mines out of the land.

Q. What's your impression, Mr. President, being the first American President to South Africa?

President Clinton. Well, I'm thrilled. I've wanted to come here, as I've told you many times, for a long, long time. And Hillary was here a year ago this month; of course, the Vice President comes frequently; so I've heard a lot about it. And I've studied these pictures of Cape Town for years. I couldn't wait to—it's even more beautiful in person than it is in the photographs.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—new perception of Africa, Mr. President, now that you've been here for the last 2 days?

President Clinton. I'm sorry, what did you say?

Q. Are you changing the perception for the American people, do you think, by being here?

President Clinton. Well, I hope so. I hope—one of the main purposes of this trip for me was to enable the American people to see the new South Africa and a new Africa, to see the good, positive things that are happening in Africa, and to understand why it is very much in the interest of the American people to have a partnership with the nations of Africa for meeting the common challenges we're going to face in the 21st century and for seizing the opportunities that we have in common.

Today, when I speak to the South Africa Parliament, I will be joined by quite a large delegation of Americans, including a significant number of American business people who are interested in trade and investment possibilities here and other places in this continent. And I hope that the American people will see that.

I think too often in the past, American images of Africa generally have come when there was a problem here or have been a part of the people thinking about traveling here because of the natural beauty and the wildlife. I don't think we see enough of the concrete possibilities for real partnership. And so I hope this trip will change that.

Situation in Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the inspectors today made an inspection of Iraqi sensitive sites, Presidential sites. Have you gotten any reports on that?

President Clinton. No, but I'm glad that they're inspecting the sites. I think that's a good thing, and it means that so far the agreement is holding. And that's all we ever wanted. We just want to see the U.N. inspectors complete their work. So I'm encouraged.

Press Secretary Mike McCurry. Last question. Thank you.

President Clinton. One for Mr. Mbeki.

Trade With Africa

Q. You're quoted on French radio, Mr. Deputy President, as saying that Mr. Clinton's formula of trade, not aid, is wrong. Did you discuss this with him?

Deputy President Mbeki. Well, I didn't say that of the President. [*Laughter*] And I've seen this particular newspaper, and it's wrong. I didn't say that. And I indeed—we receive significant amounts of aid from the U.S. Government. I don't think President Clinton is against us receiving aid. I don't think the question is correctly posed. What we are saying is, indeed, we need to move with regard to the development of Africa to address these matters of increased trade interaction between Africa and the rest of the world, including the United States, but that it's wrong to put that to say trade and therefore not aid, that you need to address both matters.

And those particular remarks were general remarks, not directed against anybody or country.

President Clinton. Let me—if I could just respond to that, my formula would be, with regard to Africa, we should have trade and aid. Indeed, I'm making an attempt at this very moment, along with our administration, to get aid levels through our United States Congress which would permit me to increase aid to Africa, to go back to our historically highest level of aid to Africa. But what I believe is that countries and individual citizens in the developing nations of the world, not just in Africa but throughout the world, will never be able to rise to the level of middle class nations with huge numbers of people earning good, sustainable incomes, unless they do it through the energy of private economic interchange, through trade and investment. I just think that the evidence is there that that is the case.

On the other hand, to get countries to the take-off point and to deal with troubled populations or disadvantaged populations within developing countries, we have to continue the aid program. So while it's true that we're putting much more emphasis on trade and investment in the last 5 years, I don't think that we should abandon our aid approach.

And in fact, just this morning, some of you went with me out to the housing project where you could see just across the highway that people had been living literally in shanties and were now in their own homes. And our aid programs contribute to the ability of people to build their own homes for themselves. Without the aid, they couldn't afford to do it. With the aid, they have a chance to have good housing and to become more prosperous citizens. So I think we should do both things.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:40 p.m. at the Cape Grace Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Address to the Parliament of South Africa in Cape Town
March 26, 1998

Thank you very much, Premier Molefe, for that fine introduction. Mr. President, Deputy President Mbeki, Madam Speaker, Mr. Chairman of the National Council of Provinces, Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, I am deeply honored to be the first American President ever to visit South Africa and even more honored to stand before this Parliament to address a South Africa truly free and democratic at last.

Joining my wife and me on this tour of Africa, and especially here, are many Members of our Congress and distinguished members of my Cabinet and administration, men and women who supported the struggle for a free South Africa, leaders of the American business community now awakening to the promise and potential of South Africa, people of all different background and beliefs.

Among them, however, are members of the Congressional Black Caucus and African-American members of my government. It is especially important for them to be here because it was not so long ago in the long span of human history that their ancestors were uprooted from this continent and sold into slavery in the United States. But now they return to Africa as leaders of the United States. Today they sit alongside the leaders of the new South Africa, united in the powerful poetry of justice

As I look out at all of you, I see our common promise. Two centuries ago, the courage and imagination that created the United States and the principles that are enshrined in our Constitution inspired men and women without a voice, across the world, to believe that one day they too could have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Now, the courage and imagination that created the new South Africa and the principles that guide your Constitution inspire all of us to be animated by the belief that one day humanity all the world over can at last be released from the bonds of hatred and bigotry.

It is tempting for Americans of all backgrounds, I think, perhaps to see too many similarities in the stories of our two countries, because sometimes similarities which appear to be profound are in fact superficial. And they can obscure the unique and complex struggle that South Africa has made to shed the chains of its past for a brighter tomorrow.

Nonetheless, in important ways, our paths do converge by a vision of real multiracial democracy bound together by healing and hope, renewal and redemption. Therefore I came here to say simply this: Let us work with each other; let us learn from each other to turn the hope we now share into a history that all of us can be proud of.

Mr. President, for millions upon millions of Americans, South Africa's story is embodied by your heroic sacrifice and your breathtaking walk "out of the darkness and into the glorious light." But you are always the first to say that the real heroes of South Africa's transformation are its people, who first walked away from the past and now move with determination, patience, and courage toward a new day and a new millennium.

We rejoice at what you have already accomplished. We seek to be your partners and your

true friends in the work that lies ahead: overcoming the lingering legacy of apartheid, seizing the promise of your rich land and your gifted people.

From our own 220-year experience with democracy we know that real progress requires, in the memorable phrase of Max Weber, "the long and slow-boring of hard boards." We know that democracy is always a work still in the making, a march toward what our own Founders called a more perfect Union.

You have every reason to be hopeful. South Africa was reborn, after all, just 4 years ago. In the short time since, you've worked hard to deepen your democracy, to spread prosperity, to educate all your people, and to strengthen the hand of justice. The promise before you is immense: a people unshackled, free to give full expression to their energy, intellect, and creativity; a nation embraced by the world, whose success is important to all our futures.

America has a profound and pragmatic stake in your success; an economic stake because we, like you, need strong partners to build prosperity; a strategic stake because of 21st century threats to our common security, from terrorism, from international crime and drug trafficking, from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, from the spread of deadly disease and the degradation of our common environment. These perils do not stop at any nation's borders. And we have a moral stake, because in overcoming your past you offer a powerful example to people who are torn by their own divisions in all parts of this Earth. Simply put, America wants a strong South Africa; America needs a strong South Africa. And we are determined to work with you as you build a strong South Africa.

In the first 4 years of your freedom, it has been our privilege to support your transition with aid and assistance. Now, as the new South Africa emerges, we seek a genuine partnership based on mutual respect and mutual reward. Like all partners, we cannot agree on everything. Sometimes our interests and our views diverge, but that is true even in family partnerships. [*Laughter*]

Nonetheless, I am convinced, we agree on most things and on the important things because we share the same basic values: a commitment to democracy and to peace, a commitment to open markets, a commitment to give all our people the tools they need to succeed in the modern world, a commitment to make elemental human rights the birth right of every single child.

Over the past 4 years, we put the building blocks of our partnership in place, starting with the Binational Commission, headed by Deputy President Mbeki and our Vice President Al Gore. This remarkable effort has given high-level energy to critical projects, from energy to education, from business development to science and technology, cutting through redtape, turning good words into concrete deeds. We are deeply indebted to you, Mr. Mbeki, for your outstanding leadership, and we thank you for it.

The BNC brings to life what I believe you call *"Masihlangane,"* the act of building together. As we look toward the future, we will seek to build together new partnerships in trade and investment through incentives such as OPEC's new Africa Opportunity Fund, already supporting two projects here in South Africa in transportation and telecommunications.

We will seek to expand joint efforts to combat the grave threat of domestic and international crime through our new FBI and customs and immigration offices here in South Africa. We will seek to strengthen our cooperation around the world, for already South Africa's leadership in extending the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and creating an Africa nuclear-free zone have made all our children's futures more secure.

I also hope we can build together to meet the persistent problems and fulfill the remarkable promise of the African continent. Yes, Africa remains the world's greatest development challenge, still plagued in places by poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, and unemployment. Yes, terrible conflicts continue to tear at the heart of the continent, as I saw yesterday in Rwanda. But from Cape Town to Kampala, from Dar es Salaam to Dakar, democracy is gaining strength; business is growing; peace is making progress. We are seeing what Deputy President Mbeki has called an African renaissance.

In coming to Africa, my motive in part was to help the American people see the new Africa with new eyes and to focus our own efforts on new policies suited to the new reality. It used to be when American policy makers thought of Africa at all, they would ask, what can we do for Africa, or whatever can we do about Africa? Those were the wrong questions.

The right question today is, what can we do with Africa?

Throughout this trip I've been talking about ideas we want to develop with our African partners to benefit all our people: ideas to improve our children's education through training and technology; to ensure that none of our children are hungry or without good health care; to build impartial, credible, and effective justice systems; to strengthen the foundations of civil society and deepen democracy; to build strong economics from the top down and from the grassroots up; to prevent conflict from erupting and to stop it quickly if it does.

Each of these efforts has a distinct mission, but all share a common approach: to help the African people help themselves to become better equipped, not only to dream their own dreams but, at long last, to make those dreams come true. Yesterday in Entebbe we took an important step forward. There, with leaders from eastern and central Africa, we pledged to work together to build a future in which the doors of opportunity are open to all and countries move from the margins to the mainstream of the global economy to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights in all nations, to banish genocide from the region and this continent so that every African child can grow up in safety and peace.

As Africa grows strong, America grows stronger through prosperous consumers on this continent and new African products brought to our markets, through new partners to fight and find solutions to common problems from the spread of AIDS and malaria to the greenhouse gases that are changing our climate, and most of all, through the incalculable benefit of new ideas, new energy, new passion from the minds and hearts of the people charting their own future on this continent. Yes, Africa still needs the world, but more that ever it is equally true that the world needs Africa.

Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, at the dawn of the 21st century we have a remarkable opportunity to leave behind this century's darkest moments while fulfilling its most brilliant possibilities, not just in South Africa, nor just in America, but in all the world. I come to this conviction well aware of the obstacles that lie in the path. From Bosnia to the Middle East, from Northern Ireland to the Great Lakes region of Africa, we have seen the terrible price people pay when they insist on fighting and killing and keeping down their neighbors. For all the wonders of the modern world, we are still bedeviled by notions that our racial, ethnic, tribal, and religious differences are somehow more important that our common humanity, that we can only lift ourselves up if we have someone to look down on. But then I look around this hall. There is every conceivable difference, on the surface, among the Americans and the South Africans in this great Hall of Freedom. Different races, different religions, different native tongues, but underneath, the same hopes, the same dreams, the same values. We all cherish family and faith, work and community, freedom and responsibility. We all want our children to grow up in a world where their talents are matched by their opportunities. And we all have come to believe that our countries will be stronger and our futures will be brighter as we let go of our hatreds and our fears and as we realize that what we have in common really does matter far more than our differences.

The preamble to your Constitution says, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity." In the context of your own history and the experience of the world in this century, those simple words are a bold clarion call to the future, an affirmation of humanity at its best, an assurance that those who build can triumph over those who tear down, that truly, the peacemakers are blessed, and they shall inherit the Earth.

Thank you, and God bless the new South Africa.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the Chamber of the House of Assembly. In his remarks, he referred to Premier Popo Molefe of the North-West Province; President Nelson Mandela and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; Frene Ginwala, Speaker of the House; and Premier Patrick Lekota, Free State Province, and Chair, National Council of Provinces. The President also referred to the U.S.-South Africa Binational Commission (BNC).

Statement on the Death of Representative Steven Schiff
March 26, 1998

I was deeply saddened to hear that Congressman Steve Schiff has died after a courageous year-long battle with cancer. Hillary and I extend our sympathies to his wife, Marcia, and their two children. Steve's constituents in the First Congressional District of New Mexico and people across America have lost an effective legislator and an honorable public servant.

His work on behalf of this Nation will long be remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.

Interview With Tavis Smiley of Black Entertainment Television in Cape Town
March 26, 1998

President's Visit to Africa

Mr. Smiley. Mr. President, nice to see you. Thanks for talking to us. Let me start by asking you how you're holding up. I'm having—it's my first time traveling in the White House press pool; I'm tired of trying to keep up with you. You must be tired.

The President. Yes, I have a couple periods during the day still where I get a little tired or jet-lagged. We've been traveling at night a lot. But the trip is so exciting it kind of keeps the adrenalin flowing.

Mr. Smiley. Let me ask you, if I can, Mr. President, to share your impressions of Africa. You at this point have now visited three African countries, three quite diverse African countries. I'm wondering if you can share your impressions; is Africa what you expected it to be upon your arrival?

The President. Yes, it's what I expected it to be, but it's even more interesting, more fascinating than I though it would be. It's a place that's just brimming with energy and, I think, basic good will on the part of the citizens of the countries that I met. I think it's a place of great opportunity for the United States. I think it's a place that we should be far more concerned about than we have been in the past and a place that can be a good partner for us in dealing with the challenges of this new century we're about to enter.

Mr. Smiley. And to move, if I can, from talking about the continent to the content of some of what you've had to say—and I'm wondering specifically, Mr. President, how you think some of your remarks are going to play back home, particularly to those outside of the African-American community? You've made some rather provocative statements; many African-Americans have been pleased by those remarks. You said in Ghana that we all came out of Africa; folks were surprised to hear you say that. In Uganda, you said that everyone—that European-Americans, rather, had benefited from the fruits of the slave trade and that we were wrong in that as well. In Rwanda, you said we didn't move fast enough to deal with the genocide happening there. Some provocative statements, again, pleasing the African-American community in large, I think, but how do you think those provocative statements are going to play outside of the black community?

The President. Well, I would hope that they would play well. At least, I hope that they would prompt all my fellow Americans to think. What I said about us all coming out of Africa is, as far as we all know, absolutely accurate. That is, the oldest known species of humanity from all the archaeological and anthropological studies are people who were in Africa. We just—I just read an article about two people walking upright, where they found footprints that are 2 million years old right near where we're doing this interview. So that's just a simple fact.

When I talked about the slave trade, I meant that when I was in Uganda. The Europeans basically organized the slave trade. They yanked Africans out of their lives and turned them into slaves. But Americans bought them, and therefore, we were part of the slave trade. Quite

apart from the injury to the slaves that were in America, what we did to Africa was wrong. And I thought it was important to acknowledge that, that it wasn't just—that Americans weren't just simply passive in that.

And finally, I think we all recognize that the world was not particularly well organized for the breathtaking speed of the genocide in Rwanda. Take it out of Africa—if you look at what happened in Bosnia, where many, many people were killed and millions were dislocated, it took the international community more than 2 years to get organized enough for the U.N. to support a NATO action that NATO took and then for NATO to come in with our allies—Russia and the others, many other countries, two dozen other countries—to stop the killing in Bosnia and effect a peace settlement.

In Rwanda, where you had a million people killed in 90 days, it is simply a fact that the United States, Europe, Japan, and the whole United Nations, the whole world community—we were not organized for or prepared for the consequences.

I'm proud of what the United States did when we finally got to Rwanda. We saved hundreds of thousands of people's lives who were refugees, children who might have died from dehydration and disease, for example. But I think this is the—what happened in Rwanda should be a clear message to not just Americans but to the world community that these are things that we can stop from happening and keep countries on a more positive course if we're well organized.

And it was particularly tragic in Rwanda, because Rwanda is not a country that was created by European colonial mapmakers. It was a coherent entity long before colonialism in Africa. And the Hutus and the Tutsis lived together literally for centuries, speaking the same language, having the same religious practices, dividing their society on lines that were quite different from tribal lines. So it was a world-class tragedy.

Mr. Smiley. Let me ask you whether or not these, as I termed them earlier, provocative comments that you made were planned. I talked to a lot of folks in the White House pool, and no one will tell me that they had any idea that you were going to make the kinds of statements you've been making. I'm wondering whether or not, then, these statements were planned or whether you got caught up in the moment where the emotion is overtaking you. Were they planned remarks?

The President. One was planned, and two were remarks that I thought I ought to say to try to get the American people to identify more closely with Africa and then to look to the future—to a common future.

We clearly planned to acknowledge the deficiencies of the United States and the world community in dealing with the Rwanda genocide. The Secretary of State had already been here and done the same thing, and I thought it was important that I do it as well, to focus the attention of the world on what we have to do to keep things like this from happening in the future, not just in Africa but everywhere.

The comment about our involvement in the slave trade and what it did to Africa, as well as what it did to African-Americans who became slaves, was a comment that I decided to make based on my feelings about the situation and my reading of what would be appropriate.

The comment about how we all came out of Africa was—I think is just—to the best of our knowledge, is simply an anthropological fact and that Americans ought to know that. I don't think—I got interested in this because Hillary spent a lot of time over the last 2 years studying the origins of humankind, and I learned a lot through her extensive reading and study. And I think that it's one more way to make all Americans identify with Africa and with the common humanity we share with people across the globe.

Mr. Smiley. I know you're leaving in just a moment to go speak to Parliament here in Cape Town, South Africa, so let me squeeze out a couple quick questions, and I'll let you go. I'm wondering whether or not you think this trip is going to dispel the negative stereotypes and myths about Africa. You've said repeatedly you want to put a new face on Africa for Americans.

My sense is that a lot of what's happening here, certainly much of what's happening here, in my own judgment, is not being portrayed accurately by the American media, some things being taken out of context. I'm thinking now specifically of the incident in Ghana when the crowd lunged first. I know you were concerned about people on the front line. That was not initially portrayed by the American media as accurately as it should have been. I'm wondering whether or not you think that the trip ultimately will dispel the myths about Africa that you're concerned about, or do you think that what you

are trying to do, your efforts are in some way being overshadowed by some press people who insist on raising questions on other matters that have nothing to do with why you are here in Africa.

The President. Oh, no. Well, I think that the trip is getting, I think, basically constructive, positive, and accurate coverage back home, as nearly as I can tell. Now, in Ghana, where we had a half million people—and more if you count the people who were right outside the square there—there was a little metal fence dividing me from the people. And when I was shaking hands, the enthusiasm of the crowd was such—and this has happened to me in America, not just in Ghana, but it's the biggest crowd I've ever spoken with—there were two women there who were—and it was over 100 degrees; keep in mind it was very hot, and they had been out there a long time—and they couldn't breathe. They were literally being crushed against the fence. So what I was worried about was that just the crowd, the enthusiasm and the happiness, the ardor of the crowd would inadvertently cost those women their lives. And I was just trying to help them. But it was a wonderful, wonderful event.

I think basically this trip will end a lot of the stereotypes that people have. I think people tend to think that—who don't know much about Africa—that all they ever read is when there are troubled tribal societies and they're fighting with each other or there's one more military coup or one more failed democracy. And half the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have elected leaders of their own choosing. They're more and more interested in market economies. They're struggling to provide basic education and other services like health. And they're very interested in being a part of the world of the 21st century. And the people are so energetic, and they're intelligent people who are looking to the future.

And what I want Americans to do is to imagine what we can do with Africa in the future as partners. I believe that this trip will contribute to that, and I certainly hope it will.

Addressing the Legacy of Apartheid and Slavery

Mr. Smiley. Let me ask you, finally, Mr. President—I mentioned earlier that you are headed to speak to Parliament as soon as we leave here—as soon as you leave here. I am told that you may, may, in fact, speak to the issue of apartheid and America's complicity in that certainly for many, many years. How would you respond to particularly African-Americans back home who ask of their President, respectfully, how he could address apartheid in Africa and not address America's version of apartheid, the legacy of slavery and segregation, back at home?

The President. Well, I would say that we are addressing the legacy of slavery back home, that this race—we addressed apartheid with the Civil War, with the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, later with all the civil rights legislation. I think it's plain that there is a deep determination in America to overcome the mistakes of our past and the injustice we did.

But the race initiative that I set up in America is focused on the future. I think the same thing should be done here. While it is true that the American Government for many years, in effect, was complicit in the apartheid in South Africa by the cooperation with and support of the South African Government, it's also true that Americans had a lot to do with ending apartheid here by the sanctions, the legislation that swept cities and States across the country that the Congress eventually put forward at the national level.

So I think Mr. Mandela would say that Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds had a lot to do with creating the international climate of opposition to apartheid in South Africa.

But what we need to be doing today in South Africa and in the United States is dealing with the legacy of apartheid here and slavery and racial discrimination there, insofar as it still needs to be stamped out, but our focus ought to be on the future. The only way we can liberate people from the problems of the past is to focus on tomorrow. And that's what I'm going to do in my speech today and what I'm trying to do with the race initiative back home.

Mr. Smiley. Mr. President, thank you for your time. It's nice to see you.

The President. Thank you. It's really good to see you.

NOTE: The interview was recorded at approximately 3 p.m. at the Cape Grace Hotel for later broadcast on "BET Tonight." In his remarks, the President referred to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 27. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's News Conference With President Nelson Mandela of South Africa in Cape Town
March 27, 1998

President Mandela. Thank you, Please sit down.

President Clinton, a visit by a foreign head of state to a country is, broadly speaking, one of the most significant developments in entrenched strong political and economic relations between the countries concerned. During this last 4 years, we have received a record number of heads of states and heads of government. They have come from all continents and practically from every country. They have come from the industrial nations; they have come from the developing world. Some have advanced democratic institutions; in others, such institutions are just developing—are only just developing; in others, there are none at all.

We have received all of them, and we have welcomed those visitors because that they have taught us things which we have not known before. We have democratic countries, but where poverty of the masses of the people is rife. We have had countries where there are no popular institutions at all, but they are able to look after their people better than the so-called democratic countries.

I have visited one which is a creditor nation, which has got one of the highest standards of living in the world, which is tax-free, which has got one of the best schemes of subsidy for housing, for medical services, and where education is free and compulsory. And yet, the people in that country have no votes; they have no parliament. And yet they are looked after better than in so called democratic countries. We insist that even in those countries that people must have votes. Even though they may enjoy all the things which the masses of the people in other countries don't enjoy, democratic institutions are still critical.

So we have received heads of states and heads of government from all those countries. But the visit to our country by President Clinton is the high watermark. And I hope that the response of our parliamentarians yesterday has indicated that very clearly.

Our people have welcomed President Clinton with open arms. And it is correct that that should be so, because President Clinton, as well as the First Lady, Hillary, they have the correct instincts on the major international questions facing the world today. Whatever mistakes that they may have made—and we have made many—but there is one thing that you cannot be accused of: of not having the right instincts. And for that reason, I hold him, and almost every South African, in high respect. The fact that we have high respect for him does not mean that we have no differences. But I would like to declare that when we have differed on an issue, at the end of that, my respect for him is enhanced because I fully accept his integrity and his bona fides, but such differences are unavoidable.

One of the first heads of state I invited to this country was Fidel Castro. I have received in this country ex-president Rafsanjani of Iran. I have also invited the leader Qadhafi to this country. And I do that because our moral authority dictates that we should not abandon those who helped us in the darkest hour in the history of this country. Not only did they support us in rhetoric, they gave us the resources, for us to conduct the struggle, and the will. And those South Africans who have berated me for being loyal to our friends, literally, they can go and throw themselves into a pool. [*Laughter*] I am not going to betray the trust of those who helped us.

The United States is acknowledged far and wide as the world leader, and it is correct; that should be so. And we have, today, a leader, as I have said, whose instincts are always correct. I would like to draw attention to a very important provision in the United Nations Charter, that provision which enjoins, which calls upon all member states to try and settle their differences by peaceful methods. That is the correct position which has influenced our own approach towards problems.

We had a government which had slaughtered our people, massacred them like flies, and we had a black organization which we used for that purpose. It was very repugnant to think that we could sit down and talk with these people, but we had to subject our blood to our brains and to say, without these enemies of ours, we

can never bring about a peaceful transformation in this country. And that is what we did.

The reason why the world has opened its arms to South Africans is because we're able to sit down with our enemies and to say, "Let us stop slaughtering one another. Let's talk peace." We were complying with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. And the United States as the leader of the world should set an example to all of us to help eliminating tensions throughout the world. And one of the best ways of doing so is to call upon its enemies to say, "Let's sit down and talk peace." I have no doubt that the role of the United States as the world leader will be tremendously enhanced.

I must also point out that we are far advanced in our relations with the United States as a result of the efforts of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Vice President Al Gore. That biennial commission has achieved—has had a high rate of performance far beyond our dreams. And today, America has become the largest investor in our country. Trade between us has increased by 11 percent.

And we have the president of the ANC who carefully pushed me out of this position—[*laughter*]—and took it over. The president of the ANC and the Deputy President of this country is one of those who, more than anybody else in this country, is committed to the improvement of relations between South Africa and the United States. I hope that when he succeeds in pushing me to step down from the Presidency, that the country will put him in that position, so that he can be in a position further to improve relations between us. And I have no doubt that we have no better person than him to complete this job.

President Clinton, you are welcome. This is one of our proudest moments, to be able to welcome you. You helped us long before you became President, and you have continued with that help now as the President of the greatest country in the world. Again, welcome.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you and all the people of South Africa for the wonderful welcome you have given to Hillary and me and to our entire delegation. We have felt very much at home here.

As I have said yesterday in my address to the Parliament, I was very honored to be the first American President to visit South Africa on a mission to Africa to establish a new partnership between the United States and the nations of Africa and to show the people of America the new Africa that is emerging, an Africa where the number of democratic governments has quadrupled since 1990, where economies are beginning to grow, where deep-seated problems, to be sure, continue to exist, but where hope for the future is stronger than it has been in a generation.

It is in our profound interest to support the positive changes in Africa's life. Nowhere is this more evident than in the miracle you have wrought here in South Africa.

The partnership between our nations is only 4 years old, but already we are laying the foundation for a greater future. And I think everyone knows that the most important reason for our success is President Mandela.

His emergence from his many years on Robben Island is one of the true heroic stories of the 20th century. And more importantly, he emerged not in anger but in hope, passion, determination to put things right in a spirit of reconciliation and harmony. Not only here but all over the world, people, especially young people, have been moved by the power of his example.

Yesterday, Mr. Mandela said that the only thing that disappointed him about our trip was that Hillary and I did not bring our daughter. [*Laughter*] Last night our daughter called us and said the only reason she was really sorry not to have made her second trip to Africa was that she didn't get to see President Mandela.

I think that the impact he has had on the children of the world who see that fundamental goodness and courage and largeness of spirit can prevail over power lust, division, and obsessive smallness in politics, is a lesson that everybody can learn every day from. And we thank you, Mr. President, for that.

Today we talked about how the United States and South Africa can move into the future together. We have reaffirmed our commitment to increasing our mutual trade and investment, to bringing the advantages of the global economy to all our people. South Africa is already our largest trading partner in Africa, and as the President said, America is the largest foreign investor in South Africa. And we want to do more.

The presence here of our Commerce Secretary and leaders from our business community underscores, Mr. President, how important these ties are to us and our determination to do better. Our Overseas Private Investment Corporation is creating three new investment funds for Africa which will total more than three-quarters of a billion dollars. The first of these, the Africa Opportunity Fund, is already supporting transportation and telecommunications projects here in South Africa. The largest of the funds, worth $500 million, will help to build the roads, the bridges, the communication networks Africa needs to fulfill its economic potential.

Increasing trade does not mean ending aid. I am proud that we have provided almost a billion dollars in assistance to South Africa since 1991. I am committed to working with Congress to return our aid for all of Africa to its historic high levels. We will target our assistance to investing in the future of the African people. If people lack the fundamentals of a decent life, like education or shelter, they won't be able to seize opportunity.

I announced in Uganda a new $120 million initiative to train teachers, increase exchanges, bring technology into classrooms throughout Africa. We're also working to help provide better housing for those who have never had it. Yesterday Hillary, with me in tow, went back, a year later, to visit the Victoria Mxenge Housing Project in Gugiiletu, where women are building their own houses and living in decent homes for the first time. I'm proud that through our aid projects and our Binational Commission with Mr. Mbeki and Vice President Gore we are providing seed money and technical assistance for this effort. And I want to do more of that throughout this country and throughout the continent.

President Mandela was also kind enough to speak with me at some length about other nations in Africa and our common goals for Africa in the future. We are determined to help countries as they work to strengthen their democracies. We agree human rights are the universal birthright of all people. I also had a great chance to talk to President Mandela about the progress we made at the regional summit in Entebbe. And he had read the communique we put out, and I think that we both agree it was a remarkable document. And if we can make it real, it will change things in a profound way in all the countries that signed off on the statement.

We're also working on security issues, and let me just mention a couple. We are committed to preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, to strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention, because we both believe disease must never be used as a weapon of war. We are both at the forefront of the effort to eliminate the scourge of landmines. And now we are joining together to speed this work.

As I said yesterday, and I'd like to emphasize again, I am very pleased that our Department of Defense has decided to purchase now South Africa demining vehicles, called the Chubbies. The vehicles will help us to remove mines more quickly, more safely, and more effectively. And I might say, that's been a terrible problem the world over. Even in Bosnia, where there are so many people, we're not taking enough mines out of the land every week. And the new South African technology will help us immensely.

Mr. President, for centuries the winds that blow around the Cape of Good Hope have been known for strength and danger. Today, the winds blowing through Cape Town and South Africa, and indeed much of this continent, are winds of change and good fortune. I thank you for being so much the cause of the good that is occurring not only in your own country but throughout this continent.

I am deeply pleased that we're committed to harnessing the winds of change together. And as we meet in your nation, which has seen such remarkable hope arise from the ashes of terrible tragedy, let me again thank you. And let me ask your indulgence as I close just to make a few personal remarks about the terrible tragedy we had in the United States, in my home State, where four children and a school teacher were killed and many others were wounded in a horrible shooting incident.

First of all, I have called the Governor, the mayor, and last night I had quite a long conversation with the school principal, to tell them that the thoughts and prayers of people, not only in our country but indeed throughout the world, were with them. I hope, as I have said before, that all of us, including the Federal authorities and the members of the press corps, will give the people in Jonesboro the chance to grieve and bury those who have died.

And then after a decent period, after I return home, the Attorney General and I and others have got to compare this incident with the other two that have occurred in the last few months

in America to try to determine what they have in common and whether there are other things we should do to prevent this kind of thing from happening. There is nothing more tragic, for whatever reason, than a child robbed of the opportunity to grow up.

Thank you, and thank you again, Mr. President, for everything.

Nigeria

Q. Mr. President, you expressed regret the other day that the United States supported authoritarian regimes in Africa during the cold war. Today, we buy about 50 percent of the oil from Nigeria, propping up a regime the United States says is one of the most oppressive in Africa. [*Inaudible*]—what will the United States do—[*inaudible*]?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, let me restate what I said because I think it's worth saying again. I said that I did not believe the United States had ever been as good a partner to the African nations and the African people as we could have been and that during the cold war, when we and the Soviets were worried about the standoff that we had between us, we tended to evaluate governments in Africa and to pick and chose among them and to give aid to them based far more on how they stood in the fight of the cold war than how they stood toward the welfare of their people. I stand by that. And I think now we're free to take a different course.

President Mandela and I actually talked at some length about this today, and I, frankly, asked for his advice. And Nigeria is the largest country in Africa in terms of population. It does have vast oil resources. It has a large army. It in capable of making a significant contribution to regional security, as we have seen in the last several months. My policy is to do all that we can to persuade General Abacha to move toward general democracy and respect for human rights, release of the political prisoners, the holding of elections. If he stands for election, we hope he will stand as a civilian.

There are many military leaders who have taken over chaotic situations in African countries but have moved toward democracy. And that can happen in Nigeria; that's, purely and simply, what we want to happen. Sooner, rather than later, I hope.

Cuba

Q. President Clinton, I wonder, was the Dow Chemical dispute discussed anywhere, and if so, has there been a resolution of the problem that affects South Africa in particular?

President Clinton. We only discussed it very briefly. You know what American law is. It was passed by our Congress by almost 90 percent in both Houses, after two American planes with American citizens were illegally shot down in international waters by the Cuban Air Force, and basically says American companies can't do business there.

We are—the Pope's recent visit to Cuba gave us the hope that we might do more to help the welfare of the Cuban people and to promote alternative institutions, like the church in Cuba, that would move the country toward freedom. And I hope that will happen. But the law is what it is.

Slavery

Q. On regret again, sir, why are you resisting those who are seeking a formal apology from the United States for America's own shame of slavery?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, there are two different issues here on the slavery issue. Most of the members of the African-American community with whom I talk at home advise me to keep our race initiative focused on the future.

I don't think anybody believes that there is a living American—I don't think that anyone believes that any living American today would defend, feel proud of, or in any way stand up for the years where we had slavery or the awful legacy which it left in its wake. But we have moved through now in the last 130, almost 140 years, the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, a spate of civil rights legislation. We're now focused on what still needs to be done, and it's considerable.

So at home we're looking to the future, to closing the opportunity gap, to dealing with the discrimination that still exists, trying to lift up those communities that have done better than others, as we become not primarily just a divided society between blacks and whites but increasingly multiracial, not only with our large Hispanic and Native American populations but with people from all over the world.

Now, in addition to that, what I tried to do the other day in Uganda is to recognize that the role of Americans in buying slaves, which were taken out of Africa by European slave traders, had a destructive impact in Africa, as well as for the people who were enslaved and taken to America. And I think that was an appropriate thing to do. I don't think anybody would defend what we did in terms of its destructive impact in Africa. No American President had ever been here before, had a chance to say that. And I think we want more and more African leaders to do what President Museveni did the other day when we were in Entebbe, and he said, "I am not one of those leaders that blames everybody else for our problem." I think we've got—you know, you've got to quit going back to the colonial era; we've got to look to the future.

If you want more African leaders to do that, which I do, then it seems to me that we have to come to terms with our past. And stating the facts, it seems to me, is helpful. If we're going to be a good partner with people who are taking responsibility for their own future, we can't be blind to the truths of the past.

That's what—I think Mr. Mandela has done a remarkable job of balancing those two things here in South Africa. That's why I made the statement I did in Uganda, and I'm glad I did it.

African Debt Relief

Q. President Clinton, I wonder whether you could tell us whether debt relief for Africa has been a topic in your discussions with President Mandela, and whether you will be taking South Africa's views on the subject back into the G–7 and into other international arenas to argue for such debt relief?

President Clinton. Well, the answer to that question is, we discussed debt relief. I've also discussed debt relief with all the other leaders with whom I have met. We have—there is presently a proposal, as I think you're aware, that includes not only bilateral debt but debt to the international institutions, which would permit African countries that are pursuing economic reform to get debt relief to up to 80 percent of their debt.

And I think it's a sound proposal in the sense that, if it's properly administered by the international authorities—for this reason—we supported the idea that people should be eligible for debt relief, more debt relief if they were moving toward economic reform but not saying that everybody had to reach the same point, because people start from—they start from different places, different countries do—different per capita incomes, different economic systems, different real possibilities.

So I think that the framework is there. Now, what I pledged to do after talking to all the people with whom I have met, President Mandela and the other leaders that I saw on the way down here, is to take a look at how this thing is going to work in fact, and see what I could do to make sure that we give as much aid as we possibly can under this proposal. But I do think it is legitimate to say, if you want debt relief to unleash the economic potential of a country, so you take the burden off of it, then when it's all said and done, there has to be—two things have to exist: Number one, you've got to have a set of policies that will produce better results in the future than you had in the past, in any country; and number two, the country has to be able to attract investment, both private and public investment, in the future.

So, for example, if you just had uncritical, 100 percent debt relief, you wouldn't guarantee that there would be better policies, number one. Now, that doesn't apply to South Africa, where you do have a good strong economic policy, but generally. Number two, if we did that, other people would be reluctant to loan money in the future because they would think they would never get any of their money back.

So I think the trick is to get enough debt relief to countries to get the debt burden down so they can grow and they're not just crushed and kept from making any progress, but to do it in a way so that the debt relief produces longer term prosperity. And that's my goal. And yes, we're going to talk about it at the G–8 meeting in Great Britain. And I will stay on top of this to make sure that what we're trying to get done is actually accomplished. Everybody talked to me about it.

Jonesboro Incident

Q. Mr. President, during this trip you've spoken out about genocidal violence in Africa, but the sort of random killings you referred to in the Jonesboro killings has terrified people in the United States with alarming frequency. How do you explain that? What can you say now

and what can you do now as America's leader to root out such violence from the culture?

President Clinton. Well, we worked on it very hard for 5 years, and the crime rate's gone down for 5 years. The violent crime rate has gone down for 5 years quite dramatically in many cities.

And I saw an analysis, actually, just before I left home, in the documents that I read every Sunday, I saw an analysis of the declining crime rate which essentially said that, obviously, the improving American economy contributed to the crime rate going down because more people had jobs, and particularly with regard to property crimes, it was more attractive to work than to steal. But the other reason was that policing and law enforcement and prevention is better now than it was 5 years ago. And crime is a problem that many societies, especially many more urbanized societies, have.

And all I can tell you is that the violent crime rate is going down in our country; it's still way too high. What I'm concerned about in the Jonesboro case or in the Paducah case or in the case of the Mississippi issue is whether we are doing enough to deal with the question of violence by juveniles and is there something else we can do to get it down even more?

Ask President Mandela a question. I'm tired. [*Laughter*]

President Mandela. No personal questions. [*Laughter*]

African Trade Legislation

Q. Not today, Mr. President.

Mr. President, have you raised with President Clinton the question of the United States-Africa growth and opportunity—[*inaudible*]—and the large number of conditionality clauses in that, and pointed out to him that this would appear to be in conflict with the United States commitment to free trade?

President Mandela. Well, this matter has been fully discussed between President Clinton and our Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki. And I fully endorse the point of view that was placed before the President by the Deputy President. These matters are the subject of discussions, and they are very sensitive matters. And I appreciate the curiosity of the media, but it is better sometimes merely to say this is a matter over which we have serious reservations, this legislation. To us, it is not acceptable. But nevertheless, we accept each other's integrity, and we are discussing that matter in that spirit. Yes, we are taking it up.

President Clinton. If I could just say one thing about it, though. If you all actually go read the bill, I think you will find two things. First, and the most important thing is, if the bill becomes law, it will increase the access of all African nations to the American market, without conditionality. The bill opens up more of the American market to all African trade. The bill then says, for countries that make greater strides toward democracy, human rights, and economic reform, there will be greater access still.

But since we are not imposing new burdens on anybody or picking and choosing winners among countries and instead saying, "Okay, we're going to unilaterally make an effort to give more access to all Africa countries but we'll do even better for the countries that are trying harder on democracy, human rights, and economic reform," it seemed to me to strike the right kind of balance.

I, myself, would not have supported it if it had gone in reverse, if it had imposed new burdens on some countries while giving new benefits to others.

U.S. Response to Genocide in Africa

Q. [*Inaudible*]—genocide in Rwanda, and you said that the United States should have acted sooner to stop the killing. Do you think that American racism, or what you described as American apathy toward Africa, played a role in its inaction? How have you grappled personally with that experience 2 days ago? And have you considered any specific policy changes, given that this isn't the first time in this century America has been slow to act, that would compel a faster American response in the future, besides early warning systems?

President Clinton. Let me say, first of all, I do not believe that there was any—I don't believe there was any racial element in our slow response. I think that—keep in mind, I don't think anybody on the outside was prepared for somewhere between 800,000 and a million people to die in 90 days. And look how long it took the United States and Europe, through NATO and then through the U.N., to put together the machinery to go in and deal with the Bosnia problem.

So I would just say to you, I think that—the point I was trying to make is I do believe that generally America has been and the whole

American policy apparatus has been less responsive and less involved in Africa than was warranted. I think that's a general problem.

But I think in the case of Rwanda, what I believe we have got to do is to establish a system, hopefully through the United Nations, which gives us an early warning system, that gives us the means to go in and try to stop these things from happening before they start, and then, if it looks like a lot of people are going to die in a hurry, that kicks in motion some sort of preventive mechanism before hundreds of thousands of people die.

I mean, if you look at the sheer—the military challenge presented by those who were engaging in the genocide, most of it was done with very elemental weapons. If there had been some sort of multinational response available, some sort of multinational force available, to go in pretty quickly, most of those lives probably could have been saved. And we're going to have to work this out through the U.N. and then figure out how to staff it and how to run it and whether it should be permanent or something you can call up in a hurry, how such people would be trained, what should be done. But my own view is, if we think that that sort of thing is going to happen, it would be better if the U.N. has a means to deal with it in a hurry. And I would be prepared to support the development of such a mechanism.

Q. That brings up the subject of the African Crisis Response Team, who is responsible, and I wondered how your discussions, both of you, went on that?

President Mandela. We had a long program of very important matters to discuss, and unfortunately, we did not discuss that one. Our attitude toward this question is very clear; we support the initiative very fully. All that South Africa is saying is that a force which is intended to deal with problems in Africa must not be commanded by somebody outside this continent. I certainly would never put my troops under somebody who does not belong to Africa. That is the only reservation I've had. Otherwise, I fully accept the idea. It's a measure of the interest which the United States takes in the problems of Africa, and the only difference is this one about the command of that force.

NOTE: The President's 156th news conference began at 12:08 p.m. in the Garden of Tuynhuis. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas; Mayor Hubert A. Brodell of Jonesboro, AR; Karen Curtner, principal, Westside Middle School, Jonesboro, AR; Gen. Sani Abacha of Nigeria; and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda. President Mandela referred to President Fidel Castro of Cuba; Hashemi Rafsanjani, former President of Iran; Col. Muammar Qadhafi of Libya; and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, president, African National Congress (ANC).

Exchange With Reporters During a Visit to Robben Island With President Nelson Mandela of South Africa

March 27, 1998

Ahmed M. Kathrada. Ladies and gentlemen of the media, this is not a press conference. You've had your share in Cape Town, and we don't believe in double features. [*Laughter*] But what we want to do now is, our President is going to hand over to President Clinton a quarry rock, with his little finger, authenticated by our President that this is a genuine quarry rock from the quarry where he worked for 13 years.

President Mandela. It's a great honor and a pleasure because, as we have said on many occasions, our victory here is victory in part because you helped us tremendously. Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Thank you.

Mr. Kathrada. May I just say that this is not a press conference. Any question must be confined to Robben Island and Robben Island only, please.

Q. We're just interested in your experience. We'd like to hear firsthand from you about your experiences in this cell.

President Mandela. Well, there were pleasant—[*laughter*]—and unpleasant experiences,

and it depends how you look at the situation. As you know, right down the centuries and in many parts of the world, there are men and women who are able to turn disaster—what would crush many people—to turn that disaster into victory. And that is what these men here, like Mr. Kathrada and others, did.

And so when I come here, I call back into memory that great saga in which the authorities, who were pitiless, insensitive, and cruel, nevertheless failed in their evil intentions. They were responsible for that.

Q. President Mandela, can we just ask you, is there—you've been back to the island many times——

President Mandela. Let's come closer, please.

Q. You've been back to the islands many times. Can you tell us what the special significance is of this particular visit with the American President?

President Mandela. There is no doubt that, as I said at the press conference, that the visit by President Clinton is a high watermark in relation to all the visits that we've held. And coming to Robben Island is something more important, with that significant achievement of coming to South Africa. And we appreciate that very much.

Q. President Clinton, what are you feeling?

President Clinton. Well, my first thought was to thank God that the person who occupied this cell was able to live all those years in that way without having his heart turn to stone and without giving up on his dreams for South Africa.

The other thing that I would say is that I think this is a good object lesson in life for all young people. You know, 99.9999 percent of the people will never have a challenge in life like the one Mr. Mandela faced when he spent all these years in prison. But everyone has difficulties, everyone faces unfairness, and everyone faces cruelty. And the one thing that is beyond the control of anyone else is how you react to it, what happens to your own spirit, what happens to your own heart, what happens to your own outlook on life.

And he is the world's foremost living example of that. And every young child, I wish, could think about his or her life that way, and there would be a lot more happiness in the world and a lot more generosity, because then no one would feel compelled to react in a certain way because of what others said or others did. It's a very important thing about living.

NOTE: The exchange took place during a tour which began at 1:15 p.m., led by Robben Island Council Chair Ahmed M. Kathrada, a former prisoner at Robben Island.

Statement on Senate Action on Supplemental Budget Legislation

March 27, 1998

I am pleased that the Senate has approved important legislation to provide funding for victims of natural disasters, for support of our forces in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf, and to deal with the risk to financial stability around the world.

It is particularly important that the Senate, by a vote of 86–14, provided the International Monetary Fund with resources it needs to help stabilize Asian economies. The crisis in Asia poses a threat to American jobs and exports, and we already have seen evidence that weaknesses in economies there are having an impact here. To ensure that the American economy continues on the path of steady growth, Congress must make sure that the IMF is strong enough to respond to any broadening of the current crisis. And because the IMF functions like an international credit union, paying our share won't cost American taxpayers a dime.

I am also pleased that the emergency funding in this bill will allow our military forces to continue their missions in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf without impairing the high readiness level of our forces worldwide.

At the same time, I remain concerned that the Senate bill does not address the matter of United Nations arrears. This continues to undercut our global leadership.

I hope that the House of Representatives will act to fund all these critical activities before it returns home for recess.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Venezuela-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation
March 27, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Venezuela on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Caracas on October 12, 1997. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States for the purpose of countering criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of modern criminals, including those involved in terrorism, other violent crimes, drug trafficking, and money laundering and other white collar crime. The Treaty is self-executing, and will not require new legislation.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: (1) locating or identifying persons or items; (2) serving documents; (3) taking testimony or statements of persons; (4) transferring persons in custody, or persons subject to criminal proceedings, for testimony or other purposes; (5) providing documents, records, files, and articles of evidence; (6) executing requests for searches and seizures; (7) assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; (8) executing procedures involving experts; and (9) any other form of assistance appropriate under the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 27, 1998.

Videotaped Remarks to Tracey Brown From Cape Town, South Africa
March 27, 1998

Tracey, I wish you could have been with us when we heard President Rawlings in Ghana, President Museveni in Uganda, talking about your father and how much he did for Africa and how much he did to bring America and Africa in closer contact. And of course, on Saturday in Johannesburg, we dedicated the Ron Brown Commercial Center—your mom was there—to your dad's memory. His legacy will live on here because the center will promote economic progress and individual empowerment and democracy.

Let me say that I've actually read your book from start to finish, and I loved it. And your daddy would be proud of it. And it's just sort of sassy and braggy enough to be right where he was. [*Laughter*] So I hope you sell a zillion copies. You certainly deserve it, and I'm very, very proud of you.

NOTE: These remarks were videotaped at approximately 5:05 p.m. in the library at the Cape Grace Hotel, to congratulate Ms. Brown on the publication of her biography of her father, "The Life and

Times of Ron Brown." In his remarks, the President referred to Ms. Brown's mother, Alma Brown. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the opening remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President Nelson Mandela of South Africa in Somerset West

March 27, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Mr. Deputy President, Ministers, Members of Parliament, members of the judiciary, Your Majesties, Your Excellencies, Archbishop Tutu, ladies and gentlemen. First let me thank you for your hospitality to Hillary and me and our delegation. We have had a wonderful time in South Africa.

And I thank you, Mr. President, for the power of your leadership and the power of your example. Today when we toured Robben Island, I was reminded again that though you were locked in prison for a long time, you opened others' minds and hearts. You helped to educate your fellow inmates; you kindled the flame of humanity in your jailers. You planted a garden in the courtyard of Robben Island because of your faith in renewal. I can't imagine anyone I would rather receive an Order of Good Hope from than you.

And when, after 10,000 days of captivity, the gates of prison were opened, you emerged to face your nation unbitter and unbroken. That is the condition I hope the tent will maintain. [*Laughter*]

And truly you have built a new South Africa where all its people have a stake in the future. The symbols of that new South Africa are all around us. From your multiracial Parliament where I was honored to speak yesterday, to flourishing businesses where all races work side by side, to the very banquet we attend tonight, the people who work, the people who are seated, all of us here together, South Africa is a monument to the power of reconciliation. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Tonight we celebrate all you have accomplished. We pledge the partnership and friendship of the United States for the daunting work ahead, for seizing the challenges and the opportunities that face you today and in the century just around the corner.

I remember when we hosted the Olympic games in Atlanta in 1996. On the final day, the first black South African ever to win a gold medal in Olympic competition, Josia Thugwane, dedicated his victory to his country and to President Mandela. I think it is worth recalling that his victory came in the marathon.

President Mandela has won a great victory in what is the longest marathon of the 20th century. But now it is important that you not lose the conviction, the energy, the sheer joy of daily living which accompanied your freedom, for the challenges you face also require a marathon.

One of our country's most eloquent political leaders, Mario Cuomo, whose son now serves in my Cabinet, once said that in democracies we campaign in poetry, but we govern in prose. It is a marathon.

I come to say that the United States admires not only the leader but the people of South Africa, and we look forward to running that marathon with you. Let us not grow weary; let us never lose heart. Let us have confidence that the people can find the way.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the President and the people of South Africa.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:15 p.m. at the Vergelegen Estates. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Episcopal Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

The President's Radio Address
March 28, 1998

Good morning. In the storefronts and shop windows of Jonesboro, Arkansas, there are signs that read, "Our hearts are with Westside Middle School." Even though Hillary and I are far away from our home State, our hearts, too, are with Westside and with the grieving families whose loved ones were killed or injured in that tragic incident just 4 days ago.

This is the third time in recent months that a quiet town, and our Nation, have been shaken by the awful specter of students being killed by other young people at schools. We join the families of Jonesboro and all America in mourning this terrible loss of young life, life so full of promise and hope so cruelly cut short.

We mourn the loss of Natalie Brooks, of Paige Ann Herring, of Stephanie Johnson, of Britthney Varner, and of a heroic teacher, Shannon Wright, who sacrificed her own life to save a child. These five names will be etched in our memories forever and linked forever with the names of Nicole Hadley, Jessica James, and Kayce Steger of Paducah, Kentucky, and Lydia Kay Dew and Christina Mennefee of Pearl, Mississippi. Our thoughts and our prayers are with all their families today.

We do not understand what drives children, whether in small towns or big cities, to pick up guns and take the lives of others. We may never make sense of the senseless, but we have to try. We have seen a community come together in grief and compassion for one another and in the determination that terrible acts like these must no longer threaten our Nation's children.

Parents across America should welcome the news reported just this month by Attorney General Reno and Education Secretary Riley that the vast majority of our schools are safe and free of violent crime. We've worked hard to make our schools places of learning, not fear, places where children can worry about math and science, not guns, drugs, and gangs. But when a terrible tragedy like this occurs, it reminds us there is work yet to be done.

I have directed Attorney General Reno to bring together experts on school violence to analyze these incidents to determine what they have in common and whether there are further steps we can take to reduce the likelihood of something so terrible recurring.

Already we've seen the remarkable difference community policing has made in our Nation's streets. Now we have to apply that same energy and resolve to our schools to make them safer places for children to learn, play, and grow. At school there must be full compliance with our policy of zero tolerance toward guns, and at home there should be no easy access to weapons that kill.

Protecting our children from school violence is more than a matter of law or policy; at heart, it is a matter of basic values, of conscience and community. We must teach our children to respect others. We must instill in them a deep, abiding sense of right and wrong. And to children who are troubled, angry, or alone, we must extend a hand before they destroy the lives of others and destroy their own in the process.

We have to understand that young children may not fully appreciate the consequences of actions that are destructive but may be able to be romanticized at a twisted moment. And we have to make sure that they don't fall into that trap.

Three towns: Jonesboro, Pearl, Paducah—too many precious lives lost. The white ribbons that flutter today in my home State of Arkansas are a poignant and powerful challenge to all of us, a challenge to come together for the sake of our children and for the future of our Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:10 p.m. on March 27 in the library at the Cape Grace Hotel in Cape Town, South Africa, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 28.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on the Future of South Africa in Johannesburg

March 28, 1998

The President. Let me first just thank all of you for taking the time to come and meet with Hillary and me. We've had a fascinating trip to Africa and a wonderful 3 days in South Africa, but I didn't want to leave the country without having the chance to have kind of an informal conversation with young people that are making the future of this country. And I want you to say to us whatever you'd like to say, but I'm especially interested in what you see are the main challenges today, what you think the United States and others could do to be helpful.

The story of the liberation of South Africa is a fabulous story. As I said last night in my toast to Mr. Mandela, one of our most eloquent political leaders in America said that in democracies, campaigns are conducted in poetry, but government is conducted in prose. And there is always a lot of hard work that has to be done. And I think it's very important that your generation maintain its optimism and energy, and it's important that the rest of us continue to make a constructive contribution to your efforts.

So I basically just want to listen today and hear what you have to say. And if you have any questions for us, I'll be glad to answer them, but I want to learn more about your take on your country and your future.

Hillary, do you want to say anything?

Hillary Clinton. No, I would be happy just to start.

[*At this point, Friendly Twala, a Ministry of Education district education coordinator specializing in guidance and career orientation, described his background and experience in mediation and conflict resolution. Graeme Simpson, director, Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, described his work and suggested that violent crime was perhaps the greatest threat to democracy and human rights in South Africa.*]

Mrs. Clinton. Why don't we go around and hear from everybody briefly first, and then perhaps have a conversation about some of those issues?

[*Bongi Mkhabela, Director of Projects and Programs in the office of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, stressed the need for integration of youth issues into national policy and for training of the next generation of leaders. Vasu Gounden, director, African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, suggested sustainable aid and the African Crisis Response Initiative as discussion topics and praised the Entebbe Summit communique positions on democracy and civil society. Bongani Linda, arts manager, Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, described his work with prisoners and youth and suggested that cultural exchanges could have a positive impact on youth in communities such as Soweto. Kumi Naidoo, executive director, South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO), urged that the U.S. Agency for International Development remain involved in South Africa beyond the transitional period ending in 2002 and provide increased assistance to the nongovernmental sector. Nicola Galombik, director of educational television, South African Broadcasting Corporation, emphasized the importance of information and technology to bridge the cultural and interpersonal divisions of apartheid by carrying the messages and faces of all South Africans. Chris Landsberg introduced himself as incoming head of the foreign policy program at the Center for Policy Studies in South Africa, and referred to the fact that both he and Mr. Naidoo had studied at Oxford in the United Kingdom.*]

The President. There are days when I wish we could all go back. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Landsberg stated that his country faced challenges in addressing the needs and concerns of a formerly disenfranchised majority while incorporating minorities in its society; avoiding a disconnect between elite society and rural society and the poor; generating economic growth and encouraging democracy in Africa; and encouraging its private sector to find solutions for social problems. He expressed his hope that partnership with the United States would have a positive impact.*]

The President. Thank you.

Hillary, do you want to say anything?

[*Mrs. Clinton agreed that there were challenges to democracies everywhere, at all stages of their development. She asked about coordinated efforts in South Africa to try to replace the enthusiasm for liberation and freedom with a long-term commitment to a stable, functioning democracy with full participation. A participant explained that the new National Development Agency provided financing to grassroots organizations and acted as a policy forum reporting to the Parliament. Another participant suggested that people who had withdrawn from public life after the end of apartheid might be brought back into a struggle to end poverty. He also stated that businesses should offer more than monetary contributions to nongovernmental organizations.*]

The President. Let me ask a question, a followup question that may seem almost simple-minded to you, but I think the answer—whatever answer you give will give me some indication about where the conversation should go. Why has the crime rate gone up so much in the last 4 years? Anybody can take it.

[*A participant suggested the crime levels had previously been under-reported, but that gangs now offered youth the same type of subcultural identity as anti-apartheid political parties had, with the added benefit of wealth potential. He defined the problem as one of identity, culture, economics, and education, and said the government had to confront its lack of technical capacity to implement its policy.*]

The President. I agree with that. Anybody else want to say anything about the causes of crime?

[*A participant stressed the need for career guidance in schools so that more people would be prepared for employment, and for more aid to education from NGO's as well as the government. Another participant reiterated that crime figures were still unreliable and noted the involvement of international organized crime. A participant then stated that disadvantaged communities had heightened expectations, unemployment was a major problem, and crime levels discouraged foreign investment.*]

The President. Let me just observe, I don't think it is an insurmountable problem, and I think it would be certainly not grounds for withdrawal of foreign investment.

But let me tell you a story about a different society. I went to Riga, Latvia—Hillary and I did—a few years ago, and the last of the Russian troops—the former Soviet Union—Russian troops withdrew from the Baltics. And Riga is the largest northernmost port in the world, I think. There are about a million people there. So the Baltic States are finally free of Communist domination after decades. And we sit there, and we're having this conversation like you and I are. We're having—these three Baltic Presidents—and I ask them, what would they like me to do—is to open an FBI office in Riga.

One of the most popular things we did was to open an FBI office in Moscow. Why? Because they had this totalitarian, control-oriented society, and when they ripped it away and substituted a democracy for it, nature abhors a vacuum. And then besides that, there were a lot of unemployed people who had positions in the apparatus. And they were dealing with huge amounts of transnational crime, the kind of thing you talked about earlier.

Same thing happens at the local level; one of you mentioned this. There is a pretty even distribution of international—and energy and ambition in this world, whether it's out there on that play yard or in the wealthiest neighborhood in the United States. And nature abhors a vacuum. And we found—I'll never forget, once I was in Los Angeles when the gang problem there was particularly intense several years ago, and there was a three-page interview with a 17-year-old gang leader. And I read this; I said, "My God, this guy is a genius. Why did we lose this young man? He's a genius." And when he was asked, "Well, what are you going to do when you're 25," he said, "I don't expect to be alive."

I think all this goes back to what you were saying at first, those of you who worked in the NGO community, those of you that are worried about the institutions of civil society. I think that for so long it was obvious what the big problem was here, and you had to deal with the big problem first. I mean, if you hadn't done that, you couldn't go on to other things. And it was easy to organize the emotions and the energies and the gifts of people toward that, whether they were young or older. But then after that, you're left with a freer government, a more open system, a more open society, but you still don't have all this infrastructure. And

there is no simple answer, but I think that basically you have to have both more leaders and more structures.

I think about—for example, in the United States, I just got a report right before I left here attempting to analyze the reasons for the big drop in crime in America in the last 5 years. And I may miss the numbers, but this is roughly accurate, because I read it in a hurry. Roughly, the people who did this research concluded that about 35 percent of the drop was due to an improving economy: more people had jobs, and the gains of property crime and the risk of getting caught were not so important. And a little less than that was due to improved policing—more police officers and rooting them more closely in the community, so that they worked with children and with families and with block leaders to keep things from happening in the first place—and the rest of it due to a whole amalgam of factors related to keeping mostly young people out of trouble in the first place, giving them other things to do. The best example of structure I've seen since I got up this morning is all those kids in their uniforms out there singing the song to me when I got out. But in America we have the Boys Clubs, the Girls Clubs, the YMCA, and all of those organizations, the scouting movement.

Those of us in government sometimes tend to be very almost egocentric, and we forget what real people do with their time all day every day, from the time they get up in the morning until they go to bed at night. And most real people don't have all that much contact with us. We fund the schools and the police officers driving around and other things. So I think that our aid programs and a lot of our partnerships ought to be focused on helping you develop more leaders and more structures.

Hillary took me the first day we were in South Africa—we got in in the middle of the night, and she made me get up early the next day because she said, "You've got to go back to this housing project that I visited that's outside of Cape Town"—about, I don't know, 30 kilometers outside of Cape Town, to meet this woman who was in charge of this community-based self-help housing project where poor people were building their own homes. And you have to contribute to the membership of the organization, so there was a remarkable amount of organization in this very poor community and a lot of leadership. And I didn't ask anybody, but I bet there is lower crime.

So my own view is, I look around here and I think, if you believe that there is an even distribution of talent, intelligence, and ability in more or less every place, then we have to have more people who have the chance to go to Oxford and Georgetown, or Witwatersrand or wherever, and whatever it takes.

You made some very specific suggestions that I thought were good. I'll see what I can do to help get more American athletes and entertainers to come here and relate to all sectors of the society. We agree that the aid programs should be extended, that it should not be replaced by trade but instead supplemented for it. I will see what I can do to do some more leadership training initiatives. And I'll see what I can do with the business community. I'm going to dedicate a Ron Brown Commercial Center here today, and I'll alter my remarks a little bit to reflect the advice you just gave me.

But I just want to make the point that—I drive down these streets—I wanted to come to this neighborhood so badly, and I admire you all so much. But I can only say, when you get discouraged, just remember, nature abhors a vacuum. There is an equal distribution of intelligence, energy, leadership, and organizing ability. Bad things will happen when you don't have good leaders, good structures, and a good mission; good things will happen when you do.

And the government—Mr. Mandela, Mr. Mbeki—no one can be expected to run a free government of free people and organize every minute of every day. That's why the media is important in a free society. That's why all these NGO's are important. That's why the private sector is important.

And I don't mean to oversimplify this, but I just think that—we visited one of these microcredit projects in Uganda in a little village. The village is getting organized around village women borrowing small amounts of money, starting their businesses. They all of a sudden become leaders; they become role models. People see that life can be different than it is. We're now, with our aid programs, funding over $2 million of those loans a year around the world. If every government giving foreign aid had that kind of priority, you could literally revolutionize the economic structure of villages in developing countries on all continents.

So I want to encourage you. I'm just so impressed by what you said, but there is no simple answer. You've got to have more leaders, more structure, and the right mission. And we have to organize our aid program, our partnerships, everything else trying to sort of work toward that goal.

I'm sitting here listening to you talk and I just wish that there were—I don't know, however many it would take—200,000 just like you out there with the same background and training. But I hope you'll be encouraged. And I think that the real trick is going to be—what you said, I thought, was very important about after the freedom was achieved and after Mr. Mandela was elected and the victory, there must have been a lot of people who said, "I'm just tired of it; I just want to go back to my life." You want to quit the public space. But if you do, you create a vacuum before the structures are there that would get people in that are tired.

You know, in our country people get tired of politics. It's not particularly terrible. Twelve people go line up and run for office. You see what I mean? You'll get there. You'll reach a time when people can make—you'll have the luxuries of making these kind of choices. You don't have that luxury yet because you don't have the critical mass of organized life and a leadership funnel that will take care of all the children that are like those kids that are in the uniforms out there singing.

What were you going to say? I'm sorry.

[*A participant stressed the importance of learning from people such as the teachers and educators who have done extraordinary things under extremely difficult circumstances to rebuild civil society structures. Mrs. Clinton stressed the importance of finding specific areas that work, such as schools, microenterprises, or citizen participation institutions, and replicating them or creating that capacity in other communities and on a broader scale.*]

The President. That may be something that the government could do more of. For example, if you had, let's say, every week there would be on your television station a special on a health program, a housing program, an education program that's really working—what are the common elements, how were the leaders picked, how is it structured? And then you say, okay, we're going to fund our health, housing, and education programs. They don't have to be just like this one, because cultures are different, places are different, facts are different. But there are common elements; everyone has to meet that.

What I found, even in the United States—Hillary was kind about this. It drives me crazy. I consider it to be the major failure of my public life that every problem in our society today is being solved by somebody somewhere, and I can't get it to be replicated. So this is a generic problem of democracy, but it's one I think, since you're trying to catch up and you're trying to move in a hurry, in a funny way you might have less inbred resistance to this than we do.

Mrs. Clinton. Right. I agree with that.

The President. You could make it like an exciting thing.

Let me ask you the question in a different way, because we may be about to run out of time. Suppose you were the person—suppose the United States and every other country just sent you the money in our aid program—we just sent it to you. And it was all in one big pile, every country in the world giving aid to South Africa of any kind, and it went in your bank. You opened a bank account and you put it in, Chris, and you got to write a check, and the rest of you got to say how you would spend the aid money, all of it. What would you spend it on? How would you do it? Where would you start? If you had that kind of resource to start, how would you go about doing it? You might not want to answer the question now, but it's helpful to think about it in those terms.

[*A participant responded by praising the United States for providing funding for a conflict prevention center which would benefit the entire continent, and added that such sustainable aid to set up institutions that deal with violence and reconciliation, education, and technology would be the most significant contribution.*]

Q. Can I add one very quick ingredient to that? I think that one of the gravest dangers for this vibrant civil society, which is such an important guardian of democracy and vital for entrenching democracy in this society, is that the thrust towards an obligation to self-financing, in social work and education sectors in particular, runs the gravest risk of forcing those of us who have been entrenched at the grassroots level to focus away from our target constituencies in order to find the people who have

the money, because these are the people who don't—and that in some senses, that is the most important issue. For me in my public life, which I admit is somewhat less public than yours—[*laughter*]—my greatest frustration——

The President. Lucky you. [*Laughter*]

Q. ——my greatest frustration has been the point at which we believe we've got, in the 40 schools that we work in in Soweto, a pilot intervention that is unbelievably worthy of duplication. We don't have the means to do it, outside of a desperate attempt to lobby, beg, plead—and I'm glad Kumi got some money from the private sector, because I didn't. And it's the flip side of that coin.

And unless there is some sustainability in the areas of victim aid, in the areas of dealing with kids, constituencies that can't pay—if there isn't something in place which enables us to operate on the basis that we are sustainable and that we are secure, we don't have the creative space to do what you say.

The President. Well, it may be that what we're trying to do with our aid program and some of the signals we're going to send during and after this trip will help that a little bit. I hope it will.

I know we've got to go. I've got to ask one more question, though. For those of you who work with children in conflict resolution—and you're still dealing with the racial tensions with kids—do you ever talk to them about similar problems of people who look alike: the Irish problem, the Bosnian problem, the Middle Eastern problem?

Mrs. Clinton. The Rwanda problem?

The President. The Rwanda problem, although the Hutus and the Tutsis don't look alike to those who are sensitive. But still, you see what I'm—in Bosnia, the Croatians, the Serbs, and the Muslims are biologically indistinct; they are what they are by accident of political history over the centuries. And in the Middle East, the Arabs and the Jews are both Semitic people. And in Ireland, there are religious differences, but otherwise there is no difference, and they still fight over what happened 600 years ago.

So do you use this? I have a reason for asking the question, but tell me.

[*A participant described his work with a diverse group of South African young people, involving use of a play as a stimulus for discussions to bridge political and racial differences. He noted that the group had been successful in demonstrating tolerance and had visited Northern Ireland, Sarajevo, and Rwanda as well to spread its message.*]

The President. That's good.

[*A participant cited the Holocaust as another example of conflict and said that young people must be graphically shown that reconciliation is possible.*]

The President. What you said is really what I was thinking about because when I talk, when I go to Bosnia and I talk to those people, it's like their deal is the only deal in the world, their division. When I deal in the Middle East, and I talk to the Irish and I have to listen to it, every time I see the main players I deal with, I know I'm going to have to get History 101. [*Laughter*] It's like they've got a tape recorder, and I'm going to have to listen for 3 or 4 minutes before we can get down to business.

I don't say this in a critical way, but I think it's important for people to understand that everywhere in society, almost, there is like a battle of human nature that goes on, and there is a strong tendency to divide, whatever your world is, up between us and them. And you can't. People should never give up whatever their "us" is, you just want it be "us" and "we" instead of "us" and "them." So that's why I ask.

Thank you so much. Good luck to you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at R.P. Maphanzela Primary School.

Interview With Johnathan Rodgers of the Discovery Channel in Johannesburg

March 28, 1998

African Education Initiative

Mr. Rodgers. Mr. President, I was in Uganda when you announced your African education initiative. It was very, very impressive. Is there a role for foundation and the private sector in helping us?

The President. Oh, absolutely. There's no way that just through Government aid from the United States and other countries we can do all this. And a lot of operations like the Discovery Channel can even more efficiently hook up these schools, give them the basics that they need, a television set, a satellite, the VCR's. Then eventually we'll be able to come in with the computers, and we'll be able to have interactive access to the Internet and even interactive communication across national lines.

But we have to begin to put in place a technological infrastructure in these schools. And since we can now leapfrog a lot of the early investments that schools would have had to make 10 or 20 years ago, we can actually do it more cheaply. In other words, they won't have to have a thousand volumes in their library that they could never afford if we can do enough through educational television.

Mr. Rodgers. You also talked about the relationship, in this case, between one school, I believe it's in Silver Spring, Maryland, and a school in Uganda.

The President. That's right.

Mr. Rodgers. Are there other things American kids can do to help here in Africa in terms of education?

The President. Oh, yes. First of all, I think it's important to set up as many partnerships as possible. And if the children have access to the Internet in the African schools, if we can get that done, then they can actually communicate directly through the Internet.

But there are lots of other things we can do. If we have partnerships—children in American schools, for example, could have book drives and send books to children—a lot of children in African schools don't have access to any of the books that American kids take for granted. Then they could write back and forth and talk about the books they're reading. Or they could make sure they have a television and access to some of your "Discovery" tapes, and then they could write back and forth and talk about what they'd seen together. I think that this is the kind of thing that we want to promote more of.

Mr. Rodgers. Great. And the last question, Mr. President: I think a lot of Americans would be surprised that in many of the African countries boys are treated differently than girls. Do you see a change coming there?

The President. Yes, we're working hard to support that. But you see this in a lot of developing nations around the world, where boys and girls have a different role in traditional society and where girls have not traditionally been educated. Now, as they move to a more modern society, young girls have the same aspirations: They want to develop their minds; they want to go out and live their lives. And we've worked very hard to support education for young girls.

One of the things I like best about the Ugandan educational initiative is that they want universal primary education for all their children. And they're going out and recognizing the schools where the enrollment and the graduation rates are just as high for girls as for boys.

That's a big priority. But it's a big change for Africa, but Africa is not alone in that. That's a worldwide issue we have to keep working on.

Mr. Rodgers. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 2:12 p.m. at the R.P. Maphanzela Primary School. Johnathan Rodgers is president of Discovery Networks, U.S. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at the Memorial to Hector Peterson in Soweto, South Africa
March 28, 1998

Thank you very much. Premier Motshekga, Father, Foreign Minister Nzo, Ambassador Sonn, Ambassador Joseph, Mayor Mayathula, Mayor Mogase. I'd like to especially thank Walter Sisulu and Mrs. Sisulu for being here and Helen Suzman and Dorothy Molefe. Thank you all so much for coming.

I thank the Soweto Heritage Trust for their work on this magnificent memorial. And I thank the people of Soweto for making Hillary and me feel welcome here.

This solemn place commemorates forever the death of one young boy, a death that shocked the world into a new recognition of the vast evil of apartheid. Today, as South Africa enjoys what our President Lincoln called "a new birth of freedom," we remember the historic events of this decade and we remember that none of them could have been possible without the bravery of the young men and women of the townships who took to the streets in protest, many of whom were cut down in struggle, more of whom were damaged by prison and torture. We remember generations divided by a system that denied them equality, justice, and the opportunity to make the most of what God gave them at birth.

Here in the heart of Soweto, on behalf of all the American people, we also honor those who led the fight over so many decades to end apartheid. Some of their names are now well known all around the world: Biko, Tambo, Hani, Suzman. Many others have names that most of us who are not South African have never heard and now will never know, black, white, colored South Africans who answered the call of conscience. But all of them together, by their unyielding refusal to accept injustice, summoned men and women around this country, and indeed around the world, to raise their voices and work until change came to South Africa, people who gave themselves for the greater good of their country men and women, people who by their very example made our world a better place to live. For this, all men and women of good will in every nation on this Earth should be profoundly grateful.

With the tree that Hillary and I just planted with the help of those wonderful young people, we remember all who fought, all who suffered, all who died. Let this tree, a symbol of new life, recall their sacrifices but also embody with every blooming the bright and hopeful new day they gave so much to bring to South Africa. And with every new day, let us be all the more grateful that they made it possible.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:57 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Premier Mathole Motshekga of Guateng Province; Father Cornelius Mpahki, rector, Holy Cross Anglican Church, who gave the invocation; Minister of Foreign Affairs Alfred Nzo of South Africa; South African Ambassador to the U.S. Franklin Sonn; U.S. Ambassador to South Africa James A. Joseph; Mayors Nandi Mayathula-Khoza of Soweto and Isaac Mogase of Greater Johannesburg; retired head of the African National Congress Walter Sisulu and his wife, Albertina; Helen Suzman, former Member of Parliament; and Dorothy Molefe, mother of Hector Peterson.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Transportation Legislation
March 28, 1998

Dear _____:

Since taking office in 1993, my Administration has made a commitment to both fiscal discipline and the strategic investments we need to lay the foundation for a strong and healthy economic future. Our initiatives have helped produce economic conditions never imagined when I first took office. We have reduced the budget deficit from $290 billion in 1993, and may realize a potential surplus in 1998, reaching

balance years before our target date. We now enjoy low unemployment, modest inflation, sustained economic growth and a level of prosperity that is a model for other countries.

Our economic policy has always demonstrated our commitment to public investments in our people to complement our commitment to private investments, fueled by successful deficit reduction. Our priorities have always included a combination of vital investments in education and training, environment, community empowerment, research, infrastructure and transportation.

Certainly investing in a reliable, efficient, and a well-constructed system of highway and mass transit is an important domestic priority and critical to our economic success. In fact, the budget I submitted this year asks for 40 percent more for transportation than the average annual expenditure in the previous administration.

However, I have serious concerns that the extent of proposed new spending in this transportation bill goes too far and could threaten both our fiscal discipline and our commitment to education and other critical investments in our future. Transportation is an important domestic priority, but we must strike a balance so that we do not allow one priority to squeeze out other critical investments such as education or undermine our fiscal discipline.

We should not and need not reject fiscal discipline or force cuts in critical programs on which our citizens and country rely to build a strong America in the 21st century. If we show a balance of our values as we reach a truly balanced budget, we can maintain fiscal discipline while maintaining strong investments in both our people and our physical infrastructure.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker, and Richard A. Gephardt, minority leader, House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, minority leader, United States Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at the Opening of the Ronald H. Brown Commercial Center in Johannesburg, South Africa

March 28, 1998

Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Motlana, for the wonderful introduction, for the extraordinary example of your career—physician to President Mandela, leader in the struggle for South Africa's freedom, and most recently, one of the most successful businessmen in the new South Africa.

Thank you, Secretary Daley, Congressman Rangel, Secretary Herman, Secretary Slater. To our ambassadors, Mr. Berger, Reverend Jackson; to the Members of Congress and the American business leaders here today. Minister Manuel, to Millard Arnold, thank you for all the work you did on this. And to all the members of the South African community who are here, thank you for what you're doing to build a strong South Africa and to build the bonds of commerce between our two nations.

Let me also say I'm pleased that a young member of my White House staff, born in Johannesburg, Russell Horwitz, is here today with his grandparents, Maurice and Phyllis Goldstein. But I'm especially pleased that Alma Brown is here.

This has been an incredible trip to Africa, a trip which I was urged to make by Ron Brown, starting before I became President. And I was just sitting here thinking that after all this time, Ron Brown can still draw a crowd. [*Laughter*]

This has been a magical tour of this magnificent continent, and in each place, I've thought about Ron and how he would have reacted to seeing a half a million people in Ghana; to talking to the President of Uganda, first, about the possibility of an American investment running into the hundreds of millions of dollars, and then walking into a little village and talking to women who got loans of $50 to start their own business; meeting with the survivors of the Rwandan genocide; coming here, and all the

magnificent things that have happened at the Maphanzela School today and at the Peterson Memorial in Soweto. This has been an incredible trip.

And in so many ways, it was inspired by the vision that Ron Brown had. Ron said that in this new era, and I quote, "Business opportunities in South Africa, once constricted by politics and struggle, will expand. If we are fortunate, we will see the rooting of democracy and free economy whose branches will soon spread, so that other African nations would also benefit." We are here to dedicate a center in honor of Ron Brown, to commerce, but also to bear witness that his vision is coming true.

As Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown relentlessly promoted the idea that American businesses could help themselves while helping to support growth and opportunity and freedom in the rest of the world. He believed that assistance was still needed for developing nations but that self-perpetuating prosperity would never occur until we also had substantial amounts of trade and investment. Five times Ron Brown came to Africa to do business, to create opportunities for Americans and for Africans. He came at the right time, South Africa emerging and all around the continent a new Africa taking shape, increasingly open to free markets, democracy, human rights.

Today, enterprising governments and entrepreneurs are taking Africa's future into their own hands, opening markets, privatizing industry, stabilizing currency, reducing inflation, and creating jobs. Small businesses are sprouting in cities and villages. Modern telecommunication systems are spreading. There are now 15 African stock markets, and 5 more in the works. Average economic growth on this continent has been 5 percent, with some countries as high as 10. Our trade with Africa is 20 percent greater than our trade with all the former Soviet Union. It supports 100,000 American jobs. The average annual return on investment—I hope they're listening back in America—the average annual return on investment is 30 percent. This is a good deal, folks.

But there is more to do. Nearly 700 million people live in sub-Saharan Africa, but only about one percent of our trade and one percent of our direct foreign investment is in Africa. There is new thinking in America and in Africa about how we can do better by building genuine partnerships, partnerships with business owners who respect workers and workers who respect their companies; with governments that respect entrepreneurs and businesses that accept laws necessary to protect workers, consumers, and the environment; and businesses that increasingly will accept responsibility for playing a role in solving the social problems of their nations; and trade and investment across borders built on common interests and mutual respect. Mutual respect and shared benefit, these are the foundations Ron Brown laid for our partnership.

As he well understood, and I reaffirm today, a new partnership in trade and investment should not come at the expense of development assistance when it is plainly still needed. Trade cannot replace aid when there is still so much poverty, flooding, encroaching deserts, drought, violence, threatened food supplies, malaria, AIDS, and other diseases, with literacy below 50 percent in many nations, because economies and businesses and individual workers cannot fulfill their potential when too many people cannot read or are hungry or ill. I will work with our Congress to restore our development assistance to Africa to its historic high level, but we must build on it with trade and investment.

Nine months ago in Washington I announced our new plan, the Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity With Africa, intended to leverage the work of other industrialized countries, international institutions, and the nations and people of Africa, itself. Our Congress is now moving forward with legislation to forward that initiative. Already it has passed our House of Representatives; soon, I hope, our Senate will pass it as well. Among the Members of the congressional delegation with me today, there are four of the bill's greatest proponents: Congressman Rangel and Congressman Royce, Congressman McDermott, Congressman Jefferson, along with Congressman Crane, who is not here, and the other Members of the congressional delegation that are here. Let me thank them for their hard work and urge them to go get the Senate to follow suit.

The plan we bring has five elements. First, we offer all African nations greater access to our markets. African countries aggressively pursuing economic reforms will be able to export almost 50 percent more products to America duty-free. In the future, we're prepared to negotiate free-trade agreements with strong-performing, growth-oriented economies, including

at appropriate times with the countries in this region.

Under our plan, all African nations will benefit. Those with the greatest commitment to reform to unlocking the potential of their people will benefit the most, whether they are the richest in Africa or the poorest. Our bonds will grow based not on wealth but on will, the will to pursue political and economic change so that everyone may have a role in the progress of tomorrow.

Second, we will target our assistance so that African nations can reform their economies to take advantage of the new opportunities. This means helping countries with creative approaches to finance, supporting the progress of regional markets, encouraging African entrepreneurs to look for new opportunities.

In conjunction with the Ron Brown Foundation, we will help to establish an endowment through the Ron Brown Center to help young Africans to pursue internships with American companies to gain technical expertise in commerce, trade, and finance. We've named a new high-level trade representative whose only job is to deepen trade with Africa, Rosa Whitaker. Rosa, where are you? Stand up there. Thank you. [*Applause*] And I've asked Congress for another $30 million this year to fund support programs for this endeavor.

Third, we are working to spur private investment. Our Overseas Private Investment Corporation has established three funds to help ventures be financed in Africa. The newest of these will provide up to $500 million for investments in roads, bridges, and ports, as well as microenterprise and women-owned businesses, to facilitate economic opportunity. And to serve as the hub for American investors interested in Africa, there is a new commercial center in which we are gathered. That's what we're here for. And let me say it again: The only name that this center could have is the Ron Brown Center.

Fourth, with our wealthy partners in the G–7, we have secured a commitment from the World Bank to increase lending to Africa by as much as $1.1 billion in the coming year, with a focus on reforming countries. We want to speed debt relief to the Highly Indebted Poorest Countries program, which is now helping countries get out from under the crushing debt burdens that prevent growth. And I'll raise at the next G–7 meeting in England early in May the concerns that I've heard on this trip from African leaders about the debt issue. I've also asked our Congress for enough debt relief funding this year to wipe out all bilateral concessional debt for the fastest reforming poor nations.

In total, our budget request this year would permit up to $1.6 billion in bilateral debt relief for Africa. I challenge others in the industrial world to offer more debt relief so that we can free up resources for health, education, and sustainable growth. And let me say again to the Americans back home, this is not charity; this is enlightened self-interest. It is good for American business, the American economy, and American jobs to have a sensible growth policy.

Finally, because of the growing importance of our economic ties to Africa, I intend to invite leaders of reforming nations to a summit meeting in Washington so that we can lay specific plans to follow up on this trip and the announcements I have made on it. We will also invite the trade, finance, and foreign ministers to meet with their American counterparts every year to advance the cause of modernization and reform.

Ron Brown understood and the leaders of democratic Africa understand that nations cannot become economic powers unless their people are empowered, unless citizens are free to speak their mind and create, unless there is equality and the rule of law and what the experts call transparency. The African leaders have put a premium on improving government accountability and attacking corruption and other barriers to doing business. Those who have done that will be richly rewarded in the global marketplace. The United States shares these goals, and we intend to work with African leaders who want to make progress on them.

Taken together, the provisions of our plan—trade benefits, technical and continued development assistance, support for private investment, increased financing and debt relief, and high-level consultations to make sure there is followup—and this trip is not a one-shot event—these will provide an environment in which private enterprise, African and American, will thrive, creating jobs and prosperity. This is a good thing for the American people and for American business. It is a good thing for Africa.

Let me also say that nothing we do can supplant the important, essential efforts that African leaders—not just political leaders but business

leaders—take for themselves. We must do more to educate all the children, to provide decent shelter, to provide decent health care. We must do more to work together to solve the continuing problems in every society on this continent.

Nothing the American people can do will replace your efforts, but I have seen the energy, the determination, and the courage of the people in every country I have visited. They are worthy of our best efforts at partnership, and we intend to give it to them.

The progress we make together is the best way possible to honor the legacy of Ron Brown. He died in the service of his country on one of these missions to a war-torn country in the hope of making peace. He believed that economic progress was a moral good if it was fairly shared and everyone had a chance to live out their dreams and fulfill their aspirations. He understood that the economy was about more than a few people making money. It was about organizing free people so that they could put their talents to work to help a society lift itself up, to solve problems and seize opportunities, and make life more meaningful and more enjoyable.

He was a bold thinker, a brilliant strategist, a devoted public servant, a good father and husband, and he was a terrific friend. I miss him terribly at this moment. But I cannot imagine a more fitting tribute to a man who proved that the Commerce Department could be an engine of growth and opportunity at home and abroad, who accepted my challenge to take a moribund agency and put it at the center of our economic policy, of our foreign policy, and of America's future in the world. He did his job well. I hope that when we leave here, we can do our job just as well so that this center will be a fitting, lasting legacy.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:42 p.m. in the courtyard. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Nthatho Motlana, who introduced the President; Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel of South Africa; Rev. Jesse Jackson, President's Special Envoy for Africa; Millard W. Arnold, Minister-Counselor, U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service; Alma Brown, chair, Ronald H. Brown Foundation, and widow of Ron Brown; and Rosa Whitaker, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Church Service in Soweto, South Africa

March 29, 1998

Thank you, Father, Bishop, Mrs. Mathlata; to all of my friends in the American delegation, our Ambassador, the South African Ambassador; to the AME bishops getting a little instruction in Roman Catholicism today. Reverend Jackson, thank you for your prayer. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for making Hillary and me and our entire group from America feel so very welcome.

And especially, I want to thank the children. Now, we're about to leave South Africa, and we're going to the airport. And maybe we'll be like the birds; we can fly. [*Laughter*] It takes a little more to get me in the air. [*Laughter*] But we're going to practice that.

I am profoundly honored to be in this great house of God, which is also a great shrine of freedom, for it was here that you and people before you gathered to stand for the freedom of the people of South Africa when it was denied you. I came to South Africa, first, to thank God you have your freedom now, to thank God for the life and work of President Mandela and so many others, known and unknown, who walked the long road for so many years so that the people of this great nation might be free. But also I came here resolved to work with the people of South Africa as a friend and a partner, to help you make the most of your freedom. It is one thing to be free, and another thing to do the right thing with your freedom.

Yesterday evening we dedicated a commerce center here to try to help bring American investment here, to create jobs for the people of South Africa, and to have more trade between our two countries. The center was named after

our former Secretary of Commerce, the late Ron Brown. He wanted to help South Africa make the most of its freedom.

And when I looked at the children singing today and I saw the children throughout this beautiful church, I was reminded that I think the lasting image I will take away from all my stops in Africa are the faces of the children, the light in their eyes, the spring in their step, the intelligence of their questions to me, the beauty of their voices. More than anything else, it is important that we help them make the most of your freedom, with better schools and better health care and more housing and safer streets and a brighter future.

A couple of years ago the United States had the honor of hosting the Olympics. And on the last day of the Olympics, the first black South African ever to win a gold medal won a gold medal—Josia Thugwane. Now, it is so fitting that your first gold medal came in what event? The marathon. Your fight for freedom was a marathon, not a sprint. People who train for the marathon say when you get almost to the end, about 80 percent of the way, the pain is so great many people quit, and you have to keep working to go through to the end. It takes a long time to run a marathon.

The fight to make the most of your freedom, to do the right things with your freedom, to give your children the right future with your freedom, that, too, will be a marathon. But we want to run that race with you.

And so, as I leave South Africa, I would leave you with one verse of Scripture that has throughout my working life been one of the very most important to me. When you are discouraged, when you are frustrated, when you are angry, when you wonder whether you can make the most of your freedom for these children, remember what St. Paul said to the Galatians: "Let us not grow weary in doing good. For in due season, we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

God bless you. Keep your heart.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. at Regina Mundi Catholic Church. In his remarks, he referred to Father Mohlomi Remigius Makobane, pastor of the church; retired Bishop Gerard Ndlovu; Beatrice Mathlata, chair, parish council; U.S. Ambassador to South Africa James A. Joseph; and South African Ambassador to the U.S. Franklin Sonn.

Remarks at a Reception in Gaborone, Botswana
March 29, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Foreign Minister, President Masire, Lady Obebile, Vice President Mogae, Mrs. Mogae, and all the other people who have previously been recognized by a previous speaker. [*Laughter*] I am glad to be here and to receive such a warm welcome and a standing ovation from all of you. [*Laughter*]

For Hillary and for me, this has been an extraordinary trip for our entire American delegation. It has taken us from Africa's western rim to its southern shore, from its smallest villages to its most modern cities, from its youngest democracy, South Africa, to its oldest, Botswana.

We have seen the promise of a new Africa whose roots are deep here in your soil, for you have been an inspiration to all who cherish freedom. At your independence three decades ago, Botswana was among the poorest countries on Earth, with only 2 miles of paved roads and one public secondary school. Today, you have a vibrant economy, a network of major highways, almost full enrollment in primary schools, and the longest average lifespan in sub-Saharan Africa. Congratulations to all of you. Africa needs more Botswanas, and America is determined to support all those who would follow your lead.

Today I'm pleased to announce our intent to establish Radio Democracy for Africa, a Voice of America service aimed directly at encouraging progress toward freedom and democracy, respect for human rights, and an independent and objective media. I thank Congressman Royce in particular for his leadership in promoting this program, as well as the other members of our congressional delegation.

Botswana's success was built by its people and by the dedicated leaders they chose. President Masire, I am deeply honored to be among those here as you leave your distinguished tenure. As Vice President and Finance Minister, you sparked the engine of an economic miracle by establishing the first joint ventures for mining diamonds. You created Botswana's sound fiscal and monetary regimes. You negotiated Botswana's access to European markets. You earned the trust of your fellow citizens. President, you've ensured that human rights and the rule of law could make their home in Botswana. Your stand against apartheid and your support of the ANC gave hope to all who yearned for dignity and equality in South Africa. You have been a leader in conserving wildlife. You've sent your troops on missions of peace in Somalia, Rwanda, and Mozambique. And as a founding member and host to the SADC Secretariat, you have helped bring countries in this region closer together and create new opportunities for your people. Now, as you step down from public office after 18 years of leadership, you're ensuring the peaceful transfer of power that has come to characterize this land.

Mr. President, on behalf of all Americans, I salute you and your achievements. I would say you have earned the right to go back to your cattle ranch. [*Laughter*]

The United States has been very proud to support Botswana's progress. Botswana's success led to the bittersweet closing of our AID and Peace Corps programs. But though these development programs have finished, their legacy endures. Lady Obebile, I know you taught many Peace Corps volunteers their first words in Setswana. You helped to ensure that countless young Americans came home with a lifelong love for your country and this continent.

Now we're building in that spirit of cooperation to renew our partnership for the future, based on common values, common vision, and mutual respect. Together, we can help all men and women in Africa secure the freedom that is their birthright. We can deepen our investment in trade and bring the prosperity to all citizens. We can work together to deter conflicts before they explode into crises. And together, we can protect this fragile Earth for future generations.

Visitors to Botswana will never forget the beauty of your environment. Tomorrow Hillary and I will have the great pleasure of visiting Chobe ourselves. You have been blessed with abundant resources, but none of those is more precious than your people. Because of them, the future looks bright for Botswana and for the region as well.

So, Mr. President, on behalf of all Americans, thank you again for the extraordinary example you and the people of Botswana have set. I wish you all the best. America is proud to be Botswana's partner and friend.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. on the State House Lawn. In his remarks, he referred to Sir Ketumile Masire, President of Botswana, and his wife, Lady Obebile; Vice President Festus Mogae and his wife, Barbara; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mompati Merahfe. The President also referred to the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Development Community (SADC).

Videotaped Remarks for the Memorial Service in Jonesboro, Arkansas
March 29, 1998

Hillary and I wish we could be with you all as you remember and give thanks for the lives of Natalie Brooks, Paige Ann Herring, Stephanie Johnson, Britthney Varner, and Shannon Wright.

Our prayers have been with their families and with all of you over these last few days. Every one of them made Jonesboro a better place. Every one of them had much to live for and much still to give. For now, you must all be thankful for the cherished memories you have.

Like all of you, I do not understand what dark force could have driven young people to do this terrible thing. As President, I have seen many children killed by political fanatics, but in some ways, this is even harder to grasp. For now, all we can do is to pray for peace and

healing for their families and for Jonesboro. And, indeed, we should pray for the families of the two young suspects, for their suffering, too, must be grievous.

Saint Paul reminds us that we all see things in this life through a dark glass, that we only partly understand what is happening to us. But one day, face to face with God, we will see all things, even as He sees us.

For four fine young girls and an outstanding teacher, that day has come. May God bless them, their families, and all of you.

NOTE: These remarks were videotaped in the afternoon on March 28 in Johannesburg, South Africa, for the memorial service held on March 31 in Jonesboro, AR. They were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 29. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters in Kasane, Botswana
March 30, 1998

Botswana National Parks

The President. I learned today that 17 percent of this country is in national parks and national preserves. They've done a great job of protecting their wildlife.

Future Russian Elections

Q. TASS is quoting Yeltsin as saying he's not going to be part of the 2000 campaign and he's going to support Chernomyrdin.

The President. Chernomyrdin?

Q. Yes.

The President. That's interesting.

President's Safari

Q. What have you seen today, sir?

The President. Well, we've seen probably 20 or 30 different kinds of birds, fascinating ones, including some eagles I had never seen before and some storks I had never seen before and obviously the vultures and then a lot of the smaller, very beautiful birds, like these rollers. There you've got a baboon, right there, and is that an impala with it? An impala, a baboon, and three elephants right here where we're standing.

We saw a water buffalo—I think you saw it also—that had been wounded, apparently, by a lion. We saw the horns of a kudu and the skull, all that remained of what apparently was a lion kill up the road here, and the vultures were still kind of hanging around it.

It's amazing. It's been an amazing day.

Q. Any warthogs? We saw some.

The President. No.

Hillary Clinton. We saw hippos.

The President. We saw a lot of hippos.

Mrs. Clinton. Crocodiles.

Q. Did you check out the stars last night?

The President. It was amazing, wasn't it? The stars were amazing.

Mrs. Clinton. We saw the lions, too.

Q. Oh, you didn't see the lions.

Mrs. Clinton. We did, Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News]. We did.

Q. You saw a lion?

Mrs. Clinton. Yes, we saw a mother lion and four cubs.

The President. Oh, yes. They were up underneath a tree.

Mrs. Clinton. One of the lions was in the tree.

The President. You could barely see them, and the mother lion was on her back, playing with the kids.

Q. I would have killed for that. [*Laughter*]

The President. It was great. At one point, she even had one of her—one of the cubs' tail in her mouth. They were playing with it, back and forth.

Q. Can a Democratic President admire an elephant?

The President. Yes, and I like to see them concentrated here. [*Laughter*]

Q. I set you up there.

The President. Actually, I was kind of jealous that the Republicans had appropriated such a nice animal as their symbol. [*Laughter*] I think they're fascinating, these elephants are.

Q. At the restaurant last night, did you check out any of the zebra or crocodile?

The President. I tried it all.

Q. Those elephants produce more dung than any other animals. [*Laughter*]

The President. If you write that, make sure you say he did it, not me.

Q. But make sure you say the President was smiling.

Q. Mrs. Clinton, have you enjoyed it?

Mrs. Clinton. Oh, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. at Chobe National Game Park. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Legislation To Establish a Uniform Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

March 30, 1998

Although my trip to Africa precludes me from joining Congresswoman Nita Lowey, Congressman Charles Canady, and others gathered in the Roosevelt Room, I want to state once more my strong support for legislation to put the brakes on drunk driving.

Setting a uniform limit for impaired driving at .08 blood alcohol content (BAC) will help us crack down on drunk driving nationwide. At a time when crime all across America is going down, we still lose an American to drunk driving every 30 minutes—every half hour a family is shattered, a child, a parent, a neighbor is lost forever.

By establishing a strong but sensible limit on blood alcohol content, we could save as many as 600 lives a year. And a uniform drunk driving standard would still allow adults to drink responsibly and moderately—since the .08 BAC standard is not reached until a 170-pound man has had more than four drinks in an hour, and three for a typical woman.

This should not be a partisan issue. Indeed, the bipartisan work of Congresswoman Lowey and Congressman Canady and Senators Lautenberg and DeWine, proves that when leaders from both parties come together, we can set aside political differences to save lives and serve America. It is my fervent hope that the majority of the House will join the large bipartisan majority in the Senate and send me legislation that will make our streets safe, our drivers sober, and our laws more sensible.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

March 30, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The Congress has an obligation and an opportunity to strengthen our democracy by passing comprehensive campaign finance reform. Instead, the Congressional leadership is attempting to derail serious, bipartisan campaign finance reform through procedural means.

The bipartisan plan proposed by Representatives Christopher Shays and Martin Meehan is genuine, tough reform, supported by a large number of lawmakers of both parties. It would address serious flaws in the campaign finance system, by banning unregulated "soft money" raised by both parties, addressing backdoor campaign spending by outside organizations, and strengthening disclosure. This bipartisan measure is the best chance in years to reduce the role of special interests, give voters a louder voice, and treat fairly incumbents and challengers of both parties. This measure has the support of a majority of the Senate, and I believe that if it were allowed to come for a vote, it would have the support of a majority of the House as well.

Instead, the House leadership has determined to thwart serious reform. It has refused to allow

the Shays-Meehan bill even to come up for a vote. Instead, it has offered a plan stocked with proposals—including the so-called "Paycheck Protection" and "Election Integrity" provisions—that are harshly partisan and plainly unacceptable.

Behind the blizzard of proposals and procedural complications, one thing is clear: this is a transparent effort to block reform. I call on the House of Representatives to rise to its responsibility, bring the Shays-Meehan bill to an up-or-down vote, and give the American people the reform they deserve.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Interview in Cape Town, South Africa, With Bryna Bates of Ebony/Jet and April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks

March 27, 1998

Apology for Slavery

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, you've made it emphatically clear that you will not apologize for slavery. But do you understand why there's such controversy around the issue, and are you prepared for Goree Island?

The President. Oh, yes. I think—it was interesting, because after I spoke in Ghana and then in Uganda, and when I spoke in Uganda about how wrong we were to be involved in the slave trade, some people in America said, "Well, why did you do this in Africa," and "Why haven't you done the same thing in America?" But most of my African-American friends and advisers don't believe that we should get into what was essentially a press story about whether there should be an apology for slavery in America. They think that that's what the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendment was; they think that's what the civil rights legislation was; and they think we need to be looking toward the future.

But when an American President comes to Africa for the first time and makes a serious trip and a serious commitment to the future, I think recognizing the fact that we did a bad thing in being part of the slave trade, I think, is important here. So I think we've drawn the right balance, and I feel good about it.

Africa-U.S. Trade

Ms. Bates. Mr. President, does the United States see African-American businesses as a part of the national strategy for participation and partnering with South Africa?

The President. Absolutely. Because, in part, I think African-American businesses are more likely to see the opportunities. There are going to be a lot more other kinds of businesses, all kinds of American businesses here, I predict to you, in the next few years, both selling here, buying from here to sell in the American market, and investing here.

But this is really an incredible opportunity for the African-American business community to get on the ground floor of what I believe will be an explosion of economic activity in the years ahead.

One of the things we're doing here is dedicating the Ron Brown Commercial Center in Johannesburg, and Ron told me years ago, shortly after he became Commerce Secretary, that there was a new Africa emerging and that we needed to be a part of it; we needed to be in on the ground floor. So that's what we're trying to do.

Ron Brown

Ms. Ryan. Do you miss him especially now?

The President. Especially now. I just—I'd give anything if he could have made this trip.

Africa-U.S. Trade

Ms. Ryan. Well, Mr. President, speaking of the Africa package, a different version of that, fast track—are you planning on reproposing that again or introducing that before Chile?

The President. Well, I don't think we can pass it before Chile, so it's not important. We know we have the votes to pass it in the Senate, and we know we don't yet have the votes to

pass it in the House. So I'm just going to keep working on it until I think we've got the votes to pass it in the House. It should pass.

But I don't think that that should deter us from passing the Africa trade and investment bill. It's passed in the House now. We certainly have the votes in the Senate to pass it, so it's really a question of getting it up on the Senate calendar. They're not meeting many days this year, and they seem to be, for reasons I don't quite understand, bringing up a lot of issues that are highly contentious and don't have a big impact on the future. So I'm hoping I can cut through the Senate agenda and get—persuade Senator Lott and others to bring it up, because I think the Africa trade bill should pass this year, and I think it will if we can just bring it up.

Ms. Bates. Mr. President, will there be any consideration by your administration similar to the Gray amendment concept, in an effort to mobilize the entire American business community? And are there any concrete plans that we can begin to talk about?

The President. Well, we've announced here that we would be involved in financing support—or supporting, if you will, the financing of American business deals here in Africa through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. And we've already helped to finance the two significant ones here in South Africa in transportation and telecommunications. So we will have way over half a billion dollars worth of support for financing new business investment in Africa. And I think that will get a lot of people involved quickly. I hope it will.

President's Initiative on Race

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, there is word that the race initiative will end in September, formally. Now, the conclusion—is that because of the fact that the momentum is not there, that you thought it could be? And there was word from some White House staffers that the initiative could last as long as the end of your term.

The President. I don't think we've decided. I think, for one thing, in some form or fashion the initiative will last until the end of my term, regardless, because I want to—I think we have to continue to work on this in a very conscious way, to close the opportunity gaps and also to prepare for living in an increasingly multiracial society. I mean, soon there will be no particular ethnic group that has a majority in America. So it will continue in one form or fashion, regardless.

And insofar as how the Advisory Board should conclude its activities and when, I haven't made a final decision on that. So there isn't—you know, my staff may be of different views on it, but I haven't heard from any of them, and we haven't made a final decision on it. We still have a lot of work to do on the agenda that has already been laid out just for this board. And we've got several things planned. When I get back, we're going to do kind of a townhall meeting on ESPN with a lot of athletes, which should be very interesting.

Ms. Ryan. Michael Jordan?

The President. I don't know if they've signed up yet. As bad as he beat me when we played golf together, he sort of owes me one, so maybe I can get him to do it. [*Laughter*]

And we are going to have a serious discussion on public television, which I think will be very, very interesting—the PBS. We're going to get some really bright people in and talk about where we're going on that, with the race matters. And then we're going to have a week in which we attempt to have a serious discussion of race on every college campus in America. So those are our next big things coming up when I get home.

Q. So April seems to be a real big month for your race——

The President. April is a big month. April will be a big month for it, but we're still rolling out policies. We've got some significant things that are in budget process which will have a huge impact on the opportunity gap issues. We've got a provision in our budget to more than double the number of empowerment zones. Secretary Cuomo has got some very impressive proposals to set up development banks and other things to create jobs in inner cities and other isolated areas where the unemployment rate is high still.

So we've got a lot to do this year, and we'll see along about September where we are and in what form we should proceed. But I haven't made a final decision.

President's Visit to Africa

Ms. Ryan. The minority community seems to be really in your favor at all times, and especially now. In the African-American community, there seems to be the biggest love for President Bill Clinton ever, especially with this Africa trip.

What is this Africa trip meant to send to the African-American community, as well as the Latino community and the Asian community?

The President. Well, I think that the trip has special meaning for African-Americans. But if I can first say, I think all Americans should strongly support this trip. There are 700 million people living in sub-Saharan Africa. Within 25 years, the population will nearly double. This is a huge place. It's bigger than the United States and Canada put together—considerably bigger. And the population has been kept down in the past because of disease, primarily, and abject poverty. Now, better health care, better investment, better education, and better economic growth are going to increase the importance of Africa to every country and all kinds of people. And America's ties to Africa need to be strengthened and deepened. So I hope every American supports it.

But African-Americans in particular should take a lot of pride in this. And I found it inconceivable when I took office that no American President had ever taken a long, comprehensive trip to Africa. And when I go to Poland, Polish-Americans identify with that. When I go to Ireland and there's over 100,000 people in the streets in Dublin, the Irish-Americans identify with that. And I think that it's high time that African-Americans had this same opportunity that other Americans enjoy to know that their ethnic heritage has a present meaning and a future for the United States and African nations in partnership.

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, it's been noted that you are very, very tired. Why did you put so much on the front end of the trip? I mean, we've watched you in some of the shots—I mean, you look like you are about ready to just fall out.

The President. Well, I just have so—it's a long way from America, and I have so little time, and I just am trying to make the most of it. And we've had some—the days have been very long, and we arranged to travel a lot late at night. And I try to sleep when I'm on the plane; it's not always possible. But I'm feeling better now; I'm kind of getting my sea legs, and I think I'm—I was less sleepy today during the middle of the day than I have been on any day so far on the trip, so I'm getting adjusted.

But I find that if you have a very hard-driving schedule, then you get tired. But if you don't do very much, then when it's over, then you say, gosh, there's 15 things I wished I'd done I didn't do. So I think, on balance, the American people are better served by having me be a little tired the first 2 and 3 days and keep driving through the schedule and getting done as much as possible.

Ms. Ryan. Thank you.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:34 p.m. on March 27 in the Cape Town Hotel, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 31. In his remarks, the President referred to NBA Chicago Bulls player Michael Jordan.

Remarks to African Environmentalists in Gaborone, Botswana
March 31, 1998

Thank you very much, Minister Kgoroba, for your leadership and your kind remarks. I certainly hope that our visit here will increase tourism in Botswana, not so much because my wife and I came but because we brought such a vast American delegation and a lot of members of our press corps. And I think I can speak for them—this may be the only subject on which I can speak for them, but I think I can speak for them—they had a wonderful time as well, and we're very grateful to you. [*Laughter*]

Vice President Mogae, thank you for joining us, and congratulations about your assumption of office just in the next few hours. Minister Merahfe, Secretary Mpofu, Ambassador Mogwe, thank you all for making us feel welcome. I'd like to say a special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Kirby and all the people associated with the Mokolodi Nature Preserve for making us feel so welcome here. This is a perfect place for our meeting.

I thank the distinguished delegation from the United States Congress and Secretary Slater and AID Administrator Atwood; Reverend Jesse Jackson; my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger; and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice, Ambassador and Mrs. Krueger, and our entire American delegation for being here.

And I would like to say a special word of thanks to the people who work day-in and day-out in environmental and preservation work who participated in our roundtable. And I'd like to introduce them. And I'll do my best to pronounce their names properly. If I don't, you'll just have to make allowances for me. They did a wonderful job.

First, the Director of the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Sedie Modise; from Cameroon, the Director of the United Nations Development Program's Office To Combat Desertification and Drought, Samuel Nyambi; from Ghana, professor of zoology at the University of Ghana and Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Yaa Ntiamoa-Baidu; the resident representative for Conservation International from Madagascar, formerly Governor of the Central Bank of Madagascar, Minister of Finance, and when I first met him, the Ambassador of Madagascar to the United States, Leon Rajaobelina; and the Director of the African Conservation Centre of Kenya, Dr. Helen Gichohi.

I think it's fair to say that none of us who visit Botswana will ever forget the beauty of the environment. Hillary and I and many of our party, as the Minister just said, have been reveling in the beauties of Chobe. And we do want to come back to the Okavango Delta. And we would like to see more of the Kalahari and more of the rest of the country. I think any human being who spends any appreciable amount of time in a uniquely pristine place, full of the wonders of animal and plant life, instinctively feel humanity's sacred obligation to preserve our environment. I have been deeply encouraged by what I have just heard in the meeting with Africa's—some of Africa's most distinguished and dedicated environmental experts as we discussed the challenges we all face in meeting our obligation to preserve the environment.

There are challenges on every continent. Here in Africa, deserts are spreading; forests are shrinking; water is increasingly scarce. The needs of growing populations often clash with those of plants and animals. People's health is more at risk as pollutants poison water and air. And here, as everywhere, global warming threatens to aggravate droughts and floods and hasten the spread of infectious disease.

American children in their imagination often travel to Africa. Since I was a boy, we have done that. The essence of what attracts them and people everywhere is a vision of the most magnificent, amazing creatures on Earth living in harmony with unspeakably beautiful nature, the vision we saw realized in Chobe. That vision of, somehow, nature in all of its manifestations in balance with people living their lives successfully inspires environmental efforts around the world.

At the Rio Summit in 1992, for the first time, nations gathered to proclaim that each country's stewardship of its own environment affects the whole planet. Africans and Americans swim and fish in the same Atlantic Ocean, breathe the same air, suffer the same health risks from toxic chemicals, greenhouse gases, destruction of the ozone layer. If animal and plant species are lost, we are all diminished, even if they are lost on someone else's continent.

Since Rio, real progress has been made in fulfilling our mutual obligations. Nations have banned dumping of radioactive waste. Nations are attacking water pollution, working to protect ocean life. We have reaffirmed the vital need for family planning. We have made real progress in reducing the destruction of the ozone layer.

But we must do more. And today, very briefly, I'd like to focus on three concerns we Americans share with Africans: spreading deserts, threats to species, and global warming. First, with regard to deserts, 27 percent of the African continent is desert—45 percent more, dry land, still arable but with limited water. The dry regions are rapidly succumbing to the desert, becoming wasteland, increasing the chances of famine and poverty. While climate change as a whole plays a role, agricultural practices—too much grazing, poor irrigation practices, too much tree clearing, failure to rotate crops—all these things play a pivotal role.

These concerns are familiar to Americans. One hundred years ago when our settlers moved from east to west in the United States, they believed they found a paradise of rich, fertile soil. They planted and plowed the land without

any thought for the future. Then, in 1931, the rain stopped. Fields dried up. Our skies turned black. Dust filled people's lungs. Food was scarce. Thousands upon thousands of starving animals descended from the hills to compete with people for scrap. In April of 1935 blinding dirt blew 24 hours a day for 3 weeks. After all these years, that is still known to all Americans as our Dust Bowl. It was called America's Sahara.

We couldn't make the rains return; that was nature's province. But we could and did, as a nation, institute strong soil conservation measures that have helped to protect us since. And we had an agricultural extension service of respected experts from each local community working with farmers to help them see that it was in their personal interest to preserve our common environment.

A half century later, at the Rio Summit, with more and more arable land on the African Continent turning to dust, African leaders pressed the rest of the world for action. The world listened and crafted a treaty, the Desertification Convention, to help stop the spread of desert and the degrading of dry land. The treaty seeks to empower local communities and to channel foreign assistance to prevent overgrazing, to grow crops appropriate to the land, to use existing water supplies more wisely.

I sent this treaty to our Senate for its approval in the summer of 1996. No action has been taken since, but today I am pleased to announce that two distinguished Senators, one from each of our parties—Senator Jim Jeffords of Vermont and Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin—have agreed to lead a bipartisan effort for Senate approval. And I will do my best to get it approved as quickly as possible.

In addition to protecting our land, we must preserve the plants and animals for their beauty and their benefit. As our participant from Madagascar reminded me today, the rosy periwinkle, found only on Madagascar, is a plant you likely would walk by without a second look. But extracts from this plant have proved critical to attacking Hodgkin's disease and childhood leukemia. It could have been lost entirely with no concern for biodiversity. A snakeroot plant found in India gives a drug that saves lives by lowering blood pressure. It can be lost entirely by ignoring the needs of biodiversity. Beyond such medical breakthroughs, there is majesty in God's creation and the balance of life biodiversity guarantees.

Yesterday at Chobe, we saw some of Africa's most beautiful wild animals. I saw all the things that I dreamed of seeing, from elephants and hippos to giraffes and lions. But I also saw some animals I never knew existed before—the lechwe, the sable antelope, the kudu. I saw a monitor lizard. [*Laughter*] And I thought of all the people I would like that lizard to monitor. [*Laughter*] But, unfortunately, I could not catch it and take it home.

I saw the magnificent secretary bird, a bird I had never seen before, and watched it in wonder. I saw the lilac-breasted roller fly and roll for us, and I wished everyone in the world—every child in the world and every child in Africa, especially—could have a chance to see these things free from the want of poverty, free from any necessity of their parents to think about doing things which would undermine the existence of those birds and animals for all time.

The rest of the world thanks Botswana for its hard work to address these problems. Under the guidance of President Masire, Minister Kgoroba, Defense Force Commander Khama, Botswana has set aside large portions of its lands and parks, worked to stop poachers, promoted sustainable use of resources, is working with neighboring nations to protect rivers, ground water, forests, and other resources they share.

Because such efforts are not easy, they must be supported. This year America will invest more than $80 million to help African nations protect their natural bounty. And we all should do more.

Across the continents, nations are also awakening to the connection between conservation and democracy as local communities share power with national governments in managing wildlife and water, forest and farmland. When people have a chance to decide, more often than not, they actually decide to protect what is precious to their way of life.

The United States has helped to empower African communities on environmental matters and will increase our efforts with a new initiative called Green Communities for Africa, based on a program already working back home. The program helps citizens in each community consider the environmental consequences of all kinds of local decisions, from disposing wastes to providing clean drinking water.

Finally, we must act together to address the threat of global climate change. The overwhelming consensus of the world's scientific community is that greenhouse gases from human activity are raising the Earth's temperature at a troubling, rapid rate. And unless we change course, seas will rise so high they will swallow islands and coastal areas the world over, destroying entire communities and habitats. Storms and droughts will intensify. Diseases like malaria, Africa's terrible scourge, already killing almost 3,000 children per day, will be borne by mosquitoes to higher and higher altitudes and will travel across more and more national borders, threatening more lives on this continent and throughout the world. No nation can escape these dangers; therefore, all must work to prevent them.

As the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, the United States has a special responsibility to our own people and the rest of the world to act. We are implementing an aggressive plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with programs for energy efficiency and clean technology. But it is a global problem that requires global solutions. We must reduce emissions in the developed world and promote clean energy development in the developing world.

Under the historic agreement reached last December in Kyoto, companies have strong incentives to invest in clean energy projects not only in the developed countries but in developing countries. The United States also plans to provide $1 billion over 5 years to help developing countries to combat global warming.

Today I'm pleased to announce that NASA, our space agency, together with our partners from southern Africa, will conduct the first-ever environmental review of this part of the continent, using satellites in space and ground surveillance. The results will provide a baseline from which to measure changes in the environment, improve seasonal drought predictions, and help to assess the impact of climate change. We can and we must work together to realize the promise of Kyoto.

A generation ago, our leaders began to realize this would become an issue we would all have to face. President Kennedy said, "It is our task to hand undiminished to those who come after us the natural wealth and beauty which is ours." In other words, the natural wealth and beauty which is ours is not really ours. It belongs to the people who came before us, who live on in our memory, and to our children and grandchildren and their grandchildren which will come after.

In the United States, many of our Native American population say that they manage their own natural resources with seven generations in view. They think, in other words, about how today's decisions will affect their children seven generations down the line. We can at least think of our grandchildren.

We have a serious responsibility to deal with poor people in a respectful way the world over because everyone deserves the right to try to advance his or her material condition so that all of our children can have decent lives and get decent education and build a decent future. But we know from the scientific data available to us today that we can grow the economy at a rate that sustains both economic well-being and our natural resources. Indeed, we know that if we maximize the use of scientific technology and knowledge, we can grow the economy and even improve the condition of the natural environment.

That is our responsibility. It has come to our generation to make these decisions now so that future generations will enjoy all the wonderful technological advances of the 21st century. But first, we must act, and we must do it together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. at the Mokolodi Nature Preserve. In his remarks, he referred to the following Botswana Government officials: Minister of Commerce & Industry George Kgoroba; Vice President Festus Mogae; Minister of Foreign Affairs Mompati Merahfe; Permanent Secretary at the Department of Foreign Affairs Ernest Mpofu; Ambassador to the U.S. Archibald Mogwe; President Ketumile Masire; and former Defense Force Commander Ian Khama, currently Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration. The President also referred to Ian Kirby, founder of the preserve; and U.S. Ambassador Robert Krueger and his wife, Kathleen. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Bella Abzug
March 31, 1998

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of former Congresswoman Bella Abzug.

Bella Abzug was a great American and a true citizen of the world. Her conscience, intellect, and political acumen made an immeasurable contribution to our public life. She raised her passionate and tireless voice demanding the best for women, for all Americans, and indeed, for people all around the world. She will be sorely missed.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation
March 31, 1998

Dear _____*:*

I am writing to commend you on the Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998 that you are introducing today on behalf of the Democratic Caucuses of both Houses of Congress. This bill represents a critically important step towards enacting a long overdue "Patients' Bill of Rights" that Americans need to renew their confidence in the nation's rapidly changing health care system.

States across the nation have already begun to enact reasonable patient protections. In fact, 44 states, including 28 of the 32 states with Republican Governors, have passed at least one of the protections that my Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality recommended, and that I endorsed last year. However, a patchwork of non-comprehensive state laws cannot provide Americans with adequate patient protections, particularly because state health care laws do not have jurisdiction over more than 100 million Americans. Federal standards are essential to assure that all patients get the protections they need.

You have done a remarkable job bringing a broad-based coalition of Democrats together to move this important issue forward. I would particularly like to commend Senator Kennedy and Representative Dingell for their leadership in developing this legislation.

The Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998 includes important patient protections, such as the right to emergency care wherever and whenever a medical emergency arises; the right to talk freely with doctors and nurses about all the medical options available, not only the cheapest; and the right to an internal and external appeals process that allows patients to address their concerns and grievances. I am particularly pleased that it includes every protection recommended by the Advisory Commission. This bill also improves on other patients' rights legislation before the Congress because it does not include expensive protections for health care providers that have the potential to increase premiums excessively.

The bill you are introducing today provides a critical step towards developing bipartisan legislation that will pass the Congress. I look forward to working with the Congress to enact a "Patients' Bill of Rights" Act that I can sign into law this year.

I am confident that, working in a bipartisan fashion, the Congress will produce a bill that achieves the important balance of providing patients the protections they need without undermining health care affordability. We must ensure that whether they have traditional care or managed care, Americans have access to quality care. Thank you again for your strong leadership and commitment to this end.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle and House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bud Shuster on Legislation To Establish a Uniform Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

March 31, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On March 28, 1998, I sent a letter to the Leadership addressing my concerns regarding H.R. 2400, the Building Efficient Surface Transportation and Equity Act of 1998. As the House prepares to consider this bill, it is my hope that the Lowey-Canady .08 provision be adopted.

As the crime rate continues to drop nationwide, we still lose an American to drunk driving every thirty minutes—every half hour a family is shattered and a child, parent or neighbor is lost forever. Setting a uniform limit for impaired driving at .08 blood alcohol content will help us crack down on the drunk driving epidemic and put a stop to these needless deaths. In addition, a uniform standard will still allow adults to drink responsibly.

This should not be a partisan issue, but rather an opportunity for the House to act in a bipartisan fashion to save lives and serve America. I look forward to continuing to work together to make the .08 standard a reality.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Message to the Congress Reporting on Appropriations for B–2 Bombers

March 31, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1998, Public Law 105–56 (1997), and section 131 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, Public Law 105–85 (1997), I certify to the Congress that no additional B–2 bombers should be procured during this fiscal year.

After considering the recommendations of the Panel to Review Long-Range Air Power and the advice of the Secretary of Defense, I have decided that the $331 million authorized and appropriated for B–2 bombers in Fiscal Year 1998 will be applied as follows: $174 million will be applied toward completing the planned Fiscal Year 1998 baseline modification and repair program and $157 million will be applied toward further upgrades to improve the deployability, survivability, and maintainability of the current B–2 fleet. Using the funds in this manner will ensure successful completion of the baseline modification and repair program and further enhance the operational combat readiness of the B–2 fleet.

The Panel to Review Long-Range Air Power also provided several far-reaching recommendations for fully exploiting the potential of the current B–1, B–2, and B–52 bomber force, and for upgrading and sustaining the bomber force for the longer term. These longer term recommendations warrant careful review as the Department of Defense prepares its Fiscal Year 2000–2006 Future Years Defense Program.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 31, 1998.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Abdou Diouf of Senegal in Dakar
April 1, 1998

African Crisis Response Initiative

Q. Mr. President, are you—how important do you feel an African force is—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, I think it's potentially very important because an African Crisis Response Force can enable the Africans to stop problems before they get out of hand. And of course, the President and I are going to review one of the training exercises here in Senegal. We've had one in Uganda. We will have one in Ghana. President Mandela said that he would be interested in participating, so I'm encouraged by that. I think there's an enormous sense among African leaders that if they have infrastructure and the training to do it, they could solve a lot of their own problems. I'm very excited about it.

Q. Will you be talking to—[*inaudible*]—about reports of—[*inaudible*]—party politics here? There is criticism that perhaps the ruling party has too much power and is too controlling.

The President. Well, we'll discuss the whole range of things. But the main thing I want to do today is to thank the President for the support that he's given to peacekeeping around the world and to—[*inaudible*]—Senegal's long experience with elected Presidencies and to work on this African Crisis Response Initiative.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11 a.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, the President referred to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Senegalese Troops Trained for the African Crisis Response Initiative in Thies, Senegal
April 1, 1998

President Diouf, distinguished leaders of Senegal and the United States, members of the Senegalese and American Armed Forces, ladies and gentlemen. We have just seen a training exercise involving dedicated soldiers from our two nations, part of the African Crisis Response Initiative.

I'd like to thank the Senegalese soldiers and the United States Armed Forces. I'd like to especially thank the distinguished officers who briefed us, Lieutenant Colonel Diallo and Major Erckenbrack. And I'd also like to express my appreciation to the other Senegalese soldiers and gendarmes who were standing there who have served with multinational peacekeeping forces in Haiti and Bosnia, Africa and the Middle East.

Senegal is respected around the world for its tradition of peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. You are a leader among the more than 15 African countries that regularly contribute troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions. I thank Senegalese troops for their commitment to peace, and I thank our American troops for your work here.

Africa and America have a great stake in the success of the soldiers like those President Diouf and I have seen here today. Where bullets and bombs prevent children from going to school and parents from going to work, amid chaos and ruin, these soldiers and other like them can bring security, hope, and a future.

Terrible violence continues to plague our world, and Africa has seen some of the worst. In some cases, children, often against their will, have stood on the frontlines of armies as cannon fodder for the ambitions of others. A few days ago, I met in Rwanda with some of the survivors of the 1994 genocide there. As I said to them, let me say again: We must find better ways to prevent such horrors from occurring.

While peace has started to take hold in many nations that once knew only violence—Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, and elsewhere—tensions linger in some of these nations, and

violence continues in others, like Burundi, Somalia, and Sudan. Buried landmines prevent children from walking in safety in too many African countries. Millions of refugees still remain driven from their homes. In the debris of war, poverty and disease thrive.

The international community needs new tools to keep the peace in volatile areas and cope with humanitarian crises. The African Crisis Response Initiative program, which President Diouf and I have seen in action here today, provides peacekeeping training and nonlethal equipment to African soldiers, with the goal of helping African nations to prepare their military units, led by African commanders, to respond quickly and effectively to humanitarian and peacekeeping challenges in Africa and around the world.

Senegal was one of the first nations to support the African Crisis Response Initiative, and along with Uganda, the first to participate in its training exercises. Mali and Malawi participated soon after. We are about to begin an exercise with Ghanaian troops, along with Belgian soldiers. Later this year, we will conduct exercises with Ethiopia, and we look forward to other countries participating soon.

Our purpose is not to dominate security matters in Africa or to abandon America's role in Africa's security but, instead, to build on existing efforts, including those of African nations, the Organization for African Unity, the United Nations, France, Britain, and others, to strengthen the capacity for preserving peace here. With our African partners we will also establish a center for security studies in Africa, modeled on the Marshall Center in Germany, to provide programs for civilian and military leaders on defense policy planning and the role of militaries in democratic societies.

America will continue to be involved on this continent as long as African nations desire our assistance and our partnership in building a safer future.

Mr. President, I want to thank you and your military leaders for being such partners. And I would like to thank the members of the American military, and one in particular, General Jamerson, for his efforts, relentless over the past couple of years, to build closer ties between African militaries and our own.

To meet the threats to peace and freedom we will face in the 21st century, we must strengthen our resolve in the face of hatred and violence. We must tell the aggressors and those who tear societies apart, "You will not prevail." We must prove that the peacemakers are getting stronger. And above all, we must demonstrate that the peacemakers are working together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. at Thies Military Base. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Col. Abdoulaye Diallo, Senegalese commander, African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI); Maj. Adrian E. Erckenbrack, USA, Commander, Operational Detachment Bravo; and Gen. James L. Jamerson, USAF, Deputy Commander in Chief, European Command.

Statement on House Action Against Legislation To Establish a Uniform Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

April 1, 1998

It is imperative that we set a uniform standard of .08 blood-alcohol content to protect our young people from harm, make our streets safer, and help us crack down on drunk driving nationwide. Our country will not tolerate irresponsible acts that endanger our children and our Nation.

I am disappointed that the House Rules Committee has decided to keep the critical .08 legislation from coming to the floor under the BESTEA transportation bill. By establishing a strong but sensible limit on blood-alcohol content, we could save as many as 600 lives a year. Saving lives and promoting responsibility should not be partisan issues.

Last month, under the leadership of Senator Lautenberg and Senator DeWine, the Senate overwhelmingly supported the .08 standard for drinking and driving. The House leadership, however, once again is hiding behind procedural

maneuvers by blocking this effort to protect children and help put an end to drunk driving. The American people deserve better than this.

Last night's setback was by no means final. Building on our victory in the Senate we will work to overcome this roadblock by the House leadership. We will continue the fight against drunk driving on every front. Today, as part of our comprehensive effort, we are announcing grants made possible by the leadership of Senator Byrd that will help combat underage drinking. I stand ready to aid Representative Lowey and Representative Canady as they continue their efforts to pass a sensible, uniform DUI standard. We will keep fighting to put the brakes on drunk driving.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption

April 1, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption ("the Convention"), adopted and opened for signature at the Specialized Conference of the Organization of American States (OAS) at Caracas, Venezuela, on March 29, 1996. The Convention was signed by the United States on June 27, 1996, at the twenty-seventh regular session of the OAS General Assembly meeting in Panama City, Panama. In addition, for the information of the Senate, I transmit the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

The Convention was the first multilateral Convention of its kind in the world to be adopted. The provisions of the Convention are explained in the accompanying report of the Department of State. The report also sets forth proposed understandings that would be deposited by the United States with its instrument of ratification. The Convention will not require implementing legislation for the United States.

The Convention should be an effective tool to assist in the hemispheric effort to combat corruption, and could also enhance the law enforcement efforts of the States Parties in other areas, given the links that often exist between corruption and organized criminal activity such as drug trafficking. The Convention provides for a broad range of cooperation, including extradition, mutual legal assistance, and measures regarding property, in relation to the acts of corruption described in the Convention.

The Convention also imposes on the States Parties an obligation to criminalize acts of corruption if they have not already done so. Especially noteworthy is the obligation to criminalize the bribery of foreign government officials. This provision was included in the Convention at the behest of the United States negotiating delegation. In recent years, the United States Government has sought in a number of multilateral fora to persuade other governments to adopt legislation akin to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. This Convention represents a significant breakthrough on that front and should lend impetus to similar measures in other multilateral groups.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the understandings described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 1, 1998.

Letter to the Speaker of the House on the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program
April 1, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On March 28, 1998, I sent a letter to the Leadership addressing my concerns regarding H.R. 2400, the Building Efficient Surface Transportation and Equity Act of 1998. As the House prepares to consider this bill, I want you to know that I am adamantly opposed to any attempts to weaken or repeal the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program extension contained in this legislation.

We have seen time and again that women and minorities are excluded from the contracting process when a DBE program is not in place. The DBE program is not a quota. The existing statute explicitly provides that the Secretary of Transportation may waive the 10 percent goal for any reason and that this benchmark is not to be imposed on any state or locality. Rather, the DBE program encourages participation without imposing rigid requirements of any type.

I ask that you oppose efforts to strike the DBE program from the bill.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
April 1, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 1997, to January 31, 1998. The previous submission covered events during October to November 1997.

International efforts on the Cyprus issue slowed during this period in anticipation of the February 1998 Cypriot Presidential election, which President Clerides won. It was, however, an active period for developments that affect Cyprus, including those in the area of EU-Turkish relations. Turkey perceived the Luxembourg EU Summit as a setback to its goal of closer integration with Europe. When I met Prime Minister Yilmaz here in December, I urged him to remain focused on Turkey's long-term interest in Europe.

There were negative developments on the island during this period. On December 27, the Turkish Cypriots indefinitely suspended bicommunal contacts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. In January, the Greek Cypriot National Guard assumed control of the Paphos airbase, which was upgraded to serve as a base for fighter aircraft. We reiterated to the Greek Cypriots our concerns about proceeding with the purchase of the S–300 antiaircraft missiles, which present a serious obstacle to achieving a settlement based on a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Interview With Sam Donaldson of ABC News for "Prime Time Live" in Dakar, Senegal
April 1, 1998

Jonesboro Incident

Mr. Donaldson. Mr. President, thanks very much for coming. Why do you think it happened the other day in Jonesboro? I mean, the police have taken into custody two young boys, 13 and 11, and that's just stunning.

The President. I don't know why it happened. And I think we're going to have to wait until we hear something from those young men or their spokespeople, their lawyers or their parents or somebody, to know more than we now know.

But it is troubling that this has happened, this school-related violence, now three times in three States, resulting in the deaths of children, in the last few months. For me, this was especially hard because I spent a lot of time in my life in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and the people there have been very good to me, and we've done a lot of things together.

I could barely look at that service in the convocation center, because that convocation center was built as a place of joy and celebration. When I was Governor, it was one of the biggest issues in my campaign in 1982 that I would build that convocation center. And to see it housing all those people in all their grief, it was very sad.

But I think we have to work on two things. I think we have to first of all support the people there, moving from their heartbreak to healing and to getting their hope back. And then I think the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education have got to get all the available information on these three incidents and any others like it, and then see if there is a pattern and whether, from that pattern, we can draw some conclusions about what we should do.

Mr. Donaldson. When I was a little kid I can remember I'd get angry, and maybe you did too, in the schoolyard or something, but it never occurred to me to plan something like that.

The President. No. That's why I think we can't know. I mean, there is all kinds of speculation. I think it's just too early to assign blame, but I think everyone should examine the issues. I think every parent should redouble his or her efforts to teach their children right from wrong and to warn them about the dangers of guns, I think not only in the South but throughout the country where there are a lot of guns because people like to hunt and enjoy it and regularly teach their children at a fairly early age. I think I was 12 the first time I fired a .22.

Mr. Donaldson. And you're a hunter?

The President. Yes. I don't do it much anymore, but I think I was about 12 years old. But you know, there has to be some extra care taken, where children are hunting, to make sure they understand gun safety and also the profound dangers of it.

And finally I think all this effort that's been made in the last few years to get the television ratings on violence and have movies evaluated for violence, I think we maybe even need to go underneath that and examine whether, in scenes of violence in movies and television, we have to be very careful not to either glorify it or minimize it, make it look almost cartoon-like.

I'll never forget what the principal at Jonesboro told me when we talked after I called her. She said, "You know, when I went out there and I saw those children lying on the ground and I saw one of them horribly disfigured and all those people gushing blood, it was very different from what I see in the movies," she said.

Mr. Donaldson. Well, we have movies that are violent and—"L.A. Confidential" has won a lot of awards; remember a few years ago, "Fargo"—and television programs on the networks are violent. Do you think there would be something to just saying to Hollywood and to everybody involved, "Guys, cut it out, or at least cut it down?"

The President. Well, what I think about the violence is—and again, I'm not an expert, which is one reason I'd like to see them review all the literature—I think the sheer volume of things to which children at an early age are exposed tends to numb their feelings about it. We do have studies on that. So maybe cutting it down is one good thing.

The other thing, I think, is if—a lot of these stories require the presentation of some violence, and it is a part of life. It's a part of a lot of the stories. If a story line requires the presentation of violence, then I think it ought not to either be glorified or cartoonized, if you will. People need to understand it's a serious thing with horrible consequences, because one of the problems with children, of course, and one of the reasons we assign different levels of responsibility to people as they get older, for their actions, is they can't often fully understand the consequences of their actions. So you have to bend over backwards to make sure—we adults do—that we've done everything we can to make sure they do understand the consequences of certain actions as we present those consequences to them.

Mr. Donaldson. On that point, it's said that one of these little boys is just now devastated, frightened, said to be frightened, calling for his mother. It's as if suddenly his eyes came open, and he was horrified with what he saw.

The President. Well, as I said, we don't know enough about that. That may well be true. But these children that have been arrested, there will have to be psychological profiles done on them. We'll have to have a lot more facts before we can draw any conclusions. I've tried to be real careful about that. I think all Americans should.

But we know generally we need to make sure there are no guns in schools. We need to enforce the youth handgun act we passed in 1994. And we need to do everything we can to teach the kids right from wrong. And in the places where hunting is a part of the culture and where there are guns around the house, those of us who have been a part of that culture, and those who are, have a special responsibility to make sure that the guns are kept out of reach of people who shouldn't have them. And we need to get these child safety locks on all these handguns and other guns that we can. And we need to support constant drilling about safe use and what the consequences are, because this is a tragedy that will take a long time to get over.

Mr. Donaldson. You know, in Arkansas as well as several other States, these two young boys, if in fact they happened to have been, as the police believe, involved in this and are charged, cannot be tried as adults, which would mean that they will get out, if they're incarcerated, at age 18 or 21 at the latest. And already some of the relatives are saying that wouldn't be justice. What do you say?

The President. Well, that's something of course we'll have to review. But most States have lowered the age at which people at least can be tried as adults. In our State, in Arkansas, the way it works is a determination can be made—the prosecutor can ask and then a court can decide that a young person under the age of 18, but 14 or over, could be tried as adults if the circumstances warranted.

It looks to me like one of the things this case will do is probably launch a debate in America about whether there should be some intermediate step. That is: Okay, maybe people below a certain age shouldn't be tried as adults, but should there be some means of keeping them incarcerated after their 18th or their 20th birthday if the circumstances warrant that, either the severity of the crime or concern about their mental condition and stability, should they be released.

Again, I'll make no judgment on the facts of this case, but I think that there will be a serious debate about that.

But the real thing is, I'll say again, is to try to prevent things like this from happening in the first place. You just have to—we have to work very, very hard at hammering home to our children what the consequences of using guns are. We have to keep the guns out of the hands of the kids that shouldn't—when they shouldn't have them. We need to make sure that the gun safety practices are very strong. They need to be kept out of the hands of kids. The child safety locks ought to be on them wherever possible.

And then, again, I'm hopeful that the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education, when they get all the facts of the these three cases and, as I said, any others if there are others out there, that they will show a pattern—practice maybe that will tell us something else we can do, if not legislation, then practice, that will reduce the chances that this will happen.

Mr. Donaldson. What is your hunch? Do you think we're in for an epidemic? I mean, there are copycat crimes, as you know. Until these three incidents that you referred to, I don't recall another one.

The President. Well, I don't know. I hope they're—I hope not. I think, actually, that the kind of publicity that this incident is getting, and the fact that it's now kind of—America is

now aware that this is the third of three such incidents, may break whatever spell there might be out there for copycats.

I know we were concerned several years ago, when I was Governor of Arkansas, when we had some children commit suicide in a small community like Jonesboro, deeply religious, hard-working community. And there seemed to be a little rash around America at the time of children killing themselves. So everybody got together and worked on it, tried to highlight it.

I would be surprised if there is a rash of this, but I would also be surprised if there is not a real effort now on the part of individuals and communities and schools to take actions that will reduce the chance that it will happen again. I also think that in the community at large and in our schoolrooms, in our churches, in our homes now, everybody is going to be a little more sensitive for children that seem to be withdrawing, seem to be troubled, that seem to be confused.

Again I say, the only really satisfactory response to all this is to try to do those things which will prevent these things from happening in the first place. Once they happen, you do the best you can to do justice in the particular case, but that's not nearly as good as trying to do those things which will keep them from happening again.

Mr. Donaldson. You're on a very important trip, as you see it, to Africa, and a lot of other people agree with you, but did you consider at all perhaps going back for the service?

The President. I thought about it. But when I realized that they—when I understood that they were willing to—wanted me to present a videotape, I thought it was the responsible thing to do, because I thought I could do more good for the country by finishing this trip, and I think that was the right decision.

I wanted to be there, not only because it was in my home State and it was a heartbreaking, mammoth, awful thing, but I have spent an inordinate amount of time in that part of Arkansas. The mayor in the town has been my friend a long time, the county judge, and all these people that I've known forever. I just—it was an awful thing for me personally, and I just grieve for those people.

Mr. Donaldson. What can you say to them? What do you say to parents who have lost a child this way, or to the relatives of the teacher who was killed? Is there anything that can be said?

The President. I don't have anything to say other than what I said in my message to them right now. I think that their friends need to hold them close, and they need to just—it takes a long time to heal. And one of the things that I have learned even more since I've been President is that a lot of things happen in this life that cannot be explained or justified, and lot of living is overcoming the unjustifiable, the madness, and somehow going on.

I would say that I believe the children who perished and the teacher who perished, from all reports, had lived extremely good lives and were extremely good people, and they would want their parents, their siblings, the spouses—the young teacher's husband—they would want them to go on living, to look for positive things to live for, to be grateful for the time they had with the children and the teacher.

And at some point you have to lay down the loss. You can never give it up. You can never stop hurting. You can never stop missing. But a choice has to be made to go on and to make the most of whatever is left in life. And I think that's what most people—most good people who die too young in an unfair way, if they could speak across space and time to their loved ones, would try to lift them up and ease their pain. They wouldn't want them to stay in the grip of hatred. They wouldn't want them to be paralyzed by grief. So I hope they'll be able to find peace and healing and go on.

President's Trip to Africa

Mr. Donaldson. Finally, Mr. President, are you happy to be going tomorrow?

The President. You bet. I'm really glad—I'm getting tired now. We've worked very hard on this trip. But it's been a good thing for our country, I think. It certainly has been an enlightening experience, I believe, for everyone on this trip. I've been immensely impressed by the energy, the intelligence, the passion of the people I've met in positions of power and in the small villages in the countryside.

And I think that we can make a strong partnership with people in Africa that we will need in the 21st century. Among other things, I think most Americans were surprised to learn that American investment in Africa earns a return of 30 percent a year, which is higher than investment on any other continent. We can do

well for ourselves by making a good partnership with Africa, and I hope as we go home there will be broad bipartisan support for continuing to deepen this partnership. And I hope it will be followed by a lot of private citizens, business people, and others coming over here and getting involved.

There is a lot to be done here and a great future here, and I want us to be a part of it.

Mr. Donaldson. Thank you, Mr. President. Thanks for sitting down with us.

The President. Thank you, Sam.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:45 p.m. at Le Meridien President Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew Golden, 11, and Mitchell Johnson, 13, accused killers in the Jonesboro, AR, middle school murders; Karen Curtner, principal, Westside Middle School; Mayor Hubert A. Brodell of Jonesboro; and Roy (Red) Bearden, Craighead County judge. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Exchange With Reporters in Dakar
April 2, 1998

Dismissal of Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

The President. Good morning.

Q. Did you get some good news last night, Mr. President?

The President. Well, obviously I'm pleased by the decision, and I think the judge's opinion speaks for itself. Let me say, though, I'm also immensely pleased by this trip, and I'm very much looking forward to going home and continuing the work of the very ambitious agenda we've got there.

Q. Mr. President, the suit was thrown out, but it did not clear your name. Are you disappointed by that?

The President. Well, the nature of the motion would not permit that, but the most important thing is that I can go back now and continue the work that I'm doing. That's the most important thing to me. I want to get back to the business of the people.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. Starr says it has no effect on his investigation. Is that your view, sir?

The President. I don't have any comment on Mr. Starr.

Q. Mr. President, how have these last 3 years affected the institution of the Presidency? Has this been a good thing for the Presidency?

The President. Well, let me say, I've done my best to do what every President who has commented on this, from George Washington forward, has said the President should do, which is that for the period of your service, insofar as possible, you should cease to be an individual citizen and spend all your time and energy on the country. And that's what I've tried to do. And I've done my best at it, and the results have been satisfactory, I think, for the American people. And that's what I intend to continue to do. Others should evaluate that question, but I need to keep working on the people's business, and that's what I intend to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. at the Le Meridien President Hotel. During the exchange, he referred to U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Human Rights Activists in Dakar

April 2, 1998

The President. First let me say how delighted that I am to have such a distinguished group to discuss human rights and democracy in Africa. I thank our panelists for being here, and also let me thank all of those who are here in the audience who have worked on this cause across the continent in your various countries and, in at least one instance, in your particular village.

I think it is clear that there has been some significant progress in Africa in the decade of the nineties. The number of governments that were elected by their people have gone from 5 to 24. But we have to be clear: There is still a huge human rights challenge, a huge democracy challenge in Africa.

We believe that human rights are universal. That's what the international Declaration of Human Rights says. That's why the United States has worked hard to support democracy and human rights in Africa. Since 1989, we have worked in 46 different African nations. We have invested more than $400 million of our taxpayers' money to support elections, to reform judiciaries, to strengthen the participation of citizens in decisionmaking that affects our own lives. That support will continue.

I have seen many heartening signs on this trip in South Africa, in the determination of the people I spoke with in Rwanda and in many other places, to continue to press the cause of human rights. Mostly though, I am here to listen and learn from you.

And I want to say a special word of appreciation to the First Lady for the work she's done on these issues, especially beginning at the Beijing women's conference and the work that began here in Senegal last year on the issue of female genital mutilation, which I know she had a meeting about this morning.

Would you like to say anything before we begin?

[*Hillary Clinton welcomed the guests and recognized a group of villagers from Malicounda Bambara, praising their efforts to eliminate the ancient custom of female circumcision in Senegal.*]

The President. Now, let's begin. There are many issues here that I hope we can have discussed today, and if they may be covered in the initial comments by our speakers, we want to talk about democracy and human rights. We want to talk about the threat of ethnic conflict to forming a unified democratic environment. We want to talk about how—the challenge of investigating past abuses and working for justice while promoting national unity and reconciliation, issues of freedom of the press, women's rights. There are a number of things that I hope we can deal with today.

But again, I want all of you to feel free to say mostly what it is you want to say about where you are, what you're doing, and what you believe the United States can do to support your endeavors.

Who would like to go first? Someone volunteer? Archbishop?

[*Archbishop Raphael S. Ndingi Mwana'a Nzeki, of Nairobi, Kenya, chairman, Kenya National Justice and Peace Commission, explained that although Kenya made advancements in democracy and human rights, corruption among law enforcement and political leaders led to increased violent crime. He stated that the people of Kenya needed U.S. support to continue their struggle for reform.*]

The President. Thank you very much.

[*Samuel Kofi Woods, executive director, Justice and Peace Commission, National Catholic Secretariat, described the human rights situation in Liberia and urged the United States to support the establishment of institutions in Liberia to safeguard the rights of its citizens and advance the cause of democracy. Reginald Matchaba Hove, chairman, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, discussed the process of reconciliation following human rights abuses, and stated that confession, acknowledgement of guilt, and forgiveness were necessary cathartic steps for both the abused and the abusers. He encouraged the U.S. Government to support local initiatives to ensure reconciliation and commended the President's visit, particularly to Goree Island, as an important gesture.*]

The President. Thank you, Doctor, very much. I don't want to interrupt the flow of the statements, but I would like to pose a question that we can return to perhaps after you all make your statements, if it's not convenient to address it as you go along. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa to which you referred obviously has made a great impression on people all across the world, and it has a great appeal. Yet, thinking about practically how you would do it in another country raises the question of whether it is possible if the leader of the country is not someone like Mr. Mandela. That is, he suffered so grievously himself, he is in a position to come forward and say, "This is the procedure I advocate, and if it's okay with me, who are you to say it's not enough?"

So, on the one hand, since he was the oppressed, he can make sure—to go back to something that Sam and the Archbishop said—he can make sure that the power of government is put at the service of the people who have been abused, something that others may not be able to do. And on the other hand, he can say to those who lost their loved ones or who were horribly scarred or maimed, "I can forgive. You should, too." So there is a unique position there.

If you sought to do something like that in other countries and we wanted to support it, as a practical matter, could it be done in a way that would either make the people who had been abused feel that they were at peace or, on the other hand, reach the consciousness of those who may be duly elected now but still may have done things for which they should atone? That, I think, is the problem we have all tried to come to terms with.

Anyway, who would like to go next? Anyone?

[*Baudoin Hamuli of the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), executive secretary, National Council of Development, Non-Governmental Organizations, described the positive changes that had occurred since President Laurent Kabila replaced former President Mobutu Sese Seko, but expressed concern that, without a constitutionally based government, the opportunity still existed for abuse of power. He urged the United States to pressure President Kabila for more democratization and to support peace efforts in the Great Lakes area, poverty alleviation programs, and economic reconstruction.*]

The President. Let me just say very briefly about this, this is very helpful. Any hope we have, I think, of having a regional system for developing the Great Lakes region, and indeed to some extent a larger in Africa, rests on the successful emergence of the Congo as a functioning democratic society. And we have here leaders—Mr. Royce, the Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee in the Congress, and our Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, and Reverend Jackson, my Special Envoy for Africa—we're all trying to figure out how we can best work with and influence Mr. Kabila, because, as you point out, I think one of their biggest handicaps is so many of them in the government were out of the Congo for so long. And then when they came in and started the struggle to replace Mobutu, I think it happened even more easily and more quickly than they thought it would.

But now they're confronted with what has typically been a dilemma, sometimes more imagined than real, for people in positions of governance. They say, "Well, you know, these countries, they fluctuate between anarchy and abusive dictatorship, so I don't want anarchy, so maybe I'll be a less abusive dictator." You've heard this story throughout your whole lives.

So what we have to do is somehow find a way for other countries from the outside and people like you from the inside to show these people who have come into the government, oftentimes from many years away from the Congo, if you will, a middle way, a way to—and the only way they can succeed—of empowering people at the grassroots level and working out a less centralized approach.

And we will work very hard on it, because I believe that if the transition of the Congo away from Mobutu to a genuine democratic, functioning government could succeed, as vast and as wealthy as the country is—and with the horrible history of the last few years—it would be a stunning example to the rest of the continent, indeed, to places in other continents of the world. So it's a very important issue. And I thank you very much for it.

[*Director of Studies Amsatou Sow Sidibe of the Peace and Human Rights Institute at the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar described Senegal's strong democratic tradition as well as its ongoing problems in protecting the human rights of women and children, and requested U.S. support for education and implementation of the*

U.N. convention on women's rights. Ivorian Association for the Defense of the Rights of Women President Constance Yai reiterated that African governments and populations are hostile to women and stressed that the absence of women in decisionmaking bodies was a major concern which contributed to the continent's problems. Nigerian Civil Liberties Organization President Ayo Obe, said that Nigerians in the past took their freedom for granted, but that due to the corruption and inefficiency of its military dictatorship, current human rights abuses added to the country's economic collapse. Ms. Obe expressed cautious optimism concerning the upcoming general election but noted that Nigeria's five political parties were all created by and beholden to the government, leading to a lack of independent ideology. She concluded by voicing the belief that the strides in human rights by neighboring African nations would lead Nigeria to follow.]

The President. Let me say just very briefly, before I ask John to speak, that in all candor the question of Nigeria has been the most difficult for us to deal with, because it is the most populous country in Africa, because it has this incredible irony of having the vast oil resources and all the poverty and dislocation at home, and because every avenue we have tried to try to deal with the government of General Abacha has been frustrating to us.

And we even had—I think it's fair to say we've had some fairly heated debates among ourselves about, well, should we just continue having nothing to do with this man? Should we try to at least deal with him in the way we're working with President Kabila? What should we do? Because it is an incredible tragedy; you have this huge, diverse, rich country, in effect, being driven into the ground by political oppression and mismanagement.

And we have said that if there were a release of the political prisoners, if there were a genuine political process that was real, not just a military government in a suit and tie, that we would try to work with it. But by your comments, you know how difficult it is to exercise any constructive influence. And yet it's a great tragedy.

I mean, when I was in Ghana, and we were discussing energy problems—just to take the energy issue—I learned that the oil production in Nigeria is continuing to burn off the natural gas instead of to save it and to sell it to Nigerians or to others, when everyone who knows anything about energy knows that the natural gas is not only just as valuable as oil but less damaging to the environment and could help to provide huge amounts of money to Nigeria to alleviate the suffering of the people and lift the condition of the people. I just give that as one example.

We will continue to do what we can. We will continue to look for other avenues, and we will continue to encourage the other African governments to do the same. And the point you made about expecting it from South Africa but needing it from the others I think is a very important one.

John.

[*John Makela, executive director of a media training institution in Mozambique, discussed the importance of strengthening the emerging media industry in African nations as a crucial arm of the democratization process. He stated that his native Zambia had a decent media presence but many other nations did not, either because of repressive governments, poor business and management skills, or both. Mr. Makela stressed the need for more widespread public discussion of issues and increased radio and Internet access, and concluded that the United States could help Africa by supporting media training institutions.*]

The President. Thank you very much. Let me just, if I could, pick up on a couple of suggestions you made. First of all, the comment you made about radio struck me as particularly important. As we traveled around the country and got into some of the rural areas, I thought about that myself. But for all of you who are interested in this, I think that it is important that people like you get out ahead of this and come up with ideas about how you could use it in a beneficial way to advance democracy and human rights. Because one of the things I worry about is that in this ongoing struggle, that some of the people that are most hostile to what you believe in could one day hit upon the instrument of the radio to drive wedges between people.

That's been one of our biggest problems in Bosnia, where we're seeking to make peace, is that instruments of the media, the radio and the television, came totally into the hands of basically the people who had a stake in keeping

the various ethnic groups at war with one another. And so they relentlessly use the radio to abuse the privilege of the airwaves, which in every country should belong to the public at large. It should be used for larger public purposes.

So I think that this is a cause, John, which you might make a common cause with other human rights groups around the continent, because I think it's very important. In the places which have no communications, including some of the villages that I have visited, it will come, and it's very important when it comes, how it comes. I cannot overestimate that to you, the importance of making sure that when this happens to the general population, that it is an instrument of education and enlightenment and bringing people together and empowering them, not just one more blunt weapon to beat them down and keep them apart.

Now, let me just say one other thing. When I listen to you all talk and putting this into the context of the larger trip, it is obvious that many, many great things are happening in Africa; that, if you look at them, you think there's an African renaissance. If you look at some of the problems you mentioned and you realize some things we haven't talked about in great detail, the education, environmental, and economic problems, there's still a lot of crisis.

I had a meeting with young leaders in South Africa to discuss this, and I said that just observing all these places—and I went to two villages, I went to three different townships and neighborhoods in South Africa when I was there, apart from the cities and the official work. And it seems to me that there is a crying need for—you have a lot of leaders and potential leaders, not only people like you who have good educations and backgrounds but the people who stood up and were applauded here—they're leaders, too. And we would like to focus more on building the structures necessary for leadership to work.

There are the national structures you talked about, the press, the education system, all of that. But there's also the need to figure out how you can best channel the resources that might come from outside at the grassroots level. We went to Dal Diam, the village here, yesterday, and we saw people essentially reclaiming the desert because someone gave them enough money to build a well. So one little village, they reclaimed 5 hectares of the desert. That's the way you reverse the growth of the desert, people do it, because they have to find a way to sustain their life as they do that.

So before we have to break up here, I would just like to say to all of you, I do not want this trip of ours to be an isolated event. I want it to be the beginning of a much more comprehensive and constructive role for the United States. So as you think about the structural issues—not just what can the President of the United States say to the leader of some other country—I want you to feel free, on your own behalf and for others with whom you come in contact, to contact us with very specific suggestions about what we can do to help people in your countries change their own lives, what kind of structural changes, supports, can be built in to build organized efforts such as the one we have celebrated today with the women and men who are here from the village that Hillary visited. I think it's very important.

We're about out of time, but I wonder if any of you have any other—any of you would like a second round of comments based on what you've heard before we adjourn. Is there anything else you would like to say to me or to each other?

Yes.

[*Ms. Sidibe asked why the United States had not ratified the convention on children's rights and a 1977 treaty on antipersonnel landmines.*]

The President. Well, let me, first of all, answer an earlier question you made. You made a lot of points about education in your earlier remarks, and we have announced a new initiative there. And I hope that—let me follow up on that just to say I hope you will think of other specific things we can do in that regard.

On the children's convention, the Senate of the United States has not ratified that because of a concern about one particular provision in it and how it relates to the sovereignty of our States in the United States. But we fully support its objectives and always have.

On the landmine issue, I don't know about the '77 convention. I can tell you that we, the United States, spend more than half of the money the whole world spends to take landmines out of the ground. We have already destroyed 1½ million of our own landmines, and we are in the process of destroying our whole supply—with the single exception of those that are in a very carefully marked plot of land in

Korea, at the border of North and South Korea. We leave them there—first of all, they're not near any residential area; they're not near any children; and the area where they are is heavily marked with warning; and no civilian has ever been hurt there—because the North Korean Army has vastly larger forces on the border of South Korea than the South Koreans and the Americans have facing them. And it's only about 18 miles from the border of North Korea to Seoul, the largest city in South Korea. And the landmines are thought to be the only presently available deterrent should an invasion occur, and no invasion has occurred.

We are there pursuant to the United Nations resolution of the conflict between North and South Korea. I think there is some encouragement that that may be resolved, that the final peace may be made. And when that happens, then the last remaining landmine issue will be resolved.

In the meanwhile, we will continue to do everything we can to end the problem of landmines for people everywhere. We will continue to spend the money that we're spending, to use the people that we're using—we, actually not very long ago, lost a crew of our Air Force—you may remember—in a tragic accident off the coast of Africa when they just deposited some American forces to take landmines up in southwest Africa. It was an airline accident, but they were there to deal with the landmine issue.

It is a very, very important thing to me, personally, and to our country. And we are trying to increase the number of people trained to take the mines up, and also increase the amount of equipment available. And interestingly enough, for the first time ever, our Defense Department has just recently purchased a machine made in South Africa that aids in the extraction of landmines from the ground. So we are working very, very hard on that.

[*A participant commended the President for listening to Africans instead of telling them what to do, and encouraged him to support reconciliation through local and regional African mechanisms.*]

The President. Well, one of the things that we have learned the hard way, just from trying to solve social problems in our own country, is that there is a sense in which the people are always ahead of the leaders. And therefore, partnership is all that works. And certainly it's true for us coming here from a totally different experience.

I believe the United States, as I said when I got here, tended to view Africa too much through the very limited lens of the cold war for too long. And I believe that the world over has seen too much of Africa only in terms of the problems, when something bad happens. So I think—what I'm trying to do is to get the scales right, to see the problems and the promise and to develop a partnership that makes sense, that will outlive my Presidency, that will fundamentally change forever the way the United States and Africa relate to one another.

It's heartbreaking to me that there are some situations for which I don't have a ready answer, the most painful and the biggest one being the one that we discussed with Nigeria. But I'm positive that if we have a consistent, ongoing effort and if we continue to listen and work together, that increasingly the promise will prevail over the problems.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:00 a.m. at the Hotel Le Meridien President. In his remarks, he referred to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Gen. Sani Abacha, Chairman, Nigerian Federal Executive Council.

Remarks at Goree Island, Senegal
April 2, 1998

Thank you, Mr. President, for that magnificent address. Thank you so much.

Now, all my friends will have to tell me if the translation is working. Yes, it's working? [*Applause*] Hurray!

Mr. President, Madame Diouf, the ministers and officials of the Senegalese Government, Governor, Mayor; to the students who are here who have sung to us and with whom we have met from the Martin Luther King School, the John F. Kennedy School, the Miriama Ba School here on Goree Island, and the Margaret Amidon Elementary School in Washington, DC; the residents of Goree Island, the citizens of Senegal, my fellow Americans and our delegation, ladies and gentlemen. I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to the curator, Boubacar N'diaye, who toured me through the Slave House today. Thank you, sir.

Here, on this tiny island in the Atlantic Ocean, Africa and America meet. From here, Africa expands to the east, its potential for freedom and progress as great as its landmass. And to the west, over the horizon, lies America, a thriving democracy built, as President Diouf said, through centuries of sacrifice.

Long after the slave ships stopped sailing from this place to America, Goree Island, still today, looks out onto the New World, connecting two continents, standing as a vivid reminder that for some of America's ancestors the journey to America was anything but a search for freedom, and yet still a symbol of the bright new era of partnership between our peoples.

In 1776, when our Nation was founded on the promise of freedom as God's right to all human beings, a new building was dedicated here on Goree Island to the selling of human beings in bondage to America. Goree Island is, therefore, as much a part of our history as a part of Africa's history. From Goree and other places, Africa's sons and daughters were taken through the door of no return, never to see their friends and families again. Those who survived the murderous middle passage emerged from a dark hold to find themselves, yes, American. But it would be a long, long time before their descendants enjoyed the full meaning of that word.

We cannot push time backward through the door of no return. We have lived our history. America's struggle to overcome slavery and its legacy forms one of the most difficult chapters of that history. Yet, it is also one of the most heroic, a triumph of courage, persistence, and dignity. The long journey of African-Americans proves that the spirit can never be enslaved.

And that long journey is today embodied by the children of Africa who now lead America, in all phases of our common life. Many of them have come here with me on this visit, representing over 30 million Americans that are Africa's great gift to America. And I'd like them to stand now. Please stand. [*Applause*]

A few hours from now, we will leave Africa and go on home, back to the work of building our own country for a new century. But I return more convinced than when I came here that despite the daunting challenges, there is an African renaissance.

I will never forget as long as I live the many faces that Hillary and I have seen in these last 12 days. In them, I have seen beauty and intelligence, energy and spirit, and the determination to prevail. I have seen the faces of Africa's future: the friendly faces of the hundreds of thousands of people who poured into Independence Square in Accra to show that Africans feel warmly toward America; the faces of the children at the primary school in Uganda, whose parents were held back by a brutal dictatorship but where today opportunity of education is offered to all of that nation's boys and girls; the faces of the women in Wanyange village in Uganda, once ordained to a life of continuing struggle, now empowered—along with 10,000 other Ugandans and women and men in Senegal and virtually every other country in Africa—by microcredit loans to start their own businesses, small loans which people repay and which repay them by giving them the opportunity to live a better life.

I will always remember the faces of the survivors of the Rwandan genocide, who have the courage now not just to survive but to build a better society.

I will never forget the face of Nelson Mandela in his cell on Robben Island, a face that betrays a spirit not broken but strengthened, not embittered but energized, a man used his suffering to break the shackles of apartheid and now to reach toward reconciliation.

I remember the faces of the young leaders I have met: young leaders of the new South Africa; young leaders who want to build a continent where the economy grows, but where the environment is preserved and your vast riches that nature has bestowed are no longer depleted; young leaders who believe that Africa can go forward as a free, free continent, where people—all people—enjoy universal human rights. I remember their faces so well.

I remember the faces of the entrepreneurs, African and American, who gatherer with me in Johannesburg to dedicate Ron Brown Commercial Center. I thank you, Mr. President, for mentioning our friend Ron Brown, for it was he who first told me that I had an obligation as an American President to build a better partnership with Africa.

Already, we import about as much oil from Africa as we do from the Persian Gulf. We export more to Africa than to all the former Soviet Union. And Americans should know that our investments in sub-Saharan Africa earn a return of 30 percent, higher than on any other continent in the entire world. But our trade and investment in Africa is but a tiny fraction of what it could be, and, therefore, of what it could produce in new jobs, new opportunities, new wealth, and new dreams for Africans and for Americans. The faces I saw will spur us to do better.

Mr. President, I remember the faces of the Senegalese soldiers yesterday, whom we saw training with Americans but led by Africans, in an African Crisis Response Initiative dedicated to the prevention of violence, to the relief of suffering, to keeping the peace on the continent of Africa.

Most of all, I will always remember in every country the faces of the little children, the beautiful children, the light in their eyes, the smiles on their faces, the songs that they sung. We owe it to them, you and I, to give them the best possible future they can have.

Yes, Africa still faces poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, unemployment, terrible conflicts in some places. In some countries, human rights are still nonexistent and unevenly respected in others. But look across the continent. Democracy is gaining strength. Business is growing. Peace is making progress. The people and the leaders of Africa are showing the world the resiliency of the human spirit and the future of this great continent.

They have convinced me of the difference America can make if we are a genuine partner and friend of Africa, and the difference a new Africa can make to America's own future.

Everywhere I went in Africa I saw a passionate belief in the promise of America, stated more eloquently today by your President than I ever could. I only wish every American could see our own country as so much of Africa see us, a nation bearing the ideals of freedom and equality and responsible citizenship, so powerful they still light the world; a nation that has found strength in our racial and ethnic and religious diversity; a nation, therefore, that must lead by the power of example; a nation that stands for what so many aspire to and now are achieving, the freedom to dream dreams and the opportunity to make those dreams come true.

I am very proud of America's ties to Africa, for there is no area of American achievement that has not been touched by the intelligence and energy of Africa, from science to medicine, to literature, to art, to music. I am proud to be the President of a nation of many colors, black and white, European and Latino, Asian and Middle Eastern, and everything in between. We have learned one clear lesson, that when we embrace one another across the lines that divide us, we become more than the sum of our parts, a community of communities, a nation of nations. Together, we work to face the future as one America, undaunted, undivided, grateful for the chance to live together as one people.

To be sure, our work is not finished and we have our own problems. But when we began as a nation, our Founders knew that, and called us always to the work of forming a more perfect Union. But the future before us expands as wide as the ocean that joins, not divides, the United States and Africa. As certainly as America lies over the horizon behind me, so I pledge to the people of Africa that we will reach over this ocean to build a new partnership based on friendship and respect.

As we leave this island, now is the time to complete the circle of history to help Africa to fulfill its promise not only as a land of rich beauty but as a land of rich opportunity for all its people. If we face the future together, it will be a future that is better for Africa and better for America.

So we leave Goree Island today mindful of the large job still to be done, proud of how far we have come, proud of how far Africa has come, determined to succeed in building a bright, common destiny whose door is open to all.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the front courtyard of the Goree Island History Museum. In his remarks, he referred to President Abdou Diouf of Senegal and his wife, Elizabeth; Gov. Yande Toure of Dakar; Mayor Urbain

Diagne of Goree Island; and Boubacar (Joseph) N'diaye, curator, Slave House.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Israel-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

April 2, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the State of Israel on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Tel Aviv on January 26, 1998, and a related exchange of notes signed the same date. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the Report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States for the purpose of countering criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of modern criminals, including those involved in terrorism, other violent crimes, drug trafficking, money laundering, and other white collar crime. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons or items; transferring persons in custody for testimony or for other assistance; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to seizure, immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; executing procedures involving experts; and providing any other form of assistance appropriate under the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 2, 1998.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

April 3, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Before I read my statement, I'd like to make a brief comment on a momentous event which occurred during my trip to Africa, back here. The Vice President turned 50, and I hope all of you noticed the increased gravity and maturity of his aura. [*Laughter*] I personally am greatly relieved. Not long before he turned 50, as I told him when I called him, an elderly lady came up to me, and she said, "I think you and that young man are doing such a good job." [*Laughter*] And it's nice to have a middle-aged team now at the White House.

The Vice President. She was very elderly. [*Laughter*]

The President. Let me say, Hillary and I are delighted to be back from what was a wonderful trip to Africa. We are working hard to strengthen the bonds of the African continent that I am convinced is in the midst of a renaissance, where political and economic liberty is on the rise.

I only wish every American could have been with me every step of the way to see, first, Africa, not only its problems, which are profound, but the energy and intelligence and determination of the people. I also wish every

American could have had yet one more opportunity to see how a very important part of the world sees America, still as a beacon of equality and freedom and hope for opportunity.

Today we learned that the unemployment rate in the first quarter of this year, averaging 4.7 percent, is the lowest it's been since 1970—28 years. While there will be ups and downs, our economy continues to be one of the strongest in history. Over the past year we've seen the strongest wage growth in 20 years; inflation is still low; homeownership now at a record level. As we approach the longest peacetime expansion in our history, this is a springtime of hope and opportunity for the American people.

Our economy is the product of the hard work, the creativity, the innovation of our citizens, and the ingenuity and drive of our businesses. But also it is the fruit, as the Vice President said, of the comprehensive economic strategy we have pursued since 1993, a strategy for the new economy.

The coming months will now test our Nation. It will determine whether we will maintain our discipline and pursue our priorities to strengthen our country for the new century. We can make this a time of action as well as a time of abundance, to secure our prosperity well into the future, to widen the circle of opportunity so that all Americans have a chance to reap the rewards of economic growth.

First, we should go on and balance the budget this year and do it in a way that continues our investment in our people and their future. With projected budget surpluses of $1 trillion over the next decade, I am pleased that Members of Congress of both parties have joined my call to reserve every penny of the surplus until we save Social Security first. This is very significant. I compliment the leadership of both parties. It will strengthen our Nation.

At the same time, as we live within a balanced budget, we must invest to create prosperity for the future. Many times I have said that in the new economy, education is the leading economic indicator. We will continue to lead the world only if our children receive the world's best education. In that context, I am very concerned that the budget plan now working its way through the Senate will squeeze out critical investments in education and children.

I believe America must address the challenges before us. Class size for our children—we must hire 100,000 new teachers so that we can reduce those class sizes. We must spur school modernization to make our classes smaller and our schools safer. We must invest in pathbreaking scientific research that will lengthen our lives and promote prosperity into the 21st century. And we must make those investments which will make credible our call for higher standards and higher performance in our schools. The budget now being drafted by Congress simply does not meet these urgent national priorities.

I'm also determined that highway spending, though it is quite important and though our budget provides for a very impressive increase in investment in highways and mass transit, must be—such spending must be within the balanced budget and should not crowd out critical investments in education, child care, health care, or threaten our budget discipline.

In the coming months I look forward to working with Congress in cooperation with lawmakers of both parties so that America stays on the path of both fiscal discipline and targeted investment, a balanced budget that is in balance with our values and our long-term interest in the future. That is what has brought us this far since 1993. We should not depart from that strategy now.

Finally, I am determined to seize this historic opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. This Congress can be the Congress that saves millions of children's lives. I want to say that we seem to be making some progress on that, with the vote in the Senate committee, but there is an enormous amount of work still to be done. And I hope during this working recess the lawmakers of both Houses and both parties will be talking to the folks back home about the tobacco legislation and will come back here at the end of this month with a renewed determination to actually pass legislation that will get the job done.

Our economy is the strongest in a generation; our social fabric is on the mend; our leadership around the world, as we saw on the trip to Africa, remains unrivaled. But our history and our heritage tells us that we can do better and that our success depends upon our constant effort to do better. The American people want us to use this sunlit moment not to sit back and enjoy but to act. We were hired by the American people to act. If we do so, in the 21st century the American dream will be more powerful than ever.

Thank you.

Independent Counsel's Investigation/Tobacco Legislation

Q. Do you have any comments on reports that Kenneth Starr is being urged to indict Monica Lewinsky and name you as a co-conspirator?

Q. On the tobacco deal, sir, how concerned are you that one or more of the tobacco companies might walk away from this proposed settlement? And do you believe that you need their cooperation, both so that there is money for your budget priorities and so that you can win restrictions on cigarette advertising?

The President. Well, the latter is of greater concern. That is, their agreement or lack of it would influence the way Congress would have to raise the money, through raising the price of cigarettes to deter more consumption and to raise the funds for the health care costs of tobacco and the health research and the other things that I believe should be funded out of this settlement. But on the advertising, of course, that could be a concern because of the governing legal precedents.

But I still believe that the incentives are there for the tobacco companies to do this. With each new revelation of the strategies which have been vigorously pursued to market cigarettes to children, I think they have an enormous interest in trying to reverse the record of the past, to try to put this unforgivable chapter behind them, and to start off on a new path. So I still believe that in the end we will achieve an agreement which will convince them, or which they will be convinced will be in their interest.

The advertising issue is the more important one from a legal point of view, but I think we'll get there because they have now, with this evidence continuing to mount up about the deliberate strategy which was followed, they have a big interest in pursuing it.

On the other matter, you know, I'm not going to comment on that. I'm going to try to do what the Supreme Court said I should do, which is not to be in any way deterred by this, and I'm going on with my business; others will comment on that.

Japan

Q. Mr. President, Moody's debt rating service earlier today issued a warning about Japan's sovereign debt. The United States has repeatedly urged Japan, with little apparent success, to try to jump-start its domestic economy. Do you see any signs that the Japanese Government is now ready to take actions that would help bring it into recovery?

The President. Well, the Prime Minister keeps moving forward in ways that then the market seems to believe are insufficient. And we have obviously urged aggressive action because we want the Japanese economy to grow. We think the Japanese economy is the key to stability and growth in Asia, and we have always wanted a strong, healthy Japanese partner.

Japan is a great democracy; they've been a great partner for us; they've been a great engine of economic growth for many years, until the last few years. There may be some momentary disruption because now you have some business leaders speaking out in Japan, but it appears to us on the outside of this that there is an ongoing struggle between what is now the articulated view, not only of the United States and others but of the business community in Japan, about the direction that country should take and the entrenched resistance to that in the permanent government bureaucracy that followed a different strategy with great success in previous years. And I think we need to be both respectful but firm in urging the Japanese to take a bold course.

Prime Minister Hashimoto is an able man, and he understands the economy, and I believe he wants to take such a course. What has to be done is that the people within the permanent government there, which have always enjoyed great power, have to realize that the strategies that worked in the past are not appropriate to the present. They have to make a break now in some ways that's not so different from the break that we made in 1993. You simply can't stay with a strategy that is clearly not appropriate to the times and expect it to get the results that are needed for the country.

But Japan is a very great country full of brilliant people who have a great understanding of economics. And as I said, I think the Prime Minister understands this and is willing to take risks and wants to do it. And he's got this raging battle going on, and I have to hope that the forces of the future will prevail.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan.

The President's Radio Address
April 4, 1998

Good morning. The First Lady and I have just returned, exhausted but exhilarated, from our trip to Africa. I know that many of you traveled along with us day by day through television and the Internet, but I wish every American could have seen up close the renewed hope and restored pride that is evident in the six countries we visited. We saw parents building futures where their children will be free from want, free from injustice, free from disease, and free to go as far as their God-given talents will allow.

This morning, I want to report on the progress we're making in our country to free children from two of the greatest health and safety dangers they face: the cruel and deadly lure of smoking and the lethal combination of drinking and driving.

Three years ago, appalled by how many children were becoming addicted to cigarettes every year, the Vice President and I committed this administration to stopping the sale and marketing of cigarettes to children. Today, thanks to these efforts and the persistence of State attorneys general, the public health community, and leaders in Congress, we have the best opportunity ever to pass comprehensive antismoking legislation that will save millions of our children from a premature, painful, and very preventable death.

This week, in an historic and resounding 19 to 1 vote, a key Senate committee gave its stamp of approval to comprehensive legislation sponsored by Senator John McCain, a Republican, and Senator Fritz Hollings, a Democrat, that would cut youth smoking by half over the next decade. This bill represents a dramatic step forward. It would raise the price of cigarettes, give the FDA full authority to regulate tobacco products, ban advertising aimed at children, and protect tobacco farmers.

We still have work to do on this legislation. Above all, we need to put in place tough penalties that will cost the tobacco industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to young people. Just this week the Centers for Disease Control released a disturbing report that found that more than a third of teenagers in the United States now smoke, even though it's illegal.

It is time to hold tobacco companies accountable. Reducing youth smoking must be everybody's bottom line. Let's remember, this is not about politics or money or seeking revenge against the tobacco industry for past practices. We're not trying to put the tobacco companies out of business. We want to put them out of the business of selling cigarettes to kids. This week's progress in the Senate shows we have real momentum in both parties to do just that.

Unfortunately, this week the Congress also took a step backward on efforts to cut down on drunk driving, a horror that has shaken nearly every American community. Republican leaders in the House blocked a full vote on an important measure to encourage States to adopt a stricter definition of drunk driving that has already passed the United States Senate. I urge the House leadership to reconsider its unwise action. A stricter definition of drunk driving will not prevent adults from drinking responsibly, but it will save thousands of lives.

There are fewer than 75 days remaining on Congress's legislative calendar. But as we saw this week in the Senate, when we set aside partisan differences and keep our eyes on the prize of dramatically improving our children's health, we can make remarkable progress in record time. There are still many issues to be worked out and many long nights ahead. But we have within our grasp one of the most important public health victories our Nation has ever achieved.

Finally, let me just pause a moment to observe the 30th anniversary of the death of one of America's greatest heroes, Dr. Martin Luther King. His dream, deeply rooted in the American dream, is a dream for all Americans. It's a

dream, as I recently saw, shared by millions and millions of people around the world. Let us here at home always strive to heed Dr. King's words and live up to his legacy.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:50 a.m. on April 3 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 4.

Message to the Pilgrimage to Memphis Celebrating the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

April 4, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone participating in the Pilgrimage to Memphis. As we commemorate the 30th anniversary of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I join you in celebrating his life and legacy.

Dr. King awakened the conscience of our nation and summoned us to join a pilgrimage from which we have never turned back. With clear vision and an eloquent voice, he called on all Americans simply to be true to our promises. He called on us to confront injustice and to overcome it. He called on us to free all our people from the indignity of discrimination and the pain of poverty. He called on us to engrave on our hearts the words that our founders inscribed on paper: that all of us are created equal.

Thirty years ago, Dr. King reassured us, in his final prophetic speech at Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, that he had seen the promised land and that "we, as a people, will get to the promised land." But he was wrong when he said, "I may not get there with you," for he is with us still. He is with us as we strive to build communities of hope and opportunity for all; he is with us when we give all our children the care and support and education they need to reach their God-given potential. And he will be with us when we enter the next millennium as One America—a better, stronger, and more united nation because of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, courage and sacrifice.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a memorable observance.

BILL CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

April 3, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from February 3, 1998, to the present.

Introduction

For much of the period covered by this report, Iraq was engaged in a serious challenge to the authority of the UNSC and the will of the international community. As documented in my last report, Iraq refused to allow U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors to carry out their work at a number of sites last December; Iraq's refusal to cooperate in spite of repeated warnings continued until the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan and

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz on February 23, and the enforcement of this agreement by the UNSC on March 2 when it adopted UNSCR 1154. Both the MOU and UNSCR 1154 reiterate Iraq's commitment to provide immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). UNSCR 1154 also stresses that any further Iraqi violation of the relevant UNSC resolutions would result in the severest consequences for Iraq. Iraq's commitment is now in the process of being tested. A series of UNSCOM inspections of so-called "sensitive" sites in early March proceeded without Iraqi interference. On March 26, UNSCOM inspections of the so-called "presidential sites" began under the arrangements agreed to by UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler and Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz. The team of 60 UNSCOM inspectors, accompanied by 20 diplomatic observers, is conducting inspections of the so-called "presidential sites" through April 5. Chairman Butler traveled to Baghdad in mid-March for discussions with Iraqi officials concerning Iraq's missile and chemical weapons programs.

Throughout the crisis created by Iraq's refusal to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors, the objective of my Administration was to achieve effective inspections, preferably through a diplomatic solution. Our vigorous diplomatic efforts were backed by the credible threat to use force, if necessary. I consulted with our allies in the region as well as with the other members of the U.N. Security Council. Secretary of State Albright, Secretary of Defense Cohen, U.N. Ambassador Richardson, and other Administration officials also pursued our objectives vigorously with foreign governments, including several trips to the region and to relevant capitals and at the United Nations. Our military forces responded quickly and effectively to support our diplomatic efforts by providing a credible military option, which we were prepared to use if Iraq had not ultimately agreed to meet its obligation to provide full access to UNSCOM and the IAEA.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

As a demonstration of U.S. resolve during the recent crisis with Iraq, the aircraft carriers USS INDEPENDENCE, USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, their accompanying battle group combatant ships, and additional combat aircraft have remained in the region. United States force levels in the region now include land- and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine amphibious task force, Patriot missile battalions, a mechanized battalion task force, and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of USCINCCENT operations. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed. These U.S. forces were augmented by the HMS ILLUSTRIOUS and accompanying ships from the United Kingdom.

In addition to the United Kingdom, a number of other nations have pledged forces to our effort to compel Iraq's compliance with its commitments. Although all of the members of this international effort seek a peaceful diplomatic resolution of the crisis in Iraq, all have shown their resolve to achieve our common objective by military force if that becomes necessary. Without this demonstration of resolve to both use military force and impose the severest consequences on Iraq for any further Iraqi transgressions, it is unlikely that the MOU and UNSCR 1154 (see below) would have been achieved.

Twenty nations have deployed forces to the region or have readied their forces for contingency deployment. Those countries currently represented in the Gulf include Australia, Argentina, Canada, the Czech Republic, Kuwait, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, and the United Kingdom. Another 12 nations have offered important access, basing, overflight, and other assistance essential for the multi-national effort. Still others have identified force contributions that are being held in reserve for deployment should the need arise. United States and Allied forces in the region are prepared to deal with numerous contingencies, either conventional or weapons of mass destruction-related. UNSCR 949, adopted in October 1994, demands that Iraq not use its military forces to threaten its neighbors or U.N. operations in Iraq and that it not redeploy troops nor enhance its military capacity in southern Iraq. In view of Saddam's record of brutality and unreliability, it is prudent to retain a significant force presence in the region to deter Iraq. This gives us the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors.

Until Iraqi intent to comply with the MOU is verified, it will be necessary to maintain our

current augmented force posture in the region. The ongoing inspections of the so-called "presidential sites" mark the next critical phase in the UNSCOM inspections process. Once Iraqi compliance is assured, we will consider whether we can reduce our present force posture.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq under Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. In response to a series of Iraqi no-fly zone violations in October and November 1997, we increased the number of aircraft participating in these operations. There have been no observed no-fly zone violations during the period covered by this report. We have repeatedly made clear to the Government of Iraq and to all other relevant parties that the United States and coalition partners will continue to enforce both no-fly zones, and that we reserve the right to respond appropriately and decisively to any Iraqi provocations.

The Maritime Interception Force

The Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating under the authority of UNSCR 665, vigorously enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of this international naval force, but it is augmented by ships and aircraft from Australia, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council support the MIF by providing logistical support and shipriders, and accepting vessels caught violating sanctions.

Since my last report, the MIF has intercepted 15 sanctions violators in the Gulf for a total of over 25,000 metric tons of illegal Iraqi petroleum products. Ships involved in smuggling have often utilized the territorial seas of Iran to avoid MIF inspections. We have given detailed reports of these illegal activities to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in New York.

The level of petroleum smuggling from Iraq appears to be decreasing. There are indications, still preliminary, that the Government of Iran may be takings steps to curb the flow of illegal petroleum products through its territorial seas. While it is too early to tell if Iran will completely and permanently stop this illegal traffic, we are hopeful that Iran will help enforce the provisions of UNSCR 661 and other relevant UNSCRs. In this regard, we note that the Iranian government has recently played a helpful role in enforcing the sanctions of air travel to and from Iraq by requiring that planes wishing to enter Iraq obtain the appropriate approval from the U.N. Sanctions Committee before overflying Iranian territory.

Recent actions by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will greatly enhance our efforts to halt illegal exports from Iraq. After diplomatic consultations with the United States and our MIF allies, the UAE has significantly increased its level of cooperation with the MIF. These efforts have resulted in a significant increase in the number of ships caught with illegal cargoes. In addition, the UAE has prohibited the use of tankers, barges, and other vessel types to transport petroleum products to UAE ports and through its waters or to store such products there. While it is still too early to determine the full effect of these measures, we are hopeful that these actions will deal a significant blow to sanctions-busting activity in the region.

While Iran and the UAE are taking positive steps, Iraq continues to improve loading facilities in the Shatt Al Arab waterway, which gives it the potential to smuggle even larger quantities of gasoil and fuel oil. The U.S. Government will seek to address this problem in the context of the expansion of the "oil-for-food" program approved under UNSCR 1153.

Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction: UNSCOM and the IAEA

Iraq's refusal to cooperate fully and unconditionally with UNSCOM and the IAEA, which are tasked with tracking down and destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs, was once again at the heart of the latest crisis between the U.N. and Iraq.

On February 23, the United Nations Secretary General signed the MOU with the Government of Iraq reiterating Iraq's obligation to cooperate fully and unconditionally with inspections by UNSCOM and IAEA for weapons of mass destruction. The agreement stipulates that Iraq will provide UNSCOM and IAEA weapons inspectors with immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any suspect site inside Iraq, including presidential palaces, and provides for specific procedures for inspections at eight clearly identified presidential sites.

The recent crisis with Iraq was only the latest chapter in the long history of efforts by the Iraqi regime to flout its obligations under relevant UNSC resolutions. Iraq has persistently failed to disclose fully its programs for WMD. Iraq has admitted, when confronted with incontrovertible evidence, that it has repeatedly and consistently concealed information from UNSCOM and the IAEA and has moved significant pieces of dual-use equipment that are subject to monitoring in violation of its obligations. Without full disclosure and free access to all sites UNSCOM and IAEA wish to inspect, the ongoing monitoring and verification mandated by relevant UNSC resolutions, including Resolutions 687, 707, and 715, cannot effectively be conducted.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 1154

On March 2, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1154, which welcomed the MOU and reiterated that Iraq must cooperate fully with UNSCOM and the IAEA. In the clearest possible terms, the Council warned Iraq in UNSCR 1154 that it will face the "severest consequences" if it fails to adhere to the commitments it reaffirmed in the MOU. This resolution is one of the strongest and clearest statements the Council has made in 7 years with regard to what Iraq must do to comply with its obligations, and what the consequences of failing to meet those obligations will be. This strong language of UNSCR 1154 is critical to ensuring that UNSCOM and IAEA can do their job and that Iraq is held accountable to its agreement. We welcomed Resolution 1154 and agreed with Secretary General Annan that, if respected, honored, and sustained, the agreement "could constitute one of the U.N.'s most important steps in addressing the consequences of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait 7 years ago."

Iraq's compliance with the agreement is now being tested. Since the beginning of March, UNSCOM has pursued an intensive agenda of inspections, including inspections of so-called "sensitive" sites and "presidential sites" to which the Iraqis had previously blocked access. Iraq has not significantly obstructed access to any sites UNSCOM and the IAEA wished to visit since the MOU was signed. This may mean Iraq will comply with the relevant UNSC resolutions, but the testing process must continue until UNSCOM and the IAEA are fully satisfied. We have consistently stressed that full, unconditional, repeated access by UNSCOM to all sites, personnel, equipment, documents, and means of transportation provides the only means by which the world can make certain Iraq does not maintain or develop WMD. We have full faith and confidence in UNSCOM and its Executive Chairman.

Biological and Chemical Weapons

Iraqi biological and chemical weapons remain the most troubling issues for UNSCOM. This is due to the innate dual-use nature of the technology; it can easily be hidden within civilian industries such as, for biological agents, the pharmaceutical industry and, for chemical agents, the pesticide industry. UNSCOM is still unable to verify that all of Iraq's SCUD missile warheads filled with biological agents—anthrax and botulinum toxin—have been destroyed.

Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Systems

The Iraqi regime contends that UNSCOM and the IAEA should "close the books" on nuclear and missile inspections. But there are still many uncertainties and questions that need to be resolved. Iraq has never provided a full and accurate account of its indigenous efforts to develop nuclear weapons and prohibited long-range missiles. Among the many problems, Iraq has failed to answer critical questions on nuclear weapons design and fabrication, procurement, and centrifuge enrichment; failed to provide a written description of its post-war nuclear weapons procurement program; and failed to account for major engine components, special warheads, missing propellants, and guidance instruments that could be used to assemble fully operational missiles. Until Iraq complies with its obligation to provide a full accounting of these and other relevant aspects of its program, the questions must remain open.

Iraq's Concealment Mechanisms

The U.N. Special Commission's work must include vigorous efforts to expose Iraq's "Concealment Mechanism." During the last 60 days, but before signature of the MOU, UNSCOM launched two special inspection teams that once again targeted this mechanism in order to ferret out WMD programs and documents that UNSCOM—and we—believe Iraq stubbornly retains. Unfortunately, it became clear that the Iraqi government had no intention of cooperating with these inspections as specifically called

for in the most recent UNSCRs on the topic—resolutions 1134 of October 23, 1997, and 1137 of November 12, 1997. The teams were stopped *en route*, denied access, and prevented from videotaping equipment movement or document-destruction activity at suspect sites.

In accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions, UNSCOM and the IAEA must be allowed to continue to investigate all aspects of Iraq's prohibited programs until they can verify that all relevant components have been destroyed under international supervision, and that all remaining capabilities have been eliminated. Without such verification, Iraq could quickly develop the ability to strike at any city in the region—and perhaps even as far as Europe—with weapons of mass destruction.

Dual-Use Imports

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq's efforts to reacquire proscribed weapons. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports any items that can be used in both military and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of such dual-use items.

We continue to be concerned that Iraq's land borders are extremely porous. Iraq continues substantial trade with its neighbors. There is significant potential for evasion of sanctions by land routes, giving additional weight to our position that UNSCOM must have full and unconditional access to all locations and be allowed to inspect and monitor Iraqi compliance over time.

The U.N.'s Oil-for-Food Program

On February 20, the Security Council adopted resolution 1153, which expands to $5.2 billion the amount of oil Iraq is authorized to sell every 6 months. The previous amount was $2.0 billion every 6 months. Resolution 1153 states that the nutritional and health requirements of the Iraqi people are the top priority and allocates $1 billion to rebuild hospitals, schools, water, and sanitation facilities. My Administration's support for resolution 1153 is fully consistent with long-standing U.S. policy. Since 1990, at the height of the Gulf War, the United States has held that the international community's dispute is with Iraq's leadership, not its people. We proposed an "oil-for-food" program in 1991 (UNSCR 706/712), which Iraq rejected. A similar program (UNSCR 986) was eventually accepted by Iraq in 1996. We supported the expansion of the oil-for-food program under UNSCR 1153 because it will provide additional humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, under strict U.N. supervision, without benefiting the regime.

Since the beginning of the oil-for-food program, we have consistently worked with the U.N. and other U.N. member states to find ways to improve the program's effectiveness to better meet the humanitarian needs of Iraq's civilian population. Iraq, however, has frequently failed to provide the full cooperation necessary to ensure that the program functions smoothly. For example, during calendar year 1997, the Government of Iraq refused to pump oil under UNSCR 986 for more than 3 months, all the while blaming the U.N. and the United States for disruptions in the flow of food and medicine that it had caused. We will be watching closely to determine how the Government of Iraq performs under UNSCR 1153. The Iraqi government refused to provide appropriate input to the Secretary General's report of January 30 on Iraq's humanitarian needs, which provided the basis for determining allocations under UNSCR 1153. On February 5, Iraq sent its official "observations" on that report to the Secretary General, rejecting many of its proposals and recommendations to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people without stating whether or not the Government of Iraq would "accept" the resolution. The U.N. Secretariat continues to work to reach agreement with Iraq on implementing UNSCR 1153.

Among its other provisions, UNSCR 1153 calls for an independent assessment of Iraq's oil infrastructure to ascertain whether it can export enough oil to cover the $5.2 billion oil export ceiling. Based on this report, the Secretary General will recommend to the UNSC whether repairs to Iraq's oil infra-structure will be needed to meet the new export target. The United States is prepared to support only those oil infrastructure repairs needed to fund the expanded humanitarian program.

The U.N. must carefully monitor how Iraq implements resolution 1153. The Iraqi government continues to insist on the need for rapid lifting of the sanctions regime, despite its record of non-compliance with its obligations under relevant U.N. resolutions. Saddam Hussein has exploited the suffering he himself has imposed on his people to build sympathy for Iraq and

its government and to create pressure to lift the sanctions. In the meantime, he has continued to build lavish palaces that benefit only the elite within his regime.

War Crimes and The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be a cause for grave concern. U.N. Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoel, is investigating credible reports from numerous independent sources that the Government of Iraq may have summarily executed hundreds—perhaps thousands—of political detainees in November and December 1997. According to these reports, many of those killed were serving sentences of 15–20 years for such crimes as insulting the regime or being members of an opposition political party. Families in Iraq reportedly received the bodies of the executed that bore, in some cases, clear signs of torture. In addition, the possibility that the government used humans as experimental subjects in its chemical and biological weapons programs remains a grave concern.

In southern Iraq, the government continues to repress the Shi'a population, destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. In the north, the government continues the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Kurds from Kirkuk and other cities. The government continues to stall and obfuscate, rather than work in good faith toward accounting for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared at the hands of Iraqi authorities during or after the occupation of Kuwait, and the nearly 5,000 Iranian prisoners of war taken prisoner by Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. The Government of Iraq shows no sign of complying with UNSCR 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people. The U.N. Special Rapporteur reported to the General Assembly his particular concern that extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and the practice of torture continue to occur in Iraq.

The INDICT Campaign

The INDICT campaign continues to gain momentum. Led by various independent Iraqi opposition groups and nongovernmental organizations, this effort seeks to document crimes against humanity and other violations of international humanitarian law committed by the Iraqi regime. We applaud the tenacity of the Iraqi opposition in the face of one of the most repressive regimes in history. We take note of, and welcome, Senate Resolution 179 of March 13 expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the need for an international criminal tribunal to try members of the Iraqi regime for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

March 16, 1998, marked the tenth anniversary of the Iraqi military's devastating chemical attack on the Iraqi Kurdish town of Halabja. As many as 5,000 civilians were killed. More than 10,000 were injured. The Iraqi regime never expressed remorse for Halabja. In fact, the regime defended its use of chemical weapons in its war with Iran by claiming, "every nation has the right to protect itself against invasion," even though a 1925 Geneva Protocol, to which Iraq is subject, outlaws the use of chemical weapons. Ten years after the massacre, the people of Halabja still suffer from the effects of the attack, including much higher rates of serious diseases (such as cancer), birth defects, and miscarriages. The sympathies of the United States are with the people of Halabja and other victims of Iraqi chemical attacks as we remind ourselves and the international community that the U.N. must remain vigilant to stop Iraq from reacquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Northern Iraq

In northern Iraq, the cease-fire between the Kurdish parties, established in November 1997 as the result of U.S. efforts, continues to hold. Both Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have made positive, forward-looking statements on political reconciliation, and talks between the two groups have commenced. We will continue our efforts to reach a permanent reconciliation through mediation in order to help the people of northern Iraq find the permanent, stable settlement that they deserve, and to minimize the opportunities for Baghdad and Tehran to insert themselves into the conflict and threaten Iraqi citizens in this region.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to UNSCRs 687 and 692, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued

almost 1.3 million awards worth $6 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by UNSCRs 986, 1111, and 1143 have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. To the extent that money is available in the Compensation Fund, initial payments to each claimant are authorized for awards in the order in which the UNCC has approved them, in installments of $2,500. To date, 457 U.S. claimants have received an initial installment payment, and payment is in process for an additional 323 U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 6.

Remarks on the Assault Weapons Ban

April 6, 1998

Thank you very much, Secretary Rubin. Thank you for your efforts. Madam Attorney General, thank you. Mr. Vice President, thank you. And to the members of the law enforcement community and Secretary Kelly, Mr. Magaw, Attorney General Miller, Congressman Engel, to representatives of Handgun Control and the victims of violent crime, and to all of you who have come here today, I thank you very much.

As the Vice President and the Attorney General and the Secretary of Treasury have said, 5 years ago we made a commitment as an administration to recover our Nation's streets from crime and violence, to provide security for our families and our children. It required a new determination by communities and by Government. It took a new philosophy of law enforcement, based not on tough talk, which was always in ample supply, but on tough action and smart action, a philosophy based simply on what works, community policing, strong antigang efforts, targeted deterrence, smarter, tougher penalties, a comprehensive strategy that includes all these elements and puts community policing at its core.

We're well on our way to putting 100,000 new police officers on the street ahead of schedule. And as the Vice President just told us, crime rates are dropping all across America to a 25-year low. Violent crime is down, property crime is down, and murder is down dramatically. From the crime bill to the Brady bill, from the assault weapons ban to the Violence Against Women Act, our strategy is showing results. And Americans should take both pride and comfort in this progress.

But statistics tell only part of the story. The real measure of our progress is whether responsibility and respect for the law are on the rise. The real test of our resolve is whether parents can unlock their front doors with confidence and let their children play in the front yard without fear. And the fact remains that there are still far too many children in harm's way, too many families behind locked doors, too many guns in the hands of too many criminals.

No statistics can measure the pain or the brave resilience of the families shattered by gun violence. Some of them are here with us today, and I would like to acknowledge them, people like Dan Gross, Tawanna Matthews, Brian Miller, Byrl Phillips-Taylor. Byrl's 17-year-old son was killed with an AK–47. Tragedies like theirs are a brutal reminder of the task still before us. They are a challenge and a call to action that we as a nation cannot ignore, and I thank these people for being willing to continue the fight through their pain. Thank you very much, all of you.

If we are going to move forward in building a safer, stronger America, all of us, police and parents, communities and public officials, must work together. We must remain vigilant. Last November, I asked the Treasury Department to conduct the thorough review Secretary Rubin has just presented. That is why our administration has concluded that the import of assault weapons that use large-capacity military magazines should be banned. As everyone knows, you don't need an Uzi to go deer hunting. You don't need an AK–47 to go skeet shooting. These are military weapons, weapons of war. They were never meant for a day in the country, and they are certainly not meant for a night on the streets. Today we are working to make sure they stay off our streets.

Two successive administrations have acted on this principle. In 1989 President Bush banned the import of 43 semi-automatic assault rifles. In 1994 this administration banned the domestic manufacture of certain assault weapons. And in Congress, Senator Dianne Feinstein and the late Congressman Walter Capps led the fight against foreign gun manufacturers who evade the law. As long as those manufacturers can make minor cosmetic modifications to weapons of war, our work is not done. And we must act swiftly and strongly.

That is what Secretary Rubin's announcement amounts to today. We are doing our best to say, you can read the fine print in our law and our regulations all you want, and you can keep making your minor changes, but we're going to do our best to keep our people alive and stop you from making a dollar in the wrong way.

It is our sworn duty to uphold the law, but it is also our moral obligation, our obligation to the children and families of law-abiding citizens, an obligation to stop the terrible scourge of gun violence. As parents, we teach our children every day to distinguish right from wrong. As a nation, we must also remember where to draw the line.

Today we draw it clearly and indelibly. If we do this, if we follow the recommendations set forth in this report, we chart the right course for America toward a future more free of fear and a new century brimming with confidence and great promise.

Again, to all of you who played any role in this important day, I thank you on behalf of the people and the children and the future of the United States. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Raymond W. Kelly, Under Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement; John W. Magaw, Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; and Iowa Attorney General Thomas J. Miller.

Remarks to the Major League Soccer Champion D.C. United and an Exchange With Reporters

April 6, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Welcome to the Rose Garden on this beautiful spring afternoon, Congresswoman Norton, Mrs. Barry, Councilman Evans.

In addition to being a magnificent spring day, this is also National Student Athlete Day. So I want to give a special welcome to those who have joined us to celebrate the achievements of students across the country. I want to thank Richard Lapchick, the director of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society at Northeastern University, and Ron Stratten of the NCAA for your work to promote academics, athletics, and community service among our Nation's youth.

I also want to welcome Kevin Payne, the president and general manager of D.C. United, and Coach Bruce Arena and the members and the staff of this very talented team. You've all worked hard to make D.C. United the most successful team in Major League Soccer history, winners of the 1996 and 1997 MLS Cups. Each year, despite torrential rains during the championship games, you've shown us you are strongly united. And with a great record this season,

you're well on your way to a "threepeat," something the law prevents me from trying to equal. [*Laughter*]

D.C. United and Major League Soccer are making soccer more and more popular in the United States, especially among young people. Last year a record 3.2 million children across our Nation played youth soccer, more than any other sport. My daughter taught me all I know about soccer. It was a great experience for me to watch her grow up in her soccer league, and I know it's making a difference in the lives of millions of children all across this country.

D.C. United is linking America to the world and the love of soccer in bringing Americans of all backgrounds together and, unless my ears have given out on me entirely, bringing some people beyond America together on this team. Last year, despite those rains, over 57,000 fans went to RFK Stadium to watch you win the championship. The D.C. United fans come from nearly every country on Earth. Their diversity and spirit add to the life of this, our Capital City, as I'm sure the representatives here would attest. Kevin Payne says that the fans are the 12th man in your winning efforts.

We can also all be proud of how united you are with the community of Washington, DC. Your partnership with DC Scores supports after school reading and writing programs, combined with the joys of playing soccer. And I'd like to give you a special thanks for that.

I also want to acknowledge the winners of that program's essays contest who are here with us today, and they're standing over here: Anoa Hunter and Anton Kent-Trout, who wrote outstanding essays on "What United Means to Me." I just read their essays. I wish all of you could read them. I think it's an inspiring and important question for all of us to think about.

Congratulations to all of you, and now I'd like to turn it over to D.C. United's president, Kevin Payne.

Kevin.

[*At this point, Mr. Payne and Coach Arena made brief remarks, and the President was presented with an official team jersey advertising Major League Soccer's primary sponsor, Mastercard.*]

The President. I'll have to stay current on my Mastercard if I wear this. [*Laughter*] I like it. Thank you.

Thank you very much. Let me, before we close and I walk over here and we take a formal picture with the team, again thank the First Lady of Washington, DC, and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and all the DC city council members. I see at least three that I overlooked the first time. Would all the members of the DC city council who are here stand up? I think they're all here. We have a quorum in case any of you have a particular problem you'd like solved. [*Laughter*]

And I'd also like to ask the student athletes and the coaches that I just honored in the Oval Office who have come here from around the country, who have done outstanding things. Many of them have overcome considerable personal obstacles to be outstanding athletes, outstanding students, and servants in their communities. I'd like to ask them to all stand please. Thank you very much.

We're going to take a quick picture, and then we'll be adjourned. You can all stand up. We'll visit a little, have a little fun. Come on.

[*At this point, the President posed for photographs with the team.*]

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, is another Middle East peace summit here a possibility? Chairman Arafat, Prime Minister Netanyahu left open that possibility. Would you consider it?

The President. We're working on it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:37 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cora Masters Barry, wife of Mayor Marion Barry of Washington, DC; Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans, District of Columbia council; and Ronald J. Stratten, group executive director for education services, NCAA. A reporter referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Resignation of Federico Peña as Secretary of Energy
April 6, 1998

Earlier today, with regret, I accepted Secretary of Energy Federico Pena's resignation.

Secretary Pena has admirably served my administration, first as Secretary of Transportation and then as Secretary of Energy. It is a measure of my confidence in his abilities that I entrusted him to run not one but two Cabinet agencies.

In his last year he diligently managed the Energy Department, focusing on energy, environmental quality, national security, and science and technology issues. Just last week Secretary Pena unveiled our Comprehensive Electricity Competition Plan, saving consumers $20 billion per year by introducing competition into the electricity industry. Under his leadership, the Department of Energy provided much of the analysis that gave me the confidence that we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions without harming the economy.

In the last year he helped shape our policy in the Caspian region, building a coalition among the key nations in that region; he provided a comprehensive national energy strategy for the Nation that will help ensure that Americans have affordable, clean, and secure energy supplies in the 21st century; and he privatized Elk Hills Naval Petroleum Reserve, generating $3.65 billion for U.S. taxpayers.

During his 4 years at the Transportation Department, Secretary Pena increased the level of competitiveness of America's transportation industry with more investments in mass transit than at any time since Woodrow Wilson was President. Secretary Pena helped to improve travel safety, signed aviation agreements with 40 nations, opened lucrative markets for American airlines, and oversaw a 25 percent increase in infrastructure investments.

I wish Secretary Pena, his wife, Ellen, and their three children the best for the future. I thank him for his invaluable service as a member of my Cabinet.

Statement on British and French Ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty
April 6, 1998

Today, France and Great Britain deposited their instruments of ratification for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in New York, thus becoming the first nuclear weapon states to ratify the CTBT.

I applaud this milestone in the global effort to reduce the nuclear threat and build a safer world. In particular, I want to thank Prime Minister Blair and President Chirac and the Parliaments of Great Britain and France for their leadership in paving the way towards early entry into force of this historic treaty.

The CTBT has now been signed by 149 states, including all 5 nuclear weapon states. In my State of the Union Address, I asked the Senate to give its advice and consent to the CTBT this year. The CTBT is in the best interests of the United States because its provisions will significantly further our nuclear nonproliferation and arms control objectives and strengthen international security.

Statement on a Breast Cancer Prevention Study
April 6, 1998

Today's new research findings about the potential use of the drug tamoxifen to prevent breast cancer are an historic step in the ongoing fight against this deadly disease. Breast cancer

strikes one in eight American women, and about 180,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. Each of us has a sister, a daughter, a friend, or in my case, a mother, who has fought against it.

The landmark Breast Cancer Prevention Trial gives us new hope that some women at high risk for breast cancer may actually be able to reduce their risk of getting this life threatening disease. It is an important contribution to our national battle to detect, prevent, treat, and finally cure breast cancer for generations of women to come.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to the Breast Cancer Prevention Trial, a joint study of the National Cancer Institute and the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

April 6, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 7.

Remarks to a National Forum on Social Security in Kansas City, Missouri

April 7, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning. Thank you, Governor Carnahan, for your leadership on so many areas and your friendship. I'd like to thank the leaders of this fine institution for welcoming us here and for the mission they perform every day. I thank Senators Kerrey and Santorum for their concern—longstanding—for Social Security reform and their presence here, and Representatives Hulshof and Pomeroy, who are participating in the program, and Representative McCarthy and also Representative David Dreier from California, who is a native of Kansas City, who are here.

I thank the members of our administration who have come, who will be participating: the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Frank Raines; the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Larry Summers; the Director of the National Economic Council, Gene Sperling; and the Administrator of Social Security, Ken Apfel.

Attorney General Nixon, Treasurer Graeber, Insurance Commissioner Sebelius, thank you all for being here. Mayor Cleaver, thank you for hosting us. I don't know if Mayor Marinovich is here or not, but if she is, hello. [*Laughter*]

I'd also like to thank the leaders of the AARP, including Horace Deets, and the leaders of the Concord Coalition, including Martha Phillips, for their hosting of this forum. The AARP has long

been a leading voice for the elderly, the Concord Coalition long a leading voice for fiscal responsibility over the long run, and their willingness to work together is very important. I'd also like to thank the Speaker of the House, the Senate majority leader, and the House and Senate Democratic leaders for nominating and being represented here today by the Members of Congress who are on the program.

As the Governor said, this is a good time for America and a time of great hope. Our economy is the strongest in a generation. Many of our social problems are on the mend. Our leadership in the world is unrivaled. Within the next year, we will have a balanced budget. And where once there were deficits projected as far as the eye can see, we now have projected surpluses as far as the eye can see, a trillion dollars' worth over the next decade.

But this sunlit moment is not a time to rest. Instead, it is a rare opportunity to prepare our Nation for the challenges and the opportunities of the 21st century, or in the words of the old saying, to fix the roof while the sun is shining. In the coming century, the aging of our society will present both great challenges and great opportunities. I hope to live to be one of those people and so, to me, it's a high-class problem.

But because a higher percentage of our people will be both older and retired, perhaps our greatest opportunity and our greatest obligation at this moment is to save Social Security. In the State of the Union Address, I called on Congress to set aside every penny of any surplus until we had dealt with Social Security first. Both parties in both Chambers of Congress have joined in this call. That is the good news.

Today we turn to the business at hand, building public awareness of the nature and scope of the problem and building public consensus for the best changes. Clearly, we will strengthen Social Security and reform it only if we reach across lines of party, philosophy, and generation. And that is one reason for the broad representation of age groups in this audience today. We have to have open minds and generous spirits. And we all have to be willing to listen and to learn.

For too long, politicians have called Social Security the "third rail" of American politics. That's Washington language for "it's above serious debate." This year we must prove them wrong. This conference, with its wide participation, is a good start. On the political calendar, 1998 is an election year. But on the Social Security calendar, we must resolve to make it an education year, when we come to grips with the problems of the system and come together to find the answers.

This issue is complicated, so we need the best ideas, whatever their source. The issue is controversial, so we have to have a national consensus on both the nature of the problem and the direction we must take.

That's why I've asked all the Members of Congress to also host townhall meetings in their own districts. I'll be talking with several of them by satellite later today, and we'll hold more additional forums like this one around the country. In December there will be a White House Conference on Social Security. In January I intend to convene the leaders of Congress to draft a plan to save it. With this effort, we can forge a national consensus, and we must.

For 60 years, Social Security has meant more than an ID number on a tax form, more than even a monthly check in the mail. It reflects our deepest values, the duties we owe to our parents, to each other, to our children and grandchildren, to those whom misfortune strikes, to our ideals as one America.

Missouri's native son, Mark Twain, once said, "I've come loaded with statistics, for I've noticed a man can't prove anything without statistics." So I thought we would begin today with a few statistics. Today, as the first chart shows, 44 million Americans depend upon Social Security, and for two-thirds of our senior citizens, it is the main source of income. For 18 percent of our seniors, it is the only source of income.

But Social Security is more than just a retirement program. Today you can see that more than one in three of the beneficiaries are not retirees; they are children and spouses of working people who die in their prime; they are men and women who become disabled, or their children.

So Social Security is also a life insurance policy and a disability policy, as well as a rock-solid guarantee of support in old age. That is why we have to act with care as we make needed repairs to the program occasioned by the huge growth in retirees.

Since its enactment over 60 years ago, Social Security has changed the face of America. When President Roosevelt signed the bill creating the Social Security system, most seniors in America

were poor. A typical elderly person sent a letter to FDR begging him to eliminate "the stark terror of penniless old age." Since then, the elderly poverty rate has dropped sharply. You can look here and see that in 1959 the poverty rate was over 35 percent for retirees. In 1979 it had dropped to 15.2 percent. In 1996 the poverty rate is down below 11 percent.

Now, there's something else I want to say about this. Even though most seniors need other sources of income in addition to Social Security to maintain a comfortable lifestyle, if Social Security did not exist today, half of all American retirees would be living in poverty—60 percent of all women. Fifteen million American seniors have been lifted out of poverty through the Social Security system.

Today the system is sound, but the demographic crisis looming is clear. The baby boomers, 76 million of us, are now looking ahead to their retirement. And people, clearly, are living longer, so that by 2030, there will be twice as many elderly as there are today.

All these trends will impose heavy strains on the system. Let's look at the next chart here. You can see that in 1960—wasn't so long ago—there were over five people working for every person drawing Social Security. In 1997, last year, there were over three people—3.3 people—working for every person drawing. But by 2030, because of the increasing average age, if present birthrates and immigration rates and retirement rates continue, there will be only two people working for every person drawing Social Security.

Now, here's the bottom line: The Social Security Trust Fund is sufficient to pay all the obligations of Social Security—both retirement and disability—until 2029, after which it will no longer cover those obligations. Payroll contributions will only be enough to cover 75 cents on the dollar of current benefits.

Now, if we act now, we can ensure strong retirement benefits for the baby boom generation without placing an undue burden on our children and grandchildren. And we can do it, if we act now, with changes that will be far simpler and easier than if we wait until the problem is closer at hand. For example, $100 billion of the budget surplus, if used for Social Security, would add a year or more to the solvency of the Trust Fund with no other changes being made. Other changes which could be made can be phased in over time, and keep in mind, small changes decided on now can have huge impacts 30 years from now.

So how should we judge the proposals to change the Social Security system? Here are principles that I believe we should follow, and they're on the next chart here. I believe, first of all, we have to reform Social Security in a way that strengthens and protects a guarantee for the 21st century. We should not abandon a basic program that has been one of the greatest successes in our country's history.

Second, we should maintain universality and fairness. For half a century, this has been a progressive guarantee for citizens; we have to keep it that way. It was not until 1985 that the poverty rate among seniors was lower than the poverty rate for the population of America as a whole. It is an astonishing achievement of our society that it is now so much lower, and we should not give it up.

Third, Social Security must provide a benefit that people can count on. Regardless of the ups and downs of the economy or the financial markets, we have to provide a solid and dependable foundation of retirement security.

Fourth, Social Security—continue to provide financial security for disabled and low income beneficiaries. We can never forget the one in three Social Security beneficiaries who are not retirees.

And fifth, anything we do to strengthen Social Security now must maintain our hard-won fiscal discipline. It is the source of much of the prosperity we enjoy today.

Now, these are the principles that will guide me as we work to forge a consensus. I hope they're ones that all of you can also embrace. This national effort will call on the best of our people. It will require us to rise above partisanship. It will require us to plan for the future, to consider new ideas, to engage in what President Roosevelt once called "bold, persistent experimentation." It will remind us that there are some challenges that we can only meet as one nation acting through our National Government, just as there are others we can better meet as individuals, families, communities.

This is also a challenge for every generation. To the older Americans here today, let me say, you have nothing to worry about. For you, Social Security is as strong as ever.

To the younger people here today who may believe that you will never see a Social Security check—indeed, I saw a poll which purported

to be serious that said that Americans in their twenties thought it was more likely they would see a UFO than that they would ever draw Social Security. [*Laughter*] That skepticism may have been well founded in the past, but just as we put our fiscal house in order, we can and must put Social Security in order.

And above all, to my fellow baby boomers, let me say that none of us wants our own retirement to be a burden to our children and to their efforts to raise our grandchildren. It would be unconscionable if we failed to act, and act now, as one nation renewing the ties that bind us across the generations.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the gymnasium at Penn Valley Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Jay Nixon, Missouri State attorney general; Clyde D. Graeber, Kansas State treasurer; Kathleen Sebelius, Kansas State insurance commissioner; Mayor Emanuel Cleaver II of Kansas City, MO; Mayor Carol Marinovich of Kansas City, KS; Horace B. Deets, executive director, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); and Martha Phillips, executive director, Concord Coalition. The forum was sponsored by the AARP and Concord Coalition.

Teleconference Remarks From Kansas City to Regional Social Security Forums

April 7, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Thank you, Ken. As Ken said, I'm speaking to you from Kansas City, where we're talking about what we must do as a nation to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century, and I'm looking forward to continuing to talk with you today.

Let me begin by thanking Representatives Bob Borski, Ben Cardin, Nancy Johnson, Jim Kolbe, and Jerry Weller for holding these town meetings across our Nation. For each of you lawmakers, these forums are not the only way you've worked to strengthen Social Security. Representatives Borski and Cardin are cosponsors of key legislation to establish the "Save Social Security First Reserve Fund." Representative Borski supports saving any budgetary surplus for investment in Social Security, and I know Representative Cardin does as well.

Now, Representative Johnson has been a strong advocate for Social Security beneficiaries. She has urged her fellow Members of Congress to continue to act with fiscal restraint as they debate what to do with the budget surplus. Representative Kolbe is one of our foremost experts on retirement and pension policy and is the sponsor of a resolution to establish a joint commission on Social Security reform. And Representative Weller has been a powerful voice for protecting the Social Security Trust Fund and was an original cosponsor of the "Social Security Preservation Act."

Together, all of you are proving that we can work in a bipartisan way to make sure that Social Security is as solid for our children as it was for our parents, and I thank you for that.

As you know, this year, working together with Congress, we'll be balancing the budget for the first time in 30 years. We have a right to be proud of that achievement, but we must also build on it. In the State of the Union, I called on Congress to set aside every penny of any budget surplus until we save Social Security first. Social Security is deeply woven into our Nation's social fabric. For 60 years, it's meant more than an ID number on a tax form, even more than a monthly check in the mail. It reflects our deepest values and the duties we owe to one another.

Today, 44 million Americans depend upon Social Security. For two-thirds of our seniors, it's the main source of income, and one in three beneficiaries are nonretirees. Social Security is life insurance and disability benefits as well as a rock-solid foundation of retirement security.

Today, Social Security is sound, but a demographic crisis looms if we fail to act. For over the next 30 years, 76 million baby boomers will retire. By 2030 there will be twice as many elderly Americans as there are today. If we don't

act now, by then payroll contributions will only cover 75 percent of benefits. That's why I've challenged our Nation to act now to strengthen Social Security for the 21st century.

Here are the principles I want to follow for meeting this challenge. First, any reform should strengthen and protect Social Security for the 21st century. We can't abandon the basic core program that's been one of the great successes of our Nation's history.

Second, we must maintain the universality and the fairness of Social Security. For a half-century this program has been a progressive guarantee for citizens. We have to keep it that way.

Third, Social Security must provide a benefit people can count on. Regardless of the ups and downs of the economy or the financial markets, we must make certain that Social Security will provide a foundation of retirement security.

Fourth, Social Security must continue to provide financial security for disabled and low-income beneficiaries. We can never forget the one out of three Social Security beneficiaries who aren't retirees.

And fifth, any strengthening of Social Security must maintain America's hard-won fiscal discipline, one of the main reasons we're enjoying our prosperity today.

These are the five principles that will guide me on Social Security, principles by which I'll judge all possible proposals. They're principles I believe can and should guide us all as we work to forge a national consensus for reform.

Above all, I know that we can strengthen Social Security only if we reach across the lines of party, philosophy, and generation with open minds and generous spirits. For too long, politicians have called Social Security the "third rail" of American politics. That's Washington language for "You can't really discuss any changes seriously." This year we have to prove them wrong.

I know that on the political calendar, 1998 is an election year. But on the Social Security calendar, let's all resolve to make 1998 an education year, a year we come to grips with the problems of the system and come together to find the answers. These forums are a very hopeful beginning, and I'm pleased to have had this chance to start this vitally important dialog with all of you today. This December we'll host a White House Conference on Social Security, and in January I'll convene the leaders of Congress to draft a plan to save Social Security for the 21st century.

I'm confident we'll meet this challenge as Americans always do, by working together, honoring our values, and preserving the solemn compact between generations that helped to build our Nation.

Now I'd like to turn the discussion over to Congressman Borski. Bob, take it away.

[*At this point, Representatives hosting the regional forums each made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you very much, Congressmen. Let me try to go back over some of what all of you said.

First of all, Congressman Cardin talked about the need to increase private saving; some others did. Congressman Borski talked about the fact that there were still some people on Social Security living in poverty. Let me try to address those things together, along with some of the other concerns which were mentioned. It is true that there are still about 11 percent of our elderly people in America living in poverty. But it's important to recognize that that's a lower percentage than in the overall population in America, and that it's just been since 1985 that the poverty rate among seniors was lower than the overall poverty rate.

Now, what can we do to make it better? There have to be other sources of income. There have to be other sources of private savings. And that is—of course, the possibility that some part of that could come out of Social Security reform is one of the things we're discussing.

But over and above that, I'd like to point out that Congress has done a lot of work with our administration over the last 5 years, first of all, to save 8½ million pensions that were under water when I took office, to stabilize 40 million others, and to make it increasingly more attractive for employees on modest wages and for small business employers to take out 401(k) plans, and then to make it easier for people to move from job to job and take their 401(k) with them. We've also dramatically expanded the availability of IRA's.

So we've tried to do some things already to help increase the ability and the attractiveness of saving, over and above Social Security. I don't think—no matter what we do with Social Security, the American people are going to have to be sensitized, the younger generation is, to do more to save for their own retirement.

On the other hand, I think it would be a great mistake, even for the youngest members of these audiences today, to believe that we shouldn't preserve Social Security as a universal guarantee. Because without Social Security today, almost half the seniors in America would be living in poverty, even though most seniors have income over and above that. So the trick is to save Social Security but also to have more income coming to people from private savings.

Now, let me mention just one or two other things. Nancy Johnson talked about wanting—made one Medicare statement about annual physicals. I believe that more and more, as people live to older ages and are healthier, we'll have to do more preventive care within the Medicare program. Nancy, you know, we've worked hard to deal with—to have more mammographies, for example. We're doing other preventive screening now. I think the more of that we do, the more we're going to save over the long run. And more importantly, we'll improve the length and the quality of life.

And she said, "People want to know whether the seniors can count on Social Security." The answer to that is, absolutely, yes. The Social Security Trust Fund, according to Mr. Apfel, who has got a legal responsibility to tell the truth about it, is stable until 2029. In 2029, shortly thereafter, the taxes coming in will only cover about 75 percent of our obligations. One of the reasons we want to move now is that by making relatively modest changes now we can extend the life of the Social Security Trust way out beyond 2029.

Can young people, the high school students here, look forward to drawing Social Security? The answer to that is, they certainly can if we do our jobs here in the next several months. You know, a few years ago, I can understand your skepticism because we were running huge deficits; we were projected to have $300-billion-a-year deficits as far as the eye can see. Now we're going to have a balanced budget sometime in the next year, and it's projected we'll have a trillion dollars in surpluses over the next decade—more than enough money if we do some other things to fix the Social Security system for the younger people listening here today. But I want to say again, no matter what we do to Social Security, those of you who are 16, 17, 20, and 21, I know it's hard to think about the end of your life, your later years, when you're that age, but you will have to do more, through your employer, through your own individual efforts, to save for your own retirement over and above Social Security if you want to maintain your standard of living when you retire.

Now, Mr. Kolbe asked a couple of questions about raising the retirement age, and then Mr. Weller asked about specific plans. Let me say, I don't want to dodge any of that, but I think all those proposals should be out there on the table. And I think that the most important thing now is, if I advocate a specific plan right now, then all the debate will be about that. The first thing we've got to do is to get the American people solidly lined up behind change. Let's stick with these basic principles I've outlined, and I want to encourage other people to come forward with their ideas. In December we'll all sit down, come up with our—we'll all put our various ideas on the table, and we'll begin hammering out a plan that we can present in January.

I still hear some new ideas almost every week coming from Democratic and Republican Members of Congress and private citizens that I think should be aired. If I put a specific plan on the table now, it will undermine and weaken debate, not strengthen it.

I do agree with those of you who say it ought to be possible for us to save Social Security without a payroll tax increase. I don't think we ought to automatically rule out any ideas over the next 30 to 50 years, as some would do, but I think that we plainly know that we can do this and provide for increased strength of the system without a payroll tax increase, given current assumptions. So I believe that will be possible.

Now, let me just answer one last question. You asked about raiding the Social Security Fund. Let me say that that just depends on how you look at it. The Social Security Trust Fund is basically a guarantee that certain obligations will be paid out to retirees, including the COLA, as well as to the disabled and to those who are the survivors who are eligible to be paid under it.

Now, in 1983, when the Social Security reforms were passed, it is true that the Government was collecting more in Social Security taxes than were needed in any given year to pay for that. So rather than raise other taxes to pay for other governmental expenses, the rest of the Government borrowed and gave a bond to the Social Security Trust Fund, with the full

faith and credit of the United States behind it, a legal obligation to pay back the money with interest to the Social Security Trust Fund when it was needed to pay out. And so there is no reason to believe that all the money that's been taken out since 1983 will not be paid back in as soon as it's needed to meet the legal obligations of the Social Security Trust Fund.

By doing that, by borrowing that money and paying it back, we didn't do anything to affect the obligations of the Fund to pay Social Security recipients in the future. But we did keep the Government from borrowing more money out in the private sector, competing with the private sector for money, and running interest rates up. So I think, on balance, it's been a safe and sound thing to do, and I do not believe that the raid has occurred on the Social Security Trust Fund. It would be a raid if the money were not paid back when it's due to be paid to you, but the money will be paid back when it's due to be paid to you.

And that's one of the things that we have to make sure is never interfered with, the legal obligation of the United States Government to replenish that Trust Fund and pay back the money when it's needed for the recipients.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. by satellite from Room 5 at Penn Valley Community College to regional forums in Columbia, MD; New Britain, CT; Philadelphia, PA; Sierra Vista, AZ; and South Holland, IL. In his remarks, he referred to Commissioner of Social Security Kenneth S. Apfel.

Remarks in a Panel Discussion at a National Forum on Social Security in Kansas City

April 7, 1998

[*Moderator Gwen Ifill, NBC News, introduced the panelists and asked the President if proposals to privatize Social Security were a slippery slope or a cure.*]

The President. Well, I don't think it's necessarily a slippery slope. I think the issue is, if you start with certain basic principles and you start with certain basic facts, then I think there are any number of options that can be chosen that both fit the facts—because if you start—you get in trouble in life if you start denying the facts. The facts are what we talked about this morning, the population trends, the financial problems of the system. I think it's important to keep a system that's universal, that's fair, that has a benefit certain as a baseline, and that deals with the problems of the disabled and the low-income people that are presently helped.

If you do all that, could you construct some system which also made allowance for private accounts? I think you could, yes. But could you—would I favor totally privatizing the system? No, because then you couldn't have a universal system that was fair that had a benefit certain.

Let me just back up and say, people are always saying, "Well, so what's your plan?" And what I'm attempting to do here is to avoid announcing a plan while we go through this period first of educating the whole electorate, all of our citizens, on what the facts are, and then eliciting ideas from people to get the broadest range of ideas. Because if I come out and say, "Well, here's exactly what I think ought to be done," then that forecloses debate when I'm trying to broaden debate. I want all of you to have your say, and I want us to wind up getting the best possible ideas.

But I think the important thing that you need to know about me and my position is, what are the principles I intend to follow, and are we prepared to do this? And I think I've answered those questions today.

But I think it would be a real mistake to rule out—what I think we all would like to see—let me go back to what Senator Santorum said in his opening remarks about the problems with the rate of return and what Senator Kerrey said in his opening remarks about the need to give all people some wealth-generating capacity. I think we'd all like to see a higher rate of return on the system, on the investments. The

question is, how do you get that and still keep the system that has lifted so many seniors out of poverty and dealt with disability and dealt with premature death and dealt with all the other problems the Social Security system deals with? But I think there are lots of options to do that.

[*Panelist Senator J. Robert Kerrey described features of the reform proposal he and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan introduced. An audience member suggested removing the welfare aspects from Social Security and keeping any increase in contributions under the private control of the individual. Panelists responded that simply raising taxes to keep the current system operating would not be politically feasible and that comprehensive reforms to stabilize the system are necessary.*]

The President. Let me just say, I don't know anybody who has proposed—and I think your Missouri Congressman today made this point, or one of the Members who spoke before me or after me made this point—I don't know anybody who thinks that we should try to preserve the status quo program with an increase in the payroll tax. Most Americans are paying more in payroll tax than they are in income tax today; most working families are. And I don't know anybody who favors that.

And with the projected surpluses we have now, all of the proposed solutions that I have seen so far I believe are achievable with no increase in the payroll tax. So that goes back to what you said.

There are some people who believe that there maybe ought to be an increase of, let's say, one percent, but only for private savings accounts, totally within the control of the payer. So it would be, in effect, an enforced savings plan to give you some investment in private income later on in life, that there are some proposals.

The only thing I've said about taxes is, I think that we ought to admit that we can solve this problem without an increase in the payroll tax, but we ought not to put ourselves in the position of saying that we won't even listen to somebody who's got a different idea. For example, I think the Kerrey-Moynihan plan—Senator Kerrey just left—has a fairly steep cut in the payroll tax in the first 20 or 30 years or something like that, and then, because of projected demographics, actually has it creeping up again—because we try to have 75-year plans with Social Security, actually has it creeping up again in 30, 35 years, something like that.

But I don't think you have to worry; most of us, I believe, are committed to trying to find a way to solve this problem that doesn't involve an increase in the payroll tax. And if there were any, all of the plans I've seen are those that say that this should be a savings account that's yours to invest as you see fit.

[*An audience member asked why the President had not actively supported legislation prohibiting any further borrowing from Social Security funds.*]

The President. Because I'm against it. I haven't taken a position to get it achieved, because I think it would be a big mistake. The Social Security Fund has been investing in Government securities, which have the full faith and credit of the Government behind it. The Government then takes that money and spends it on other things; that's true. But it's an investment by the Social Security Trust Fund. If they take in more money in any given year than they give out as benefits, they have to do something with that money. They have to invest it somehow. If they invest it in Government securities, they get the money back plus interest, and it's the safest possible investment.

Now, there was a lot of talk for years about how this amounted to a raid on the Social Security Trust Fund. And I could understand that talk because we were running huge deficits every year, so people had a right to ask, what's going to happen when the Government has to pay back the Social Security Trust Fund and the Trust Fund needs the money to pay out benefits—which is one reason it was so imperative that we balance the budget and then start running a surplus. But now the projected surpluses we have over the next 10 to 20 years are surpluses over and above what it will take to pay back to the Social Security Trust Fund the money of their investment plus interest.

And I believe it was a good investment by the Social Security Trust Fund. I also think it was good for the taxpayers at large. It kept the Government from going out into the private markets, borrowing money, running interest rates up, and driving your interest rates up by making it harder for you to get money. So I don't agree that it was a bad policy. But it would have become a horrible policy if we

hadn't balanced the budget and started running a surplus, because then when it came time for the Government to pay back the Social Security Trust Fund, we either wouldn't have been able to pay the money back or we would have had to sock you with a huge tax increase. But you don't have to worry about that now because we've got this deficit down, we're going to run a surplus, and it's going to look like a good investment of the Trust Fund, I think.

[*Panelist Representative Kenny C. Hulshof noted the existence of proposals in Congress to make Social Security surpluses untouchable, counteracting the tendency to create new programs with available money.*]

The President. If I could just follow up, because he made a point there that I think deserves some greater attention. I didn't mean to dismiss your question as lightly as it may have sounded like. There are people who believe that it would be better—let's assume that what I said is right. It is right now, as long as we keep the balanced budget, we run the surplus. Let's assume that's right. Still there are people who say, "Okay, Mr. President, so the Social Security Trust Fund had a surplus, and they invested their surplus in Government securities, and they'll get it back plus interest. But wouldn't it be better, if we had any surplus, that in effect the surplus was invested in a way that went to the individual in accumulating benefits of the people who were paying the taxes?" That's basically what a lot of people say.

See, one reason the return is not any higher than it is, is that 90 percent of your taxes, when you pay Social Security every year, are going to pay for the current Social Security benefits of your parents and grandparents. And that's what Senator Kerrey was talking about. That's what a lot of the people—the individual account argument is. If you get money this year, even if it's just $2, if all you get is a 5 percent return on it, if you keep it there for 50 years, pretty soon you're going to have a pretty good chunk of change. That's the argument for having something for children at birth.

But I just want to point out, it will not be all that easy to shift from a system where you take all the surplus of any given year and apply it to each individual's future retirement when 90 percent of the money you're paying out now is being used to pay your parents' and grandparents' retirement. So it sounds like a good idea, but it's going to be hard to make the transition.

[*An audience member requested the President's encouragement for more local discussion forums explaining the details of the Social Security crisis. Panelist Senator Rick Santorum agreed on the need to lay a foundation of public understanding before Congress could act.*]

The President. Let me just say, if I could follow up on that, one of the most important things about a democracy, a representative democracy like ours, is that the political system—when you quoted President Ford today, it was a great comment—the political system act when it's required to act, in a bold way, but that you have the trust of the people and the support of the people. And this is an interesting issue. This is a fairly complex issue.

Now, I think the people have been ahead of the politicians as a whole in the sense that I think it's widely understood that there's a problem here, and therefore all of you want us to do something about it.

On the other hand, there is a fairly small number of the political leaders in Congress, let's say, and there's a fairly significant number of people in the press, the people that are covering this, who've been thinking about this problem for a long time, and they know we need to do something about it. So all of us who are activists, you know, the tendency is that we want to go in a room now and just—you know there's a problem, so we'll fix out what to do about it.

The nearest thing I can think of that we're trying to avoid happened a few years ago, before I became President, on catastrophic health insurance. I don't know if you remember this—and the AARP even got burned on this—where everybody in the country knew there was a problem, right? So the politicians figured, "Well, the people all know there's a problem. The AARP says there's a problem. So we'll all sit down and do what seems like a reasonable thing and come up with a solution." And the public outcry was so great that a then-Democratic Congress and a Republican President had to undo what was done.

Now, it was too bad, really, in that, but it wasn't catastrophic for the country. This is big-time business. We can't—once we do this, we have to do it, do it right, and we can't undo it. We've got to do this right, and so that's

why we're doing it in this way. And I thank you for what you said, and I'll do what I can to try to—I've got an office in Washington, part of the White House, that deals with State and local officials. We'll work with the Congress and try to see how we can multiply these things.

[*An audience member asked how privatization would affect disability and survivors insurance and how supporters could be certain that people would indeed save when given the opportunity.*]

The President. I think we should all have a chance at that. Go ahead. We'll start here; we'll just go around. You've asked, in some ways, the question on which everything else depends, so I'll give everybody a shot at that. Why don't you start?

[*Panelists commented on the need for Social Security to continue to protect the most vulnerable citizens by incorporating elements of privatization while still providing an income guarantee.*]

The President. I can't add much to what's been said, except I would like—this is the one and only time I'll try to do this because the Social Security issue itself is sufficiently complex and important—but just for a moment, since you talked about families that are at risk of having something bad happen, I'd like to fold the Social Security issue into the larger issue of family savings, just for a moment, and ask you to think about it and think about it from the point of view of a family living on, let's say, $20,000 a year and one living on $40,000 a year and then one living on $100,000 a year.

We want a system, first, in Social Security that has some sort of a disability benefit and a survivor benefit to give a baseline threshold of existence to people that could have horrible misfortune. Then we want a baseline predictable retirement benefit that is universal, again, that—today it's lifting 15 million seniors out of poverty.

But there are other things that we want to happen in the course of a family's life. We want more and more people to be able to save for their own retirement. And keep in mind, more and more companies are offering their employees defined contribution plans, not defined benefit plans. There are very few—increasingly, a smaller percentage of our workforce works for a company that can afford to guarantee your retirement, that says, here's what your benefits are going to be forever.

So what have we done? We've tried to stabilize any retirement systems that are under water or at risk, with various actions in Washington. And the Congress, in a complete bipartisan fashion, has tried to dramatically increase the ease with which and the incentives through which people have to take out 401(k) plans and then can carry them from job to job.

In addition to that, in the IRA proposals that we passed in the last year as a part of the Balanced Budget Act—and then again last year we liberalized them, I think, some—you can now save for an IRA. And you can say, well, you can't afford to save. But if you can, you don't have to pay taxes on that money. And then later, if you withdraw now from an IRA, for example, to pay for your child's education expenses, you don't have to pay taxes on that either.

So what we're trying to do slowly but surely is to create a system in which middle class people who are strapped for cash can afford to save in a comprehensive way. Now, what are the problems? Relatively low rate of return on Social Security. And if you move away from low rate of return to higher rate of return, can you continue to maintain the baseline benefit and the universality, number one? Number two, do you create so much risk that, if people happen to retire and need the money when there's a big drop in the stock market, they're in bad shape? Senator Santorum has really thought a lot about how to minimize the downside risk.

But I hear your message; I agree with it. And I think those are the real dilemmas we're going to have to figure out: What are people going to have to do for themselves outside the Social Security system, and what can we do to help them do that? How are we going to increase the return; how are we going to minimize the risk; how can we do that and keep the benefit level at an acceptable level?

But to me, what I'd like to do when I leave office when the 21st century starts, I'd like to know that any family that's out there with one person or two people that are working their hearts out, doing the best they can, no matter how meager their income, they're going to have a chance to create a little something for their children and themselves later on and have a chance to do even better, and that no 20-year-old person will ever have to worry about whether his or her Social Security taxes are going

to be wasted, because there will be a retirement system when they retire.

[*An audience member suggested removing the cap on the amount of wages subject to Social Security tax, as a means of generating more revenue for the system. A panelist responded that it would not generate enough additional revenue and would increase the tax burden unfairly.*]

The President. Maybe I should answer this since this is really a question, if we're going to defend this, that a Democrat should answer, if we're going to try to keep this nonpolitical.

If you think about it, there may be an argument for raising the income some, because of inflation and because a lot more people have moved into higher income brackets in the last 5 years. But if you think about it—let's suppose you took it off altogether. You say, "What do I care about some baseball player making $10 million a year," right? But if you think about it, what would happen is you would be putting people in a position of paying over the course of their lifetimes 50, 60, 100 times more than they would ever draw out of the Social Security system. And you can say, "Well, they owe it to society." But these people also pay higher income taxes, and the rates are still pretty progressive for people in very high rates.

So I think you can make—in fact, if you took it off altogether—the gap that will exist in 2029 is the equivalent of about 2¼ percent of payroll, and that would close, I think, if you took it off altogether, I think about a percent and a half of payroll. But you would really have tremendously changed the whole Social Security system. You would have basically said, "If you get to where you make $70,000 or more a year, we're going to soak you, and you're never going to get anything out of this compared to what you're putting in."

Like I said, I wouldn't rule out raising it some, but I think we should be very careful before we get out of the idea that this is something that we do together as a nation and there at least is some correlation between what we put in and what we get out, except we want people on the bottom to get out a whole lot more than they put in so we can give them a decent retirement. It goes back to what our nurse said there.

[*An audience member asked if Congress would consider such unpopular options as raising the retirement age or changing the cost-of-living adjustment formula. Panelists responded that, in the context of overall reform, those options were important considerations but were not a quick fix to a difficult problem.*]

The President. Let me just make one suggestion here, if I might, for all of you, and I'm embarrassed that I can't remember exactly the numbers for the question that the lady just asked. But you need to keep in mind, if the specifics are real important to you—I mean all the specifics—then I think you need to always know what the impact of any specific proposal is. So again I'll say, in the year 2029, we'll stop being in balance, and then we'll go into a deficit of roughly where we can only pay 75 percent of the cost of the existing system of Social Security with the revenues that we have.

So if somebody says to you, "Well, what if we raise the retirement age to 70," or "What if we cut the cost of living by half a percent," or "What if we took the ceiling off the incomes earnings," to go back to this gentleman, I think it's important, if you really want to seriously discuss that level of detail, that you know what the impact of each specific one would be. And we can get you that information. For example—or if you want one percent of payroll devoted to individual savings account, what will that add to the gap of 2.23 percent in the short run? And then you just have to decide what you're prepared to do to close the gap.

But you have to understand, your Members of Congress here, they're going to have to actually make difficult decisions at something less than an abstract level. They're going to have to sit down and say, "Okay, if I raise the payroll ceiling this much, it will close four-tenths of a percent of this 2¼ percent payroll gap."

And one of the things that surprised me—the reason I brought this up—one of the things that surprised me when I started studying it in this way is what a small impact it would have to accelerate the rate at which we're going to 67 for the retirement age. I mean, it does you some good, but it doesn't have anything like the impact that I had imagined it would.

Do you want to say anything?

[*A panelist concurred, emphasizing that a reform package should balance many elements. An audience member then described features of his retirement annuity.*]

The President. You like the fact that it's locked in?

Audience member. Yes, and I can't touch it. I can't cash in. I can't go buy shoes or anything like that. It's locked in for me. [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you.

[*Panelists and audience members commented on the options of individual savings accounts and 401(k) plans in terms of the level of access permitted and the need to preserve funds for use in retirement.*]

The President. But I do want to emphasize that your proposal would be not to increase the amount of payroll tax but to take a percent away so——

Senator Santorum. No. Take a percentage away so it wouldn't be an increased tax burden on you.

The President. Let me say to the young lady that asked this question, we changed the law on IRA's, individual retirement accounts which would require you to be able to put away something over and above your Social Security tax. But now, if you put money into an IRA now, and you have to withdraw from that IRA to meet a medical emergency or for a first-time home or to pay for education, you can do that without a penalty now. And if you do it for education, you do it without even paying any tax at all on the gain.

So there is a way under the present system, as a young person, that you can save. And if you face a medical emergency, you could withdraw from the savings without penalty, but it would have to be over and above what you pay in your payroll tax. And that wouldn't be changed by what Senator Santorum—he wouldn't make it any harder for you to do that. And we tried to make it easier, in the way we changed the law in the last 2 years.

[*An audience member suggested changing the Social Security cap.*]

The President. You think that there should be a cap on the size of your tax or that we should have a higher floor on the benefits?

[*The audience member said that those with incomes under $30,000 per year should pay minimal or no Social Security tax. Senator Santorum responded that the present earned-income tax credit was intended to assist lower income taxpayers.*]

The President. It's $31,000 a family.

Senator Santorum. It's up to around $30,000, and you would get some credit to help you pay your Social Security tax. So in a sense—I do know that people earning under, I think it's $20,000, pay no Social Security tax, net, of the EIC. So there is no Social Security tax burden, net, when you take the tax credit in effect.

The President. Let me say again, I believe that those of us who have higher incomes should pay more on the Social Security cap. I don't have a problem with that. The only point I was making is, if you took the cap off altogether on upper income people, they literally—they wouldn't be in a Social Security system anymore, they'd just be writing 6 percent of their income for something that they'd never see.

And we do tax them more on the income tax side, considerably more. And we also have no cap on what they pay into the Medicare Trust Fund, which you pointed out. But the thing that has made Social Security work in the past is that everybody has had to pay in and everybody got to draw out, that there was a guarantee and a mutuality of responsibility.

The earned-income tax credit has been somewhat controversial in Congress, but if it were up to me, I would have it even more generous. Because the way it works now is the average family of four with an income of $30,000 a year or less is paying approximately $1,000 less in income tax, including eligibility for refunds, than they would have paid if the law hadn't been changed in 1993. And we did it to try to take account of the fact that the payroll tax was so high for people and that incomes of people—the lower 20 percent of our work force had not gone up very much in the last 10 years.

But it seems to me that it's better to have some giveback there and still have a universal participation in the system, since we want everybody to be a part of both the responsibility for paying in and then be able to get the minimum amount coming out.

[*An audience member, citing the stalemate in campaign finance reform, asked for assurance that something would actually be done, and panelists responded that Congress was working to achieve a bipartisan solution and expected to*

act on Social Security reform in 1999. Ms. Ifill then asked for the President's closing comments.]

The President. Well, that question melds rather nicely with the last question that was asked from the audience. I deeply regret that we haven't passed campaign finance reform legislation. But to answer this, why is this different, for one thing, the divisions in the campaign finance reform are both not only divisions—they're divisions of party and also divisions of incumbency and non-incumbency. And then they're honest differences of opinion about what would work and wouldn't—all kinds of problems—and complicated by Supreme Court decisions and a zillion other things.

But the other thing is, frankly, every Member of Congress that really doesn't want to pass it knows that the Republic will go on and that the system we have is capable of producing significant positive change; witness the Balanced Budget Act and the fact that we've had the biggest increase in aid to higher education in 50 years and the biggest increase in coverage of children's health insurance in 35 years. So people know that this system can be made to function.

The Members of Congress in both parties know that, at some point in the future, Social Security will stop functioning, with grievous consequences to the fabric of American life that affect people who are Republicans and Democrats and independents, in all walks of life, with all manner of circumstances. And basically, there's enough patriotism in the Congress to want to address it. That's the honest truth. It's an issue of our survival as a people, our unity as a people, and the innate patriotism of the people that are serving. That's why I believe it will happen.

What I think will happen, what I want to see is that we will spend the time between now and December trying to answer the question this gentleman had: How can we get out this information to people? We also want you to become more familiar, so you can answer questions for yourselves. If you had to choose, for example, between a faster movement to a higher retirement age or an individual savings account or, you know, raising the cap on income or all these choices they're going to have to make, what choices would you make and why? And how would you answer the other charges? This ought to be a big national debate. There is no other program that affects so many of you in such an intimate, personal way.

And then what I believe will happen is all these Members will have lots of forums in their own States. They'll listen to their own people. They'll listen to these experts. You're going to see 100 or more articles written by people like our panelists here, coming up with new refinements on ideas, analyzing the proposals that Senator Kerrey and others have made.

And then in December, in January, we'll sit down and come up with the best possible solution. It won't please everybody 100 percent, but it will save Social Security for the 21st century, and it will make us a stronger, more united country. And then I think the Congress will come in and pass it because it is the right thing to do.

That may seem naive, and I may be old-fashioned, but I'm more idealistic today than I was the day that I took the Oath of Office. That's what I think will happen. And I think you will make it possible, because you'll support people like these folks who will do the right thing by your children and your future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The discussion began at 2:16 p.m. at the Penn Valley Community College. The panelists were: Senators J. Robert Kerrey and Rick Santorum; Representatives Kenny C. Hulshof and Earl Pomeroy; Marilyn Moon, senior fellow, Urban Institute; Gary Burtless, senior fellow, economic studies, Brookings Institution; David Walker, trustee, Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund; and Fred Goldberg, former executive director, Commission on Social Security and Entitlements.

Statement on the Death of Tammy Wynette
April 7, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the untimely death of Tammy Wynette. For more than 30 years, Tammy Wynette defined the Nashville sound that helped to make American country western music popular all over the world. Her string of number one hits has* filled music halls, homes, and radio waves, and her trademark style has* filled our hearts and made her a legend. From the Mississippi cotton fields where she worked as a child, to the stage of the Grand Ole Opry where she presided as the First Lady of country music, Tammy Wynette was an American original, and we will miss her.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Waiver on Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for Vietnam
April 7, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to subsection 402(c)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, (hereinafter the "Act"), I have issued an Executive order waiving the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act with respect to Vietnam.

I wish to report to the Congress that I have determined that the requirements of subsections 402(c)(2)(A) and (B) of the Act have been satisfied.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 1998
April 7, 1998

Warmest greetings to all those celebrating Passover.

This sacred holiday commemorates the long and arduous exodus of the Jewish people to the promised land of Israel. Despite centuries of slavery and oppression, the Israelites, strengthened by the promise of salvation, refused to abandon their dreams of freedom. In their darkest moments of persecution, the hope of liberation and redemption burned bright in their hearts, lighting their way to a new land and a new life.

Passover holds special meaning for us this year as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the modern state of Israel. It is a powerful reminder of the indomitable spirit of the Jewish people, of the quest for freedom and dignity that unites us all, of God's powerful presence in our history, and God's constant loving concern in our lives.

As the Jewish community across America and around the world commemorates this holy season, let us pray together for peace in the land of Israel, for the tranquility of its people, and for a bright and hopeful future for us all.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a memorable Passover.

BILL CLINTON

* White House correction.

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 7.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Dinner in Chicago, Illinois
April 7, 1998

Thank you very, very much. Let me thank all of you for coming tonight, and especially to Lou and Ruth for opening their home and giving us this wonderful meal, and Ramsey Lewis and the other fine musicians. You get a comedian after me. [*Laughter*] I used to tell jokes, and I was pretty good at it, and they made me stop. They said it wasn't Presidential, so now I have to have help.

I want to thank Mike and Pat Cherry and Howard and Judy Tullman and anyone else who was responsible for this dinner tonight. On behalf of Steve Grossman and Len Barrack, we're very grateful for the help and support you're giving to our party.

I think I saw Congressman Conyers walk in here a minute ago; there he is. Thank you, John, for being here. I want to thank Gary LaPaille, who is leaving his post after many years as chairman of the Democratic Party of Illinois, for his work in that regard. Thank you, Gary.

I want to say a word—I thought that when Dick Durbin got wound up a while ago we were about 3 days from election day. [*Laughter*] That speech had the kind of juice you expect when you're coming right down to the wire. I want to thank Senator Durbin for many things. He has been a great friend to me, to our administration, and to this country. I was thrilled when he was elected, and I have been even more pleased by his service. He has exceeded even my high expectations, and you should be very, very proud of him. He has done a great job for you.

I want to say a little more about Carol Moseley-Braun in a moment, but I was very delighted to see not only what Dick Durbin said but the reception that you gave for her. I hope very much that she will be re-elected. I intend to do everything I can to help her get re-elected. And I think that for her advocacy of education reform alone she has earned the right to be re-elected United States Senator from Illinois.

I'd also like to say a word for someone who's not here, our nominee for Governor, Glenn Poshard, who's been a great Congressman from southern Illinois. And I've had a chance to work with him now for over 5 years. I like him very much. He is an extremely able political leader, and he has—when Dick and Carol and I were riding in here together from the airport, we were laughing about Glenn Poshard's fanatic support he got in the Democratic primary. He got 98 percent of the vote in his hometown, and I think that's a pretty good indication of what the people who know him best think. So the way I've got it figured, if the rest of us could help the rest of Illinois know him as well, he'll do quite well in the fall.

I was thinking when all this storm came up, when the tent began to sway, this is the way I live every day in Washington. [*Laughter*] Believe me, I've found that if you just keep standing up, most of the time the tent won't fall. [*Laughter*] And if the storm blows over you, you won't melt. Ninety percent of it is just showing up every day. It gratifies your friends and confounds your enemies; it's a good thing to do. [*Laughter*]

I wanted to say to all of you, I just came back from this incredible trip to Africa, and I won't give you a travelog. If you followed it in the press, you know pretty much what we did. But let me say it was, for me, not only as your President but as a citizen, it was an astonishing experience. Hillary went to Africa with Chelsea about almost exactly a year ago, and they went to many of the same places that I went, although not all. And they had many of the same experiences I did, although not all, but I was sort of prepared for this at one level.

But I was literally overwhelmed by the energy of the place and the refusal of people to be ground down by the most difficult of circumstances. I guess the most emotional moments of the trip were when I flew into Rwanda to meet with six survivors of the genocide, which

took somewhere between 700,000 and a million lives in 90 days. And I met a woman there, among other—I met this woman who was calmly telling me—she wore her nicest dress, and she was there with all great dignity, incredible dignity, telling me how the Hutus had come to her village to kill her people and that they had taken her outside with her family and taken a machete to her.

And miraculously, she hadn't died. But when she woke up lying on the ground in her village, she saw that her husband and her six children had been killed. And yet somehow she felt the—she found the inner strength to go on and to devote her life to trying to heal these terrible wounds.

I met a very articulate young woman who lost two of her four siblings and both her parents in the war, and she talked about how her parents were betrayed by their neighbors. These are stories that a lot of Jewish-Americans can identify with. But this woman was telling me—she said, "You know, we lived in this little village." And she said, "My parents—their neighbor came up to them and said, 'These people will take you to safety.' And instead they took them to a stadium where they were killed with other people just like them." And she said, "Now I have to go back to their house, and we have the same neighbor we had before."

And they're trying to come to grips with this and trying to decide whether there is anything they could do like what's been done under President Mandela's leadership in South Africa to try to work through this some way and build some harmony.

I saw a village in Senegal where people were living as they had lived for hundreds of years, and they were living on the edge of a desert, but they had recovered 5 acres of land in beautiful green gardens because an organization in the United States and our aid program had given them enough money to dig a well. All they needed was enough money to dig a well. They've recovered 5 acres against the desert. It's a big problem in Africa and a big international environmental problem, the growth of the desert. And these people were so proud of what they had done, and this village elder was just holding his accounts in his hand. He wanted me to know that they hadn't wasted the money that had been given them and he was keeping count of all their expenses and all their income, and he knew exactly what their return on the investment he'd been given had been in this distant village in Senegal.

When I was in Accra, Ghana—you probably saw the film, which was somewhat misleading—we had something like 400,000 people within this square and a couple hundred thousand beyond the square, and I was upset because two ladies got crushed against the fence as the crowd came forward, and we got them out, and they were fine later. But I guess I want to tell you two things about that. When I came home, besides being more optimistic about Africa than I had ever been before and more optimistic about our options for investment in Africa, we dedicated a commerce center in Johannesburg, dedicated to the late Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown. We had a lot of African business people there, a lot of American business people there. And last year American business people earned a 30 percent return on their investment in Africa, highest return of investment on any continent, so I'm quite optimistic about all of that.

But the two points I want to make tonight—I came home thinking, for all of the challenges we have in this country, we are so lucky to live in a country where we have the level of prosperity we enjoy and where we're at least trying to make a conscious effort to live together across all the racial and ethnic and religious lines that divide us. And the second thing that I want to say to you is, I just wish every American could see in the reaction that Hillary and I received in Africa the way people all across the world in distant villages, many of them we've never done anything for, the way they look at the United States, the way they believe in the promise of America.

And what I want to say to you tonight is I spent a lot of time in my first term trying to fix things that weren't working in America, and a lot of it was quite controversial. Dick Durbin told the truth: Carol Moseley-Braun, a first-term Senator from Illinois, with all the Republicans saying that they would destroy anybody that voted for my economic plan in 1993, that it would cause a huge recession and be the end of the world, if she hadn't been willing to walk down the aisle and say "Aye," I wouldn't be here today, because the economic plan we passed was the thing that got the deficit down, which got the interest rates down, which got the investment going, which has put us in the position now for the first time in 30 years of

having a balanced budget and projected surpluses of a trillion dollars over the next decade.

The point I want to make is not that we're doing well. The point I want to make is the point I tried to make in the State of the Union Address. This is a golden moment for our country. We have the best economy in a generation. We've got the crime rate going down for 5 years in a row, apparently for the first time since the Eisenhower administration. We've got a record high homeownership. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years.

But this is a time when we should not be complacent, because the world is still changing very rapidly and because there are still a lot of challenges in this country. And when I see how others look at us and I imagine the challenges we have at home and the opportunities and what I see going on in the rest of the world, this is a time when we ought to say, "We have the elbow room now. We have the confidence, and frankly, we have some money, to bear down and meet the challenges this country is going to face, so that we can position America to guarantee that 50 years from now people will still feel the same way about our country that they do today, that I saw in Africa." That is really what we ought to be doing.

I'll just give you a few examples. Today I was in Kansas City with two Republican Members of Congress and two Democratic Members of Congress having a national forum on Social Security. Why? Because when all the baby boomers get in the Social Security system, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security if we keep the same birth rates, immigration rates, and retirement rates we have today. And that means the system will go broke in 2029; at least, we'll only be covering 75 percent of the cost of the system with the revenues that are coming in.

And I think it's imperative now to do something about that, because we can do something now, 30 years in advance, that will guarantee that those of us in the baby boom generation don't either have to see our poorest members in a destitute old age or see our children overtaxed and impaired in their ability to raise our grandchildren just because we didn't take the time right now to fix Social Security. And we ought to do it, and we ought to do it right now.

So we're going to have all these forums around the country. And then in December I'm going to convene a meeting of the leadership, and in January we're going to try to pass some legislation. Why? Because that's a gift we can give the 21st century. It's a gift. Just think, nobody else will have to worry about that for 30 or 40 years. And it's something we ought to do to just free people of worrying that either we're going to go back to an insecure old age for some of our fellow Americans, or we're going to damage the American economy or burden younger people coming up.

I'll give you another example. We have a historic opportunity this year—I know it's an election year, and it's hard to get stuff done. We've got an historic opportunity to pass comprehensive legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. Now, 3,000 kids start smoking cigarettes every day; 1,000 of them are going to have their lives shortened by it. It's illegal in every State in the country; yet it's still a terrible problem.

Dick Durbin has done as much as anybody in America to call the attention of the people of this country to this problem. And I thank him for that. But it will be unconscionable if, just because this is an election year and just because this is a complicated issue, we don't deal with it this year. And this is a long-term issue. You think about it. We've got a chance to save 1,000 lives a day in perpetuity, and we ought to do it.

In education, tomorrow morning, Carol Moseley-Braun and I are going to go out and do an event to highlight what she's trying to do to get us, for the first time, to help our schools either construct new buildings or rehabilitate the ones that are there.

Now, why is this a big deal? We've got the largest number of children in school ever now; the first time we've got more kids in school, starting last year, than the baby boom generation had, the first time—the largest number of kids in school. Now, the average age of a school building in the big inner cities of America is 60 years. In Philadelphia the average age of a school building is 65 years of age. You have all these kids coming into bigger and bigger classes, bringing more and more problems from their home. I offered a program that would reduce class size in the early grades to an average of 18 kids a class, hire 100,000 teachers, and modernize schools. She gave me the idea on the schools. And this is a huge thing.

We're having a big fight in Washington because the leaders of the other party and most of the rank and file don't think it's the thing to do. They think it's not their problem; they think it's a local problem. But even though Chicago—I take my hat off to Chicago, and I'm trying to help other school districts do what's been done here to kind of end social promotion and have mandatory summer school, do the things that have been done here, which you should all be very proud of.

It is not true that it's not a national problem. We've got the finest system of higher education in the world. No one questions it. Today I'm down at a community college in Kansas City at this Social Security forum, meeting with a bunch of students from the University of Central Oklahoma who came all the way over to come to the forum, and I meet two kids from Pakistan, two kids from Nigeria, a young man from Darbyshire in England. Why? Because people want to come to America to go to college. We've got the best system of college education in the world.

So what I tried to do after I became President was just to open the doors of college to everybody, with better student loans and more work-study slots and more scholarships and now a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college and tax credits for the other years as well.

But no one believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And if you look ahead—right now we have the strongest economy in the world, but more and more and more and more this economy will run on what people know and not only what people know but what they're capable of learning. Therefore, we must do whatever we can to give ourselves the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world.

I tell you, I've been working at this for 20 years. And I would be very surprised if any President has ever spent any more time in schools than I have, because I was a Governor for a dozen years before I took this office. I still read the literature. I still try to learn everything I can. No one has all the answers. But I can promise you this: Every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. And the biggest problem is we don't have a system where we have to learn from one another to survive.

But I can also tell you that I have been in districts in very poor areas, but I've never been in a successful school that wasn't in decent physical shape. And that's why what Carol Moseley-Braun wants to do is all right. I can also tell you there's no point in us hiring 100,000 teachers if they don't have a classroom. You can't lower the class size unless there is a classroom with a teacher to put the 18 kids in.

So this is a very big deal that we're trying to do. And again I say, in my judgment, while there is no simple answer, having higher standards, having greater accountability, doing more to get the best kind of teachers trained and out in the schools, and having the smaller classes in the early grades, and having the help to districts that don't have a lot of money to have decent physical facilities, these things are important. And her leadership in this agenda alone—never mind the fact that if you're from southern Illinois she's pretty good on the agricultural issues and all that—just on education, our stake in building a world-class system of elementary and secondary education dwarfs most other public issues, and it justifies your effort and support to re-elect Carol Moseley-Braun to the Senate.

Let me just mention a couple of other issues. When I was in Africa, I met—I had an amazing meeting with six environmentalists from countries around the African continent, and it was very interesting. Those of you who are interested in the environment, if you'd been sitting there talking to these people, you would have thought this was a conversation you could have in this community, except you wouldn't be worried about how to preserve the rhinos. I don't think there are any around here.

But except for the—you know, the common interest we have in having clean water and clean air and a sustainable environment is very important. One of the things that I'm hoping we can do in this session of Congress—but I'm not optimistic based on the preliminary soundings—is to pass our clean water initiative and also to pass an initiative for America to do its part in dealing with the problem of global warming.

The overwhelming consensus of scientists is this climate is warming up. And if you see what's happening, you see how much more extreme weather this El Nino has brought us all over America than the last El Nino, and you look at how upsetting it's been, that will become more and more and more regular unless we

take steps to reverse the incredible speed at which the Earth is warming up.

Now, our party is four square for the proposition that we can preserve the environment and grow the economy. But right now, we're in a big fight about that in Washington, and right now we're not doing so well.

So again I say to you, if you're thinking about not just how to keep this stock market up until next month but what kind of America our grandchildren are going to live in, whether we have a systematic program to have clean water in America and whether we're prepared to do something about climate change are huge issues. It is our moral responsibility in a good time to take on a long-term issue like this.

Now, I'll just mention two other things very briefly. First, a lot of you know that I've invested a good deal of time and effort in efforts to bring peace to other parts of the world. We're doing much better in Bosnia today than we were a year ago. And I still think we were right in 1985 to go in and stop that war. It was the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the end of World War II, and I think history will record that.

We are working very, very hard to find a formula which will permit the Middle East peace process to be resumed. And the less I say about it the better, but we're working hard on it.

And Senator Mitchell, my former Senate majority leader, was named to be the principal broker for peace in Ireland, and he's tabled a peace proposal, and there is some chance that sometime within the next few days the land of my ancestors will actually have an agreement to resolve some issues that are hundreds of years old.

So there's a lot of hope there, but the United States should continue to be involved in this. And I hope all of you will support that. Believe it or not, it's more controversial than you think in Washington. There are lots of people that think we ought to just be tending to our knitting more and be less involved around the world. I personally believe we should be more involved around the world because there is no easy division between our domestic interest and our foreign interest. And about a third of our economic growth in the last 5 years has come because of our expansion of trade and our reaching out to other countries and our willingness to be good partners with other people.

The last point I would make is this: If you think about what the roots of the problems in the Middle East and Bosnia and Northern Ireland are; if you think about the fact that in Rwanda, where I told you somewhere between 700,000 and a million people were killed in 90 days because of the conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis, tribal differences—let me tell you that they lived together in that country for hundreds of years, not hundreds of days—hundreds of years. Even though they are very distinct looking, the differences—you could see after you were in a room, you'd know who the Hutus were and who the Tutsis were. They spoke the same language. They had the same native religion. They shared the same land. They worked out accommodations for tribal differences. And yet still, the wheel ran off the track, and there they were, killing each other with breathtaking abandon.

What's the point of all of this? One of the reasons that America is attractive to others in the rest of the world is because we are trying every day to bridge the gaps that are still tearing people apart. What good does it do you to work a computer, to solve all the problems of science, if all you do is put all that knowledge and all that power to work in a primitive way dividing people instead of uniting them?

So I would say that I still believe we have no more important work than trying to bring the American people together and trying to continue to be a beacon of hope. I was so moved when I was in Senegal, a country that is 85 percent Muslim. I went to the biggest mosque in the country and visited. Why? Because they publicly rebuke the notion that they should hold down people who are of a different faith. The President is a Muslim with a Christian wife and now a Jewish daughter-in-law. [*Laughter*]

And so, here's this man, every day, in much more difficult circumstances than America, trying to embody the idea that it is crazy for us to punish one another because of our religious or our racial or our tribal differences. But these are deep feelings, man. It is deep in the psychology of all human history that people, when threatened especially, look for others to look down on and try to define themselves up by pushing others down. And you have to teach people to escape that, and you have to practice that.

And every time people see America uniting all different kinds of people, it sends a loud

message to the rest of the world and gives a greater chance that your children and your children's children will never have to leave our shores to fight in a foreign war because people hate each other for reasons that are fundamentally not as important as what they have in common.

So these are the things I think we ought to be thinking about. Now, if you think about what elections used to be about—what did they used to talk about, the Democrats? You didn't hear this; this is not the subject of elections. How did the Republicans win the Congress? How did they win the White House? They always said, "Oh, you can't vote for those guys. They're weak on the deficit. You know, they're weak on crime; they're weak on welfare; they're weak on all that." You remember all those speeches, sort of driving wedges in the election.

Well, I'm sorry, but there's no deficit anymore. We've got the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years. We've got the best economy in a generation. The crime rate has been going down. We, just last week, said we were going to stop importing another 55 assault weapons, keep another million and a half weapons out of this country that are designed for nothing other than killing people. So now we don't have to worry about that anymore.

Elections do not need to be, and indeed should not be, dominated by negative issues anymore or fear. There's no fear. You can go out in 1998 and talk to your friends and neighbors and try to put a little juice in the idea that we can actually have a referendum in America about the future direction of this country and about whether we're going to look at the long-term problems.

And I think if we do that, Carol Moseley-Braun will win handily. I think if we do that, our party will pick up seats in Congress, although it never happens in the second term of an incumbent President that his party picks up seats in Congress. It never happens. It's going to happen this time if we make the election about the future of the American people.

And your investment in our party has made the chance of that happening much, much more likely. That's why you're here, and that's why I'm grateful.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:17 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Lou and Ruth Weisbach; Mike and Pat Cherry and Howard and Judy Tullman, event co-chairs; Steve Grossman, national chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; and President Abdou Diouf of Senegal and his wife, Elizabeth.

Remarks at the Rachel Carson School in Chicago

April 8, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you for making me feel so welcome at what is at least my third trip to the Chicago schools since I've been President.

I want to begin by thanking Rita Nicky for that wonderful introduction and for her obvious devotion to the children of this city. I thank very, very much Kathleen Mayer, the principal, for making me feel welcome. I'd also like to thank Catherine Garza, whose science class I visited. And I'd like to thank the students in the science class who showed me how to make a weather vane and the young students who sang to me today and all the students, indeed, of Rachel Carson, along with the teachers and the administrators and the staff. Thank you so much.

I thank Aldermen Coleman, O'Connor, and Burke for being here. I thank Congressman Gutierrez, but also Congressmen Davis, Rush, and Blagojevich, who are out here in front, for being here, for their support; and Senator Art Berman and Senator Dick Durbin; and Senator Carol Moseley-Braun I'll have more to say about later.

I want to thank the mayor and all of those who have cooperated with him, the members

and the leaders of the teachers union, the parents, the administrators, everybody, in this remarkable attempt to revolutionize, revitalize, and energize the schools of the city of Chicago. It has been awesome to watch. But in particular I would like to thank the CEO of the Chicago board of education and the superintendent of schools, Paul Vallas and Gery Chico. They have done a wonderful job, and I thank them so much. Thank you, gentlemen.

But mayor, none of it would have happened without you. And you believed that the kids of Chicago could learn and deserved a chance to learn and could have a future and deserved the chance to have that future. And when you got up here and you said you got tired of making excuses for failure and you decided to start making reasons for success, the whole crowd clapped. I wish that every public official in America had that simple creed. We'd be a lot better off as a country, and I thank you.

I also want to thank the Carson Choir and the Recorder Band, the people that provided music earlier.

Very often when I get up to speak I feel like that old joke at the banquet—where the banquet starts at 6 and everybody in the whole room either gets introduced or gets to talk. And the last speaker gets up at 10, and he says, "Everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it." [*Laughter*] And somehow that's how I feel this morning, because so much that needs to be said has been said.

But I want to try to put this issue of modernizing our schools in a larger context for you, about what it means to prepare our country for the 21st century. It is just 632 days away. I'm gratified that most Americans think we're in good shape for that new century, because we have the strongest economy in a generation, 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in a quarter-century, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history; first time crime has gone down this many years in a row since President Eisenhower was President; the welfare rolls are the lowest they've been in 27 years. That's all good.

But when things are changing as rapidly as they are now, we should use good times to think about the problems that remain today and the challenges that loom ahead tomorrow. It is a responsibility of good citizens in a democracy to bear down and do more in the good times, not to relax and pat ourselves on the back.

This meeting I had today, along with 23 community forums the Vice President and the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, are having across the Nation, are all designed to discuss the importance, first, of modernizing the schools. Like Senator Durbin said, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Carol Moseley-Braun for sounding the alarm on this issue. She is the first person who ever talked to me about the possibility that the Federal Government should play a role. And so I said, "Well, look, I was a Governor for 12 years, and I spent more money on education than any of my predecessors. I raised more funds. I put more money into the schools. But the building decisions were always made at the district level."

And she gave the same speech to me years ago she gave to you today. She said, but that having good schools is a national priority. We spend money at the Federal level on roads that are the responsibility of the State and local government. We invest in that kind of infrastructure. But the most important infrastructure for tomorrow is the infrastructure of education. If we can be spending Federal money, as we are, to try to make sure we connect every classroom and library in the entire country to the Internet by the year 2000, don't we want the classroom to be fit to go to school in, and don't we want there to be enough to have small class sizes where we need it?

So she sold me, and ever since I've been trying to sell the country, which as usual is ahead of the politicians, and the Congress, which sometimes is a little behind the President. [*Laughter*] So we're working on this in Washington.

And I came back to Chicago because of all the exhilarating things that Chicago is doing, leading a revolution in public schools of high standards, accountability, rising expectations. Last year I came here to highlight the practice of ending the destructive policy of social promotion but not letting the kids drift off and instead bringing them closer by giving them summer school opportunities.

Today the mayor told me there are now 240 schools plus in Chicago open after school every day for tutoring and academic work and to provide a decent dinner to poor students who need it, so the kids can actually get 3 meals a day in 240 schools. He said there had already been

an evaluation of 40—of the first 40 schools where this 3-meals-a-day policy had been in effect, and the tutoring, and that 39 of them had shown dramatic gains in learning. This is not rocket science; this is taking care of our children. If Chicago can do it, everybody can do it.

So the mayor and I were talking yesterday about the ROTC program in the schools and what it does for young people, to be able to put on that uniform and feel the pride and find constructive things to do, and how they're being given a little extra consideration in being hired for other work that needs to be done in Chicago.

So Senator Carol Moseley-Braun, sitting here while we're talking, she said, "You know, I'm not sure we put enough money in the defense budget to take care of all the kids in the country that would like to be in ROTC. And there are a lot of kids in this country that that may be the only opportunity they ever get to learn the lessons they'll learn and become the kind of people they can become to do the kinds of things they can do." So I now have a new assignment from Senator Carol Moseley-Braun—[*laughter*]—and I am about to fulfill it when I go back to Washington.

I say this to you because this is big stuff here. This is exciting. All over the country, people, all kinds of people, have just sort of given up on public schools and the kids that are in them and the children whose first language is not English. And I'm telling you, that's crazy. I just got back from the poorest continent on Earth, Africa. I saw over half a million people in one sitting in Ghana. I went to rural villages. I talked to all kinds of people. I can tell you I believe more strongly than I ever have in my life that there is an even distribution of intelligence, energy, and potential among all human beings everywhere. The question is, are we doing what's necessary to bring it out and to give kids the chance that they need?

So that's what this is about. I really like the fact that in her introduction Rita said, "Well, even in the old building, teachers work hard to do a good job." A lot of those classrooms are still open and they're appealing; I was kidding her. I went to a high school that was built in 1914. It's been closed for years. We're trying to renovate it and open it up as an arts center. But if you really want to make the old buildings work, it requires a lot of money, too. And our proposal would permit not only the building of new buildings but also the rehabilitation of old buildings—I mean the rehabilitation—opening the window, solving the problems that she mentioned, recovering them for positive purposes.

What does all this mean? At this school you've got reading and math scores up, attendance at almost 100 percent, all parents turning out for report card pickup day. This is a school of choice, a school of champions. And congratulations, by the way, to the fifth and sixth grade soccer team for winning the city title. But you're winning an even more important title in my mind by proving that our city public schools can work.

Now, if I were listening to this and I were in the same state of mind I was in before I became a convert, I would say, "Well, if the city of Chicago can put all this money into building new schools, why can't everybody?" I'll tell you why. Ask the mayor. There's a limit, even in these good economic times with these very low interest rates, in how much money that the markets will let any city borrow to build school buildings. There is also a limit to how much the taxpayers can pay, as Senator Carol Moseley-Braun said.

This is a national priority. I went to a school in Florida in a fairly modest-size community, where the kids in the school building were also going to school in 17 house trailers out back. Since last year, we've got the largest number of children in our schools in the history of America. This is a problem not just in big cities; it's a problem in a lot of smaller towns and communities across this country.

One-third of all of our schools need major repairs. More than half have major building problems. Nearly half don't have the wiring systems necessary to support my goal of hooking up every classroom to the Internet. Think of that. How bizarre is that? You have all these high-tech companies wanting to give you computers, hook you up to the Internet—I'm sorry, the wiring in the schools won't let us take our kids into the 21st century. The American Society of Civil Engineers gave our schools an F in its infrastructure report card this year, worst than in roads, bridges, mass transit, and every other category of investment.

Last week Congress passed billions of dollars for new roads, new bridges, and other public works. I believe that we should have a good road program. I believe that unsafe bridges

should be repaired. I believe that the city streets ought to be in good shape. I believe that mass transit should be adequately funded. But I believe none of that will matter very much if we let the education system come crumbling down around our children.

I want these kids to be able to get on the subway in New York or the Dan Ryan Expressway in Chicago and be able to afford the ticket or afford a car and be going to a job where they can earn a good living because they've got a good education. You can't just have one kind of investment.

Now, the proposal in our balanced budget plan to help the schools do construction provides tax incentives to help communities modernize and build more than 5,000 schools. Our children deserve schools they can be proud of.

I want to help promote programs like after-school programs. We have funds for that. I have a program to reduce class size in the early grades all over the country and help schools hire teachers to do that. But if we pass the funds to provide help for the schools to stay open late, to tutor the kids, to feed the kids, do whatever needs to be done, and if we provide funds for more teachers to help get the class size down, you still have to have good classes in good buildings that are safe and clean, where there are good learning environments, and they are at least adequately organized so they can be part of the information superhighway. This is an important thing.

The work that is being done by your school leaders here, we can't do. Eighty percent of the schools in Chicago now, according to the mayor, are following the school uniform policy, which you know I love. I thought those kids looked great in their uniforms today. And I know—and the children that can't afford it, you have to find help to give them that. If you're going to have uniform policy, it's got to embrace all children.

But that's a decision that a local district has to make. The President can tell you how to do it legally and help support it morally, but that's a decision you have to make. You know, which schools should be open how many hours a day, what kind of tutoring programs you have, what you do with the ROTC program, that's a decision you've got to make here. How these children learn to speak English, if English is not their first language—I want to thank one of the students, Rosalia Delgado, who took me around this morning—how she learned to speak English—that's a decision you have to make.

But it is in the national interest to know that we have decent infrastructure for our schools, just as much as our national future depends upon a decent network of highways and a decent investment in mass transit. That is the idea that we have to convince the Congress on.

And when I can show people that, look what they're doing in Chicago; all they want us to do is to help, to create a framework in which they can have more success and a framework in which every other school in America can have the kind of success I saw here at Rachel Carson, I think we will have gone a long way.

So I came here to send that message out, and I ask you to help me send that message out and give your Members of Congress and the United States Senate a pat on the back for leading the way.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. in the school courtyard. In his remarks, he referred to Rita Nicky, first grade teacher, who introduced the President; Catherine Garza, third grade teacher; 16th Ward Alderman Shirley A. Coleman; 40th Ward Alderman Patrick J. O'Connor; 14th Ward Alderman Edward M. Burke; State Senator Arthur L. Berman; Paul Vallas, chief executive officer, and Gery J. Chico, president, reform board of trustees, Chicago public schools; and Mayor Richard M. Daley. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the United States-France Civil Aviation Agreement
April 8, 1998

I am pleased that the United States has reached an agreement with France significantly increasing air service between our countries. The U.S.-France aviation market is our third largest in Europe. Until today, it was also our largest aviation market not governed by a bilateral agreement. This agreement will eliminate all restrictions on airline operations between the United States and France in 5 years. It will allow many more flights between our two countries and give U.S. airlines extensive new rights that will enhance their capacity to serve this market. This increased competition means more choice for American business travelers and tourists alike.

This agreement continues my efforts to open the world's markets in areas where American companies are most competitive. We have already concluded important aviation agreements with Japan, Germany, Canada, and many other nations. These agreements are part of our strategy to replace restrictions with opportunities and move international aviation into a 21st century where consumers, not governments, determine how passenger and cargo needs are served.

I want to thank Secretaries Albright and Slater and the negotiators at the Departments of State and Transportation for their sustained efforts in reaching this agreement.

Remarks at the Andrew W. Mellon Dinner
April 8, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Laughlin. Mr. Powell, Mr. Smith, members of the Board of Trustees, members of Congress and our administration, members of the Mellon family, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for Hillary and me to be here tonight to honor this great legacy of Andrew Mellon and to honor all of you who do so much to carry on that legacy.

I first came to the National Gallery over 30 years ago when I was a college student at Georgetown. Over the years, I've come back as often as I could. When I came here from time to time as Governor of my home State, I confess that on occasion I sneaked out of the meetings of the Governors' Association and came to the National Gallery, where there was less noise and more light. [*Laughter*] Hillary and I have been privileged to visit here in the last few years to tour the Vermeer and Picasso exhibitions, among others.

It's hard to believe now that the National Gallery is 61 years old, founded when our country was in the grip of the Great Depression and the world was slipping inexorably toward World War II. But Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon knew that our Nation's work lay, even then, not simply in our monetary strength or our military power but in the value of our ideas, the creativity of our spirit, the power of our common culture. So he and a group of passionate men and women gave this great gift to the Nation and established the tradition of partnership that endures down to the very day.

There is no question that Paul Mellon carries on this tradition. His generosity has helped to invigorate and sustain our entire Nation's cultural and artistic institutions. Having already won the National Medal of Arts in 1985, last fall he was awarded the National Medal for the Humanities, which Robert Smith kindly accepted for him.

So tonight I want to thank him again and all the members of his family who have participated in giving other Americans, who could never have afforded these things on their own, access to this wonderful world.

When President Roosevelt dedicated the National Gallery, he said, "The dedication of this gallery to a living past and to a greater and more richly living future is the measure of the earnestness of our intention that the freedom of the human spirit shall go on."

Today, at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium, it falls to us to continue

in that great tradition. Hillary and I have launched the White House Millennium Program to encourage all Americans to honor our living past, with all its treasures, and to imagine our even more richly living future, with the creations and the discoveries yet to come.

I hope that all of you will find ways to join us in your homes, wherever you're from, in the coming months and years as we celebrate and commemorate the new millennium. But most of all, tonight I just want to thank you on behalf of a grateful nation for your dedication and your commitment to our common cultural and artistic life.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. in the West Building at the National Gallery of Art. In his remarks, he referred to Alexander Mellon Laughlin, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Earl A. Powell III, Director, Robert H. Smith, President, and Paul Mellon, Honorary Trustee, National Gallery of Art.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Tobacco in Carrollton, Kentucky
April 9, 1998

The President. Well, good morning, everybody. The first thing I'd like to do is thank Mr. Lyons for hosting us, and thank all of you for being here. I thank the members of the panel, and also I'd also like to thank Governor Patton and Senator Ford and Congressman Baesler for being here and riding down with me from the airport. And I thank Lieutenant Governor Henry, your State Auditor Edward Hatchett, Senate President Saunders, Senator Blevins, Speaker Richards. And I want to thank County Judge McMurry and Mayor Welty, who came to meet me as well. And again, I'd like to thank Melvin and Brett Lyons for hosting us here. And I thank all of you for being here on the panel.

I know Secretary Glickman has already been down this way and been doing some work, but I'd like to make a few comments about where we are now in the evolution of this tobacco legislation. The first thing I'd like to do is to say a special word of appreciation to Wendell Ford. His work on the tobacco bill that's now moving through the Senate I think has been very valuable in trying to provide clear and certain protection to tobacco farmers, to warehouses, to communities without compromising our long-term goal of reducing teen smoking. And I really want to say that he's been talking to me about this for years. He and Congressman Baesler have done a very good job of pushing your interests there in a way that is consistent with what we're trying to do in reducing teen smoking.

I also ought to say that while I'm here, Governor, I think it's only fitting that I begin these remarks by congratulating the University of Kentucky for winning the basketball tournament. As you know, Hillary and I were in Africa and I was getting up at amazing hours in the morning to watch these games. I had to watch the championship game on a tape, but that was really good.

Let me also say to those of you who are here and to the many thousands of people outside this warehouse that are listening to us or will be watching this, I am well aware that the people who farm tobacco and who work in this whole area have difficult jobs. I know that it's family work, small farms, hand work, that there was a flood in '97 and, the year before, blue mold which made the work more difficult, and that there is a lot of uncertainty now among people in this community, as I saw up and down the road all the way in here.

Last year, a settlement was announced between the tobacco companies and the State attorneys general to try to settle all their lawsuits with a set of agreements which would dramatically reduce teen smoking and provide some reimbursement to the State governments and to the Federal Government for the public health. But when that settlement was announced, there was absolutely nothing in there that would protect farmers in the event the overall volume of tobacco sales went down. And so, when I announced my reaction to their proposed settlement and what kind of legislation

I would support in the Congress, I said that we had forgotten that and that tobacco farmers deserve protection and that I would not sign legislation that didn't have it in there. And I want to reaffirm that to you today.

Yesterday, some tobacco executives indicated that they were going to withdraw from the discussions with the Congress about legislation, but, despite that, I want to tell you that I believe there's still a good chance we can get comprehensive legislation this year that will not leave the farmers behind. And again I want to say to them, we have no interest, whatever, in putting the tobacco companies out of business. I just want to get them out of the business of selling tobacco to children.

And I think it's important—I think every American recognizes that the tobacco farmers have not done anything wrong. You grow a legal crop, you're not doing the marketing of the tobacco to children, and you're doing your part as citizens. So what I want to hear from you today is about what you have to say to me that you want me and every member of our administration, every Member of Congress, and the country to know about this issue and where we go.

But let me just clearly state again what my concern is. We know that even though it's against the law in every State, 3,000 children a day start smoking and 1,000 of them will have their lives shortened because of it. That's my concern, overwhelmingly. But I do not want to do anything in dealing with that concern which will not honestly take account of the communities and the people and the families that are involved in tobacco farming.

It seems to me that you have a big interest in actually seeing legislation enacted as soon as possible if it provides adequate protection for the farmers because then we'll be helping the children, which I know you all want to do anyway, and we'll be doing it under terms where you'll actually have some certainty there, where you'll actually know what is going to happen, and you'll feel some level of security. And if the structure of Senator Ford's proposal prevails, then it would, as I understand it, would be consistent with the wishes of over 97 percent of the farmers in this area which voted in the referendum that's required every 3 years to keep the tobacco program intact.

So I've tried to get prepared, and I got an earful on the way down here, as I always do, from Wendell and Scotty and Paul, and I thank them for that. So I'd rather spend the rest of the time just listening to you. And I'd like to ask our host to open and maybe explain—keep in mind, you've got several members of the national press here, too, and they will be reporting this to the country as a whole. And maybe, Mr. Lyons, it would be helpful if you could just very briefly explain what goes on in this warehouse, as if none of us knew anything about it, and how that fits with the tobacco farmers and what your concerns are with the legislation now pending in Congress.

There's a microphone. I think we can turn it up so you can speak into it. If you want to sit, you can; if you want to stand, you can. Do whatever makes you feel most comfortable.

[*Melvin Lyons, owner of the warehouse, thanked the President and gave a brief description of the warehouse and the process for moving tobacco from farms to manufacturers.*]

The President. I want to ask Mr. Kuegel to talk next, but I want to point out, and we'll get into it because this is one of the things that's important for the American people to understand why we need the kind of approach that Senator Ford has recommended, that Mr. Baesler has a bill on in the House of Representatives.

You say that this will bring the farmers approximately $5,000 an acre.

Mr. Lyons. Approximately.

The President. And what will be the net income to the farmer out of that $5,000?

Mr. Lyons. It would vary. Some people are more efficient than others—probably $2,000, $2,500.

The President. Now, Mr. Kuegel, you're the president of the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative, and yet you've also been involved with the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. So why don't you just comment—and bring that microphone over closer to you—why don't you tell us a little bit about the economics of tobacco, what you're trying to do, and how you believe that we can vigorously pursue this Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and protect the interests of people whom you are elected to represent.

[*Rod Kuegel described efforts to work with health groups to find common ground and described how Senator Ford's "Leaf Act" would advance agricultural and economic development*

in Carrollton and protect the farmers from the tobacco companies.]

The President. And basically, it protects you by preserving the structure of the program you now have, so that when the co-op buys the tobacco, the farmers get the income immediately. The co-op holds the tobacco in storage until market conditions support the release of tobacco, its sale at an acceptable market price. Isn't that right?

[*Mr. Kuegel concurred with the President's summary and expressed concern about some of the other proposals in Congress.*]

The President. Well, based on what I understand—and I agree with you about that—I want to just make sure everyone understands this—the way the Ford bill works—and Wendell, if I make a mistake, pipe in here——

Senator Ford. You can bet on it. [*Laughter*]

The President. Poor, shy man. [*Laughter*]

The bill offers an up-front, generous buy-out proposal to people who want to get out, and the assumption is that there will be some older people or others who want to get out, and that would, therefore, reduce the total number of producers. Then it keeps the program in place. Then, if at some future date the demand goes even below that, there are substantial transition payments and assistance payments offered to communities, warehouses, and farmers.

And along the way, there are the kind of education and training benefits offered that we provide, for example, to people that are displaced when there are trade changes, changes in the American economy caused by trading flows that may benefit the overall economy but disadvantage people, so we owe them an extra bit of help to get started.

And I think there are two points to make here to those who would be skeptical about the approach that is being advocated. The first and the most important one is the one you've already said: At least to date, no one has figured out how to tell a tobacco farmer with a straight face that you should produce another crop and we will facilitate you getting into alternative crop production. The average farm in Kentucky is how big? Four acres, five acres?

Mr. Kuegel. Average tobacco production.

The President. Tobacco production; not farm, but tobacco production. There is no known crop with the same income per acre. So if you were going to pay somebody to transition, one of the things you'd have to do is buy them all a whole lot more land. And I think that's a very important point to make.

The second point that needs to be made is, if you dismantle this program, you would not end the production of tobacco. You would end the ability of all these family farmers to produce tobacco, and you would probably create a structure more like what you see in some parts of California, where the ultimate processor in California, food processor—in this case the processor would be the cigarette companies—would control the farming, and everybody would be a hired hand. And the income would all flow up except for a salary.

Isn't that basically your conclusion of what would happen?

Mr. Kuegel. I don't think there is any question that's what would happen. And it would be inevitable with Senator Lugar's bill if it does away with our tobacco program.

The President. So I think it's very important for the Members of the Congress, the members of the press, and people out in the country to understand that we don't want to be guilty of the law of unintended consequences here. What we're trying to do is improve the public health, cut teen smoking, get enough money into this program to deal with some of the larger health consequences in our society that have already developed. But we need to think a long time before we break down the structure that you see from the Cincinnati airport—which is in Kentucky—all the way driving here. And I think it's very, very important because I think this is a not very well-understood point.

I'd like to call on Amy Barkley next who is the director of the Coalition for Health and Agricultural Development and involves public advocates actually working with farmers to address both the health and the economic issues. Amy, would you like to say anything about what we're discussing here?

[*Ms. Barkley thanked the President and stated that health advocates had supported the tobacco program because they did not want tobacco farmers to become employees of tobacco companies. She said that while she was a firm supporter of stopping teen smoking, she believed both goals should be reconciled to protect both the health of our youth and the future of the tobacco farmer.*]

The President. Let me ask you a question that I didn't ask Rod, and maybe anybody can feel free to comment. One of the things that occurs to me is, if we allow this program to lapse—let's suppose we have some version of the McCain bill. Now, the fight is going on now in Washington with tobacco companies as they say that it raises a lot more money from them than we had estimated. They say it will raise the price of cigarettes even more than we had estimated. They say it will cut consumption more than we had estimated. Therefore, they say they will be at great risk, and it's inconsistent with the original agreement.

And so we've got to work through all that. But one of the things that—the provisions for the tobacco farmers get almost no notice, but it occurs to me that if we were to abolish the program altogether, give everybody some sort of a cash payment for their allocation, and then just abolish the program, then what you think would happen I think would happen—first of all, that there would be no restrictions on production. And what I think would likely happen is there would be more tobacco grown at a lower price, which would make it uneconomical for you so the companies would take it over directly.

But from the point of view of our public health objective, if more tobacco is grown at a lower price, that undermines our desire to make a pack of cigarettes high enough in price that it will be part of what discourages children from smoking.

It seems to me that that's the public health angle here that someone like you, Amy—we need this highlighted from a public health point of view so that people in the vast, vast majority of our country that don't know anything about tobacco farming, don't have a dog in this hunt, and don't understand it, and don't want to make sure we're not doing something funny here, they need to understand that, ironically, if we dismantle this program, we might undermine the goals of reducing teen smoking.

I'd like to call on Mattie Mack now to talk a little bit about this from the point of view of an individual farmer. She's had an interesting family history on her farm, and I think I'll let her tell it to you, especially since we've apparently gotten her a local reporter in here. I hope we have. [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Mack stated that tobacco farmers should not be penalized because children smoke and suggested that parents must play a greater role in preventing their children from smoking. She described her life as a tobacco farmer, the economic struggles and benefits, and how she had raised her own 4 children and 38 foster children on the farm, concluding that tobacco had made some good things possible.*]

The President. You guys didn't oversell her. [*Laughter*] It was just like you said it would be.

Let me call next on Karen Armstrong Cummings, because she's the managing director of the Commodity Growers Cooperative, which develops markets for family farm products. And they're interested in preserving the future of small farms.

So how are we going to preserve the small farms and do something about teen smoking? What options are there?

Could you give the microphone back, Rod?

[*Ms. Cummings described her participation in the Agriculture Department's National Commission on Small Farms, which developed over 140 recommendations to get USDA's policies focused on the family farm, and said that the tobacco program was essential to the continued existence of family farms in the Southeast.*]

The President. Thank you. This is really not exactly the time or place for this, but if you get beyond tobacco and you look at other small farm issues, the reason this program has worked for small farmers is that you've had—first of all, you've had an allocation system which keeps the price within some bonds, although it varies still quite a bit as all of you know, depending on weather conditions and other things.

And because you've got this co-op system that really works to give the farmer cash money on the front end, even if the big tobacco companies, cigarette companies don't pay you right away, the co-op will. And I think we really need to look at this again. It's off the subject we're here to meet about today, but before I leave office in 2001, I really hope that we will have been able to set up an alternative framework of policies that will enable family farmers who live in places where this is not even an optional crop, where they've got to do something else, and where they're doing what most tobacco farmers do, they have some income from off

the farm and some income from on the farm to be able to continue to do that.

The whole theory behind this whole going to a completely free market in agriculture was that you would get more efficient production. But the truth is the family farmers that have been put out of business, by and large, have not been put out of business from inefficiency of production; they have been put out of business because they didn't have enough cash to stand the bad years. At least that is my belief. That is what I think based on my experience in a totally different agricultural environment.

[*Ms. Cummings stated that the whole issue of access to capital and the lending system needed to be reviewed, and noted that her organization recommended a Presidential commission to look at market concentrations in the agricultural sector.*]

The President. If you look at how you sell cattle or, especially, how increasingly hog operations are going and you compare that to how the tobacco co-op works as a buyer of last resort, so that the cash is transferred to the farmer immediately and someone else basically is holding the crop until it can be sold and paying the price of holding the crop—I mean, it gives you some idea of what—it would be good if we could figure out a way to do.

Now, it's very different with live animals you still have to feed, you still have to—they don't warehouse too well, and you still have to feed them. So I don't—none of these issues are simple. If they were simple, we wouldn't have to worry about them. But I do think you made a good point.

And I want to get back to the subject at hand, but I promise you I'll spend some time on this because it's very important to me to see that we don't lose every small farmer in America just because of the structure of the money economy, the finance economy, as opposed to the efficiency of the operation. I'm not interested in protecting any inefficient operators who can't compete, but I have seen enough crops come in now over the course of my life in enough different areas to believe that it's more the way the money economy is structured and the way the products are brought to market than the efficiency of the farmer that's changed the structure of farming.

The reason you've got all these small farmers here is you've got the allocation, the limited production, and the cooperative buyer. I believe that.

Mr. Sprague, do you want to go next? You're the president of the Kentucky Farm Bureau, and I understand you're a fifth generation farmer. And you have 3,000 acres of crop; that makes you a big tobacco farmer—it makes you a small rice farmer in Arkansas and a big tobacco farmer in Kentucky. [*Laughter*]

[*Bill Sprague stated that tobacco generated $1 billion worth of income for Kentucky farmers and 3 or 4 times that much as it moved through the economy. He indicated that the present situation regarding tobacco created uncertainty in the whole tobacco industry and said that the Nation needed a policy at the national level that would give stability to the industry.*]

The President. Let me, if I could—and I would invite—I know I've got two more panelists I want to call on, and I would invite any of you to kick in. You have stated a sort of summary of where you are and where you think the farmers are so well, I think it might be worthwhile to go back to the beginning here.

Let's remember how this whole thing came up. There were two things going on. First of all, the Federal Food and Drug Administration opened an inquiry and found, as a factual matter, that there was an effort made to market tobacco products to young people, that it was not only against the law but it was likely to become more addictive to them if kids started smoking when they were young rather than if they started after they were adults when they might use it more in moderation and all that, and that the health consequences were considerable. That was the finding.

Simultaneously, they had a number of States that filed suits against the tobacco companies, claiming that they had marketed cigarettes to children in violation of the law all these years, and that that had led to not only injury to the individuals, but vast costs to the States through their medical programs. And then there were the private lawsuits, the people that got lung cancer and all.

And all these things came together, and the tobacco companies and basically the State attorneys general and the representatives of the private plaintiffs came up with their proposed settlement in which they agreed, among other things, to pay more money to defray some of the health care costs, to run up the price of

cigarettes some to make it less attractive, and to reduce—change their advertising practices.

But in order to get all that done comprehensively, they had to pass a bill through Congress, because they also have to deal with the Federal Food and Drug Administration program. So now we're in a situation where, as you pointed out, there are lots of different agendas here and lots of different things going on.

I do believe, however, that there is a bipartisan majority of people in the Congress in both Houses, in both parties, who honestly just want to do as much as they reasonably can to reduce smoking by young people as quickly as they reasonably can, in a way that does not put the tobacco companies out of business and, even more important to most of us, is not really unduly unfair to you.

So what you're saying to me is that right now the uncertainty is the worse enemy you have and what we need is to get this thing done in Congress this year, do it in a way that achieves our goal of driving down teen smoking as much as we can, as fast as we can, and let you know what the rules are.

Now, let me ask you just specifically—I mean, I assume you believe this, but you didn't say it explicitly—it seems to me that the greatest balance of certainty for the farmers in our efforts to reduce teen smoking is in some version of what Senator Ford has proposed. That is, if you assume that—let's just assume that through whatever means the American Medical Association, for example, says that because there are so many kids out there more or less on their own, that the advertising has a bigger impact on inducing kids to start smoking even than peer pressure does. So if you assume all that, then it seems to me the best proposal is something like—something that would offer a buyout that is generous and fair and adequate to people that want to get out because there is no easy substitution, as all of you have said.

Then for all those that don't get out—because you assume that if all the kids start—if you cut teen smoking in half, then, within some number of years, the aggregate demand for tobacco in America will go down. So some people get out, and you pay them a legitimate price to get out; then the other people who are still in operate under a program that controls production and gives the family farmers a chance to survive. That's basically what Wendell wants to do.

And in addition to that, since maybe there won't be enough people get out for the market reduction—we don't know that—it also provides a structure within which you get aid to warehouses, aid to communities, and aid to individuals for continuing education and training, as I've said, just the same way we would with people that are dislocated from trade. If we pass something like that, is that the best thing to do? I mean, is that basically what you would recommend that we do?

[*Mr. Sprague said that he believed so, but that about half the tobacco grown was for export and that efforts to reduce exports would be detrimental to farmers. He indicated he would like to see the exports continue.*]

The President. Okay. Marissa, would you like to talk a little bit about how you view this issue?

[*Marissa Vaught, whose grandmother died of cancer, expressed her opposition to youth smoking but said raising taxes on cigarettes would make it harder for people from Kentucky to put food on the table.*]

The President. What do you think the most effective—I should say that Marissa is, I think, a junior at Carroll County High School; is that right? What do you think the most effective thing we could do would be to reduce teen smoking? Let me just say, there are lots of people who think the most effective thing you could do is just make cigarettes a lot more expensive. There are other people who think the most effective thing you can do is to stop the cigarette companies from doing any advertising that could be specifically or extra appealing to young people. Then there are people who think that there is nothing you can do except to try to get the parents and the religious leaders and the community leaders to try to teach kids not to do it in the first place.

What is your sense of what the most effective thing that we could do to discourage your peers from beginning to smoke?

[*Ms. Vaught suggested it would be helpful to show the positive side of not smoking, rather than to stress punishment.*]

The President. Do you believe that most teenagers actually do know and believe that it is dangerous?

Ms. Vaught. I do believe that they actually do. But sometimes people really don't care.

The President. When you're 16 you think you're going to live forever, don't you?

Ms. Vaught. Exactly. They don't know——

The President. I did. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Vaught. ——that it's going to hit you. Consequences are hard, and they do come fast and slow. They think they're going to live forever, and I'm going to die anyway. But it's how you die that is important. I think that your health and safety is important, especially on teens.

The President. So you think if we could—that's what Bill said. He said, if his daddy gave him $1,000 if he didn't smoke by the time he was 21——

Ms. Vaught. Yes, that's positive incentive.

The President. So you think a positive—some sort of positive incentive program would be effective?

Ms. Vaught. Exactly. I do think that. It worked for you, obviously. It works for teens.

The President. Thank you.

Dr. William Goatley is the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Eminence, Kentucky. I thought we ought to give him a chance to say whether he thinks the religious community should have any role in this whole issue.

Doctor?

[*Dr. Goatley said that tobacco was a way of life, providing a livelihood for people in Kentucky, and that part of the solution had to be an alternative livelihood. He said the President should continue his crusade against youth smoking.*]

The President. Thank you very much. That was a very moving statement to me. No one knows exactly why, but, for whatever reason, we know that teen smoking has, in fact, been on the rise. And the overwhelming—I say again, we can't lose sight of the big issue; the overwhelming evidence is that 3,000 children begin to smoke every day, and 1,000 of them will have their life shortened because of it, and that the rest of us as taxpayers will pay enormously for them. But the most important cost is human, not economic.

And the question is whether we can pursue a reasonable course to deal with that and deal with the human reality of the livelihood and the life and the structure of life that all these fine people have been talking around the table and have described today.

I think the answer is yes. And as I said, I think, ironically, trying to preserve the structure will actually—since no one suggested tobacco is not a legal crop and that adults should not be free to buy it, that that is not a position advocated by anybody—nobody's advocating prohibition here—ironically, it seems to me, that our objectives in reducing teen smoking by making it both more expensive and less attractive in other ways, and dealing with the advertising is actually furthered by preserving this program because it will reduce production and keep the price up.

If you abolish the program, you put a lot of these folks out of business, but you will not reduce production. You'll probably increase production, lower the price of tobacco and, therefore, make cigarettes cheaper, notwithstanding whatever we do with the tax or a voluntary payment or whatever we wind up calling it when Congress acts.

So anyway, I thank you for that. Secretary Glickman, would you like to say anything?

[*Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman described his visits to Kentucky and efforts underway to deal with the situation, saying that he was considering economic development options rather than alternative crop programs as a significant part of the solution.*]

The President. Let me just make one other request of all of you. I will certainly try to do what you've asked me to do; that is, I'm going to do my dead-level best to get the legislation passed this year that will not only dramatically reduce teen smoking, but will provide some certainty to you and some legitimate protection for the tobacco farmers and the warehouses and their communities. So I will try to do that.

But let me ask you to do something, because you've really piqued my interest here, both what our pastor said and what Marissa said, what you said, Bill, what you said, Mattie, about parents' responsibility. I have spent quite a bit of time with young people's groups, the youth organizations all over the country, from New York City to small towns in California, of young people who are organized to try to get their peers not to smoke and who also often go from store to store to store to test whether the sellers of cigarettes are actually even making modest efforts to do anything about it.

And I respect that because I think it's wrong to put all the responsibility here on the manufacturers. It's not like these children and their parents and their families and their schools and their churches are just ciphers that have no will, have no knowledge, have no nothing. I mean, they get up every day and go through life, too. And I wish you would give some thought to—as a practical matter, I don't know that the Government could offer every 18-year-old $1,000 on their 18th birthday if they could prove they never smoked a cigarette, but there may be some other things we could do in the area of getting young people to assume more responsibility and providing some rewards and doing some things that we haven't thought.

And Marissa, the other thing, we may not have been as creative about that whole element of this as we can be, and I'd be willing to think about that.

Ms. Vaught. There is a teacher who talked to me about this, and he said maybe college scholarships for nonsmokers, maybe a non-smoking scholarship for students who happen to do well in school and are non-smokers.

The President. We'll look at that. We'll figure out what the cost of that would be. You may be right; it may be cheaper than some of the other stuff we're doing. [*Laughter*] I'll do that, I'll look into that.

You were great all of you. Thank you very much. Let's give them a hand. Weren't they great? [*Applause*] Very impressive. Thanks.

NOTE: The discussion began at 11:08 a.m. at the Kentuckiana Warehouse. In his remarks, the President referred to Gov. Paul E. Patton and Lt. Gov. Stephen L. Henry of Kentucky; State Auditor Edward B. Hatchett, Jr.; Senator Larry Saunders, president, and Senator Walter Blevins, Jr., president pro tempore, Kentucky Senate; Representative Jody Richards, speaker, Kentucky House of Representatives; Gene McMurry, Carroll County judge; Mayor Bill Welty of Carrollton; and Melvin and Brett Lyons, owners, Kentuckiana Warehouse.

Remarks at Carroll County High School in Carrollton

April 9, 1998

Thank you very much. Now, Jackie was a little nervous before she came up, but I think she did a great job, don't you? [*Applause*] She mentioned your other two classmates, Marissa and Josh, who were over at the other meeting in the warehouse, and they were also very, very good, and you could have been very proud of them.

I could have done without Jackie reminding me that Kentucky beat Arkansas not once, not twice, but 3 times this year. But I cheered for you anyway in the tournament. [*Laughter*]

And let me say, I'm delighted to be here with my good friends Governor Patton and Senator Ford, and I thank them for their leadership for you and for all of Kentucky. I thank Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman for coming down here with me today, and for being here last week and for his tireless work for the farmers of America.

I thank Congressman Scotty Baesler for flying down here with me today and also bending my ear about the needs of farmers and the communities; and Lieutenant Governor Henry; your auditor, Edward Hatchett; Senator Saunders; Senator Blevins; Speaker Jody Richards and Mayor Welty and Judge McCurry. I thank all of them for being here with me.

I thank your superintendent and your principal for welcoming me to your school. And I'd also like to thank the people, in addition to the students who were mentioned, who met with me over at the tobacco warehouse a few moments ago to discuss both this community's desire to prevent teenagers from smoking and to preserve the way of life for the tobacco farmers and their families. And I'd just like to acknowledge them—they're over here—Melvin Lyons, the owner of the Kentuckiana Tobacco Warehouse; Rod Kuegel, the president of the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative; Amy Barkley, the director of the Coalition for Health and Agricultural Development; Mattie Mack, a tobacco farmer who has raised 4 children and 38 foster children on her tobacco farm; Bill Sprague, the president of the Kentucky Farm

Bureau; Dr. Wilbert Goatley, the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Eminence, Kentucky; and Marissa, Josh—you all stand up, all of you. Thank you very much for being here for us today. Thank you.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to the vice chairman of Humana, David Jones, who was part of the Presidents' Summit on Citizen Service last April in Philadelphia and has committed $2 million and 50,000 community service hours to help stop tobacco use by children. Thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I get into my speech, I need to say a few words about the terrible losses suffered by our neighbors in Alabama and Georgia as a result of the tornadoes that swept through there last night. If you've been looking at the television, you've seen how awful it has been. Today I am declaring a major disaster in three Alabama counties, Jefferson, St. Clair, and Tuscaloosa; adding to the number of counties already declared in the State of Georgia; and ordering more Federal aid to those areas. I have spoken to our FEMA director, James Lee Witt, and I've asked Mr. Witt and our Vice President, Al Gore, to go down to Alabama and Georgia tomorrow to look at the damage.

But if you have been seeing it on television, it's quite amazing, and I hope you'll all say a prayer for those folks tonight and join with them in spirit as they begin to rebuild.

Speaking of rebuilding, it's good to see how you have recovered from the flood of '97, when Eagle Creek and the Kentucky River were spilling out all over this county. It's a great moment of resilience for Kentucky and a golden moment for our country. Communities all across America are thriving. We have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment rate in 25 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest rate of homeownership in the entire history of America. We have the lowest crime rate in 24 years, and crime has gone down 5 years in a row for the first time since the 1950's, when even I was younger than most of you in this audience. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years. Things are going in a good direction in this country.

We've tried to open the doors of college to all Americans. Now, all of you students, your families can get a $1,500-a-year tax credit for the first 2 years of college tuition and tax credits for the junior and senior year, for graduate school, for adults who have to go back to school; a better student loan program; more work-study grants; more Pell grants.

I think it's really possible for us to say to every young person in America, for the first time in the history of this country if you will work hard and make your grades and you want to go to college, money should now not keep you from going. We have opened the doors of college to all Americans.

I understand that the chemical and steel industries here in Carroll County are booming and virtually guaranteeing jobs to students who are involved in your remarkable work-study program and getting the essential math, science, and technical skills you need.

Today, as all of you know, I came here to talk about the urgent national need to deal with the problem of more and more of our young people beginning to smoke, even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to minors in every State in the country, and to talk about how that could impact the future of tobacco: tobacco farmers and tobacco communities.

I know there has been a lot of discussion in this area and, indeed, all over Kentucky about what this tobacco legislation in Congress involves and where we are in the process. So today I came here, first, to listen to the concerns of the people that I introduced over there who were trying to speak in a way for all of you and, second, to tell you where I think we're going with this.

But let me begin by making three points. First, we have a historic opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation this year which both contains the elements necessary to reduce teen smoking in America and provides adequate protection for tobacco communities. And I'm going to do everything I can to put politics aside and pass legislation that will achieve that objective.

Second, the legislation we seek is not about politics or money or Senator Ford seeking revenge on the tobacco industry. I don't want to put the tobacco companies out of business. I do want to put them out of the business of selling cigarettes to teenagers.

Third, it is important not to abandon the tobacco farmers, the warehouses, the communities, who have not done anything wrong, who have not marketed cigarettes to teenagers, who have worked hard to grow and sell a legal crop and been good, honest, taxpaying citizens. I will not support any legislation in this area that does

not contain adequate protection for your farmers and your communities.

You know, when the flood waters were rising out of control here, not only you but all of your fellow citizens all across America just took it as a given that we had a national responsibility to help you deal with the flood and its aftermath and get back to normal.

When the terrible earthquake hit California, and you saw pictures of our representatives going to California to try to help those folks restore normal life and spending a lot of money to rebuild their highways and rebuild one great university out there, I'll bet you hardly anybody in Kentucky resented the fact that the National Government was helping them.

When the Mississippi River overflowed its banks a few years ago and we had a 500-year flood, most people in Kentucky, I bet anything, did not object to the work we did to try to help the people in Iowa and Missouri.

Last year, when that town in North Dakota, that beautiful little town, was both flooded and burned at the same time, I bet all of us were pulling for the mayor up there and the citizens and glad to help.

When we have big economic upheavals, we must do the same thing. So if we succeed in reducing—here's the bottom line—if we succeed in reducing teen smoking, then sooner or later we will reduce the overall demand for tobacco. Can we do that and still do right by the families who grow tobacco, by the warehouses, by the communities? I think the answer to that is yes. And that's what the legislation has to do, so let me describe it, because otherwise, you can't say, "Oh, I'm for reducing teen smoking, but I don't want you to do anything about it."

By definition, if you reduce teen smoking, the volume will go down. Let's not pretend, just because I'm in Kentucky, that this is an easy problem. There's no point in pretending something is true that isn't. If you reduce teenage smoking, as is the right thing to do morally and from a health point of view and the law requires, it will reduce, sooner or later, the overall volume of tobacco required. How can you do that and be fair to the tobacco farmers and their communities? That is the issue here.

Now, I think we can do it. But first of all, you have to decide if you think it's important. Everybody says it, but do you believe that? Just last week, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta released a disturbing report that found that more than 40 percent of American teenagers now smoke or chew tobacco. Now, the law says that tobacco companies can't advertise tobacco products on television or radio, but the ads are everywhere else, in magazines, sport arenas, billboards, toy race cars, something not many adults buy. Not long ago, a national survey showed more young children recognized Joe Camel than Mickey Mouse. Today and every day, about 3,000 young people begin to smoke, and the evidence is conclusive that 1,000 of the 3,000 will have their lives shortened as a result.

Now, one of the things that has poisoned the political atmosphere is that the tobacco companies—nobody has any animosity against the farmers—but for years and years and years, the companies denied that they were marketing to children until all these lawsuits were filed and the information was drug out. And now every month, there's a new set of information which shows that not only were they knowingly advertising in a way that was especially appealing to children but that there were direct-marketing campaigns designed to get people involved before they were 18 to keep the number of cigarette smokers high. Now, that has come out. It wasn't volunteered; it wasn't told; it's been pulled out. And that has created this climate that exists in Washington and has resulted in all these lawsuits being filed.

What I want to do is to say, look, what's past is past, but what we want to do is to do all the things necessary to stop advertising and marketing tobacco to kids; to do things that will actually reduce teen smoking so more of you will live longer, better, healthier lives; and to do it in a way that protects the tobacco farmers and the communities, and again I say, doesn't put the tobacco companies out of business, just gets them out of the business of selling to children.

Now, last week, a key Senate committee on which Senator Ford sits approved by 19 to 1 a bill sponsored by John McCain, a Republican, and Senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina, a Democrat, that we believe would cut teen smoking by half over the next decade. And thanks to Senator Ford's leadership, it contained provisions which will do what I said we have to do and also protects tobacco farmers and their communities. It recognizes that a lot of what people have been saying to tobacco farmers for years is just unrealistic, "Well, why don't

you just go grow some other crop on the land?" There is no other crop that has anything like the same return per acre that tobacco does, and most tobacco farmers have small plots of tobacco, earning quite a high yield per acre.

What does it do? It offers, first of all, a very generous buyout for people that want to stop producing now—very generous—so that they can have more than enough money to spend the investment doing something else to generate income.

Secondly, it says that if, over time, there is further reduction in demand, it provides more funds to help warehouses, communities, and provide very generous education benefits to people who are involved in the work.

And the third thing it does is to preserve the existing program for people who stay in it so that there will finally be some certainty instead of all the uncertainty that's been hanging over the families and communities like this one for so many years. The president of your State farm bureau said the most important thing we need now is to have legislation passed this year that will reduce teen smoking but will give these farmers and their families and their communities some certainty. That is what we want to do.

Yesterday, for whatever reasons, some of the tobacco executives indicated that they might not participate anymore in negotiating this bill, either because they think the bill that passed out of the Senate committee was too hard or because they're afraid it'll get worse. I don't know exactly what. I will say this, we have to have some financial incentives on them to in fact reduce the rate of teen smoking; otherwise we will have done all this for nothing. I'm not just trying to raise a bunch of money to raise money or to raise the price of cigarettes. The goal is to make America's children healthier.

And so I hope they will reconsider, because I'm determined to get this done this year. I heard today that the people here in this county do not want any more uncertainty. They want us to act. It would be better if we could act with the tobacco companies at the table too, so we're all talking together, so we're all sharing our information, so we all at least agree on the facts if we don't agree on the solutions. So I hope they'll reconsider and become a part of this. But we're going to do this, this year. If I can control the outcome, we will actually act this year.

I don't think this is a time for threats by anybody. This is a time to put the past behind us, look ahead to the future, and achieve all these objectives. If we move forward with the legislation in the Senate and it does what it's supposed to do, it will stop about 60,000 children a year in Kentucky from beginning to use tobacco over the next 5 years. That means that 20,000 children a year in this State will live longer, healthier, fuller lives. I think that's worth the effort.

Let me also say, Mattie Mack, the farmer I mentioned who raised her own children and 38 foster children, gave me a pretty good little lecture about the responsibility of the people who buy or receive tobacco products and their parents and that we shouldn't put all this on the sellers. And so I say to all of you students, I hope that you are taking responsibility for your own future, and if you haven't started smoking, I hope you won't. I don't believe that the Wildcats could have left all of their opponents gasping for breath, could have come from behind repeatedly to win the tournament, if their lungs had been incapacitated. And I don't think you do either.

Again, I want to encourage you also to work with each other. I have a young friend here who's from another community in Kentucky who has become a pen-pal of mine. Her name is Meghan Johnson. Stand up, Meghan. She's a seventh grader from Madison County, Kentucky. And she's been writing me very interesting letters for the last few years. And so now, when one of Meghan's letters comes in, everybody in the office clamors to read it because she always says something rather unconventional and interesting. Like so many of you, in her youth she is brutally honest about whatever it is she's writing about.

She's taken a big stand against tobacco in her community. After seeing two people close to her stricken with cancer, she and some of her friends decided to produce a video and a poster to help convince every student in her middle school—understand the dangers of smoking.

And Meghan and all of you young people here today are the future of your State and our Nation. If you want to do this and do it right, we can do it. We don't have to wreck the fabric of life in your community. We don't have to rob honest people of their way of life. But even in tobacco country, we can't deny what

the scientists have told us or what has been done to market tobacco to children in ways that compromise their future. To me, no company's bottom line is important compared to America's bottom line. America's bottom line should be your life, your future, your health. And for me, that's what it is.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:14 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Carroll County High School students Jacqueline Jones, who introduced the President, Marissa Vaught, and Josh Coombs, and principal Randy Marcum; Gov. Paul E. Patton, Lt. Gov. Stephen L. Henry, and State Auditor Edward B. Hatchett, Jr. of Kentucky; Senator Larry Saunders, president, and Senator Walter Blevins, Jr., president pro tempore, Kentucky Senate; Representative Jody Richards, speaker, Kentucky House of Representatives; Mayor Bill Welty of Carrollton; Gene McMurry, Carroll County judge; Robert Biggin, Jr., superintendent, Carroll County public schools; Mayor Patricia Owens of Grand Forks, ND; and Bill Sprague, president, Kentucky Farm Bureau.

Remarks to the NCAA Football Champion Michigan Wolverines and Nebraska Cornhuskers

April 9, 1998

The President. Welcome. We've had a lot of heavyweights in this room in the past but nothing to compare with this today. [*Laughter*]

Coach Osborne, Coach Carr, President Bollinger, Chancellor Moeser, Congressman Levin, Congressman Dingell, Congressman Upton. And I can't help noting today the presence of my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, an alumnus of the University of Michigan. The only time he ever stops work is when Michigan plays football. [*Laughter*]

I am honored to have all of you here to celebrate the remarkable seasons of two great football teams from two great universities. For the entire season, everybody in America, especially in the last month or so, wanted Michigan and Nebraska to meet. I'm the only person who could pull it off. [*Laughter*] Since the sun is out, we ought to just go outside and settle the whole thing. [*Laughter*] We'll call it the Rose Garden Bowl. [*Laughter*]

In alphabetical order, we'll start with Michigan. All of America was awed by your performance in one of the most exciting Rose Bowls in history. A team that never lost its poise and never lost a game. Charles Woodson was terrific all season long, and deserved to be the first primarily defensive player to win the Heisman Trophy. The outstanding defense was complemented by a fierce offense, quarterbacked by Rose Bowl MVP Brian Griese.

I'd also like to say a word about Coach Carr. The man who brought Michigan its first championship in 50 years, he has quickly established himself as one of the best coaches in college football. Congratulations on taking the Wolverines to the championship in only your third season.

Now I'd like to introduce you, Coach, to say a few words.

Coach Carr.

[*At this point, University of Michigan Coach Lloyd Carr thanked the President and made brief remarks. Wolverine cocaptains Jon Jansen and Eric Mayes then presented gifts to the President.*]

The President. Thank you. As long as I can be on injured reserve for the next game. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

And now, a team that lived up to all the great traditions of Nebraska football. The Cornhuskers' overwhelming victory in the Orange Bowl was a fantastic finish to an undefeated season. The offense put 42 points on the board, led by tailback Ahman Green's 206 rushing yards, quarterback Scott Frost's three rushing touchdowns.

The 206 yards registered with me because I was in the stands in the Orange Bowl in 1978 when Roland Sales of Arkansas rushed for 205 yards. [*Laughter*]

The Nebraska defense also did a magnificent job in stifling the Peyton Manning-led offense of Tennessee that had been so strong all year.

For Coach Tom Osborne, the Orange Bowl victory marked a spectacular close to a spectacular 25-year career that included three national championships and 255 wins. Tom Osborne is truly one of the great legends of college football. His name now will inevitably be ranked in history along with Knute Rockne, Bear Bryant, and Pop Warner.

Congratulations, Coach, and thank you for not only all the wins but for the way you did it and the example you set.

Coach Osborne.

[*At this point University of Nebraska coach, Tom Osborne, thanked the President and made brief remarks. The new Cornhusker coach, Frank Solege, and team captains Grant Wistrom, Jason Peter, and Aaron Taylor then presented gifts to the President.*]

The President. It's beautiful. Thank you.

Now, what are we supposed to do? Usually, I'm supposed to—we're going to go out here and do the receiving line and the pictures, right?

Thanks again for coming. Congratulations to both of you on a magnificent year. And thanks for all the thrills you gave the rest of us who sit in the stands and watch on television. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Lee C. Bollinger, University of Michigan, and Chancellor James C. Moeser, University of Nebraska.

Statement on the Resignation of John R. Garamendi as Deputy Secretary of the Interior

April 9, 1998

It is with regret that I accept the resignation of John Garamendi as Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

For almost 3 years, John has been a very important member of my administration and has successfully handled some of the toughest and most complicated issues in one of the largest and most important agencies in the Federal Government. From California water issues to the protection of Headwaters redwoods, John's ability to find common ground and creative solutions has been a great asset.

I wish him the best for the future.

Message on the Observance of Easter, 1998

April 9, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Easter.

Just as nature renews the earth each spring, so does the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ enliven our spirits. During this holy season, Christians across America and throughout the world rejoice at the good news of salvation and the re-creation of God's perfect world.

On this day of hope and joy, we are also in the midst of one of the most challenging and exciting periods in our nation's history. From the life of Jesus, we can draw strength for the vital tasks that lie before us: to unite our nation of diverse races, cultures, and backgrounds; to widen the circle of opportunity for all our people; and to build lasting bridges of understanding and respect among the nations of the world.

As Americans gather at sunrise services and in churches across the country, Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a blessed Easter.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Senator Barbara A. Mikulski
April 9, 1998

This is exhibit A for everything I believe in in politics. You know, Senator Mikulski just reeled off my week to you, and we just got home from—Hillary and I did—from this incredible 12-day trip to Africa. And I have been in all those places she said, so I was tired when I got here. But if you stand this close to Barbara Mikulski for 5 minutes, I could get down and do 100 push-ups right now. [*Laughter*] I want to go out and run around the block. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, all of you know I do a number of these kinds of events, and some nights when I'm tired I say, "Gosh, I can't believe we've got to do one of these." I wanted to come tonight, and this is one that Hillary is jealous of me that I got to do that she didn't, because of our admiration for Barbara.

I want to read you something. I normally don't speak from notes at these things, but I just want to read you this. Barbara Mikulski: the first Democratic woman to hold a Senate seat in her own right; the first Democratic woman to serve in both Houses; the first woman to win a statewide election in Maryland; the first woman to have a leadership position in the Senate for our party. She's the first woman Senator to write two mysteries, which I love because I read scads of them every year. [*Laughter*]

What I want to say to you is that she got to be all that—first, first, first, first, first—not because she was a woman but because she has the heart of a lion and because she's done good things for the people of Maryland.

The State of Maryland has been extraordinarily good to me, and we've won two great victories there, because I didn't have to run against Barbara Mikulski. [*Laughter*] And there's so many things that I could say about her, but let me just say a couple of things.

First of all, in 1993, when we were being absolutely eviscerated with criticism from the Republicans in Congress, and when, to the person, they voted against my economic plan, and they said it would cause a terrible recession, and they said it was going to raise taxes on ordinary people—they said all these things—we carried that by one vote in the Senate. And if Barbara Mikulski hadn't voted that way, we wouldn't have the economy we enjoy today. But more importantly, Barbara Mikulski gave other people the courage to vote right. When it comes to a tough fight, she is the tallest member of the United States Senate.

And I'm grateful to her for standing with me in the fight for safer streets, for 100,000 police, and to get the assault weapons off the streets. I'm grateful to her for helping to create the national service program, AmeriCorps, which has now given 100,000 young people, a lot of them in Maryland, a chance to earn money to go to college while serving in their communities. I'm grateful to her for leading the fight for safer food. The "Food Safety Act" that we adopted is profoundly important, and it will become more important in the years ahead as we have more and more food exported from the United States to other countries, more and more food imported into our country from others. I'm grateful to her for the work she's done on women's health in so many different areas. I'm grateful to her because she believes that we're here to do things. And I will say again, this is a year which is election year, and the country is in great shape, and I'm grateful for that. But Barbara Mikulski is helping me to challenge the Republican majority in Congress not to sit still and relax and enjoy the success of America but to take it as an opportunity and an obligation to deal with the long-term challenges of this country, to deal with the challenge of fixing Social Security; to deal with the challenge of making sure that we don't keep killing another 1,000 kids a day by not doing what we can to reduce teenage smoking, to deal with the further challenges of child care and education and the environment. We have a lot to do, and we need some more doers in the Congress. I

don't think a single soul here doubts that there is no bigger doer in the Congress than Barbara Mikulski.

Let me say, one of the big votes that Congress is going to face in the next few days—the Senate when they come back—is whether to vote to enlarge NATO, to take in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland. I wish every constituent of Senator Mikulski could have been with me in Warsaw when we had tens of thousands of people in the square there, and I introduced Barbara Mikulski, a daughter of Poland, to the assembled crowd, along with the then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, John Shalikashvili, also a Polish American.

What we want to do in expanding NATO is to give Poles the chance and the security in their own country to grow up and live their dreams, to have the kinds of careers and lives that Barbara Mikulski has had.

The last thing I want to say, which is, to me, more important than anything else: She is a person who lives her faith. She believes that we will all be judged by whether we have tried to provide opportunity to those without it, whether we have tried to take decent care of those who through no fault of their own are in genuine need. And she has helped us to prove that the Democratic philosophy that we have advanced, beyond any shadow of a doubt, demonstrates that the whole country does better when more people have opportunity.

For all those reasons, I predict an overwhelming victory in November. And I thank you for making sure it happens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. at the Hay Adams Hotel.

Remarks on the Northern Ireland Peace Process and an Exchange With Reporters

April 10, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. After a 30-year winter of sectarian violence, Northern Ireland today has the promise of a springtime of peace. The agreement that has emerged from the Northern Ireland peace talks opens the way for the people there to build a society based on enduring peace, justice, and equality. The vision and commitment of the participants in the talks has made real the prayers for peace on both sides of the Atlantic and both sides of the peace line.

All friends of Ireland and Northern Ireland know the task of making the peace endure will be difficult. The path of peace is never easy. But the parties have made brave decisions. They have chosen hope over hate, the promise of the future over the poison of the past. And in so doing, already they have written a new chapter in the rich history of their island, a chapter of resolute courage that inspires us all.

In the days to come, there may be those who will try to undermine this great achievement, not only with words but perhaps also with violence. All the parties and all the rest of us must stand shoulder to shoulder to defy any such appeals.

On this Good Friday, we give thanks for the work of Prime Minister Ahern and Prime Minister Blair, two truly remarkable leaders who did an unbelievable job in these talks. We give thanks for the work of Senator George Mitchell, who was brilliant and unbelievably patient and long-suffering. We give thanks especially to the leaders of the parties, for they had to make the courageous decisions. We also thank Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Ahern's predecessors for starting and nurturing the process of peace.

Together, all these people have created the best chance for peace in a generation. In May, the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland will have the chance to seize the gift they have been given. At this Easter season, British and Irish leaders have followed the admonition of Luke, "to give light to them who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death and to guide their feet into the way of peace." For that, peaceloving people the world over can be very grateful.

Q. Mr. President, what promises or assurances did the United States make to help move this process along?

The President. Well, from the very beginning all I have tried to do is to help create the conditions in which peace could develop and then to do whatever I was asked to do or whatever seemed helpful to encourage and support the parties in the search for peace. And that's all I did last night.

Q. Did you offer any assistance in terms of financial aid, and what did you think——

The President. No.

Q. ——where did you really weigh in in all those phone calls?

The President. Well, first of all, the answer to your first question is no. Now, we have, as all of you know, an international fund for Ireland, which I have strongly supported. And I do believe that there will be very significant economic benefits flowing to the people of Ireland, both Protestant and Catholic, in Northern Ireland and in the Republic, if this peace takes hold. But there was no specific financial assurance sought, nor was any given.

In terms of the give and take, you know, I made a lot of phone calls last night and up until this morning, actually until right before the last session. But I think the specifics are not all that important. I did what I was asked to do. Again, I was largely guided by the work of Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Ahern. I had a very—a long talk, in the middle of the night for me, last night with Senator Mitchell about his work there, and I'm looking forward to seeing him early next week. I just did what I thought would help. And I tried to do what I was asked to do.

Q. Mr. President, will you be going to Belfast now that they've reached a deal?

The President. Well, I really haven't had much discussion about it. No decision has been made. This is not even a day to think about that. This is a day to celebrate the achievement of the people and the peace talks.

Q. President Clinton, do you feel somewhat vindicated for the policies that—including giving Gerry Adams a visa here—that have come under scrutiny and at times have brought you some derision from other parts of the world for being too provocative?

The President. Well, when I did it, I thought it would help to create a climate in which peace might emerge. And I believe it was a positive thing to do. I believed it then, I believe it now.

But make no mistake about it. Whenever peace is made by people anywhere, the credit belongs to the parties whose own lives and livelihoods and children and future are on the line. And that's the way I feel today. If anything that I or the United States was able to do was helpful, especially because of our historic ties to Great Britain and because of the enormous number of Irish-Americans we have and the feelings we have for the Irish and their troubles, then I am very grateful. But the credit for this belongs to the people who made the decisions.

Q. What role do you expect to play from now on?

Q. Mr. President, how fragile is the peace agreement? How fragile is it, and will it be able to withstand a violation of the cease-fire?

The President. Well, I think the parties will honor it. They fought too hard over the details, down to the 11th hour and then some. They even went past Senator Mitchell's deadline and well into this Good Friday. Given Irish history, maybe it's appropriate that this was done on this day.

So they fought too hard over the details to violate them. I expect the parties to honor the agreement. And then it's really up to the people. The people of Northern Ireland and the people of the Republic of Ireland are going to have a vote on it in May, in late May, and their judgment will prevail.

Will there be those who are disgruntled, who may seek to violate the cease-fire, who are not part of the parties that have signed off on this agreement? There may well be. But if we all stand shoulder-to-should together and everyone understands that the integrity of the leaders and the parties that are part of this process is still unshakable and rock solid, I think we'll be all right. We just need to let the Irish people have their say, and I think they will have their say.

Q. What role do you expect to play from now on in this process, in terms of trying to maintain this agreement?

The President. Well, I don't know. If I can be helpful, I will. That's been my position all along. That's what I tell everybody that talks to me about it. But no decision has been made about that, and you know, the United States believes in this process passionately. I, personally, am deeply committed to it. And if the leaders think there's something I can do to be

helpful, well, of course, I'll try. But there's been no discussion about it and no decision made.

Q. Mr. President, could there have been an agreement today without your efforts last night?

The President. Oh, I certainly—I wouldn't say there couldn't have been. I was asked to help; I did my best to help.

But let me say again, there were people that I was talking to up until 8, 9 o'clock, even later, this morning who haven't been to bed in 48 hours. They sat and talked and worked and fought and argued and got back together. And for some of them, they put their political lives on the line; others may have put even more on the line, as you well know.

And they and the Prime Ministers and Senator Mitchell, who somehow kept it all together, they deserve the credit. I just tried to do what I was asked to do. If I played a positive role, I'm grateful to have had the chance to do so.

President's Easter Plans

Q. Happy Easter. Are you going to Camp David?

The President. I am. We're going up probably in the early evening, and I hope all of you have a great holiday. Bless you.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. What are you going to do about the Middle East? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, we got Bosnia and Haiti, and now, I hope, Ireland. And I'll just keep working on it. The Irish thing ought to give you hope for the Middle East because the lesson is: just don't ever stop. And in the end, if the will for peace is stronger than the impulse to avoid it and the impulse to avoid the tough decisions and the sacrifices that are made—that have to be made, then the will for peace can prevail. That's the lesson here.

So I would hope that those who care desperately about the Middle East and want the peace process there to prevail will take great heart here, because believe you me, I know a lot about this. There were a lot of tough decisions which had to be made, nobody could get everything they wanted, and risks had to be taken. And they were taken. And they now will be taken. And it seems to me that the friends of peace in the Middle East should take great heart from this, and perhaps we'll even find some examples that could be followed.

Thank you.

Reaction to Northern Ireland Peace Agreement

Q. Mrs. Clinton said that peace in Ireland is an article of faith. Is there going to be any kind of Clinton celebration here this evening?

The President. I'm celebrating right now, but we need to let the Irish people have their say. That's going to be in a few weeks.

Q. Going to let these guys go to sleep?

The President. Right now I want these guys to go to sleep. I hope nothing serious happens to our country in the next 8 hours, because I've got a bunch of pickle-brains in the NSC. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and former Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland; Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams.

Message on the 30th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act

April 10, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating the 30th anniversary of the enactment of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968—the Federal Fair Housing Act.

Within a week of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Congress passed and President Johnson signed into law this landmark legislation, which has helped countless Americans achieve the American Dream. The theme of this anniversary celebration, "Many Neighborhoods—One America," reflects the reality that people of diverse cultures and backgrounds can

live together in harmony and reaffirm the American ideals of equality, opportunity, and freedom.

By limiting housing choice, discrimination reduces the quality of life for many Americans. During the past three decades, we have made great strides in opening housing markets. But housing discrimination, although less apparent than in years past, still exists, and the need to enforce fair housing laws vigorously remains as urgent today as ever.

My Administration is committed to building strong partnerships between the Department of Housing and Urban Development and local communities. I have proposed the largest single increase in HUD's civil rights enforcement programs in two decades. My proposal includes a significant increase in funding for HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives and Fair Housing Assistance Programs that, among other things, will combat racially motivated hate crimes related to housing. We are also seeking congressional approval to raise the Federal Housing Administration loan limit so that more Americans, including minorities and women, can become homeowners.

Working together, we can create a more just society that underscores our shared strengths instead of focusing on our differences. The Fair Housing Act continues to be an indispensable tool in these efforts, and as we celebrate its 30th anniversary, I call on all Americans to join me in making division and discrimination issues of the past, and to make America a stronger, better place to live for all of our people.

Best wishes for a memorable anniversary celebration.

BILL CLINTON

The President's Radio Address
April 11, 1998

Good morning. Across America and around the world, this is a holy weekend for three of the world's great religions. Christians are celebrating Easter; Jews, Passover; and Muslims have just ended their annual pilgrimage, the Hajj.

On this special weekend, the eyes of the world and the prayers of so many are focused on Northern Ireland, as an historic peace agreement was reached among representatives of all the major parties to that long and tragic conflict.

I especially want to salute the leadership of Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain, and the leaders of all the parties who came together in a remarkable display of courage to set aside differences in the pursuit of peace. I also salute the previous Prime Ministers of Ireland and Great Britain, who started and nourished this peace process.

And all Americans should take a special measure of pride that the talks in Northern Ireland were chaired by George Mitchell, the former majority leader of the United States Senate, who has served his country and the cause of peace very, very well. I thank him for his brilliant leadership.

Of course, we understand that the pain and hatred of so many years cannot and will not be washed away in one weekend. So on behalf of the American people, I pledge the continuing aid, support, encouragement, and prayers of the United States to the effort to build a lasting peace and an enduring prosperity in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

In the last analysis, the future of that region lies in the hearts and hands of its people. Like so many Americans, part of my family calls Ireland home. And having been there, having met with so many remarkable Irish men and women from all sides of the conflict, I have seen the future in their eyes—a future in which children can grow up free from fear; a future rich with the lilt of Irish laughter, not the pain of bitter tears.

There may be those who seek to undermine this agreement by returning to violence, so we are resolved that the acts of peace and courage will triumph over acts of cowardice and terror.

Tomorrow the dawn will break on Easter morning. All across Ireland, Catholics and Protestants will, in their own way, proclaim their faith in the triumph of life over death. On this Easter, their leaders have lifted their Christian beliefs and have lived them by giving the people

of Ireland and Northern Ireland the chance to choose peace over conflict, indeed, to choose life over death.

When I visited Ulster, and later the Republic of Ireland, the great Nobel Prize-winning Irish poet, Seamus Heaney, gave me a stanza from a poem he wrote that today hangs on the wall of my office in the upstairs of the White House. Its message has a special meaning today. Here's what it says:

History says, *Don't hope*
On this side of the grave.

But then, once in a lifetime
The longed-for tidal wave
Of justice can rise up,
And hope and history rhyme.

What a wonderful Easter gift for the Irish, Irish-Americans, and lovers of peace everywhere.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:30 p.m. on April 10 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 11.

Statement on School Crime
April 12, 1998

Today the Attorney General and Secretary of Education forwarded to me an important, but troubling, study on school crime. Although the study shows that the overall crime rate in our schools did not change significantly between 1989 and 1995, it confirms that some schools have serious problems. Most disturbing, the study found that the number of students reporting gangs in their schools has nearly doubled. This is unacceptable. Gangs—and the guns, drugs, and violence that go with them—must be stopped from ever reaching the schoolhouse door.

Congress can help lead the way by passing the antigang and youth violence strategy that I sent to them more than a year ago. It is based on what we know works—tough, targeted deterrence and better antigang prevention. Through this approach, police and prosecutors in Boston literally disarmed the gangs and brought juvenile gun murders to a halt. We should not wait any longer to help other communities do the same.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 11, but it was embargoed for released until 6:30 p.m. on April 12.

Remarks at the White House Easter Egg Roll
April 13, 1998

The President. Thank you. Good morning. Isn't it a wonderful morning? Let me say, I want to thank all the volunteers and all the sponsors who've made this wonderful day possible for thousands and thousands of young people.

I also want to say that the first official White House egg roll occurred here in 1878 when President Rutherford Hayes was living in the White House. Now, a lot of things have changed since then, but the most important thing today that you need to know is that for the very first time, hundreds of thousands of young people will be experiencing the White House egg roll through the Internet, thanks to EarthLinks, and I want to thank them for that.

I'd also like to thank a number of others, and especially Sun Microsystems, for all the work that's been done to try to open the White House to people around the world and especially around our country. But this day is special because of what EarthLinks has done to let lots and lots of young people who never could come to the White House be part of the egg roll.

So, are we ready to start the egg roll?

Hillary Clinton. Bernie's right here.

The President. Bernie, where's the whistle? This is the one thing every year I know, no matter what else happens, I will do right. [*Laughter*] Are you ready, kids? Are you ready?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I'm going to count to three and blow the whistle. One, two, three!

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to White House volunteer Bernie Fairbanks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Former Senator George J. Mitchell

April 13, 1998

Possible Visit to Ireland

Q. Mr. President, are you going to make a trip to Ireland?

The President. Well, if it would help, of course I would be willing to go, but I think it's important not to make that decision yet. I haven't had a chance to talk to the two Prime Ministers about it or the leaders of the main parties. If they think I should go—and they've got the biggest stake and the closest sense of the public—I would be happy to do it. But I have not decided to do it, and it's really completely up to them.

Q. Do you think that it might constitute sort of unwarranted interference in their affairs for you to go before the referendums?

The President. That's a decision I want them to make. That's why I said I don't think it's my place, really, to deal with this one way or the other. I'm not going to weigh in on it. I'm always willing to do whatever I can to help, but I don't want to do something that would undermine the chances of success. I want to do whatever I can to increase the chances that the parties themselves and the public now will make a decision.

U.S. Ambassador to Ireland

Q. Are you sending Riley to Ireland?

The President. I have made no decision about the next Ambassador to Ireland. I've made no decision about that.

Q. Why?

The President. Because I haven't. I haven't had time. I've been doing other things.

President's Income Taxes

Q. How much are you paying on your taxes?

The President. A bunch. I don't know. We'll give you the form today.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, could you see yourself naming a successor to Senator Mitchell, a person to be on the ground, a new sort of peace envoy, to help the Irish and the British through a new phase?

The President. No one has even suggested that to me yet. I think what we should all be focused on now is getting the facts of the agreement out to the Irish publics, letting the people in the North and in the Republic vote their convictions, and then see where we are.

As I said, I'm always willing to do whatever I can to help, but the role of the United States here is a supporting role. And to try to help—as I said, we should always try to help create or preserve the environment within which peace can occur and progress, and then encourage the parties that have to make the decisions, including the general public. And so I'm open to that. But there has literally been no discussion of that. Nothing.

Q. Have you seen the agreement yet, and what chances do you give it?

The President. Of course I've seen it. I'm not a handicapper. I want to be encouraging. The important thing is that the public that I saw there in December of '95 in both communities wanted peace. They wanted an honorable peace. They wanted a process by which they could begin to work together. And I think that the agreement that Senator Mitchell has hammered out, that the parties have agreed to, provides them that chance, and I hope that they will seize it.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Q. Do you know at what moment David Trimble changed his mind? And do you have any idea why? Because on Wednesday he said, no deal, he couldn't accept your framework agreement.

Senator Mitchell. There was a process of negotiation which occurred between Wednesday and Friday in which changes were made to the draft document in a manner that led all of the parties to eventually find it acceptable. That's what comes out of negotiation.

Q. But at what point did he say, "Yes, that's it, that's what I was waiting for." Or did he never?

Senator Mitchell. I first knew that the agreement would be approved at 4:45 in the afternoon on Friday when Mr. Trimble called me and said that they were ready to go. We had distributed the agreement in its final form on Friday morning, and I had been in touch with all of the party leaders during the day to inquire as to when they might be ready to go with a final plenary session to vote on the agreement and to approve it.

And of course during those discussions I encouraged them and inquired of them as to whether they would be ready to vote for it. And gradually, over the course of the day, several of them said, we're ready to go now, and we'll vote for it. And at 4:45 p.m., Mr. Trimble called me to say he was ready to go and was prepared to get it done. And so as to make certain that it was done without any further interruption, I called the meeting right then and there.

Q. Would you have gotten the agreement without the input of President Clinton?

Senator Mitchell. I don't think there would have been an agreement without President Clinton's involvement—not beginning this past week but beginning several years ago. I think the President's decisions have been timely, have been critical, and I think it's very important to keep that in mind, that while the President was very actively involved in the concluding negotiations, including staying up all night and making phone calls to many people, including myself, they didn't begin there. They began 5 years ago, and what happened was the culmination of a long process of involvement by the President.

No American President has ever before visited Northern Ireland while in office. No American President has ever before placed the problem of Northern Ireland high on the American agenda at a time when it seemed that there was no prospect for success. It's an easy thing to get involved in an issue when it's on the downhill side and it looks like it's going to succeed. President Clinton got involved in Northern Ireland when no one gave any chance for success.

So the answer is yes, the President's role was critical. I don't think there would have been an agreement without his leadership and participate, and it began many years ago.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. Senator Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland, referred to David Trimble, Ulster Unionist Party leader. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Announcing the Office of Management and Budget Transition and an Exchange With Reporters

April 14, 1998

The President. In a few moments I am leaving for Houston to speak to the men and women of NASA, visit with America's oldest and newest space hero, Senator John Glenn, and participate tonight in an ESPN townhall on race. But first, I want to make a personnel announcement about a critical position on our economic team.

For 5½ years, our administration has brought a new vision of stewardship to our economy. We insisted on fiscal discipline, on bringing the deficit down from $290 billion on the day I

took office to nearly zero today. At the same time, we were determined to invest in our people and their future, to give all Americans the chance to reap the rewards of our prosperity. This invest and grow economic strategy is clearly the right one for America.

To put this strategy into place, we have needed an able team. I have been proud to have at my side skilled and dedicated men and women, a true team of public servants who have helped to steer the economy through one of the longest peacetime expansions in our history.

For the past 2 years, Frank Raines has been a key member of that team. He has served the American people with true distinction as Director of the Office of Management and Budget. He is the first Budget Director to draft and submit a balanced budget since Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon. He brought a businessman's practical sensibility to the task of safeguarding the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. He has earned the trust of Democratic and Republican Members of Congress alike. He has served as a key negotiator of last year's balanced budget agreement. He has shown true leadership in tackling the difficult problems of the District of Columbia. Frank Raines has been, in short, a brilliant OMB Director, a leader of this administration, a trusted adviser, an able spokesperson, and a real friend.

He has just informed me in the last couple of days that he has decided to step down as Director of OMB because of a wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity in the private sector. I regret his decision, but I certainly understand it. I think it's clearly the right thing for him, his wife, Wendy, and their children, and I wish them all the best.

I'm also delighted to announce my intention to nominate Jack Lew to be the next OMB Director. Only a handful of people in Washington have Jack Lew's profound knowledge of the Federal budget and the legislative process; almost none of them has his ability to explain it in plain English. Just as important, very few people in Washington also have his record of idealism, commitment, and conscience.

From his days as policy director for the Speaker of the House, when he and Tip O'Neill worked to strengthen Social Security in 1983, to his days fighting to create AmeriCorps, a national service initiative that has brought the spark of service and the opportunity for a college education to the lives of tens of thousands of young Americans, to his most recent work as Deputy Director of OMB, drafting our balanced budget, Jack Lew has been a true and dedicated public servant.

Like Frank Raines, with whom he has made a very good team, Jack works to balance the budget not just for its own sake but for the sake of the people whose interests and values he serves. He already serves as a valued member of our economic team. I look forward to his speedy confirmation as Director of OMB, and I thank him and his wonderful family for being here today and for being willing to undertake the sacrifice and rigors of public service for the honor and the reward.

Thank you very much. Now I'd like to ask Mr. Raines and Mr. Lew to make statements.

[*At this point, Director Raines and Director-designate Lew made brief remarks.*]

NationsBank and BankAmerica Merger

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of the big bank mergers? Mr. President, do you have any ideas about them?

The President. It would be inappropriate to comment now.

Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Q. Where is Mr. Raines going—this chance of a lifetime?

Director Raines. Stay tuned. [*Laughter*]

The President. Shortly. That's news, unfortunately, I can't make.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Houston, TX.

Remarks in a Telephone Conversation From Houston, Texas, With Astronauts at Kennedy Space Center in Florida

April 14, 1998

The President. Are you ready?

Lt. Col. Richard A. Searfoss. Yes.

The President. Well, you're looking good. I hope you find out a lot of things about the human neurological system to help me, because I'm moving into those years where I'm getting dizzy and I'm having all these problems—[*laughter*]—and I expect you to come back with all the answers.

Lieutenant Colonel Searfoss. Well, thank you, Mr. President. We'll take that on board as one of the challenges that we'll try to meet. [*Laughter*]

If you'd like, Mr. President, I'll introduce my crew to you.

The President. I'd like that. And anything you want to tell me about the mission, I'd be glad to hear it.

Lieutenant Colonel Searfoss. My name is Rick Searfoss. I'm the commander of the flight. It will be my third shuttle mission. Right next to me, my immediate right, is Scott Altman. He will be the pilot on the flight. Next to him, Kay Hire, our flight engineer. Our payload crew consists of four doctors—right next to me, Rick Linnehan, who is a DVM, veterinarian. And behind us, Drs. Buckey and Williams are medical doctors; and Jim Pawelczyk is a physiologist, a Ph.D. researcher. So, as you can see, we've got some great science expertise to do the onboard portion of this mission.

The President. Just very briefly—you know, I've got the whole national press here with me, so why don't you briefly describe what the purpose of the mission is and what some of the things you're going to be exploring are.

Lieutenant Colonel Searfoss. Absolutely. The fundamental, overriding question that is consistent across all 26 of our experiments, Mr. President, is that what happens, in a very detailed sort of way that we want to understand, to the nervous and neurological processes and systems when you take the certain variable away that we just can't take away on Earth, and that's, of course, gravity.

I'm going to turn it over just for a minute or two to Dr. Linnehan, who is our payload commander, and he can give you a few more details on that.

Rick.

Dr. Richard M. Linnehan. Yes, sir. Mr. President, we have 26 major experiments that deal all the way from the vestibular system, which is the inner ear, how we interpret balance on Earth as opposed to in space, up to neuronal plasticity, which really is just another way of saying how the brain heals or rewires itself in terms of damage or new adaptations in space.

The President. That's great. Well, we're all excited about it. We're anxious to see you get off and anxious to see you come home safely, full of information.

One of the general points that I want to make with all of you here, that I have tried to make both to the Congress and to the Nation, is that the space program has enormous potential to change life here on Earth for the better, in a health way, in a way that you're exploring, in environmental ways, and in other ways as well. So this is a particularly exciting mission to me, because I believe it will help to strengthen the support of the rank and file Americans for our NASA operations, generally. And I'm very grateful to you.

Good luck, and have a great time out there. Thank you.

Lieutenant Colonel Searfoss. Thank you very much, Mr. President; we appreciate it.

The President. Goodbye. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. from the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center with Lt. Col. Richard A. Searfoss, USAF, mission commander; and Dr. Richard M. Linnehan, mission specialist. During the telephone conversation, the following crewmembers were referred to: Lt. Comdr. Scott D. Altman, USN, pilot; Comdr. Kathryn P. Hire, USNR, flight engineer; Dr. Dafydd Rhys Williams, mission specialist; and Dr. Jay Clark Buckey, Jr., and James A. Pawelczyk, payload specialists. Health sciences mission STS–90 was scheduled for lift-off aboard the space shuttle *Columbia* on April 16.

Remarks at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston
April 14, 1998

Thank you very much. Once again, I'm delighted to be back here. I have to beg your pardon for starting this program a little late, but when I get here, I get involved in what I'm doing. And besides that, John Glenn wanted to make sure I saw every single square inch—[*laughter*]—of space he would be living and maneuvering in—which didn't take all that long to see, actually. [*Laughter*] But we've had a wonderful day.

I want to thank Dan Goldin for doing a marvelous job. One thing he did not mention was the fact that he made the decision, which I strongly supported, to continue our involvement with the *Mir*, to participate with our partners there in the spirit of international cooperation in space. And I thank him for that. I'd also like to say to George Abbey, thank you very much for all the work that you and all the wonderful people here do. Thank you, Mayor Brown. I'm very proud that you were once a member of my Cabinet, and I see you've gone on to higher things. [*Laughter*]

That reminds me—you know, Abraham Lincoln used to keep regular office hours in the White House. And a woman broke in the White House one day, in a fit of anger and anxiety, worried about something, and she ran into him. And she was so excited she didn't recognize him—there wasn't any television back then, of course—and she said, "I demand to speak to no one lower than the President." And he said, "Ma'am, there is no one lower than the President." [*Laughter*]

So you folks gave Lee a promotion. I understand he's the first mayor, actually sitting mayor, to come out here to the Johnson Center, and I think that's a very good thing, and I appreciate that.

I'd like to thank Congressman Lampson. You just heard—he's the fairly eloquent advocate on your behalf. I asked him whether he and I should volunteer to go to Mars if we get the mission. It would make a lot of people happy, at least if I went, I think. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to thank Representatives Sheila Jackson Lee and Gene Green and Ken Bentsen for being here today and for the work they do for Texas, for the Houston area. I'd like to thank your Land Commissioner, Garry Mauro, and your State Senator, Rodney Ellis, for being here, and the other city officials who are here, Don Boney, Sylvia Garcia. Judge Eckels, thank you for coming. I'd like to thank Colonel Curt Brown, who is the commander for the mission Senator Glenn is going to. And you see his whole team back here, including a member from Japan and a member from Europe, who is a native from Madrid, Spain. And we're glad to have all of them here.

I'd like to thank David Wolfe and all the other astronauts that showed me around, and also the folks on the Neurolab team that talked to me by long distance.

I have had another great day here at the Johnson Space Center. On behalf of all your fellow Americans, I want to thank you, those of you who work here, for expanding the frontiers of our knowledge, launching our imagination, helping our spirits to soar. Each of you—our scientists, our engineers, our astronauts, those of you who work in other capacities—embody the bold, restless, pioneering spirit of America.

I'm also proud to be here, as Dan Goldin said, with our oldest and newest man in space, John Glenn. He and Mrs. Glenn—Annie, who is here with us, and I'm delighted to see her—have been good friends of Hillary's and mine for a long time now. I have loved working with him in Washington. I, frankly, was heartsick when he said he wasn't going to run again for the Senate. He said, "Well, I'm too old." [*Laughter*] And he said, "Oh, by the way, can you get me into space?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Now, wait a minute, John, you're too old to do 6 more years in the Senate, but you're plenty young enough to go into space?"

The truth is, this man has done 149 combat missions in World War II and Korea; 4 hours, 55 minutes, and 23 history-making seconds aboard *Friendship* 7; and 4 terms in the United States Senate. In today's atmosphere, perhaps that latter accomplish was his most hazardous duty; maybe it is safer for him to go into space. [*Laughter*] But he's here doing what he has desperately wanted to do. And I think I can say, without fear of anyone contradicting me,

that the decision was made by Dan Goldin to allow Senator Glenn to participate because we thought it would be good for the space program, good for science, good for the American people, good for our future.

The only thing is—as Dan and I were talking on the way in about what remarkable shape John and Annie are in, and the whole purpose of him going up there, you know, is to find out what the effects of space and long space travel are on the aging process and on the elderly, and since he really hasn't aged in the last 40 years—it's going to be a total bust. [*Laughter*] But we'll get a kick out of watching him wander around up there anyway.

I do want to say, seriously, we are living longer than ever before as Americans. It is imperative that we live healthier than ever before. That requires not only the maintenance of our physical health, but the continuing fires of our imagination.

We have a lot of health care costs now associated with our longevity. A lot of people complain about it. I personally think it's a high-class problem, and the older I get, the more I think it's a high-class problem. But it is imperative that we learn as much as we can about the aging process. That's one of the most exciting things I think will come out of the Neurolab mission that's going up on Thursday. It's also imperative that we hold up as role models people who, in their mid-seventies, still dare to dream new dreams. And I think we should all learn a lesson from that, whether we can go into space or not.

Thanks to NASA, America has met President Kennedy's challenge of becoming the world's leading space-faring nation. We've left our footprints on the Moon, explored the surface of Mars, completed 89 space shuttle missions, orbited Earth for 755 days, 12 hours, and 44 minutes. When the 90th mission lifts off into space this Thursday, 238 Americans will have had the chance to see the stars up close, and more and more, to see the stars up close and to work with dedicated people from other nations who share the same goals and dreams of a peaceful, cooperative future.

We've launched satellites and probes that have alerted us to weather phenomenon like El Nino, discovered water on the Moon, made instantaneous communication between peoples on opposite sides of the Earth a reality.

And yet, even as you have worked hard to reach for the stars, NASA has more than ever kept its feet grounded in fiscal discipline. Congressman Lampson's claim for an adequate budget for NASA's future is bolstered by the leadership Dan Goldin has given. Since 1993, productivity at NASA has increased by 40 percent; new spacecraft are being built in half the time at much less cost. That is something you can be proud of. And in the 1980's, we launched just two solar system exploration missions. This year we're on schedule to launch a spacecraft every 10 weeks.

I am committed to maintaining a strong, stable, balanced space program. Our balanced budget will support 28 new space missions—missions that will help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes and ancient stars and of Earth and, indeed, life itself.

Hillary and I are working on a big national celebration of the millennium, which, as you know, is not very many days away now, and we have called it, "honoring our past and imagining our future." We have asked the Congress to dramatically increase the research and development budget for America across all the areas where we need to be learning more and looking more. We cannot imagine our future without a vigorous, comprehensive, and consistent commitment to our mission in space. And I thank you for what you're doing today.

On the day after Senator Glenn's first historic flight, at the height of the cold war, President Kennedy invited the Russians to join us in exploring outer space. "We believe that when men reach beyond this planet they should leave their national differences behind them," he said. "All will benefit if we can invoke the wonders of science instead of its errors." Thirty-six years later, we are indeed leaving behind national differences, invoking the wonders of science for the benefit of humanity.

Seven Americans have lived aboard the Russian space station, *Mir*—the last 6 for 25 consecutive months—working with Russians and 14 other nations. Soon, the international space station will be launched—the size of a football field, so large it will actually be visible to the naked eye here on Earth.

Yes, as Mr. Goldin alluded, it was a fight for awhile, and there were those who thought we should abandon it. But we did not abandon it. And 10 or 20 years from now, people will wonder that we ever even considered such a

thing, because we will all, before long, be thanking our lucky stars that we had the vision to work with people from around the world to set up the international space station in the sky. From it we will explore vast new frontiers, chart unexplored seas, reach a little deeper into the vast final frontier.

In so many ways, your mission here at NASA reflects the spirit of America for every child who's ever tied a cape made of a sheet or a rag around his neck and dreamed of flying, for every mother who ever sang a child to sleep with "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," for every senior citizen who ever stared at the heavens in the wonder of what might be out there. You are the place where dreams are made real, where impossible missions are accomplished by remarkable people.

We have become a great nation in no small measure because our people have always recognized the limitless possibilities of the human spirit. I have every confidence that those of you who work here at Johnson Space Center will always carry that conviction not only in your minds but in your hearts. When it comes to exploring space, we must never consider any mission impossible. The story of our space program is the story of barriers broken and new worlds uncovered. Let us make sure that is the story of our space program in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in Building 9. In his remarks, he referred to George W.S. Abbey, Director, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center; Houston Mayor Lee Patrick Brown; City Councilman Jew Don Boney, Jr.; City Controller Sylvia R. Garcia; Judge Robert A. Eckels, Harris County Commissioners Court; Lt. Col. Curtis L. Brown, Jr., USAF, STS–95 mission commander; and astronauts Chiaki Mukai, Japanese Space Agency, Pedro Duque, European Space Agency, and David A. Wolfe, NASA.

Remarks at the ESPN Townhall Meeting on Race in Houston
April 14, 1998

[*ESPN commentator Bob Ley, who served as moderator, welcomed the President and asked what such a dialog on race and sports could bring to the Nation at large.*]

The President. Well, first of all, let me thank you and ESPN for doing this for the second time, and thank our panelists for being willing to put themselves on the line and be honest and open and accountable to the audience.

I'd like to say a couple of things I think we can achieve. First of all, America, rightly or wrongly, is a sports-crazy country and we often see games as a metaphor or a symbol of what we are as a people. So I think by dealing with both the positive things which have happened, in terms of opportunity for people of all races and people getting together and working together, and the continuing challenges in athletics, I think just by doing that we learn more about the rest of the country and what needs to be done.

Beyond that, I think that it's important that people see that in athletics in America, that the rules are fair, that people get their fair chance, and I would hope, too, that the concern for the lives of the players off the field, off the court, and what they're doing when their athletic careers are over, and whether they still will be full and equal members of society, closing the opportunity gaps that have existed historically between the races in our country—whether there's something we can do about that, because that clearly will have larger implications for the society as a whole.

But all of us, as Americans, I think, should be both proud of how far we've come when we see what racial and ethnic and religious tensions are doing in other parts of the world, and at the same time should be very determined to continue to meet the challenges that still exist, because our country is becoming more and more racially and ethnically diverse. And if we can be one America, celebrating our diversity but knowing what we have in common, then it's the greatest asset I can imagine for us to take into the 21st century. But it's something we really have to work at, as I'm sure all these folks will tell us.

[*At this point, Mr. Ley asked former football player and actor Jim Brown for his impression of the condition of race relations in sports since an ESPN program on race 14 months earlier. Mr. Brown said tremendous progress had been made and that white America had provided African-Americans with opportunities that should be taken advantage of economically. Georgetown University basketball coach John Thompson described the need for frank and open discussions about many college athletes' lack of competency outside of sports. Keyshawn Johnson, wide receiver for the New York Jets, stated that during his rookie year in the National Football League, contrary to what he had been told, he found that all players were not treated equally. Carmen Policy, president of the San Francisco 49ers, responded that the youth of the athletes entering professional sports had to be taken into consideration. Mr. Ley then asked about hiring practices in sports, particularly for head coaching positions in the NFL. Mr. Policy said that team owners would hire the best candidate for the job regardless of that person's race, but that the selection process itself was flawed. Mr. Ley then asked Minnesota Vikings head coach Dennis Green how he broke the racial barrier. Mr. Green referred to his accomplishment as jumping a hurdle and said that discussions like this would focus attention on the issue. He pointed out, however, that out of 15 coaching vacancies in the last 3 years, not a single position went to an African-American. Mr. Ley asked the President if a conclusion should be drawn from that statistic.*]

The President. It says something. We just have to make sure we know what it says. For example, very often we assume that those numbers are there, there's some—maybe even an illegal practice, which may not be true. But if you go back to what Carmen said, one of the things that I've seen—or go back to what John Thompson said—and you know, Georgetown is my alma mater so I always try to cheer for John and try never to disagree with him. [*Laughter*] But there's some—let's assume that there is absolutely no conscious racism in any of these decisions. I have been now in an executive position—I've been President for 5½ years nearly; I was Governor of my State for 12 years. I've hired hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people. In every position I've ever held, I've always hired more minorities than my predecessors. When I was Governor, I hired more minorities, appointed more than all my predecessors combined. No one ever accused me of giving anybody anything for which they weren't qualified.

But what I found out was, if that was a goal and you knew it was important, there was a certain network by which—the easy network by which those decisions are made, and you've got to break through the network and change the rules if you want to do it.

Mr. Ley. So the numbers are important then?

The President. Numbers are important. But my reaction was, when Keyshawn's book came out—and you know, I'm a big football fan, I follow this, and I saw him play in college—is, you know, if I were running his team, I'd just want to make as many touchdowns as I could, you know. And what I think you have to do is to kind of—Carmen went around here and he really prepared for this tonight. So I think that's what we need people to do for these coaching positions. We need to think if this is a problem, we want more minority coaches in the NFL, we want more minority coaches in the college ranks, you have to say—and we're making an honest effort to pick the most qualified people, why aren't we producing them?

I'd say there's something wrong with the recruitment system, with the pool, and you've got to rethink that and make a real effort. But my experience, my personal experience is, if you make a real effort there are lots of people out there. Since I believe intelligence and ability are evenly distributed across racial and ethnic groups, if you look at it, you can find it.

[*At this point, Mr. Ley asked John Moores, owner of the Major League Baseball San Diego Padres, if he was satisfied with minority representation in administrative positions in baseball. Mr. Moores said he was not and noted that while baseball was the most ethnically diverse sport, well-qualified minority manager candidates had been passed over. Former baseball player and current ESPN baseball analyst Joe Morgan said he believed progress was being made and that equal interview opportunity should be given to all candidates for all types of vacancies. Mr. Ley asked Vince Dooley, athletic director at the University of Georgia, about the continuing predominance of white head coaches in Division I college football, where over half the players were African-American. Mr.*

Dooley responded first by commending the President for the race initiative.]

The President. Thank you.

[*Mr. Dooley said college football needed more examples like Mr. Thompson, Mr. Green, and Tubby Smith, head coach of the NCAA champion Kentucky Wildcats men's basketball team. St. John's University basketball player Felipe Lopez discussed the benefits of ethnic diversity in sports. Former track star Jackie Joyner-Kersee, administrator of a foundation in East St. Louis, IL, helping youth, discussed the need for action to follow up on the dialog, in order to provide more examples for minority youth and to combat the subtle racism in business networking that kept the upper strata exclusive. After a commercial break, Mr. Ley asked Mr. Johnson about racial stereotyping by professional athletes. Mr. Johnson replied that the media created stereotypes in their coverage but management and coaching often reinforced them. At this point, Mr. Ley called on audience member Michael Waters, a high school student body president, who asked Mr. Brown if the stereotype of blacks being more athletically adept than whites was a form of discrimination against whites. Mr. Brown dismissed the questions of stereotyping as missing the point of the discussion and then reiterated his emphasis on economics, saying that African-American coaches and athletes making millions of dollars in salaries should hire black lawyers, agents, and managers exclusively. Mr. Johnson said that his attorney and investment advisers were African-American, but were hired for their skills rather than their race. Ms. Joyner-Kersee added that in her foundation she tried to give opportunities to those who might not get them otherwise. Mr. Thompson responded that he would not terminate his relationships with whites who had helped him achieve his success, and that society caused individuals to think in such racially limited terms. He then stated that blacks didn't want to feel they had to be perfect to get the job, but only wanted the same opportunity to try. Mr. Dooley commented that he paid more attention to a candidate's history of success than to an interview. Mr. Ley then asked the President for his views.*]

The President. Well, first of all, I appreciate the honesty of the interchange and that shows basically the—actually the progress that's been made on this issue in athletics. Why? Because I basically—I agree with the point Jim Brown made, but I respect what John Thompson said. That is, if you have personal experiences with people who have helped you to achieve their goals, even if they're of different races, and you're not going to turn around and abandon your friends and abandon people who are doing a good job for you. And that's good.

The point Jim is making, however, is a different one, and I'd just like to sort of—because when we get to the last section, there's another issue I want us to get to, which is related to this—but what he's pointing out, there's still a huge opportunity gap in our society by race in terms of economic standing. That's the only point he was making—and that if we want a stable society, we want large middle classes among African-Americans, large middle classes among Hispanic-Americans, large middle classes among Asian-American immigrants—first generation immigrants. That's the point Jim's making. And that if a group, a certain group within the African-American community, let's say, has amassed this wealth and then has to reinvest it, to the extent that they can also help to create this larger middle class while helping themselves and doing something, that's a good thing.

I think you can say that and still respect John's decision, which I think we all do, and respect any other individual decisions that would cross racial lines. But the effort to create a middle class, people whose names will never be in the newspaper but who helped to build a big, stable society, I think that's a very important goal for us here.

Mr. Ley. Do you think athletes have a special responsibility to have a social conscience to act, to be involved in the communities, or is that unfair?

The President. No, I don't think it's unfair. I think—first of all, I think anybody with a special gift has a special responsibility. And if you've got a special gift, whatever the gift is—if you're a great singer, if you're great at making money, if you're a brilliant scientist—I think if you have a special gift, if God gave you something that other people don't normally have, and no matter how hard they work they can't get there, then you owe more back. That's what I believe. So, yes, I believe that.

[*After a commercial break, Mr. Ley asked Mr. Green about access to the power structure elite*

in the NFL. Mr. Green responded that there needed to be equal access and opportunity for ownership of teams. Mr. Brown suggested that acquiring ownership was simply a matter of amassing enough money, and that African-Americans needed to pool their economic clout to attain the power ownership provides. Mr. Thompson agreed, saying that the lack of strong relationships between financial institutions and the African-American community undermined participation at the ownership level. Ms. Joyner-Kersee noted that companies like Nike and sports celebrities Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods, who endorsed Nike products, used their wealth and fame to give back to the community. Mr. Brown reiterated his position, suggesting that African-Americans pool their resources to form a capital base. Mr. Ley then took a question from audience member Fernando Tamayo, a senior at Washington High School, who pointed out that Hispanic-Americans had not yet been mentioned, although they were the fastest growing minority in America. Mr. Lopez agreed and asserted that the more the Hispanic community worked together, the more opportunity they would get.]

The President. Let me make one observation about this. Hispanic-Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in our country. Historically, they have done very well in America through an enormous work ethic and an enormous commitment to family.

There was a wonderful movie a couple of years ago with Edward James Olmos and a number of other Hispanic actors and actresses called "*Mi Familia*." It was a wonderful movie; some of you may have seen it. But we have a problem today that athletics could play a role in solving with the Hispanic community, and I hope we'll get into this a little more in the last section—that is, what about all the athletes whose names you never know, who play in junior high or high school or college or even in the pros? And what about the rest of their lives? I hope we can talk about that a little bit before we leave.

But last year, for the first time in modern history, the graduation rates from high school of African-Americans and white Americans were virtually identical—the first time ever. The graduation rates of Hispanics is much lower; the dropout rate is higher. Part of that is because there has been a heritage in Hispanic immigrant families of kids dropping out of school and going to work to support the family.

The problem is, today if you don't have a high school diploma and a couple years of college, it's hard to get a job where your income grows over time. So one of the things that I'm hoping is that we'll have more Hispanic young people in athletic programs and at least in high school; that will get more coaches to convince them and their brothers and sisters to stay in high school and hopefully go on to college. Because America is not going to function very well if we have a Hispanic dropout rate that's 20 percent higher than the rest of society.

[*Mr. Lopez agreed, saying that although basketball got him into college, he wanted his education to make him more than just an athlete and he hoped to use his education and success in ways that would give back to his community. Audience member Martin Garcia, a senior at Jesse H. Jones Senior High School, asked Mr. Moores why Little League baseball was not promoted in the inner cities. Mr. Moores responded that it was a good question and that the country would benefit from more support at that level. Mr. Morgan agreed and said that resources in the United States were not adequately tapped, as in foreign countries, for recruitment of baseball players. He noted the success of basketball and its outreach programs for inner-city youth and urged baseball to do the same.*]

The President. I just wanted to follow up on something Joe said and something that the questioner said because he made a slightly different point. You know, we had one of the best World Series last year we've had in a month of Sundays. I mean, everybody loved the World Series—it goes down to the last game, at the end of the game. And everybody was thrilled with the story of the young Cuban pitcher and how his mother finally got out of Cuba to come watch him pitch. And he's saying, "But I've got a brother at home who's an even better pitcher than I am." And as strained as our relationships with Cuba are, it's virtually more likely that you can be a Cuban player in Major League baseball than a Cuban-American from Miami or New Jersey.

And so it's not just African-Americans. You've got all these Hispanic-Americans here who are in inner cities. And we now have got some very exciting Asian—Japanese players in Major League baseball. But America is full of Asian

immigrants. And, the baseball folks who are here, I really think that we haven't answered it fully. The truth is that there are tens of thousands of kids in every State in this country who are not in any kind of athletic program unless they're in a football or basketball program.

Now, the mayor here and the former mayor, Mr. Lanier, who is also here, he started a program with thousands of inner-city kids in soccer and golf programs. And it may be that—I'm just saying that maybe one specific thing that could come out of this meeting is if we could actually bring baseball back to kids that aren't in the football or basketball programs, it might be a great gift to the future.

[*After a commercial break, Mr. Johnson asked those on the panel in administrative or ownership positions why athletes had difficulty getting positions with the organizations after their playing days were over. He also asked if NFL owners would give an African-American-owned franchise equal opportunity. Mr. Policy responded that the Nation was awakening to problems in race relations, including inequities in the sports business, and was taking steps to correct them. Audience member Dennis S. Brown said that he recalled hearing a pro quarterback state that black and white players did not shower together, and he asked Mr. Johnson to respond. Mr. Johnson replied that his experience was that, for the most part, everybody mingled in the locker room and any racial comments there were made jokingly and understood that way as well.*]

Mr. Ley. All right, we were at this point supposed to be wrapping things up, but the President has graciously agreed to spend a little bit more time with us this evening, so we'll have a chance to ask some more and answer some more questions.

The President. That little boy, you'd better ask him, that young man——

Mr. Ley. We're going there, sir.

[*Jesse, a 13-year-old boy who introduced himself as half Mexican-American and half Irish, asked Mr. Morgan if he ever discouraged minority youths from focusing on professional sports as a goal and encouraged them to concentrate instead on school. Mr. Morgan answered that he felt it was good to encourage a mix of the two, that succeeding in both areas was not impossible. Mr. Thompson asserted that if opportunity was provided, people would be educated, but that too many young people did not see opportunity ahead and therefore did not work hard in school. Audience member Tiffany Singleton, a senior at a high school in Houston, asked Ms. Joyner-Kersee if she felt doubly obligated to carry expectations as both a woman and an African-American. Ms. Joyner-Kersee said she put no added pressure on herself but hoped her achievements inspired others. Audience member Matt Sharp, a junior at Elks Lake High School, then asked the President if it was fair for minority athletes who were only average students and whose SAT's were low to get scholarships over white students who were not athletes but excelled academically.*]

The President. Let me answer the question. I had a problem in California when they voted—and California has been very good to me, but the people and I disagree with these things—[*laughter*]. California voted to repeal their affirmative action admissions policy. And I made the argument that they would give a minority athlete a scholarship under the new system because of his or her athletic ability and have another member of a minority group who had higher grades and higher SAT scores, but no athletic ability, couldn't get a scholarship. So it wasn't just a race issue.

Let me say what I think about that. First of all, I think colleges and universities have a right to have athletic programs and they have to recruit if they want to have them. The real issue is we should have a system in America, since we now know that it is necessary to have at least 2 years of education after high school if you want to have even a good job with a growing income for younger people, and it's better—we have a vested interest of the Nation in seeing that every young person like you gets to go to college. What I've tried to do is make sure that money would never be an obstacle to anyone, and that's really ultimately the way to resolve that. Every college and university has to make up its mind; do they want to have an athletic program; then they'll want to compete for the best athletes—they're going to do that. But it should never, ever be at the expense of providing academic opportunities to people who are qualified.

Let me just say, since I've been in office, we passed a HOPE scholarship, which gives everybody a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, tuition and tax credits for junior and

senior year and graduate school. We've got more Pell grants, more work-study positions, more national service positions—we've got more opportunity. And, I think—I'll say this—for me, that's the answer. I don't think—otherwise, a college simply can't have an athletic program or recruit its athletes.

My view is they ought to be able to recruit athletes, but they ought to give enough scholarships so that every young, gifted person who can get admitted to the school should be able to go without regard to the money that they or their families have. That's what I believe.

[*After a commercial break, Mr. Thompson responded to Matt's question, saying that students from wealthy families and children of alumni also received special preference from universities. Mr. Ley then asked the President to summarize his thoughts on the meeting.*]

The President. Well, I feel better about my country than I did before we started. And I think all of you do, don't you? [*Applause*]

I want to applaud the panelists for their candor and their honesty. I want to thank the members of the audience for the questions that were asked.

I want to say just two things. Number one, I think it's obvious that athletics in a way is leading America toward a more harmonious, united society, but we still have work to do—in the coaching ranks and the management and the scouting and all of that. We ought to keep working on it.

The second thing I'd like to say is, I hope that everybody who's in an athletic program also learns good life skills to make good choices, good decisions; can take something out of the teamwork, the rules of things that you get from being in athletics so that if they play in high school but not in college that they're still better off and they're better citizens.

The same thing if they play in college, not in pros. The same thing when they finish their pro career. We didn't talk much about that tonight, but I think that's important—that the lessons learned from athletics carry over into good citizenship, including attitudes about people of different races. If that happens, we're going to be a lot better off.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the Cullen Theater at Wortham Theater Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Lee Patrick Brown and former Mayor Bob Lanier of Houston. The townhall meeting was broadcast live on the ESPN cable network as "Sports and Race: Running in Place?" The meeting was part of "One America: The President's Initiative on Race."

Exchange With Reporters on Tornado Damage in the Pratt City Neighborhood of Birmingham, Alabama

April 15, 1998

Q. Mr. President, now that you've seen it firsthand, what do you think?

The President. It's horrible. But I'm glad so many people lived, like these people here. They were in the—they got warning, so they went in the bathroom and lay down. They have two 8-year-old twins. They had their children with them. So they're all unhurt.

We've just got to make sure that they get—they have no livelihood here. And the important thing is that we move this assistance as quickly as we can to them.

Q. What assistance are you bringing today?

The President. We have all kinds of personal assistance, and we're also going to try to help them with the cleanup so they can get back to normal and also hire some people around here, while they're otherwise idle, to be part of the cleanup.

Q. What are you trying to say to these people? It's got to be so difficult to talk to people——

The President. I think the most important thing is that they—right now a lot of them are still almost in shock, but they're beginning to think—it's been a few days now—they're beginning to think about how they're going to live. And the important thing is that we work out all the practical problems of their lives right now—make sure everybody has got a place to

live and food and income to live on—and then that we move all these claims through as quickly as possible and do everything we can to speed the process by which they can return to normal.

There is so much grief and frustration and loss. The most positive thing that can be done is just to get everybody focused on tomorrow. If they've all got something to look forward to tomorrow, some progress, no matter how halting, it's been my experience that that's the healthiest thing that can happen, that everybody—just start people focused on coming back. And so that's what we're trying to do.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. while touring the area struck by a tornado on April 8. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in McDonald Chapel, Alabama
April 15, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Let me first of all thank Governor and Mrs. James, Senator Shelby, Congressman and Mrs. Bachus, Congressman Hilliard, and we were joined earlier today by Congressman Riley and Congressman Aderholt, my long-time friend Mayor Arrington and my friend Senator Heflin. I thank all of you for joining us, Senator Escott, Representative Hilliard, Sheriff Woodward, and all the law enforcement officials.

I want to thank James Lee Witt and our SBA director, Aida Alvarez, for their presence here today and all the FEMA workers, beginning with Mr. Witt, for the wonderful job they've done here in Alabama. I'd like to thank the people who've shared their stories with me, Pastor Homer and Shelva Jordan, as we stood in their Chapel Hill Baptist Church down there. I thank Bill and Gayle Reed, and Morris and Bonnie Rembert, and Phil and Cindy Rutland who are our hosts—we're on their property today. They are throwing an open house for us. [*Laughter*]

All of you know that we're looking at what remains of one of the deadliest tornadoes in Alabama's history, one of the most powerful tornadoes ever recorded in the United States. I've just come from a recovery center in Pratt City where I spoke with some other grieving families. I met a young man who was on his way to his wife's funeral. They were married just a year and a month.

When the Vice President came back from his tour here, he told me about the destruction, but this really is a place that has to be seen to be believed and understood. I want all of you to know, here in Alabama, that the entire country has been moved by this disaster, by its scope, by its sweep, and by the way that you have recovered and tried to fight through it.

Our country has prayed for and hoped for you and for your neighbors in Georgia. As always, I have been especially moved by the way people in the community have pulled together, have reached out to their neighbors whom they knew and their neighbors whom they did not know before this terrible tragedy struck, and I thank you for that.

I never cease to be amazed when I see people who have lost everything, who can still express their gratitude that they and their children and their neighbors are still alive and they have the ability to start again. Your community has pulled together. Your State has been here, and there is a responsibility that your fellow citizens throughout the country feel.

The reason we have a Federal Emergency Management Agency, the reason the Small Business Administration has disaster assistance, the reason we do all these things is because all of us recognize that from time to time in America things will happen that no community, not even one State, can handle on its own.

I am pleased that Federal assistance checks are already in the hands of Alabama residents who are repairing or rebuilding their homes or those who need temporary housing or medical care. I spoke to some folks today who hadn't received them yet, and I assured them that they would be there soon, and that if they aren't they ought to call us and let us know.

I know, too, that today the first disaster loans to businesses went out from the Small Business

Administration, about $600,000 worth of them. Also today I can say that we are making available all categories of public assistance funding for local governments and non-profit organizations to rebuild, restore, and reconstruct public facilities, including schools and infrastructure, and I think that's very important.

And I think its also important that we recognize that for all the courage and heroism and just plain old-fashioned resilience of the people, there are emotional and physical stresses associated with a disaster like this that go beyond the cost of the buildings blowing down and the homes blown away and the family letters and pictures that will never be seen again, even beyond the hospital costs of legs that have to be set and cuts that have to be sewn up. So we're authorizing a crisis counseling assistance and training program here to provide up to 9 months of community services and outreach to help people who need to be supported as they start trying to look to tomorrow again.

Finally, I talked to a number of people today who obviously can't go to work right now because of what's happened, who are concerned about their situation. Secretary Herman and the Department of Labor are going to provide over 3 million jobs for—temporary jobs to assist in the clean up and recovery. And I hope some of the people in this neighborhood who may be unemployed as a consequence of the tornado will be able to get some temporary work helping to put their neighbors' lives and their communities back together again.

Finally, let me say that our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, contacted the National Council of Churches about the loss and destruction to churches here, and they have pledged to help on a national basis to assist in the effort to rebuild and repair all the churches that were damaged and destroyed here in Alabama as a result of this tornado.

Let me just close with a special commendation for all the State and local emergency management officials, the search and rescue teams, the volunteers who have labored so long; the Governor told me about some of the horrible human loss just within yards of where we're standing. I thank the people in our military uniforms. Many of them have been here for hours and hours and hours without relief. I know that many of these relief workers have been working more than 18 hours a day to clear debris, to cut trees, to lift telephone poles. I would like to compliment your power company for getting the power back on within 48 hours and allowing some measure of normalcy to return.

I would like to thank the Salvation Army for providing the free meals and all the people that contributed food from all over America. I would like to thank the people who have provided quilts or medicine or other physical support. I would also like to say—Bill and Gayle Reed said something to me I think I ought to say to all of you—they said, you know, a lot of times in the last few days the most important thing they got from their friends and neighbors was just a kind remark or a pat on the back or an expression of support. And for all of you who have done that, I thank you.

My experience has been, from being Governor of a State with a lot of tornadoes for 12 years and then being President during some of the most profound natural disasters of the 20th century, is that the most important thing for people in trouble is that they know their friends and neighbors and family members are supporting them and that they have some concrete thing to look forward to tomorrow. We have to give people a way to look forward to tomorrow—a project, work to do, something that can be done to make a difference.

I'm always struck by the strength and bravery, the generosity of the American people at a time like this. The families I have seen today have reaffirmed that and I thank them. Back behind us over here in McDonald Chapel, the Open Door Church may lie in a rubble, but I understand that on Easter morning the congregation gathered on folding chairs and held a service in the parking lot. The Book of Isaiah has a verse that has particular meaning to me. I'll just leave it with you: "You were wearied with the length of your way, but you did not say it was hopeless; you found new life for your strength, and so you were not faint."

My friends, the road to recovery is long. Your grief and your pain are profound. It will take weeks, months, even years to rebuild all that has been destroyed. But the process of restoration has begun because the most important thing you have, your spirit, was not destroyed. And we look forward to working with you all the way.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the McDonald Chapel neighborhood of suburban Birmingham, AL, which was struck by a tornado on April 8. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Fob James, Jr., and his wife, Bobbie; former Senator Howell Heflin; State Senator Sundra Escott-Russell; State Representative John R. Hilliard; Mayor Richard Arrington, Jr., of Birmingham; Sheriff Jim Woodward of Jefferson County; Pastor Homer Jordan of Chapel Hill Baptist Church and his wife, Shelva; and tornado survivors Bill and Gayle Reed, Morris and Bonnie Rembert, Phillip and Cindy Rutland, whose mobile home was destroyed, and Marcus Coleman, widower of Colet Coleman.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Prevention of Nuclear Proliferation

April 15, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required under section 601(a) of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–242, 22 U.S.C. 3281(a)), I am transmitting a report on the activities of United States Government departments and agencies relating to the prevention of nuclear proliferation. It covers activities between January 1, 1997, and December 31, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 16.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Eduardo Frei of Chile in Santiago

April 16, 1998

President Frei. We're going to start this meeting, and I would like, first of all, to extend a very warm welcome to the President of the United States, to the Ministers and members of staff, and to the Ministers of my Cabinet and the advisers for Chile.

It is an honor, a pleasure, a source of pride to have you all here. We had a very pleasant visit to the United States last year, and we had the opportunity to get together in Washington to see the Congress, to visit some States, and at that point, I think we kicked off the beginning of our bilateral relationships. I would like to, therefore, extend a very cordial welcome to the entire delegation and to tell you that we are really proud to host the second Summit of the Americas.

We've been working very hard. We've done a lot of solid groundwork with the cooperation of the United States. And I think that this summit will be exceedingly interesting because we will not only be talking about the problems of democracy and trade but we'll be talking about topics that interest the person on the street, like education, justice, health, and concerns of poor people.

I would like to point out that we had a very lengthy meeting with the U.S. President. We talked with great frankness about bilateral topics. We went over almost every single issue in our bilateral relationship with a lot of sincerity and with a positive spirit. We have noticed that our relationships are going through a very special moment; there is a lot of richness in the agenda; it's very versatile with a lot of topics. And the Ministers that are present here will be—have signed about 10 different documents on the environment, cooperation, et cetera. And I believe that we are looking toward the future with an aim to building more open societies, more democratic societies, and to put an end to the marginalization of our peoples, and would like

to face squarely the big issues that are important at this point, like globalization, world trade.

I've told the President all that we've done in Chile since 1994, when we met at the first Summit of the Americas, and I've told him about all the efforts that we've put into channeling problems that arise in relationships and overcoming them. We're over the $7 billion of exchange. And obviously, there will always be a small amount of disputes or friction or conflicts, but the important thing is to find a way to settle these. And this is what we've been doing through the bilateral commissions. And it seems to me that the real launching of this commission in bilateral trade and agriculture will be very important. It has been a very basic issue. And I think that what we want is to have a very open relationship with the United States in which we will talk not only about trade but we'll be able to have a dialog on the entire bilateral agenda and especially the hemispheric and global topics.

For Chile, Mr. President, it's an honor to receive you and your delegation. I think that this meeting proves that we will be able to find a way to solve the big problems of the world, that we have a great deal of agreement on the issues that are facing us in the Americas, that we can continue to work for the future of our peoples.

And I thank you once again for your state visit that is beginning. We will be meeting once again this afternoon. We'll be visiting the field; we will be meeting with business persons; we'll be having a state dinner here tonight. Tonight you'll see our Parliament, which is one of the oldest Parliaments in the world. And then we'll go to Cerro Castillo, and we'll be able to talk about our relationships, our friendships, and about building the future together and improving the quality of living of our peoples. And this is what we're interested in. And at this point, I would like to give you the floor.

President Clinton. Thank you for making us all feel so welcome. I think it is clear that we have looked forward to this state visit for quite a long while, that we value greatly our relationship with Chile, and that it is getting broader and deeper, something for which we are very grateful.

We did, as you said, have a very good conversation this morning, and we went over a large number of issues—I think virtually everything that our Ministers wanted us to discuss with one another. And I would like to express my appreciation for all the work that has been done on the declaration we are about to sign and announce, because it's quite important. It shows a very broad-based relationship; it shows a maturing relationship; and it demonstrated the kind of partnership that I think will be critical in the years ahead, not only to our own people but to the hemisphere as a whole.

Let me also just say very briefly, I appreciate, more than I am capable of saying, I think, the work you have done on the Summit of the Americas and the preparation that your entire government has done, because it's clear that we're going to come out of this summit with two messages loud and clear. Number one, we are going forward with the process of hemispheric integration. And number two, we are doing it in a way that will change the lives of ordinary citizens in all of our countries. And that, I think, is the message we want the world to get, and we certainly want our own people to get.

So I am extremely appreciative of what you have done, how you have done it, and of the remarkable progress that our relationship is making. And for all that, let me say thank you. I also thank you for keeping my Ambassador here for the last few years, my old friend and colleague. [*Laughter*] He's kept me well-informed. And I thank you also for the work you've done especially with Mr. McLarty in his capacity as our special representative to Latin America. But we're well pleased, and I must say I was very impressed, with the document that all of you have produced, and I thank you for your hard work on it.

NOTE: President Frei spoke at 11:45 a.m. in La Moneda Palace. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to Gabriel Guerra-Mondragon, U.S. Ambassador to Chile. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Joint Declaration Signing Ceremony With President Eduardo Frei of Chile in Santiago

April 16, 1998

President Frei. Good afternoon. I would first like to emphasize that it has been a great pleasure to welcome President Clinton to our country, together with Mrs. Clinton and the distinguished delegation accompanying them.

In February '97, I had the honor of paying an extremely satisfying and productive state visit to the United States. I was given a particularly warm welcome in that country, demonstrating the appreciation and respect felt there for Chile. Today I'm gratified to be able to return that invitation and to receive you in La Moneda, the place, the house that belongs to all Chileans.

This exchange of visits reflects the new level of maturity that relations between our two countries have achieved. We share a common democratic vocation. Both the Chilean and U.S. economies are enjoying strong growth rates and are successfully confronting the challenges of globalization. Both countries are undertaking important reforms aimed at achieving greater social equity and equality of opportunity for our people. We belong to the same continent, and we are engaged in working together towards the establishment of a new hemispheric community.

I would like to recall here that it fell to our two countries to lead the preparatory efforts for the second Summit of the Americas, which will be inaugurated this Saturday in Santiago. We have achieved optimal coordination, facilitated by the support that we have obtained from many of our sister countries in the hemisphere.

This morning our Ministers signed an agreement between our two international cooperation agencies to support the fulfillment of some of the initiatives established in the summit plan of action.

I have to say that this morning we have had a long and productive meeting with President Clinton. It was a very frank, open, and candid meeting. We reviewed all the issues involved in bilateral relations. Each item of our bilateral relations, we discussed. And also, it is with great pleasure that I say that we found several common issues for the whole hemisphere, a commonality of ideas that allow us to work ever stronger together.

As well, we have signed a joint declaration. And this joint declaration summarizes everything we have discussed and all the issues in common. At the same time, in parallel, the Ministers held a meeting in which they signed seven agreements: one on education, on trade, investments, environment—protection of the environment, protection against disasters, information promotion—seven documents which embody our bilateral relations. And these documents involve very concrete, very specific subjects which affect and impact our common ordinary citizen in everyday life.

It has not been a meeting dealing with abstract issues, not at all. These issues are targeting an improvement of the quality of their lives, a struggle against drug traffic, and a series of promotion of information and exchange.

The visit of President Clinton is just beginning. In a short while, we will be visiting a district, at Comuna, where we will talk and have dialog with the citizens. Later on, there will be an evening with businessmen. Then, tonight, a state dinner, and tomorrow, President Clinton will visit Congress. After that, also, we will meet in Vina del Mar. And this visit is absolute proof of the consolidation of our relations, this that will be projected into the future that will make fluent our dialog and our interchanges.

Finally, I would like to say that Chile and the United States both, we are preparing together the road to the 21st century, a century in which we will be faced with enormous challenges; we will be faced with the globalization of markets, and thus we will be working for peace, for democracy, and for the dignity of man.

It is these values and these realities that bring us together. And it is that which will make the relations between both of us one of the present, but not so much of this present day, but rather a relation working for the future. And it is in this environment that we will open the second Summit of the Americas. It will be how the whole continent, how America will be facing next century.

Welcome once again, President Clinton, to this country, to this house, the home of the

President. Your historic visit is a point of tremendous inflection in our relations from here into the future.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Mr. President, members of the Chilean Government, members of our American delegation, ladies and gentlemen. Just over a year ago, it was my great honor to host President Frei at the White House. Now I come to Chile to build on our friendship, to deepen our progress in creating a better future for all our people.

As the tides of change have swept over our hemisphere over the past 15 years, Chile has set an impressive standard in strengthening its democracy, opening its economy, lifting its people from poverty. As Chile's stability and prosperity have grown, it has become a leader in our hemisphere and an even stronger partner and friend for the United States.

Today we resolved to strengthen the ties that bind us together and to harness the powerful forces of change to benefit all our citizens in the new century. We have created a new, broader Joint Trade and Investment Commission to keep our economic relations on a mutually beneficial path, by boosting prosperity and jobs in both our countries, addressing new areas such as electronic commerce, and resolving disputes when they arise. We look forward to concluding, as soon as possible, a new open skies agreement to help our trade literally take off, with better services, more flights, lower prices for passengers and shippers alike.

We addressed the crucial importance of strong financial safeguards and openness, a shield against the shock of market volatility. Our banking officials will be strengthening their cooperation and regulating banks that do business across our borders, which will improve financial security and increase the confidence of investors.

We resolved to work harder to extend the practical benefits of open markets and free trade to all of our people. In that regard, nothing is more important than education. I want to applaud you, Mr. President, for your commitment to education, both here at home and across the Americas. Building on the Fulbright agreement we signed last year, the United States and Chile will deepen our cooperation in education, increasing exchanges of students and teachers, developing high standards for learning and teacher training, bringing technology to every classroom, so that every child, no matter where he or she may live, can explore the world of information now available with the stroke of a computer keyboard.

And we have resolved to work together, through the Summit of the Americas, to help other nations advance their own reforms. This is truly a laudable agenda for which you, Mr. President, will long be remembered.

We have also signed a GLOBE agreement to help our children learn more about our environment. Through this program, Chilean students will be linked through the Internet to tens of thousands of other young people in 65 nations. Together, they will share information about science and ecology and learn how to help build a healthier planet.

We have also agreed to work together to create a pan-American climate forecasting system. We know from the last year that is more important than ever. By using the latest technology and skills, we can better predict and better prepare for disruptive weather systems like El Nino. We also agreed to work together to meet the challenge of climate change and global warming caused by growing emissions of greenhouse gases.

I applaud President Frei for affirming today that all countries have an important role to play. Developed countries must lead the way in reducing our emissions. Developing countries should participate meaningfully, also taking on emissions targets whenever possible. Together, we can chart an energy course for the future that allows both strong economic growth and strong environmental safeguards to go forward hand in hand.

I know this is a matter of some controversy throughout Latin America, and, indeed, throughout many developing nations. But I can tell you from America's own experience, for 30 years, every time we have sought to improve our environment someone has said, "Oh, this is going to slow the growth of the economy." And every time we have improved our environment, it has speeded up the growth of the American economy by creating new jobs in new areas, so that we see clearly that the steps we take to preserve and, indeed, to enhance our environment will, in fact, lead to broader, stronger, deeper economic growth. That is the path I hope and pray the United States and Chile will chart together into the future.

Mr. President, our increasing cooperation in all these areas and all the things that you mentioned is a real testament to the astonishing record established by Chile in the last few years in economic and in political terms. The leadership you are showing now in the hemisphere for peace and prosperity and freedom is a natural outgrowth of the leadership you have demonstrated and that the Chilean people have demonstrated within your own borders. It is altogether fitting that the spirit of hemispheric cooperation and the future orientation of our cooperation, which was established 4 years ago at Miami, should be carried on under your leadership here at Santiago.

It is clear to anyone who imagines the way the future should be that our burdens will be lighter and our strides will be longer if we move forward together. That is the promise of our growing partnership. And you have the thanks, the respect, and the admiration of the American people for your role in it.

Thank you, sir.

NOTE: President Frei spoke at 12:29 p.m. in La Moneda Palace. He spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Joint Declaration With President Eduardo Frei of Chile
April 16, 1998

On the invitation of the President of the Republic of Chile, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, the President of the United States of America, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton, made a State visit to Chile, April 16–17, 1998. The President of the United States was accompanied by his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and by a high-level delegation composed of Secretary of State Madeleine Korbel Albright, Attorney General Janet Reno, Secretary of Commerce William Daley, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, Director of National Drug Control Policy Barry McCaffrey, Counselor to the President and Special Envoy to the Americas Thomas "Mack" McLarty, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Samuel R. Berger.

In recent years, the United States and Chile have established solid and stable relations, based on a mutual commitment to respect democracy and human rights, open markets and free trade. This joint vision was reaffirmed during the State visit of President Frei to the United States in February 1997 and was strengthened on the occasion of the State visit of President Clinton. Today, the Presidents note with satisfaction the progress achieved in their bilateral relations, and state that this will have a positive impact on the quality of life of their peoples, and to that effect agree on the following Joint Declaration:

During working meetings held at the Palacio de la Moneda, Presidents Clinton and Frei reviewed the excellent state of bilateral relations, assessed progress made since the State visit of President Frei to the United States in February, 1997 and identified areas for future collaboration. As part of the high-level Consultative Framework begun by Presidents Clinton and Frei in 1994, they reaffirmed their desire to continue strengthening the comprehensive ties between the two countries.

The Presidents reiterate the political commitment of their Governments to ensure that the second Summit of the Americas, to take place April 18–19 in Santiago, contributes to strengthening hemispheric relations and to improving the development and well-being of the peoples of the Hemisphere in concrete and positive ways. In that context, they discussed the four major areas of the agenda: Education, Preserving and Strengthening Democracy and Human Rights, Economic Integration and Free Trade, and the Eradication of Poverty and Discrimination.

In addition to underscoring the importance of the Declaration and Plan of Action which will be adopted by the thirty-four Heads of State

or Government at the Summit, both Presidents agreed on the need to continue working together on the process of integration and free trade at the hemispheric level, reaffirming their commitment to the formal start of negotiations for the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) during the Santiago Summit.

The Presidents agree on the great importance of education as the most effective tool to attain full development, and in particular to reinforce the values of democracy, to give hope to our peoples for a better life, and to prepare our citizens for the 21st century global economy. Within this context, they welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Education, which will put technology at the service of creating opportunities for the poorest segments of the population and other disadvantaged groups, improve quality and standards, strengthen professional development of teachers and enhance cooperation in all levels of education. They also applauded the signing of an agreement by which Chile will join the "GLOBE Program" designed to link schools and scientists around the world through the Internet, so that information and experiences can be exchanged and so that students can make environmental scientific observations for use by researchers.

The Presidents agreed upon a program of cooperation between their respective agencies for international development, including jointly funded scholarships for training in such areas as combating poverty, strengthening democracy and education, and economic integration.

The Presidents reaffirmed the commitment of their Governments to achieve a comprehensive free trade agreement that includes both countries, and to adopt specific measures aimed at promoting the competitiveness of their respective countries in the global economy. In this regard, they noted with satisfaction the significant progress made in improving agricultural trade relations through the Consultative Commission on Agriculture created by the two Presidents last year. In light of the economic development achieved in recent years in both countries and with a view to promoting cooperation bilaterally and in regional and multilateral areas, including the World Trade Organization, Free Trade Area of Americas, and the Asia Pacific Economic Council, the Presidents agreed to establish the U.S.-Chile Joint Commission on Trade and Investment. This consultative mechanism will be comprised of the relevant Ministries involved in these topics and will be chaired by the Chilean Minister of Foreign Relations and the U.S. Trade Representative, who will meet at the time of the Second WTO Ministerial Conference to sign the appropriate agreement. The Committee will hold its first meeting prior to October, 1998. On that occasion, it will examine the full range of measures affecting the various dimensions of trade, including such new areas as electronic commerce. It will also discuss ways of addressing restrictive trade practices, and the consequences of such practices, in the context of a global economy.

The Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to the WTO, including full, effective implementation of the agreements reached in the Uruguay Round. Both countries pledge to continue promoting within the WTO full multilateral liberalization of trade, complementing negotiations already scheduled for the agriculture and service sectors.

On bilateral commercial matters, the Presidents underscored the value of completing as soon as possible the efforts to sign a bilateral Open Skies agreement in order to provide their citizens better air transport services and to facilitate commerce and exchange between their countries. They also agreed that their ministries should deepen bilateral cooperation by exchanging commercial missions and information on major infrastructure projects, as well as creating databases on commercial opportunities in each country.

The Presidents reviewed topics of common interest relating to recent world economic events, and recognized the importance of applying sound macroeconomic policies, including balanced budgets and financial transparency, which have enabled both nations to continue experiencing high levels of economic growth, despite difficulties in other regions of the world. In order to strengthen bilateral financial cooperation, United States and Chilean banking oversight authorities have signed a Statement of Cooperation to Enhance Cooperation in the Supervision of Cross-border Banking Institutions.

The Presidents affirm their desire to strengthen cooperation on the environment and sustainable development. They firmly support the principles and objectives of the Kyoto Protocol, and are convinced that the market mechanisms that it establishes will be a great help to mobilize

the resources of the private sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

They recognize the potential of the Clean Development Mechanism to become an important resource for attracting private sector initiatives and investment in clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, forests and other activities that reduce, absorb or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

They agreed that all countries should be involved in global efforts to address climate change, taking into account their common, but differentiated responsibilities.

Developed countries must set the example in reducing greenhouse gas emissions as a matter of priority, while developing countries should participate meaningfully in efforts to address climate change, for example, by taking on emissions targets whenever possible.

They commit their governments to work together on these issues in preparation for the next conference of parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change this November in Buenos Aires.

Concerned by the profound impact caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon throughout the Americas, the Presidents welcomed the signing of a Declaration of Intent to advance the launching of a Pan-American Climate Information System for Disaster Preparedness. Such a system will utilize the latest technology to help governments and private citizens better prepare themselves to be able to reduce the damages caused by climate-related phenomena.

They agreed to instruct their experts to explore the mutual benefit that could accrue to their respective nationals under a bilateral Social Security agreement that would eliminate double taxation of Social Security contributions and help improve benefit rights for people who have worked in both countries.

The Presidents also welcome the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between our Governments' authorities for the Promotion and Development of Public Policies for the Strengthening of Government Administration.

Presidents Clinton and Frei reiterated their commitment to continue their efforts to promote international peace and security, and cooperation with respect to compliance with agreements and treaties at the international and regional levels. In that regard, they applaud the work of the Defense Consultative Commission and the Global Security Dialogue. They noted the importance their Governments attach to policies designed to achieve greater transparency, both in terms of defense expenditures and conventional arms transfers, and to foster mutual confidence and security-building measures. In that spirit, the leaders support the adoption of regional transparency measures for conventional arms purchases.

Recognizing the importance of the Organization of American States, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary this month, and in order to make its modernization a reality, the Presidents instructed their Foreign Ministers to consult with their colleagues in the Hemisphere to establish effective means through which the OAS could be revitalized, with due regard to its relations with other hemispheric institutions, and to agree on a timetable for the review and reform to be completed.

The Presidents also reviewed the situations in Iraq, the Middle East and Bosnia, where Chile and the United States are participating with peacekeeping forces under the mandate of the United Nations, and they agreed to maintain such important joint efforts on behalf of international peace.

In their capacity as Guarantors of the Rio Protocol, the Presidents reviewed recent progress achieved by the Governments of Ecuador and Peru and continue to urge both parties to settle their dispute by the May 30 target date agreed to by both parties.

The Presidents agreed to continue negotiations to reach a prompt agreement on cooperation that will provide for coordination of efforts of both countries to take more effective and timely action against illicit traffic of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and their related crimes, as well as to prevent the abuse of those substances. All this, with the aim of reaching full implementation of the principles and policies contained in the Hemispheric Strategy adopted in the framework of the Interamerican Commission for Drug Abuse Control.

They also look forward to the early completion of a customs mutual assistance agreement to advance cooperation against fraud.

To facilitate and further advance our close ties, the Presidents agreed to establish a Bilateral Consultative Mechanism at the Foreign Ministry level, and to advance its operations through the appropriate diplomatic channels.

WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
President of the
United States of America

EDUARDO FREI RUIZ-TAGLE
President of the
Republic of Chile

NOTE: This joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary, but it was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks in a Discussion on Microenterprise in Santiago, Chile
April 16, 1998

Audience member. Mr. President, in your country, does microenterprise exist? Is there any special legislation for microenterprise? Do you have any support programs like we have here?

The President. First of all, yes, it exists. And in the more prosperous areas of America, people can simply go to established training programs, as you have described, and then they typically will go to work for someone else, or if there is a demand there, they can often—can get credit from a bank and borrow money.

But in the poorer areas of America—because, keep in mind, there are still some parts of our country which are much poorer than others, mostly in the inner cities of our large cities, in some neighborhoods, or in some of our rural areas, or with some of our native Indian populations, where people are living a long way from the center of economic activity. And the truth is that in some places there are special programs to give credits, but in most places there aren't.

Now, when Hillary and I were living at home in Arkansas, we helped to start a bank to lend to small-business people with a special program for microentrepreneurs, for very small loans to people who were poor but who had good skills, good reputation, clearly would pay the money back. And then when I became President, we worked to pass through the Congress a modest program—as Mrs. Frei said, within the budget—but a modest program to set up institutions like this all across America.

In addition to that, we have, through our foreign aid programs—we are trying to support people like you all over the world. I just—we visited in Africa with some microentrepreneurs just recently. And every year, through our programs, we make about 2 million small loans across the world to people like you, because you really are the future of all these countries. I mean, if people like you—the stories you've told, that is the future. And as far as I know, the worst repayment rate anywhere in the world for microenterprise loans—the worst—is 97 percent. Some countries that have terrible weather problems, poor people go broke if they have a bad storm and they can't pay it back, and it drops all the way to 97 percent. Otherwise, it's always 99, 100 percent; you know, the people pay it back. So that's why I wanted to hear your stories.

But on the other hand, I agree with Mrs. Frei that the most important thing is to first have the training, because if you have it in your head—still many people find a way to get into business, to save or to borrow or to whatever.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:20 p.m. in the San Miguel neighborhood. In his remarks, he referred to Marta Frei, wife of President Eduardo Frei of Chile. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Business and Community Leaders in Santiago
April 16, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. President, Mr. Fernandez, Mr. Riesco, Mr. Mayor, ladies and gentlemen. First, let me thank President Frei for the warm welcome that Hillary and I and

our entire delegation feel with our trip to Chile. I have looked forward to it for a long time.

To those of you who wonder about the commitment of the United States to this relationship, I would just note that in the audience here I am joined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Commerce, National Security Adviser, our Trade Representative, our National Drug Control Policy Director, my Special Envoy to the Americas, the Director of the Small Business Administration, the Director of OPIC, and five distinguished Members of the United States Congress, Congressmen Hamilton, Hinojosa, Rodriguez, Levin, and Portman.

We are glad to be here, and together we hope we will be able to persuade you by our presence, if not by my words, of the importance that we attach to our growing relationship with Chile.

I'm told that when this city was founded in 1541, it was called Santiago del Nuevo Extremo—Santiago of the New Frontier. On the verge of the 21st century, Santiago is again on that new frontier. It is a window through which we can see over tomorrow's horizon to a future of freedom and broadly-shared prosperity.

You are helping to build that future. The Summit of the Americas that President Frei will host this weekend is helping to build that future. Never before have the Americas been so united in values, interests, and goals. We have to keep that in mind as there are bumps along the way or inevitable differences as all human beings will have.

Chile and the United States are working hard to seize the promise of our shared values and interests and visions. The President has already outlined all the things we have agreed to do together today. No one can fail to be impressed by the economic performance of this great nation. Sound, consistent policies have produced high growth, low inflation, more savings, less poverty. Chile stands at the vanguard now of a new revolution of freedom and enterprise that is indeed embracing all of Latin America. Last year Latin America and the Caribbean combined had an average growth rate of more than 5 percent, with the lowest inflation rate in 50 years.

There has been an explosive increase in commerce within our neighborhood, and more than goods are flowing across our borders. Between 1991 and 1996, the number of minutes for telephone calls from the United States to South America tripled. In that same period, the number of planes that left Miami for Central and South America increased by over 50 percent. More and more young people from our countries are studying in each other's schools and colleges, enriching their lives and our cultures. Thanks to the new spirit of openness, capital flows across our borders are absolutely massive.

I remember it was just a month after our first Summit of the Americas in Miami in 1994 that the Mexican peso crisis struck. It shook the entire region. I'm sure some of you have a vague memory of it. [*Laughter*] But instead of closing their doors, Mexico, and indeed, all of Latin America, deepened their reforms. Now Mexico is back and is our country's second largest export market.

In general, Latin America has grown so strong that I think even a lot of you are probably surprised that this region has weathered the shock of the Asian financial crisis as well as the region has. It is a great tribute to those of you who have worked for and fought for and lived by smart, sensible, disciplined policies over the last several years.

Now, of course, we know that there is more to do. Just last December our Finance Ministers committed here in Santiago to tighten bank supervision, fight money laundering, and to provide new credit to the smallest entrepreneurs—the kind of people that President Frei just mentioned, that we met with a few moments ago in San Miguel. But every outside observer knows that Latin America has found its voice, its confidence, and its well-earned seat at the international table. The United States is delighted by the success of Chile and, indeed, all our neighbors. Our futures are joined like a cord that gains its strength from the many threads that are tightly intertwined.

Today, more than 40 percent of America's exports go to our hemispheric neighbors. Our exports in this region are growing more than twice as fast as anywhere else in the world. With three of our four top energy suppliers in the Americas, we can literally say that this hemisphere fuels our growth. Your prosperity lifts ours, just as a healthy United States economy helps you. The better you do, the better off we will be in our increasingly interdependent world.

The United States, therefore, will continue to work for more cooperation and more integration. At our summit this weekend, we'll take

the next step toward open trade in the hemisphere by launching comprehensive negotiations for the free trade area of the Americas, as we committed to do 4 years ago in Miami. All of you know, as the previous speakers have said, it will create opportunities for producers throughout the Americas; it will create new jobs and higher living standards for our workers; it will create better buys for 800 million consumers; it will help to lock in market reforms and democratic triumphs throughout the hemisphere.

And let me also say that it won't be the first time that the United States has launched its own involvement in negotiations of this kind without fast-track authority. Before they're done, we'll have it and it will work.

Let me also say, I am especially pleased that for the very first time we are creating a special committee to expand the role of environmental and labor groups in our trade deliberations. Those who want to protect and enhance the role of working people in the global economy, and those who remind us that we dare not sacrifice our children's planet for present profits should be heard. Their voices and their concerns should shape, but cannot reverse, our emerging partnership. We can grow the economy and not only preserve but indeed improve the environment. We can have prosperity and indeed enjoy more of it if we assure that it is broadly shared.

The benefits for America's workers and companies and consumers for expanding trade should make, in my judgment, a clear case for fast-track authority. I thank you for the support you have given it. I will continue to work hard with Congress to build support for fast-track. But let me say something to you that I am convinced of. There is not a majority in either House of the United States Congress for a return to misguided protectionism. What there is in the United States and in our Congress is what you have in every country in Latin America: there is a continuing and vibrant debate about how we're going to grow in the global economy in a way that gives everybody a chance to be a part of that growth and in a way that recognizes values that may not be built into today's market systems, like environmental preservation. And what I am doing my best to do is to persuade our Congress that walking away from what I believe to be a colossal opportunity with Chile and with the rest of our partners in Latin America is neither the best way to lift labor standards or to preserve the environment. But the debate is worth having.

So be patient with us. You may decide to have the debate yourselves before it's over in some other forum which may prevent some decision from being made as quickly as you would like.

Winston Churchill once said that democracy was absolutely the worst system of government except for all the others. [*Laughter*] He also once said in a moment of frustration with our country that the United States invariably does the right thing, after having exhausted every other alternative. [*Laughter*] So just stay with us; we'll get there.

But we must recognize, let me say again, that the combined force of globalization and technology have given us all economies in which a rising tide does not necessarily lift all boats. People without the right education, without training, without skills, without bargaining power can be stranded on yesterday's shore. And remember, some Latin democracies have not been that way all that long, and we cannot afford to have conditions in which ordinary people—the kind of people the President and I met with today—lose faith in the ability of this system, not only to produce wealth in the aggregate but to actually change their lives and to give their children better lives than they've had—if they work.

So that—we have to continue to see the enhancement and broadening of democracy and free enterprise together. As we encourage more business contracts, we must also strengthen the social contract. For every citizen must believe that he or she can have a place in the future we are building together. Of course, the only place to start in such an endeavor is with our children and their education. It is the best path out of poverty, and it is very good for business' future.

In order to do that, I might also add, we have to give every child a chance to go to school by making sure they're not in the workplace illegally. The United States is working with Central America to launch a new initiative to combat child labor while helping parents to find good jobs. Earlier this year, I asked our Congress for a tenfold increase in our investment to combat child labor abuses worldwide. I hope our neighbors will join us in that fight. Again, no one has a long-term interest in taking children who ought to be in school and putting them

in the workplace. And over the long run, that will diminish a nation's wealth, productivity, and strength.

We must do more to deepen democracy's roots with a free press, an honest, efficient judiciary, strong protections for existing laws on working standards. We have to work harder to reduce the gap between rich and poor, which has been widening in most industrialized and industrializing countries in recent years. We must continue the fight together against corruption, drugs, and crime. They erode the fabric of all our societies. And we must do more together to protect our environment.

Harnessing the forces of globalization to work for all our citizens is literally a challenge for every nation in the world. I just got back from a long trip to Africa, and I saw the same thing in every country. It will be a major focus of the Summit of the Americas, thanks to the leadership of President Frei. It will be at the top of the agenda when the G–8 countries meet in Birmingham next month, because everybody knows we have to figure out how to do this. Those of you in business can help us lead the way.

In the meeting that the President and I mentioned to you with small entrepreneurs and people who had gotten an education and worked their way out of poverty, a few moments ago, they didn't talk to us about the intricacies of trade, but they did understand education, child care, jobs, and access to credit. They will trust us in our respective countries to make these big structural decisions, and to make them right, as long as they feel that somebody is making some decisions that give them a chance to make their future along with ours. Working families in that sense, from Santiago to San Diego, may not be all that much different.

I want our nations to work together. And let me say, I have been profoundly impressed by President Frei's commitment to improve and expand access to education. Chile has doubled its social spending since 1990, largely for education—more classrooms, longer school days, better access for disadvantaged children. Our agreement on education is quite substantive. We've agreed to exchange more students and teachers, to develop higher standards of learning and teacher training, to work to bring technology into every classroom. And I can tell you again, on every continent where I have been where education is a crying issue, and many children in small rural areas have no access to it, I see how we can skip a generation of development, painful development in education, if we make the most of today's technology.

No country can do it without the active, aggressive partnership of the business community in every country, and I hope you will help President Frei in that regard. You can revolutionize the future of Chile's children if you do.

Let me just make one other substantive point. I have had great conversations with the President about what I believe is the imperative for all nations to work together on the problem of climate change. In many developing economies, there is a reluctance to participate in trying to meet the goals announced at Kyoto in Japan last year, because many people believe that poor countries cannot become rich countries without emitting more greenhouse gases and, therefore, that any attempt by the developed countries like the United States, who are already big offenders in the greenhouse gases we emit, must be some dark conspiracy to hold others down.

In the first place, that's bad economics, because the United States should want all of our trading partners to get wealthier. That is what is in our interest. No one is interested in that. But I can tell you this—I said before when the President and I had our press conference—for 30 years, every time we have sought to improve the environment in America, someone has stood up and said, "If you take this step to clean the air, to clean the water, to improve the health of the food supply, you will cost jobs and hurt the economy." And for 30 years, every single step we have taken to improve the environment has helped the American economy.

We can reduce greenhouse gas emissions worldwide and grow the economy, and we need to do it in the most comprehensive way possible. I respect very much the President's leadership on that, but I will make you a prediction that those of us—our successors, whoever will be sitting here 15 years from now at a speech like this, representing your group, will be overwhelming concerned with the condition of the global environment and what it does or does not do for their ability to make a good living. So I hope we will deal with this now when it will be less painful, instead of waiting until later when it will be much more costly.

Through bold commitments like the FTAA negotiations, to improve education, to work on

strengthening our justice system and freedom of expression, our new hemispheric alliance against drugs, more work to alleviate poverty, the Santiago summit that President Frei is chairing is going to make a difference to the future of the Americas. We will leave the summit with a clear message to the world that Miami was not a one-shot effort, that we are broadening our cooperation, but that we intend to move forward with more determination across a broader range.

I know that all of you will support that. What I ask you to do is to do all you can to make sure that everyone with whom you work and anyone with whom you have contact back in the United States understands what we're doing and why.

In 1811, as Chile struggled for its independence, it chose to dedicate its national flag on July 4, which is our Independence Day, at a celebration held by United States citizens in Santiago, long, long ago. On that day, the American flag and the new Chilean banner were raised together in many public places, entwined with one another. At last, our partnership can fulfill the potential of those two entwined flags, for our goals and our dreams are clearly intertwined. We can make them real for tomorrow's generation; we can make the Americas a model of hope and unity for the world. We can do it if we follow the lead that I have seen set by this great President and this great nation. And we're glad to be here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the Teatro Municipal. In his remarks, he referred to Alex Fernandez, president, Chilean-American Chamber of Commerce; Walter Riesco, president, Confederation of Production and Commerce; and Mayor Jaime Ravinet of Santiago.

Exchange With Reporters in Santiago

April 16, 1998

President's Visit to Chile

Q. Do you like Chile?

The President. Very much.

Q. Did you eat something special inside? Did you eat something special?

The President. No, no. I just had lunch, so I just had a Coke. And I was visiting with the people. It was very nice.

Q. Are you tired from all this week, these 2 days here in our country? Are you tired?

The President. Tired?

Q. Yes.

The President. A little, but I'm going to go back and get a little nap, and then I'll be fine tonight.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Kenneth Starr's going to keep investigating you, and Paula Jones says she's going to appeal——

The President. [*Inaudible*]—I've had a great time.

Paula Jones Civil Lawsuit

Q. What do you think about Paula Jones appealing, Mr. President? Are you disappointed that she's appealing?

The President. Oh, I don't have an opinion about it. You know, I don't have any comment about it. My comment is, I spent my day today with people who are interested in human problems and human promise and not so interested in politics. And I don't think I ought to be commenting on politics while I'm here. I feel good about what happened before, and I feel good about where we are, and mostly I feel good about the job I'm doing here for the American people in Chile. And that's what I'm interested in. I don't really have any comment on anything that they do.

Q. Will things dragging on hamper that, sir?

The President. No. No. I'm going to—you know, I'm going to do my job. And I'm not—it's an unusual political environment, but I'm just not going to let the politics get into my way. I haven't done it for 4 years; I'm not going to start now.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Do you think Ken Starr should wrap things up?

The President. I don't have any comment on that, either. I just don't—I shouldn't be commenting on domestic politics while I'm overseas. I'm here doing my job, and I'm thrilled by the people I've met and what I've seen, the reception I've received on behalf of the United States. And we're here to do important work, and that's what I'm going to do.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:22 p.m. outside the Teatro Municipal. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Tornado Damage in Arkansas and Tennessee
April 16, 1998

I was deeply saddened to learn this morning of the tragic deaths of two small children in Arkansas, as well as the deaths of two individuals from Dyer County, Tennessee. My heart goes out to their parents and families and to the many who have suffered in both States. The destruction of last night's tornadoes was swift and powerful, and the threat of another storm looms in its wake.

Disaster relief efforts began today at daybreak. James Lee Witt, the Director of FEMA, will provide me with an assessment of the destruction and FEMA is standing ready to respond if appropriate. The burden of recovery is heavy, but it will not be carried by these communities alone. Our thoughts and prayers are with the survivors as they mourn all that was lost and begin the difficult process of healing and rebuilding.

Statement on the Death of Pol Pot
April 16, 1998

The death of Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot has again brought to international attention one of the most tragic chapters of inhumanity in the twentieth century. Between 1975 and 1979, Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge followers transformed Cambodia into the killing fields, causing the death of an estimated 2 million of their countrymen in a brutal attempt to transform Cambodian society.

Although the opportunity to hold Pol Pot accountable for his monstrous crimes appears to have passed, senior Khmer Rouge, who exercised leadership from 1975 to 1979, are still at large and share responsibility for the monstrous human rights abuses committed during this period. We must not permit the death of the most notorious of the Khmer Rouge leaders to deter us from the equally important task of bringing these others to justice. And equally, we must renew our determination to prevent such atrocities from occurring in the future.

Now is a time to remember the victims of Pol Pot's murderous reign of terror and to underscore our determination to help the Cambodian people achieve a lasting peace based on respect for basic human rights and democratic principles.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Eduardo Frei of Chile in Santiago

April 16, 1998

Mr. President, Mrs. Frei, members of the Chilean Government, citizens of this great nation: On behalf of my wife, our administration, the Members of Congress and our entire party, I thank you for the warm welcome we have received. And I understand that I should thank you in advance for your patience because the great gathering of this coming week will probably create the biggest taco in your history. [*Laughter*] For those in our delegation who don't know, that means "traffic jam."

Mr. President, it was just over a year ago that Hillary and I hosted you and Martita for a state visit in Washington. On that trip you delivered a powerful address to a joint session of our Congress. Now I will have the opportunity and the honor of addressing your Parliament tomorrow.

The short time between our visits reflects the growing strength and the growing importance of our relations. Chile is admired in the United States and around the world for its natural beauty, its writers and artists, its athletes, its leadership in seeking peace in volatile regions, its remarkable economic growth and stability, and the bravery of your people in restoring longstanding democracy after two turbulent decades.

That Chile is host to the second Summit of the Americas shows the esteem in which your country is held in this hemisphere. It also demonstrates, Mr. President, the great respect you have earned among your fellow leaders who are proud to be coming here for this meeting.

Some see you, Mr. President, as a man of calm reserve; a civil engineer who, as you just said, expertly builds bridges to improve the lives of your fellow citizens. But it seems to me there may be another side to you. It is said that you love opera and the tango—hardly the stuff of dry engineering. [*Laughter*] And when you addressed our Congress last year, the first person you quoted was not some gray-suited economist but that great political leader Don Quixote de la Mancha. The words of the noble Don you selected go to the core of our shared values, so let me repeat them tonight: "Freedom is one of the most precious gifts Heaven bestows on man. All the treasure of Earth cannot equal it."

Mr. President, we have seen that like your father before you, you care passionately about the freedom of your people and about the least fortunate in your society. I'm sure your father was in your thoughts when, in your very first address as Chile's President, you pledged to bring hope and dignity to the poorest of your fellow citizens. You've worked hard to ensure that your growing prosperity will benefit not just the few but everyone. And Mrs. Frei deserves great credit for her active work on behalf of the poor, women and children, and Chilean artisans.

The United States wants to deepen our partnership with Chile across the whole range of challenges and opportunities we share, strengthening democracy, improving education, protecting the environment, preserving the peace, and yes, expanding trade. Our meeting today furthered all these goals. I know we will continue to do the same. So much is at stake. Working with the Chilean people and with you, Mr. President, is a great honor for me, my Government, and our citizens.

In the darkest days of the past year, when dissent was suppressed, when people were denied a meaningful vote and true leaders denied the chance to lead, the Chilean people never abandoned hope that one day things would get better. Now, because of your hope, the courage, the vision of your leadership, and your people, things are, indeed, better—much better. Better in a way that is a beacon of hope to people throughout this hemisphere, and, indeed—perhaps more than you know—throughout the world.

Now the United States and Chile celebrate together the precious gifts of freedom and prosperity, and our determination to support democracy and to advance prosperity all across the Americas and throughout the world.

For all that you have done and the reception we have received, and for all that we must do together for tomorrow, I am honored to invite all of you to join me in a toast to the President, the First Lady, and the people of Chile.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. in La Moneda Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Frei's wife, Marta.

Remarks to the National Congress of Chile in Valparaiso
April 17, 1998

Thank you very much. To the President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, to the members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, members of the Chilean Cabinet, members of the diplomatic corps, my fellow Americans, including members of our administration, Members of Congress, the Governor of Puerto Rico, ladies and gentlemen. First, let me thank you for the warm reception that Hillary and I, the Secretary of State, Secretary of Education, and our entire delegation has received not only here but by the people of Chile.

We are honored to be in this great nation, a place of marvelous gifts and well-earned accomplishments. Visitors here marvel at the beauty and extraordinary contrast of your landscape, from the desert north to the towering ranges of the Andes, to the mysteries of Easter Island, to the southern beaches where penguins brave Antarctic winds.

Your culture moves the world in poetry and prose and music and dance, in theater and films, haunted by the spirits of the past, enriched by dreams of the future. Your Nobel Prize-winning poets, Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, have moved readers everywhere. Neruda's words and rhythms still come alive on every continent; his echo still heard in internationally acclaimed Chilean works like the novels of Jose Donoso and Antonio Skarmeta.

Your economic success is admired the world over. Indeed, more and more other nations, whether developed or developing, want to be able to learn from your example. But over and above all those gifts and achievements, Chile possesses something older than the achievements, and perhaps even more valuable than nature's gifts—your devotion to freedom and democracy, a long and proud tradition.

Not so very long ago now, freedom-loving people everywhere in the world cheered and cheered when the people of Chile bravely reclaimed their democratic heritage. Our hemisphere's longing for democracy goes all the way back to George Washington and Simon Bolivar. Today, we work to claim its full blessings, for a strong democracy honors all its people, respecting their dignity and fundamental rights, giving them the responsibility to govern, demanding that they tolerate each other's differences in an honorable fashion. It honors its children, giving all of them the opportunity to learn so that they can live their dreams. It honors its poor, its ill, its elderly, offering them support, leaving no one without hope. It honors entrepreneurs with efficient and honest government, offering the chance to create prosperity. It honors its writers, its artists, and its press, ensuring freedom of expression, no matter, and perhaps especially, when it is painful to hear. It honors its soldiers for their commitment to defend the people, not to rule them. This principle was strongly championed by Diego Portales early in Chile's history.

Democracy is never perfect, but because it is open and free, it is always perfectible. In the words of our President Franklin Roosevelt, who tried so hard to be a good neighbor to Latin America, democracy is a never-ending seeking for better things.

At different points in this century, many nations of the Americas lost their democracy. Some of them lost it more than once. No one loves freedom more than those who have had it and lost it. No one prizes it more than those who have lost it and regained it. I know, here, I am in a room full of people who love freedom.

Freedom's victory now has been won throughout the Americas. With a single exception, the day of the dictators is over. The 21st century will be a century of democracy. To those anywhere in the Americas who would seek to take away people's precious liberties once again, or rule through violence and terror once again, let

us reaffirm President Aylwin's historic words at Santiago Stadium, "*nunca mas*." Never again.

This commitment has now gone beyond those words; it is written into solemn compacts among the nations of our hemisphere. Here in Chile in 1991, the members of the Organization of American States unanimously adopted a commitment that we will stand together to defend democracy wherever it is threatened. And last year the OAS amended its founding charter so that member nations may actually suspend any regime that overthrows a government elected by its people.

We have backed our words with actions. In Haiti, nations from across the Americas, joined by others, participated in the United Nations' sponsored effort to restore a democracy that had been stolen by military force. Nations of this hemisphere stood with the people of Paraguay to preserve democracy when it was threatened there in 1996. A message should be clear to all: We have made a decision that in this hemisphere—the people govern.

Now, having resolved to protect democracy, we must now do much, much more to perfect democracy. And we must do it throughout our hemisphere. Free elections are democracy's essential first step but not its last. And strong democracies deliver real benefits to their people. Across the Americas, there are still too many citizens who exercise their right to vote, but after the election is over, feel few benefits from the decisions made by their officials. This kind of popular frustration can fuel the ambitions of democracy's foes. As Chileans understand perhaps more clearly than any of their fellow Americans, there must be a second generation of reforms, beyond free elections and free markets, because for democracy to thrive, people must know that everyone who is willing to work will have a fair chance to share in the bounty of the nation.

Leaders must ensure that the political system, the legal system, the economic system are not rigged to favor those who already have much but instead give everyone a stake in shaping the future. A strong and thriving democracy requires, therefore, strengthening the rule of law, the independence of judges, the professionalism of police, for justice must be honest.

It requires a strong and independent legislature to represent all the people, even when on occasion, they do not do what the President would like them to do. It requires a constant campaign against corruption so that public contracts are awarded based on merit and not bribes. It requires bank and securities regulation to permit growth while guarding against cheaters and collapses. It requires a credit system not only for those who are obviously successful but for enterprising people no matter how poor or remote their conditions. It requires a robust, free press that can raise serious questions and publish without censorship or fear.

A strong democracy also requires protecting the environment and attacking threats to it. It requires good schools and good health care. It requires protecting the rights of workers, standing up for the rights of women and children and minorities, fighting the drugs and crime and terrorism that eat away at democracy's foundations, reaching out across all sectors of society—from the corporate executive to the grassroots activists to the working family—again, to ensure that everyone has a stake in shaping the future.

Tomorrow, democratically elected leaders will assemble in Santiago for the second Summit of the Americas, to launch the next steps in our united efforts to build strong democracies that deliver for all our peoples.

Chile is a shining star in America's constellation, stable and resilient with budget surpluses, a high savings rate, a high growth rate, low unemployment, and low inflation. But Chile also is trying to do more to give everyone that precious stake in the future.

In his first address after taking office, President Frei pledged to work for all of Chile's people, and he has. Poverty has been cut in half compared to 1990 levels. The quality of education has improved, especially in poorer areas. Yesterday President and Mrs. Frei took Hillary and I to a neighborhood in Santiago where we talked to ordinary citizens who had benefited from educational opportunities and business opportunities in ways that enabled them to change their lives. Your citizens are working hard to protect the environment, although just like those of us in my country, we've still got a ways to go.

The success of this nation goes beyond your borders. As President Frei noted last year in Washington, Chile was once known as the "end of the Earth." Now it is known as the forefront of progress, a leader for peace and justice and prosperity, a leader in this hemisphere and throughout the world.

I thank you for what democratic Chile has done to promote peace in El Salvador, Haiti, Bosnia, the Persian Gulf, between Peru and Ecuador. Your country served on the United Nations Security Council. You have taken the initiative to attack corruption and crime across the Americas. For all that, I thank you.

In the future, we must work together as we have in the past—indeed, as we have from the beginning—to strengthen our democracies and brighten our people's lives and broaden our children's futures. The friendship between the United States and Chile goes back to 1810, when our still-young Nation recognized your independence. Our friendship was off to a good start, but in all the long years and ups and downs, it has never been stronger or broader than it is today.

We are your largest trading partner, and trade between us has grown at an average of 13 percent a year since 1993. We want and will resolutely pursue a free-trade agreement that includes our two nations. And I will not be satisfied until we achieve that goal.

Chile and the United States must be full partners in the 21st century. We must also be full partners with like-minded democracies throughout our region. Tomorrow we will take a big step toward that full partnership as we begin the historic effort envisioned 4 years ago at the first Summit of the Americas in Miami, to create a free-trade area of the Americas by 2005. Meanwhile, as all of us know, the private sector is visibly proceeding as if it had already happened—expanding trade and investment, building successful joint enterprises in everything from mining to insurance to retailing.

We know that more trade and commerce will increase our collective prosperity. But we must resolve, again I say, to pursue that second level of reforms to ensure that prosperity is widely shared. As President Frei has repeatedly said, clearly, for every nation, education is the key. More than ever before as nations and as individuals, our destiny depends upon what we know and how quickly we can learn. In a world where the volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years, strong schools can give children the skills they need; it can also encourage their dreams. It can give people the power to overcome the inequalities between rich and poor. It can give nations the opportunity to fulfill their destiny.

President Frei and I have committed ourselves to work together and to learn from each other to improve the quality and the reach of education in both our nations. All of us—all of us—should apply our best efforts to that until we have done much better than we are doing now in every nation of the Americas.

As we travel into the 21st century, Chile can continue to rely on the United States as a friend and an ally. We have a great stake in your continuing success. You make the hemisphere safer and more prosperous. You are a strong partner in meeting our common challenges in this hemisphere and throughout the world.

Indeed, we welcome the growing strength of all nations that believe in freedom and human dignity and work for a brighter future for their people, so that the partnership between our two people, as we will see at the Summit of the Americas, is really part of a larger community of values sweeping across our hemisphere. As we all come together this weekend, we do so to make democracy work in ways that our people can feel, to advance the fight against common threats and for wider economic opportunity and deeper democracy. In the words of Neruda, our dreams become one.

On this very day, a consortium of universities from Chile, the United States, and other nations starts work on a powerful new telescope in northern Chile. Their astronomers will look up to the heavens, gazing deep into outer space and, therefore, deep into the past, so that they can learn things which will help us all to build a brighter future.

We must never forget our past, but we must use it. We must not use it to open old wounds or to rest on the laurels of escape from its worst moments but, instead, to quicken our imagination of a better tomorrow and to propel us toward it.

Together, let us resolve that when this summit is done, the leaders of the United States and Chile will not rest until we have shined the light of freedom and lit the spark of hope in every corner of our nations, in every part of our hemisphere. That is a worthy mission for the new century in the new millennium for two peoples who have loved freedom for a long, long time.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the National Congress Building. In his remarks, he referred to President of the Senate Andres Zaldivar; President of the Chamber of Deputies

Gutenberg Martinez; former President Patricio Aylwin of Chile; and Gov. Pedro Rossello of Puerto Rico.

Remarks to the Community in Casablanca, Chile
April 17, 1998

Thank you. Mr. President, Mrs. Frei, Mr. Mayor, Senora, thank you all for making Hillary and me feel so welcome in this beautiful town of yours. I want to say a special word of appreciation to all the young people who came out, especially those who made the nice signs in English. Thank you very much.

And I think we should give another round of applause to Los del Mauco for the *cueca*. The music was wonderful. Thank you very much. Also the wonderful band, Colegio Saleciano, from Valparaiso, let's give a hand to the band over here. [*Applause*]

You know, one reason we wanted to come here is that the house in the United States where the President lives is called *Casa Blanca*. And so when I came here today, the mayor said to me, "Here you're in my *Casa Blanca* and I am the boss. But when I come to visit you, you can be the boss in your *Casa Blanca*."

Let me say to all of you, you should be very proud of your country and your President, for beginning tomorrow Chile will host and President Frei will preside over the Summit of the Americas, a gathering of the 34 freely elected leaders of our hemisphere. And the real reason we are here is because we want you to know that we will do our best to discuss things and work together on things that will make your lives better.

We believe that the people of Chile, the people of the United States, the people of all the Americas will share a common future. And we want it to be a future with better education for all of our children, better health care for all of our people, a cleaner environment in every nation in the Americas, and a stronger, better, freer future in which we are all working together.

The United States is proud to be a partner and a friend of Chile, and I have enjoyed very much coming here today and seeing all of you. In the faces of the children, I see the future of the Americas, and I like what I see very much.

Thank you very much. *Muchas gracias.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:22 p.m. in the town square. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Manuel Vera of Casablanca. The President also referred to the *cueca*, a Chilean national dance.

Remarks at the Opening Session of the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile
April 18, 1998

President Frei, distinguished heads of state, leaders of the Chilean Congress, Supreme Court, members of the diplomatic corps, President Wolfensohn, President Iglesias, Secretary General Gaviria, Secretary General Ruggiero, Director General Alleyne; 4 years ago in Miami, we, the democratic nations of this hemisphere, met in the historic Summit of the Americas and pledged ourselves to a common future rooted in shared values, shared burdens, shared progress, and embodied in our call for a free trade area of the Americas by 2005.

I thank all my fellow leaders and their governments for their faithfulness to the summit process. I thank especially those who helped us to begin the Summit of the Americas in 1994.

Now we come together in Santiago. What shall we do? First, we should celebrate a new

reality in the Americas, the march of freedom, prosperity, peace, and partnership among our nations. Second, we should recognize that in all our nations too many people have not felt this new reality, and we should resolve to continue to work together until they do.

As we look back on the 3½ years since the Miami summit, there is much to be proud of, as our report, "From Words to Deeds" documents. The economy of the region has grown 15 percent. Last year average growth was 5 percent, and inflation was the lowest in 50 years. Chile and Uruguay have set the standard for poverty reduction and fiscal responsibility. Brazil and Argentina have slowed inflation to a crawl. Mexico has overcome adversity, transformed its economy, broadened its democracy. Bolivia has attracted new foreign investments and given its citizens a greater stake in their future. Venezuela's *Apertura* program is drawing investment to develop its energy resources. Peru and Ecuador, with a little help from their friends, are working towards a peaceful end to their decades-long border dispute. Central America, after years of strife, is well on the way to achieving its long-held vision of democracy and integration and growth. Caribbean nations are joining forces to expand their economies and to defend their shores against drugs and crime.

Together we have begun to create the free trade area of the Americas, a thriving market of 800 million people invested in each other's future, enriching each other's lives, weaving a tapestry of interdependence that strengthens every nation. The Americas have set a new standard for the world in the defense of liberty and justice through our collective commitment to defend democracy wherever it is at risk in our hemisphere. Concerted action by neighbors and friends already has helped to restore or preserve democracy and human rights in Haiti, Guatemala, and Paraguay.

Our cooperation in the fight against drugs has intensified, based on an understanding that drugs are a problem for all of us and all of us must work together to attack both demand and supply. We've adopted tough new measures against money laundering, forged the first multilateral treaty in the world to fight corruption, so that our societies will be governed by the rule of law. We have signed an historic convention to stop the illegal trade in guns in our hemisphere. We're working to advance the environment and public health.

Our people are healthier, our water safer, our air cleaner than 4 years ago. We are wiping measles off our hemisphere's map, dropping from more than 23,000 cases in 1994 to less than 500 so far this year. We're phasing out lead from gasoline. In 1996, 12 nations achieved this goal; by 2001, there will be 20. We're working together to promote a clean energy future and to meet the challenge of climate change.

I thank the efforts of many people in this regard, the Vice President and our Government and many in other governments throughout this hemisphere.

The Miami summit was a watershed in the history of our hemisphere, as the leaders of free people embraced a common vision of the future and a common strategy for achieving it. The journey from Miami to Santiago has been filled with progress toward our goals. Now, here, and on the road forward from here, we must do more to ensure that the path of reform and democracy and integration actually lifts the lives of ordinary people in all our nations.

Poverty throughout the hemisphere is still too high; income disparity is too great; civil society too fragile; justice systems too weak; too many people still lack the education and skills necessary to succeed in the new economy. In short, too few feel change working for them. Therefore, with democracy and free markets now in place, we must vigorously launch a second generation of reforms for the next generation of Americans. No priority is more important than giving our children an excellent education.

The fate of nations in the 21st century turns on what all citizens know and whether all citizens can quickly learn. Too often, resources are spent primarily on higher education for the few. We must all redirect our focus toward higher quality education for all. I especially thank Presidents Frei, Cardoso, Menem, and Zedillo for their leadership to give all our children a good education, with well-equipped classrooms, well-trained teachers, high standards, and accountability. This is a goal we must vigorously embrace and work hard to realize.

We will also work here to deepen democracy and respect for human rights. We know free elections are democracy's first step, not the last. We'll support the Organization of American States special rapporteur for freedom of expression; launch a regional justice center to train

judges and prosecutors; strengthen local government institutions to bring power closer to people; and in its 50th year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we will redouble our efforts to protect the human rights of all people.

We will also do more to defend democracy against its enemies, corruption, terrorism, and drugs. The new hemispheric alliance against drugs we will launch here will encourage, support, and improve all our national efforts to fight this common threat as partners. We'll continue to promote our common prosperity by launching negotiations for a free trade area of the Americas.

I want to underscore the importance we attach to a special civil society committee that will allow a broad array of stakeholders, within all our societies, the opportunity to make their voices heard. If economic integration in a global economy is to work for all people, we must demonstrate that we can have economic growth and lift labor standards for all our workers. We must demonstrate that we can grow the economy and preserve, indeed, even improve the environment. This civil society committee will give the peoples of our nations the chance to make that argument, and we must prove that we can make the argument work.

Let me reaffirm to all my colleagues, the United States may not yet have fast-track legislation, but we will. And I assure you that our commitment to the free trade area of the Americas will be in the fast lane of our concerns.

We must do that. After all, more than one-third of the United States growth in the last few years has come from expanded trade. More than 40 percent of our exports go to our neighbors seated on this platform. We can only continue to grow and create jobs in the United States if we continue to reach out to our neighbors for more open markets and freer trade. That is the fundamental observation that all of us share. Your prosperity lifts ours; our prosperity lifts yours. As more good jobs are created in any nation, as economies grow and people thrive, they become better partners for each other and for others around the world. Finally, we must take further steps to lift people from poverty and spread the benefit of progress to every member of society, from supporting women's full participation in the lives of our countries to providing loans to microentrepreneurs to broadening property ownership.

Now, this Santiago agenda is ambitious, but it is imperative. Again, let me applaud President Frei for his leadership, for bringing us all here together and for supporting such a broad and deep agenda. If we are to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges of our time, we must pursue this agenda, and we must do it together.

The first broad meeting of representatives from our hemisphere took place in 1889 in Washington, DC. Times were different and slower then. The delegates met for more than 6 months and toured around our Nation by train. The only bad thing was they had to listen to even more speeches. But in that meeting our predecessors, drawing on Bolivar's vision of hemispheric unity, set a precedent for cooperation that grew over 50 years later from that seed into the OAS.

Four years ago at Miami, we planted the seed of a new partnership for a new century. Now we can and must do what is necessary for that seed to grow—to grow in freedom and opportunity and cooperation. The Americas can be a model for all the world in the 21st century. That is, after all, the spirit of the Summit of the Americas and the promise of Santiago.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. in the San Cristobol Room at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to James D. Wolfensohn, President, World Bank; Enrique Iglesias, President, Inter-American Development Bank; Cesar Gaviria, Secretary General, Organization of American States; Renato Ruggiero, Secretary General, World Trade Organization; Sir George A.O. Alleyne, Director, Pan American Sanitary Bureau; President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil; President Carlos Saul Menem of Argentina; and President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico.

The President's Radio Address
April 18, 1998

Good morning. Although Hillary and I are in Chile, far from home today, our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas, who have suffered the latest in a series of tornadoes that swept through the South with ferocious force.

Yesterday I spoke with the Vice President, who was in his home State of Tennessee to see the damage, comfort the victims, and reassure the people of Tennessee that we're standing ready to help them in this time of crisis.

It's often been said that when disaster strikes, the things that divide us fall away as neighbor helps neighbor and stranger reaches out to stranger. We saw this just a year ago tomorrow in Grand Forks, North Dakota, when flood and fire nearly destroyed the entire city but could not destroy the spirit of its residents or stop its newspaper, the Grand Forks Herald, which just this week was awarded the Pulitzer Price for public service. We saw it again this winter in New England, when ice storms isolated entire communities but couldn't keep people apart. And we saw it in Florida and Georgia, Alabama and Arkansas, as tornadoes have torn towns to pieces but have not taken away people's hope.

These natural disasters have tested our faith, and tragically, they have taken many lives. But they've also reminded us of the enduring power of the American people to overcome calamity and the commitment of our national community to help people rebuild their communities. There are some challenges no individual—indeed, no community—can handle alone. When faced with them, all of us have a responsibility to act through our National Government.

For more than 5 years, we've worked hard to make our Government smaller but more effective, with less redtape and more flexibility. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we have reinvented Government so that it better serves the American taxpayers, more effectively targets its efforts, and can respond more quickly to crises.

There's no better example of what this new kind of Government can do than FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I was Governor of a State that had more than its fair share of natural disasters for a dozen years. So when I became President, I vowed that the Federal Government would help communities respond to the ravages of nature. When I took office, disaster relief became one of our highest priorities. And our efforts were led by the very able person who had headed our effort in Arkansas when I was Governor, James Lee Witt.

With the Vice President's commitment and James Lee Witt as its driving force, FEMA has gone from being a disaster itself, in the eyes of many, to becoming a model of disaster relief, recognized around the world for its skill, speed, and dedication. It used to take hours of waiting in line to register for assistance; now it takes only minutes over the telephone. It used to take over a month to receive that assistance; now it takes about a week. And our "one stop shopping" disaster recovery centers are helping people to rebuild their lives, their businesses, and their homes more quickly than ever.

We know every dollar spent on disaster preparedness and prevention saves two or more dollars in future costs. That's why FEMA also has launched Project Impact, building disaster-resistant communities through partnerships with the private sector, volunteer groups, community organizations. FEMA has already started seven of these pilot projects, and we're working to put a Project Impact community in every State by this fall.

I thank the dedicated public servants at the reinvented FEMA and other agencies for restoring citizen confidence in their Government simply by doing their jobs well.

One year after the flood waters receded, the work of rebuilding communities continues in Grand Forks. And FEMA is still there to help, just as it is there to help in tornado-ravaged Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.

In the worst of situations, we see the best in our citizens and our public servants. As I work here in Chile with other democratic leaders from our hemisphere at the second Summit of the Americas to bring the benefits of the modern world to all our people, it's reassuring to know that old-fashioned American values of neighborly care and concern will be a constant

in our lives, no matter what good fortune or new trials the 21st century brings.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on April 17 at the Hyatt Hotel in Santiago, Chile, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 18.

Statement on the Death of Terry Sanford
April 18, 1998

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Terry Sanford.

His long and distinguished career of public service as Governor, president of Duke University, and U.S. Senator helped build the New South and served as an inspiration to me and an entire generation of Americans. He stood for civil rights, education for all, and progressive economic development. His work and his influence literally changed the face and future of the South, making him one of the most influential Americans of the last 50 years. Most important, he was a wonderful man who fought for the right things in the right way.

I was lucky to count him as a friend. Our thoughts and prayers are with Margaret Rose, Terry Jr., Betsee, and his entire family.

Closing Remarks at the Summit of the Americas in Santiago
April 19, 1998

President Frei; fellow leaders of the Americas; First Ladies; distinguished Presidents of Senate, Chamber of Deputies, Supreme Court; members of the diplomatic corps; ladies and gentlemen of the Americas; let me say first to you, Mr. President—and I know I speak for all of us here—we thank you and Mrs. Frei and your entire team for the warmth of your welcome, the wonder of your country, and the genuine leadership you have brought to this Summit of the Americas. Thank you very much.

At our first summit in 1994, we agreed on a common vision of a democratic, prosperous, peaceful, united hemisphere for the 21st century. We also formulated a comprehensive agenda to help us to realize that vision, an agenda to strengthen our democracies, tear down trade barriers, improve our people's quality of life.

Our journey from Miami to Santiago, as we have often said, was from words to deeds. Still, for all our progress, we all admit that too many of our citizens have not yet seen their own lives improved as a result of our participation as free nations in the global economy. Therefore, we have committed ourselves here to a second stage of reforms designed to bring the benefits of freedom and free enterprise to ordinary citizens throughout the Americas.

As was the truth in Miami, it is so here today: The real work of Santiago begins as we leave. And until we meet again in Canada, we must work every day to keep the commitments we have made to each other and to our people.

First, we must continue to stand fast for democracy for our entire hemisphere, with no holdouts and no backsliders. We must support the integrity of the electoral process. We welcomed and participated in the restoration of democracy in Haiti. We supported its preservation in Paraguay. We now must support the OAS and CARICOM as they support the people of Guyana in the integrity of their electoral process. We must support our new special rapporteur on freedom of expression and work to prevent violence against journalists; get our new hemispheric justice system up and running; implement the OAS Illegal Firearms Convention to help to stop firearms from falling into the wrong hands; adopt the laws necessary to make our unprecedented anticorruption convention a reality. And most important, we must move aggressively to establish our alliance against drugs, so that we will have a more genuinely collective

effort to protect our people against narcotrafficking and drug abuse, violence and organized crime.

Second, we must continue to bring the free economies of the Americas together. Today we launched comprehensive negotiations for a free-trade area of the Americas and vowed to make concrete progress toward that goal by the year 2000, including greater transparency in government procurement and banking operations, a commitment to free trade in cyberspace, and steps to facilitate business, such as customs coordination.

And as we improve the climate for business contracts, we know we must also strengthen the social contract. The civil society committee we have established is designed to give all the voices of society the opportunity to be heard in shaping the new free-trade area of the Americas. We want more trade and better working conditions, more growth and a cleaner environment.

The entrepreneurs of the information age can prosper in a way that increases opportunities for all who are willing to work hard. And we can reap the benefits of economic change and meet the challenge of climate change.

Finally, we have made it our mission to give our people the tools they must have to succeed in the new economy: opening the doors of learning to all our children; doing more to lift our people out of poverty, supported by billions of dollars in new lending commitments for microenterprise and health care from the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

By the time we meet again, we should resolve that all our small entrepreneurs, especially our women, should have access to the loans they need to get their businesses off the ground; that poor urban and rural citizens should be able to gain titles to their property; that we should eradicate measles from this hemisphere; and most important, that millions more of our children will be in school, not on the streets. We should achieve an 80-percent completion rate in primary school as we work toward our goal of 100 percent by the year 2010. Our children, after all, will have more to say about the future we are trying to create than any of the rest of us.

The people of the Americas, as the President of Uruguay pointed out to us yesterday, have launched a profound revolution in the last few years, a revolution of peace and freedom and prosperity. Here in Santiago, we embrace our responsibility to make these historic forces lift the lives of all our people. That is the future we can forge together. It is a future worthy of the new Americas in a new millennium.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building. In his remarks, he referred to President of the Senate Andres Zaldivar, President of the Chamber of Deputies Gutenberg Martinez, and Justice Roberto Davila, President of the Supreme Court of Chile; and President Julio Maria Sanguinetti of Uruguay.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing

April 19, 1998

Three years ago today the people of Oklahoma City suffered the worst act of terrorism in our country's history. It was an attack not just on the people, a city, a State, a nation, but on what we stand for, how we govern ourselves, and the values we live by. During that time, we have worked to bring to justice those who were responsible for this crime. And during that time, all America has stood by the people of Oklahoma City as they have worked to rebuild their lives. Today, once again, our thoughts are with the families of the 168 people whose lives were tragically lost. Their courage and the resilience of Oklahoma City has shown us all the full meaning of community.

Remarks on Congressional Action on Tobacco Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

April 20, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Today Congress returns to work and to its obligation to act on the most critical public health threat to our children. Over the next 5 weeks, this Congress has an historic opportunity to pass bipartisan, comprehensive legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. We must not let this opportunity slip away.

The facts are plain as the stakes are high: 3,000 children begin to smoke every day, even though it's illegal in every State, and 1,000 will die earlier because of it. All these children have been targeted by a massive, multimillion-dollar media campaign that preys on their insecurities and their dreams.

For decades, we now know from their own documents that tobacco companies targeted children; and for decades, the industry denied it. Now, the tobacco industry once again seeks to put its bottom line above what should be our bottom line: the health of our children. In today's newspaper, the lead lobbyist for the tobacco industry says, and I quote: "We are fighting for our life." Well, let me be clear: We are fighting for the lives of our children; we are fighting for the public health; and we are fighting against predatory practices by tobacco companies that have targeted our children.

In the days to come, the tobacco industry will doubtless raise objection after objection and will work behind closed doors to persuade Congress to pass half measures that will not reduce teen smoking. But I believe the majority of the American people and, indeed, the majority of Congress, members of both parties in Congress, will see this for what it is, a tobacco industry smokescreen.

I ask Congress and the American people to focus on the real opportunity now within our reach. Over the past 5 weeks, Congress must move forward—over the next 5 weeks, Congress must move forward on comprehensive bipartisan legislation to reduce teen smoking by raising the price of cigarettes, putting into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, and imposing penalties on the industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to children. We can do that and protect the tobacco farmers at the same time.

The legislation now moving through the Senate, authored by Senator McCain, which was voted out of committee on a nearly unanimous bipartisan vote 3 weeks ago now, is a strong step in the right direction. This is not a time for half measures; that simply won't reduce teen smoking, and it will only play into the tobacco industry's hands. It is a time for the kind of comprehensive approach to the problem that Senator McCain's legislation takes.

We have an opportunity and an obligation now to put aside politics, to turn aside the pleas of special interests, to act in the interest of the health of generations of our children. I call on Congress to do so, and I look forward to working with them in good faith over the next few weeks.

Q. The suggestions that Speaker McCain—rather not, McCain—pardon me.

The President. Is he running for Speaker? [*Laughter*]

Q. No, but perhaps he should. Speaker Gingrich wants to water down the bill, and House Republicans—there have been those suggestions. What's your reading of Speaker Gingrich's position, and what position should he take?

The President. Well, let me say, before his recent comments I had been encouraged, because he basically said that he would not permit us to take a stronger position than he did. I was concerned by his reported comments; you know, I wasn't here in the country. I didn't hear them; I didn't see the context of them. But I certainly hope that he will return to his former position.

We need this to be a bipartisan effort. We need everybody working together. And we can do this. We can work through all the differences that are out there, and we can pass a bill that will clearly, dramatically reduce teen smoking. We can do it. And we got fresh evidence from the Journal of the American Medical Society—American Medical Association, showing that the role of advertising on children and their smoking habits has been even greater than peer pressure. We've got all this evidence out there, and we

know what to do; we know how to do it; we can do it. And I'm just hoping and praying that we will.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:13 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the Energy Star Buildings Label Program

April 20, 1998

I extend my congratulations to the owners and managers of three of America's greatest landmark buildings for pledging to dramatically cut their energy use—an important step to protect our environment. The Empire State Building and the World Trade Center in New York and the Sears Tower in Chicago are long-time symbols of American enterprise and ingenuity. Today they become symbols of leadership and responsibility in ensuring that our Nation tackles the challenge of global warming. These skyscrapers are again hitting new heights by leading the way in curbing the pollution that contributes to global warming.

These American landmarks are charter members of the administration's new Energy Star Buildings Label program—a vital part of our plan to put the Nation on track to curb global warming. Their owners are voluntarily committing to cut their energy use up to 30 percent, thereby reducing the burning of fossil fuels and the related carbon dioxide pollution that causes global warming. These buildings will save energy, save money in electricity bills, and protect the true bottom line—the environment we leave our children.

I call on all commercial building owners and managers across our Nation to take the same responsible, commonsense, cost-effective step to help meet our most pressing environmental challenge. If all commercial buildings became Energy Star Buildings, we would save $25 billion a year and achieve over 10 percent of the carbon dioxide reduction needed to meet our Kyoto target.

I am sure the American people join me in thanking the following building owners and managers who have signed up as charter members in our new Energy Star Building Label program: the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; the Helmsley-Spear, Inc.; the Rockefeller Center Management Corp.; TrizecHahn Office Properties, Inc.; LaSalle Partners; the Durst Organization; Amerimar Enterprises, Inc.; MagneTek, Inc.; the Trane Company; Rudin Management Company, Inc.; Tooley and Company; Cushman and Wakefield; Harwood Pacific Corporation; and the General Services Administration.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Education Legislation

April 20, 1998

Dear Mr. Leader:

As you consider H.R. 2646 this week, you will have the opportunity to vote for the first time on a version of my proposal to help build and modernize more than 5,000 schools across America. I am writing to ask for your support in this important effort and for your opposition to the expanded Education IRAs in the bill.

Never before have the education infrastructure needs of the Nation been so great. In order to accommodate record enrollments, move to smaller class sizes, repair aging buildings, take advantage of new technologies, and better educate children with disabilities, States and localities are faced with unprecedented construction and renovation needs. The Federal Government helps build roads, bridges, and other infrastructure projects, but none of that will matter much if we let the education infrastructure come

crumbling down on our children. We must be part of the solution.

I understand that Senator Moseley-Braun will offer an amendment that would replace the IRA provisions with a proposal to allow communities to issue nearly $22 billion in bonds for modernizing public schools. Because bond purchasers would receive interest payments through a Federal tax credit, communities' costs would be reduced by one-third or more. A vote for the amendment is a vote for safer, state-of-the-art schools that will open doors to the future for our children.

The IRA provisions, which provide tax benefits for elementary and secondary education expenses, are both bad education policy and bad tax policy. Instead of targeting limited Federal resources to build stronger public schools, this proposal would divert needed resources from public schools. In addition, the expanded IRAs provide little financial assistance to average families, disproportionately benefiting the highest-income taxpayers. For these reasons, and because of other potential amendments that may be adopted, I would veto this bill.

Our children deserve schools they can be proud of. I urge you to help our schools provide a learning environment that will prepare our children for the challenges of tomorrow by supporting the Moseley-Braun amendment, and opposing the expanded Education IRAs.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Trent Lott, majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, minority leader, United States Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Lithuania-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

April 20, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on January 16, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activity more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including "white-collar" crime and drug-trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; locating or identifying persons or items; serving documents; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and rendering any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 20, 1998.

Remarks on the 1998 Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters
April 21, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. In the coming weeks, Congress will be making an awful lot of important decisions about how to best prepare our children and our Nation for the 21st century. First, we have an historic opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. The legislation would put an end to the tobacco industry's calculated, multimillion-dollar media campaign to hook our children early to the deadly habit of smoking.

For years, the cartoon character Joe Camel was the star of their efforts to create a new generation of customers for cigarettes, what the tobacco industry euphemistically called "replacement smokers," what most of us call our children. Even as the executives denied they were targeting children, Joe Camel became as recognizable to them as Mickey Mouse.

Now, some in Congress say that teen smoking has nothing to do with Joe Camel. Medical science and common sense makes it plain: Teen smoking has everything to do with Joe Camel, with unscrupulous marketing campaigns that prey on the insecurities and dreams of our children. Indeed, a recent study by the American Medical Association found that over a third of our young people who try cigarettes do so because of advertising and promotion and that Joe Camel was the overwhelming favorite among 12- to 15-year-olds.

The industry has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on such marketing campaigns, plainly not designed to appeal to adults. It is time to end this story once and for all. So again I say to Congress, now is the time to pass strong bipartisan tobacco legislation. And again I say, I hope that both parties will work together for the benefit of our children.

Today is an extremely important day for the future of public education in America. Soon the United States Senate will be faced with a clear choice: whether to modernize 5,000 schools and strengthen educational opportunity for all children or offer families about a $7 tax rebate that would barely cover the cost of schools supplies and, in the process, would weaken our national commitment to education.

Above all, the information age is an education age. And the most important thing we can do to strengthen our country for the 21st century is to give our people the best education system in the world. In our balanced budget, I propose a plan that would help us to do that. It would help all Americans—teachers, parents, students, principals—bring a revolution of standards, accountability, and choice to our schools.

I am committed to seeing that our students master the basics with national standards and an exam to measure those in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math; to reduce class sizes in the early grades to an average of 18; to encouraging public school choice, charter schools; and to ending social promotion. Making sure that every child in America has an opportunity to learn in a modern, safe, state-of-the-art school is also a centerpiece of our plan.

The need is great. With the number of school-age children at a record high and growing, schools across the country already are at or beyond capacity. One-third of our schools need to be modernized. Nearly half don't have the wiring to support basic computer equipment. The Federal Government helps to build roads and bridges and other infrastructure projects because they are in the national interest. But none of that will matter if we do not see that our national interest in an adequate education infrastructure is also preserved.

Today Senator Carol Moseley-Braun will offer an amendment that will help communities raise the funds to modernize 5,000 schools. If we want our children to be prepared for the 21st century, they ought to have 21st century schools. I urge Congress to adopt the amendment right away.

Today the Senate will also vote on the wrong way—an ill-advised tax incentive for elementary and secondary expenses. The proposal is bad education policy and bad tax policy. It won't do anything to strengthen our schools and, in fact, would weaken public education by siphoning limited Federal resources away from public schools. The $1.6 billion proposal would do very little for average families, offering an average of $7 in tax relief for parents of the 90 percent of our children who are in public schools and

$37 for the parents with children in private schools. It would disproportionately benefit highest income taxpayers; families who are struggling to make ends meet would never see a penny of it. It would short-change our children.

The right way to fix the schools is to fix them not walk away from them. We have 600 days left before the turn of the century. We have to prepare our children for it. We should begin with protecting their health and giving them the best schools in the world.

I'd like to ask the Vice President and Senator Daschle and Mr. Gephardt to make some remarks. Thank you.

[*At this point, Vice President Albert Gore, Jr., Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle, and House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt made brief remarks.*]

Cartoon Characters in Advertising

Q. Mr. President, do you think that other cartoon characters used to market other products that potentially are dangerous to children, like beer, should be outlawed as well—the frogs in the Budweiser commercial, for example?

The President. I think that, by an order of magnitude, what we saw with the tobacco marketing is far greater in its impact on children and in its destructive capacity. And so I don't want to be deterred by focusing on other things when the business at hand is to pass this tobacco legislation. I don't think there's any—no other thing I can think of compares with what has been done there in terms of the destructive impact on our children and their health.

And also, I would say, based on all these documents which are coming out now and all these lawsuits—the latest one in Minnesota—it appears unambiguous that they were designed to do just what they did, which was to appeal to children.

Q. Mr. President, the tobacco companies——

Bipartisan Agreement on Tobacco Legislation

Q. Mr. President, how do you expect to get bipartisanship when you bash the Republicans and they bash you with the kind of rhetoric that we've heard here today?

The President. Well, first of all, I haven't bashed all the Republicans. Senator McCain—I bragged on the bill that came out of his committee, 19 to one. I talked—I called Senator Lott a few days ago and said that I very much wanted to get this bill passed.

What has caused our concern here is this apparent dramatic change in the statements made by Republicans about this. I mean, it wasn't so very long ago when the Speaker said that there's no way in the world that I could ever be for a more progressive tax bill—tobacco bill than he would be for. And I, frankly, loved hearing that. I don't mind sharing the credit for this. I don't want this to be a partisan thing; I want this to be an American thing.

Let's look what had happened here. All of us have been talking about trying to get bipartisan agreement on this. The tobacco industry says they don't like the McCain bill, and they refuse to negotiate any further, and they're fighting for their life, and this is war. And all of a sudden, we get different public statements coming out of people in important positions in the Republican Party.

I still believe and hope that there will be enough Republicans to make a genuinely bipartisan effort to pass sensible, sound, strong legislation. And that is my commitment. That is all of our commitments. We are responding to events as they have unfolded. But I would remind you that what sparked all this was the bipartisan action of the Senate committee. That is what I have lauded, and that is what I want.

Education Legislation

Q. Mr. President, regarding the education bill, sir, you seem to be unwavering over the vouchers issue. The Republicans have indicated they're going to be unwavering on the vouchers issue. Isn't the reality that there probably isn't going to be an education bill this year, over this issue perhaps?

The President. Well, I hope not. This may be just the opening foray, but I think a lot of them are genuinely opposed to the concept embodied in Senator Carol Moseley-Braun's bill. That is, they believe it's okay for Congress to invest money in highly specific local transportation projects but not to give even the most general kind of support for our education infrastructure.

Now, during all the time I've been President, when we had those tough budget years, I always tried to provide enough room for there to be some increase in infrastructure for transportation. But I believe the infrastructure of the nineties will be the superhighway that carries information, and I believe the people that can travel it will be those that have a good education

not the finest vehicle. And so, to me, when we've got cities with the average school building being 65 years old, when we've got small communities like the one I visited in Florida with 17 trailers out back of the main school building where the kids are going to school—this is a national infrastructure issue. And I think it's important.

Now, on this education IRA, I think the real thing you have to ask yourself about that is this: Does it make sense, when the Federal Government only spends about—provides about 6 percent of the total education budget of the country and when everybody recognizes we need more general investment—does it make sense to take $1.6 billion and put it into a program that will give the average public school parent 7 bucks? Let's assume the Republicans who favor more private school education are right—give the average public school parent 7 bucks to pay tuition to a private school? And for those that already have their kids in private school, if they're middle class families, give them an average of $37 a year?

I think the $1.6 billion would be far better spent funding charter schools, funding school standards programs, funding the master teacher program, and helping to fund this school construction program. That's what I believe. I don't think it's even close. If they believe these programs are so great, then they ought to be out there in every city and every State in the country making this case instead of using the limited Federal money we have which ought to be spent to benefit the largest number of people in the most impactful way.

Q. Mr. President, the tobacco companies——

Transportation Legislation

Q. [*Inaudible*]—fails to lower the spending levels in the transportation bills, will you veto the bills? And if not, why not?

The President. Well, first of all, the transportation bill has not yet passed; it's going into conference. I have a lot of problems with it, including the dropping of the provision for a tougher DWI standard in the House bill. But I think it is imperative that we wind up with a transportation bill which increases our investment in transportation but does not do so at the expense of education, of research—medical research—the environment, all the things that are also important to our future, on the one hand, and on the other hand, that doesn't run away from our Social Security first commitment on the surplus.

And so I'm going to do my best to fashion that sort of infrastructure highway bill. And I am concerned that the bills, as passed, are disembodied from the budget. They don't have any relationship with all the other pieces in the budget and, at least on their surface, appear to be far in excess of anything we can afford and still continue our commitments in education and honor Social Security first.

But this is a process, and we're not there yet. We're not to the point yet where we have to make the discussion you said.

Education Legislation Veto

Q. Do you expect that you can get anything done as long as Congress meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays?

Q. Would you veto an education bill if it included both the Coverdell accounts and the school construction money you want?

The President. Yes, yes.

Tobacco

Q. Mr. President, Speaker Gingrich yesterday said you sent the wrong signal to children by smoking a cigar when you're celebrating. How would you respond?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the only time I've done that since I was President was when we got that young man out of Bosnia. And I think he's probably right about that. I think he's probably right about that. But let me say, I do not—I think to contend that that isolated event has a bigger impact on children than these millions of dollars of deliberately calculated ads—billions—is just a way of avoiding taking responsibility for doing the right thing.

Now, secondly—you know, he made another point with which I agree, which is that there is too much—there are too many young actors and actresses in alluring movies in Hollywood making smoking look alluring again. But we've been talking about that for 2 or 3 years. The Vice President, I think, has already had two meetings with people in Hollywood; I have voiced the concern publicly and privately. I agree with that.

But these things get—said in the context in which he said it, it was like to let them off the hook for taking responsibility for passing tobacco legislation and making cigarettes both more expensive for kids to buy and then using

the money to deal with the health care consequences and to fund an antismoking advertising campaign that they know would be effective. And I'll tell you one—I'll bet you anything that in addition to their previously effective advertising campaigns, we'll be treated to another big ad campaign from the tobacco industries surrounding this before you know it.

So you can say all these things, but none of us should ever, ever be guilty of that. We can point the finger at others, but no amount of finger-pointing at others, by the President or anyone else, will ever absolve us of our own responsibility to push the public interest. And that's what I'm trying to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:23 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. During the exchange, he referred to Capt. Scott O'Grady, USAF, an F–16 pilot shot down and subsequently rescued in Bosnia in June 1995.

Memorandum on Streamlining the Granting of Waivers
April 21, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Streamlining the Granting of Waivers

Five years ago, the Vice President asked you to create reinvention laboratories in your departments and agencies and to streamline the granting of waivers of internal agency rules within them so the laboratories could more effectively promote innovation. These waivers—delegations of authority to deviate from existing internal agency policies and procedures—are often sought by front-line employees who are trying to make their operations work better, cost less, and get results that Americans care about. The Vice President and I emphasized such measures in the Blair House Papers last year, when we encouraged you to delegate more power to front-line employees to unlock the enormous potential of the Federal workforce.

Your departments and agencies have responded, and Federal employees have used waivers to facilitate innovation and provide excellent customer service. For example, the Coast Guard marine safety programs have increased managerial flexibility for field commanders to waive unnecessary requirements that had previously accounted for over one-half million work hours annually. The Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service's Tort Claims Adjudication Team used a waiver to reduce the processing time for tort claims of less than $2,500 from 51 days to 8.

Based on these experiences, I am directing you, where you determine that it is appropriate, to adopt some of the best practices developed by agencies. These best practices include the following characteristics:

1. Waiver requests are acted upon within 30 days or less. After 30 days, the originating entity within the agency can assume approval and implement the requested waiver.

2. Those officials having authority to grant or change internal agency rules can approve waiver requests, but only the head of an agency can deny a waiver request.

3. Officials who have the authority to grant waivers are encouraged to identify potential waiver opportunities and extend waivers to their own agencies.

The Vice President's team at the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) is ready to assist you in developing a waiver process based upon lessons learned and best practices from agencies that have experience with waivers. Some of you already have this type of waiver process in place for reinvention laboratories. I direct you to take every opportunity to extend this process throughout your agency.

You should report to the Vice President on actions taken to implement this memorandum by July 1, 1998.

This memorandum does not apply to waiver requests by grant program recipients nor does it apply to the granting of waivers to statutory requirements or practices required by law. It applies to those internal agency rules not codified in the Code of Federal Regulations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on Earth Day in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia
April 22, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you for the welcome. I want to especially welcome all the young children and not-so-young children and all of you who feel childlike, even though you're not anymore, to this wonderful American celebration of Earth Day.

I thank the Vice President for his steadfast, constant, and brilliant leadership to preserve our environment for future generations. I thank Congressman Bob Wise, who has been a good friend and an adviser and represents you so well. I want to thank our National Park superintendent, Bob Stanton. You know, I was sitting with Bob, and I said, "You know something, you've got the best job in the whole Federal Government." And he said, "I know, and they're foolish enough to pay me to do it every day." [*Laughter*]

Mayor Stowell, thank you. Pam Underhill, thank you for your work at the Appalachian Trail Park; thank you for a lifetime of dedication to America's National Park System. And I'd like to ask all of you to give a round of applause to all the National Park employees who are here. They do a wonderful, wonderful job. [*Applause*]

Finally, let me thank Sandi Marra and all the other volunteers who worked with the Vice President and me today to make sure we didn't mess up anything so badly. I walked away saying, "Now, I wonder if they're going to have to go along behind us and undo all the stuff we just did and then do it right?" [*Laughter*] I don't think so. I think we crossed the threshold of minimum competence as volunteers today.

But let me say to you, Sandi, and to all the other volunteers that are here and those who will hear about what happens here today, the American people have utterly no idea how dependent not only the Appalachian Trail but the entire park system has been on citizen volunteers. And we who know need to do more to get out the word, but I hope you and all your fellow volunteers will continue to work. We need you; we honor you; and we're very grateful. Thank you very much.

We came here today in part to highlight the work of the volunteers. Last year they gave over 8 million hours, the equivalent of $100 million, in hard but loving labor to enhancing America's great outdoors.

You know, the Appalachian Trail was conceived of 100 years ago by a teenager who was hiking among the sugar maples and spruce trees in New Hampshire, in the White Mountains. Benton MacKaye imagined connecting the country all the way from New England to Georgia with a hiking trail and, in the process, reconnecting Americans to the wonders of nature. As MacKaye said, "Life for 2 weeks on a mountaintop would give renewed perspective to the other 50 weeks down below." Do you mind if I stay here another 13 days? [*Laughter*] That's pretty good.

And so began the Appalachian Trail, the brainchild of a teenager; the product of generations of cooperation; one of our most precious national gems; the longest natural thoroughfare in the world passing through four of seven forested habitats of North America; a haven for rare plants and animals. And thanks to many of you here today, this Appalachian Trail surely has surpassed even Benton MacKaye's wildest dreams.

Today, on our 28th annual Earth Day, we come here to the stunning confluence of the Shenandoah and the Potomac Rivers to celebrate the foresight of early conservationists and to commit ourselves to carry forth their abiding sense of responsibility to future generations in the new millennium.

I'd like to take just a couple of minutes to tell you what the agenda the Vice President and I have adopted for the coming year is. First, we want to preserve even more of our natural wonders. In the historic balanced budget agreement, we have the means to save the ancient redwoods of the Headwaters Forest in California, to protect Yellowstone from the ravages of mining. And I am proposing to add 100 new sites to our Nation's endowment of sacred places. We should begin by bringing the last remaining sections of the Appalachian Trail under public control, thereby making every inch a part of our children's birthright.

Among other priorities of providing a critical winter range for elk and bison and restoring salmon runs in Washington's Elwha River, what

I want to say to you today is that the money has been authorized and appropriated for all 100 of these projects but not yet released. As a courtesy and a practice of long standing, administrations notify Congress of the intended project target. And sometimes there is an objection, sometimes a legitimate one, to one or two of them. We have put together a great list of 100; none of the money for any of the projects have been released because of actual or potential disputes on other issues.

So if you can do anything, if any of you live in congressional districts—aside from Congressman Wise, he's not the problem—I hope you'll do it, because we need to get about the work and do it now. The money is there, the economy is in good shape, the budget is going to be balanced. We have made this commitment to our future, and I'd like to see us get it done. So I'd like to ask you to encourage your Congress to support the release of this fund.

Second, as part of our celebration of the millennium in which we will both honor our past and imagine our future, we have to expand our efforts to preserve our places richest in cultural and historic values, sites that echo with America's most important stories. That's what we see here in Harpers Ferry—the other part of Harpers Ferry: the story of John Brown, the story of pre-Civil War America. And we have just unveiled an initiative to preserve the homes, the churches, the other sanctuaries all along the route of the Underground Railroad, the route to freedom for Harriet Tubman and thousands of other fleeing slaves. It also includes part of the Appalachian Trail.

Third, as the Vice President said, we want to improve our ability to encourage and support better stewardship on our private lands, through voluntary partnerships to help private landowners preserve their own land. Of the more than 100 million acres we have protected during the last 5 years, more than three-quarters are privately owned. It's a real tribute to the American people that they want to manage their property properly, and I believe it's the right thing for our Government to do, to get out there and create the incentives and the partnership and the support for them to do so.

For example, right here in the Appalachian region, acid drainage from abandoned coal mines have polluted streams severely, endangering plant and animal life. But now we're working with mining companies to create natural buffers to stop pollution from flowing in the streams. Citizens already are reporting that fish stocks are recovering, for the first time since the early part of this century.

Successful local models like this are at the core of the clean water initiative I announced in February. We must do more of this. Wherever people are willing to help us with private property to restore biodiversity, we need to support it. And I thank you for your support.

Fourth, we want to change and broaden the focus of how we manage our national forests, putting greater emphasis on recreation, wildlife, and water quality—forest values too long ignored. We're reforming logging practices to ensure sustainable supplies of timber and jobs.

Our national forests are more than mere paper plantations. They are the source of the vast majority of our fresh water and as places where far more families experience the outdoors than anywhere else in America. So I urge Congress today on Earth Day: Let's make our national forests a common ground, not a political battleground.

Fifth, we must commit to healing the wear and tear in our magnificent but often quite overextended national parks. Many parks, refuges, and monuments are in dire need of repair, ironically, because the American people love them so much. Countless Americans set off for their vacations every year knowing they can have the best and most economical vacation in the world at a national park. Often it may be the only one they can afford and still might be the best one money can buy. We have to continue to honor this pact with the American people. And therefore, I have proposed an increase of nearly $1 billion over the next 5 years to carry on the work of repairing our National Park System.

Finally, as the Vice President told us in his remarkable book, "Earth In The Balance," years ago, we have to broaden our notion of stewardship of the environment to embrace our entire planet. The greatest environmental challenge we face today is that of global climate change. If we are growing more interdependent economically, if we are growing more interdependent socially, surely our interdependence environmentally is apparent to every thinking person. The world's leading climate scientists have warned that if we do not reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases, the Earth will warm, the seas will rise, severe weather events will intensify and increase in number.

Fortunately, we know how to avert these dangers. We know we can make great progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through innovative technological, market-related solutions all around the world. We have made an unprecedented commitment here of more than $6 billion for research and development and tax incentives to promote new green technologies that will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emission. I hope you will all support that. And I hope you will tell your elected representatives it is a great investment in our children's future.

You know, the Vice President mentioned Teddy Roosevelt, who is a particular favorite of mine among our past Presidents. Ever since Teddy Roosevelt started talking about conserving our natural resources, for 100 years now, every time someone has said it, someone else says, "If you do that, it will ruin the economy." And we now have 100 years of experience. They have uniformly been wrong every time they have said it for 100 years.

And since 1970 and Earth Day and the Clean Air Act, we have heard it with repeated intensity. It has always been wrong. Every time we have taken a sensible, reasoned, but strong step to protect the environment, we have actually increased the diversity of our economy, the breadth and width of it, and increased jobs and strengthened the long-term economic prospects of our country.

That is a lesson the whole world has to embrace now. We can only sustain economic growth if we can improve the environment, if we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, if we can build a balanced future together.

So I hope that all of you, as you leave here on this Earth Day, will honor the great gifts God has given us, will honor our National Park employees and others who preserve our treasured resources with their careers, will honor these volunteers, but most of all, will promise yourselves to be the best possible citizen stewards of our resources.

That is the ethic that inspired Americans to preserve Harpers Ferry, the landscape that President Jefferson said was worth a voyage across the Atlantic. That is the ethic that will enable us to honor our responsibilities as Americans well into the 21st century.

Thank you, and happy Earth Day.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:12 p.m. at the Point in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. In his remarks, he referred to Robert G. Stanton, Director, National Park Service; Mayor Walton (Kip) Stowell of Harpers Ferry; Pamela Underhill, Park Manager, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and volunteer Sandi Marra, member, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. The National Volunteer Week proclamation of April 21 and the National Park Week proclamation of April 22 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the House of Representatives Release of Tobacco Industry Documents

April 22, 1998

The House Commerce Committee today released thousands of tobacco industry documents. I commend Chairman Bliley, Congressman Waxman, and the members of the Committee for helping to bring these documents to light.

The release of these documents underscores the urgency of enacting comprehensive, bipartisan tobacco legislation this year, which can stop 3 million children from smoking over the next 5 years and save 1 million lives. I am committed to working with legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle, in both the House and the Senate, to enact a comprehensive bill to stop young Americans from smoking before they start—a bill that raises the price of cigarettes, puts into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, imposes penalties on the industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to children, and ensures that the FDA has authority to regulate tobacco products. Our Nation's children are counting on us to put politics aside and work together in a bipartisan manner to get this job done.

Statement on the Kaiser Family Foundation Report on the Patients' Bill of Rights

April 22, 1998

Today the Kaiser Family Foundation released a new report that confirms our longstanding belief that the cost of the Quality Commission's Patients' Bill of Rights, which I have endorsed, is modest and well worth the protections it would provide. By affirming the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) estimates, the Kaiser report convincingly rebuts the scare tactics that some have used to undermine bipartisan efforts in the Congress to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

Many Americans today lack the protections necessary to ensure high quality health care. They may not be able to see the specialists they need or to get emergency care wherever and whenever a medical emergency arises. They may not be able to talk freely with doctors and nurses about all the medical options available, not only the cheapest. They may have no place to go to present grievances about their health care. The Quality Commission's Patients' Bill of Rights guarantees Americans these and other commonsense protections.

The Kaiser report reaffirms recent estimates by the CBO that these protections would increase health insurance premiums less than one percent (less than $3 per family per month). The improvement in the quality of health care that will result from these protections is more than worth the very modest premium increases projected by both Kaiser and CBO.

This report again shows the utter groundlessness of claims that a Patients' Bill of Rights will significantly increase health care costs. With this new information, there is no excuse left for inaction. I therefore call on Congress again to send me legislation that gives Americans the health care protections they need and deserve. I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

Statement on House Action on Campaign Finance Reform

April 22, 1998

I am very pleased that the House Republican leadership will heed the call of congressional reformers and allow a vote on campaign finance reform. I strongly support the bipartisan legislation offered by Representatives Christopher Shays and Marty Meehan, which is the best chance in a generation for real reform. Similar legislation already has the support of a majority of Senators, yet it has been blocked by a minority on procedural grounds. Now every Member of the House of Representatives has a responsibility to vote for this measure to ban large soft money contributions, improve disclosure, and restrict backdoor campaign spending. A vote for bipartisan campaign finance reform will be a vote to strengthen our democracy and give ordinary voters a stronger voice.

Memorandum on Citizen Service
April 22, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Strengthening Our Commitment to Service

Citizen service is one of the most important ways we demonstrate that we care for and are responsible for one another. It is also an American tradition that we meet our challenges as members of a true community, with all of us working together. Thus, citizen service should not just be a temporary pursuit of only a week or a month. The ethic of service must extend throughout a lifetime.

Over the years, great numbers of Federal employees have been generous with their time and talents and have made positive contributions to their local communities, even as they have fulfilled their official responsibilities. At the same time, as the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government has a responsibility to set an example by helping to make it possible for its employees to dedicate time to serve others.

Therefore, I am today directing Federal departments and agencies to explore additional measures to expand service opportunities for Federal employees. Each department and agency should review its work scheduling practices and make maximum use of existing flexibilities to allow Federal employees to plan and take time off to perform community service as the public business permits. Each department and agency should also inform its employees of the various flexibilities available to them to participate in volunteer activities. The Office of Personnel Management should provide information to departments and agencies in support of this effort. Each department and agency should then report to the Office of Personnel Management within 90 days on the measures taken to implement this memorandum.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at the Third Millennium Evening at the White House
April 22, 1998

[*Moderator Ellen Lovell, Director, White House Millennium Council, welcomed the participants and introduced a short film about the Poet Laureate Consultant Program at the Library of Congress. Following the film, Hillary Clinton discussed the influence that poets and their works have had on American culture and welcomed poets laureate Robert Pinsky, Robert Hass, and Rita Dove. Mr. Pinsky, Mr. Hass, and Ms. Dove then read selected poems by various American poets and commented on the importance of poetry on America's past and future.*]

The President. I don't mean to be heretical, but I was transported by Robert and Robert and Rita. And I was thinking, this really is a historic moment: first, there were the three tenors—[*laughter*]—then there were three sopranos, but nobody ever had three such poets before, and we thank them.

A few years ago there was an interesting article in the Atlantic Monthly, which asked whether poetry could matter in the 21st century. I reread it a few moments before coming down tonight. You know, in this crazy world we're living in, everything's running around so fast. If it could matter, how could we revive the human value of poetry, its importance to our culture, to our sense of who we are and who we are becoming as individuals and as a people?

Well, tonight there is a poet who was not an American but was very much of the Americas, and I think we would be remiss not to acknowledge. Here's what Octavio Paz said about his craft:

Between what I see and what I say,
Between what I say and what I keep silent,
Between what I keep silent and what I dream,
Between what I dream and what I forget,
poetry.

That is what we celebrate here tonight. Does it have any value? Of course, it does. It made us happy. It made us nostalgic. It made us sad. It made us wiser tonight.

When I was a boy in high school, I was once required to memorize 100 lines from Macbeth, hardly designed to entice me to a public career. [*Laughter*] But then again, I learned about the dangers of blind ambitions—[*laughter*]—the fleeting nature of fame—[*laughter*]—the ultimate emptiness of power disconnected from higher purpose. Mr. Shakespeare made me a better President. [*Laughter*]

Something quite a lot to be said for all this, and I welcome you here tonight. Tonight we have honored the poetry of our Nation's past. Now I'd like for you to see some of the poets of our future, people whom Hillary and our poets laureate visited with today at Johnson Junior High School.

[*At this point, a video about the junior high school was shown.*]

The President. Now I'd like to turn the discussion over to the Director of our White House Millennium Project, Ellen Lovell.

[*Ms. Lovell invited audience members and Internet participants to read their favorite poem selections and to ask the three poets questions. The President was then asked to make closing remarks.*]

The President. Let me say, first of all, I thought the people who were in the audience who read their poems were absolutely fabulous, and I'd like to thank you all. You were great. Thank you.

Well, I'm supposed to end. I suppose the first thing I should say is that poets help me get over Macbeth. [*Laughter*] When I was about 21 and despairing, I came across those wonderful lines from Carl Sandburg:

A tough will counts; so does desire.
So does a rich, soft, wanting.
Without rich wanting, nothing arrives.

We want these children to have ambition. We just want it to be well connected.

A lot of Presidents have wanted to be poets. [*Laughter*] George Washington actually tried his hand at poetry, writing that "true happiness depends upon a quiet soul," as I told our poets laureate on the way out. And John Quincy Adams actually wanted to be a poet; he wanted to do that, but he just couldn't quite get there. [*Laughter*] So he settled for a lesser path. [*Laughter*] But still he composed verses all his life. Even when he was an old man in Congress, waiting to vote, he would write out little verses. He once wrote in the Congress, "We must seize the moments as they pass, and snatch the retrieveless sunbeam as it flies."

Lucky for you, I haven't written any poetry in over 20 years. [*Laughter*] And the poems I wrote to Hillary so long ago, I would still be a little embarrassed to read today. [*Laughter*]

But I would like to close with a particularly American poem about love of country, sacrifice, the conflict between mortality and the timeless value of a deed well done. It is Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Concord Hymn," written to honor the completion of the Battle Monument commemorating the battles of Lexington and Concord in the Revolutionary War.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror in silence sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Evening program began at 7:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on the Child Care Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters
April 23, 1998

The President. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here. We thank Mr. Tobias for his work and the power of his example. I thank Secretary Shalala and Secretary Herman for their extraordinary work, and Secretary Rubin, in his absence. And I note the presence here by SBA Director, Aida Alvarez, and our OMB Director, Frank Raines, in the back. I thank the Members of Congress who are here: Representatives Lois Capps, Rosa DeLauro, Sheila Jackson Lee, Sandy Levin, Patsy Mink, Tim Roemer, Ellen Tauscher, Lynn Woolsey, and Steny Hoyer.

There are many other Members of Congress who are supporting this child care initiative, two who are not here; three that I think I should mention are Senators Dodd, Jeffords, and Kohl, along with Senator Specter, who have given real bipartisan leadership to the child care initiative in the Senate.

Let me also say I'm delighted to see all the children here today. I like Take Our Daughters to Work Day. As Representative Capps pointed out, since her daughter works in the White House, she came to work with her daughter today instead of the other way around. [*Laughter*] But, for the rest of you, I like this day.

When my daughter started preschool and she was asked what her father did, she said that he works at McDonald's. [*Laughter*] So I decided I'd better take her to work with me, even though I realized it would result in a diminution of my status in her eyes. [*Laughter*] So then by the time she went to kindergarten, she had actually been to work with me, and they asked her what I did for a living, and she said, "Well, he drinks coffee, makes speeches, and talks on the telephone." [*Laughter*] So I'm delighted that all the children are here.

The idea of merging work and family is embodied in Take Our Daughters to Work Day. There's also another important idea embodied in it, which is that we want our daughters to believe, along with our sons, that they can aspire to do whatever it is they want to do, whatever they're willing to do, whatever they're prepared to make the effort to do. Now, if you want that to be a reality, we have to make a commitment to give all of our children the best possible childhoods. That's really what all this is about.

Last year Hillary and I sponsored two conferences that many of our administration people helped on and many of you participated, one on child care and the other one on early childhood and the brain. Now, what they showed is what all of you already know but what is still not widely accepted by decisionmakers in our society. They showed, first of all, that the early years are profoundly important and that an even greater percentage of a child's learning capacity and intellectual infrastructure is built up in those very early years. And they showed what we in the child care conference, what we've all been here to say today, that people are worried about whether they can find child care, whether they can afford it, and whether it will be good child care.

We've been very fortunate in our country in the last few years, and I know we're all grateful to have the best economy in a generation and the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years and the lowest crime rates in a generation. But if we really want Americans to succeed over the long run, we have to allow every family the opportunity to succeed at home and at work. It is the most fundamental decision we have to make. There is no more important job in a society than raising children well. Nothing even compares with it. In the end, if you fail at that job, all the other jobs will, by definition, fail.

Therefore, there is virtually nothing worse you can do to a parent than to put a parent in the position of basically just being knotted up every day, worrying about whether he or she has fulfilled the responsibilities to the child. How can you be at work worrying about your kids and if you have to leave work to take care of your kids, except in emergency situations or for appropriate events; there's a sacrifice there.

One of the reasons the business community is interested in this is that enlightened business leaders understand that, actually, if you permit people to do the right thing by their children, you wind up having a happier, more upbeat, more affirmative, more positive business environment, and ultimately the business enterprise will be more successful because the workers are

also successful at home. That's what this whole business is about: taking care of their children and not asking their parents to choose between being good parents and good workers. It all comes down to that.

The private sector obviously can and should do more. We should have more companies that are willing to follow the example of these fine leaders who are here and who have been acknowledged. The Treasury working group that Secretary Rubin has led has done a very important job in participating in and presenting this report to me, and I am glad to receive it.

I'm also releasing a report today, that Secretary Herman has provided, that highlights other family-friendly businesses, giving them sort of an honor roll status. I think it's well-deserved, and I hope that the work the Labor Department will now do in serving as a clearinghouse for companies interested in child care and setting up mentoring programs between businesses on child care will get more and more private sector folks involved. Secretary Shalala pointed out that in the welfare reform bill—the one we finally got—we fought like crazy to get $4 billion in child care for States. But, believe it or not, there's still a lot of demand out there that's not being met, in State after State after State.

Hillary said, before we came out of the Oval Office this morning, that everybody talks about how important child care is, but if you look at higher education—and this may be hard for some of you to believe if you have staggering tuition bills, but still, nationwide, families directly pay only about 25 percent of the costs of their children's move through college.

No one questions that we have the best system of higher education in the world. No one questions that it's not only been good to let our children live out their dreams, but it's also been very, very good for the American economy. By contrast, with child care, the average family—at an earlier age with a lower income, just getting started out in the work force with young children—on the whole, pays over 60 percent of the cost out of pocket.

So I would suggest to you that we basically have a choice to make here. I have put a proposal before Congress that deals with affordability, accessibility, the training of the workers, the quality of the child care. But the fundamental question is not so much over the specifics of our proposal, but whether the National Government has a responsibility to do more. And we have a fundamental choice: Do you believe that the early years are as important as all the evidence says? Do you believe that we could hardly do anything better for America's families than to relieve them of the burden of being terribly worried about their children while they're at work? In other words, do you believe that this should be an urgent priority for America?

That is the decision every Member of Congress should make. And this year, we shouldn't slide by it. Everybody should just stand up and say, yes or no. Because the budget is going to be in balance, we have the money to make a major step forward.

Now, there's a highway bill making its way through Congress, and I support a good highway bill. I presented a good highway bill that would have significant increase in our infrastructure. But I hope that, as Congress continues to consider this and determine how much money should be put in it, they will remember some other things. We've got to build a lot of highways—or bridges, if you will—to the 21st century. We have to have a road that will make Social Security strong in the 21st century. We have to have a road that will make our children's environment better in the 21st century. We have to have a road that will guarantee universal high-quality, high-standards education in the 21st century.

I think we have to have a road that will guarantee that people will not have to choose between being good parents and good children and that we will act on the overwhelming weight of the evidence about the importance of the earliest years in the child's life.

Now, there are choices to be made, and it is wrong to pretend that there are no choices here. We now have the opportunity, because of the good fortune that we enjoy as a people, because of the solvency of the budget, to take a major step forward in child care, to build that part of our national infrastructure. You look around at all these children today and at their parents beaming about them; I don't really believe that any part of our infrastructure is more important than they are.

Thank you very much.

Tax Cuts

Q. Mr. President, do you propose tax cuts for mothers who want to stay home?

The President. I'm glad you didn't stay home today, Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News]. [*Laughter*]

Q. What do you think of the idea of tax cuts for a stay-at-home mom?

The President. Well, we need to get into a negotiation. We need to get started talking seriously about what we're going to do.

Q. Would you be open to it?

The President. I'll be happy to talk to them, but we've got to—are we going to make a serious effort here? We need to have a discussion about it.

Q. So you are willing to negotiate, then?

The President. I'm willing to negotiate with anybody who wants to help people raise their children better so that people can succeed at home and at work. It's not an either-or deal. That's why we had the $500 tax credit last time, children's tax credit, because we wanted to help all parents. We're not against helping all parents. But the question is, most parents are in the work force and we have to do something serious about it. We have to decide, are we going to do it, or not?

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Treasury Department Working Group on Child Care member Randall L. Tobias, president, chairman, and chief executive officer, Eli Lilly and Co. He also referred to the Treasury working group report entitled "Investing in Child Care," and the Department of Labor report "Meeting the Needs of Today's Workforce: Child Care Best Practices." The exchange portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Senate Action on Education Legislation

April 23, 1998

I am disappointed that Republicans in the United States Senate have passed up a major opportunity to improve public education in this country.

Instead of investing in modern schools for the 21st century, the Senate chose to provide tax incentives skewed to high-income taxpayers. Instead of helping make classes smaller and improving student learning, the Senate chose to eliminate accountability by prohibiting voluntary national tests. Instead of giving kids new learning opportunities after school to keep them out of trouble, the Senate chose to undermine the critical safe and drug-free schools initiative. Instead of working to strengthen public education, the Coverdell bill returns us to the days when Republicans waged a campaign to eliminate the Department of Education.

As I have said before, if this bill reaches my desk, I will veto it, because it weakens our commitment to making America's schools the best they can be in the 21st century.

Statement on Protecting the Northern Right Whale

April 23, 1998

Today I instructed the United States representatives to the International Maritime Organization to seek strong measures to protect the northern right whale, one of the world's most endangered marine mammals.

Like many other species of whale, the northern right whale was once hunted nearly to extinction. The 300 or so that survive spend much of the year in waters off of Cape Cod and off the Georgia and Florida coasts. Biologists believe the greatest human threat they face today is collisions with large ships. We must address this threat so these magnificent creatures can flourish once again.

Under our proposal, which the IMO will address when it meets in July, commercial ships entering the whales' calving and feeding grounds will be required to report by radio to the U.S.

Coast Guard, which will relay back the latest information on the whales' locations and advice on avoiding collisions. We believe this reporting system is essential if we are to ensure the survival of these majestic creatures.

Joint Statement on United States-Turkmenistan Relations
April 23, 1998

During their April 23, 1998 meeting in Washington, Presidents Clinton and Niyazov agreed to expand cooperation between the United States and the Republic of Turkmenistan to promote its development as a market democracy. The United States strongly supports Turkmenistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and respects its neutrality. Through governmental and private sector partnerships, the United States and Turkmenistan aim to strengthen political, economic, security, commercial and agricultural ties for the benefit of both countries.

Presidents Clinton and Niyazov agreed on the importance of rapid development of Caspian energy resources and efficient export routes to world markets to promote regional development. U.S. companies are deeply engaged in these activities and this engagement is growing. The two Presidents focused particular attention on strengthening east-west routes in the Eurasian transport corridor. They expressed their support for practical steps to develop a trans-Caspian pipeline as part of a multiple pipeline network. President Niyazov welcomed the support of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency to assess the feasibility of a trans-Caspian pipeline. In this context, the Presidents favor early resolution of the Caspian delimitation dispute. They welcomed the recent positive developments in the Afghanistan peace process, which could create new commercial opportunities and advance prospects for construction of a trans-Afghan pipeline.

The United States and Turkmenistan seek to expand economic and commercial relations, including greater trade and investment. The two nations will work toward completing a Bilateral Investment Treaty. Both Presidents welcomed the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between USAID and the Government of Turkmenistan on technical and professional assistance to the Turkmen energy sector, and of a Cooperation Agreement between the U.S. Export Import Bank and the Government of Turkmenistan. Extensive potential exists to deepen agricultural cooperation, building on the already active role of U.S. firms in Turkmenistan. The United States and Turkmenistan agreed to launch a bilateral dialogue on energy policy and commercial issues.

Turkmenistan has made significant progress toward economic stabilization. To sustain this progress, President Clinton encouraged deeper structural reforms, including privatization, in close cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Such steps will facilitate Turkmenistan's integration into the global economy. The United States supports Turkmenistan's accession to the World Trade Organization on commercial terms generally applied to newly acceding countries.

Democratization, economic reform and observance of human rights are essential to Turkmenistan's future. Rapid, concrete steps toward reform in these areas will demonstrate Turkmenistan's intent to abide by international norms that will advance the prosperity of the Turkmen people. Turkmenistan is committed to strengthening the rule of law and political pluralism, including free and fair elections for parliament and the presidency in accordance with international standards and the constitution of Turkmenistan, as planned for 1999 and 2002, respectively. Turkmenistan has invited the OSCE to open an office in Ashgabat, and the United States pledges its active support. President Clinton welcomed these steps to advance democracy and human rights.

The United States recognizes the challenges facing Turkmenistan in assuring its national security and respects its neutrality. The United States encourages Turkmenistan's further integration into emerging European security structures, including NATO's Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The

Presidents support enhanced security cooperation, which will be explored in a bilateral security dialogue to be initiated this summer.

The two Presidents exchanged opinions on important international issues. They discussed the serious threats posed by international terrorism, narcotics trafficking, international crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They committed their governments to explore ways to expand cooperation in combating these threats to regional and global security.

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Helsinki Joint Statement on Nuclear Forces Reduction

April 23, 1998

Dear _____*:*

As required by section 1229 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105–85), attached is a report on the Helsinki Joint Statement.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Strom Thurmond, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; and Floyd D. Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on National Security.

Remarks at a Reception for Supporters of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993

April 23, 1998

Thank you. Many of you have said to me tonight that this was like a reunion. I hope you have loved being here and enjoyed seeing each other, but you couldn't be nearly as happy to be here as Hillary and Al and I are to have you here.

And I just want to say—there are a couple of other people I would like to mention. There are so many people in the administration who were crucial to this, but I want to add my thanks to Mack McLarty and acknowledge Gene Sperling. I want to thank Larry Summers, our Deputy Treasury Secretary; and in absentia, I'd like to thank Laura Tyson, Bob Rubin, Leon Panetta, and our friend Lloyd Bentsen, who's been a little under the weather, and I hope we will never forget him.

I never will forget when he came down to Arkansas before I got sworn in, and in that sort of dour, Texas, patrician way of his, and said, "Now, if we don't reduce the deficit by at least $500 billion, interest rates will not go down and the market will not go up." [*Laughter*] And then they proceeded to tell me how hard it would be to do that, based on accepted scoring techniques. And then we proceeded to do what we all did.

And I want to thank you because it was so easy, there was no arm twisting involved. [*Laughter*] Not a deal made, it was all a high-flown sort of thing. [*Laughter*] I'm so indebted to all of you. I would like to thank especially Bob Kerrey for never releasing the contents of our last telephone conversation. [*Laughter*] And I don't know if he's here tonight, but I invited him. I'd like to say a special work of thanks, too, to Roger Altman, who ran our war room, which helped us to keep that non-pressure up. [*Laughter*] But it was a wonderful experience.

I, too, would like to personally thank George Mitchell, who has done a magnificent job in the Irish peace process. And I want to thank

Speaker Foley, too, who is doing a great job in Japan. And I want to join what has already been said about Senator Moynihan and Chairman Rostenkowski. In different ways, they were both absolutely indispensable.

You should take a lot of pride at this golden moment in America's history, with the economy up and our social problems down and the deficit going to zero. All of you know that it's one of those rare moments, as the Vice President said, where you can literally say that this has happened because of the energy and spirit of the American people, but also because we passed an economic plan that liberated that energy and spirit.

In every home where wages are rising and people now have jobs, in every town which was down and is now up, there are millions of people who are in your debt. And I did mostly just want you all to be in this room so I could say on their behalf, thank you, and God bless you for what you did.

I want you to think a little bit about what this plan represented. One of the reasons I ran for President was it seemed to me that everyone knew that something bad was wrong, but no one was prepared to do what it took to change it; and that we had to replace drift and deadlock with a real sense of momentum and purpose.

In the process of passing this plan, you set a new direction for our country, forged a new identity for our party, and helped to revitalize and redefine the whole idea of progressive government for a new century and a new economy.

You know, we knew we had to bring deficits down, and they were enormous. But we also knew that we could do it, and we had to do it, and still invest in our future, in education, in health care, in tax cuts for small businesses and for 15 million of the hardest-pressed working people. Because you doubled that earned-income tax credit in that economic plan, which was a painful thing—it required us to do a lot of other things that were exceedingly difficult—you need to know, tonight when you go to bed, I want you to think about this—there are 2.2 million children who are not in poverty because you did that. And you should be very proud of that.

When you replaced trickle-down economics with invest-and-grow economics and let this economy spring to life, you took a situation where we had a deficit with $290 billion and brought it down before the bipartisan balanced budget plan, which I also supported and believed in. But before that plan saved one red cent, the deficit had already been brought down by more than 90 percent, 93 percent, to be exact. The deficit used to have 11 zeros; now it will have no zeros. In fact, we're going to be in surplus.

In '92 the unemployment rate was 7.5 percent; now it's the lowest in 25 years. In '92 new jobs were scarce; now there are 15 million more. Business investment has increased, more than any—at a rate higher than any time since the Kennedy administration. From '81 to '92 real wages fell; last year the average paycheck of the American worker rose 2.9 percent, the fastest growth in more than 20 years.

Soon we will mark the longest peacetime expansion in our history. Merrill Lynch says there has never been a better economy. Goldman Sachs says it's the best economy America has ever had. And just as important, maybe, over the long run, when you took this vote and weathered the consequences, you began to restore the faith of the American people in their Government.

Americans are always given to a healthy distrust of government, and that's good. A lot of our Constitution is structured to prevent the abuse of power, and well it should be. But for too long, this skepticism risked running into a sort of corrosive cynicism. A lot of people had become convinced by the time I ran for President that the Government couldn't organize a two-car parade—[*laughter*]—and that everything we did that looked bold led to unintended consequences, most of which were bad.

Well, the '93 economic plan worked, and it worked for the reasons we said it would work. So in a way, with that law, you actually enacted a law of intended consequences in American public life, and therefore, you helped to lift the public's appreciation for what we could do through representative government.

The vote you cast was probably among the most difficult ever cast by Members of the Congress of the United States in the history of our Republic. You had withering partisan criticism. I can only ask you to remember the people you helped, the families you strengthened, the opportunity you created.

Let me just give you three examples. Karen Shephard represented a district in the only State where I ran third in 1992. [*Laughter*] But because she took the vote she did, those people,

notwithstanding the fact that sometimes they stray in their political judgment—[*laughter*]—have an unemployment rate of 3.1 percent. Karan English, because of the courage you showed in 1993, Arizona has the fastest job growth in its history. And Marjorie Mezvinsky, because you laid down your seat, your county has the fastest job growth of any county in the entire State of Pennsylvania. Unemployment has dropped by 25 percent. And it gave me a great deal of pleasure to have you sit with the First Lady at the State of the Union Address this year when I announced that. Because of the vote all of you cast, we would in fact, balance the budget years ahead of schedule.

In "Profiles in Courage," President Kennedy wrote these words: "Democracy means much more than popular government and majority rule, much more than a system of political techniques to flatter or deceive powerful blocs of voters. A democracy that has no moment of individual conscience in a sea of popular rule is not worthy to bear that name."

Karen, Karan, and Marjorie, to all the rest of you, every one of you has a story. And I only wish I could tell them all tonight. The 103d Congress was chock-full of profiles in courage. And when you add them all up, by the narrowest of margins, repeatedly, they led to the first balanced budget in 30 years, and American economic renaissance, and a resurgent conviction on the part of our people that together we can solve our problems and seize our opportunities, and do great things; that our old-fashioned Government that Mr. Washington and his friends helped to start still works in this newfangled age if it has the right people willing to do the right things at the right time.

It is altogether a monument to your determination, your conscience, and overall, your love of your country. So on behalf of your country, again I say, thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:54 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Counselor to the President and Special Envoy for the Americas Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty; former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers Laura D'Andrea Tyson; former Director of the Office of Management and Budget Leon E. Panetta; former Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen; former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Roger Altman; former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; former Speaker of the House of Representatives Thomas S. Foley; and former chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Dan Rostenkowski.

Remarks Announcing the Resignation of Counselor to the President and Special Envoy for the Americas Thomas F. McLarty and an Exchange With Reporters

April 24, 1998

The President. Last week, at the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, I saw again the profound change in the very character of the relationships between the United States and our neighbors to the south and the start of a true partnership based on mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual reward.

Two quiet revolutions were the catalysts for this change. The first, of course, was the quiet revolution of democracy and open markets in the Americas. The second quiet revolution was Mack McLarty, our Special Envoy to Latin America, who helped all of us to realize that the Americas must become a cornerstone of our prosperity and security for the 21st century.

Mack has made over 40 trips to the Americas since he became my Special Envoy. He has earned the trust and respect, the friendship and affection of leaders from the Caribbean to Central America, from Canada to South America, who value his extraordinary combination of integrity and intellect, ability and civility. He helped to change the way we see Latin America, and just as important, he's helped to change the way Latin America sees us.

Earlier this week, Mack told me of his desire to leave this administration at the end of June

to return to his private life, to spend more time with Donna Kay, and with their sons, Mark and Franklin. It has been a day I hoped would never come, so I accept his decision with regret but eternal gratitude.

As most of you know, Mack and I have been good friends virtually all of our lives. We've taken a lot of ribbing about Miss Mary's kindergarten, but she must have done something right. [*Laughter*] Hillary and I have been especially grateful to have Mack and Donna as friends for a long, long time, and especially in our lives these past 5½ years. Mack represents to me everything that is good and decent in public service; honesty and civility, fidelity and kindness aren't just words to him, they're a way of life.

Just after I was elected President, I asked Mack to leave a long and varied and highly successful business career to be the White House Chief of Staff. It was a daunting task for people who were new to Washington. We had new ideas and new energy. We had all kinds of ideas about the new direction we wanted to take our country in, but we were also new to the strange and often arcane ways of this city.

As Erskine Bowles has often said to me, from his own experience, it's a whole lot harder to start up an enterprise than it is to take it over and tune it up. Mack was there at the beginning. And as Bob Rubin has said so often, and I know he would want me to say on his behalf today, it was Mack that established a culture, in our White House and administration, of teamwork and decency which has continued throughout the years, and has been responsible for much of the success that we have enjoyed.

During Mack's tenure, we launched policies that helped to turn our country around, to bring our people together, to make our Government work again. Our party had been out of office for 12 years. Beginning with Mack's steady hand as we chose our first Cabinet, he helped to put in place a dramatic change in direction for our Nation. He organized our forces at the White House and was a driving force on Capitol Hill toward the passage of our economic plan that has helped to bring such unparalleled prosperity.

It sparked a boom in investment; cut the deficit over 90 percent before the Balanced Budget Act was passed; invested in education and health care, in the environment, in science, and space; cut taxes on small businesses and 15 million people; and led to the creation of 15 million jobs. He helped to secure the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which over 12 million Americans have used when a baby is born or someone in their family is sick. He set the stage for the crime bill, continued our work that we began in Arkansas on education reform, helped us to fight and win major victories to open markets in this hemisphere and around the world through NAFTA and GATT.

After he became my counselor, I asked him to tackle complex and important missions—from his work with the Vice President to make the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta a success, to his efforts in the Gulf, to secure support for the Dayton Peace accord in Bosnia, to reaching out to the business community and other key constituencies, and to his truly historic service as Special Envoy to the Americas.

He has pursued these many missions with grace and decency and good humor, earning the admiration and trust of a pretty disparate group of people, from Dick Gephardt to Trent Lott, from Tom Donohue at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to John Sweeney at the AFL–CIO, from Jesse Jackson to Ross Perot. Now, this does not surprise me, because as long as I've known him, he's always been well liked and well respected by everybody. And, frankly, I still resent it. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to Mack and to Donna and to their fine sons, thank you for serving America. To his family, I thank them for lending Mack to me for a little while. For a long time now, we have been friends; now we know we are colleagues; now we know what it's like to fight and lose and win again on behalf of the American people. It has been a wonderful experience. And again, I say that Mack McLarty is a genuinely patriotic public servant in the greatest American tradition. And as is my commitment, I promised him that for once, he can have the last word.

Mr. McLarty.

[*At this point, Mr. McLarty made brief remarks.*]

Q. What are you going to miss the most about the White House?

Mr. McLarty. Muy poquito, muy poquito [Very little, very little]. [*Laughter*] Probably, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International], not having that energy, knowing that

that first question is coming at a setting like this. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Sergey Kiriyenko of Russia

Q. Mr. President, I take it you can work with the new Russian Prime Minister as you did with his predecessor.

The President. Well, I'm looking forward to it. We have a high opinion of him based on our experiences with him, and the commission set up—we had with the Vice President and the Russian Prime Minister. I look forward to continuing that. It's helped us to resolve an enormous number of issues. I also very much hope that this will free the Duma up now to consider the START II Treaty, because if they will ratify it, then we can move on to START III and continue our effort of dramatically reducing the nuclear threat.

So this is, I think, a good news day for Russia and for the United States. I look forward to seeing President Yeltsin in Birmingham in about a month, and we'll have a chance to discuss these and other matters.

Latin America-U.S. Relations

Q. Does Mr. McLarty's leaving signify an erosion of U.S. interest in Latin America?

The President. Oh, no, not at all. It is true that I don't know anybody else who could get me to go down there 3 times in 12 months—[*laughter*]—but I must say, every time I went I was more eager to return. And I think that through his efforts, as Secretary Albright said, the Government and the principals and, maybe in a fundamental way, even the American people have altered their notions of what our relationships with Latin America are and what they should be and what they can become. And so we will continue to even intensify our efforts.

If you look at the agenda that we embraced at Santiago—which was, in no small measure, Mr. McLarty's work—it will require, just to honor the commitments we have made, a deepening effort in Latin America. It will require us to do more than we have done in the past.

Airlines Agreements

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned about the impact on consumers of the agreements announced between the four major airlines, and will your administration look into possible antitrust violations in those agreements?

The President. Well, any decision like that, of course, is not one for the White House to be making. But I don't think we've had enough time to analyze it to know whether we have concerns or not, so I don't believe it's appropriate for me to make a comment yet because I don't know enough about it to make a good one.

Corporate Trends

Q. Well, what about the trend in terms of the banks and so forth? I mean, the country is moving in that direction. Is that good?

The President. Well, if it's being done to compete globally, and there's still adequate amount of competition so that consumers are protected in terms of price and quality, but American business becomes more globally competitive, then it's a good thing. If it is a function of there being an awful lot of money around in the economy today and it's just one of those periodic bursts of mergers which may or may not have a good effect on consumers and may or may not lend stability to our economy, then it's much more questionable.

So I think that it requires a level of analysis about what is really going on here and why, that I simply haven't had either the opportunity to do or to get advised on by my folks. So I think it's something that should provoke a lot of comment and a lot of thought; experts around the country should be writing op-ed pieces for newspapers; people should be thinking through this, but—to help the American people understand it, because we've always had a native suspicion of bigness of all kinds in America. It goes all the way back to our beginning. It started with big government, and it's basically extended to all the large institutions in life. And Americans often feel that ordinary people don't have enough control over their lives anyway.

So I think that there is going to be this questioning atmosphere, but I would just say, we need to analyze each one of these on their own merits and ask the questions that I just put out. I'm pretty convinced that I just gave you the right questions to ask; I just haven't had a chance to analyze it and have experts talk to me about it and work it through.

Response to Criticism

Q. Mr. President, many House Democrats want to censure Dan Burton for the vulgar remark he made about you. What do you think about that remark, and what do you think should happen to him?

The President. Well, the House is obviously the judge of its own affairs, and they should continue to be. And therefore, it's not appropriate for me to comment on it.

Q. But surely as a human being——

The President. Well, as a human being, I learned that it's inappropriate for the President to let feelings—human feelings interfere with the job.

Q. Sure it is. [*Laughter*]

The President. We're going to have a—no, no, I'm saving all of that for Saturday night, Helen. [*Laughter*]

Yes, but let me just say this. Go back to my Inaugural, this last Inaugural, and even before, when Dr. Schuller and others gave me that great passage from Isaiah. A President cannot repair the breaches in a country, cannot unify a country, and cannot lift its vision if he takes personally personal assaults. You can't do it. You just have to blow it off and think about something else.

And, I mean, my advice, as I said—you asked me yesterday, I think, if I had anything to say to Mr. Burton, and I said, yes, I do—I hope he will vote the campaign finance reform bill now that it's finally going to be put on the floor of the Senate—of the House. And maybe we can get it on the floor of the Senate if we can pass it in the House.

So I think that's the way we all ought to be. I can't further the public interest of America by engaging in that kind of debate. I just want to lift it up. I think that we all ought to just—we'd do a lot better in this town if we had less personal focus and more public focus of all kinds.

Thank you.

White House Correspondents' Association Dinner

Q. Speaking of Saturday night, sir, are you looking forward to having dinner with Paula Jones in the same room?

The President. You know, we practiced all kinds of answers to this question—[*laughter*]—and most of them I think I'll have to give Saturday night. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

NOTE. The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Sergey Kiriyenko, former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Rev. Robert Schuller. A reporter referred to Paula Jones, whose civil suit against the President was dismissed on April 1. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon
April 24, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, Governor, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I'm delighted to see you, and I've enjoyed our visit already today. I thank you for being here. Len and I were just joking over on the side when Roy was talking about how we would have to explain to the media when we characterize this as the Democratic Party's "Ragtime" weekend. [*Laughter*] And Len said, "Well, I always say it's our 150th anniversary celebration weekend." But actually, for those of you who are familiar with "Ragtime," it's not a bad thing to be a kind of metaphor for the struggles of our party, the aspirations of our party, and the hope that we have for the future of America. And so I thank all the folks who are associated with the wonderful production for helping us to celebrate this weekend.

Let me also say to you, Governor, I thank you for what you said about the Irish peace process and about the trips to Africa and to Latin America. Just before I came over here I had a visit and got an update from the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, about where we are on that and what's going on. In a way, those two trips and the efforts of the United States to help to broker the peace, or at least to create the conditions in which peace could occur in

Northern Ireland, are also metaphors for what I think our national mission should be now.

For about 5½ years, we have been working to change the direction of the country so that when we enter the 21st century there really will be opportunity for everyone who is responsible enough to work for it and so that there really will be a country that is one American community across all the lines that divide us and so that we will continue to lead the world—which, as Roy said, is a smaller and smaller place—toward peace and freedom and prosperity and a spirit of interdependence that makes us stronger because we work with our friends, our neighbors, and people who share our values.

And I'm very pleased with the results that we've had in the last 5½ years. Last night I had the great honor of hosting, at the White House, the Members of the Congress, in 1993, who passed our economic plan—all members of our party—by one vote in each House, including the Vice President's vote in the Senate. As he said, whenever he votes, we win. [*Laughter*] And it was a remarkable thing because, as you know, some of those people gave up their seats in Congress because they voted for that, because of the horrendous attacks to which they were subject and all the sort of distortions of their position. But it's pretty hard to quarrel with the results. Before we ever passed the Balanced Budget Act, which I strongly supported, the deficit had been reduced by 93 percent. And so I just want all of you to be proud of that.

I, just before I came over here, bid a formal goodbye to Mack McLarty, my old friend, my first Chief of Staff, my Envoy to the Americas. And I pointed out that in just the first year and a few months when he was our Chief of Staff, we passed the economic plan, the family and medical leave bill, a sweeping expansion of the global trade network, and began this work in education to which Governor Romer referred.

So I want you to feel a part of this, and I want you to feel good about it. But I also want you to be resolute that our party's mission is to get things done, not to score political points in Washington. We want to change the lives of people in America, not to rack up a few points on the rhetorical scoreboard that changes every day here anyway.

And we have a big agenda. We're trying to pass a budget this year that is within the budget that preserves the balanced budget and saves any surplus until we decide how we're going to reform Social Security for the 21st century. We are trying to pass a principled tobacco settlement which protects what has been called, in some of these documents coming out, "replacement smokers"—to me, they're children—and to do it in a way—we don't want to bankrupt the tobacco companies, unlike the criticism that's been leveled in the paid ads you've seen. We do not want to put them out of business. We just want them out of the business of selling tobacco to children. And that is a critical distinction there, which I believe we have to hammer through until we succeed.

I have a very aggressive education agenda, which has been embraced by the Democrats in the Congress and some Republicans, to modernize our schools, to have smaller classes in the early grades, to continue until we connect all of our classrooms to the Internet, and to raise academic standards and to have voluntary national tests to measure whether our children are meeting those standards. And we are in a pitched battle.

Yesterday there was a vote in the Senate on a bill that would have ended our initiatives for charter schools, for a lot of our other education reforms, and would have cut off funding for voluntary tests. It's interesting. Do you suppose the same people would vote for a bill that said, let's continue to have football in America, but let's stop keeping score; or, let's play this game, but let every community score however they want; soccer is a global sport, but we're going to have everybody keep score in different ways? I would submit to you that education is far more important than football or soccer, that there is an international arena within which our children will live, by which they will be judged, and objective standards which do matter in their lives. So I predict we're going to have a big debate about education in the closing months of this congressional session. I welcome it, but I need your support.

We're trying to do things to help families: the Medicare buy-in for people over 55 who have lost their jobs and their health insurance. The Congress Budget Office—not me—the Congress Budget Office says we can allow that to be done without putting any burden on the Medicare system. It will not impact our efforts to reform Medicare at all.

The HMO bill of rights, the child care initiatives that we talked about so much yesterday—we have all this evidence now that what happens in a child's first 3 years of life is so important to the child's development. More than half the parents of children in the first 3 years of life are in the work force, and people are panicked all over the country about not being able to afford quality child care. We have a proposal on the floor which can fund that sort of quality child care for millions more children within the balanced budget amendment. We need to pass it.

We're finally going to get a vote on campaign finance reform in the House, thanks to that brave band, that small band of Republicans that joined with the House Democratic Caucus and forced a majority position on the Congress. I thank them for that.

And we are also going to have a chance to pass, for the 21st century, the most impressive commitment to scientific and biomedical research in modern history, as a part of our gift to the 21st century.

That's a pretty big agenda. And I just want you to know that you're a part of all this; your support makes this possible. But I would like to ask you to urge all of our fellow Democrats to urge the Congress to act. There are so many of these things we can do, and we'll still have plenty to argue about in November on the election. But we're Democrats; we believe the purpose of the Government is not to give us sinecures of power but to do things that help people advance their own lives. And that's what we're here trying to do, and we need to bear down and do it. That's why the country is in good shape today, because we have put aside short-term considerations to lift up the long-term interests of the country. No one can quarrel with the results. We just need to do more of it. And I'm going to do my best to make your support a catapult for getting those results.

Thank you again, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks at the National Teacher of the Year Award Ceremony
April 24, 1998

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, I was sitting here listening to Secretary Riley and Senator Robb, thinking about how very long we've been working together, principally on education—more than 15 years, the 3 of us—and I've noticed a few changes. For one thing, I was looking at Chuck's remarks, and as the years go by, the print on our notes gets bigger. [*Laughter*]

But I must say, their fidelity to the cause has never wavered. I continue to be astonished by Dick Riley's energy and passion and devotion to education. We couldn't have a better champion as Secretary of Education. And I am very grateful for a man with Senator Robb's raw courage, to have him in the Senate and on the side of our children.

I'd also like to thank Congressman Tom Davis and Congressman Tom Petri for being here to honor their respective Teachers of the Year. Congressman Davis swears that he went to junior high school with our honoree's wife, who is also a teacher. But the age disparity appears to be too great for that to be true. [*Laughter*]

I'd also like to welcome Gordon Ambach, the Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers; Mary Beth Blegen, the 1997 Teacher of the Year; and say a special word of appreciation to all the other Teachers of the Year who are here from all the States and the territories.

You know, this is the Rose Garden, and from these steps we have, at various times, paid tribute to our bravest soldiers, our pioneering astronauts, our greatest athletes. Americans who, in offering up their personal best made our spirits soar, and sometimes changed the course of history, and in so doing, earned the title of hero. But nothing could be more fitting than to celebrate the men and women whose great deeds

are too often unsung, but who, in offering up their personal best every day, help to create those other heroes. For every soldier, every astronaut, every scientist, every athlete, every artist can thank in no small measure a teacher, or more than one, for what he or she ultimately was able to become.

In that sense, we celebrate heroes, here today, who build up our children and America's future. We're especially glad to honor this year's National Teacher of the Year, Mr. Philip Bigler, but all the other teachers, too. I'm sure he would be the first to say—and I'm sure all of you would be the first to say—that you really stand here in the shoes of tens of thousands of others who every day do their best to lift our children up.

Your tools have changed over the years; textbooks have been updated, slates have given way to computers. But the most important tools—the heart and soul and compassion—are still the same. The passion for opening young minds to knowledge; the unshakable faith in the potential and possibility of every child; the commitment every now and then to stay after class to help a struggling student; the vigilance to answer every child's discouraged "I can't" with a determined "Yes, you can."

Our national honoree, Philip Bigler, brings all these gifts to his history classes at, appropriately, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Virginia. For more than 20 years, his students haven't just studied history, they have lived it. He's transformed his classroom into a virtual time machine, challenging students to debate each other as members of rival ancient Greek city states, as lawyers before the Supreme Court, as Presidential candidates named Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

Through these historic simulations, his students have learned lessons about democracy and the meaning of citizenship, lessons that will last a lifetime, lessons we want every American to know.

We need more teachers like Philip Bigler and all our other honorees in every classroom in America today. For it is they who can make our schools the best in the world. It is they who can guarantee that America will have another American Century in the 21st century.

Of course, we have to help them, and here in Washington, as Senator Robb said, we're doing our best to push an agenda for educational excellence for all. Secretary Riley has labored for it every day since we've been here, to empower teachers and students and principals and parents, through national standards and accountability, through smaller classes and better classrooms and more hookups to the Internet, through more master teachers and more charter schools.

For 4 years and more, the Congress and the President worked together in bipartisan fashion toward higher standards, greater accountability, and more opportunity. Indeed, in just the Balanced Budget Act last year, we had the biggest increase investment in public education in 35 years, and the biggest expansion of opportunity for our children to go on to college since the GI bill 50 years ago.

As Senator Robb said, this week Congress did a little about-face. The Senate voted against the school construction program to modernize our schools, against national standards, against reducing class sizes in the early grades. It voted to weaken the movement to charter schools and our efforts to hook all our classrooms and libraries up to the Internet by the year 2000.

Instead, they voted for a very small, as Senator Robb said, tax incentive proposal that allegedly will help parents meet elementary and secondary school expenses. But the truth is, this bill, though it cost $1.6 billion, which is a lot of money in Federal assistance to education, would offer an average of $7 in tax relief for parents of the 90 percent of our children who are in public schools, and just $37 in tax relief on average for those with children in private schools. Upper income families would get a disproportionate share of the money. Families struggling to make ends meet wouldn't get one red cent. Public education would be weakened by siphoning limited Federal resources away. Now, we can do better than that. And I'd like to ask the teachers to help me prepare the right lesson plan to ensure that we do.

Earlier this month, a House committee took, in some ways, an even more shocking step in our effort reward outstanding teachers all across America by actually eliminating funding for the important work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which certifies the master teachers—something that one of our colleagues, Governor Jim Hunt from North Carolina, has devoted a major part of the last 10 years to working for.

By defining the standards of excellence in teaching, the National Board helps to focus and upgrade teacher training, recognize outstanding teachers, keep our best teachers in the classroom, and help them help other teachers. National Board certification helps our teachers test themselves against the toughest standards. I believe it would be a terrible mistake to end national support for the work of the board, and I'm going to work with Congress to make sure that this provision never reaches my desk.

Every school in America ought to have at least one board-certified teacher who can inspire and help all his or her colleagues. Now is no time to walk away from our commitment to public education or to reject our common obligation to help our children and to help you help our children. It's no time for Congress to set a poor example for students by ignoring the evidence, the lessons that are plainly there from all the educational research that has been done in the last 15 years, since the issuance of the "Nation at Risk" report; from all the anecdotal evidence they could pick up by talking to any one of you who have been honored by your fellow teachers and your States.

This should not be a partisan issue; it should not be an ideological issue. It ought to be, purely and simply, what can we do to help you do what is best for our children and their future?

The most encouraging thing I can say about looking at all of you is, while we go on and debate all this, you're going back to your classes, back to our kids, and because of you they're going to do just fine while we argue about, often, the wrong things. [*Laughter*] And I think that should be deeply encouraging to the American people.

Now, I close with these words, so that we can give our honoree the last word. The great Daniel Webster once said, "If we work upon marble, it will perish. If we work upon brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust. But if we work upon immortal minds, we engrave on those tablets something that will brighten to all eternity."

Thank you, Philip Bigler, for brightening those minds to all eternity.

[*At this point, Mr. Bigler made brief remarks.*]

The President. I think we're supposed to say, class dismissed. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:22 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Beth Blegen, 1996 National Teacher of the Year.

Message on the Observance of Armenian Remembrance Day, 1998

April 24, 1998

This year, as in the past, we join with Armenian-Americans throughout the nation in commemorating one of the saddest chapters in the history of this century, the deportations and massacres of a million and a half Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in the years 1915–1923.

This painful event from the past also serves as a powerful lesson for the future: that man's inhumanity to man must not be tolerated, and that evil cannot conquer. The Armenian people have endured, surviving the ravages of two World Wars and seven decades of Soviet rule. Throughout the world, and especially in this country, Armenians have contributed to the material, intellectual and spiritual lives of their adopted homes. Today's Armenians are building a free and independent nation that stands as a living tribute to all those who died.

The United States will continue working to preserve a free Armenia in a peaceful, stable and prosperous Caucasus region. In that spirit, I extend to all Armenians my best wishes on Remembrance Day in the fervent hope that those who died will never be forgotten.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

The President's Radio Address
April 25, 1998

Good morning. This morning I'd like to talk to you about one way we are working to restore Americans' faith in our National Government, in our efforts to shore up Social Security and other vital benefits by cracking down on fraud and abuse.

For 60 years, Social Security has meant more than just an ID number on a tax form, even more than a monthly check in the mail. It has reflected our deepest values, the duties we owe to our parents, to each other, to our children and grandchildren, to those whom misfortune strikes, to those who deserve a decent old age, to our ideal of one America.

That's why I was so disturbed some time ago to discover that many prisoners, who are by law barred from receiving most of these Federal benefits, were actually collecting Social Security checks while locked up behind bars. Inmates were, in effect, under our law, getting away with fraud, primarily because it was so difficult to gather up-to-date information on criminals in our Nation's more than 3,500 jails. But thanks to an unprecedented Federal, State, and local cooperation, as well as new, innovative incentive programs, we're now finishing the job.

The Social Security Administration has produced a continually updated database that now covers more than 99 percent of all prisoners, the most comprehensive list of our inmate population in history. And more important, the Social Security Administration is using the list to great effect. By the end of last year we had suspended benefits to more than 70,000 prisoners. That means that over the next 5 years we will save taxpayers $2.5 billion—that's $2.5 billion—that will go toward serving our hard-working families.

Now we're going to build on the Social Security Administration's success in saving taxpayers from inmate fraud. In just a few moments I will sign an Executive memorandum that directs the Departments of Labor, Veterans Affairs, Justice, Education, and Agriculture to use the Social Security Administration's expertise and high-tech tools to enhance their own efforts to weed out any inmate who is receiving veteran's benefits, food stamps, or any other form of Federal benefit denied by law.

We expect that these comprehensive sweeps by our agencies will save taxpayers millions upon millions of more dollars, in addition to the billions already saved from our crackdown on Social Security fraud. We will ensure that those who have committed crimes against society will not have an opportunity to commit crimes against taxpayers as well.

The American people have a right to expect that their National Government is always on guard against every type of waste, fraud, and abuse. It is our duty to use every power and every tool to eliminate that kind of fraud. We owe it to the American people to ensure that their Social Security contributions and other tax dollars are benefiting only those who worked hard, played by the rules, and are, by law, eligible to receive them. That's exactly what we're trying to do.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Memorandum on Action To Prevent Prison Inmates From Inappropriately Receiving Federal Benefits

April 25, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Use of the Social Security Administration's Prisoner Database to Prevent Prison Inmates from Inappropriately Receiving Federal Benefits

The Social Security Administration ("SSA") is required by law to suspend Old Age and Survivors and Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income benefits to certain persons who are incarcerated. To carry out the law, the SSA, with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Prisons and various State and local entities, developed a database of persons who are incarcerated. Other agencies, too, including the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, operate Federal benefit programs that have statutory requirements to reduce, suspend, or terminate benefits to those who are incarcerated.

All of these agencies have been carrying out the requirements to suspend or reduce Federal benefits to prison inmates. However, the agencies' enforcement of these requirements independently, rather than in coordination, is not the most efficient use of Government resources and has not allowed the agencies to enforce these requirements to the greatest effect. Therefore, to provide for a coordinated government-wide effort to improve the implementation of the laws permitting suspension or reduction of Federal benefits to prison inmates and to use Government resources more efficiently, I hereby direct executive departments and agencies to take the following actions, to the extent permitted by law:

(1) By November 1, 1998, the Social Security Administration shall provide access to its prisoner database, on a reimbursable basis, to Federal agencies that administer benefit programs and to appropriate State and local entities that administer benefit programs in cooperation with Federal agencies. The SSA shall assist these agencies as necessary to allow quick and efficient access to the SSA prisoner database. By May 1, 1999, the agencies should make operational their computer systems that are to conduct the matches between their benefit program databases and the SSA prisoner database;

(2) The Departments of Education, Labor, and Veterans Affairs and Food Stamp agencies acting as agents for the Department of Agriculture, shall conduct matches between their benefit program databases and SSA's prisoner database to identify ineligible recipients of benefits on their benefit rosters. Agencies that have begun to conduct matches of their benefit program databases with SSA's prisoner database or other agencies' databases shall continue that work;

(3) Other executive agencies with benefit programs shall review such programs and determine whether it is appropriate and cost effective to conduct a match of their benefit program databases with the SSA prisoner database;

(4) Based on their matches with the SSA prisoner database, agencies that identify ineligible recipients shall immediately take action to suspend, reduce, or terminate benefits as permitted by law; and

(5) The agencies shall work with the Commissioner of Social Security and State and local governments, where appropriate, and take whatever actions are practicable to carry out this memorandum. The Commissioner of Social Security shall report to me within 180 days on the actions the SSA and other agencies have taken to implement this memorandum.

I believe that this coordinated government-wide approach to terminating, suspending, or reducing Federal benefits to prison inmates will more fully carry out the intention of the Federal laws restricting payment of benefits to prison inmates and will provide savings in Federal benefit programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner
April 25, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. McQuillan, Mr. Powell. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

As you know, I have been traveling to other lands quite a lot lately, and I just want to say what a pleasure it is for Hillary and me to be here in your country. [*Laughter*] Since I arrived here—[*laughter*]—I've been awestruck by the beauty of your landscape, the spirit of your people, the color of your native garb. [*Laughter*]

Now, the crowds who greet me here are not quite as adoring as in other nations I've visited lately—[*laughter*]—but they seem occasionally friendly, nonetheless. I've even sampled some of your indigenous cuisine, your hamburgers—quite tasty, sort of a meat sandwich. [*Laughter*]

It appears that democracy is thriving here. There are regular elections, contested with vigor, honored by some—[*laughter*]. In the legislature, persistent coup attempts so far have failed to upend the balance of power. [*Laughter*] You have a lively, independent press, confident in its judgment and bold in its predictions. [*Laughter*] And persistent, I might add. Yes, this Washington is a very special place, and Hillary and I will never forget our visit here. [*Laughter*]

Now, as I have come to do on these tours, I want to take just a few moments to reflect on our shared history. The past decades, indeed centuries, are filled with regrettable incidents. Mistakes were made. [*Laughter*] Injustices were committed. And certainly the passive tense was used too much. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I regret so much—I regret our long neglect of the planet Pluto. [*Laughter*] It took until 1930—1930—to welcome Pluto into the community of planets, and that was wrong. [*Laughter*] And I am so sorry about disco. [*Laughter*] That whole era of leisure suits and beanbag chairs and lava lamps—I mean, we all had to endure the cheesiness of the seventies, and that was wrong. [*Laughter*]

Then there's the Susan B. Anthony dollar. [*Laughter*] It did look too much like a quarter. And that was wrong. [*Laughter*] The expression "happy campers"—oh, it was cute the first couple of times, but it got real old real fast. [*Laughter*] I recently used it at a Cabinet meeting, and that was wrong. [*Laughter*] Pineapple on pizza—some things are just wrong. [*Laughter*]

I'd also, in this moment of cleansing, like to take just a moment to reflect on past treatment of the White House press corps. I apologize for the quality of the free food you've been served over the years. [*Laughter*] At the price, you deserved better. It was wrong. [*Laughter*] For many years when the space that is now the briefing room in the White House was a swimming pool, reporters had to tread water for hours on end. [*Laughter*] And that was wrong—sort of. [*Laughter*]

And I'd really like to apologize for all the information you've had to attribute to anonymous sources over the years. Of course, that apology has to be off the record, and for that I am truly sorry. [*Laughter*] But now that we have put the issues of the past behind us, I really would like to thank you for inviting me to tonight's dinner. This is the night I get to poke fun at you. That is my definition of executive privilege. [*Laughter*]

Now, I'm at a little bit of a disadvantage this year. I've been so busy I haven't read a newspaper or a magazine or even watched the evening news since the Pope went to Cuba. [*Laughter*] What have you been writing about since then? [*Laughter*] I hardly have any time to read the news anymore. Mostly, I just skim the retractions. [*Laughter*] I've even stopped watching McCurry's briefing; I mean, he never answers a single question. [*Laughter*] I don't know how you put up with it. I've told him again and again and again he can answer any question he wants. [*Laughter*] What has he told you about that? [*Laughter*]

Seriously, I have been looking so much forward to seeing all of you this weekend. I just want to know one thing: How come there's no table for Salon Magazine? [*Laughter*] That's supposed to be funny; don't take yourselves so seriously. [*Laughter*] You'll see the light. Don't worry about it. Loosen up. [*Laughter*]

One of the things I like about this dinner is that as big as it is, it's a lot smaller and more intimate than the White House pundits dinner. [*Laughter*] I don't have anything against

political pundits, mind you. Some of my best friends used to be political pundits, and some political pundits used to be my best friends. [*Laughter*]

Really, I'm just here to warm the audience up for Ray Romano. I feel ambivalent about it. He's the star of a show called "Everybody Loves Raymond." Everybody loves Raymond? I can't stand a guy with a 100 percent approval rating. [*Laughter*]

I do want to congratulate the winners tonight, Earl Lane and Andrew Smith, Mike Frisby, Ron Fournier, Peter Maer. I'd like to say something to Mike Frisby: Now that you've won this award, I think you ought to slow down, work a little less, try to enjoy the finer things of life. [*Laughter*]

And to Ron Fournier—you know, I honestly believe Ron Fournier is the only person who came to Washington with me from Arkansas who hasn't been subpoenaed. [*Laughter*] But the night is still young. [*Laughter*]

I'm also happy to see that Peter Maer is getting an award tonight for his excellent work. I was worried—since he was nearly mauled by a cheetah on our Africa trip, you probably ought to be giving him the Purple Heart. Now, come on, could you write a joke about Peter Maer? A little laugh there. [*Laughter*]

It was reported on our trip that Sam Donaldson scared away a herd of elephants with his distinctive voice. [*Laughter*] That is not fair. Elephants are very smart. The elephants knew Sam works for Disney; they thought he was trying to round them up for a new theme park. [*Laughter*]

This has been an extraordinary few months for the White House press corps. It's no wonder you've been swarming around the White House; there's nothing to cover on Capitol Hill. [*Laughter*] Now, listen to this. All over, TV executives are asking, what can possibly fill the gaping hole on Thursday night once "Seinfeld" goes off the air? I've got it: Congress on C–SPAN. Now, there's a show about nothing. [*Laughter*] Not that there is anything wrong with that, mind you. There's nothing wrong with that. [*Laughter*]

There are barely 40 days left in the 105th Congress as of tonight. This is a Congress with nothing to do and no time to do it in. [*Laughter*] But there will be one news item coming out of Capitol Hill next week. I met with Senator John Glenn recently to decide who should be the next distinguished Member of Congress hurled into the far reaches of the universe. [*Laughter*] And we have our man. Godspeed, Dick Armey. [*Laughter*]

On Tuesday, Speaker Gingrich is holding a press conference to proclaim that Tony the Tiger is not selling Frosted Flakes to children. [*Laughter*] Last week he said the movie "Titanic" glorified smoking. I couldn't believe it. This week he'll accuse it of glorifying drowning. [*Laughter*] You know, this is a—it gets funnier if you think about it. [*Laughter*]

For all of you who do not live in Washington, let me ask you to make some allowances for all of us tonight. This is a unique and rather unsettling moment in Washington. I'm not the only one who is anxiously awaiting the release of Steve Brill's new magazine. I have an advance copy here. See? It's called "Content." [*Laughter*] Now, why would anyone want to call a magazine about the news media that? Oh, McCurry says it's called "Content." Why would anyone want to call a magazine about the news media that? [*Laughter*]

Anyway, you might be interested in what's going to be in the first edition. I have it here, the table of contents: Makeover tips, by John King. [*Laughter*] George Mitchell writes about the prospects of lasting peace between Barbara Walters and Diane Sawyer. [*Laughter*] "Six Lip-Smacking Summertime Recipes for Harvest Burgers," by David Brinkley. [*Laughter*] A retrospective: CBS News, from Murrow to Molinari. [*Laughter*] "Buddy Got What He Deserved," by Maureen Dowd. [*Laughter*] Here's an article called "Waiting in the Wings," co-written by Al Gore and Brian Williams. [*Laughter*] I think they're both going to make it. Here's Lanny Davis' review of "Spin Cycle." He liked it. [*Laughter*]

Now, I've got to say one thing. You know, this book "Spin Cycle," it implies that this Kabuki dance between the White House and the press is some kind of a recent phenomenon. That's not true. It is a cherished part of our history. Just in preparation for tonight, I had the National Archives send over some yellowed transcripts to make this point. For example, here's some good news from the Hoover administration: Housing starts were up in the third quarter of 1931. [*Laughter*] Said a senior adviser to the President, "These Hoovervilles reflect a commitment to private initiative instead of paternalistic big Government. The President is proud they bear his name." [*Laughter*]

Then in 1814 a White House official disputed the idea that the burning of the White House was a setback for the Madison administration. [*Laughter*] "Yes, fire did consume the mansion," he said, "but it was in desperate need of renovation anyway—[*laughter*]—and this salutary effort by the British actually saves us time and taxpayers' money." [*Laughter*]

Here's one from the Jefferson administration in 1804. A spokesman for Vice President Aaron Burr asserted, "People don't kill people, guns kill people." [*Laughter*] Way back in 1773 a spokesman for Samuel Adams asserted unequivocally that the Boston Tea Party was not a fundraiser. [*Laughter*] "No one paid to attend; there was no quid pro quo," he said. "The party was just a town meeting for colonists to get to know each other and discuss details of the new tax law."

Well, we've been at this a long time. Helen ought to know; she was there. [*Laughter*]

Let me say one serious thing: Helen Thomas is not just the longest serving White House correspondent. One of the reasons she got that award tonight in her name is that she's still the hardest working, the first to show up in the Press Office every morning about 5 o'clock, 5 days a week, for nearly 40 years. And I dare say tonight is the first time she has ever been completely scooped. By my calculation, she's had about 10,000 mornings, thousands of notebooks, thousands of ballpoint pens, thousands of cups of coffee—sometimes brought to her by White House staffers—never has it compromised her yet.

For all of us in the White House, she is a rock; for everyone here tonight, obviously a symbol of everything American journalism can and should be: the embodiment of fearless integrity, fierce commitment to accuracy, the insistence upon holding Government accountable—all of that in the spirit of the first amendment and the free press it protects.

Helen, by tradition, you always get to ask the first question at the press conference. This has been a rather long opening statement, but to honor the tradition tonight you can ask me anything you want. But remember, in an even older tradition, I don't have to answer. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:26 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Larry McQuillan of Reuters, outgoing president, and Stewart Powell of Hearst Newspapers, incoming president, White House Correspondents' Association; Earl Lane and Andrew Smith of Newsday, winners of the Edgar A. Poe Award; Michael K. Frisby, Wall Street Journal, winner of the Aldo Beckman Award for 1998; Ron Fournier, Associated Press, and Peter Maer, NBC Radio/Mutual News, winners of the Merriman Smith Memorial Award for 1998; Sam Donaldson, ABC News; and Helen Thomas, United Press International, first recipient of the association's Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award.

Statement on Drug Use By Prison Inmates

April 26, 1998

The report on jail inmates released today by the Justice Department confirms the urgent need for Government at all levels to pursue a policy of coerced abstinence for drug offenders. The report shows that more than half of these criminals used drugs in the month prior to their arrest. We have an obligation to install a tough system of testing, treatment, and punishment for drug offenders to prevent them from returning to the streets with dangerous drug habits intact. Congress can take the lead by adopting my administration's proposals to promote coerced abstinence throughout the criminal justice system.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 25 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m. on April 26.

Remarks at the Premiere of "Ragtime"
April 26, 1998

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, when we were being ushered up the aisle and backstage and we were preparing to come up here, I was full of ambivalence, frankly. I wanted so badly to come up here and thank Garth and the magnificent cast, musicians, people backstage, everybody who had anything to do with this unbelievable gift we have been given. I wanted to thank the leaders of the Democratic Party and the staff. I wanted to especially thank all of you for being here and for making this weekend, celebrating our 150th birthday as a party, a success. But I was absolutely convinced that anything I would say would be a complete anticlimax after the wringer they have put us through today. [*Laughter*]

I was thinking on the way over here about the time when Mr. Doctorow published this magnificent novel, over 20 years ago now, and Hillary and I were young law professors living in the mountains of north Arkansas. And I read the book almost immediately after it came out. I couldn't put it down. I just sat there, read right through it. And after it was over, I felt just as I felt after the show was over.

But I don't think even then I fully grasped the life force behind the stories in "Ragtime." And I think what I would like to say to you is that, yes, this is the story of America, and it reminds us that we have a good system and the best ideals, but we always fall a little short. And the story of our country has to be the continuing effort to overcome our own individual flaws and imperfections and tendency to fall into injustice and bigotry and oppression and greed and shortsightedness or just plain tone-deafness, but that there is also a part of the human condition which makes us vulnerable as people.

I was walking down the aisle and several of you said, thank you so much for what you did to try to help the Irish peace process along. And then I saw the representative of my ancestors, the Irish fireman here—[*laughter*]—playing the heavy. We got a book last week, Hillary and I did, entitled "How The Irish Became White." [*Laughter*] And it basically talks about how, when the Irish immigrants first came here, they really identified with the African-American slaves because they were treated the same way, and they had much the same experience.

I say that to remind us all that there will always be the tendency of people to abuse power if they can abuse it. That's why we have a Constitution which seeks earnestly to limit that. And all of us will always have our imperfection, and so will our children and grandchildren and their grandchildren. The thing that makes America great is that we have the right ideals and that through history we have constantly sought to overcome our own limitations, to stand for deeper freedom, to stand for wider opportunity, to stand for a more perfect Union.

And I hope that all of you will always remember what you saw on this stage tonight. I hope you will never, ever abandon what brought you here to this performance tonight. And I hope all of your lives you will try to create more of the joy you saw here, eliminate all the oppression you can, and be very proud to be both an American and a Democrat.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the National Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Garth H. Drabinsky, chairman and chief executive officer, Livent, Inc.; and author E.L. Doctorow.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner
April 26, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much. Let me see, we have now seen a magnificent musical rendition of a wonderful novel. We heard two fine speeches. If I had any sense, I would sit down. [*Laughter*]

When Bob was talking about that obscurity is forever, I think the Vice President is too sensitive. I thought he was talking about being a former President, not being a—[*laughter*].

I want to thank the Kogods and the Smiths and all their family members for having us in this magnificent home, for giving us a chance to look at all the wonderful art, for being in this beautiful tent. I'm delighted with the weather, and I'm delighted with the company. I want to thank the leaders of our party and the cochairs of this event tonight.

As you leave here—and the Vice President has already said a lot of the things that I think should be said about what it means for a party to be 150 years old. But let me say, when Hillary and I were in Chile recently, someone, I think on her staff, got us a copy of a speech which Theodore Roosevelt gave in Chile after he left the White House in the early part of this century, a speech which I have to say I believe the members of his party ignored. But it's brilliant speech about how in politics, if you want to really matter, you have to be faithful to eternal values, but you have to always be willing to lift the dead hand of history off your politics, always be willing to do whatever is necessary to advance the expansion of freedom and opportunity for people, and never to be paralyzed by what you used to do when it no longer makes sense.

It's really quite a brilliant speech, and I read it when I was in Chile, thinking, that's what I think, and that's what I think our party embodies.

What I would like for you to think about, leaving here tonight, basically are just three things. Number one, in terms of what we're going to do in the next 2½ years, in order to continue to win Presidential elections, win back the Congress, and become the dominant party in the country again, I think we not only have to continue to win with an aggressive, specific agenda; I think we have to also keep pushing the big ideas—that we do believe in opportunity for everybody; we do believe that we should expand the reach of human freedom; we do believe that we're stronger as a diverse country.

And there are two or three really simple things that I would like to mention that to me are quite important. And frankly, I haven't succeeded yet in convincing huge numbers of the American people that this has to be a part of our thinking. The first is that it no longer makes sense to have a clear, bright line between what is an American domestic policy and what is a foreign policy. Now, if I had succeeded in doing that, we wouldn't have some of the disputes we still have in our country today, and there would be more support in our country for paying our U.N. dues, investing in the International Monetary Fund, being responsible citizens in every way.

I think the American people know we're living in an interdependent world, but it's not such a high priority that politicians for their own purposes don't feel they can—they still feel free to walk away from some of our responsibilities in the world. And I think that's a great mistake, because I can tell you—you know, I believe that every nation I have set foot in as President, I was doing something that was good for the American people and their future and our children's future.

You do not have to be a Jewish-American or an Arab-American to know that the children of our country will have a brighter future if there is peace in the Middle East. You don't have to have come out of central Europe to know that the children of our country will have a brighter future if there is peace in Bosnia. You don't have to be Greek or Turkish to know that we'd be a whole lot better off if we'd resolve the problems over Cyprus. You don't have to be Indian or Pakistani to know that it would be an ultimate disaster if those two great nations went to war over Kashmir, when they could go to peace and change the whole future of the 21st century by their numbers and their ingenuity.

This is elemental, and as Democrats we have got to continue to push the fact that our children live in a smaller and smaller world and that we cannot any longer just look at the outlines of the United States on a map and say only those events which occur within that border and only the people who live within those borders bear directly on our lives, our future, and our imagination.

The other thing I'd like to say is that I think that we have got to learn to stop thinking of ourselves as the environmental party and start thinking of the environment as a part of all of our other policies. I think we will never have the kind of country we want unless we say we can conquer the problem of climate change as we grow the economy. We dare not think of

some—we can't even have health policy unless we have environmental policy. We have to learn to think in a more integrated fashion.

This may be late at night, and you may think that's esoteric, but I'm telling you, I'm about through with my public service as an elected official. Most of my service as President is over, and I'm thinking about the things that will shape what our children have to live with for 30 or 40 years.

And the last thing I want to say is what the musical was about tonight is still the most important thing. We have to got to inculcate in our people both the pride in their own heritage, beliefs, and convictions and a fundamental respect, even a celebration, of people who are different from them. It is a great opportunity for the United States that we are the most diverse democracy in the world.

Now, as a factual matter, both Russia and India also have huge numbers of different ethnic groups, languages, and religions within their borders, but the difference is, largely those people live in geographically separate parts of the same country. Here, we're the most mixed up, if you will—I don't mean addlebrained—[*laughter*]—I mean intermixed—diverse democracy in all of human history.

And if there is one thing I have learned as President that I did not really know when I took office in the way I know it now, it is that when people fight and kill each other or live in paralyzed isolation because of their ethnic, their racial, or their religious differences, they do not do it because of some dark content of human nature, some inevitable hard hand of history. They do it because they don't have leaders who stand up and say, this is the right thing to do; that is wrong to do; we must not live apart; it is wrong to kill and hurt and maim people.

So when you go home tonight, I hope you'll remember the play for the rest of your life, the musical. I hope you will always be proud you were here. But remember, there is a reason we're still hanging around after all these years: because we've still got the same values we started with, but we never let the dead hand of history keep us from making the changes necessary to make the American dream more real for more people in a more profound way in each new age and time.

And if we leave with that and we continue to fight for that and we remember the three specific things I said tonight, then 150 years from now a bunch of other people will be having a nice dinner celebrating the 300th birthday of the Democratic Committee. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:41 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner cohosts Arlene and Lauren Kogod and Clarice and Bob Smith.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia

April 24, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments since my last report concerning the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

1. On October 21, 1995, I signed Executive Order 12978, "Blocking Assets and Prohibiting Transactions with Significant Narcotics Traffickers" (the "Order") (60 *Fed. Reg.* 54579, October 24, 1995). The Order blocks all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of four significant foreign narcotics traffickers, one of whom is now deceased, who were principals in the so-called Cali drug cartel centered in Colombia. These persons are listed in the annex to the Order. The Order also blocks the property and interests in property of foreign persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State, (a) to

play a significant role in international narcotics trafficking centered in Colombia or (b) to materially assist in or provide financial or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, the narcotics trafficking activities of persons designated in or pursuant to the Order. In addition the Order blocks all property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State, to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, persons designated in or pursuant to the Order (collectively "Specially Designated Narcotics Traffickers" or "SDNTs").

The Order further prohibits any transaction or dealing by a United States person or within the United States in property or interests in property of SDNTs, and any transaction that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, the prohibitions contained in the Order.

Designations of foreign persons blocked pursuant to the Order are effective upon the date of determination by the Director of the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury. Public notice of blocking is effective upon the date of filing with the *Federal Register*, or upon prior actual notice.

2. On October 24, 1995, the Department of the Treasury issued a notice containing 76 additional names of persons determined to meet the criteria set forth in Executive Order 12978 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 54582, October 24, 1995). Additional notices expanding and updating the list of SDNTs were published on November 29, 1995 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 61288), March 8, 1996 (61 *Fed. Reg.* 9523), and January 21, 1997 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 2903).

Effective February 28, 1997, OFAC issued the Narcotics Trafficking Sanctions Regulations ("NTSR" or the "Regulations"), 31 C.F.R. Part 536, to further implement my declaration of a national emergency and imposition of sanctions against significant foreign narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia (62 *Fed. Reg.* 9959, March 5, 1997).

On April 17, 1997 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 19500, April 22, 1997), July 30, 1997 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 41850, Augusthree 4, 1997), and September 9, 1997 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 48177, September 15, 1997), OFAC amended appendices A and B to 31 C.F.R. chapter V, revising information concerning individuals and entities who have been determined to play a significant role in international narcotics trafficking centered in Colombia or have been determined to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, or to be acting as fronts for the Cali cartel in Colombia. These actions are part of the ongoing interagency implementation of Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995. These changes to the previous SDNT list brought it to a total of 426 businesses and individuals with whom financial and business dealings are prohibited and whose assets are blocked under the Order.

3. OFAC has disseminated and routinely updated details of this program to the financial, securities, and international trade communities by both electronic and conventional media. In addition to bulletins to banking institutions via the Federal Reserve System and the Clearing House Interbank Payments System (CHIPS), individual notices were provided to all relevant State and Federal regulatory agencies, automated clearing houses, and State and independent banking associations across the country. OFAC contacted all major securities industry associations and regulators. It posted electronic notices on the Internet and over 10 computer bulletin boards and 2 fax-on-demand services, and provided the same material to the U.S. Embassy in Bogota for distribution to U.S. companies operating in Colombia.

4. As of March 25, 1998, OFAC had issued nine specific licenses pursuant to Executive Order 12978. These licenses were issued in accordance with established Treasury policy authorizing the completion of presanctions transactions and the provision of legal services to and payment of fees for representation of SDNTs in proceedings within the United States arising from the imposition of sanctions.

5. The narcotics trafficking sanctions have had a significant impact on the Cali drug cartel. Of the 133 business entities designated as SDNTs as of February 20, 1998, 41, or nearly a third, having a combined net worth estimated at more than $45 million and a combined income of more than $200 million, had been determined to have gone into liquidation. As a result of OFAC designations, 3 Colombian banks have closed about 300 SDNT accounts of nearly 100 designated individuals. One of the largest SDNT commercial entities, a discount drugstore with

an annual income exceeding $136 million, has been reduced to operating on a cash basis. These specific results augment the less quantifiable but significant impact of denying the designated individuals and entities of the cartel access to U.S. financial and commercial facilities.

Various enforcement actions carried over from prior reporting periods are continuing and new reports of violations are being aggressively pursued. Two criminal investigations are ongoing. Since my last report, OFAC has collected its first civil monetary penalty for violations of IEEPA and the Regulations under the program. OFAC collected $2,625 from a commercial agent for ocean-going oil tankers for violative funds transfers.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from October 21, 1997, through April 20, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency with respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers are estimated at approximately $620,000. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of Justice, and the Department of State. These data do not reflect certain costs of operations by the intelligence and law enforcement communities.

7. Executive Order 12978 provides my Administration with a tool for combatting the actions of significant foreign narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia and the unparalleled violence, corruption, and harm that they cause in the United States and abroad. The Order is designed to deny these traffickers the benefit of any assets subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and to prevent United States persons from engaging in any commercial dealings with them, their front companies, and their agents. Executive Order 12978 demonstrates the United States commitment to end the damage that such traffickers wreak upon society in the United States and abroad.

The magnitude and the dimension of the problem in Colombia—perhaps the most pivotal country of all in terms of the world's cocaine trade—are extremely grave. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against significant foreign narcotics traffickers and their violent and corrupting activities as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 24, 1998.

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 27.

Remarks at a Reception Celebrating Israel's 50th Anniversary
April 27, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Rector, all the officials of Hebrew University; Mr. Vice President, members of the Cabinet, the administration; Members of the Congress. I'd like to especially thank Dr. Dunn, Dr. Nyang, Dr. Schorsch, and Richard Dreyfuss and Linda Lavin for their wonderful contributions to this day. To Ambassador and Mrs. Ben-Elissar, thank you for being here. To all of our former Ambassadors to the United States and other distinguished guests from Israel, and my fellow Americans.

I'd also like to ask that we give a special word of appreciation to the people who provided all that wonderful music which got us in the right frame of mind, Esta band. [*Applause*] Thank you very much. If you could hang around here for a month or two, I think we might get some things done; you'd keep us all in a very positive frame of mind.

I am very honored to receive this degree from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, honored because its founders include Chaim Weizmann,

Martin Buber, Sigmund Freud, and Albert Einstein; honored because it is now one of the world's leading centers of learning and research.

I must say, I never expected to be doing this here. Many American universities have satellite campuses where working people like me can obtain degrees at locations near their homes and offices. [*Laughter*] This is more than I ever could have anticipated. [*Laughter*]

President Magidor, thank you for bringing this ceremony here so that those of us who cannot go to Israel in a couple of days may share in the celebration of this magnificent 50th birthday.

I accept this honor today on behalf of my predecessors, beginning with Harry Truman, nine American Presidents all devoted to Israel's security and freedom, all committed to peace in the Middle East. I accept it on behalf of the American people who have formed not just an alliance but a profound friendship with the people of Israel over these last 50 years.

Today we celebrate that extraordinary 50 years. In 1948 Israel arose from the seeds of the Diaspora and the ashes of the Holocaust. The children of Abraham and Sarah, survivors of 2,000 years of exile and persecution, were home at last and free at last. For its founders, the Israeli State was, however, about even more than securing a haven for the Jewish people after centuries of suffering and wandering. Isaiah prophesied that Israel would become "a light unto the nations," and David Ben-Gurion and his allies set out to make that prophecy come true by establishing a society of light, embracing what Ben-Gurion called the higher virtues of truth, justice, and compassion.

Ben-Gurion believed Israel could lead the world to a better future by marrying the ethical teachings of the ancients with the discoveries of modern science. "It is only by the integration of the two," he wrote, "that the blessings of both can flourish." Of course, he also envisioned a third great achievement for Israel, that with strength and wisdom and skill, Israel would build a lasting peace with its Arab neighbors.

As we have heard today, relations between our two nations were born of another leader's courage and vision. Harry Truman brushed aside the urgings of his advisers, as he often did, when they said go slow, wait and see, before offering Israel recognition. For him, supporting a Jewish homeland was a moral imperative rooted in his understanding of the suffering and dreams of the Jews from Biblical times. And as we learned from Richard's wonderful reading, it occurred just 11 minutes after Israel proclaimed independence. We, in becoming the first country to recognize Israel, had one of our proudest moments. Not only that, 50 years later, old Harry Truman looks pretty smart. [*Laughter*]

Look what Israel has done. Under a brilliant blue sky, the Israelis have built prosperous farms and kibbutzes, planted forests, turned streets of sand into shining boulevards, raised families, and welcomed the arrival of brothers and sisters from Europe and North Africa, from Russia and Ethiopia and America. Israelis have dazzled the world with achievements in science and scholarship, in literature and the art. They have built a thriving democracy.

And despite the passage of 50 years, Israelis seem to love and practice their freedom as if they had only just gained it. They never seem to cease challenging themselves about their history, their relationship with their neighbors, the hard choices for the future. If anyone ever wonders whether there is a place in the world where you can have freedom and honest, vigorous, 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week, 365-day-a-year argument, go to Israel. [*Laughter*]

It is truly one of the most pulsating, vibrant places on Earth, alive with thousands of sounds: prayers in dozens of languages in the Old City, young people gathered on the avenues of Tel Aviv, computer keyboards tapping, new ventures launched on the Internet, schoolchildren now conversing in Hebrew—once the language only of sacred text, now the voice of an Israeli renaissance. And the economy has been propelled by all this energy and activity into being one of the most advanced and diversified in the world; per capita income now matching nations in Europe; exports last year were $32 billion dollars, 1,000 times their level in 1948. High-tech companies, high-tech people—you go to Israel, it looks as if you can't be a citizen of Israel unless you have a cell phone glued to your hand. [*Laughter*]

Yes, Israelis have gone a very long way toward fulfilling the first two pieces of Ben-Gurion's vision. Surely they have built an ethical, democratic society and a modern science- and technology-based economy. It has endured against great odds by prevailing again and again in battle—the valor of citizen soldiers and military and political leaders like Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Yonni Netanyahu.

But in the battle for the third piece of Ben-Gurion's vision, a just, secure, and lasting peace, is still being waged—and still in blood and tears. Camp David brought peace between Israel and Egypt, but it cost Anwar Sadat his life. Here on this very spot, on a brilliant day in September of 1993, Yitzhak Rabin committed himself not only to an agreement with Mr. Arafat but to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. How bravely he pursued it. But it cost him his life. Jews and Arabs who have wanted nothing more than to live quiet, normal lives are still denied that simple pleasure.

Still, as the new century dawns, the world is filled with the promise and hope that we can overcome ancient hatreds to build a modern peace for our children. From Guatemala to Mozambique to Bosnia, and now even to the land of my ancestors in Ireland, longtime antagonists have left the battleground to find common ground. They are weary of war. They long for peace for their children. They move beyond hatred to hope.

This is a time of reconciliation around the world. It must be a time to deepen freedom and raise up life in the Middle East. The 21st century can and must be a century of democracy, prosperity, and justice and, of course, of peace. But it can be only if we learn not only to respect but to honor our differences. The Middle East can build on the momentous achievements of its Nobel Prize winners, Begin and Sadat, Arafat, Peres, and Rabin, so that all its children may grow up without fear.

In a land holy to three great religions, sacred sites for Islam, Judaism, and Christianity exist side by side. If there is so much history there, the children of all that history should be able to live together.

Again and again, extremists have sought to derail peace with bullets and bombs. Again and again, they demonstrate the real divisions today are not between Jews and Arabs but between those stuck in the past and those who long for a better future, between those paralyzed by hatred and those energized by hope, those who stand with clenched fists and those who reach out with open hands. We cannot let the extremists prevail. Israel can fulfill its full promise by drawing on the courage and vision of its founders to achieve peace with security. Never has the opportunity been more real, and it must not be lost.

You know, I was sitting here on the stage today listening to everything that was said and thinking of all the great gifts that Israel has given the United States. In 1963, 35 years ago this year, when Israel was still a young nation and President Kennedy was killed, your then-United Nations Ambassador, Mr. Eban, gave an enormous gift to the American people in all of our pain by putting in one short, terse sentence how we all felt when he said, "Tragedy is the difference between what is and what might have been." As we look ahead to tomorrow, let us define triumph by turning his formula on its head. Triumph is when there is no difference between what might have been and what is.

Let us in the United States say that we will stand by Israel, always foursquare for its security, always together in friendship, but we want this debate to continue until there is no difference between what might have been and what is.

We look at Hebrew University and see all three pieces of David Ben-Gurion's dream coming to life. We see biologists developing techniques to locate a single cancer cell among millions of healthy ones; we see the moral commitment to keeping people's health among the scientists there; we see Hebrew University researchers undertaking efforts in cooperation with Palestinian researchers in East Jerusalem. One of the participants in the project said, "It's science and peace together." We know that much more is possible. We must understand that much more is essential.

Fifty years from now, the 21st century will near its midpoint and Israel will have a 100th birthday celebration. Sure as the world, our grandchildren will be hanging around here on this lawn. What do you think they'll be able to say? And what will they be celebrating? It is my dream that on that 100th anniversary, people from every country in the Middle East will gather in the Holy Land, and all the land will be holy to all of them.

As a Christian, I do not know how God, if He were to come to Earth, would divide the land over which there is dispute now. I suspect neither does anyone else in this audience. But I know that if we all pray for the wisdom to do God's will, chances are we will find a way to close the gap in the next couple of years between what might be and what is. I think

that is what we owe the founders of Israel, to finish Ben-Gurion's dream.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Menachem Magidor, president, and Menahem Ben-Sasson, rector, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Rev. James M. Dunn, executive director, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; Sulayman S. Nyang, president, Interfaith Conference of Washington, DC; Ismar Schorsch, chancellor, Jewish Theological Seminary; actors Richard Dreyfuss and Linda Lavin; Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Eliahu Ben-Elissar and his wife, Nitza; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Abba Eban, former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations.

Remarks on Receiving the Surgeon General's Report on Tobacco Use Among Minority Groups

April 27, 1998

Thank you very much, Dr. Satcher, for the exceptional report. I thank all those who worked on it. Mr. Vice President, Secretary Shalala, thank you for your long and constant fidelity to this cause. Thank you, Senator Frist, for being here, for demonstrating that it is a medical, not a political issue, and an American, not a partisan issue. You gave us a "two-fer" today, and we thank you for that. You were great. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I also thank Senator Hatch and Senator Chafee for being here, all the Members of the House of Representatives. I thank the leaders of the Native American tribes who are here. I especially thank the attorneys general who are here. They had a lot to do with beginning this long struggle to free our children from tobacco, and they deserve a lot of the credit for the efforts that are now going on. And I'd like to thank the young people who are standing behind me and those whom they represent, all across America, in the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Youth. They represent the future we are trying to preserve.

This report gives us fresh evidence that those of us in this society who are adults, and especially those of us who are parents, are not doing our jobs very well. Any of us who have ever been parents know that our most profound and instinctive urge is to protect our children from danger so that they can grow up healthy, safe, and secure.

Just today I was talking, before I came in here, with a Member of the House who was at our previous event, and he was talking about a young staff member of his who was dealing with a serious health problem. And he choked up; he couldn't even finish the conversation. And he's a good person with a good heart, but that reflects the natural human response we have to protect our own children and all those who are of the younger generation from whatever dangers we can, in the hope that they will have the opportunity to live full, good lives.

Well, we've done a good job over the years of strapping our kids into seatbelts in cars, in safety seats. We do a pretty good job of bundling up children against the winter cold; not many of them die of pneumonia anymore. We make sure that they get to school safely each day. But we haven't done what we should in wrapping the protective arm of parents and other adults in our society as a whole around them when it comes to resisting advertising, peer pressure, or whatever other forces get young people into smoking, even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to children in every State in the United States.

We know that today about a third of our children are smoking. The report issued by Dr. Satcher shows that more and more are becoming hooked on cigarettes. Smoking rates are up among teens of all backgrounds, but now we see especially among Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, and especially and most dramatically among African-Americans, where the rates used to be dramatically lower than the average.

These are children just starting out in life; they've got enough challenges as it is. We ought to do more to clear the way, to assure them the best possible chance at the future of their

dreams. Instead, they are still becoming the targets of highly sophisticated marketing campaigns. They are the "replacement smokers" of the advertisers' strategy. But they are our children, and we can't replace them.

The call to action should be getting louder. Congress has a very important opportunity to build on the work done by the attorneys general, the representatives of individuals who have been harmed in smoking, and others—the work of the FDA—to pass a comprehensive, bipartisan tobacco bill that will cut teen smoking by raising the price of cigarettes, putting into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, imposing strong penalties on those who continue to sell cigarettes to children, ensuring the FDA has the authority it needs to regulate tobacco products, protecting farmers and farming communities, and yes, doing what Dr. Satcher says we still need to do, continuing to invest more in research to find out the answers that we don't have yet in this regard.

A bill sponsored by Senator McCain and voted out of the committee with all but one vote—a unanimous vote save one—is a good step in that direction, because it explicitly changes the rules of the game to make it much harder for the tobacco industry to profit at the expense of our children's health.

I want to say a special word of thanks, too, to Senator Frist, because he's worked so hard to make sure that the bill provides the FDA with the authority it needs to continue to cover tobacco products.

Now, folks, the Surgeon General has just issued his first report. It's a fine report. It's a compelling report. It is obviously compelling to the leaders of the groups from whom these children come, because they have come here. We know what the danger is. We know what the remedy is. They're just kids; we're the grown-ups. Now, if we know what the danger is and we know what the remedy is, are we going to do what it takes to save their lives and their health and their future, or not? It is as simple as that. This is not rocket science.

I have been profoundly moved by the extent to which this really has become an issue about health, not politics, an issue about our children, not partisan differences. Every step along the way we have been able to reach across party lines; we've been able to put aside rhetoric; we've been able to try to look to the health issue of our children.

Now, I know there are some complexities surrounding this issue. There are complexities: How much money should be raised? How should it be spent? How should we assure the continuing jurisdiction of the FDA? Exactly what are the nature of the advertising restrictions? There are complicated questions. But my experience now, after many, many years in public life, is that all the complicated questions get much simpler if you focus on the big issue.

The big issue is that the children behind us deserve to have a future, and we know that unless we do something to stop them from being treated as replacement smokers, their future will be restricted. That is the big issue. We know what the problem is; we know what to do about it. I suggest that these children—you look at them, look at all those they represent, look at those who don't yet have the good sense to put their tee shirts on and join their crusades—and it becomes pretty clear that we need to take this very first report by our latest distinguished Surgeon General and do the right thing with the report and for our children.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The report was entitled "Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups."

Memorandum on the Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

April 27, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: 1998 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

I am delighted that Rodney E. Slater, Secretary of Transportation, has agreed to again serve as the Chair of the 1998 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area. I ask you to support the campaign by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and appointing a top official as your vice chair.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support many worthy charities. This year our goal is to again raise more than $38 million. Public servants not only contribute to the campaign but assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help guarantee another successful campaign this year.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28.

Remarks on Receiving the Report of the Social Security and Medicare Trustees and an Exchange With Reporters

April 28, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Five and a half years ago, America chose a new course of fiscal discipline and economic growth, balancing our budget and investing in our people. Holding fast to that course, our people have built the strongest economy in a generation.

Success of this strategy cannot be cause for complacency, however. Instead, it offers us an opportunity and an obligation to act boldly to strengthen our Nation for the new century. Above all, we can harness our unsurpassed prosperity to uphold our duty to our parents, to our children, and to each other through Social Security and Medicare.

I've just been briefed by the four Social Security and Medicare trustees for the administration: Secretaries Rubin, Shalala, Herman, and Social Security Commissioner Ken Apfel. The trustees have issued their annual report on the future financial health of these vital programs.

The trustees have told us today that the Balanced Budget Act I signed into law last year has significantly improved the financial future for Medicare. The unprecedented reforms included in that law have cut the so-called 75-year deficit of Medicare in half, even as we have extended new preventive benefits, provided more health choices for Medicare beneficiaries, and instituted other reforms that extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade.

In fact, because of the bipartisan steps taken last year, the long-term prognosis for Medicare is stronger than it has been in over a decade. A bipartisan commission is now at work to craft further steps to strengthen the complex program into the 21st century. I look forward to their recommendations.

The trustees also report that the strength of our economy has led to modest improvements in the outlook for Social Security. They project that economic growth today will extend the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund by 3 more years, now to 2032.

Today's report is encouraging. It shows we can honor our values and meet our most fundamental obligations, even as we balance the budget. However, these modest improvements only underscore the fundamental challenge we face. We must act to make certain that Social Security is as strong for our children as it has been for our parents.

Above all, let me say again, we must save every penny of any budget surplus, of any size, until we have strengthened Social Security. I've been heartened by the support this approach has received from lawmakers from both parties. But as estimates of the possible surplus have grown, the demand for new tax and spending initiatives that could upend our fiscal discipline have grown as well. Fiscal responsibility created our prosperity. Fiscal irresponsibility could undercut it. So I will resist any proposals that would squander the budget surplus, whether on new spending programs or new tax cuts, until Social Security is strengthened for the long-term. Once more I will insist that we save Social Security first.

In the coming months we will work to build public awareness of the nature and scope of the challenge and to build public consensus for solutions. We must proceed with care, remembering that Social Security offers our people not only a guarantee of retirement security but also a life insurance and a disability insurance policy as well.

Any changes we make now will be far easier than if we wait until the problems of Social Security are at hand. We will strengthen Social Security only if we reach across lines of party philosophy and generation, as we did when we drafted last year's balanced budget. And if we make this year a year of education on Social Security, I'm confident we will come together to take the necessary steps next year.

Finally, let me say that as we continue to take the necessary steps to sustain the growth of our economy, we must look ahead to the challenges that remain. Today, once again, I have asked Congress to strengthen America's commitment to the International Monetary Fund and the U.N. In this new era, the health of our economy will be deeply affected by the health of the world economy, and the security of the United States is clearly affected by the security of the rest of the world. Failure to act on these matters will put at risk both global economic stability, which will affect our own, and the prosperity that has widened the opportunity that we have enjoyed in this country, the very prosperity which has made possible the progress on Social Security and Medicare that I announced today.

We've got a real opportunity here, and a rare one, to act today to provide for our children's tomorrows. We should seize the moment, and I'm confident that we will.

Thank you.

Criticism From Speaker of the House

Q. Mr. President, Newt Gingrich says your administration postures more and achieves less than any administration in American history. How do you respond?

The President. Well, I think the achievements speak for themselves. And he said a lot of things last night that I don't think it would serve any useful purpose for me to respond to. There is enough negative political talk in Washington every single day without the President adding to it. I want to focus on the challenges facing our country, and that's what I intend to do.

Q. Mr. President, he also said that you should tell your supporters to stop attacking the independent counsel, Ken Starr.

The President. I don't have—I've already told you, Mr. Gingrich said a lot of things last night that I don't think deserve a response, and I think it would not serve the American public well for me to waste my time doing it. I think I need to be focused on the public issues that affect them, and that's what I intend to do.

Q. Do you have any thought of firing Ken Starr? I mean, he made that suggestion.

The President. Of hiring him?

Q. Firing him, sir. [*Laughter*] He said, if you want, you could do it in the morning. I mean, have you ever thought of that?

The President. First of all, that's not what the statute says.

Q. I'm just quoting him, sir.

The President. I know, but I don't want to respond to what he said.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

Q. Mr. President, are you threatening to veto any tax proposals beyond—say, tobacco?

The President. Wait, wait, I'll take both, but—go ahead.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien's Visit to Cuba

Q. Are you concerned that the Canadian Prime Minister's visit to Cuba is undermining your efforts to isolate Castro?

The President. Well, Canada and most other countries in the world do not agree with the extent of our embargo. But Canada has been a good, loyal ally in the cause of human rights. And I talked to the Prime Minister at some

length, both on the telephone and when I saw him, about the importance of advocating a human rights agenda, and I believe that he will do that. I think he will push for democracy and human rights in Cuba. And if he does that effectively and makes that case—the same case that President Cardoso of Brazil made when we were in Chile, when he said that it would be possible for Cuba to preserve its social contract in health care and education and still make the transition to democracy, and that's what they should be working on now—then it could serve our common goal. We can have different approaches to a common goal, and I think we do have a common goal.

Go ahead, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]. I'm sorry.

Legislative Agenda and Social Security

Q. I was asking, are you threatening a veto for any tax cuts—[*inaudible*]?

The President. I tried to make it clear that I will do my best to stop any legislation that does not honor the principle of saving Social Security first.

There are lots of good ideas out there that deserve to be evaluated in the coming months about what we should do to promote long-term security and stability for not only our parents but the younger generation, and secure Social Security, and they all ought to be debated. But when we move, we ought to move in the context of Social Security reform. Then after that's out of the way, we can see what the Treasury looks like and what else should be done.

But I think we need to deal with Social Security first. And I still believe that a majority of Members of both Houses in Congress and both parties believe that. I hope they do, and I hope they'll stick with it.

Q. Do you have any ideas of how to save it, yourself? I mean——

The President. Well, sure I do. But as I said in the first forum—and I think I've been proved right—you see Senator Moynihan's got a proposal out there; Senator Kerrey's got a proposal out there; there are many proposals that have been offered by various Republican Members of the Congress. It is important for me to keep this process going and get these ideas out there. And if I were to actually take a position now, it would undermine debate and public education and immediately focus on the specific piece of legislation, which I think is the worst thing we can do.

We know—every survey of American opinion shows that there's a far different level of understanding about this issue today even than there was a year ago. Nearly everybody knows that something substantial—really substantial—has to be done to reform the Social Security system to accommodate the baby boom generation and then, subsequent, the generations after that. And yet there is a dramatic difference of opinion across the age lines about what exactly should be done and what the facts are.

So we have to—we really need to continue this effort we're making in this calendar year to educate the public and to get all the ideas out there and to encourage all the proposals to be viewed against the backdrop of how it fits into the overall scheme of things. And then I think what you'll see is—and what I certainly hope you'll see—is very rapid action early next year. I have a plan. We're going to end up in December with a conference here. We're going to meet with the leaders of both parties in Congress, and I'm going to do my best to hammer out a plan, which then will be a centerpiece of what I recommend to the American people and the Congress early next year.

International Monetary Fund and United Nations Funding

Q. Mr. President, on the Iraqi report at the U.N.——

Q. May I ask on the U.N. and the IMF, sir? Despite what you said, it seems unlikely Congress will pass funding this year. Can you spell out in more detail what you think will happen if there's not funding? Do you have any other mechanism to give——

The President. Well, let me just make it clear that Secretary Rubin has done a good job, I think, managing a difficult situation. But let's just look at Asia, for example. There's been a lot of talk about whether the IMF should be active in Asia, what it should be doing. The United States has had a good deal of success over the last 5 years by exercising economic leadership to open more markets to American products and services on terms that were fair not only to ourselves but to our trading partners. About a third of our economic growth has come as a result of that increase in trade. Just under a third of our exports are going to Asia. Now, I think, therefore, it is clear that it is in our

long-term interest for the IMF to be involved in trying to stabilize those Asian economies and help them to recover.

In our personal interest—how can we expect to be the leader of the world and also to benefit personally, economically from a system that we won't contribute to and we won't pay our fair share on? I think virtually every American now believes—or at least a huge majority—when it comes to the United Nations, that in this interdependent world we should share responsibilities. I think people liked it when we shared responsibilities in Haiti, when we shared responsibilities in Bosnia.

And we're saying to the world, "Yes, we want to continue to lead the world toward peace and freedom. We understand this is an important part of our security and our prosperity, but we're having a little political spat in the United States, and we don't think we ought to pay our dues to the U.N. We think that different rules apply to us, and we have a right not to pay our way, so we can have this fight over an issue that is unrelated to our U.N. responsibilities or our IMF responsibilities." I don't think that is a responsible, mature message to send to the world by the leading country in the world.

I think that if we want to lead, we ought to lead, and we ought to lead by example, by paying our way. That's what I believe, and I hope that I'll be able to prevail upon Congress to make some progress in that direction.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on International Monetary Fund and United Nations Funding

April 28, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am writing with respect to the treatment of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and United Nations (UN) funding in the pending supplemental appropriations conference.

I am pleased that both Houses have approved needed funding for domestic disaster relief and defense. I urge Congress to approve this funding as I requested it, without violating the "firewalls" agreed to in last year's balanced budget deal or including objectionable extraneous measures.

However, I am deeply concerned that the conference report may not include the funding I have requested for the IMF. Delay or failure to approve the full IMF requests could undermine our capacity to deal with threats to world economic stability and could leave us unable to protect American workers, farmers, and businesses in the event of an escalation or spread of the Asian financial crisis or a new crisis.

I am also deeply concerned by the possibility that the conference will not include payment of our UN arrears. The failure to provide the full request in this bill could jeopardize our chance to affect negotiations starting in May on lowering U.S. dues and would undermine U.S. leadership in the international community.

Some would link passage of IMF funding and UN arrears to legislation related to international family planning. There are deep convictions on both sides of this debate, which should be settled on its own merits—and not used to sidetrack other legislation on matters vital to our nation's well-being.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to include the full requests for the IMF and UN arrears in the bill now in conference.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; Richard K. Armey, House majority leader; and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Brazil-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

April 28, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Brasilia on October 14, 1997. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties that the United States is negotiating in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of modern criminals, including those involved in terrorism, other violent crimes, drug trafficking, money laundering, and other "white-collar" crime. The Treaty is self-executing, and will not require new legislation.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes:

(1) Locating or identifying persons or items; (2) serving documents; (3) taking testimony or statements of persons; (4) transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; (5) providing documents, records, and items; (6) executing requests for searches and seizures; (7) assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and (8) any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 28, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in New York City

April 28, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, Shelby and Katherine, for opening your beautiful home. I thank all the Senators who are here. I thank especially Senator Kerrey and Senator Torricelli. When Bob Torricelli goes around the country or Bob Kerrey goes around the country, I know they enjoy it, but it still gets hard. [*Laughter*] It still gets hard. All these Senators are here; they're going to go get on a plane and go home tonight so they can be there and vote tomorrow. And I thank them for doing this on behalf of others, among whom surely are the three candidates we have for the Senate in New York tonight. And I thank them all for running and for their fidelity to our party and for what they have already done for our country. And I thank Judith Hope for her leadership.

I also would be remiss if I didn't thank the people of New York for being so good to me and Al Gore. Twenty-five percent of the total plurality I received in popular votes in the entire country in 1996 came from New York, and I'm very grateful. I was just leaning against the wall back there wondering how much better I might have done if I hadn't interrupted traffic for 4 years before the election. [*Laughter*] Truly the people here are the epitome of tolerance. One of you tonight informed me that you had to walk 10 blocks just to get here because of my attendance. [*Laughter*] For that, I apologize.

Let me say very briefly, I try to do a number of these events to help our candidates for the Senate, our candidates for the House. I believe that the success that our country has enjoyed

in the last few years is something that all Americans can claim a part of. Certainly, the private sector deserves an enormous amount of credit; just ordinary working people deserve an enormous amount of credit. But clearly, the direction of this country, and with it the direction of our party, has moved into the future, has changed, has gone to a different level. And the results have been very, very satisfactory.

We are going to have a surplus of some size this year, the first time our budget has been in balance in three decades. We have been able to dramatically increase our investments in education and in health care for our children, in the environment, in science and technology, to try to prepare for long-term growth.

What I would like to say to you tonight is—I think I'd like to make just two points about why this coming election is so important. Because if you're just following events in the papers today or on the evening news, you see that there's—particularly from the other side—there's a little more partisan rhetoric creeping back into their speeches. They seem to be sort of lapsing into that. It's easier; you can be in a semi-coma and give that speech, because they know how to do it so well.

But I think that we shouldn't forget as Democrats why we're here, why the country is in the best shape it's been in a generation, and what we're supposed to do with this time. You know, good times can be very deceptive because even if the times are very good, all of us know they're very dynamic. Things are changing very rapidly. You can take any set of circumstances and pick up a magazine, and one expert will say the glass is half-full, and the other will say the glass is half-empty; a third will say the glass is unbreakable, and the fourth will say it's about to be shattered.

So in a dynamic time, it seems to me, we need to think about two things. Number one, when people have a lot of confidence because things are going well, but leaders know that things are changing and the ground is still moving, that is the time when big issues should be faced and long-term problems should be solved. Now, we've got the sort of basic mechanisms of our society working better now with the budget in balance and the other things that are going on.

This country has some big, long-term problems. I'll just mention three or four: One, reform of Social Security to deal with the baby boomers; two, reform of Medicare to deal with the costs that will come before the baby boom generation—we've cut the long-term deficit in Medicare by more than half in the last 2 years, but we've still got some problems; three, climate change; four, the biggest public health problem in America is still the fact that 3,000 children a day start to smoke cigarettes and 1,000 of them a day are going to die sooner because of it; five, we still don't have an adequate network of child care in our country that is truly affordable for working people. Now, those are just five issues. I can think of a lot more. Overshadowing all of them is that we still haven't provided a truly world-class education for every child in this country.

I mention those things to say when times are good you should bear down in dealing with those problems, not relax and walk away from them. And no political party should let itself sort of just kind of disintegrate into petty bickering and small-minded politics. This is a time to lift America up, energize us on big issues, and move us forward. That's the first point I want to make. That's why these elections are important.

The second point I want to make is this country, for all the change and all the modern things and all the science and technology and everything else, is still always about, in my opinion, three big ideas. And at every time of change we have to lay off the dead hand of history and adopt new means to reaffirm and broaden these three big ideas.

One is, we're about freedom and liberty. We're about deepening the meaning of freedom. That's why I supported the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." That's why I've tried to involve more different kinds of people than any administration ever has, in our administration. That's why I have tried to push this race initiative and get Americans to think about what it's going to be like when we are no longer a biracial or even a triracial society but we have the most diverse democracy in the world, when more and more places look like the New York City schools do.

Because these are the challenges we've always faced. This is the challenge of our generation, the freedom challenge. How are we going to get the most out of everybody's life? Only if everyone is treated with dignity and equality.

The second thing this country has always been about is widening the circle of opportunity, giving everyone not a guarantee but a chance. I don't think any serious person would say that everybody in this country has really got the same chance today. But there are more people with more chances than they had 5 years ago, and I'm proud of that. And I'm determined to see that we continue to expand those chances.

That's why we've supported things at home and abroad like microcredit programs, for example, to give little people a chance to borrow money to get into business, to prove that they can make something of their lives. It may sound like a small thing, but to someone who has it, who didn't have it before, it's all the difference in the world. And the Democratic Party is about widening the circle of opportunity.

And the third thing that I want to say, and it's very important, that is so easy to lose sight of when the stock market is at 9,000 or even when it drops 160 points, is we're also about strengthening the bonds of our Union and improving our relationships with people beyond our borders. That also has been a constant throughout our 200-year-plus history. And that's very important.

If you look at what's eating the world alive today—I go to Africa, and I celebrate all the wonderful things that are happening and then go to Rwanda and talk to 6 people who survived 100 days in which 800,000 people were slaughtered because of their tribal differences. We're all sitting on pins and needles, especially in New York, waiting for the Irish to vote in May to see whether they can vote for the next 30 years, instead of being imprisoned by the last 30 years or indeed by the last 600 years. We're all hanging around now waiting on pins and needles as we celebrate Israel's 50th birthday, because the Secretary of State is going to London to meet with the leader of Israel and the leader of the PLO hoping to get the peace process going again.

All over the world, in this so-called modern world where kids are pecking away on the Internet on every continent, we are still bedeviled by the most fundamental and primitive of prejudices of all kinds. We, the American people, should be drawing closer together. We, the Democratic Party, should be the instrument of that union.

So I say to you, there are two reasons that you ought to be here. One is, more Democratic Senators, and reelecting the ones we have, means we'll do a better job on the big issues for tomorrow. We've proved it with the deficit. We've proved it with crime. We've proved it with welfare. We've proved it with the environment. We've proved it with a whole host of issues. But we've still got huge challenges out there to face.

And two—and even more important—we will carry forward the eternal mission of America in modern times. And that matters more than anything else. In the end, that's what will really matter to your kids. Are we forming a more perfect Union? Is there more opportunity for everybody? Does freedom mean more today than it did 30 years ago? If we can do our job and you help us, the answer to all three of those questions will be a resounding yes.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Shelby and Katherine Bryan; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at a Reception for the United States Winter Olympic and Paralympic Teams

April 29, 1998

Thank you, and welcome to the White House. I am delighted to have all of you here. I thank the members of the Cabinet for coming, and I thank Congressman Ryun from Kansas, a former Olympian, for being here. To the president of the Olympic Committee, Bill Hybl, to the executive director, Dick Schultz, and to all

the other officials, and to the members of our Olympic team.

Let me say—before I get into my remarks, I need to make two preliminary comments. First of all, I want to thank Tipper Gore for representing our administration at the 1998 Winter Olympics. I wish she could be here with us today. I know she would like to be. I'd also like to thank my good friend Mack McLarty for working so hard with the Vice President as the Cochair of our White House Task Force on the Olympic games.

The second thing I'd like to do before I get into my remarks is to just say, for the benefit—because this is my only chance to talk to the press today—I just finished a very good meeting with the Senate Republican and Democratic leaders, Trent Lott and Tom Daschle, about one of the most important votes that our Senate will face this year, and that is to expand the alliance of NATO to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

I want to thank them both for their support. This is coming at a very important time for America, 4 years after I first proposed that we expand our European security alliance to make us more secure and Europe safer and more united. And I am very grateful for Senator Lott and Senator Daschle, Senator Helms and Senator Biden, and all the others. We are seeing a very impressive, high-level debate in the Senate, even among those who don't agree with my position. I must say I've been very impressed by the debate. And I'm looking forward to a positive vote by the end of this week.

Now let me say I have looked forward to this day for a long time, ever since the Olympics concluded. To see these fine people, and those who are not here who are part of their teams, I think makes all Americans very proud. In the mountains, the ice rinks, the race courses of Japan, we saw America at its best. The young Olympians who are here did more than carry our flag. In a fundamental way, they carried with them the spirit of America.

I'd like to say a special word, too, of appreciation to the Paralympians who brought home 34 medals in the largest Winter Paralympics ever. [*Applause*] Thank you.

It's also a great source of pride for us that the Winter Olympics in 2002 will be in Salt Lake City. When the Olympic flag was lowered and passed from the mayor of Nagano to Mayor Corradini, it really marked the opening events of the 2002 games. So we're very glad that Mayor Corradini has joined us today, along with the chairman of the Salt Lake Olympic Committee, Robert Garff, and other members of the Utah Olympic Committee. We want to help them succeed. And I'd like to ask them to stand and receive our support. Mayor Corradini and the members of the Utah Committee—there's Mr. Garff. Thank you all for being here. [*Applause*] Thank you—there they are, right there.

I'd also like to say one more word to America's Olympic teams in 1998. In a fundamental way, you have become a part of America's team for the rest of your lives. If you choose, for the rest of your lives, because you were an Olympian, you can have a profound positive impact on all the people with whom you come in contact, but especially on young people.

Even though for many of you the Olympic triumphs you had, just being a member of the team, must have marked the most magic moment in your lives, I hope that the future will be even richer for you. And I think it can be if you use the fact that you are an Olympian to have a positive impact on the lives of young people. The lessons of setting your sights high, working hard, being persistent, believing in yourselves, playing by the rules, supporting your team, those are lessons that every child in America needs to learn, lessons that every child can see in your eyes and in the power of your example.

Some of you earlier today participated in the Champions in Life program. You can reach out, in telling your stories, working in communities, approaching future endeavors with this kind of drive and commitment, and I hope you'll do that because you can really have a positive impact on 21st century America.

In this century, through all its highs and lows, we have seen throughout the 20th century a renaissance in the Olympic games. Everybody now knows about the remarkable triumph of Jesse Owens in the 1936 Berlin games, what it said about prejudice and hatred, what it said about the difference between America and the Nazi regime that then governed in Germany.

Jesse Owens said this in 1936: "Only an Olympian can fully realize the grip the games have on the youth of the world." It was true in 1936; it is true today. Then, it was true, and people saw a profound good in the midst of a dark time. This is a sunlit moment of peace and prosperity. But the Olympic spirit, the spirit

of good will, friendship, understanding, and unity across all the lines that divide us, that can propel us into an even brighter era of respect and success.

Now I would like to introduce the athlete that has been chosen by her teammates to represent the Olympians here today, a person whose grace and excellence on the ice—and I must say, even more after the competition—must have been a source of enormous joy and pride, not only to her teammates but to all Americans.

Ladies and gentlemen, Ms. Michelle Kwan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Hybl, president, and Dick Schultz, executive director, U.S. Olympic Committee; Mayor Tasuku Tsukada of Nagano, Japan; Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT; and Robert H. Garff, president, board of trustees, Salt Lake City Olympic Organizing Committee. Following the President's remarks, Michelle Kwan, silver medalist in women's figure skating, presented a U.S. Olympic team jacket to the President.

Statement on Bipartisan Support for Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

April 29, 1998

I am extremely pleased that today at least nine Republican Members of Congress joined as cosponsors to H.R. 3605, the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998." In announcing their support for this legislation, they are sending a strong signal that it is unacceptable for this Congress to adjourn this year without passing a strong patients' rights bill.

I commend Representatives Ganske, Bass, Forbes, Fox, Gilchrest, Graham, Horn, LaTourette, and Leach for their leadership, and I look forward to working with them. We have learned again and again that when we reach across party lines we can pass important legislation that improves our Nation's health care system. Making the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998" bipartisan provides new momentum towards ensuring that a Patients' Bill of Rights will become the law of the land.

The "Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998," recently introduced by Representative Dingell, provides long overdue protections that Americans need to renew their confidence in the Nation's rapidly changing health care system. It allows patients to see the specialists they need, to get emergency care wherever and whenever a medical emergency arises, to talk freely with doctors and nurses about all the medical options available—not only the cheapest, and to appeal when they have grievances about their health care.

I urge Congress to send me legislation that gives Americans the health care protections they need and deserve. I look forward to working with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

Message to the Congress Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention

April 29, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify in connection with Condition (7)(C)(i), Effectiveness of Australia Group, that:

> Australia Group members continue to maintain an equally effective or more comprehensive control over the export of toxic

chemicals and their precursors, dual-use processing equipment, human, animal and plant pathogens and toxins with potential biological weapons application, and dual-use biological equipment, as that afforded by the Australia Group as of April 25, 1997; and

The Australia Group remains a viable mechanism for limiting the spread of chemical and biological weapons-related materials and technology, and the effectiveness of the Australia Group has not been undermined by changes in membership, lack of compliance with common export controls and nonproliferation measures, or the weakening of common controls and nonproliferation measures, in force as of April 25, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 29, 1998.

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30.

The President's News Conference
April 30, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Please sit down. Before I take your questions I'd like to make a few comments on a couple of matters that I believe are essential to the strength of America in the 21st century.

Five years ago we started a new economic course for a new economy, a combined strategy of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, increased investment in education, science, technology, and our people. Today we received more good news that that strategy is working. The latest economic report shows that in the first quarter of 1998, our economy grew at 4.2 percent. Wages are rising while inflation remains low. This expansion is not fueled by big Government deficits but by booming business investment.

In the first quarter, unemployment was the lowest in 28 years, inflation the lowest in 30 years, consumer confidence at its highest level in 30 years. For 5 years in a row now, our economy has been rated the most competitive in the world.

We are living in an American economic renaissance in which opportunity is abundant, communities are getting stronger, families are more secure and more prosperous. But we cannot allow the hum of our growing prosperity to lull us into complacency.

As estimates of the possible budget surplus expand, so, too, the suggestions that we immediately commit to spending that surplus on tax cuts or new spending. But Americans have worked too hard for too long to put our economic house in order. So I will strongly resist the use of a single penny of the surplus until we have first saved Social Security for the new century.

Nor can we turn our backs on America's responsibility to lead in the world. We see that, by the way, in the commitment today of the Vice President and Mrs. Gore as they represent our Nation on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel.

Today, the health of our economy is also deeply affected by what goes on in global affairs and by the health of the global economy. Therefore, I call on Congress to step up to its responsibility and renew our commitment to the International Monetary Fund and to pay our United Nations dues. I am confident we can do this in a bipartisan fashion.

The debate over NATO enlargement has been a model of bipartisan action. I want to thank Senators Lott and Daschle, Senators Helms and Biden for their leadership on this issue. I hope for a strongly positive vote in the Senate later today, because by admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic we come even closer than ever to realizing a dream of a generation, a Europe that is united, democratic, and secure for the first time since the rise of nation-states on the European Continent.

At the threshold of the 21st century, we are on the rise at home and abroad. But we have to continue this progress. We have to continue to work if we want economic advances and strong national security. We have to continue

to work if we hope to overcome our divisions at home and work together as one nation.

We can be everything that all of you want us to be and all Americans want us to be. But I want to emphasize, the fact that we are doing well today should not be a source of complacency. It should not be a pretext to drift off into politics as usual or small matters. We need to bear down and deal with the long-term challenges of the country.

Now, to honor my pledge at the White House Correspondents dinner the other night, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International], you get the first question.

Q. You may not like it. [*Laughter*]

The President. I never expected to. [*Laughter*]

Monica Lewinsky and the Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, in view of a new court ruling, Monica Lewinsky may have to appear before a grand jury. Under the circumstances, do you stand by your previous denials of any relationship with her or that anyone encouraged her to lie?

And while I have the floor, do you think that the special prosecutor has gone beyond the call and is out to get you?

The President. Well, I think modestly observant people are fully capable of drawing their own conclusions to the latter question. And as to the former question, I have answered it repeatedly and have nothing to add to my former answer. I have repeatedly said what the answer to that question is.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Stock Market

Q. Mr. President, Wall Street is back above 9100, and the Dow was up 165 points at 1 o'clock. A lot of Americans are pouring money into the stock market now. Do you think that this stock market bubble is going to burst? Do you think people should be nervous about that?

The President. Now, I didn't comment on it when it dropped a lot. [*Laughter*] And I don't think I should now.

Let me say, there is a lot of speculation about that, as you know. The London Economist ran a whole series on it, I think either this last edition or the one before that. We have a very productive economy with high growth and low interest rates. Also, the fact that there is a downturn in many Asian economies I think has created some investment capital that normally might have gone somewhere else that may be coming back into our country. And that would tend to drive the stock market up.

I think that what's important here is for all informed people—the stock market analysts, the people on Wall Street, Mr. Greenspan, whom I think has done quite a fine job over the last 5 years in managing his part of our economy—all of us need to just sort of talk about what the fundamentals are, what the facts are, and if there are any reasons for caution, then they ought to put them out there. But I think that to date you would have to say that most of what has happened has been spurred by the hard work and the productivity of American workers and American businesses and other developments around the world over which we Americans had no control.

But I'm encouraged by the underlying fundamentals, and what I hope will happen is that we can avoid any kind of big swings in the market one way or the other by just steady, slow—maybe not so slow but, at least, steady growth. And I think if we all just get all the facts out there to the investors, it's likely to come out all right.

Q. You're not nervous about where it's going?

The President. Well, I'd rather it be going up than down—[*laughter*]—in any big sense. But I think that you have to—I mean, even when it dropped a lot—you remember a couple years ago when we had that big drop—I wasn't terribly worried because I thought it was a correction based on the judgment of the people in the market, because our underlying economy was healthy and our financial system was honest and secure and had integrity and we had strategies for continuing long-term growth.

So I think that's what I'd like to say. It's impossible for me to predict the market, impossible for anyone to, or to characterize it. I'd just say the economists have a word called "transparency" that they use all the time that I think is the appropriate thing here. I think it's in the national interest for all actual and potential investors to have as much information as possible about how we're doing, where we're going, and what their investment options are. And then I think the markets will go up and down, they'll change.

But I'm pleased with the success of the market. I do understand the bubble theory. I think

the best way to avoid having a big bubble that some day pops is to make sure that we have open information about where we are right now, and the progress of the market is pretty well tied to the real progress of the economy.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Iraq

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, the Pentagon said this week you're expected to decide whether to reduce U.S. forces in the Gulf soon. Has Baghdad made sufficient progress on allowing weapons inspections to permit a reduction in force? And if so, will we see an ending of the sanctions against Iraq?

The President. Well, those are two very different questions. Let me say, first of all, we are encouraged by the level of compliance so far with the U.N. inspections and by the evidence that has been adduced on the nuclear side that more progress has been made. And I believe we've already issued a statement that we believe that if Baghdad will continue to work with us, that by October the U.N. may well be able to certify that they are actually in compliance on the nuclear side, and they can go from the inspection to the monitoring phase. Keep in mind, even under the agreements, the U.N. resolutions, no matter what is found out in any of these areas, there will still be a monitoring regime there.

Our position on lifting the sanctions is that the U.N. resolutions have to be complied with completely, and then we'd vote to lift the sanctions. So this is just the nuclear piece. But I am encouraged by that.

Now, on the question of reducing our military presence in the Gulf, I would wait for a recommendation from the Pentagon with involvement from the State Department and the NSC on that. That is, we have a certain number of carrier groups and a certain number of assets to deploy at sea. They have to be trained; they also need to be deployed in different places for different reasons. So, inevitably, unless we believe there is some reason for it to be there at some point in the future, I would anticipate some reallocation of our resources. But I have not received a recommendation on that yet by the Defense Department.

Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News].

Presidential Standards

Q. Mr. President, quite a few Americans seem to believe it doesn't matter what you may have done in private moments, that that's between you and your wife. And some are saying it doesn't even matter if you've broken the law, obstructed justice, or committed perjury. Now, you deny wrongdoing, I understand. But as a standard for Presidents, what do you think: Does it matter what you do in private moments, as alleged? And particularly, does it matter if you have committed perjury or in other sense broken the law?

The President. Well, since I have answered the underlying questions, I really believe it's important for me not to say any more about this. I think that I'm, in some ways, the last person who needs to be having a national conversation about this. What I'm trying to——

Q. But you're the leader.

The President. I may be the leader, but my job as leader is to lead the country and to deal with the great public issues facing the country, and to prove Justice Scalia right when he said that nothing that could be done to me in a legal way would in any way affect my job as President; it would just be one of those things; and I could go right on and do my job. And I'm going to do my best to prove him correct by doing the public's business——

Q. So you can't even say whether Presidents ought to obey the law?

Q. Mr. President, I hate to beat a dead horse, but let me just follow that up——

The President. No, you don't. [*Laughter*]

White House Response to Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Ken Starr supporters make the case that he could be wrapping up his investigation except for the delaying tactics put forward by your lawyers, your aides—specifically, the privilege assertions, denying the Secret Service the right to testify, denying some of your aides the right to testify, denying the First Lady the right to answer certain questions because of these privileged questions. And a lot of Americans are having a hard time understanding—why assert privilege if there's nothing to hide?

The President. First of all, you've asked three questions; let me deal with them.

On the First Lady's testimony, Mr. Kendall's response blows what they said out of the water

better than anything I could say, and amounts to a "shame on them" for saying that.

Secondly, with regard to the Secret Service, I literally have had no involvement in that decision whatever. That is a decision that they have made based on what they believe—the position they've taken is a position they've taken based on what they believe is best for the institution of the Presidency. And the court will just have to evaluate their arguments and make a judgment.

Now, thirdly, on the claims of executive privilege, I cannot comment on those matters because they are under seal. However, as you know, we have suggested to the court that the pleadings and the briefs be made public, be open to public inspection, so that you and the American people could evaluate the specific executive privilege issues and whether you believe they're valid or not. But I can't talk about them. Our side has tried to honor all these court orders, and I want to continue to honor it. We've asked—it's under seal. I can't discuss it.

But I will do my best to deal with this in an appropriate way. And if the court changes the rules, I hope that we'll be able to release the pleadings and the briefs so that all of you can see what this is about and draw your own conclusions and then ask questions about it.

Trudy [Trudy Feldman, Trans Features].

Russia and the Middle East Peace Process

Q. What do you think is the strategy in the Russian state toward the Middle East at this point? And what are you expecting from the London talks next week? Is there a Russian strategy?

The President. I believe there is. I believe that basically what the Russians would like to do is to have an influence in a critical region of the world. And they have been, after all, cosponsors of the peace process with the United States since a period before I became President. It goes back to the first Madrid Conference in '92.

Will we always agree with every position they take? No, we won't. But the Russians have pledged to cooperate with us to minimize and hopefully eliminate weapons transfers and component part transfers and things like that that should not go into explosive environments in the Middle East, and we are going to keep working with them to see that we achieve that goal.

Now, in terms of the London conference, I hope that after Secretary Albright meets with Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat that we will have the elements of an agreement which will get the parties into final status talks. You all pretty well know what the parameters are. There is still no agreement on how much of a redeployment should be undertaken by the Israelis from the West Bank in this next phase. But they are much closer than they were just a couple of weeks ago—much, much closer. And there are some other issues that may be able to be worked out around that that might still enable us to make an agreement.

I think what both of them are going to have to decide is whether or not they believe that they're better off waiting or each side giving a little more to get to a final status talks.

Now, keep in mind, this is not a final peace agreement. We are arguing over the dimensions of a step which is part of the Oslo agreement designed to get the parties in the final status talks which are supposed to be over a year from now—I think May of '99 is when they're supposed to end. So what the parties have got to make up their mind about is do they want to roll the dice—because, believe me, in the nature of all these agreements, the most principled compromise will leave both sides dissatisfied, by definition. That's the way—if peace agreements were easy they'd all be done already.

So the most principled compromise will leave both sides dissatisfied. What they have to decide is, do they want to roll the dice—do they really want to gamble on 6 more months of basically everything in suspended animation? Do they really believe it will be better then? Do they really believe it will be better in another year? What happens when the timetable runs out on the Oslo Accord? Will we be closer to peace?

I think the answer is manifestly no. And so I'm hoping and praying that we'll be able to get something positive out of the London accords.

Yes, ma'am. Go ahead.

Stock Market

Q. Mr. President, I'm Evelyn Y. Davis, editor of "Highlights and Lowlights." About the stock market—and this is the middle of the stockholder meeting season—with the market being dangerously high, and the SEC favoring institutional investors, and mutual funds are not required to have adequate cash reserves, and these

recent circuit breakers instituted by the New York Stock Exchange are mostly for the benefit of institutional investors—what is the administration going to do to protect small investors, people who have maybe like 100 or 200 or 500 shares of stocks in the markets, from the forthcoming bear markets? And we all know what has to go up has to go down.

The President. That's true, but it's also true that over time the trend has been up. And over any long-term period, the market has outperformed Government securities. I do believe that the SEC has a responsibility to enforce the laws that are on the books, but the SEC cannot repeal the rules of the market, going up or down, for any single class of investors. And I am unaware of any specific thing that they've been asked to do over and above this.

Claire [Claire Shipman, NBC].

Legal Fees Resulting From Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, whatever you may think about all of these ongoing investigations of your administration, they certainly have pulled in a lot of your friends and employees and acquaintances, people who have had to appear before the grand jury. A number of times, a lot of people—like Betty Currie, for example, who built up large legal fees. And I wonder, do you feel in any way personally responsible? And do you still intend, as you mentioned in 1996 in an interview, once you're out of office to help out with those legal fees?

The President. Yes, if I can figure out a way to do it, I will. I feel terrible about—there are all these people who have been hauled through this, who under the governing statute can never get their legal bills reimbursed, so that you have—the Independent Counsel not only has an unlimited budget and can go on forever—10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years, spend $40 million today, $100 million tomorrow—they can take—you're laughing, but we still have one from the mid-eighties in effect and—although it's not active. But in this case, we had this Resolution Trust Corporation report 2 years ago which exhaustively reviewed every issue relevant to Whitewater, and it didn't have any effect. The thing just went on and on and on.

So more and more people get called in, and they spend money they don't have for legal fees that they can't afford. And they're never targets of investigation; therefore, they're not subject to any reimbursement. And I feel terrible about it. If I can think of something to do about it, I will.

Q. Are you responsible for that at all, yourself? I mean, is that a personal——

The President. No, if there's one person in the world I'm not responsible for, it's Mr. Starr. I think all of you would admit that—and his behavior and what he and Mr. Ewing and the others have decided to do. I don't think there's any American who believes I'm responsible for them.

Tobacco Legislation

Q. Mr. President, turning to tobacco for a moment, the House Republican leadership apparently has rejected Congressman Bliley's presentation of a compromise tobacco deal. What state do you think the tobacco compromise is in now? Are the Republicans in the pocket of big tobacco, and will this have to be fought out in the November elections?

The President. I certainly hope not. For one thing, Mr. Bliley is a conservative Republican from Virginia, a tobacco-growing State. Mr. Waxman is a liberal Democrat who's got a great reputation for protecting the public health. The fact that they reached an agreement should have been some basis of going forward. And all I can tell you is I'm heartened by what's happening in the Senate, where we got an almost unanimous vote—just missed it by one vote—out of the committee in the Senate for the bill sponsored by Senator McCain and others. And we are going to work ahead.

I just don't think we can afford to let politics get in the way of this. I mean, the news report was that some people who were going to go along with this don't think they have to now because they think they found some political way to avoid it. I think that's a terrible way to look at this. The only thing that matters is 3,000 kids a day start smoking, even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to kids; 1,000 of them a day will die sooner because of it. That is the only thing that matters. And we know that there are strategies which will save their lives.

I do not want this to be an issue in the November election. Let me say this again: I do not want this to be an issue in the November election. If it is an issue in the November election, it will only be because those people who have a political or a financial interest in seeing

that this matter is not resolved between now and November prevent it from being resolved. The worst thing in the world would be to play politics with our children's health. I'm not going to do it, and I hope no one else will.

Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio].

President's Response to Questions of Character

Q. Mr. President, aside from the legal questions that you face both here and in the courts, Republicans have been notching up questions about your moral authority. How important is moral authority to you as you deal with questions like tobacco and drugs? What effect do you think this whole wave of controversies has had on your moral authority? And what kind of moral authority do you think the Republican critics have?

The President. Well, let me say, if I were to answer them in kind, I might be able to damage their reputation, which they might be able to do to me, but I could have no effect on their character, just as they can have none on mine. And therefore, I think if I were to answer them in kind, it would be more of a reflection on my character than on their reputation.

I believe that it's very important for the President to be able to stand up for the values of the American people, collectively, and for communities and for families and for individuals. And I think this administration has a good record, and I believe I have a good record of standing up for the things that will help us to raise our children stronger and keep our families stronger and make our country stronger. At least I have done my best.

These things are distracting, and we live in a time where they are more prominent than they have been at most times in our country's history, although not at all times. And I deal with them the very best I can. But I do not think the right thing for me to do is to respond in kind. The right thing for me to do is to let others defend me as best they can and to go on and worry about the American people.

Go ahead.

Tobacco Industry Political Contributions

Q. I have a question about tobacco.

The President. Jackie, you can go next.

Q. I'm sorry.

The President. No, go ahead, Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Q. I've got the floor. I don't want to give it up. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good for you.

Q. I'm wondering if you are ready to tell the DNC and the two Democratic congressional campaign committees to stop taking campaign contributions from the tobacco companies.

The President. Well, it was my understanding that the DNC did not.

Q. Well, that's not exactly correct. There is still some tobacco money——

The President. It was my understanding that the DNC was not taking tobacco money——

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the congressional committees.

The President. Well, I don't tell them what to do. Congress is an independent body, as we see, and the House and the Senate committees will have to do whatever they're going to do. I have had a chance to set the policy for the Democratic National Committee. If it's being violated, I will check on it. But I think we're doing the right thing. It's legal for those people to contribute if they want. But I think until we get this matter resolved of the teen smoking, I think it would be better if none of us did. But it's up to them to decide what to do.

Kathy [Kathy Kiely, Houston Post].

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, there are some questions that have arisen because of Mr. Starr's investigation that both you and your staff have admitted are legitimate questions, but that you don't feel you're able to answer while his investigation is ongoing. Now that he's said that the end is not near, are you willing to live with these questions hanging over you for the rest of your administration?

The President. Absolutely.

Q. Does that mean, sir, that you would leave these waiting, that you're not prepared to sit down and——

The President. It means that I think every American who has observed the conduct of the Independent Counsel would expect me to follow the advice of my counsel. And that's what I intend to do.

Q. Secondly, sir, if you believe that Ken Starr is running, as you've indicated, a partisan vendetta, and especially if you think he's wasting taxpayer money, as you've suggested here, why not ask Attorney General Reno to remove him?

The President. That would not be an appropriate thing for me to do.

Congress and the Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, you and your aides have been insisting for quite some time now that you're able to remain focused on the business of the country and do your work despite what's going on. But House Speaker Gingrich is making it increasingly clear that unless there's some more cooperation, some more forthcoming on your administration's part, that your agenda on the Hill is going to be stalled. I wonder if there comes a point where you feel it's your responsibility to provide some more cooperation so that some work can get done for the American people.

The President. Oh, I don't think anyone really seriously believes that's what the last 3 or 4 days have been about. They've been about politics. And I'm not going to let—I can be responsible for a lot of things, but I'm not responsible for the Speaker's behavior. Neither, however, will I respond to it. Nothing he says about me personally—nothing—will keep me from working with him and with other Republicans in the Congress to do everything I possibly can on every issue before us.

There is nothing that he can say about me for whatever reason that will affect my willingness to sit down with him and others and work for the benefit of this country. So it's not going to get in my way. It is simply not. I am not going to permit it to happen.

Now, I will tell you this: The only thing he said recently that really bothered me was when he said that he thought that tobacco advertising basically had no impact on whether children decided to smoke or not. I simply disagree with that. I think there are other reasons, but I think that was wrong. And that's something that affects other people's lives. That's not Washington politics.

But you known, whatever people say, let them go. I've got to do my job. And I will still welcome them to the White House, and we will do our job for the American people because that's what I'm supposed to do.

Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News]. And Jackie [Jackie Calmes, Wall Street Journal].

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Mr. President, speaking of issues, is there any reason to take seriously a promise from any politician of either party for campaign finance reform, to regard it as anything other than lip service, when by actually voting for campaign finance reform in a way that would cause the bill to pass, they'd be facilitating challenges to themselves? Do you believe that this is really possible?

The President. Oh, yes.

Q. And why would anybody do it?

The President. Well, I believe it's really possible because I think a lot of politicians know that the cost of campaigns and advertising, particularly—and particularly television advertising—has gotten so expensive that they're spending all their time raising money. And it's wearing them out, and it makes them—some of them, at least—I think very few people really are terribly compromised and wind up voting in ways different than they would otherwise vote, but I think they know it raises all kinds of questions they wish it didn't raise. And I think most people in public life would love to do it.

But as I have said before, since the Republicans now have a majority in Congress, it is more difficult for them because they raise more large money, more total money, more foreign money—they raise more money in all these categories that people have raised objections to, so it is harder for them. But even among the Republican ranks, a lot of people I think genuinely want to do it. And I think that we're just going to keep working and try to get it done.

Yes. You never got your question, did you? Go ahead, I'm sorry.

Congress and the Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, given the questions about your moral authority this week, together with the trouble for the tobacco bill and IMF funding, is this going to be looked on back as the week where the era of bipartisanship between you and congressional leaders ended? And if not, what are you going to do to revive things so you can get something done?

The President. Well, I don't think so. We're having some problems over the tobacco issue, but keep in mind—because of the stuff that's coming out of the House, which I don't really know how to assess—but keep in mind, we have a bill slated to go to the floor of the Senate that passed, I believe, 19 to 1. And therefore, the Senate is moving forward.

Look at the funding for the International Monetary Fund, which is very critical to our

long-term economic stability. It passed the Senate 86 to 14, total bipartisan support. So—they're voting on NATO today; I expect it to be a bipartisan vote. And they'll be—and by the way, the opposition will be bipartisan, too. So I don't think a few days of high-level static in the House of Representatives, which may have more to do with their affairs than with the rest of us—I don't pretend to understand it all—I don't think that should make us believe the era of bipartisan Government is over.

If they—if the American people will send them a clear signal and they conclude it's in their interest to work with me and work with the Republicans and the Democrats in the Senate and all of us that are working together to do it, then I think that's what will happen. It's a question of what they conclude is in their interest. And I don't understand it entirely, but I'm going to keep working to get it done.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—money, how do you pay for all your initiatives, and if the Republicans instead used the money for a tax cut, would you veto the tax cut?

The President. Well, let me back up and say most of my initiatives, the Federal part of most of my initiatives are paid for by nontobacco sources. I believe—I believe, and I think they disagree with me, and we can argue that out in the future—that could be a subject for the coming election—that if we give them back a whole lot of money that they have already spent on Medicare—Medicaid—if they get money back from the Federal Government as a result of this settlement and especially if they get more than they anticipated getting under the original attorney generals' agreement, I think, it is appropriate for us to say you ought to spend this on children. And the best way to spend it on children is on child care and education—early childhood education—getting down to small classes in the early grades, because we had the biggest increase in child health in 35 years in the balanced budget agreement last year.

So I think that's an appropriate thing to do. If they disagree with me, then we can argue about that. But I would never stand in the way of a tobacco bill that actually reduced childhood smoking because they disagreed with me about how to invest the money. But I would expect a bill to actually help our kids.

Okay, you guys. Jacobo [Jacobo Goldstein, CNN Radio Noticias], go ahead.

Cuba/Fast-Track Trading Authority

Q. You have just returned from Santiago, where you attended the second Summit of the Americas. Many of the hemispheric leaders told you or made public their belief that the U.S. embargo is not working against Cuba; it has brought about no democratic changes. Prime Minister Jean Chretien has just visited Cuba. President Castro used the opportunity welcoming him to say that the U.S. had committed war crimes against the Cuban people and should be judged in an international court for that embargo. My question is, sir, do you believe the embargo is working?

And number two, you promised the leaders in Santiago you would work to get fast track. With the economy doing so well, isn't this a good time to start pushing Congress?

Thank you.

The President. Well, the answer to the second question is it's probably not the best time because it is even closer to the election, and for reasons that I disagree with, a lot of Members of Congress—and most of them in my own party—think that it's not a good thing to do politically. I think it is imperative for our future, and I will continue to try to pass it. But I don't think this is a good time right now.

What was the other question?

Q. Castro—the Cuban embargo.

The President. Oh, the Cuban embargo. On the Cuban embargo, I think that it has been useful, but I also believe that we should do more to minimize the damage to the Cuban people—which is why, after the Pope's visit, I relaxed a lot of the restrictions on the transfer of food and medicine and on travel there, in an attempt not only to help and strengthen the Cuban people but also to strengthen the church and other institutions of society, in the hope that there can be a transition to a more open, freer place. And I'm still hoping for that.

Go ahead, Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

U.S. Secret Service and Confidentiality

Q. Mr. President, back on the Secret Service, if I can. It argues that if its agents and officers were to cooperate with Independent Counsel Ken Starr, that it would cause you to keep them at a distance. Is that true, sir? Would it change the nature of your relationship with the Secret Service detail if they were to cooperate with the Independent Counsel?

The President. I think what it argues is—what the Secret Service argues is that the institution of the Presidency would be affected because the President, for example, would feel that conversations in the limousine going to and from places and other things that he might do in the future that have every right to be kept confidential would be subject to questioning. And even if there was nothing unlawful about them, they would then be leaked, even if leaking is illegal. And certainly, they have lots of evidence to support that worry.

I mean, as I understand it, that's their argument. However, I have had no conversations with them about it. And I think, again, I should not comment on it. They are making a case about the institution of the Presidency. President Bush has said that he agrees with them, and you might ask other former Presidents what they think. But it's the—the Secret Service has made this decision on its own; I am not involved with it. And I think that that's the way it ought to stay.

Mr. Cannon [Carl Cannon, Baltimore Sun].

Clemency

Q. Mr. President, earlier you spoke about the hardship of people who had to get lawyers and spend money who have done nothing wrong and are not even being targeted with an investigation. My question is about people who have been targeted. I'm asking how far along are you in your thinking about possible pardons for people who you think have been wrapped up in an investigation that they never would have even been—they never even would have come across any prosecutor's radar screen if you——

The President. No one has asked me for one and there's been no discussion about it.

Tobacco Industry Role in Legislation

Q. President Clinton, I wanted to talk to you about politics and the tobacco legislation. Specifically, one way you could take the politics out of the tobacco legislation is by embracing the tobacco industry and inviting them back into the process. Do you have any intention of doing that, and are there any plans for some sort of tobacco summit?

The President. Well, first of all, they walked away. We didn't drive them out. I was—the first I knew about them leaving was when they called a press conference and said they were leaving. I thought they were negotiating with the Congress. We were trying to negotiate with the Congress. We had—the only vehicle you have is when the leader, in this case the leader of the Senate, signed—Senator McCain's committee, the jurisdiction over the committee—he got together with Democrats and Republicans on the committee. They put together a bill, and it was voted out. They said they didn't like the bill, thought it was going to get worse, and they were walking away. And then they started running their television ads. And that's all I know.

So I would hope that before this is over they would come back and rejoin the negotiations. I think it would be better if they were at the table. And as you know, at least at the edges there's some questions about the Government's ability to impose certain restrictions on advertising unless it is done in a consent agreement with their participation. So I would like to see them a part of this.

Scott, [Scott Pelley, CBS News] go ahead.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. I'm working, Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service]. I'll get there. Be patient.

Monica Lewinsky

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You suggested at the beginning of this news conference, sir, that you've answered the questions about Monica Lewinsky. But respectfully, there has been no explanation for her dozens of visits to the White House after her employment here ended; no explanation for the Secret Service concern about her behavior in the West Wing; no explanation about the extraordinary effort by your secretary and your closest friends to find her a job. Sir, could you now give us some better sense of what appears to be an extraordinary relationship that you had with this woman, and fulfill your promise to the American people of more, rather than less, sooner rather than later?

The President. Well, first of all, you have more information than you did when I said that, and secondly, I have nothing else to say. I have been advised—and I think it's good advice under the circumstances—but I just don't have anything else to say about that.

Q. Are you in legal jeopardy, sir?

Sidney Blumenthal and Hickman Ewing

Q. Mr. President, your adviser Sidney Blumenthal last week called Ken Starr's deputy, Hickman Ewing, a religious fanatic who has proclaimed that he operates from a presumption of guilt. Sir, I want to ask you if that's an appropriate comment, if you agree with it, and if you agree with Mr. Blumenthal's assertion that Starr is abusing, not just using, his office in an effort to destroy your Presidency?

The President. I don't have any comment about that. I believe there was an article on Mr. Ewing in the New Yorker in which he made some comment about his presumption of guilt, and you can just—his words ought to stand or fall. Nobody else should be able to characterize them.

Go ahead, Mr. Bennett [James Bennett, New York Times]. And then Sarah. And then John [John Harris, Washington Post].

President's Response to Questions of Character

Q. In light of your comments before about character, Mr. President, I'd like to ask you about a divergence we've seen in the polls recently. Public polls have suggested that the strong majority still approves of the job you're doing as President. The majority no longer feels that you share their moral values, and they say that they no longer respect you as a person. I wonder if you find that distressing and how you account for it?

The President. Well, I don't think it's hard to account for. It's been part of a strategy that's—it goes all the way back to 1991. And—but it used to distress me greatly; it doesn't anymore.

You know, I will say again, all these people that have been working hard on this for 7 years now. They can affect my reputation; they can do nothing, for good or ill, to affect my character. Unfortunately, they can't make it any better either. They can't make it any better; they can't make it any worse. They can't have an impact on it.

And it's obvious, I think, to the American people that this has been a hard, well-financed, vigorous effort over a long period of time by people who could not contest the ideas that I brought to the table, couldn't even contest the values behind the ideas that I brought to the table, and certainly can't quarrel with the consequences and the results of my service, and therefore, personal attack seems legitimate. I have never done that in my public life. I don't believe in it, and I'm not going to participate in it. But all I can do—I can't say—I can't get in an argument with the American people about this. All I can do is show up for work every day and do the very best I can. That's what I did today, and that's what I intend to do tomorrow.

China

Q. Mr. President, it looks as if you're getting ready to sign an agreement with China which will give them help and some of our secrets, and not just be a friendly thing. Would you sign this without the American people having had wide discussion over this and debate—don't you need approval of Congress? Would you just go ahead and sign this? Because after all, that's one of our greatest enemies is China.

The President. Well, Sarah, I'm not sure I know the specific issue you're referring to, but I would not make any agreements with China in secret, and they would be subject to the knowledge of the Congress and the debate of the American people. We are trying to get to a point where we can work more closely with them and where they cooperate more closely with us. So we're trying to build the same kind of world in the future and not a very different kind of world. And I hope we'll get there.

Yes, John, go ahead.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Mr. President, there have been reports—news reports that the Independent Counsel has invited you to voluntarily answer questions about the Lewinsky matter, but so far you haven't committed to an interview. Are those reports true, and would you commit to answering questions that he has, or do you believe that he's simply too biased in his investigation and, therefore, you don't have an obligation?

The President. I don't have anything to say about that. All my interactions with him, Mr. Kendall speaks for me, and I just have nothing to say.

Go ahead, Bill [William Douglas, Newsday]. Bill and then April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks].

President's Initiative on Race

Q. Recently, some conservatives who you met with at the White House in December said that

they feel that your race initiative has not been inclusive, and they're embarking on their own race initiative. Do you agree with their assessment? And also, the year for your initiative is drawing to a close rapidly. Do you foresee extending that period?

The President. Well, first of all, I guess you're referring to Mr. Connerly and Ms. Thernstrom, and I'm glad if they want to spark a debate. But I did invite them here to be part of our discussion, and I invited other conservatives who were not able to come. And I've done what I could to broaden this debate in many ways and not just to those who claim a special stake in it. What we did on ESPN I thought was in some ways one of the more interesting things that has occurred in the last year.

So I welcome any kind of organized discussion. Today we've got about 40 Governors and the YWCA announcing that all over the country they're going to be engaging in these kinds of discussions. I think all of this is to the good, not bad. So I would encourage people who disagree with me about all these issues to seek out people who are different from them and get into the debate and the dialog and talk it through.

Now, as we come down to this year, to be perfectly candid, I have not made a decision about how best to carry forward this. But in some form or fashion we have to carry this forward, because what I'm trying to do is to get people to think about our racial diversity as an enormous asset for America in the 21st century if we become more of one nation as a result of it.

So we have—for example, I've got a lot of legislative proposals on the table which are critical to this: our whole empowerment zone, more community development banks, all the things we're doing to try to close the opportunity gaps in our inner cities and our rural areas; the EEOC budget, which, to go back to one former question, I believe the Speaker is committed to support, which will be very good, to clear out this huge backlog in discrimination cases before the Federal Government. There are lots of specific things we still have to do, as well as other avenues of dialog that I think need to be explored.

April.

National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey

Q. Mr. President, General Barry McCaffrey is in the midst of controversy over the needle exchange program, as well as a personality conflict. Mr. President, what are your words to General McCaffrey's detractors, especially those in your Cabinet, your administration, and those Democrats in the CBC that are joining Newt Gingrich to get McCaffrey out of the drug czar's office?

The President. Well, first of all, I think we ought to look at his record. I think he's got quite a commendable record. We have more than double—we've had a strategy that was as follows with the drug issue: one, to try to help parents teach their children that drugs are wrong and illegal and can kill you; two, to try to support local law enforcement efforts and local community efforts at not only punishment but prevention; three, to try to increase our capacity to stop drugs from coming in at the border. We more than doubled border guards, for example, from 3,000 to 6,000. We've got another 1,000 coming in this budget. We've got a fund set aside in the highway bill to increase the technological capacity of the Government to stop drugs coming in at the border.

And General McCaffrey has been behind a lot of that. He's also done enormous work with the supply countries and Latin America, trying to get them to work with us. And he's made some real headway. He's one of the reasons we've got this alliance against drugs at the last Summit of the Americas. He supported huge increases in funding for treatment and for testing and treatment for inmates not only in Federal but in State and local penitentiaries. So I think he's got a good record.

Now, he believes that the benefits of needle exchange are uncertain and that the message you send out is not good, that somehow the Government is empowering drug use. There are people all over the country who agree with that. Now, the weight of medical research and the American Medical Association has a different view. Their view is that it may help to lower the transmission of HIV, and there is no evidence that it increases drug use.

I think—if I might, I mean, that's the next logical question, why did we make the decision we did—because the weight of scientific evidence was what I just said. But if you look

at it, it's clear: If you go all across the American cities or go to Vancouver, Canada, anyplace where they've had a needle exchange program where there has been serious testing, the only place it really works to reduce HIV transmission and to reduce drug use is when the people who come in to exchange needles get pulled into treatment programs.

So the real issue is, will there be more funds for treatment? And that's obviously—I'm getting as much money out there as I can, but that's why I think it should remain a local decision and why I made the decision I did and why I'd like to see this controversy put behind us, because I think in a way, in terms of impact on people, it has been—there has been more heat than light on it.

NATO Expansion and Hungary's Economy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. This is for Hungarian national television—[*inaudible*]. What is your message, sir, to those nations, particularly to Hungarians, millions of them living below the poverty line? I mean the Hungarian poverty line. Will they be better off by joining a military alliance? Some critics here say that this is like putting the cart before the horse. Military comes first; economic integration just second. What's your take on that?

Thank you.

The President. Well, first, I think it's a very legitimate question. It is a legitimate question. It's a question that bothered me, for example, when some other countries not nearly as prosperous as Hungary were asking to be considered for NATO membership. For the United States and for other NATO members, we have to trust the elected representatives of the countries involved—in this case, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic—to make the right decision on that.

My view is, if it can be afforded—for Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic—if it can be afforded, consistent with a commitment to economic growth and benefits preserving the social contract for the people, it will be good economically over the long run for Hungary, because it will tie Hungary more closely to the emerging global economy of democracies, it will identify Hungary even more clearly as a responsible nation capable of helping NATO solve other peacekeeping problems, and it will remove any lingering questions, however rational or not, about Hungary's security. So I think it will be good for the economy over the long run if it could be managed now.

George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

President's Response to Questions of Character

Q. Following up on Peter's earlier question, to what degree do you believe that a President, any President, is a role model in his private behavior? And does that not justify questions about private behavior that might otherwise be considered intrusive?

The President. Well, those are questions that you need to ask and answer without my involvement for the simple reason that our consensus about that over time has been—it's changed dramatically, first of all. Secondly, there is a difference between the question you asked and the exact nature of what's happened here over the last 5½ years, which I am sure you appreciate.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, as President of the United States, the country leader to defend democracy in the world, are you ready to accept a democratic vote by the majority of the members of the OAS to reinstate Cuba as an active member of the inter-American system? If not, why not?

The President. No, and because just last year, the OAS voted to kick anybody out who abandoned democracy. So we would look completely hypocritical if we said, "Here's the set of rules we have for all of our members; if you abandon democracy you're out of here. But we feel so terrible that Cuba has been under this dictatorship for 40 years and has been outside the OAS that we think we'll bring them in here."

First of all, I think it's hypocritical. Secondly, I don't believe that democracy has been in effect and is secure enough from the enormous pressures that are on a lot of these countries to guarantee that we can preserve it if we were to make that sort of mistake.

Now, other countries in the OAS in the Americas are perfectly free to disagree with our position on Cuba. For example, the Canadian Prime Minister—one of you just asked a question—just went to Cuba. But I think when he was there, he was also pressing for democracy and human rights. We can have differences in our approach to the same goal, and I wouldn't criticize that. But I think to open up the OAS or the Summit of the Americas process to a

nondemocratic nation, in my view, would be a big mistake.

This country stands for freedom and democracy. We're fighting like crazy to preserve it in countries where it is very difficult to do so, where people literally put their lives on the line every day for freedom. And when people are out there risking their lives, we ought not to send the wrong signal about how important that is to us.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 157th news conference began at 2 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to one of his private attorneys, David E. Kendall; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr and Deputy Independent Counsel W. Hickman Ewing, Jr.; Abigail Thernstrom, senior fellow, Manhattan Institute; Ward Connerly, chairman, American Civil Rights Institute; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada.

Statement on Senate Ratification of the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

April 30, 1998

I am delighted that the Senate voted by an overwhelming margin to admit Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO. This vote is a major milestone on the road to an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe. The addition of these three democracies to our alliance will strengthen NATO, expand the zone of stability in Europe and reduce the chances American men and women will ever again be called into Europe's fields of battle. The message this vote sends is clear: American support for NATO is firm; our leadership for security on both sides of the Atlantic is strong; and there is a solid, bipartisan foundation for an active U.S. role in the world.

I want to pay tribute to the indispensable efforts of the many leaders from both parties who brought us to this day, starting with Majority Leader Lott and Minority Leader Daschle. This vote stands in the tradition of Harry Truman, George Marshall, and Arthur Vandenberg and the other giants who kept America engaged in the world after World War II and were present at NATO's creation. Their lesson then is our lesson tonight—that our strength lies in a foreign policy guided by the interests and values that unite us as Americans.

Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion With Employees of Therma, Inc., in San Jose, California

May 1, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. I want to thank Joe and Nicki for welcoming me here. I want to thank Dan Kirby for the tour through the operations. He did a great job. Thanks to Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and Mayor Susan Hammer, my good friends, for joining me here today. I thank the labor leaders that are here, Amy Dean, Ray Lancaster, Mark Van Den Heuvel, Steve Preminger. But most of all, I thank all of you for giving me a chance to leave Washington and come out and visit the real world. It's great. Thank you very much.

Before I say a little more about why I came here today, I'd like to make a brief comment on something very important to your future that did happen in Washington, DC, late last night. Last night an overwhelming bipartisan majority of 80 Members of the United States Senate voted for a treaty that will permit us to bring Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into the NATO military alliance.

Now, why does this matter to you out here on this factory floor? I think it's very important to you and to every American. We fought two World Wars and lost a lot of Americans, and waged a long cold war in a deeply divided Europe. The Berlin Wall fell, communism dissipated, giving us the chance for the first time in history, ever, to deal with a Europe that is free, democratic, and undivided. That's important. If we can do that, that means you will know that you'll have stable partners for trading purposes. You can sell them things; you can buy things from them; you can be a part of growing. Even more important, it means you know that your children will likely never have to go there to fight and die in a war. And furthermore, you know that we'll be able to work together on the problems that do exist in the world, to contain them.

Now, just in the last few years since I've been President, we have used NATO for those purposes. We've brought in two dozen other countries in a Partnership For Peace, and they work with us all over the world, training, working with our militaries together. We made a special agreement with Russia and with Ukraine. And together, we went into Bosnia and stopped the bloodiest war in Europe since the end of World War II, with no conflicts, no shooting, no deaths.

So that's why this is important. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—three more partners that will make our alliance stronger. If we have to do something in the future, that's three more countries that will be contributing people, sharing our burden, and building a future of strong partnership based on trade and commerce and travel and visitation, not on conflict. It's a big deal.

And I would like to thank the Senate Majority Leader, Trent Lott; the Senate Minority Leader, Tom Daschle; Senator Jesse Helms; Senator Joe Biden—all of them. This was an unusual coalition of people—[*laughter*]—who worked together to do something that a lot of people didn't think we could do. And it's going to make a better world for our children. Ten years from now, it will look like an even bigger vote than it does this morning. So I thank them.

I'd also like, before I begin, to offer my condolences to the family of the police officer, David Chetcuti, who was killed in the line of duty last Saturday, and express my gratitude for the bravery he showed when he lost his life. And in that connection, I'd like to thank the police officers from the motorcycle crew from Santa Clara County, because they had to accompany me on this visit, and they're missing his memorial service that is going on this morning. So I thank them for doing that.

Now, let me tell you why I came here: because, to me, you guys represent the future. You're good at what you do; you're changing all the time; you're committed to getting better; you're operating in a global economy; you have a good management-labor partnership; you have apprenticeships for new workers; you have training for veteran workers to make sure they learn new skills and master new technologies. You're proving that Silicon Valley's economic revolution does not just include computer programmers; it can include all the workers of America if we're all well-trained, highly competitive, and the best in the world at what we do.

You're evidence of that. I thank you for it. I wanted America to see it. And mostly, I wanted to talk to you and your representatives behind me about how we can do this all over America, in every part of America, and set the processes in motion that will keep it going year-in and year-out.

You are a very important part of this wonderful economic renaissance going on in America now. Yesterday we saw that the economic strategy that we put in place over 5 years ago in Washington did, in fact, work to unleash the competitive capacities of America. We said we were going to reduce the deficit and balance the budget. We were going to invest in our people, in education, in technology, in scientific research, in environmental investment. And we were going to trade more with the rest of the world. We were going to open more avenues to trade our goods and services.

Yesterday we saw more evidence that it's working. The economy grew in the last quarter at over 4 percent. Unemployment was the lowest in 28 years; inflation, the lowest in 30 years; consumer confidence, the highest in a generation. For 5 years in a row now, our country has been rated the most competitive economy in the world. You did that, you and people like you all over America, and you should be very, very proud of yourselves.

Another reason I wanted to come here was because this company proves that even in Silicon Valley, opportunity to participate in that new economy embraces more than those who work

directly with computers or in laboratories or in offices; and also shows, as this gentleman demonstrated, that computer technology has revolutionized every aspect of American labor and therefore that we all must become more familiar with it.

I couldn't believe it—I told the folks that were going around with me that at one point during my long service as Governor of my State, I would go out about once a month and spend a shift working in different kinds of factories. And I was around a lot of sheet metal workers. I've seen a lot of welding in my life, and it was a long time ago now, a few years—that's light-years as fast as things are changing—but the machines I saw today and the level of the work I saw, it's just so breathtakingly different than just 10 years ago, it's almost unimaginable. You, of course, understand that better than I do. But for somebody like me who hasn't seen this work in a few years—I don't have as much time as I used to, to do these sort of things—[*laughter*]—it was quite shocking in a very positive way.

And again, I say I think it's important that all of America see that these kinds of things are going on and that all American workers in all forms of endeavor have an important role to play in building our future.

The other point I wanted to try to explore today is how we can really make sure that everybody has a chance to participate in it, because you know as well as I do that even though the unemployment rate is the lowest it's been in 28 years, there's still places in America where it's fairly high. And there's still workers in America who work at tasks where they're not improving their productivity; they're not learning new skills; they're not mastering new technologies; and they're not getting raises.

And what we have to do now at this moment when the economy is working so well is to try to devise systems that will work for everybody who is willing to work for himself or herself. We have to try to make sure that the lessons that you live every day in this place are somehow learned where they don't exist.

We're doing what we can in our administration to create the special economic incentives to go into inner-city areas and isolated rural areas where there hasn't been a lot of new investment. We're doing what we can to give people the ability to start their own businesses more easily in those places. But I think you know that unless we can guarantee a world-class education to all our kids and a system of lifetime learning for all workers in America so that they can always continue to learn new skills, we will not be able to reach the people that presently have not yet fully participated in this recovery.

You've done a great job on that, and I just wanted to be here. I've done my best to do two things that I think are important. One is to open the doors of college to all Americans of any age. With our HOPE scholarships now, we give virtually all Americans a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college and then credits for the second and third year, and for people who, like many of you, might want to go back and get further training, we've increased scholarships and made the loan program better. And there's also now an education IRA so that you save—for example, for your children's education, you can put the money into an IRA and that money is not subject to tax when you put it in. And then the gain is not subject to tax when you take it out if you use it for your children's education, to try to help make it easier for people to save for education.

The other thing we're trying to do is to create a training opportunity for people who work in companies that are not as sophisticated or advanced as yours, by passing what I've called—and I've been trying for 5 years to pass this—the "GI bill" for America's workers. We have literally dozens of Federal training programs. And if I gave you a sheet of paper and a pencil and I asked you to write down five of them, I bet you there's not a person in the room who could do it—probably including me. [*Laughter*] But there are dozens of them. And they were all created for some particular good purpose when the economy was more static than it is, before it started changing like it is now.

What I've been trying to do for 5 years is to collapse all the programs, put it in a fund and just give everybody a certificate who's eligible for the training and let them take it to the local community college or wherever else, to let the people who need the training have the money and then choose the place where they want to get the training. I think most of you have enough sense to plot your own future, and most other adults do in this country, too. And it would be a lot better than having all these separate bureaucracies and programs there.

So we're working on that. The House has passed a good bill. The Senate has got a bill up—I think they're going to take it up today. And I hope that this vote last night on NATO is a good indicator of what might happen on the "GI bill" for America's workers. Because think what it would mean if every person in every workplace in America—every person in every workplace in America—if they lost a job or if they were grossly underemployed, could get a certificate which would basically empower them to get further education and training at any point during their life. It could revolutionize the lives of a lot of those folks we're talking about that have not yet fully participated in the recovery. And I hope we can get the support for it.

The last thing I'd like to say is that if you all are going to keep producing more things in less time at higher quality, you've got to sell them someplace. And you have to sell them to companies that in turn sell their products. Everybody you sell something to has got to sell what they sell—produce to somebody else. Otherwise they can't buy your product. So it's very, very important that we have a growing American economy and a growing world economy.

If we don't have a growing world economy, we're going to be in deep trouble. Why? Because we have 4 percent of the world's population, but we have 22 percent of the world's wealth. Now, you don't have to be a mathematical genius to know that if you've got 4 percent of the population and 22 percent of the wealth and 96 percent of the people are living someplace else, and for the next 20 years in the developing countries, they're projected to grow at 3 times the rate of the rich countries, somebody has got to sell something somewhere else than America in order to maintain our 22 percent share, in order to maintain the opportunities that we all want for our children.

And that means that we have to help other people get wealthier, too. And you may have noticed, in Washington we're having a big argument now about whether we should pay our fair share to something called the International Monetary Fund, the IMF. What that fund does is to help countries who get in trouble stabilize their economy so they can start growing again—from our point of view, so they can start buying our products again.

Now, we're out here in California—30 percent of our economic growth in the last 5 years has come from selling to other countries. Over 30 percent of our exports go to Asia. You have been reading in the papers, I'm sure, that a lot of those Asian countries are in trouble. The IMF does not just go in and give people money; it says, if you've got a problem, you've got to clean up your act, organize your business properly, start running your economy efficiently, and if you'll do these things, then we'll help you get stabilized and start growing again.

Those Asian countries are our trading partners. They're an important part of our future. And I think we ought to pay our fair share to the IMF. I don't care what other political business is going on in Washington—and there is a lot of other things that are going on here—we should do whatever is necessary to keep this expansion going. And I hope that you will send that signal. And I want to thank you representative, Zoe Lofgren, for being strongly in favor of this position. But we've got to convince the Congress that America, if we want to lead the world economically, has at least got to pay our dues and put in our part of an institution that is going to help Asia come back so we can keep selling.

I guess that's a long-winded way of saying the best way for us to succeed is for me to do my part and you to do yours. And I'm going to try to do that. But one of the things that we have to do is get the focus in Washington on basic things: How do we build a world-class education system; how do we support companies that are committed to changing technologies; how can we make sure workers can continue to get the education and training they need? That's what I hope to learn from you here today, and what I hope through your voices all America will hear on the news tonight and tomorrow morning.

Thank you for the example you set for our country. Thank you very much.

[*At this point, the discussion proceeded, and it is joined in progress. Joe Parisi, founder and president, Therma, Inc., said that his company tried to be ahead of the curve and benefited from training schools established in partnership with employee unions.*]

The President. How do you determine—first of all, who pays for the training?

Mr. Parisi. The employers donate so many cents per hour toward a training fund.

The President. And are the training programs just for the employees of your company, or do they include people from other companies?

Mr. Parisi. All of the people in the construction trades go to the training schools.

The President. And is there a regular schedule for doing it, or does it depend on what new things you're doing at any given time?

[*Mr. Parisi explained that most of the employees participate in a 5-year apprenticeship training program in order to become a journeyman and that 60 percent of employees at the journeyman level continue their education in evening classes.*]

The President. And you started this company 31 years ago?

Mr. Parisi. Yes.

Nicki Parisi. Yes.

The President. When Nicki was underage. [*Laughter*] Now, I didn't want to put this out on the record. How many employees did you have when you started?

Mr. Parisi. Well, one or two. [*Laughter*]

The President. And how many do you have here today?

Mr. Parisi. You're looking at them—1,600, I think, give or take.

The President. That's pretty good growth. That's impressive.

LeRoy, do you want to talk about——

[*LeRoy Ginn, project manager, Therma, Inc., discussed how the company gave its employees opportunity to prosper in their careers.*]

The President. Give us an idea of the different kinds of customers you have. Do you serve people in the computer business, people in the biotech business?

[*Mr. Ginn said the company served every major computer manufacturer, as well as manufacturers of tools to make computer chips. Another participant noted that the short product life cycle in the technology industry encouraged Therma employees to be innovative in order to help their customers stay competitive. Another praised Mr. Parisi and his wife, Nicki, cofounder and chief executive officer, Therma, Inc., for promoting independent decisionmaking by field personnel.*]

The President. Good for you.

[*The participant explained that the fast turnover of projects in the high-tech industry fostered utilization of the best talent. Patricia Glenn, customer service manager, Fix Air Co., said that time constraints mandated cooperation among companies in the industry. Other participants cited the willingness of employees to adapt and react quickly because of the level of trust placed in them.*]

The President. That may be the single, most significant revolution, even more important than all the technology, that's occurred in manufacturing in America over the last two decades or so. The companies that are doing really well are the companies that empower their workers and that learn from them as well as teach them, and where people are working together.

I can go to any part of America and spend half an hour in a plant and immediately know, without anybody having to say anything, how people feel about that, because that's the most important thing that you see—anyplace you go, whether the answer is a good one or not a good one, it's down deep inside the most important thing to the people that work there.

[*A participant commented that the lack of a formal hierarchy at Therma allowed for a friendly and cooperative work environment. Other participants concurred that the company's teamwork approach inspired both customer and employee loyalty over the long term.*]

The President. That's what you said, right?

Participant. It's true. That's right. [*Laughter*]

The President. You could go somewhere else.

[*Participants described training and learning opportunities provided to employees to enhance their skills and improve their careers.*]

The President. You know, it's interesting, I have worked hard—with limited success, I might add, but more than I would like—more than I thought in the beginning we'd have—with the Vice President, to try to organize this kind of workplace in as many Government agencies as possible. And it's harder in some ways, because you're organized to make good things happen and to make good things happen in a hurry. A lot of people who go to work for the Government are terrified that something bad will happen, and it will be on them, and they'll read about it in the newspaper, and then they'll have to be a scapegoat for it.

So what that tends to do is to create a kind of a—to reinforce the sort of bureaucratic mentality: Don't venture out, don't try, because if you make a mistake, it will be in the papers;

all the taxpayers will be mad; you'll be the goat; you'll be out the door sort of thing. As a consequence, more mistakes are made.

If you think about it, we've still got—we are really trying to create an environment in which we can respond more quickly to people's needs. We're having—just a little example—we're having millions of people this year are filing their income taxes by E-mail or telephone, in just a few minutes. And most people have a fairly simple form. There may be, I don't know, some percentage that will be harder to check, or whatever. But the point is, it's really worth doing because it's a hassle on the best of terms and to make it easier for people is a good thing to do.

And the Social Security Administration, believe it or not, won an award, over L.L. Bean and a lot of other places, for the best telephone service of any major, big organization in America. [*Laughter*] But we really worked at it.

But it requires getting people to not be afraid to try something new, and to let them know that, assuming they're not abusing the citizens or something, that if you're actually out there trying to do something new and you're taking a chance, if it doesn't work out, you're not going to be punished because you want people to feel that way.

But it is really—it's an enormous challenge to try to create the flexibility and productivity you have in an organization like this, where you have clear common goals. I mean, it's not like there's no uniformity of objective—or uniformity of standards. But you still have some creativity in carrying it out. And you've kind of got my juices flowing to keep trying today.

But every effort we've made in Government has been worth it. But I just—I want to urge all of you to support us in doing that, too, because it's like everything else. If you give people a lot of freedom and you ask them to try, once in a while you make a mistake, because nobody is perfect. And you have to create an environment in which your people are trying to do the right thing for the right reason and not being reckless in doing it—you support that.

[*A participant agreed with the President, and Ms. Parisi asserted that if mistakes were not made, nothing was being attempted. She then quipped that she and her husband could make a lot of mistakes, but their employees covered them up.*]

The President. I could say something hilarious about that but I won't. [*Laughter*]

Let me say again, though, I think—one of the places, interestingly enough, where we've had quite a bit of success is a place that you might not expect, is in the military, because we have very rigorous, uniform training characteristics. I was out here a couple of years ago, actually in the harbor at Oakland, having lunch on an aircraft carrier with some career Navy people. And I talked to an enlisted man who had done 19 years in the Navy, and he'd quit and gone to work in the private sector for 2½ years, and he came back to the Navy because he said that as compared to the private sector job he had, he had much more responsibility and they trained him—they gave him at least one new skill every year. It was fascinating. And he said, "Eventually I'll have to quit this, and I'll still be a young person," but he couldn't find another job in the private sector where someone was always teaching him something new and where he was being given more and more responsibility. And that's basically what I'm hearing from all of you.

Participant. Hopefully.

[*A participant discussed Mr. Parisi's devotion to the company's training center and stressed the importance of training in the high-tech industry.*]

The President. You'd be amazed how little of this is done in some other parts of the country and some other sectors of the economy. And yet I'm convinced you would have pretty much the same pay-off everywhere, because what you go around here, you see that—I mean, sure, you're serving all these high-tech industries, but if this company were located out in the middle of the country somewhere where you had a totally different customer base, you would still be making more money if you were doing the same things you're doing here. Isn't that right? And you would still have that gentleman over there running your computer program for you and you'd still have all this—in other words, you'd be doing all this stuff that you're doing here, even if you had a different customer base.

That's what we've got to get people to understand, that we need—that you can't—education and technology dominate every form of production. And just the fact that your end users happen to be in Silicon Valley predominantly, or be in this kind of business, is almost incidental

to what we should be doing in every workplace in America, I think.

[*A participant said he had acquired skills he could take elsewhere if necessary, though he wanted to stay at Therma. Other participants agreed and discussed the level of cooperation within the company and with specialists in the industry, as well as the rate of growth of companies in high-tech fields, particularly the pharmaceutical-biotechnology industry.*]

The President. For whatever it's worth, our people believe that that will continue for another 20 years because of the human genome project and all the mysteries we're unlocking. Just 2 years ago—year before last, we found these two genes that are predominate in causing breast cancer. We've seen splicing of nerves in laboratory animals that actually repair the spines of laboratory animals that have been broken, so that they can actually have lower body movement again, which offers the possibility, if we can work out the genetic sequencing in people, that people who are in wheelchairs because of spinal cord injuries may be able to walk again.

All these things are happening, and the pace at which these genetic discoveries are being made is accelerating rather dramatically. So I think there will be more of it.

[*A participant noted that Therma process engineers designed the process for a biotechnology firm to make its product.*]

The President. That's an amazing story. [*Laughter*]

Participant. No, it happens all the time.

The President. Just your typical sheet metal worker story. [*Laughter*]

But again, it shows the power of ideas. And if you think about it, work can be a lot more interesting now than it even could have been 50 years ago, when it wasn't being powered by ideas and repetition was important in building the kind of traditional industrial society. Now work can be fun and good because the whole economy is being powered by ideas. And that means also that there is an unlimited, inexhaustible supply of future human endeavor, which is why I believe, for example, that the environmental movement, the movement to have—to deal with the problems of climate change and global warming, which we've seen a little bit—a taste of with El Nino this year, that that will not cost jobs, that will generate jobs, because we'll have to figure out how to do it and ideas will be brought to bear on it. All these little people that come up with all this stuff and then become fabulously wealthy are just idea machines.

[*A participant agreed, noting that the ban on chlorofluorocarbons and certain other refrigerants caused problems in industry, but was also the catalyst for many cottage industries in alternative technologies.*]

The President. The CFC thing is a great example. When we took chlorofluorocarbons out of the atmosphere, it not only—it was projected to have a modest negative impact on our economy, and instead it had a noticeable positive impact. And I think that the important thing for the Government, for us, to do is to—when we make these rules is to make them in such a way that allows these kinds of processes to develop.

Participant. Phase them in?

The President. Yes. And to give a market solution a time to work. That's a big concern I had when we went to Japan last December to try to come up with some rules about how to deal with climate change. I am positive that—if you look at what puts carbon dioxide into the atmosphere today, about a third of it comes from vehicles; about a third of it comes from buildings, both residential and commercial; and about a third of it comes from power plants and factories. And we now know that there is available technology—just for example—you can buy windows now which let in 6 times as much light and let out only one tenth as much heat. They cost about 3 or 4 times as much, but if they have a 2-year payout, then after that, you're making money. And once you get the technology, once it all works out, then we will be doing these things that we ought to do for the environment because they also are good for the economy. You have to turn the problem into an idea machine.

[*A participant described how the company's energy retrofit department helped companies run more energy-efficient buildings and operations by upgrading equipment and operating controls.*]

The President. Yes, what do you require? If you start something new like that, how quick does it have to pay out for you to think it's worth doing?

[*A participant replied that most customers wanted to see the payback in energy savings in 1 year, but that some were only interested in low construction costs, no matter how quick the payback.*]

The President. Well, we're trying to see if we can make a few changes in the Tax Code that will change that behavior, because in manufacturing processes there are like—there's not one big thing, as you know, there's dozens of little things that can be done, all of which, at least the ones that I've studied, have a 2-year or less payout, which dramatically cuts your energy bill. And then after that, you're making money eternally.

And so we're trying—I have asked the Congress to adopt some minor changes in the Tax Code which won't cost a lot of money, but which would give significant incentives if you're right up against that decision—you say, "Well, can I wait a year, year and half to get this money back?"

[*Participants said that such incentives would be a big stimulus to their industry, noting that decisions were too often based solely on bottom-line profit and stock market success.*]

The President. They would have been better off waiting in the last 5 years. Wait and wait and wait. [*Laughter*]

Participant. It's a tough call.

The President. You've got the biggest stake in this. [*Laughter*] I asked him if it was true he had nine children. My notes said he had nine children. He said it was true, and I said, congratulations. [*Laughter*] Well, I mean, it's true; you have a stake in this meeting. You have nine kids that will be able to do hundreds of different things that haven't even been invented yet by the time they're old enough to go into the workplace.

Johnny Gooch. That's true.

Participant. What's the age span of them, Johnny?

Mr. Gooch. Oh, God. [*Laughter*]

The President. He's going to start bragging now. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Gooch. From 23 to 17 months.

The President. Do you have twins?

Mr. Gooch. Yes. Most of you know who know me, I have 2 sets of twins, 8 years old and 17 months. Big span. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's great.

Participant. ——extended production. [*Laughter*]

The President. Here's a man who wants to be taken care of in his old age. [*Laughter*]

Participant. There won't be enough Social Security. [*Laughter*]

The President. Oh, yes, there will. [*Laughter*]

I will say, though, one of the things we're doing now is we're undertaking a process across the country to determine what we have to do to change and modernize both Social Security and Medicare to make sure it's there when the baby boomers retire.

The generation of people who will turn—the oldest baby boomers—I'm one of them—the people that were born between '46 and '64, that group of people, are the largest group of Americans in a given generation in history, until last year when we got—last year there was finally a group of school children that were more numerous than the baby boomers. But that skips a whole generation and then some. So that when we're all in the retirement system, which is roughly 2029—that is when we're all 65 or over, which is about 2029, we'll all be—all the baby boomers will be 65 or over—if we continue the projected work force participation rates and the projected retirement rates, there will be only two people working for every person who's drawing Social Security. And, so, we're going to have to make some fairly substantial adjustments to make sure that the benefits are there to provide at least the minimal support that Social Security provides today.

About half of the seniors in America would be living below the poverty line if it weren't for Social Security, although almost all seniors have income over and above Social Security. Social Security itself is not enough for hardly anybody to maintain the standard of living they had before they retired, but if they didn't have it, they'd be in trouble—most people. So what our trick has got to be is to figure out how to keep what is good about it, but to make the adjustments necessary so that it's financially stable and so we can—and maybe have a little bit higher growth rate from our investments—so that we can deal with the coming population changes.

Participant. The one thing nice about the unions is that they have a fabulous pension program. They retire real well.

The President. Pension plan.

Participant. [*Inaudible*]—with the advancement of all of the medical advancements and lifestyle changes, that the retirement age of 65 is a little bit shy now, that we can extend that out.

The President. Yes. We're raising it to 67.

Participant. I think it should be even higher than that. I think people are productive way after that.

The President. Well, one of the things that we're trying to do to deal with that—we've raised it to 67, and then we have made it possible—we've put incentives in the system for people who want to work to work longer.

If you raised it to 70, for example, the real problem with that is that the—and, of course, you have early retirement at 62 and you take a discount. You'd change the discounted value. So the more you raise the retirement age, the less you get if you retire earlier. But the real problem with going—and we're looking at this, and as I said, we've tried to raise the incentives, for example, now, for people to keep working. Because if they keep working, they keep paying taxes and they're paying into the system even if they're also drawing some Social Security. And that really makes a huge difference in leveling up the system.

But if you go to 70, you could probably work here comfortably at 70—here—but there's still a lot of people who work in jobs where it would be quite difficult for them to work that long. And so, if—you say, well, but you still have the early retirement option—that's true, but the early retirement option is worth considerably less, because you take the present value of the whole deal, because you move the full retirement out later than if you retired at 62, you get a little less.

I agree that it has to be raised, and we are raising it to 67. We've tried to—and one of the things that—one of the variables that's being looked at is whether it should be raised more. Other people have suggested that we have, for younger workers, some portion of the payroll tax available for their own investment decisions on the theory that—now, that looks like a wonderful idea now because the stock market has gone from 3200 to 9000 since I've been President, and there's no precedent for that in history.

It's also true that over a 30-year period—any given 30-year period in the 20th century, stocks have always outperformed guaranteed Government investments. The problem is, if you had an individual account, it's not true in every month of every year. So what happens if you have to retire in a year when the thing is down for several hundred points and you don't get it out. If there's some way to sort of share the gains, if you will, across the years—that's one of the things we're looking at. Because, obviously, if we could generate a higher rate of return for the investment that you make in your payroll tax, it would make Social Security more attractive to younger workers.

The other thing, don't forget, that Social Security does that other retirement systems don't, is it's also—it's a disability plan and it's a survivors insurance policy. So if you pay into Social Security here and something happens to you, then your surviving family at least get something to help them survive, and that can be quite important.

But let me just say this—there is a huge amount of discussion about this out there now, and I think most Americans know we've got to make some changes. And I think most Americans will support us making some substantial changes, because there is no point in being dishonest about it, we can't sustain the present system as the baby boomers retire at the present rates of return.

But there is also—it's important not to overlook how much good this program has done to stabilize—the poverty rate among seniors in America is now under 11 percent, and it is lower than that of the population as a whole. It has been for over 10 years now, for the first time in the whole history of America. And that's something that our country should be proud of. So we have to figure out how to save the best parts of it.

But you ought to tell—if you have any ideas, specific ideas, or you want to even organize the folks in the company to put their ideas up, if you give them to Congresswoman Lofgren, I promise you they will be carefully reviewed by our group, because we're actually trying to go out in the country, tell people what the facts are, and figure out what the best resolution is.

Participant. Mr. President, I think I see a signal here that we have to quit. [*Laughter*]

The President. This is Clinton's Second Law of Politics. When you start to have a good time, you're supposed to be somewhere else. [*Laughter*]

I've enjoyed this immensely. Thank you all very much. Thank you. I appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the Therma, Inc., warehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Dan Kirby, floor manager, and Johnny Gooch, sheet metal foreman, Therma, Inc.; Mayor Susan Hammer of San Jose; Amy Dean, business manager, and Steve Preminger, community services director, South Bay AFL–CIO Labor Council; Ray Lancaster, Jr., business representative, Plumbers, Steamfitters and Refrigeration Fitters Union Local 393; Mark Van Den Heuvel, business representative, Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 104; and David Chetcuti, a Millbrae, CA police officer who was shot and killed in the line of duty on April 25.

Statement on Signing the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act

May 1, 1998

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3579, the FY "1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act." This emergency supplemental legislation makes urgently needed funds available for victims of natural disasters and for our troops in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf. While it is disappointing that the Congress has failed to meet the Nation's financial responsibilities by not approving funds for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations (U.N.), the Congress has provided funds that I requested for victims of natural disasters at home and for our military troops overseas.

I am pleased that this legislation will enable us to meet our commitment to our troops in Bosnia and the Gulf, to support readiness worldwide, and to aid victims of natural disasters at home. This Act provides more than $2 billion for these purposes.

The Act also includes $2.4 billion for disaster relief programs for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for emergency highway repair, for repairing levees and other flood control systems, for repairing national wildlife refuges and national park property, and for State and private forestry, farm loans, dairy, and other agricultural assistance.

I am also pleased that the Congress has decided to omit a number of extraneous and objectionable items in this legislation, such as provisions to increase the number of assault weapons on the street, to subsidize banks excessively for making student loans without fully offsetting the costs, and to undermine our ability to provide food stamps to certain legal immigrants.

It is very troubling, however, that the Congress placed politics above sound science by insisting on two measures that would diminish our public lands. One of these provisions permits the building of a six-lane commuter highway near Albuquerque, New Mexico, through the Petroglyph National Monument. This is a dangerous departure from the practice of managing National Parks based on sound science and resource protection. Another objectionable section is intended to interfere with the Forest Service's ability to manage the National Forests. This rider is directed at a proposed regulation that would temporarily suspend road construction in roadless areas of our National Forests. It imposes difficult and burdensome paperwork and potentially costly compensation requirements on the Forest Service. In addition, I am very concerned about the limitations placed on the Government's ability to ensure a fair return for oil and gas resources extracted from Federal lands. My Administration will oppose any efforts to make these limitations permanent.

I am deeply disappointed that this Act extends the comment period and delays the effective date of the "Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network" final rule, allowing an unfair organ allocation system to continue. This inequitable system violates the intent of the National Organ Transplant Act, which requires a national, equitable system, free of geographic bias, as well as the American Medical Association's Code of Medical Ethics, which prohibits the distribution of organs on the basis of geographic conditions. The final rule would ensure that organs are allocated to the sickest candidates first.

It is also regrettable that in order to pay for the emergency funding for victims of natural disasters, this legislation demands unnecessary and unwarranted cuts in existing housing programs for low-income Americans. In response to my Administration's strong objections, the Congress pledged to restore this funding fully in the next fiscal year. I call upon the Congress to honor that promise, and to do so without draining resources from any of the housing programs contained in my budget for FY 1999. Instead of cutting housing assistance to low-income Americans, the Congress should provide funding for the 100,000 new housing vouchers proposed in my FY 1999 Budget.

It is imperative that the Congress act quickly so that we may meet our commitment to the IMF and the U.N. Delay or failure to meet the full IMF requests could undermine our capacity to deal with threats to world economic stability and could leave us unable to protect American workers, farmers, and businesses in the event of an escalation or spread of the Asian financial crisis or a new crisis. In addition, failure to provide the full request for U.N. arrears could jeopardize our chance to affect negotiations on lowering U.S. dues and would undermine U.S. leadership in the international community. I call on the Congress to pass new legislation quickly, with workable terms, so that the United States is able to maintain its position as a world leader and to meet its obligations to the IMF and the U.N.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 1, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3579, approved May 1, was assigned Public Law No. 105–174.

Memorandum on Agency Use of Alternate Means of Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking

May 1, 1998

Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Designation of Interagency Committees to Facilitate and Encourage Agency Use of Alternate Means of Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking

As part of an effort to make the Federal Government operate in a more efficient and effective manner, and to encourage, where possible, consensual resolution of disputes and issues in controversy involving the United States, including the prevention and avoidance of disputes, I have determined that each Federal agency must take steps to: (1) promote greater use of mediation, arbitration, early neutral evaluation, agency ombuds, and other alternative dispute resolution techniques, and (2) promote greater use of negotiated rulemaking.

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States including sections 569(a) and 573(c) of title 5, United States Code, as amended by the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–320), I hereby direct as follows:

An Alternative Dispute Resolution Working Group, comprised of the Cabinet Departments and, as determined by the Attorney General, such other agencies with a significant interest in dispute resolution, shall be convened and is designated under 5 U.S.C. 573(c) as the interagency committee to facilitate and encourage agency use of alternative means of dispute resolution. The Working Group shall consist of representatives of the heads of all participating agencies, and may meet as a whole or in subgroups of agencies with an interest in particular issues or subject areas, such as disputes involving personnel, procurement, and claims. The Working Group shall be convened by the Attorney General, who may designate a representative to convene and facilitate meetings of the subgroups. The Working Group shall facilitate, encourage, and provide coordination for agencies in such areas as: (1) development of programs that employ alternative means of dispute resolution, (2) training of agency personnel to recognize when and how to use alternative means

of dispute resolution, (3) development of procedures that permit agencies to obtain the services of neutrals on an expedited basis, and (4) recordkeeping to ascertain the benefits of alternative means of dispute resolution. The Working Group shall also periodically advise the President, through the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, on its activities.

The Regulatory Working Group established under section 4(d) of Executive Order 12866 is designated under 5 U.S.C. 569(a) as the interagency committee to facilitate and encourage agency use of negotiated rulemaking.

This directive is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions

May 1, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (the "Convention"), adopted at Paris on November 21, 1997, by a conference held under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Convention was signed in Paris on December 17, 1997, by the United States and 32 other nations.

I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, interpretive Commentaries on the Convention, adopted by the negotiating conference in conjunction with the Convention, that are relevant to the Senate's consideration of the Convention. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

Since the enactment in 1977 of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the United States has been alone in specifically criminalizing the business-related bribery of foreign public officials. United States corporations have contended that this has put them at a significant disadvantage in competing for international contracts with respect to foreign competitors who are not subject to such laws. Consistent with the sense of the Congress, as expressed in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988, encouraging negotiation of an agreement within the OECD governing the type of behavior that is prohibited under the FCPA, the United States has worked assiduously within the OECD to persuade other countries to adopt similar legislation. Those efforts have resulted in this Convention that once in force, will require that the Parties enact laws to criminalize the bribery of foreign public officials to obtain or retain business or other improper advantage in the conduct of international business.

While the Convention is largely consistent with existing U.S. law, my Administration will propose certain amendments to the FCPA to bring it into conformity with and to implement the Convention. Legislation will be submitted separately to the Congress.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 1, 1998.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Portola Valley, California

May 1, 1998

Thank you very much. You know, I always marvel at Walter's energy and fidelity to our cause, and I thank him again tonight. I'm very honored to be here. The last time I was in a tent in this yard was when we had a dinner for the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, I think—when I came to San Francisco and we had the wonderful event there. And I must say I'm delighted to be back.

I thank Senator Feinstein and Dick for coming tonight, and Representative Eshoo. Mayor Hammer, thank you for coming. Art Torres, our State Democratic Chair, thank you for coming. Len Barrack, thanks for all the work you've done. This man came all the way from Philadelphia. You remember what W.C. Fields said about that. [*Laughter*] He's a good person, and he works hard, and I'm grateful to him.

I'd like to thank the vice chairs of the dinner, Ken Karas, Ernest Gallo, Chong Moon Lee, and Maura Morey. I'd like to thank Senator John Burton for coming. And I'd like to thank my old friend Clarence Clemmons, who gave me a couple of mouthpieces, but I can't make them sound the way he did tonight. And I'd like to thank our young musicians over here, this young saxophone player and his compadres. They've got quite a future as well. I thank them. They did a great job.

And finally, I'd like to thank my former Defense Secretary, and I think the best Defense Secretary since World War II, Bill Perry and his wife, Lee, for being here. Just for a pure rush for me, an old-fashioned American boy who grew up in the fifties and the sixties, I want to thank Willie Mays for coming tonight and making my night. Thank you very much. Thank you.

You know, I feel so indebted to California because the people of this State have been so very good to me and to Hillary and to the Vice President. And of course, now we have the most important person in our lives out here, Hillary and I do, going to school—and it is a long way from Washington. You know, it's hard for the President to do anything without attracting any notice. I can hardly just wake up one morning and decide, I think I'll go have dinner with Chelsea—just get on Air Force One and fly to California. No one will know. [*Laughter*] So it's very frustrating. But still, I'm happy she's here, and I'm happy she's especially in this part of this wonderful State.

I have seen the people of California go through a lot since I first began coming here as a candidate in 1991. I think—when we were at dinner Walter said, "Well, I want you to know times have never been better for us here than they are now." And I hope that's true. I'm grateful that the unemployment rate has dropped 40 percent in California in 5 years; that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and the lowest inflation in 30 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rates in 24 years. I'm very grateful about all that. And insofar as our policies played a role in that, I am grateful.

But what I think is helpful is to look at why all these companies around here do so well and try to see to what extent they could be a metaphor for how our country would work if it were working at its maximum capacity. I visited, with Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and Mayor Hammer today, a wonderful manufacturing facility in San Jose that was started by a man and his wife 31 years ago with one employee, and they have 1,600 now. And they have a great kind of labor-management agreement, a great continuing education program, a great decentralized, creative manufacturing system where the workers feel empowered, and no one ever quits who gets a job there.

And I thought to myself, I wish Washington worked this way. [*Laughter*] But in a larger sense, I wish all of America had a chance to be part of something that worked this well. I wish every child's school worked that well. Some of you here have been active in the charter school movements that you know I care a great deal about. When I became President I think there were—well, there were just a handful of charter schools; now there are hundreds. And I know you're working to establish another 100 a year out here in California, and I heartily endorse that because I think it's very, very important.

We have got to guarantee and demonstrate that public institutions can provide genuine excellence in elementary and secondary education. Everybody knows we have the best system of higher education in the world; no one thinks we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. The more diverse our student bodies become, the more diverse our society is, the more important it will be to build excellence in education.

The point I'm making is, this company that I visited today, they're doing real well; they're doing better than they've ever done; and they don't spend much time thinking about it. They're thinking about what they're going to do tomorrow and how they can do more to develop the capacity of the people who work for the company, and how they can really fulfill the dreams of the people—literally, the dreams of the people that work for the company.

And that's what I think we ought to do in America. I do not believe this is a moment for complacency. Sometimes when countries are doing well they sort of sit back and relax and wait for something bad to happen, or act like nothing bad will ever happen, or ignore the clear challenges before them. And if you don't remember anything else I said tonight, I hope you will remember that I believe that America ought to respond to the dynamic times in which we live with gratitude for the prosperity we have, but using it as a springboard to deal with the challenges yet unmet that are right before us and the long-term challenges of the country.

And I tried to keep everyone busy in Washington on positive things that would give us a chance to work together and push forward as a nation. I'll just mention a few.

We've got a budget to pass this year. If we do it right we'll have the first surplus we've had in over 30 years—a really substantial surplus—and we'll have another one next year and the year after that. Some people want to spend it. I think it's a terrible mistake. Some people want to give it away, give it back to you in tax cuts. I think that's a mistake, too—until we know we've got a balanced budget, it's going to stay balanced over the long run, and we figure out what we're going to do to deal with Social Security when all the baby boomers get into it. We're going to have to make some substantial changes in Social Security if we're going to preserve it.

And you know, a lot of young people wish the whole thing—we could just forget about it and give them back their money. But it's important to remember that not every 5-year period in America has seen the stock market go from 3,200 to 9,000. [*Laughter*] As a matter of fact, I don't think there ever has been a period where that happened.

It's important to remember that Social Security is a life insurance program and a disability program, as well as a retirement income program. And it's important to remember, as we sit here in Walter's palatial and gorgeous place, that almost half of the senior citizens in America today would be living in poverty if it weren't for their Social Security income, even though almost all of them have some other income to go along with Social Security.

But the system will go broke the way it's going because when all us baby boomers get on it there will be two people working for every one person drawing. I mean, it's not rocket science, and we're going to have to make some changes. There may be some ways to increase the rate of return. There may be some ways to give people more individual control. There may be a lot of things that have to be done—we're raising the retirement age already under existing law. But we have to do it in a way that protects everybody. And the worst thing we could do is go off squandering this budget surplus that we worked for 5 years to try to clean our country's financial system up, get interest rates down, get investments up, get the economy going, until we've taken care of this huge long-term challenge for America. So to me that's the first thing I want to say. I hope that gets done this year. And I believe it will.

I hope the Congress will adopt comprehensive tobacco legislation to protect children from the dangers of tobacco—this year. I'm a little concerned about the rhetoric of the last couple of weeks because we've gotten this sort of contentious political rhetoric coming out of the Nation's Capital. But you should know that a committee of the United States Senate voted 19 to 1 for a bill that I believe will actually succeed in dramatically reducing the access of children to tobacco and the incidence of children learning to smoke.

Now, again, this should not be partisan issue. I know this is a Democratic Party event and I'm glad our administration has led the way on

this and I'm glad we were the first administration that ever took on this issue. But I don't necessarily care about the credit for this. This is about kids' lives. Three thousand children start smoking every day; 1,000 will die sooner because of it. It is the most significant public health problem in the United States today, and we know what to do about it.

Now, are there complexities. Are there genuine disagreements if we raise the price of cigarettes and give the States back their share because they participate in a Medicaid program which deals with some of these medical costs? Do I disagree with some of the leaders of Congress about how the money ought to be spent? Yes, yes, yes. It doesn't amount to anything compared to the main issue. The main issue is, can we adopt a plan which will dramatically reduce the rate at which children begin to smoke and become addicted and die sooner?

And the answer to that question is, yes, we can, if we make up our minds to do it. And it is not all that complicated. There are lots of complicated issues around the fringes, but every one of you has got some problem in your life like this where, you know, you think about some problem in your life, your work, whatever—it's just so complicated it gives you a headache, but you know down deep inside the essentials are very clear and the real question is whether you're going to take a deep breath and go on and do what you ought to do. Now, that's what's facing Congress now. And I hope very much that we will do that.

Let me just mention one or two other things. Last night, the United States Senate, by a vote of 80 to 19, voted to let Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic join NATO. That comes after—4 years after I first proposed it, but also after we've got over two dozen other countries involved in a partnership with NATO called the Partnership For Peace. Almost all of them are helping us in Bosnia. Our enemy used to be Russia. We've signed—NATO signed a special agreement with Russia and they work shoulder-to-shoulder with American troops in Bosnia. We stopped the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II.

But now, I say that to make the following point. Some of us in this room are old enough to remember that we have fought two World Wars, as well as a cold war, in a Europe that was divided. When the Berlin Wall came down and communism began to be rejected everywhere, it's easy again to assume that everything is going to be all right and we don't have to think about it. Bill Perry did a lot of work to help me think about what the security framework of the 21st century should be about—just as I want a trade framework for the 21st century, so that the world—or at least responsible free peoples in the world are growing together militarily and economically.

We've got an unbelievable situation in Washington where we won't pay our contribution to the International Monetary Fund, which helps to stabilize, in this case at this moment in time, the Asian economies which are very important to us. Thirty percent of our growth in the last 5 years came from exports. Thirty percent of our exports go to Asia—more from California—but in the country as a whole, go to Asia.

The IMF doesn't just go throw this money away. If you've been reading you know that the people that get it often complain about it, because it comes with conditions necessary to rigorously strengthen the economy so that it can grow over the long run. I don't see how we can expect to be treated as and to continue to be the leading economy in the world if we won't even pay our fair share to the International Monetary Fund because we're having a totally unrelated political difference in Washington about how family planning should be handled.

The same thing is true of the United Nations dues. The United Nations is good for the United States. First of all, it's headquartered in the United States. Secondly, they do a lot of things. They have people that go all over the world doing things that, frankly, we'd be under a lot of pressure to do ourselves if someone else weren't willing to take up the slack.

One of you said something to me tonight about thanking me for my role in the Irish peace process. Every single day for the last 40 years—every single day for the last 40 years—an Irish citizen has been somewhere on patrol for peace on behalf of the United Nations, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for 40 years—the only country in the world that can say that. They're pretty good partners for us.

And again, the idea that we won't pay our U.N. dues because we're having a fight over family planning—but we want to be the leading country in the world, we want everybody to follow us—but, by the way, would you pay our way while we get over here and fight like kids

in a play yard about other things and say, "Well, if you won't give me what I want, I won't pay my U.N. dues." You know, sooner or later, the rest of the world will get tired of that.

So again I say, what we need—it's inconceivable to me that that sort of dispute could arise in the business that I visited today. They would find a more wholesome way to resolve their differences. And they wouldn't let their differences over one thing paralyze them over another. So that's what we need to do in Washington.

And we also have an education agenda, an environmental agenda to deal with climate change—which I hope you're all supporting after what you just went through with El Nino out here—[*laughter*]—you wouldn't like to have that on a permanent basis—a health care agenda and a child care agenda in the near term. Over the long run, I ask you to think about this. We have to reform our fundamental systems if you want America to continue to grow in the 21st century and then grow together.

We have to, number one, reform both Social Security and Medicare so that they work in the way they should when the baby boomers retire and they don't bankrupt the country. Number two, we have to close the opportunity gap in inner cities and isolated rural areas where the spark of free enterprise has not yet come. Number three, we have to build a world-class system of education for our children and of skills training and lifetime learning for adults in America.

And finally, we have to come together as one country. We have to learn how to celebrate our differences and deal with them. You know, you've got—and it's a complicated thing. It's easy for everybody to say, I want us to be one America; I want us to all get along; I want us to work together. But there are specific, practical, complicated problems. I'll give you just one example.

You've got an issue on the ballot out here in California relating to bilingual education. And most people think of it as Spanish and English. But if you go to any significant California school district you'll see people from 30 or 40 different racial or ethnic groups. The Fairfax County school district across the river from my office in the White House has young people there from over 175 different racial and ethnic groups, with over 100 native languages in one school district.

Now, I've been very concerned about how these children were getting language instruction and whether they were learning English quickly enough. And frankly, there are some significant shortcomings in our bilingual education program. So I think the people that are concerned about this and put this matter on the ballot, they deserve some acknowledgement that the system we have is not working well for all children.

My problem is, I think if this initiative passes it will make it worse, not better. Because it's one thing to say, well, you're in bilingual education, you can have some instruction in your own language for a year and then you're out; it's fine to say that. But we're talking about 100 different languages now, and children at different stages of their own development. And the transition into English from some languages takes longer than others and for some people takes longer than others.

And even more important—and this is where I think people have a legitimate gripe—of all the kids that need this help today, between 15 and 20 percent of them don't get any help at all. I guess they're in the position that this amendment would put a lot of people in. But they're not getting any help at all, and they're suffering in school because of it. There are a lot of others who—basically the rest of them are divided into two different kinds of programs, and the real problem is there are so many children now whose first language is not English that there are insufficient numbers of trained teachers to deal with it.

Now, I'm going into this in some detail because it's an important issue for California. The parents who don't want their kids held back and given second-class education by being kept in bilingual education programs for 5 and 6 years, they deserve a pat on the back. But the answer is not to say, we'll go to one year and you're out without knowing, number one, what's going to be in that year; number two, can you provide the teachers that need to be provided; number three, is it literally, intellectually possible for every child of every age, no matter what age they are when they come in this country and what their language is, to get that training?

So that's why you have local school boards and local school districts and cities, governments, and all that to try to deal with this. What we're going to try to do at the national

level is to develop a program with a presumption that no one should be in these programs for more than 3 years; but that we have to do more to make them mean something.

I hope that all of you in California, particularly here, will debate this, because we need to do right by these kids. And doing right means giving them what they need, but not keeping them trapped in some sort of intellectual purgatory where they'll get bored and drop out of school and won't go forward. So I'm very sympathetic with the impulse that put this initiative on the ballot, but I think it's the wrong answer.

But the main thing is—I'm just another person. I mean, I realize I have a position but—[*laughter*]—but you all have a vote here, and you should see this as an opportunity to debate the face and future of California. And you should see this as an opportunity to examine what your mutual responsibilities are to all these kids that are going to be doing the work for all the rest of us 10 or 20 or 30 years from now. And I think if we do it, then we'll figure out how to deal with this—and I'll try to do my part.

The last thing I'd like to say is this. There are a lot of issues that directly affect Silicon Valley that are going to be debated in Congress. Congresswoman Eshoo has got her uniform laws bill, and we've got a skilled worker visa bill and a lot of other things. And I think that you've got a chance to get most of the things that most people up here want worked out in a fairly satisfactory way before the Congress goes home. I think that's pretty good, and I think Anna's bill will pass. [*Applause*] Yes, you can clap for that.

But in all of our newness—this is the last point I will leave you with—everything new should really open up to all of us the basic fundamentals in life that don't change, both about our individual lives and about our country. I've spent a lot of time since I've been President—late at night, normally—reading about periods in American history about which not much is known. And also trying to really master the critical turning points in our history.

And I have come to the following conclusion. You can go all the way back to the framers of the Declaration of Independence and all the way forward to the present day and you will find that every—every age has presented challenges which have required us to make the same three decisions in new and different terms, to throw off the dead hand of history and change so that we can make the same three decisions in new and different times. We have had to repeatedly reaffirm our allegiance to liberty and to deepen the meaning of it. I mean, liberty when we became a country was something for white male property owners—a minority in America today, white male property owners. We have deepened the meaning of liberty.

The second thing we've done is to repeatedly have to widen the circle of opportunity. This economy works today on ideas and on the thinking skills of people. And that factory I visited today was being driven to higher and higher levels of achievement because everybody's mind was valued.

And the third thing we have to do is to reaffirm our devotion to the unity of our nation and our communities. You know, I get so tired of the harsh political rhetoric that too often dominates the national landscape because it is unrelated to a specific issue designed to unify the American people so we can all go forward together. If it is true that the best companies in this community do well because people work together, if it is true that we only win wars and overcome depressions and deal with other challenges that are negative because we can work together, it is clearly true that we can only absorb all the changes going on in the world today if we form a more perfect Union.

This is a better country and a different country and a deeper country than it was at the beginning, and it will be well into the 21st century if people like you still care enough to do those same three things in each new time.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host Walter Shorenstein; Richard Blum, husband of Senator Dianne Feinstein; Mayor Susan Hammer of San Jose, CA; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; California State Senator John Burton; saxophonist Clarence Clemmons; and baseball legend Willie Mays.

The President's Radio Address
May 2, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk about our efforts to improve service and end abuses at the Internal Revenue Service. American citizens have every right to expect that they'll be treated with respect by a Government that works for them. A big part of our values as a people include courtesy, efficiency, and fairness from Government.

For far too long in the minds of too many Americans, the IRS has symbolized an immense bureaucracy, a place where unfair treatment and unresponsive service were far too common. We've worked hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer, more efficient, more responsive to their needs, and to support the many dedicated IRS employees who do want to serve them well. And we've made progress.

Two years ago I was proud to sign into law the second Taxpayer Bill of Rights. It's made it easier for taxpayers to appeal IRS decisions and to recover attorney's fees when the IRS makes mistakes. And last May Vice President Gore and Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin began an unflinching top to bottom review of customer service at the IRS. They reported back to me with their recommendations, and we're already beginning to see a new IRS that is more committed to the needs of taxpayers.

We're keeping IRS offices open longer during filing season, launching independent citizen advocacy panels to help taxpayers get relief. Now you can call the IRS and get telephone service 6 days a week, 18 hours a day; soon it'll be 24 hours a day. And this year 24 million Americans saved an awful lot of time and hassle by filing their returns on the phone or electronically. I've also appointed a new IRS Commissioner and a new kind of IRS Commissioner. Charles Rossotti is an experienced businessman who spent his entire career on the taxpayer side of the table.

But we've got more to do. Like most Americans, I was outraged by testimony at last week's congressional hearings on the IRS, by the stories of our citizens harassed and humiliated by what seemed to be an unaccountable, downright tone-deaf agency. These problems developed over years, of course, and we can't solve them all overnight. But Commissioner Rossotti has moved swiftly to rout out abuses and to further reform operations of the IRS.

Also, he's asked Judge William Webster, the former Director of the FBI and the CIA, to conduct an independent review of the criminal investigation division. As further steps are needed, they will be taken.

But above all, our new Commissioner needs new tools to build a better IRS, and he needs them now. Last year our administration worked with the House of Representatives to pass sweeping, strong, bipartisan reform of the IRS, to give citizens more protection, improve service, reduce abuse. Now the Senate is poised to enact very similar legislation. I call on Congress to make this year the year we set aside political differences to enact real reforms of the IRS. When it comes to quality service at the IRS, Congress can't afford to file for an extension.

As we continue to improve our work, we may uncover more problems at the IRS. Now, if we do, I pledge to the American people that once again we'll act swiftly, guarding against abuse, punishing those who cross the line. And as we do, we will build a fairer and more effective Government for a stronger America in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:30 p.m. on May 1 at a private residence in Palo Alto, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 2.

Statement on the European Economic and Monetary Union
May 3, 1998

We welcome this weekend's historic announcement that 11 European countries have qualified for, and decided to establish, an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The United States has long supported European integration. We admire the determination that Europe has shown in moving forward toward the economic convergence that makes EMU possible. A strong and stable Europe with open markets and healthy growth is good for America and for the world. A successful EMU that contributes to a dynamic Europe is clearly in our best interest.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Loretta Sanchez in Westwood, California
May 3, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. First of all, I'd like to thank Loretta and Stephen and all their families for being here and making this a family affair. I think there are enough relatives in this room—[*laughter*]—to avoid another recount in a disputed election. [*Laughter*] And I am here in part because I do not want to go through that again after this next election—and I know you don't either—and I'm sure we will not have to, thanks to you.

You know, when I came here in October—I came to Orange County, to Loretta's district—and we had this huge rally, I was so excited. And I got all my folks together and I said, "I honestly believe that woman is going to win." [*Laughter*] "And I think if she does win, then she'll win more handily the next time because I think she can do the job." And I'm here to tell you, she is doing the job. I know; I'm there. Loretta Sanchez has come a long way. She was a Head Start child, and now she's working to give all of you a headstart on the 21st century.

I have had so many reasons to be profoundly grateful to the people of California. This State has been so good to me and to my wife and to Vice President Gore and our administration. You have enabled us to serve the American people for 8 years. And it's been a good 8 years, but it's not over yet. I hope the best is yet to come.

I'd like to make just three points very quickly, if I could. Number one, we really did have a different approach. We believed that if you focused on giving opportunity to every responsible citizen and bringing this country together as one community and then trying to see that America leads the world in this new global economy for peace and freedom and prosperity, that we would all do better. And that was a very, very different view than had been taken before.

And so on the economy, for example, which had to be our first order of business, we said yes, we have to balance the budget, but we have to do it in a way that brings our people together and doesn't divide them; that invests in education and health care and the environment and science and technology. And I think it's pretty hard to quarrel with the fact that even though everybody in the opposite party opposed us in 1993—none more loudly than the former Congressman from Loretta's district—[*laughter*]—we now have a record. The results are there.

We've got the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest consumer confidence in 30 years, the highest homeownership in the history of our country, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, and the lowest crime rates in 24 years.

So the first thing I'd like to say is, it seems to me that if you know that and you have this congressional decision to make, it's a pretty easy decision: she was right, and they were wrong.

The second thing I'd like to say is, even though there are just a few days left in this congressional session—which has been shortened because of the election season and unfortunately altogether too acrimonious to suit me—we still have a lot to do. We have to pass a budget that will be a budget passed for the

first time when we have a balanced budget—indeed, a surplus of yet undetermined size—for the first time in 30 years.

Now, there are those who say, "Well, let's spend it." There are those who say, "Let's have a tax cut." My view is, look, we've waited 30 years for this. The economy is coming back because we've been responsible and kept interest rates down and gotten investment going again. Senator Watson and Controller Connell will tell you that California and other States are in better shape economically because the country is doing better.

And yet, we know that we have a lot of long-term problems, the chief of which is making sure that Social Security is reformed but secure when the baby boomers retire. And so I say we should not fool with this surplus until we have resolved how we're going to save Social Security for the 21st century.

Secondly, we all know that we have a lot of work left to do in education. We have a proposal that will raise standards, help schools to be rebuilt or build new schools where they're needed, enable the schools to be hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000, have smaller classes in the early grades. It's an important agenda. It deserves to be considered.

We have a very important piece of legislation to pass—which I still believe we can pass, notwithstanding the acrimony of the last few days—to finally write into law a comprehensive bill that will protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, the single biggest public health problem in the country. Three thousand kids a day start smoking; 1,000 will die earlier because of it. We have a chance to stop that or to dramatically cut it, to cut the problem in half in the next 5 years. I want to do it before the Congress goes home for the election season.

We have a bill before the Congress that will establish a bill of rights for health care consumers. And with more than half of our people in HMO's and related managed care plans, I think that's important. We have a proposal that will allow people who have retired or been forcibly retired before they are eligible to draw Medicare to buy into the Medicare system. I think that's important. We have significant legislation that will expand the availability of child care—quality, affordable child care—to working families. I think that's important. That should be considered.

These are the kinds of things that we're committed to. We've got an IRS reform bill that's been up there for months. We've got a campaign finance reform bill that finally the Democrats and a handful of brave Republicans have forced the House to vote on. And I thank them for that. So we've got a lot to do this year.

And then if you look out beyond this year, what will be dealt with after this next congressional election? What are the long-term problems of the country? Well, I already mentioned one. We have to reform Social Security for the 21st century. That's going to be done in 1999. You want her voting on that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. We have to decide how we're going to reform Medicare for the 21st century. Same sort of problem. It will hit us earlier. We have about 10 years before we reach a real financial crunch there. There are so many people who would be devastated if they didn't have access to health care as provided under Medicare. She needs to be there voting on that, and you've got to understand that.

We will be nowhere near finished with our work in education. Everybody knows that America has the finest system of higher education in the world. We have the most diverse student body in our history. We've got to make sure we've got the finest system of elementary and secondary education in the world. That's terribly important.

We have this great economy but, you know, there's some neighborhoods in our inner cities that it hasn't reached yet. And I put a program before the Congress to deal with that. We can never be satisfied until every child growing up in this country has an opportunity to participate in this economy that we now celebrate. And we're going to be dealing with that over the next 2 years.

And finally, we are going to continue the work of trying to bring our country together, across all the lines that divide us, to build one America out of citizen service and out of mutual understanding and respect. And we'll have a lot of issues that deal with that. And in the Congress, we can either have a forum for dividing the American people or for bringing us together. And in the end that may be the most important thing of all. You cannot name a single, solitary challenge this country has ever had in 220 years that we haven't done the right thing about when

we've been together. And when we've been divided we have gotten in serious trouble, going back to the very beginning.

So for all those reasons, I'm here for Loretta Sanchez. But I'm also here for your children, your grandchildren, and the future of this country in a very new and exciting time.

And finally, in spite of all the newness, let me just say this. If you go back through the history of the country—and I spend a lot of time as President going back and reading about American history, including a lot of periods in American history that most Americans don't pay a lot of attention to, including me when I was a student. [*Laughter*] I've studied a lot, for example, about what happened to America in the 30 years or so before the Civil War, and in the 40 years after the Civil War and before Theodore Roosevelt became President. And I honestly believe more strongly than I did the day I took office that the promise of this country is limitless, that our best days are before us; but that no matter what new things happen, in every pivotal time we have to do the same old things well.

And you look at every time we faced a challenge; there are three things we've always had to do. We have had to deepen the meaning of freedom. In our age and time, it means not excluding anybody from the full benefits of citizenship. We have to widen the circle of opportunity. In our age and time, it means recognizing that there are lots of people who still are not part of the American dream. And we have to deepen the meaning of our common community. Or in the words of our Founders, we have to keep working to form a more perfect Union.

That is the message that I have tried to bring to Washington. That is the message that our party reflects. That is the message that the election and service of Loretta Sanchez embodies. And as I said, I want you to have an unambiguous celebration this November. I will do whatever I can to make sure it happens, and I want you to do the same.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:41 p.m. at the Westwood Marquis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Stephen S. Brixey III, husband of Representative Sanchez; former Representative Robert K. Dornan; State Senator Diane E. Watson; and State Controller Kathleen Connell.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in Beverly Hills, California

May 3, 1998

Thank you very much. There may be one person in America, Dick Gephardt's 90-year-old mother, who wants to call him "Mr. Speaker" worse than I do—but no more than one. [*Laughter*]

Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for hanging in there these last couple of years. You have no idea, those of you who may not follow this on a daily basis, how many good things happened since the 1994 elections, when we lost the majority, because we had a large, strong, united minority that on many occasions made common cause with a brave band of Republicans who would stand with us to continue to move this country forward. In some ways, that's a harder thing to do. And Dick Gephardt also led in that effort, and I'm very grateful to him for that.

Thank you, Martin Frost. I thank all the members of the California delegation who were introduced. I thank Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis and our State Democratic chair, Art Torres, for being here as well. And ladies and gentlemen, I thank all of you, especially Eli and Edye, thanks for having me back at your house.

You know, Martin Frost got up here and sort of made that offhand remark about how this was the largest amount of money that we had ever raised at a private home. And I thought if you got here in time to take a tour, you know it hasn't been a fair fight. [*Laughter*]

I think I should repeat something I said. I once went to Marvin and Barbara Davis's home and I walked down that beautiful spiral staircase, and I said, "You know, this place makes the

White House look like public housing." [*Laughter*] That's sort of how I feel tonight. And of course, the White House is public housing. [*Laughter*] And I thank you for letting me and my family be tenants for a little while. It has effective rent control as well. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I've had a wonderful time tonight. It's been great to see so many of my old friends and meet some people I haven't met before. I want to thank you for many things. I want to thank you for being so good to me and to Hillary and to Al Gore and to our administration. California has had a very special role in our public life, as all of you know. I want to thank you for being here for these folks tonight. And I want to ask you to try to in the next few months find every opportunity to put your voice where you've put your investment tonight, because we have a case to make to the American people.

When I took office, I believed that the most important thing I could do is to throw off sort of the dead hand of history that I thought had paralyzed Washington, to try to move our country forward and galvanize our party's energies to think about what we wanted America to look like in the 21st century.

Many of you have heard me say this before, but I'm going to say it again; I believe at every age and time, America has to reaffirm three great missions. We have always to deepen the meaning of liberty, to widen the circle of opportunity, and to strengthen the bonds of our national Union. That's an interesting thing to do in this day and age, when there are still vestiges of fairly profound discrimination against some Americans; when, in spite of all of our economic opportunity, there are still places in inner cities and isolated rural areas, Native American settlements on reservations around the country where the spark of enterprise is still not reached; and where we now are becoming more and more diverse than we ever have been before, in every conceivable way. And we are clearly the most diverse democracy in the world in terms of people that actually live in elbow range of one another. In addition, for more than 50 years now, we have had both the responsibility and the opportunity to try to lead the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity.

So that's what we set about doing in 1993, and with only Democrats voting for us, we passed an economic program which had reduced the deficit by 92 percent before the first red cent was saved by the balanced budget amendment that was adopted in the Congress—the balanced budget plan.

Now, we have today the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest consumer confidence in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rolls in 24 years—lowest crime rates. And I'm very grateful for all that. But I say something to all of you that you know well because of where you live: we are living in a world where the ground is constantly shifting, where the future is coming quickly on us, where ideas are the currency of economics and politics, and where I think we have an obligation to use this magic moment not to bask in the sun but to bear down and deal with the long-term challenges of the country.

We will never have a time, probably in the lifetime of any of us here, where we have more opportunity to deal with the long-term challenges of America because of the good times. And that's what we ought to do. And that's what this election is all about.

We're doing our best, believe you me, to get a lot done in this session of Congress. We're trying to pass the health care bill of rights for consumers. Over half of our people are in HMO's now. We're trying to allow people who are retired, forcibly or otherwise, who can't draw Medicare and don't have any health insurance, to buy into it. We're trying to pass a dramatic improvement in our schools by going for higher standards, funds to help schools be repaired and remodeled, hook up all the classrooms in the country to the Internet by the year 2000, have smaller classes in the early grades. We are doing our best to try to meet the challenge of climate change and to do it in a way that generates new jobs and new technologies, by helping us to grow the economy as well.

We've got a lot of things to do. We're trying to protect our kids from a dramatic and troubling increase in young people beginning to smoke when we know it's illegal to sell cigarettes to teenagers, and we know 3,000 kids start smoking every day, and 1,000 will die early because of it.

We've got a big agenda. I'm going to do my best to pass it. All of us are committed to it. We're having a little trouble in Washington, as you know if you've been listening to the hot air burn its way off the newswires in the last

few days, but we'll get a lot of this done. But make no mistake about it—there will be a lot to do after this election.

And what I would like to do is to spend the last 2 years of my Presidency taking on these big issues that will shape our country in the 21st century, that require someone to be able to stand there and take a position who clearly has no political agenda. I can't run for office anymore—unless I go home and run for the school board or something. [*Laughter*] I can't do that. But in order to shape the future in a way that creates opportunity and brings us together instead of divides us, it's very important what the texture of the Congress is. It's very important what the values of the Congress are.

You think about the long-term challenges of this country. Let me just mention two or three. We ought to, in 1999, reform Social Security for the 21st century and make it easier for people to save for their own retirement, because hardly anybody can live on a Social Security check alone. But on the other hand, we don't want to scrap the program altogether, because half of our senior citizens today would be in poverty if it weren't for Social Security adding to their income.

In 1999 we ought to reform Medicare for the 21st century. We should do that. You all know what the problems are. I'm the oldest of the baby boomers. When our crowd gets fully in the retirement pool, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The present system is not sustainable.

Now, if we're going to change it, it's important we change it with the right values in mind. We ought to make a serious commitment in 1999, in my opinion, to a long-term plan to preserve the environment, to reduce global warming, and to do it in a way that will permit us to continue to grow the economy.

If you look at what Californians have done—the California voters have consistently voted, every time they have had a chance, to clean up the environment. And every time they vote for it, there's this huge campaign which says, "If you do this, you will shut the economy down." And it's been wrong every time. For 28 years, ever since we adopted the Clean Air Act, every time the United States of America has adopted an environmental position, we have been told it was going to hurt the economy. Since I've been President, we've made the air cleaner, the water cleaner, the food safer, and every time, the economy kept getting stronger. If you do it right, we can do this. But we have a big long-term challenge here that we ought to address in 1999.

We still don't have the kind of education system we need, and we still don't have a system of lifetime learning. We know that the average person will change the nature of his or her work seven or eight times in a lifetime. We've got to create a system in America where our elementary and secondary education is second to none, and then where an adult in the work force, no matter what their level of education, can always go back and learn a new skill. And we haven't done that yet.

And finally let me say, we still have a big agenda in the world. Dick Gephardt mentioned part of it. I hope we'll get it done this year. But, you know, I think most of you are proud of the fact that we saved who knows how many Bosnians from dying when we stopped the war in Bosnia and helped to implement the peace. I'm glad we replaced the military dictators in Haiti and gave democracy a chance there. I'm glad that we have worked for peace in Ireland, and I'm hoping and praying the referendum this month will come out all right. And the Secretary of State starts another round of intense efforts in London tomorrow on the Middle East peace process. I'm also proud of the fact that we have built enormous new trade relationships with our free allies in the Americas and in Asia.

But we can't lead the world if we don't even want to pay our way. And because of an unrelated political dispute in Washington today, we're over a year late paying our U.N. dues. Because of an unrelated political dispute in Washington today, we can't get America's contribution for the International Monetary Fund.

Now, most Americans don't know what the International Monetary Fund is, and that may be why our adversaries think they can get away with not funding our part of it. But 30 percent of the 15 million jobs we've gotten in the last 5 years have come from trade. Thirty percent of that trade is in Asia. Our trading partners in Asia are in trouble today, and the International Monetary Fund helps them. But they don't just write them a blank check, they only give them money if they agree to adopt a plan that will get them out of the trouble they're in.

Now, I haven't always agreed with every decision the IMF has made, and you haven't always agreed with every decision I've made. But you don't pick up your cards and quit voting if you don't agree with everything I do. And we can't pick up our cards and walk away and not pay. And this directly affects the prosperity of the people of California. We would not have seen the Californian economy come back as much as it has, had it not been for exports to Asia. And we owe it to the future of this country and to our children to pay our way at the IMF, to pay our way at the U.N., and to say, we do not expect to lead and not set a good example. Yes, we want to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, but we expect to set a good example.

These are big issues. And I can just tell you, yes, I am a Democrat, and I'm proud of it. And I'm proud of where our party is now, and I'm proud of what's happened. But I'm not running anymore. I'm thinking about what my grandchildren's America is going to look like. And I'm going to do my best to get these big, big things taken care of for you in the last 2 years of my Presidency. But it cannot be done unless we have people of good will who are thinking about our children and our grandchildren, instead of how they can cut a wide hole through a spirit of cooperation in Washington and raise the heat and turn down the light for some temporary political benefit.

That's not what we're about. That's not what our administration has been about. And I'm telling you, the three candidates who were introduced tonight and the Members of Congress who are here and their leaders who are here, if you give us a chance, we'll deliver on those things, and our country's future will be more secure. And you will know you did it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:07 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Martin Frost, chair, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California; Art Torres, chair, California Democratic Party; and dinner hosts Eli and Edythe L. Broad.

Remarks at a California Labor Initiative Breakfast in Los Angeles, California

May 4, 1998

Thank you very much. I want to thank John Sweeney for those kind words and for his brilliant leadership in giving new life and energy and direction to the American labor movement. Thank you, Doug Dority and all the other labor leaders who are here. I thank Ron and Jan for opening their home to us and letting us relive the movie fantasies of the last 60 years here in this great old house.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to my longtime friend John Garamendi for his distinguished leadership as Deputy Secretary of the Interior, and he's now gone to work with Ron. And I wish him well in private life. He also got a daughter married off last weekend; he assures me it is survivable, but I'm not so certain. [*Laughter*] I thank the Members of Congress who are here, and Lieutenant Governor Davis, thank you for coming.

I would like to just say a few words to all of you who have come here to this fundraiser. First of all, you wouldn't be here if you didn't believe what I think is an elemental truth of the modern economy, which is that we can only have a good economy and a good society if we find ways to widen the circle of opportunity and to reward people for their labors. And insofar as we reward people for doing the right things, then those who are especially well-positioned will do even better.

John mentioned the Therma plant up in Silicon Valley I visited. Most people think that most of the places that are doing well up there are computer companies or biotech companies, but someone has to build all those buildings that they work in, and someone has to supply them with what they need. And that plant, as John said, is a family-owned business with 1,600 workers, most of whom are sheet metal workers,

a few of whom are in the plumbers union, but they're all unionized, and yet they have all the things that the enemies of organized labor always say you never see. They have a flexible workplace; they have incredible partnerships with their owners, and the people who run that plant are very, very proud with their relationship with the union and with the people on the floor. And they have a modern workplace in which no one wants to leave, because they think they're getting their fair share of the labor, and because they believe their labor is respected.

We have tried to do that. I was very disturbed when I became President that our country had had 20 years of increasing inequality among working people. And there were many reasons for it, some of them unavoidable because we were changing the nature of the American economy, and whenever you change the nature of an economy—it happens about once every 50 or 60 years—the people that are really in the best positions do best. It happened when we went from being agricultural to an industrial economy. But a lot of it was because our people weren't well-equipped and weren't being treated fairly, and that people didn't understand that we had to make extra effort.

So I want to thank the labor movement and John Sweeney and all the other labor leaders for the things they've supported that their own members were not the primary beneficiaries of. Most of the people that got the benefit of the Family and Medical Leave Act were working people who did not have the benefit of union representation. Most of the people who got the benefit of the increase in the minimum wage, directly or indirectly, most, if not all, were union people—were not union workers. Most of the people who get the benefit of the earned-income tax credit, which is now worth $1,000 a year to a family of 4 with an income of under $30,000, and it's lifted 2.2 million children out of poverty—were working families that did not belong to unions. And so I thank you for being the voice, all of you, not only for your members but for those who are not members of organized labor.

Now, when you look ahead to the future, it seems to me one of the great challenges still facing us is how every single person in our country, and ultimately in other parts of the world, can feel that there is some way they can live out their dreams, raise a family, live a life that makes sense in this new world we're living in.

And it's funny, because one of the things that has clearly happened, with more and more people on the Internet, more and more kids on the Internet at school, more and more people being able to individually access information, is that there really is a new upsurge in the world today in people's desire to have more individual control over their destiny.

We're in the process now of reviewing the Social Security system, for example, and there's this huge age differential. Young people all say, well, we should have—not all but a lot of young people say, "We should have individual accounts, and we'll decide how to invest it." Older people remember that the stock market has not always gone from 3,000 to 9,000 in any 5-year period—and so they say, "Well, you better have a little bit of protection here for what happens on the days when it's not so good."

This initiative on the California ballot can be seen against that background. The people of California have been very good to me and my family and my administration. And I have watched with interest as the State has emerged from its economic recession, starting in 1993 and coming forward—Californians, in the most popular State in the country and a State where it's fairly easy to get an initiative on the ballot, have been asked to come to grips with issues that are being debated.

Now, I think sometimes these ballot initiatives have dealt with real problems, but at least from my point of view, with the wrong solution. For example, if you look at this ballot initiative on bilingual education, I think there is a significant problem in the—I think the way we are handling immigrant children, integrating them into our education system, integrating them into the mainstream of American life, is inadequate. I don't think it's working as well as it should. But I think the proposal on the ballot will make it worse, not better. That my only—but at least they're debating a real issue. And I'm hopeful on that issue that the voters of California will be able to think it through. And I applaud the speaker of the house here who tried to get an alternative measure through to deal with it in what I believe is a much more positive way.

This issue dealing with labor unions and the relationship with labor unions to their members, I think it's an entirely different one. This is an issue, in my view, which seeks to take a legitimate principle, which is that people should not have their money spent against their will,

and turn it into a ballot initiative that will simply put organizations that represent working people at a significant competitive disadvantage to other organizations in the political marketplace.

So this is something that sounds good, but isn't—not something that's dealing with a real problem. There is no real problem here. And that's what you have to get out to the people of California.

John and I—on the way in, he pointed out that, again, that it is labor union members who do not wish their dues money, others who do not wish their voluntary check-off money to be spent on political purposes, can inform their unions of that and get back a portion of their money. I think you said—Gerry McEntee said 33,000 AFSCME members got back a portion of their money last year. This is not a problem. This is being put forth as a problem. This is not a problem that exists. No one is making labor union members contribute to political campaigns.

Now, what this amendment seeks to do is to basically muffle the ability of the collective voices of working people to be heard by putting on them a far, far greater administrative burden than corporations face when they spend their own money—they don't have to get their shareholders' permission every year—or other organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, the NFIB, any other membership organization that spends money either to support candidates or to affect ballot initiatives or other political issues.

Why should labor unions be singled out when they already give their members a better voice at opting out of the system than a lot of other organizations do? Why should we have a system where we say—let me tell you, I've been in Washington now for 5 years—we haven't always agreed on everything. John Sweeney and I don't agree on every issue. But I'll tell you something: If it were up to them, every American would have health care tonight, every child would go to bed tonight not worrying whether or not there would be a doctor there if the baby woke up at 3 o'clock in the morning.

We have family and medical leave. We have this very different tax system for low-income working families. We have all these things in our balanced budget agreement; we've got the biggest increase in child health care in 35 years—going to provide 5 million children with health insurance. We have virtually opened the doors of college to every American, in no small measure because American labor was working up there in the Congress to try to pass this. This is a better country because of them.

I don't know what the 30-second message is because I'm not part of the ad team out here, but I can tell you this: I believe if the people of California understood clearly that every member of every union in America has a right at any time to say, "I do not want my money spent, my dues money, spent to lobby on ballot initiatives or spent for political purposes"—that that is a far more expensive thing that applies to other organizations as a practical matter, and that this is just an attempt to put unions at a disadvantage to other organized groups in the political marketplace and thereby to diminish the voice of working men and women—and keep in mind—and for people who are not members of unions for whom they speak, who would otherwise have no voice—who would otherwise have no voice.

That family and medical leave thing, we had 170 other countries that had family and medical leave, for goodness' sakes, and we still have people in the United States Congress saying, "Oh, if you do this, it will cost America jobs."

And that's what this is about. And I honestly believe if you can just tell the people of California the facts, that no man or woman in any labor union anywhere in California or in the country is being ripped off, that they can reallocate their money when they want to—they can say, "I do not want this to happen"—and then they understood that this ballot initiative does not apply to business organizations, it does not apply to other organizations, it does not apply to corporations—I think the innate sense of fairness of the people out here will prevail. And all of you who are contributing here at this breakfast today are giving the people who are running this campaign a chance to do that.

But I really believe that it's important that the message get out there that is not like—a lot of these other ballot initiatives are dealing with real, legitimate problems, and then you're just arguing over whether this is the right solution to a real problem. This is not a real problem. This is an attempt to create the impression that individual members of unions are being put upon, when they aren't. And it's being done to alter the balance of power in the political debate.

And so I hope very much you will prevail, and I hope my being here helps you a little

bit. And I hope between now and the time it's voted on, enough people will understand the facts. This is why we're—if they really know the facts, I think you'll win.

Good luck, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:22 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Sweeney, president, AFL–CIO; Douglas H. Dority, international president, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union; breakfast hosts Ron and Janet Burkle; Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California; State Assembly Speaker Antonio R. Villaraigosa; and Gerald W. McEntee, president, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Remarks Announcing the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing in San Fernando, California

May 4, 1998

Thank you very much. I think Christy did a terrific job. And the rest of her family is out here; we're glad you're here. And let me say to all of you how very glad I am to be here. I want to thank Congressman Sherman. I know that Congressman Berman wanted to be here today, but a family emergency prevented him from coming. His daughter Lindsey is here; I thank her for coming. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis, for being here.

We have a number of people who have been involved in this endeavor: William Apgar, who is our Assistant Secretary-designate at HUD; Deane Evans, the staff director for PATH. Thank you, Bob Vila. Thank you, Jeff Lee and Jay Stark, the president and director of development for the Lee Group. I thank the Braemar Urban Ventures, who are also a part of this project.

I say a special word of thanks to Don Martin, the president of the National Association of Home Builders—came a good long way to be with us today, and that shows the kind of commitment we have out of this national organization. I thank him very much for his remarks and his presence.

I see a lot of people in the audience, I hesitate to acknowledge some for fear of missing others, but I see our L.A. County Supervisor, Zev Yaroslavsky, and City Councilman Richard Alarcon, former Assemblyman Richard Katz, Assemblyman Bob Hertzberg. I thank them for coming.

And I have to make special notice of one person who is here. I don't know a more ardent environmentalist than Ed Begley, Jr. He's the first person I ever met who owned an electric car. Thank you for coming.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a very important day. I know that all of us are glad that our country is enjoying good economic times, that we have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the highest consumer confidence in 30 years. We also have another accomplishment as a country that's particularly relevant today: We have the highest homeownership ever recorded in the history of the United States.

And all of that is very good. The housing market has never been stronger. It appears that between now and 2010, we'll have 15 million more new homes built in America. It's a great opportunity for the American people. But like all the changes going on today, as I have repeatedly said, this is not a time for us to be smug or complacent. This is a time for us to ask, how can we take advantage of the good times we have and the changes that are going on to meet the long-term challenges of America?

And we have a number of long-term challenges. One is to reform Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century so the baby boomers don't bankrupt the rest of the country. I can say that because I am one. [*Laughter*] Another is to bring the spark of free enterprise to the inner-city neighborhoods that haven't yet felt it, to make sure everybody has a chance to be a part of the economic future of America. Another is to make the most of our rich racial and ethnic diversity so that we are even stronger than we have ever been. Another is to build

a world-class system of elementary and secondary education to go along with our system of higher education.

But all of that requires us to be able to live in our global home on free and fair and decent terms with our neighbors around the world. And the biggest challenge to that today, in my opinion, is the challenge of climate change and global warming.

There is virtually unanimous—not complete but virtually unanimous—opinion among scientists that the globe is warming at an unacceptably rapid rate. We know, for example, that the last decade is the warmest decade in 600 years. It literally—3 years in the 1990's are the warmest years since the year 1400. You know in California from the unusual severity of this El Nino what these kind of disruptive weather events can be like. And we know that if the climate, in fact, continues to heat up through the excessive emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, we will have more extreme, dramatic weather events, such as those you've experienced so frequently in California in the last few years, on a more regular basis throughout the United States and, indeed, throughout the world.

We also know what to do about it. We know that we can substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we know if we do so, we can—in the right way—we can do it and continue to grow the economy at a perfectly acceptable rate. Now, it's already been said by previous speakers that emissions from homes in America account for about 20 percent of our total greenhouse gas emission. Let me try to put that into some perspective. Basically a third of the greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation, primarily from cars and trucks. About a third comes from factories and powerplants. And about a third comes from buildings—homes and office buildings, commercial structures. In that third, about two-thirds of that comes from homes.

So if we know that we can do things with available technology—and you just saw it all demonstrated here—that will actually be profitable to homeowners, won't hurt homebuilders, and will help to save the planet, by definition, it will put more money into consumers' pockets; and by saving the environment, we will generate higher, not lower, economic growth. It will improve the productivity of homebuilding and, in a very profound way, the productivity of living in homes.

Now, that's what this PATH project is all about. It will be the most ambitious effort ever to help private homebuilders and homeowners make cost-effective, energy-saving decisions that will pay big dividends throughout the 21st century.

Now, let me say that we have a specific goal here, and I don't think it's an unrealistic one based on what you have already heard and the specific examples you saw at the beginning of this event. Over the next decade, the goal of PATH is to cut energy use by 50 percent in new homes and 30 percent in 15 million existing homes. Keep in mind, there are 100 million homeowners in America, as our homebuilder leader said. That's an achievable goal. If we achieve that goal, it means by the year 2010 we'll save consumers $11 billion a year in energy costs, reduce annual carbon emissions—listen to this—by 24 million tons, equivalent to the amount produced each year by 20 million cars. For new homes and old ones, therefore, PATH will lead us toward a cost-effective solution to help preserve our real home, the planet Earth.

Now, several weeks ago right here, PATH experts reached out to the Lee Group to help identify inexpensive ways of building energy-saving features into all the new homes. The results have been dramatic. The new technologies suggested by PATH experts—listen to this—here will save homeowners in this very moderate climate more than $230 a year on their energy bill, $7,000 during the life of the mortgage, without adding a dime to the price of the home. In regions where there are greater extremes of hot and cold, the savings will be much, much larger.

The power of this partnership is growing every day. Many Federal agencies are working with builders and suppliers to develop even better technologies. They're working with State and local officials to streamline regulations, and that's very important. That's why I'm glad to see so many State and local officials here today. The Los Angeles City Council just passed a resolution to help speed PATH projects. When homeowners agree to buy ultra-efficient appliances, the Department of Water and Power will help to pay any extra cost. Fannie Mae will make it possible for more homeowners to qualify for home mortgages, giving them credit for the energy savings they will collect in terms of the

eligibility for their mortgage. And we ought to congratulate MetroLink, too, for making it so easy for community members to leave their cars at home.

Now, this collaborative approach to energy savings is the same one we're also trying to take with the commercial sector. Remember, residential and commercial together are about a third of our greenhouse gas emissions. We're working with the owners and the managers of the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center in New York, the Sears Tower in Chicago, and many other buildings to cut their energy use by up to 30 percent.

It's the approach we're taking in the car industry. Transportation is a third of the problem. We've already worked with Ford, GM, and Chrysler for 5 years now to help them produce prototypes that will get more than twice the mileage of today's cars, with no sacrifice in comfort, safety, or performance. And we are on the verge of having energy engine technologies in transportation that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75 to 80 percent.

This is the approach that I'm trying to take to this problem in a comprehensive fashion. It's why I have asked the Congress to make a commitment that is unprecedented but a good investment of $6.3 billion over the next few years for research and for tax incentives to mobilize these new technologies. Some of the incentives I've proposed, such as tax credits for energy-efficient homes or the solar panels you see there that are so dramatically different from the huge contraptions that used to be necessary to put on roofs, are designed specifically to promote the goals of PATH, the ones I've just announced to you.

Today I hope again I can ask all of you to ask the Members of Congress who are here with Brad Sherman and don't agree with Howard Berman and Brad to actually vote for this. It seems to me that every Republican and every Democrat Member of Congress would be for a system of tax credits that actually created a win-win situation. It would generate more economic activity and less pollution. It will save money for consumers and cut down on greenhouse gas emissions by saving natural resources.

Now let me say again, there are still people in Washington who think this is some great plot to wreck the economy. If I'm trying to wreck the economy, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*] Every time in the last 28 years since we started with the Clean Air Act in 1970, every time we have faced an environmental challenge, people have said, "Oh, if they do this, they're going to hurt the economy." I have heard it and heard it and heard it—whether it was acid rain, pesticides, polluted rivers, the ozone hole—everybody said it was terrible.

Well, guess what? The ozone hole is thickening now. The layer is thickening again. We got rid of CFC's, and we did it in a way that actually has improved the economy. Every single environmental challenge we have met as a country in the last three decades has actually served to strengthen the economy by creating a demand for new ideas, new technologies, and new businesses.

So we have generated more jobs, not fewer jobs, by doing the responsible thing for our environment. And that's what will happen again. These new technologies in our homes, in our cars, our appliances, new sources of energy like solar power and fuel cells, working with other nations of the world in new partnerships—all these things are going to give us a much more well-balanced economy. On the other hand, if we don't do it, I will say again, if you liked El Nino for the last several months, you will love the 21st century if we keep on the path we're on.

I think the answer is clear. And when someone can stand up here and make the kind of very personal testimonial about what it does to your living circumstances, like Christy did, and then say it enables her husband and her son and herself—it enables them to be good citizens by making a statement about what kind of environmental values they have—that's the story we want every American to be able to tell.

So I ask you to support the PATH initiative. I ask you to go home and examine whether you can do something in your own home to be a part of this. I ask you to ask the Members of Congress, without regard to party, to make this an American crusade. Because if you think about the big, long-term challenges America faces, this is clearly one, and we have it within our grasp to meet the challenge in a way that will give these little babies that are in this audience a much better life in the new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at a PATH development site. In his remarks, he referred to Christy Steindorf, owner of an energy-

efficient home who introduced the President; Bob Vila, host of the television program "The Renovation Guide"; Jeffrey Lee, president, and Jay Stark, director of development, Lee Group; and actor Ed Begley, Jr.

Interview With Al Hunt for CNBC and the Wall Street Journal
May 4, 1998

National Economy

Mr. Hunt. Mr. President, thank you for being with us. Let's talk about the American economy for a moment, which is really the envy of the world today. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan says that it's the best economy in modern memory. But in your view, are there one or two developments that could jeopardize these good times?

The President. Well, I think the thing that I'm most concerned about today is the necessity of having growth in every major region of the world to sustain our own. I mean, we're now in a position where about a third of our growth is due to exports, where a significant percentage of them go to Asia. And our own analyses are that the Asian financial crisis, within its present parameters, won't have a terribly destructive impact on the American economy now. But if we had slow growth everywhere at once, it would—which is why I think it's rather important that we support the IMF and have a really disciplined effort to try to help move the Asian countries through this financial period and get them back to growth again.

And I feel the same way about what I'm trying to do in Africa as well. I just think that we have to understand that our welfare is more inextricably tied with others than ever before. So that's one of the things that I'm quite concerned about.

Japanese Economy

Mr. Hunt. In that context, the greatest threat in Asia, most experts think, is Japan. You and Secretary Rubin have encouraged, have cajoled, have pressured the Japanese to try to stimulate their economy, where it always seems to be too little, too late. What are the consequences if that persists, both in Asia and for the United States?

The President. Well, let me say, this last stimulus package, if it's real—that is, if it's real money and it's implemented rapidly and vigorously, I think it will be a plus——

Mr. Hunt. You think it's sufficient——

The President. Well, I think—let me finish, if I might. I think that it might be enough on its own terms if, in addition to that, they have other reforms in the economy, you know, to open the economy to subject it to more genuine competition and open markets. Then I think, between the two of those things, you would really get growth going again. I think at least there is a chance that it is.

One of the problems that the Japanese have in their political system is that, because the pressures against doing these kinds of things are so enormous, very often they can be proposed and then their impact can be watered down or delayed in ways that make it difficult to implement. But if they actually do what the Prime Minister has proposed, and they do it quickly, and they follow it up with other reforms with banking and competitive market reforms, then I think that there is a chance we can see some real movement in Japan. And, of course, that would lead the whole region out.

And Prime Minister Hashimoto has got an enormously difficult challenge now, but he's a very able man; he's a strong man; and he's trying to, I think, really come to grips with this. And I'm hoping that he'll be able to.

Mr. Hunt. You're going to China for almost a week this summer. Is there any chance you'd stop over in Tokyo to talk to the Japanese about this economic situation?

The President. Well, I hope to see Prime Minister Hashimoto for an extended period in Birmingham, in England, at the G–8 meeting before I go to China. I would not like to wait that long. I'd like to have the chance to really sit down and visit with him and see what, if anything else, we can do to help before then. So I'm looking forward to blocking out some

good time on my schedule when we're together for the G–8 meeting.

Mr. Hunt. And no reason then to go to Tokyo on your trip to China?

The President. Well, my instinct is to treat this as I would another—any other state visit, just to go and come. But I have been to Japan a couple of times, and I expect to go back again before I leave office. But I think what we need to do is to deal with this financial challenge they face as old friends and allies, in a very straightforward way. I don't think that the symbolism of a visit is nearly as important as the reality of a partnership, and I'm going to do my best to be a good partner to them.

G–8 Summit in Birmingham, England

Mr. Hunt. You mentioned the meeting coming up in Birmingham, England. What do you expect to come out of that other than a call for more financial disclosure from other nations and the IMF? Is there any more substantive——

The President. Well, I hope so, because I think that we really—I hope we'll do a G–8 version of what we were doing at the Summit of the Americas in Santiago. I thought what we—I hope we'll be talking about how globalization can work to the benefit of all the peoples in our countries, and then how it can only work if we're benefiting other nations as well.

Now, let me just give you an example. Great Britain now has a low unemployment rate, and the Dutch unemployment rate is down, but a number of the other European unemployment rates are still high, even though they're enjoying growth. The Canadians have had strong growth for the last couple of years. Their unemployment rate is only now beginning to yield to it. So there is a lot of interest among the G–8 about how they can generate more jobs without increasing inequality and without undermining growth.

So I expect we'll be talking about things like the earned-income tax credit in the United States as a device for reducing inequality but still increasing employment. I know we'll spend a lot of time on the training of the work force and wealthy countries' significant obligation to upgrade the skills of their own people because of the change in the globalization of the economy. So I think we'll have a lot of things that really affect people on the street in America and in these other countries.

European Economic and Monetary Union

Mr. Hunt. Let me ask you a question about the European Monetary Union with, I guess, 11 countries coming together. There has been a lot of celebration of that; your administration has been very supportive. And yet, isn't there a concern that when you have countries with such incredibly diverse cultural and social and economic and political systems, that rather than lead to more unity, it could produce more unrest, more disunity?

The President. It could if people feel that it's been sort of imposed on them. But I believe that the general tendency toward political and economic union in Europe is a positive one. The United States has supported it; I have personally supported it strongly. So I think that's positive. I think the efforts made by many European countries to get their fiscal house in order, get their deficits down so they can qualify for membership, has been truly impressive.

And the European States themselves will have to decide how they want to unify politically and economically, but if they choose to do this European Monetary Union, I want to be supportive. But I think that in order to make it work, they'll have to do other things as well. They'll have to find a way, first of all, within their countries to preserve a sense of sovereignty and integrity in these other countries while they're unifying the currency. And then, in dealing with the United States and others, they will have to find a way to continue to make sure that they're sending us the right signal that they're opening their economy—they're unifying, but they're not closing others out, they're opening. And we are in negotiations and discussions with them now about how we might do that. So, on balance, I'm positive about this.

National Economy

Mr. Hunt. Let's return to the domestic economy for a second. We've now had six quarters where the economy has grown more rapidly than even your most optimistic of advisers, the latest just being in the last few day. But given the inevitable business cycle, do you think it's time to at least start to consider tapping on the brakes so you don't have to slam them on later?

The President. Well, I think the only reason to tap on the brakes with high growth and low inflation is if you think it will actually prolong the period of growth. And there is a lot of debate out there in the world today about the nature of our growth and what would stop it and what would keep it going. So I think that the judgment ought to be what are the mix of policies we can adopt that are most likely to keep this period of economic growth going for the longest period of time.

I don't believe we've repealed the business cycle, but I think perhaps we've fundamentally altered it. That is, if you look at the impact of the technological revolution working through the economy, which is, I think, giving us higher productivity levels than we can measure accurately; I think if you look at the globalization of commerce and America having still a relatively open economy, which keeps inflation down by having everything subject to more competition; if you look at the benefits we're reaping now from the painful adjustments that were made in the 1980's by the business community—all these things happening now—I think there is a chance that we now know it's more possible than it used to be for a government to have a prolonged period of growth if it's properly managed.

Do I think that there is no business cycle and that the laws of supply and demand in the global context never come back to shorten the leash on a country? No. I think it's still out there. But I think we can continue to prolong this if we do the right things.

Mr. Hunt. Just to follow up for a moment, your predecessors were always—several were quite critical of Chairman Greenspan whenever he put brakes on. Your administration, particularly Secretary Rubin, have had very good ties with Chairman Greenspan. Do I take it from that answer that, whereas you're not encouraging him to tap on the brakes, that you wouldn't be critical if he did?

The President. Well, we've tried to work together while respecting our independence. And I have believed always that if I provided America with a responsible budget that was moving toward balance so that in the short term we were behaving in a responsible way and that had the long-term investments necessary to triumph in the kind of economy we live in, that that would permit him to do his job with the lowest possible interest rates. That is, I thought he would be able to leave interest rates than he otherwise would feel he could. I think on balance that's what's happened.

I know that he couldn't possibly agree with every decision I've made in the last 5½ years, and he put the brakes on pretty tight in 1994, trying to keep this thing going. And we had a big—we had a pretty good slowdown, but then we were able to keep it going, keep the expansion going. And so it's continued right the way through until here we are, almost to the middle of '98. And I believe that he'll do what he thinks is right for the long-term interests of the American economy.

Mr. Hunt. You were asked the other day at your news conference about the stock market continuing to go up, and you were an optimist. If you were private citizen Clinton today, would you invest in the market?

The President. Yes, but I would also recognize that it goes down and it goes up and it goes down and it goes up. And what the American people need to know is that if you can hold your investments long enough, over any given 15- or 20-year period, the stock market has always outperformed private—I mean Government bonds in earnings.

The insecurity is if you enter, particularly if you enter at a fairly high point now, and you happen to get one of those downward bumps and you have to liquidate your investment; then you could lose. But if you look at the stock market—the stock market has always tracked the fundamentals in the end. And I just feel that if I can work with the American people and keep the fundamentals good, keep productivity up and investment for the long run up, keep the unemployment rate down, keep the inflation rate down—if we keep the fundamentals in good shape, then the stock market, over time, will track that.

And I know that there are a lot of people who are worried because it's gone quite high lately, but the market—they correct themselves; they always do, one way or the other. I just think over the long run, what—if you're President, you can't be thinking about next month in the market; you have to be thinking about what's the long-run economic scenario. And then you just have to trust the market to follow the market realities in the American economy over time. I think that's hat will happen.

Mr. Hunt. In this booming economy, some critics have worried that it's been too uneven.

I'll give you one example: The pay of CEO's of the largest companies last year rose 35 percent, rose 54 percent the year before. That's 13 times greater than the pay of average workers. And I think the figure now is that the average boss earns 326 times what the average worker earns. Is that, A, acceptable; and, B, should Government do anything about it?

The President. Well, I think that in and of itself, it's probably a phenomenon of companies bidding for management talent at a time when management talent is important in how these companies do in the market. So in that sense, it may not be any different than asking whether it's acceptable that professional athletes earn as much money as they do.

I think the real question is, are working people earning a fair share of their company's prosperity and their country's prosperity? And are we, in the aggregate, decreasing the level of income inequality that developed over the last 20 years—because we had a very, as you know, very sharp increase in inequality among various classes of working people, with folks on the bottom getting the short end of the stick. Government policies I think had something to do with it, but I think the larger thing was that we were changing the dominant economic factors of this age. And now the dominant economic factors relate to people's level of education and skills, so that there became—there's a huge education premium now in the work force, and people that don't have it, particularly younger workers, tend to get punished very harshly by the low incomes they earn.

So to me, what I've tried to do is to reduce income inequality, not necessarily by reducing upper income people's incomes, except to ask them to pay their fair—what I believe is a fair share of the country's tax burden, but instead by lowering the incomes of the lower 40 percent of the people and trying to create more high-wage jobs by tying more of them to trade, because we know trade-related jobs and technology-related jobs pay 17 to 20 percent more than average wages. And the evidence is that in the last couple of years, we have slowly, finally, begun to reduce income inequality, particularly when you take into account the impacts of the earned-income tax credit, which is worth about $1,000 a year to a working family of four with an income under $30,000.

Projected Federal Budget Surplus

Mr. Hunt. Another of the benefits of the booming economy, of course, has been we have something that people thought unimaginable a few years ago, a budget surplus. The latest CBO estimate I think, was——

The President. Well, we hope we do. We think we will.

Mr. Hunt. But with April receipts coming in, I gather, much stronger than anybody anticipated, I've now heard some people suggest you could have a budget surplus of as much as $50 billion this year. Is that right? Is that reasonable?

The President. Could be.

Mr. Hunt. Could be that high? Now, you have said that you're going to veto—that Social Security comes first with any budget surplus—if they try and enact a big tax cut before they do that, that you would veto it. But there's also a big-spending, highway pork bill coming down the pike right now. As things stand now, would you also veto that?

The President. If it got into the surplus. I met with Senator Lott and Senator Daschle yesterday, and we discussed this. And it's very interesting—historically, always, highways have been the one thing that Congress, whether Republican or Democrat, they always want to spend more on than the President. And part of it is the President's desire to maintain some control over the budget; at least, for me that's been the case.

Now, I like the—I believe we need to invest money in infrastructure, in highways and mass transit and bridge repair. I think it's good for the economy in terms of the jobs it creates, but it's even better for the economy in terms of giving people safer roads to travel on and less wear and tear on their cars, less accidents—fewer accidents—the whole thing. I'm all for this. And we need more mass transit because, among other things, it's an important part of the welfare reform component. If we're requiring people who are poor and on welfare to go take jobs and they have to travel, they've got to have some way to get there. So I'm for a hefty increase in investment in infrastructure.

But I think that these bills that have been passed—the thing that bothers me is, I can't

see, based on what I understand to be the options, how either one of these bills can be funded without either getting into the surplus or cutting our investment in education, medical research, the environment, and other critical areas. So we're just going to have to try to find a way to fit all these things in, in a manner that doesn't spend the surplus.

Social Security

Mr. Hunt. Let me ask you just a couple more quick questions. On Social Security, you've said very clearly you don't want to have a specific proposal now. But some of your Democratic colleagues—Senator Moynihan and Kerrey, are talking about private accounts alongside traditional Social Security. No matter the specific details, is that a good idea to consider?

The President. Absolutely, it should be considered. But what I want to say—I'd like to make two points—first is, the reason that I think it would be a bad thing for me to have a specific proposal now is I think it would shut down debate rather than increase it. And then everything would be, are you for or against this proposal? Right now, we've still—the American people, I think, on this issue—the good news is that everybody knows something fairly substantial is going to have to be done to make this system survive into the 21st century when all the baby boomers retire. That's good.

Secondly, I think the younger people are, the more likely they are to be open to all kinds of new ideas, and that's good. But I think that what has not been accomplished yet in the public education process that we're now undertaking this year is for people to understand the tradeoffs involved in making a set of choices.

That is, I could call you on the telephone and I could say, "I am a reporter for the Clinton polling agency, and I'm going to ask you these 10 questions, and do you like these ideas?" And you might like them all. But if I said, "You can only have four of them," and then you have to rank them in rank order of priority, that's a much more sophisticated judgment. That's what I'm trying to get done now.

On the individual accounts, I think it's absolutely an idea that deserves a lot of consideration. There is some debate, as you know, in Congress about trying to dedicate the surplus to individual accounts now just starting. The problem I have with that proposal is that it doesn't deal with the underlying Social Security program. What are you going to do—I think we still need some baseline Social Security in the 21st century that's a baseline protection for people that may not have a lot of money in the market or may lose some in the market or don't have a chance to accumulate a lot of wealth, and we've got to know how we're going to fix that. And then, the people—admittedly, that's what Senators Moynihan and Kerrey tried to do. They tried to guarantee a baseline Social Security benefit and, over and above that, have an individual account. And that's one of the things that I think ought to be fully explored here.

Corporate Mergers

Mr. Hunt. We only have a few more minutes, but as long as we're talking about whether things are good or bad, there have been a rash of big mergers lately, particularly in the financial service banks. Do you think, generally, without commenting on any one, but as a general proposition, is that good or bad for consumers and the economy?

The President. I don't know yet. I think, to some extent, they were inevitable because of both the nationalization of finance, bank finance, across our whole country and the globalization of commerce which puts a premium on bigness, partly so you can afford to get into new market areas, partly so you can afford to handle bad years; you have more money.

So I think some of this is inevitable. I think that the test which ought to be applied—and I honestly have not had time to get a detailed analysis of it—but the test of all these mergers ought to be this: Does it allow them to become more globally competitive in ways that don't unfairly raise prices or cut the quality of service to consumers in America? Or does it superficially allow them to become more globally competitive but, in effect, undermine their competitive position because they're not attractive to their customers anymore because of what happens to prices or service?

And I think that's the test we ought to apply, that's the test Government agencies ought to apply, in terms of any lawfulness—you know they're looking at that. But I think it's too soon to say yet. On balance, I think it was inevitable; I think these things were coming. And we have to do what we can to make sure that they're good for the consumers of the country.

Tobacco Legislation

Mr. Hunt. Next to the last question, on tobacco: Would you be willing to give up some of the initiatives that you have proposed as part of the tobacco deal in order to get legislation that limits any revenue strictly to tobacco and health related areas?

The President. Well, let me say, first of all, most of the initiatives that I proposed to fund—in education, for example—were not coming out of tobacco revenues, except those that were being collected to be sent back to the States.

Now, I wanted to say that those should be spent for the benefit of children, in smaller class sizes in the earlier grades and in child care, and not children's health, for the simple reason that in the Balanced Budget Act we had the biggest increase in children's health in 35 years.

If Congress wanted to give the States some more flexibility in spending that money, we could argue about that, but that wouldn't be a deal breaker for me. We can also have a debate about that in the election, whether I was right or they were right and what we should do with the priorities in the future.

My sole concern, in terms of what bill I would sign or not, is the question of whether it will substantially reduce teenage smoking and thereby lift the health fortunes of all these children that are otherwise going to be imperiled.

Mr. Hunt. Do you think the McCain bill does that? Is that correct?

The President. I do. I do. There are a couple things that if I were writing the McCain bill I'd change, and maybe we can even get a few changes in it. And I'm sure there are people on the other side who would like to change a couple things about it. But I think that the McCain bill is—I think Senator McCain and the Democrats and Republicans who worked with him—keep in mind, 19 people voted for that bill—made an honest effort to, first of all, protect our children from the dangers of tobacco; secondly, raise enough money that we can invest it in an advertising campaign and medical research and to do the things that ought to be done from a health point of view; took decent care of the tobacco farmers, gave them an opportunity to buy their way out of what they are doing now in ways that seem to find favor among the farmers; and basically did the kinds of things that ought to be done. It's certainly a good vehicle through which we can work to try to get a bill out of the Senate and then hopefully get one out of the House.

Independent Counsel's Investigation and Consumer Confidence

Mr. Hunt. Last question. One of the reasons the economy has done so well is unsurpassed consumer confidence. Consumers really feel good about how things are going in general. If you and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr become embroiled in a huge, high-stakes battle over impeachment charges and countercharges, could that threaten or jeopardize consumer confidence in general?

The President. Oh, I don't think so, because, for one thing, I've done my best to demonstrate to the American people that I'm letting all this business from Mr. Starr be handled by my lawyers and others speaking on my behalf, that when I have to answer questions about it, I do, but that I'm working on their business. And I'm very optimistic about it. So I don't think that anything that can conceivably happen is likely to impact on consumer confidence, unless somebody tries to do something completely irresponsible and insupportable. By the facts at hand, we're going to be fine on that.

Mr. Hunt. Or impact upon your stewardship of——

The President. No. No. I think that early on in this process I was somewhat bewildered by it, and it was distracting. And finally, I decided what I owed the American people was not to be distracted, and so I'm doing pretty well now, and I intend to keep right on doing it.

Mr. Hunt. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:24 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House on April 30, but the transcript was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on May 4. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in Chicago, Illinois

May 4, 1998

Thank you very much. Well, first, let me—a lot of things have already happened here tonight that I didn't intend to happen. [*Laughter*] And I feel that I should quit while I'm still not too far behind. [*Laughter*] It's not often that a man in his declining years can demonstrate a loss of hearing, a loss of memory, and a loss of the muscles necessary to play a saxophone all in one fell swoop. [*Laughter*] But even when I was a kid, when I was a teenager and I could play pretty well, there was one unbroken rule that all of us who actually played and tried to earn a little money—never, never walk into a strange place and pick up a strange horn. [*Laughter*] And if you do, always have your own mouthpiece. [*Laughter*] And if you disregard both rules, you deserve whatever happens to you. [*Laughter*] But I had a good time. And the musicians and Shelley covered my sins pretty well. You were terrific. Thank you, Bill and Shelley, for having us here. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank Bill and Shelley and Jim and all the people who worked on this dinner tonight. I thank all of you for coming. I thank Dick Durbin for his great service in the Senate and for his good humor. I wish I'd written down those cracks; they were pretty funny. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Mayor Daley, for everything you do. And everything they said about you, I agree with, and then some. I'd like to also thank Bill Daley for being a truly terrific Secretary of Commerce and doing a great job for us. I'd like to also tell you that another Chicagoan whose parents are here tonight, Todd Stern, who served for some time as basically the White House secretary—he organized all the affairs of my life, virtually—has now taken on a huge responsibility to lead our administration's effort at complying with the climate change treaty we signed onto, to try to figure out how we can make our contribution to fight global warming and continue to grow the American economy. We were out in California today illustrating just exactly how we intend to do that. And so, he has done a great job.

You know, I love to come to Chicago. I am so indebted to Chicago—for my wife, for a great convention, for two elections. I still have the picture on my wall in my private office in the White House where Hillary and I were together at the hotel here in Chicago on St. Patrick's Day in 1992. It was on that night when the votes from Illinois and Michigan came in, in the primary, that I knew I would be the nominee of my party. And I owe Illinois a very great deal in this great city.

I want to just take a couple of minutes—you know, you're all here; you've made your contributions; you're warm; and you want to go home. [*Laughter*] And you had to put up with our music, and I thank you. But I'd like to ask you to leave and ask yourselves, why did I go there tonight, and if somebody asked me tomorrow morning, what answer will I give—somebody I know who had never been to a fundraiser, asked me tomorrow morning why did I go there, what answer will I give? It certainly can't be that you wanted to hear me play the saxophone. [*Laughter*]

In 1992, and indeed, in '91, I ran for President because I thought our country was moving into a dramatically different era, the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other, the way we relate to the whole rest of the world would be challenged and would have to change.

And at every great time of challenge in this country's history, we have always met the challenge by throwing off the dead hand of the past in terms of policies and finding new ways that were consistent with our oldest and deepest values. We've always found a way to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to widen the circle of opportunity, to come together as one country.

And a lot of people said to me, "That's not going to be possible in a global economy. Our country is just going to be pulled apart by all these economic forces moving through the world. And we're not going to get closer together, we're going to get more divided because we're becoming simply too diverse." It's all very well to talk about it, but you've got county after county after county with people from more than 100 different racial and ethnic groups. The school district across the river from the White

House that I can literally see when I walk to work every morning has children in it from 180 different racial, national, and ethnic groups, speaking over 100 different languages, in one school district.

And people have said to me, "But look at this deficit—you're a Democrat, you'll never be able to do anything positive because you've got this big deficit." And I believe we could do better. And for 5½ years, with the help of the two people who just spoke before me, we've been working at it steadily.

So the first thing I'd like you to think about is, we're all very fortunate tonight and no one can claim full credit for it, but we live in a country that has its lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, its lowest inflation in 30 years, its highest consumer confidence in 30 years, its highest homeownership ever, its lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, its lowest crime rate in 24 years—as a nation. And we should be grateful for that.

The second thing I'd like to say is, the last thing we should do is to stop doing the things that got us to where we are in the last 5½ years. The last thing we should do is to be complacent, smug, arrogant, or lazy, or, I might add, small-minded. Because all you've got to do is follow the news, events around the world, events at home—the world is still spinning very fast; times are still changing profoundly. And this is a time to take advantage of the good things that are happening in our country, of the high level of confidence people feel in our ability to deal with our challenges, and get on about the business of moving our country into the 21st century.

The second point I want to make is that we represent a party—Dick Durbin, Carol Moseley-Braun, the mayor, the Secretary, all of us—that is not trying to sit on its laurels and spend a lot of time crowing and claiming credit. We're trying to drive an agenda of change that will see us through to a new century and a dramatically new era.

What is the agenda in Washington today? Our agenda is we're going to have the first budget surplus in 30 years; let's don't spend it until we save Social Security. Our agenda is let's do something to protect our kids from the dangers of tobacco; 3,000 kids start to smoke every day, even though it's not legal, and 1,000 will die sooner because of it.

Our agenda is let's adopt a health care bill of rights. Over half our people are in HMO's; they can do a lot of good, but they ought to know that their choices and their quality is not going to be compromised. Let's provide affordable child care for all the working families that need it. Let's reform the IRS in a responsible way. Let's pass campaign finance reform. In the House of Representatives, our Democrats and a handful of very brave Republicans risked the ire of their superiors and said we're going to get one more shot at it this year.

And most important of all, let's begin to deal with education on a national level, the way Chicago is trying to deal with it here in this community. If it were for no other reason—and there are more reasons—but the most important reason, I believe, to reelect Carol Moseley-Braun for the rest of the country is she has come to symbolize the idea that the National Government has a responsibility to help communities make our schools the best in the world again. She has come to symbolize that.

She started with the idea that we ought to help rebuild a lot of these schools that are breaking down, that we ought to build new schools in the places were kids are being educated in housetrailers, that we cannot meet my goal of hooking up every classroom in the country to the Internet by the year 2000 when half the schools can't even take a computer hookup because they're in such desperate conditions.

We also are trying to have smaller classes in the early grades. All that is part of the plan that she and I and Dick and our allies are trying to push in Congress. We also have a part of our budget which would give schools more money to open after school. Most juvenile crime occurs after school lets out, before the parents get home. And we're doing our best to actually get massive help to cities who will agree to do what Chicago has done, stop social promotion and give somebody the authority to make decisions in our schools.

A big part of the problem in American schools today in the cities—there are good teachers everywhere; there are bright kids everywhere; there are dedicated principals everywhere; but somebody has got to be in charge. And if you have two or three different bureaucracies with four or five different sources of funds and people can keep batting the ball back and forth and nobody gets to say, up, down, or sideways,

you cannot reform a reluctant bureaucratic system. Our children deserve better.

When the history of these schools is written on what is happening now and people look back on it, they will say one of the most important things that was done is they changed the way the laws work so someone could make a decision and then live with the consequences, good or bad. That has to be done. You cannot hope to do it.

But we're saying in Washington, if you pass our budget and another city wants to undertake the efforts that Chicago is making, we'll give you some funds, we'll help you, we'll bring in experts, we'll do everything we can, but you have to take responsibility for your children and your future, and you have to be responsible first.

So we have an agenda. The third point I want to make is, we're thinking about the long-term interest of the country. If you vote for Carol Moseley-Braun and she gets 6 more years—and I'll have by then, after that election, 2 more years—I'll tell you what I want to do. When I finish, I want to know that we've got a huge headstart on the long-term problems that will affect our country for the next 30 years.

What are they? We have to reform Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century for the baby boom generation. We've got to prove we can grow the economy without continuing to deplete the environment. We have to prove that we can bring the spark of enterprise and jobs and opportunity to these inner-city neighborhoods and isolated rural places and to Native Americans living on reservations that have felt none of this economic recovery, so we can say everybody's got a fair chance in America. We have to prove we can build the best education system in the world—not just universities but elementary and secondary schools. And we've got to prove we can live together as one America.

The other thing we have to do that I hope to persuade the American people I'm right about—I'm having a mixed record of success according to all the polls—is we have to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom. We have to continue to expand trade. We have to continue to stand up in places like Bosnia and Northern Ireland and Haiti. And the Secretary of State is in London today working for peace in the Middle East. We have to continue to do these things. And if we're going to do it, we have to pay our way. We have to pay our U.N. dues; we have to contribute to the International Monetary Fund. We can't say to people, we'd like to lead the world, but you pay the way. We're having a little fight in Washington, so we're not going to fulfill our responsibilities. This is an interdependent world, and our success depends upon our ability to be good, responsible partners.

So I'd like to focus on those things. We need positive forces in Congress to do that. The President is not a dictator, and much of what needs to be done requires a cooperative relationship between the President and Congress. So when you go home tonight, you say, "I went there because I'm grateful for what's happened and I support it; because they've got an agenda that they're working on even in this election year; because they're interested in the long-run problems of the country, and Carol Moseley-Braun is the best person to fight for those long-run solutions; and finally, because we love our country, and we want to do what's right by it."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to William Farley, chairman and chief executive officer, Fruit of the Loom, Inc., and his wife, Shelley, dinner hosts; Jim Levin, dinner cochair; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; and Todd Stern, Assistant to the President for Special Projects.

Remarks at the Dedication of the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center

May 5, 1998

Thank you very much. Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Barram, Secretary Daley, Senator Moynihan, Delegate Norton, Senator Dole, Senator Lott, all the Members of Congress and the diplomatic

corps who are here; Mr. Mayor; Secretary Shultz and General Powell and all the former members of the Reagan administration who are here and enjoying this great day; to Maureen and to the friends of President and Mrs. Reagan who are here. I'd like to begin by thanking Jim Freed and his team for a magnificent building. I think we all feel elevated in this building today.

I also want to say on behalf of Hillary and myself a special word of appreciation to Mrs. Reagan for being here. From her own pioneering efforts to keep our children safe from drugs to the elegance and charm that were the hallmarks of the Reagan White House, through her public and brave support for every family facing Alzheimer's, she has served our Nation exceedingly well, and we thank her.

The only thing that could make this day more special is if President Reagan could be here himself. But if you look at this atrium, I think we feel the essence of his presence: his unflagging optimism, his proud patriotism, his unabashed faith in the American people. I think every American who walks through this incredible space and lifts his or her eyes to the sky will feel that.

As Senator Moynihan just described, this building is the completion of a challenge issued 37 years ago by President Kennedy; I ought to say, and doggedly pursued for 37 years by Senator Moynihan. [*Laughter*] I must say, Senator, there were days when I drove by here week after week after week and saw only that vast hole in the ground, when I wondered if the "Moynihan hole" would ever become the Reagan Building. [*Laughter*] But sure enough, it did, and we thank you.

As you have heard, this building will house everything from an international trade center to international cultural activities to the Agency for International Development to the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. It is fitting that the plaza on which we gather bears the name of President Wilson. And it is fitting that Presidents Wilson and Reagan are paired, for their work and, therefore, the activities which will be culminated in this building span much of what has become the American century.

Since President Reagan left office, the freedom and opportunity for which he stood have continued to spread. For a half century, American leaders of both parties waged a cold war against aggression and oppression. Today, freed from the yoke of totalitarianism, new democracies are emerging all around the world, enjoying newfound prosperity and long-awaited peace. More nations have claimed the fruits of this victory: free markets, free elections, plain freedom. And still more are struggling to do so.

Today we joy in that, but we cannot—indeed, we dare not—grow complacent. Today we recall President Reagan's resolve to fight for freedom and his understanding that American leadership in the world remains indispensable. It is fitting that a piece of the Berlin Wall is in this building. America's resolve and American ideals so clearly articulated by Ronald Reagan helped to bring that wall down.

But as we have seen repeatedly in the years since, the end of the cold war did not bring the end of the struggle for freedom and democracy, for human rights and opportunity. If the history of this American century has taught us anything, it is that we will either work to shape events or we will be shaped by them. We cannot be partly in the world. We cannot lead in fits and starts or only when we believe it suits our short-term interests. We must lead boldly, consistently, without reservation, because, as President Reagan repeatedly said, freedom is always in America's interests.

Our security and prosperity depend upon our willingness to be involved in the world. Woodrow Wilson said that Americans were participants in the life of the world, like it or not. But his countrymen did not listen to him, and as a result, there came the Great Depression, the rise of fascism, the Second World War. Our Nation then learned we could not withdraw from the world.

Then a new generation of Americans reached outward in the years after World War II, building new alliances of peace and new engines of prosperity: NATO, the United Nations, the IMF, the international trading system. It is no accident that during this period of great American leadership abroad we experienced unparalleled economic prosperity here at home. And it is no accident that freedom's great triumph came on America's watch.

Today, on the edge of a new century, the challenges we face are more diverse. But the values that guide America must remain the same. The globalization of commerce and the explosion of communications technology do not resolve all conflicts between nations; indeed, they create new challenges. They do not diminish our responsibility to lead, therefore; instead,

they heighten it. Because today's possibilities are not tomorrow's guarantees, we must remain true to the commitment to lead that every American leader of both parties, especially Ronald Reagan and Woodrow Wilson, so clearly articulated in this 20th century.

For 50 years we fought for a Europe undivided and free. Last week the United States Senate took a profoundly important step toward that goal by welcoming Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO, an achievement I believe that would make Ronald Reagan proud. The alliance that helped to keep the peace for a half century now brings us closer than ever to that dream of a Europe united, democratic, and at peace.

Now Congress has other opportunities to fulfill the spirit and honor the legacy of the man whose name we affix to this building today. Congress has the opportunity to maintain our leadership by paying for our support to the IMF and settling our dues to the United Nations. I hope they will do it.

President Reagan once said we had made what he called an unbreakable commitment to the IMF, one that was unbreakable because, in this age of economic interdependence, an investment in the IMF is simply an investment in American prosperity. And we fought for 50 years for peace and security as part of the United Nations. In 1985, Ronald Reagan said the U.N. stands as the symbol of the hopes of all mankind for a more peaceful and productive world. "We must not," he said, "disappoint those hopes." We still must not disappoint those hopes.

President Reagan understood so clearly that America could not stand passively in the face of great change. He understood we had to embrace the obligations of leadership to build a better future for all. The commerce that will be conducted in this great building will be a testament to the opportunities in a truly global economy America has done so much to create. The academic and cultural activities that will be generated from people who work here will bring us closer together as well. Because the Agency for International Development will be here, we will never forget that the spark of enterprise and opportunity should be brought to the smallest, poorest villages in the world, for there, too, there are people of energy, intelligence, and hunger for freedom.

This is a great day for our country. This is a day of honoring the legacy of President Reagan, remembering the service of President Wilson, and rededicating ourselves to the often difficult but, ultimately, always rewarding work of America.

As I stand within the Reagan Building, I am confident that we will again make the right choices for America, that we will take up where President Reagan left off, to lead freedom's march boldly into the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. in the atrium of the Ronald Reagan Building. In his remarks, he referred to former First Lady Nancy Reagan; General Services Administrator David J. Barram; former Senator Bob Dole; Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., of Washington, DC; former Secretary of State George P. Shultz; former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth; Maureen Reagan, daughter of former President Ronald Reagan; and architect James I. Freed.

Statement on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Report on Child Care

May 5, 1998

I want to commend the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its *KIDS COUNT Data Book* which highlights the need for safe and affordable child care for millions of America's working families. The report, released today, provides important evidence of the child care challenges facing families, businesses, and the economy.

KIDS COUNT reports that every day parents of 29 million children struggle to find safe and affordable child care so that they can go to work. The challenge is especially great for the working parents of 10 million children in low-income families. The report tells us that this need continues to grow; that child care is

unaffordable for many families, consuming 25 percent of income for many low-income families; that quality is uneven and often poor; and that inadequate care can have a dramatic impact on children's development.

This report provides further evidence of the urgency for Congress to act on child care legislation. Too many American families are struggling to find and afford child care to meet their obligations as workers and their more important responsibility as parents. My child care initiative will help working families pay for child care, build a good supply of after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning. Today I again call on Congress to act, and I look forward to working with Members in both parties to enact comprehensive bipartisan child care legislation that meets the needs of children and families.

Statement on Senate Action on Job Training Reform Legislation
May 5, 1998

More than 3 years ago, I proposed my "GI bill" for America's workers to reform our employment and training system for the 21st-century economy. Today I am very pleased that the Senate passed—with overwhelming bipartisan support—legislation that incorporates the principles articulated in my original proposal. This legislation reforms our job training system so that it works better for America's workers and is more responsive to today's rapidly changing economy. I particularly thank Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, DeWine, and Wellstone for their hard work at getting this legislation passed.

This legislation will fundamentally reform our workforce development system by empowering Americans to gain new skills with a simple skill grant. It also consolidates the tangle of training programs; creates a network of One-Stop Career Centers; increases accountability to ensure results; allows States and communities to tailor programs to locally determined needs; and ensures that business, labor, and community organizations are full partners in system design and quality assurance. It targets vocational and adult education funds to educational agencies and institutions with the greatest need and to activities that promote program quality. It improves the vocational rehabilitation program by streamlining eligibility determination, improving State planning, and strengthening program accountability. And it includes the Youth Opportunity Areas initiative—which was funded in last year's appropriations process—that will create jobs and opportunity for out-of-school youth in high-poverty areas.

While I have outstanding concerns with both the Senate- and House-passed versions of this legislation, I am confident our differences can be resolved quickly in conference. I urge Congress to continue to work in a bipartisan manner and finish the job of reforming our job training system by early this summer.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Pemigewasset River
May 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I take pleasure in transmitting the enclosed report for the Pemigewasset River in New Hampshire. The report and my recommendations are in response to the provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Public Law 90–542, as amended. The Pemigewasset River study was authorized by Public Law 101–357.

The study was conducted by the National Park Service with assistance from a local study committee. The National Park Service determined that the 32.5-mile study segment is eligible for designation based upon its free-flowing character and outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, fishery, and botanic values. However, in deference to the wishes of local adjoining

communities, six of seven of whom voted against designation, and the State of New Hampshire, I am recommending that the Congress not consider designation at this time. If the local communities and/or the State should change their position in the future, the question of designation could be reevaluated.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 5, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the State of Small Business

May 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to present my fourth annual report on the state of small business. In short, the small business community continues to perform exceptionally well. For the fourth year in a row, new business formation reached a record high: 842,357 new firms were formed in 1996.

The entrepreneurial spirit continues to burn brightly as the creativity and sheer productivity of America's small businesses make our Nation's business community the envy of the world. My Administration has worked hard to keep that spirit strong by implementing policies and programs designed to help small businesses develop and expand. We have focused our economic strategy on three pillars: reducing the deficit, opening up markets overseas, and investing in our people through education and technology. Our efforts with respect to small business have been concentrated in a number of specific areas, including directing tax relief to more small businesses, expanding access to capital, supporting innovation, providing regulatory relief, opening overseas markets to entrepreneurs, and strengthening America's work force.

A Balanced Budget and Taxpayer Relief

When I took office, the Federal budget deficit was a record $290 billion. I determined that one of the best things we could do for the American people, including small business, would be to balance the budget. Because of our hard choices, the deficit has been reduced for 5 years in a row. By October 1997, the deficit had fallen to just $22.6 billion—a reduction of $267 billion or 90 percent. These lower deficits have helped to reduce interest rates, an important matter for all small businesses.

Small business owners have long recognized the importance of this issue. At each of the White House Conferences on Small Business—in 1980, 1986, and 1995—small businesses included on their agenda a recommendation to balance the Federal budget. With passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, I signed into law the first balanced budget in a generation. The new budget will spur growth and spread opportunity by providing the biggest investment in higher education since the GI bill more than 50 years ago. Even after we pay for tax cuts, line by line and dime by dime, there will still be $900 billion in savings over the next 10 years.

And at the same time we are easing the tax burden on small firms. My Administration and the Congress took the White House Conference tax recommendations seriously during deliberations that led to the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. The new law will direct billions of dollars in tax relief to small firms over the next 10 years. Small businesses will see a decrease in the estate tax, an increase to 100 percent over the next 10 years in the percentage of health insurance payments a self-employed person can deduct, an updated definition of "home office" for tax purposes, and a reduction in paperwork associated with the alternative minimum tax.

Significant new capital gains provisions in the law should provide new infusions of capital to new small businesses. By reducing the capital gains tax rate and giving small business investors new options, the law encourages economic growth through investment in small businesses.

Access to Capital

For so many small business owners, gaining access to capital continues to be a very difficult

challenge. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) plays a key role as a catalyst in our efforts to expand this access. The SBA made or guaranteed more than $13 billion in loans in 1997. Since the end of fiscal year 1992, the SBA has backed more than $48 billion in loans to small businesses, more than in the previous 12 years combined. In 1997, the SBA approved 45,288 loan guaranties amounting to $9.46 billion in the 7(a) guaranty program, a 23 percent increase from 1996, and 4,131 loans worth $1.44 billion under the Certified Development Company (CDC) loan program.

Included in the 1997 loan totals were a record $2.6 billion in 7(a) and CDC loans to more than 10,600 minority-owned businesses and another record $1.7 billion in roughly 10,800 loans to women-owned businesses. Over the last 4 years, the number of SBA loans to women small business owners has more than tripled, and loans to minority borrowers have also nearly tripled.

The Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program, the SBA's premier vehicle for providing venture capital to small, growing companies, produced a record amount of equity and debt capital investments during the year. The program's licensed SBICs made 2,731 investments worth $2.37 billion. In 1997, 33 new SBICs with combined private capital of $471 million were licensed. Since 1994, when the program was revamped, 111 new SBICs with $1.57 billion in private capital have entered the program.

And in the past year, the SBA's Office of Advocacy developed a promising new tool to direct capital to dynamic, growing small businesses—the Angel Capital Electronic Network, or ACE–Net. This effort has involved refining Federal and State small business securities requirements and using state-of-the-art Internet technology to develop a brand new nationwide market for small business equity.

Government Support for Small Business Innovation

As this report documents, small firms play an important role in developing innovative products and processes and bringing them to the marketplace. Federal research and development that strengthens the national defense, promotes health and safety, and improves the Nation's transportation systems is vital to our long-term interests. Our Government has instituted active policies to ensure that small businesses have opportunities to bring their innovative ideas to these efforts.

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs help ensure that Federal research and development funding is directed to small businesses. In fiscal year 1996, more than 325 Phase I and Phase II STTR awards totaling $38 million went to 249 small businesses. Also in 1996, the SBIR program invested almost $1 billion in small high technology firms. The program has touched and inspired individuals like Bill McCann, a blind—and once frustrated—trumpet player who used SBIR funding to help start a company that designs software to automatically translate sheet music into braille. Today, Dancing Dots Braille Music Technology is rapidly expanding the library of sheet music available to blind musicians.

Other initiatives include the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Advanced Technology Program, enabling small high technology firms to develop pathbreaking technologies, and NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which helps small manufacturers apply performance-improving technologies needed to meet global competition. Two of the SBA's loan programs—the 7(a) and 504 loan programs—currently assist 2,000 high technology companies. And the SBA's ACE–Net initiative is especially designed to meet the needs of these dynamic high technology firms.

Because they give small firms a footing on which to build new ideas and innovative products, these efforts benefit not only the small firms themselves, but the entire American economy.

Regulatory Relief

A pressing concern often identified by small businesses is unfairly burdensome regulation. My Administration is committed to reforming the system of Government regulations to make it more equitable for small companies. In 1996, I signed into law the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act, which strengthens requirements that Federal agencies consider and mitigate unfairly burdensome effects of their rules on small businesses and other small organizations. A small business ombudsmen and a new system of regulatory fairness boards, appointed

in September 1996, give small firms new opportunities to participate in agency enforcement actions and policies. Because agencies can be challenged in court, they have gone to extra lengths to ensure that small business input is an integral part of their rulemaking processes.

Many agencies are conducting their own initiatives to reduce the regulatory burden. The SBA, for example, cut its regulations in half and rewrote the remaining requirements in plain English. All of these reforms help ensure that the Government maintains health, safety and other necessary standards without driving promising small companies out of business.

Opening Overseas Markets

Key in my Administration's strategy for economic growth are efforts to expand business access to new and growing markets abroad. I want to open trade in areas where American firms are leading—computer software, medical equipment, environmental technology. The information technology agreement we reached with 37 other nations in 1996 will eliminate tariffs and unshackle trade in computers, semiconductors, and telecommunications. This cut in tariffs on American products could lead to hundreds of thousands of jobs for our people.

Measures aimed at helping small firms expand into the global market have included an overhaul of the Government's export controls and reinvention of export assistance. These changes help ensure that our own Government is no longer the hurdle to small businesses entering the international economy.

A 21st Century Work Force

American business' most important resource is, of course, people. I am proud of my Administration's efforts to improve the lives and productivity of the American work force. We know that in this Information Age, we need a new social compact—a new understanding of the responsibilities of government, business, and every one of us to each other.

Education is certainly the most important investment we can make in people. We must invest in the skills of people if we are to have the best educated work force in the world in the 21st century. We're moving forward to connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000, and to raise standards so that every child can master the basics.

We're also training America's future entrepreneurs. The SBA, for example, has improved access to education and counseling by funding 19 new women's business centers and 15 U.S. export assistance centers nationwide. And we are encouraging businesses to continue their important contributions to job training. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 encourages employers to provide training by excluding income spent on education for employees from taxation.

We are taking steps to improve small business workers' access to employee benefits. Last year, I signed into law the Small Business Job Protection Act, which, among other things, makes it easier for small businesses to offer pension plans by creating a new small business 401(k) plan. We made it possible for more Americans to keep their pensions when they change jobs without having to wait before they can start saving at their new jobs. As many as 10 million Americans without pensions when the law was signed can now earn them because this law exists.

Given that small businesses have created more than 10 million new jobs in the last four years, they will be critical in the implementation of the welfare to work initiative. That means the SBA microloan and One-Stop Capital Shop programs will be uniquely positioned to take on the "work" component of this initiative. The work opportunity tax credit in the Balanced Budget Act is also designed as an incentive to encourage small firms, among others, to help move people from welfare to work.

A small business starts with one person's dream. Through devotion and hard work, dreams become reality. Our efforts for the small business community ensure that these modern American Dreams still have a chance to grow and flourish.

I want my Administration to be on the leading edge in working as a partner with the small business community. That is why an essential component of our job is to listen, to find out what works, and to go the extra mile for America's entrepreneurial small business owners.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

May 5, 1998.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan

May 5, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, and matters relating to the measures in that order. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067.

1. On November 3, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13067 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 59989, November 5, 1997—the "Order") to declare a national emergency with respect to Sudan pursuant to IEEPA. Copies of the Order were provided to the Congress by message dated November 3, 1997.

The Order blocks all property and interests in property of the Government of Sudan, its agencies, instrumentalities, and controlled entities, including the Central Bank of Sudan, that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereafter come within the possession or control of United States persons, including their overseas branches. The Order also prohibits (1) the importation into the United States of any goods or services of Sudanese origin except for information or informational materials; (2) the exportation or reexportation of goods, technology, or services to Sudan or the Government of Sudan except for information or informational materials and donations of humanitarian aid; (3) the facilitation by a United States person of the exportation or reexportation of goods, technology, or services to or from Sudan; (4) the performance by any United States person of any contract, including a financing contract, in support of an industrial, commercial, public utility, or governmental project in Sudan; (5) the grant or extension of credits or loans by any United States person to the Government of Sudan; and (6) transactions relating to the transportation of cargo. The Order also provided a 30-day delayed effective date for the completion of certain trade transactions.

2. Executive Order 13067 became effective at 12:01 a.m., eastern standard time on November 4, 1997. On December 2, 1997, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued General Notice No. 1, interpreting the delayed effective date for pre-November 4, 1997, trade contracts involving Sudan if the preexisting trade contract was for (a) the exportation of goods, services, or technology from the United States or a third country that was authorized under applicable Federal regulations in force immediately prior to November 4, 1997, or (b) the reexportation of goods or technology that was authorized under applicable Federal regulations in force immediately prior to November 4, 1997. Such exports or reexports were authorized until 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time, December 4, 1997, and nonfinancing activity by United States persons incidental to the performance of the preexisting trade contract (such as the provision of transportation or insurance) was authorized through 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time, February 2, 1998. If the preexisting trade contract was for the importation of goods or services of Sudanese origin or other trade transactions relating to goods or services of Sudanese origin or owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan, importations under the preexisting trade contract were authorized until 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time, December 4, 1997.

3. Since the issuance of Executive Order 13067, OFAC has made numerous decisions with respect to applications for authorizations to engage in transactions under the Sudanese sanctions. As of March 12, 1998, OFAC has issued 55 authorizations to nongovernmental organizations engaged in the delivery of humanitarian aid and 77 licenses to others. OFAC has denied many requests for licenses. The majority of denials were in response to requests to authorize commercial exports to Sudan—particularly of machinery and equipment for various industries—and the importation of Sudanese-origin goods. The majority of licenses issued permitted the unblocking of financial transactions

for individual remitters who routed their funds through blocked Sudanese banks. Other licenses authorized the completion of diplomatic transfers, preeffective date trade transactions, and the performance of certain legal services.

4. At the time of signing Executive Order 13067, I directed the Secretary of the Treasury to block all property and interests in property of persons determined, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, the Government of Sudan. On November 5, 1997, OFAC disseminated details of this program to the financial, securities, and international trade communities by both electronic and conventional media. This information included the names of 62 entities owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan. The list includes 12 financial institutions and 50 other enterprises.

5. OFAC, in cooperation with the U.S. Customs Service, is closely monitoring potential violations of the import prohibitions of the Order by businesses and individuals. Various reports of violations are being aggressively pursued.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from November 3, 1997, through May 2, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Sudan are reported to be approximately $425,000, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureaus of Economic and Business Affairs, African Affairs, Near Eastern Affairs, Consular Affairs, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Commerce (the Bureau of Export Administration and the General Counsel's Office).

7. The situation in Sudan continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Sudan contained in Executive Order 13067 underscores the United States Government opposition to the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan, particularly its support of international terrorism and its failure to respect basic human rights, including freedom of religion. The prohibitions contained in Executive Order 13067 advance important objectives in promoting the antiterrorism and human rights policies of the United States. I shall exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 5, 1998.

Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo, 1998

May 5, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

On this day in 1862, brave Mexicans stood up against seemingly overwhelming odds to defend their right to self-determination, and they emerged victorious. It is their spirit and their valiant contribution to the cause of freedom that we celebrate today.

This annual commemoration of the Mexican Army's triumph at the Battle of Puebla gives us a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the richness of Mexico's cultural contributions to U.S. society and the long-standing ties of friendship between our two peoples. The reverence for freedom that we share has been the firm foundation of our relationship in the past and will continue to strengthen us as we look forward to the promise of the future.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a memorable celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy

May 6, 1998

Prime Minister, Mrs. Prodi, members of the Italian delegation, welcome to the White House and welcome to the United States. Hillary and I are delighted to see you again, and I look forward to our talks today which will deepen our relationship. But first let me say, I was terribly saddened to hear of the torrential rains and mudslides in southern Italy which have resulted in the loss of Italian lives. United States forces from Aviano are now transporting Italian civilians to the scene to assist in rescue efforts.

The history of our partnership is long and special. Every schoolchild knows that Columbus crossed the Atlantic in 1492, soon to be followed by other great Italian explorers, Amerigo Vespucci, John Cabot, Giovanni da Verrazano. That was only the beginning of a relationship that has now flourished for centuries, bringing us together in new ways generation after generation.

Today, Italians once again are expanding the world's horizons. Italy stands at the forefront of a new Europe, leading efforts to promote peace and unity throughout the Continent, from economic and monetary union to military cooperation.

In recent months, Italy has led efforts to restore civil order in Albania and is seeking to avert a deepening conflict in Kosovo. Italian and American troops patrol alongside one another in Bosnia, and we will continue to work together to build stability throughout southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean. And finally let me say, we are deeply grateful for Italy's hospitality toward United States forces working to preserve peace in Europe.

Mr. Prime Minister, under your leadership Italy is building a better future. Enterprise is thriving; the rule of law prevails. Today's dreams are being shaped into tomorrow's reality.

Together we are exploring outer space, fighting crime and terrorism, restricting the spread of dangerous weapons, and creating a climate where goods and ideas can be freely exchanged between our countries and around the world. Truly, Italy is setting an example for the new Europe.

This week in Washington and next week at summits in Europe, we will forge even stronger bonds of cooperation to equip our people to succeed in the global economy, to combat international crime and other threats to the security of our citizens, to nurture the health of our planet. The year from now, we look forward to meeting here again when the NATO alliance celebrates its 50th anniversary and acts to make the alliance stronger for the next 50 years.

The great seal of the United States contains the words *novus ordo seclorum*, a new order of the ages. Those words were written by Vergil in Italy more than 2,000 years ago. But they have fresh meaning today, as a new generation builds a new order of peace and freedom, prosperity and security for the 21st century. Vergil's words apply to your deeds, Mr. Prime Minister, and we are very glad to welcome you to the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Prodi was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, the President referred to the Prime Minister's wife, Flavia Prodi. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Prodi.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy
May 6, 1998

President Clinton. Good afternoon. Please be seated. I have very much enjoyed having this opportunity to welcome the Prime Minister to Washington again. For more than 50 years Italy has been among our closest allies. Today we charted a course to strengthen our cooperation for the next 50 years.

We discussed our common efforts to build an undivided Europe at peace. We welcomed the Senate's recent vote on NATO enlargement and hope the Italian Parliament will also act favorably soon.

I thanked the Prime Minister for Italy's contributions in Bosnia and more recently in Albania, where Italian troops played a critical role in bringing an end to violent unrest. We also discussed our deep concern over the situation in Kosovo. The absence of genuine dialog there is fueling a conflict that could threaten regional stability. We're working urgently to establish unconditional talks that can avert escalating violence. But we must and will be ready to substantially turn up the pressure on Belgrade should it keep blocking the search for a political solution or revert to indiscriminate force.

I congratulated Prime Minister Prodi on the historic step Italy and other EU members took this past weekend on the European Monetary Union. I admire the way he has led Italy on a path of fiscal responsibility and genuine recovery. I'm confident that a strong Europe with open markets and healthy growth is good for America and good for the world.

We discussed new ideas to reduce the remaining barriers to trade and boost prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic. I'm pleased that we've agreed to begin the next round of talks on an open skies agreement, with the goal of concluding an agreement as soon as possible to bring greater choice and better service to our tourist and business travelers alike.

We're also looking forward to the G–8 Summit in Birmingham, where we'll take the next steps in preparing our nations for both the opportunities and the challenges of the future.

As to the challenges, from terrorism to drug trafficking, from international crime to environmental damage, threats that disregard national borders demand international responses. Italy has been at the forefront of international efforts to fight crime. It has led in getting the G–8 to join forces in combating crime rings that smuggle illegal immigrants for sweatshop labor and for prostitution. This will build on the work America and Italy have begun together to fight the horrendous international crime of trafficking in women and children. Victims are lured with promises of jobs, opportunity, and hope, too often to find themselves instead in conditions of virtual slavery and actual physical danger.

In Birmingham we'll announce a new joint action plan to crack down on crime rings that smuggle immigrants, bring the perpetrators to justice, and protect the lives of innocent victims. This is not only about public safety, it is about basic human rights.

The partnership between our two nations is far-reaching. Our extensive collaboration in science, technology, and space exploration makes that clear. But the friendship is anchored in basic values at the core of both our societies: liberty, tolerance, love of family, devotion to community and country.

In closing, let me note that this is the 50th year of the Fulbright program between the United States and Italy, a program that has given generations of our young people the chance to live with and learn from one another. As we celebrate all the ties that bind us, we are looking ahead to the next 50 years, to an even stronger and more vibrant partnership which will shape a brighter future for all our people.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Prodi. Thank you. Very few comments to add to your speech.

I enjoyed so much to exchange our views in what I can call the magic moment of American-Italian relations. We have no point of disagreement. We have—our goal is only to build up a stronger relation and to bring them into the future.

In a moment that is very favorable that we did in the last weekend, we concluded one of the most important achievements, never seen in world history, to put 11 different currencies

together. And this will bring, I'm sure—this is my firm opinion—a new period of strong growth, very similar to the period that you did in your country, President. And it's very rare to see 8 years of continuous growth without inflation, with decreasing unemployment, as you did in your country, and to think that the euro may give us the same possibility for Europe. But Europe needs a renewed set of relations between Europe and the United States because this new event needs a new organization of our relations.

So I am very favorable to the proposal of transatlantic—a new set of economic and political relations. To this new set, we shall start to work immediately and with a realistic program and with a long-range view.

Second, we analyzed our bilateral relations, and this was the easiest chapter because there are no fundamental problems of dissent. But we also analyzed the hot point of the regional difficulties in the Balkan and Mediterranean area. In this, we have not only to act together but to have the continuous fine-tuning of our action. Kosovo is a source of worry for us. But Bosnia is still there, with all the problems and with these long-term solutions that, briefly, you have indicated that we are executing together.

But another point that we analyzed is the Mediterranean area, not only the Middle East—that is, of course, the object of our attention—but the pivotal problem of Turkey, the Greece-Turkish relation, Cyprus, and all of that—in the end, the enlargement of the European Union to the east and the consequence that this enlargement will bring in world politics.

This has been the agenda. And I'm so happy that we could discuss this not only in deed but with a strong, strong common commitment.

President Clinton. Thank you.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press], would you like to go first? We will alternate. I will call on an American journalist; the Prime Minister will call on Italian journalists. We'll just go back and forth.

Court Decision on Executive Privilege

Q. Mr. President, while the matter remains under seal, lawyers familiar with the case say that a Federal judge has denied your assertion of executive privilege in the Monica Lewinsky investigation. Do you intend to appeal that decision? And what's the difference between your case and Richard Nixon's effort to stop the Watergate investigation?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, as you pointed out, the matter is still under seal. And as I've said in all these cases, at least one party in every case should follow the judge's orders, preferably—it's better if both do. So I can't comment on it. But let me remind you, I have asked for the release of the briefs and the pleadings in the case so that you and the American people can evaluate my position and any differences that exist between that which we have asserted in previous assertions of executive privilege. I would also remind you that the facts are quite different in this case.

Q. How so, sir?

Europe-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, would you consider the four European countries part of the G–7 as the more natural counterpart to the U.S., even more so now that there is a European Central Bank—not a central political authority in Europe? And do you subscribe to the work of President Prodi for the launching of a new transatlantic negotiation for a new marketplace?

And for Mr. Prodi, the French President is resisting the idea of transatlantic negotiations. Will you take a leadership with that against his position?

President Clinton. Well, the answer to your second question to me, would I support the launching of new negotiations to broaden our partnership, the answer to that is yes.

I think the proper answer to your first question is that from the day I took office, I have supported increasing unity within Europe and any specific step that the Europeans might decide for themselves to take, including a common currency. And what I want is a strong, united Europe that is our partner in dealing with the challenges and in seizing the opportunities of the 21st century world. That's what I look forward to. I think that is one of the legacies I would like to leave when I leave office in 2001. So for me, this is a positive step, these things which are happening now.

Q. I'm sorry, on the G–7 though, Mr. President, I mean, there is no counterpart to the European Central Bank——

President Clinton. Well, on the G–7 we all—in the G–7, we operate by consensus, so it's not like—we do everything together anyway.

Prime Minister Prodi. On my side, it's true that the French oppose it at the present time, the negotiation. But they didn't oppose the general idea. They opposed the specific proposal, and we decided to go on. We decided that we must make a very concrete, step-by-step approach. We have a lot of things that we can deal with unanimity now, but we have decided that this is one of the most important issues, not because of Far East crisis but because of the future of humanity. We think that the relations between Europe and the United States are still the foundation of the world peace. This is what we told, and so we will have to accompany them with increasing economic and political relations.

From the point of view of the transatlantic negotiation, we shall find concrete steps to start immediately for the negotiation. I can't take the initiative alone, because I am part of the European Union, but I am happy to start this type of pressure in order to convince all my colleagues to have a quick starting of this negotiation.

I want to express also my gratitude—I already have done in another interview—to President Clinton, to the American people, for the attitude they had during this process of monetary union. It's completely infrequent to be so clear, so transparent, not to put any obstacle, any suspicion in this—such a big change—it will be a change also for American policy. This is enormous change in the world economy. And this is, I think, the real meaning of what is a long-term friendship.

President Clinton. Lori [Lori Santos, United Press International].

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Sir, Israel's Prime Minister says he won't accept U.S. dictates in the Middle East peace process. What will you do if Israel rebuffs the U.S. proposal for a 13 percent withdrawal?

President Clinton. Well, I don't believe Israel or any other country should accept the dictates of the United States in a peace process. We cannot and we should not attempt to impose a peace on parties because they have to live with the consequences. What we have tried to do for a good year now is to listen to both parties, look at the situation on the ground, understand their respective concerns, and come forward with a set of ideas that we believe are most likely to get the parties to final status talks.

Keep in mind, they're supposed to finish these talks a year from this month, by their own agreement. Now, the ideas we put forth, as Secretary Albright said, were accepted in principle by Mr. Arafat. The Prime Minister said he was unable to do so, but he asked that he be permitted to go home—not permitted but that he be given time to go home and talk through with his Cabinet what might be an acceptable position, bring it back to us, and see if we could bring the parties together. That is what we are trying to do.

And keep in mind what we are trying to do. We are not talking about here a final settlement of all the outstanding issues between Israel and the Palestinians. We are talking about a settlement of sufficient number of issues that will permit them to get into the final status talks within the framework embodied by the agreement signed here in September of '93.

And the first person to advocate a more rapid movement to the final status was Prime Minister Netanyahu. I have tried to find a way actually to do what he suggested. He said, "The facts have changed. The Government is different. Things are different than they used to be. Let's go on and go to final status talks and try to resolve all this at once in a package." I thought it made a lot of sense at the time, and I have done my best for a year now to find the formula that would unlock the differences between them to get them into those final status talks. That's all I'm trying to do. There's no way in the world I could impose an agreement on them or dictate their security to them, even if I wished to do that, which I don't, because when the agreement is over, whether it's in the Middle East or Ireland or Bosnia or anyplace else, they have to live with the consequences.

Q. Will you go Monday, if it's not—[*inaudible*]?

President Clinton. Well, I expect to do—first of all, we are working—let's wait and see what, if anything, Prime Minister Netanyahu comes back with. Let's wait and see, and then see where we are. I hope very much—I would like very much if we could get the parties together so they could get into the final status talks. I do believe if they could get over this hurdle, if they could demonstrate good faith to one another, and then they got in the final status talks and everything were on the table, all the outstanding pieces, then I think that give-and-take

would be more likely to produce a final agreement.

So I'm very anxious to get them over this hill, so they can get into discussing the final arrangements. That's one thing I thought Prime Minister Netanyahu was right about, but I hope that both sides will help us get there. That's what we're trying to do.

Italy's Role in the United Nations

Q. President Clinton, you have been praising Italy as a faithful ally of the United States. Now Italy is also a major contributor of the United Nations. Do you think that your Government would support a reform of the U.N. Security Council which would give Italy a bigger role?

President Clinton. Well, we would support an expansion of the Security Council with the membership still to be determined. I don't think we can dictate it all. And we would support other efforts to give Italy a larger role, generally. First of all, let me say that as long as I have been President, for 5 years, the Italians have been as forthcoming as any country in being willing to make contributions to solving our common problems, whether it's in Bosnia or the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia or now in Albania, where you took the initiative. And all we had to do, if you will, was to sit on the sidelines and cheer you on and try to be supportive.

Then, in the government of Prime Minister Prodi, we see a remarkable strength and cohesion and singularity of purpose, which has led to a marked improvement in your economic situation, early entry into the European Monetary Union. So I think the prospects for greater roles of leadership for Italy in many, many different forums are quite good. And I would support that. I think that Italy can justifiably say, "We should be a part of more and more of these decisionmaking bodies because we're making a bigger contribution." And in general, I think that's a positive thing.

Randy [Randy Mikkelsen, Reuters], you have a question?

U.S. Forces in the Persian Gulf

Q. Mr. President, there are reports today that the United States has cut the level—cut its aircraft carriers in the Gulf from two to one. What does that say about the level of threat in the region and the state of U.S. relations with Iraq? And what can you say about reports that morale among U.S. troops there is at an all-time low?

President Clinton. Well, we have sent—the *Eisenhower* is sailing on schedule, as you probably know. And there's been some speculation about the timetable there, but I can tell you that I have not—Secretary Cohen has not recommended a final decision to me on this, and I have certainly not made one, and we've done our best to keep all of our options open.

The main thing I want to reaffirm is our determination to see the United Nations resolutions complied with and the inspection regime continue until it finishes its work. But no final decision has been made on that yet.

Q. And the morale issue, sir?

President Clinton. I can't really comment on that. I think you should talk to Secretary Cohen about that to see if he agrees with the assessment of it.

But one of the things that we recognize is that as we ask more and more and more of our men and women in uniform and they have longer deployments, we're going to have to work harder to make sure they get adequate support and their families back home get adequate support in order to keep morale high. I can't comment on the specific assertion because I'm not sure that it's so. But I am sure that our men and women in uniform, because we have so many responsibilities in so many parts of the globe, are called upon to do quite a lot and be away from home base for extended periods of time. And that puts a bigger responsibility on those of us who make these decisions, beginning with me, to do everything we can to give them the support they need and to make sure their families are taken care of.

U.S. Aircraft Incident in the Italian Alps

Q. Prime Minister Prodi, are you satisfied with the way the American authorities are dealing with the accident in the Italian Alps?

Prime Minister Prodi. Since the first moment when I called personally President Clinton, I found a very warm and prompt response to the problem. And I have to thank Ambassador Foglietta, who is here, who—he understood immediately how big was our sorrow, how deep was our regret. And the following evolution of the problem—they've always kept with a daily communication between the American Government and the Italian authorities. So I am waiting for the future development of the case, but I've

seen a deep involvement of the American political authorities.

President Clinton. I'd like to just make a brief comment about that. This was a horrible human tragedy. I can't even describe how I felt the first moment I heard about it, and——

Prime Minister Prodi. I do remember your call.

President Clinton. My regret is profound. Since that time, we have done everything we could both to cooperate with the Italian Government in the investigation into the case and to handle the disposition of the charges, as well as the treatment of the families of the victims, in accordance with the agreements signed between our two countries and to be as faithful to it as we could. And we will continue to do that.

I regret terribly what happened. And I cannot bring back the people who perished, but I will do my best to make sure that we behave in a completely honorable way, in a way that is completely consistent with the commitments we have made.

Stewart [Stewart Powell, Hearst Newspapers].

Cuba

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I wanted to ask you about Cuba for a moment.

President Clinton. Go ahead, I'm sorry.

Q. Your former Atlantic Commander, Jack Sheehan, came back from a visit to Cuba—he spent a week there, spent 8 hours with Fidel Castro and returned with—seeing opportunities for some rapprochement with Castro. I wonder if you're now willing to undertake some steps to ease the embargo or take additional steps to provide humanitarian relief in Cuba, and secondly, whether you're willing to undertake any steps to dismantle or ease the defense perimeter around Guantanamo Bay as a symbolic gesture toward Cuba at this moment?

President Clinton. Well, in the aftermath of the Pope's visit to Cuba, I did take some steps which I hope would send the right signal to the Cuban people—[*inaudible*]—in the hopes that it would help to support a move toward a civil society there. As you know, what further steps I could take are clearly circumscribed by the passage of the Helms-Burton Act. And furthermore, there have been mixed signals coming out of the actions of the Government in Cuba since then about whether they really wish to have a rapprochement that is more than government to government and maybe trade to trade but also includes what our real concern is.

Our real concern is for the people of Cuba: Can we move the society toward freedom and human rights and a democratic system? These things don't have to be done overnight, but then again, they have to be done. There has to be some clear signal.

I understand the desire of the Cuban Government to keep its health care system, to keep its commitment to universal literacy to even its poorest citizens. That's a commendable and laudable thing. But I do not accept, nor can I ever accept, some of the antidemocratic and, frankly, clearly anti-human-rights policies of the Government. So we have to have some basis for doing more, especially given the constrictions of the law. Now, nothing would make me happier than to see some basis for doing more. I think all Americans would like to be reconciled with Cuba because of our ties of blood in this country and because of its proximity to us.

Capital Punishment

Q. Mr. President, you have spoken of the common values that unify our two countries, but there is one big issue that is opening an ever-widening gap between the two countries, and it has a lot to do with values, and it is the issue of the death penalty. And I was wondering, because this issue is seen with tremendous sensitivity in our country, if you could give us a sense of what your personal feelings are on this issue. And I hope Mr. Prodi might want to add his own comment.

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I do not believe that our different views on the death penalty should drive a wedge between our two countries, since that is a matter of essentially domestic, not foreign, policy and since in our country criminal defendants are given extensive procedural protections to avoid abuse as well as extensive rights of appeal.

I support capital punishment under certain circumstances. The law in our country is that for most cases involving murder, it is up to the States of our Republic to decide whether to have the death penalty. Some States do have the death penalty, and some States don't. It is a question of State law. There are a few crimes on the Federal books for which capital punishment can occur. But it's, by and large, most of the cases—the great majority of the cases are matters of local law, State law in our

country. And unless the Supreme Court were to reach a contrary decision and invalidate all death penalty laws, which it has explicitly refused to do, under our Constitution it would remain that way.

Prime Minister Prodi. From my point of view, I belong to a country which the death penalty has been abolished since a long time. It is in the roots of our tradition, of our values, of our society not to have it, and I stick on it.

President Clinton. Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN].

Hubbell and McDougal Indictments

Q. Thank you, Mr. President—Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. President. Mr. President, since your last news conference, Ken Starr has indicted Webster Hubbell and Susan McDougal once again. And at the same time Congressman Dan Burton has released all these prison tapes involving Webster Hubbell and his wife and his lawyer and others. I wonder how you would assess all of this in light of the problems that you and your supporters are facing as this investigation into the Monica Lewinsky matter continues to escalate and perhaps reach some sort of conclusion sooner rather than later. Obviously your thoughts on all of this would be interesting to all of us. [*Laughter*]

President Clinton. Well, I think it was clearly a violation of privacy of Mr. and Mrs. Hubbell for the tapes to be released. And I think virtually everyone in America now recognizes it was wrong to release selected portions of the tapes, apparently to create a false impression of what the whole record indicated.

On the other matters you mentioned, the parties have spoken for themselves about what they think was behind it, and I can't really add anything to that.

Kosovo

Q. Mr. President, did you discuss the eventuality to send troops to Kosovo?

And to Mr. Prodi, is our country available to send troops to Kosovo?

President Clinton. I suppose the literally accurate answer to your question is we did not discuss that. But I have made it clear, and I believe we have made it clear between us, that, at least from my point of view, no option should be ruled out. We do not want another Bosnia in Kosovo. Too many people have died there already in indiscriminate violence. And of course, it happened very quickly. Neither, however, do we want to get in the position where Italy has to send troops to every one of its neighboring countries and the United States has to send troops every time there's a dispute in that part of the world.

But I don't think we can rule out any option, because we don't want another Bosnia to happen, and we don't want—both in terms of the human loss of life or in terms of the regional instability. So I wouldn't rule out any option. But I think the most important thing is to keep the carrots and the sticks we have on the table and for a genuine dialog to occur.

Look, this is not—we have a saying in America sometimes—this is not rocket science. You've got a part of Serbia which is 90 percent Albanian, and they want some kind of autonomy and to have their legitimate concerns addressed. The Serbs don't want to give up a big part of their country which they believe and is legally part of their country. So they obviously need to sit down and talk through how the legitimate aspirations of the Kosovo Albanians can somehow be manifest in giving them some measure of self-government and decisionmaking authority over their lives within the framework of Serbia. There are 50 different ways this could be worked out in a humane, legitimate way. They do not have to kill each other to get this done, and they should not do that.

Prime Minister Prodi. I completely agree, but probably the question was not put in the right way. The problem is not to send troops in the general way, but there is the problem of how to protect the border in order to avoid in the short term the problem of smuggling weapons from one side to the other one. Even this option is dangerous because, in some ways, whenever you send troops, you send hostages, potential hostages, to the situation.

But as President Clinton told, we didn't rule out any solution. We are just making an effort to arrive to a peaceful solution. And also we had a long conversation concerning the possibility of helping the civilian recovery of Kosovo in this difficult situation, in which Kosovo has been abandoned in some ways. But of course, you can't rule out anything now.

President Clinton. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's 158th news conference began at 1:50 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. During the news conference, the following persons were referred to: President

Jacques Chirac of France; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Thomas M. Foglietta, U.S. Ambassador to Italy; Gen. John J. Sheehan, USMC (Ret.), former commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Command; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; and former Associate Attorney General Webster L. Hubbell, and his wife, Suzanna, Deputy Director of External Affairs, Department of the Interior.

Joint Statement: The United States and the Republic of Italy: A New Partnership for a New Century

May 6, 1998

The United States and Italy have built a strong, genuine and enduring relationship during more than fifty years of close cooperation. Today President Clinton and Prime Minister Prodi assessed the new opportunities and challenges before both countries as this century comes to a close and a new millennium begins. They agreed on a common agenda to create an even closer partnership in the 21st century.

Transatlantic solidarity remains the indispensable cornerstone of the U.S.-Italian relationship and the basis for a Europe secure, prosperous and free. As Allies in NATO, participants in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and partners in the U.S.-EU New Transatlantic Agenda, the United States and Italy reaffirm their confidence in a new Europe and a strong, enduring transatlantic community. Our shared commitment to build a better future does not stop at Europe's borders, but extends to the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

As we move into the next century, the world will require increased international cooperation to meet common challenges, foster economic development and uphold democracy and human rights. In pursuing these goals, we reaffirm our strong support for the international institutions we worked to create more than fifty years ago. The United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions must continue to play a key and reinforced role in tomorrow's increasingly interdependent world.

Joint leadership in political and economic areas is essential as we strive to enhance European security and address new challenges around the globe. We look forward to a historic NATO Summit in Washington in April 1999, which will celebrate NATO's fifty years as the most successful alliance in history, welcome three new members and prepare NATO for another fifty years of close transatlantic cooperation. We recognize that maintaining our security will require vigorous efforts by the range of Euro-Atlantic institutions to promote stability in Southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean.

An even stronger and more effective Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is a central part of our vision for a more democratic and stable Euro-Atlantic region. We will work closely within the OSCE to focus on ways to spread the security, democracy, freedom and prosperity enjoyed by Western Europe over the past fifty years to other areas of Europe in the coming years.

Europe is pursuing accelerated political and economic integration through the European Union, which the United States has consistently supported. Both the United States and Italy recognize the historic step just taken by Italy and other EU Members to create an Economic and Monetary Union. Italy and Europe can benefit from a successful EMU underpinned by sound macroeconomic and structural policies, which would also be in the best interests of the United States. Indeed, a successful EMU has the potential to benefit the entire transatlantic economic relationship, as will our shared determination to reduce barriers to trade and to work together in the WTO to promote multilateral trade liberalization. The EU, which demonstrates so clearly the vital link between democracy and prosperity, will become an even more dynamic entity and partner for the United States as it welcomes new members and projects increasing stability throughout the Continent.

We will strengthen our overall cooperation through these institutions and other mechanisms to enhance European security. We will consult closely on the most effective ways to prevent

new conflicts and address threats to security that do arise, as we have done in Bosnia and Albania and are doing now in Kosovo. We agree that the situation in Kosovo is increasingly serious. The decisions taken by the Contact Group in Rome must be implemented. Absent dialogue, the conflict will only deepen and spill over, threatening regional security. We will continue raising the pressure on Belgrade if it continues to obstruct a political resolution. We will also continue efforts underway to promote stability in Southeastern Europe through the Southeast Europe Cooperation Initiative and other means.

We are committed to expanding the spectrum of our bilateral cooperation in the years ahead. We will increase already strong efforts to stem the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Our cooperation on law enforcement and judicial matters, particularly in the fight against organized crime, terrorism, illegal arms trading, drug trafficking and alien smuggling, is exemplary. Our statement today on increased efforts to combat international trafficking in women and children launches our intensified cooperation in these areas. We will also increase our efforts to promote safety on the high seas through the International Maritime Organization.

We agreed to begin negotiations next month in Washington aimed at concluding an Open Skies and aviation agreement as soon as possible. We have also created a joint working group to enhance U.S.-Italian aerospace cooperation and take advantage of opportunities that will benefit both countries.

One of the strongest pillars of our science and technology relationship has been space cooperation. We welcome recent achievements in this area, including the successful launch of the Cassini mission to Saturn and agreements for cooperation on the International Space Station. We look forward to new initiatives in astronomy, planetary exploration, earth science, biomedical research and commercialization of space.

We also have made significant efforts to expand our longstanding collaboration in biomedical sciences and to jointly address global health concerns. Our respective institutes for health have recently committed to measures which will enhance opportunities for inter-institute collaborative projects in a range of fields, including HIV/AIDS, aging and cancer. We look forward to the implementation of these projects as well as to joint efforts in the fight against malaria, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Noting our shared objectives to protect the global climate and environment, we are proud of recent agreements to foster joint development of geothermal, biomass, solar and other applied technologies to reduce emissions, improve air and water quality and conserve scarce natural resources. Mindful of the recent declaration of the G–8 environment ministers at Leeds, we will together address the risks posed by climate change, enforce multilateral environmental agreements, protect marine diversity and reduce threats to the health of our children.

Together the United States and Italy, working with our partners in Europe and elsewhere, have the opportunity to shape a future that is more secure, peaceful, free, and brighter for all. We pledge to do all we can to make the most of this chance to build an enduring legacy of peace and prosperity for the 21st century.

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

Statement on Proposed Tobacco Legislation

May 6, 1998

I commend Representatives Hansen and Meehan for their hard work in putting together a strong bipartisan comprehensive tobacco bill designed to reduce youth smoking in this country. The Hansen-Meehan bill contains a substantial price increase, strong industry and company penalties for failure to reduce youth smoking, full FDA authority to regulate tobacco, strong restrictions on advertising and youth marketing of tobacco products, and strong protections against exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. I look forward to working with them

to ensure that their legislation adequately protects tobacco farmers and to pass a comprehensive tobacco bill this year.

Statement on Coerced Abstinence for Drug Offenders
May 6, 1998

This week, the Connecticut legislature adopted a statewide policy of coerced abstinence for drug offenders. Two States—Connecticut and Maryland—have now joined the Federal Government in embracing tough systems of testing and sanctions for drug offenders. All States should follow their lead, and Congress should support their efforts. The choice is simple: cut crime and drug use by demanding that criminals kick their drug habits, or release drug offenders back into the community knowing they will commit more crimes to feed their addiction.

Statement on Funding To Fight Methamphetamines
May 6, 1998

I am pleased today to announce $8.8 million of new Federal money from the Office of National Drug Control Policy's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Program to fight methamphetamines, a deadly drug. These new funds will bolster joint Federal, State and local law enforcement efforts now underway as part of this Administration's comprehensive National Methamphetamine Strategy. By further strengthening the ability of law enforcement to target those who produce and push methamphetamines, we take this deadly drug and the accompanying crime off our streets and protect our children.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Ukraine-United States Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreement With Documentation
May 6, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153 (b), (d)), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the United States of America and Ukraine Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, with accompanying annex and agreed minute. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the agreement, and the memorandum of the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency with the Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement concerning the agreement. The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, which includes a summary of the provisions of the agreement and various other attachments, including agency views, is also enclosed.

The proposed agreement with Ukraine has been negotiated in accordance with the Atomic energy Act of 1954, as amended by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 and as otherwise amended. In my judgment, the proposed agreement meets all statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States. The agreement provides a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation between the

United States and Ukraine under appropriate conditions and controls reflecting our common commitment to nuclear nonproliferation goals.

The proposed new agreement with Ukraine permits the transfer of technology, material, equipment (including reactors), and components for nuclear research, and nuclear power production. It provides for U.S. consent rights to retransfers, enrichment, and reprocessing as required by U.S. law. It does not permit transfers of any sensitive nuclear technology, restricted data, or sensitive nuclear facilities or major critical components of such facilities. In the event of termination, key conditions and controls continue with respect to material and equipment subject to the agreement.

Ukraine is a nonnuclear weapon state party to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Ukraine agreed to the removal of all nuclear weapons from its territory. It has a full-scope safeguards agreement in force with the International Atomic energy Agency (IAEA) to implement its safeguards obligations under the NPT. Ukraine was accepted as a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group in April 1996, and as a member of the NPT Exporters Committee (Zangger Committee) in May 1997.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the agreement and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

Because this agreement meets all applicable requirements of the Atomic energy Act, as amended, for agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation, I am transmitting it to the Congress without exempting it from any requirement contained in section 123 a. of that Act. This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. My Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 6, 1998.

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy

May 6, 1998

Good evening, and welcome to the White House, Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Prodi, distinguished members of the Italian delegation, my fellow Americans.

Mr. Prime Minister, today we accomplished a great deal. Tonight we celebrate the ties that bind us.

Those ties begin with the discoveries of Columbus and Vespucci, whose busts adorn the Blue Room next door. When the Founders created the American Republic, they looked to Rome for inspiration. George Washington was likened to Cincinnatus, the Roman hero who abandoned his plow to rescue his country by popular demand. I might say, they were the last two people to head our countries only by popular demand. [*Laughter*]

Poets and philosophers of the Roman Republic were read and rejuvenated as our new Republic looked to the past to plan our future. In the writings of ancient Roman thinkers like Cicero and Cato, America's Founders saw the promise of democratic representative government. Every aspect of our new Republic paid tribute to the simple grandeur of Rome: from our architecture to words like "senate" and "capitol." Indeed, after our Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked what our Founders had produced. His simple reply was, "A Republic, sir, if you can keep it."

Towns sprang up with the names from the ancient Mediterranean world, names like Utica, Troy, or the Vice President's hometown, Carthage. Artists portrayed America's leaders wearing togas, as the bust of George Washington in the hall demonstrates. Thankfully, that is a tradition we have left to the 19th century. [*Laughter*]

In the 19th and 20th centuries, our Republic turned into a bustling nation, thanks in no small measure to Italian-Americans. Ancient Rome was replaced by young Italy in the American imagination. And democracy was given new life by heroes like Mazzini and Garibaldi.

America's growing cities attracted millions of Italians, eager to build a new life in a new world. They worked hard. They prospered. Today American Italians, or Italian-Americans, are leaders in every enterprise conducted in our Nation. And as we all know, it is impossible to walk more than a few blocks in any American city without hearing the words "caffe latte." [*Laughter*]

The people here in this room tonight are the link between our two countries, between two cultures that have nourished each other since America was just an idea. From our highest courts to our finest tables, from our playing fields to our silver screen, from one side of the aisle in Congress to the other, Italian-Americans have graced our Nation with their intellect, their industry, their good will, and above all, a contagious love of life.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have accomplished so much in your time in office. You have presided over a string of economic successes. And Americans especially admire your perseverance in leading Italy toward European monetary union. Without Italy, Europe is not Europe. And without Europe, the world would be a poorer, less free, and much duller place.

Italy has been a force for peace and security in its region, on the Continent, around the world, in Albania, in Bosnia, and in Kosovo, where we're working hard together to bring about a peaceful resolution. America is proud to know you as a partner and an ally, and we are grateful for your provision of our military bases, sent to help maintain Europe's hard-won peace.

Mr. Prime Minister, we take pride in our strong friendship. We know it will continue to grow stronger as we enter the new millennium, a word that brings us, once again, back to Rome. For just as the *Pax Romana* spread far and wide through the ancient world, we hope and work for the peace of a new millennium that will allow more people than ever before to live their dreams in security.

If we can achieve a peace of the millennium, then the ancient dream of Columbus to explore new places can be lived by more people than ever—new places in outer space, in biotechnology and medical research, in the hearts and minds of people around the world who still look to Italy and America for confirmation that a good society can be created from many parts.

E pluribus unum, the motto of the United States, a principle cherished by Italians and Americans: Out of many, one. Mr. Prime Minister, let us make it so.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to the Prime Minister and Mrs. Prodi and the people of Italy.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Prime Minister's wife, Flavia Prodi. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Prodi.

Remarks to the Mayors Conference on Public Schools

May 7, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Mayor, Secretary Riley, thank you for your outstanding work. I'd like to thank Attorney General Reno and Secretary Slater, Secretary Herman, Secretary Glickman for also coming, along with James Lee Witt, our FEMA Director. I'd like to thank Mickey Ibarra and Lynn Cutler for the work that they do with you and all the other members of the White House staff, and say a special

word of welcome to Senator Kennedy and Congressman Martinez, about whom I'll say more in a moment.

I'm sorry if I cost Mayor Helmke any votes in the Republican primary. [*Laughter*] It is his great misfortune to have been my friend for a long time. But surely, whatever he lost he got back by outing me as a law school truant today. [*Laughter*] I hope he has recovered all that lost ground. Unfortunately, it's true. [*Laughter*]

Because this is my only opportunity to appear before the press today, before I get into my remarks about education I would like to make a few important comments about the peace process in the Middle East.

First, I think it's important in the temporary frustration of the moment not to forget what Israelis and Palestinians have accomplished in just the past few years: the peace agreement signed here in September of 1993, based on the Oslo accords, the agreement over Hebron, continuing in very open dialog, an unprecedented amount of security cooperation. What we are trying to do now is simply to regain the momentum that has been lost in the past few months, not by imposing our ideas on anyone, because only the parties can make decisions that will affect the lives they have to live, their security, and their future.

What we're searching for is common ground to achieve what Prime Minister Netanyahu asked us to pursue a year ago, the start of accelerated permanent status negotiations. It's important not to forget that. We are not talking about a final agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis. What we're talking about is what kind of agreement can they make within the framework of their previous agreements that will get them into discussing all the difficult issues that would allow them to wrap this up, hopefully on time by the end of May next year, which was the timetable established in the Oslo accords.

Secretary Albright, I believe, made some real progress in London. Both Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat were seriously constructive. They discussed a set of ideas that we believe are necessary to get into those final status talks.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has asked us to send our Special Envoy, Dennis Ross, back to the region to pursue creative ways to make our ideas acceptable to both sides. He leaves later today with my instruction to literally go the extra mile, to seize this opportunity for peace, to launch the final status talks.

The Prime Minister and I agreed to try to do this a year ago, and we're going to do our best. I do not want to minimize the difficulties. Both sides have to make very hard decisions if we're going to keep moving forward. But the prize is a just and lasting and secure peace, and the prize can be attained. We're going to do everything we can to make it a reality.

Now, let me say what I said to you before when I was asked to appear before this conference. I applaud the mayors for holding this meeting on education. You have done an enormous service to the county by being here and by putting this document out. You can lead the way to a revolution of high standards and high expectations, of genuine accountability and real choice in education. And I believe you are determined to do so.

In the past few years, a lot has been done by dedicated teachers, fine principals, supportive parents, other committed reformers, and our students. But all of us know we have a lot more to do. We know that we have the world's best system of higher education, and we've taken unprecedented steps to open the doors of college to all Americans. We're moving forward on other levels, as well.

Tuesday, the United States Senate passed, 91 to 7, a bill that articulates the principles that I set out 5 years ago in my proposed "GI bill" for America's workers. I think all educators know that we have to create a system of lifetime learning in America. Everybody has got to be able to go back to school throughout their lifetime. Indeed, one of the most important provisions in the balanced budget was that which provided a HOPE scholarship tax credit of $1,500 a year for first 2 years of college and continuing tax credits for other forms of education for people of any age when they have to go back to school.

What this "GI bill" will do, this present legislation that the Senate passed, is to untangle and streamline the current large number of Government programs on job training so that workers can get a simple skill grant to choose the training they need. That is very important.

But everyone knows we still have a lot of work to do in our public schools. Our public schools, for generations, have taught our children not only how to read and write but what

it means to be an American. And they have embodied the principle that everyone ought to have a fair and equal chance to live out their dreams. We know we have to strengthen them to do their job for the 21st century. As I said, there is a lot to be proud of. It's important to remember—and I think the evidence will show—that since the issuance of the "Nation At Risk" report in 1983, dedicated teachers, visionary principals, committed students, and involved parents have accomplished a lot. But a lot needs to be done.

Our schools are still not giving our children, particularly our children who come in from the most difficult circumstances that Mayor Helmke discussed, the best education in the world. And therefore, I really thank you for this action plan. It reflects the lessons that have been learned in communities across America. It reflects the goals I have sought to advance, that Secretary Riley has worked his heart out on for more than 5 years now.

And I think it's worth mentioning what they are. Every child in every community must master the basics with national standards in reading and math. Every child must have the chance to learn in small classes, especially in the early grades. That's why I proposed a national effort to hire 100,000 more teachers and distribute them in a way that will enable us to get average class size down to 18 in the first 3 grades. Every child should have more public school choice and the opportunity to learn in a modern, safe, state-of-the-art school. No child in any community, in my opinion, should be passed from grade to grade, year after year, without mastering the material. I believe that those things are principles that, if they were real in every school in America, would strengthen education dramatically.

I've often said, based on my own personal experience, that there's no education problem anywhere in America that hasn't been solved by somebody somewhere in America. We have to do more, all of us, to shine a spotlight on reforms that work at the local level and then to encourage people to embrace other people's changes.

You know, our Founding Fathers set up the States as laboratories of democracy. That was the phrase used by James Madison and by other Founders. And in so many ways, they are. I used to say, when I was a Governor, I was much more proud of being the second State to do something than to be the first State to do something, because if we were the second State to do something, it meant we were paying attention to the laboratories and we weren't embarrassed to take somebody else's good idea if it would help our people. I think today, more than any other single group of people, the mayors embody that spirit.

And this report that Secretary Riley is issuing today called "Turning Around Low Performing Schools," shows that, number one, it can be done and shows what is done. Let me just show it to you; Dick just gave me a copy of it before I came in. I hope this will be read by every mayor, every Governor, every school superintendent in the entire United States of America. If nothing else, it will give people the courage to know that no matter how difficult their problems are, things can get better, much better. And I hope that others will be as unashamed as I was when I was a Governor to take other people's ideas. It's okay to give them credit, but the main thing you need to do is to take them.

When parents and teachers take responsibility, asking more of themselves, their children, and their leaders, you can replace triumph—you can replace failure with triumph. That's what this report shows. It shows that no school is a lost cause and that no child is a lost cause.

A lot of you have been kind and generous and openminded enough basically to embrace and elevate the remarkable experiment launched by Mayor Daley in Chicago. They looked at their schools; they saw low test scores, high dropout rates, students literally earning diplomas who couldn't read them. But instead of walking away, they went to work. Chicago ended social promotion, but Chicago also gave more after-school opportunities, had mandatory summer school for children who did not pass from grade to grade. And we now see, in addition to a lot of other changes, including far more involvement by parents, school by school, we now see high standards and uncompromising excellence coming back into the classrooms of that city. And I have been in the Chicago schools, I believe, three times in the last couple of years—I was just there recently—and it is truly amazing.

The thing that has moved me most, I think, was we were at a school—not the last time, Mayor, but the time before last—in which there

were lots of parents there who had clearly rejected the notion that the worst thing for their child's self-esteem was being forced to go to summer school or forced to repeat a grade. They understood that by the time they were 30 years old, if they couldn't fill out a job application or read it in the first place, that would do far more damage to their self-esteem than having to spend a few more months learning. And that was a terrific achievement. And I think you deserve a great deal of credit for it. And I thank you for what you've done.

I believe we have to use standards in testing to identify children who are failing to learn, to make sure they get the extra help they need. I believe that we have to say to every student that America cares about you; America believes in you whether you believe in yourself or not, right now; but it is our fundamental value in education that you must learn in order to be certified as a learner.

Let me also say, I think we have to say that it is absolutely wrong to go about this business of saying you're going to end social promotion or have testing with standards and then not do what it takes to bring the children up to speed. It would be wrong to do this without giving those after-school opportunities, without providing those tutorial opportunities, without providing those summer school opportunities.

And I want to say—I see Sandy Feldman here—I want to say that I think that the teachers of this country will lead the way on this if they believe that the kids are going to get the long-term support they need to be held to the high standards. And I think the leaders of the AFT and the NEA feel that way, and I think local teachers in every school throughout this country feel that way.

No one wants to be a part of a failing enterprise, especially when the stakes are the highest they could possibly be, the future of our children. And if you look at these two things, if you say, "Okay, we know this can be done, and everybody wants to do it," then the only remaining question is, what do we have to do and why aren't we doing it? And I see now more and more cities responding to this call: Boston, Cincinnati, Long Beach, Rochester, Washington, New York, Philadelphia are all taking steps to end social promotion. I've been in many of the schools in cities that are here in this audience represented, and I know that there are people working to take the kind of responsibility for transforming their schools.

Now, if you're going to do that, we have a responsibility to help. As Paul said, there are some disputes about what the role of the National Government should be, as opposed to the States, as opposed to the local level. I think it's important to put on the table first that the Federal Government's role in education has always been somewhat limited. It's less than a dime on the dollar of the education money. That means that we should focus on what works, on national priorities, and on helping schools that need the most help because they have the least ability to provide for the needs of their people.

We also ought to focus on those that manifest a desire to do the right thing. If you know what works, you ought to reward that. That's why I have proposed a network of what we call education opportunity zones. Today, Senator Kennedy, Congressman Clay, and others, and Mr. Martinez—thank you for being here—will introduce legislation to create these zones all across America.

They will target poor urban and rural communities where schools are often in crisis. They will spread reforms that work. You get the benefit of these zones if you're prepared to end social promotion, impose higher standards, recognize good schools, turn around failing ones, give parents public school choice, reward outstanding teachers, help those who are having trouble, remove those who cannot make the grade, and make sure that all children get the help they need through after-school tutoring and summer school.

This bill should be supported by everyone in both parties who cares about children and who cares about turning around failing schools. It is the only way we can offer opportunity to and demand responsibility from all the children in all of our communities all across America.

I think one of the most interesting things—I asked for a report before I came out here about the cities that are working in environments where they don't have the level of direct control that the mayor enjoys in Chicago, and I got a good report on what some of you are doing in various cities. And the only thing I would say about that is that, either through a cooperative process or in some other way, in the end someone has to have the ability to make

a decision and make it stick. Someone has to have the ability to make a decision. We don't make those decisions in Washington. We can create a framework. We can create opportunities. We can give money. But in the end, if a change has to be made, there has to be someone who can make the change.

I've already said that I believe—and I strongly believe—there's enough evidence of what works that if we get the people together at the local level, you can create an environment in which that's happening. But the mayors, even if they don't directly control the schools, have to be willing to speak up and say that this is not being done if it's not being done. You are the only people who can do that. You are still the single voice of your cities.

And I have now spent hours and hours and hours looking at the Chicago experiment. I have spent no little amount of time on several other school systems, including some represented in this room. And I honestly believe that in the end, if no one can make a decision and they can always bat authority back and forth and no one can be held accountable and no one's willing to be responsible for what doesn't work as well for what does, it's going to be very tough.

So we'll do our best to push this bill. I hope you'll help us pass it. I think it will really support what you're trying to do. But you know as well as I do, that if we have a value of no social promotion, if we have a value that says every child can learn, if we're trying to propose what works, in the end someone has to be able to take responsibility for making that decision.

Now, let me say that we've got a comprehensive education agenda in the Congress, as all of you know. We're trying to get the funds to aid for school construction and school repair. Many of our cities have average age of their school buildings over 65 years. Many of our other cities have huge numbers of children going to school in trailers every day. I hope we can pass the construction bill. I hope we can pass the smaller classes.

We're doing our best to get full authorization for America Reads, to continue our work to help you hook up all the classrooms and libraries in the country to the Internet by the year 2000, to continue our struggle for national standards, including the tests in reading and math at the fourth and eighth grade.

We have made some progress on some of these issues in Congress. We may have a chance to talk about that in the question and answer period. But so far we have not been able to persuade the Congress to embrace the smaller class sizes, the modernized schools, the more teachers, the higher standards. We're going to keep working to do that. I want to ask Congress to join with the mayors across party lines to do what is right for our children in the 21st century.

You have set an example, all of you, without regard to party, who have put your children first. Just remember this: I had a meeting with the head of the Federal Reserve Board, Alan Greenspan, a couple of days ago, and he said—it was really interesting—he said, "You know, it's hard to be sure about everything that's going on in this economy, but one thing is absolutely clear. It is now being powered by ideas. We live in an economy of ideas. You have more wealth growth on less density of physical product than ever before in human history, and the trend will continue unabated. That means all the opportunities of tomorrow are those that are in the minds of our children waiting to be brought out." You recognize that, and together we have to bring them out.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN, president, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Ambassador Dennis Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; and Sandra Feldman, president, American Federation of Teachers.

Statement on New Initiatives in Support of Peace in Northern Ireland
May 7, 1998

Today, I met with 10 women and men representing the WAVE Center in Northern Ireland, a support group for those who have been touched by the political violence of the past three decades. Each of these extraordinary individuals, representing both traditions in Northern Ireland, has suffered—losing members of their families or being badly wounded themselves. I was inspired by their courage in rejecting violence and working for lasting peace in a land where people are not labeled by religion or national preference, inspired by their vision of a future marked by reconciliation and cooperation. And I will never forget their personal stories of sorrow and suffering, stories which are shared by many people of both communities in Northern Ireland. WAVE proves hatred can be overcome by hope, division can give way to unity, as victims of Northern Ireland's tragic past work together for brighter future.

The Good Friday Agreement, forged by an extraordinary group of leaders representing the full range of Northern Ireland society and politics, offers the people of Northern Ireland the chance of a lifetime to secure a lasting peace. It is time for all the parties to say no—once and for all—to violence and yes to hope, to make a decisive break with the past and launch a brighter future. There is no better way to honor the sacrifice of the people with whom I met today—and so many more like them.

America has stood by those who have stood for peace, and we will continue to do our part to help the people of Northern Ireland realize tangible benefits of peace—so the despair that accompanied violence can give way to faith in the future.

Since 1993, this administration and the Congress have contributed $100 million to the International Fund for Ireland for Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland. I am today announcing a series of actions to bolster the foundations of peace.

First, I am committed to seeing that the new West Belfast Springvale Campus project is completed. I intend to work with Congress to make available up to $5 million to make this happen. As a first step, I am directing Jim Lyons, my Adviser for Economic Initiatives, who is also our observer on the Board of the International Fund for Ireland, to confirm that the IFI will approve those funds. Four years ago, at our initiative, we and our partners in the IFI provided the initial £5 million that seeded this project. Straddling the peace line that once divided Protestant from Catholic, the Springvale Campus will give students of both communities the chance to acquire the education to match their indomitable spirit—and in so doing, encourage cohesion, community pride, and economic growth.

I am asking the United States Information Agency to support the Springvale Campus with its full range of educational programs, including Fulbright, international visitors, and citizen exchanges. USIA will also foster links between Springvale and one or more American universities to promote cooperation between their faculties and establish long-term ties.

Second, the United States is committed to helping the communities in Northern Ireland build the new institutions created by the April 10 accord. The new Assembly will give the people both a voice and a stake in their peace, but the challenges to create a functioning institution are great. My administration will work with Congress to make available $500,000 as soon as possible to fund programs to support this effort.

Third, Secretary Daley will visit Northern Ireland in early June with a high-level U.S. business delegation to intensify what is already a substantial economic relationship. With peace holding firm, there are strong business opportunities we must pursue now to boost prosperity and the hope for the future that is crucial to the foundations of peace.

Fourth, USIA is supporting the collaboration of the Philadelphia Jobs Initiative with Worktrain, a Northern Ireland welfare-to-work initiative. I will meet with representatives of the two organizations during the U.S.-EU Summit in London.

Finally, I am pleased to announce a Vital Voices Conference to be held in Belfast in early fall, with cosponsorship from the United States and regional partners. This conference will

showcase and support women's role in the economic and political life of their society. The women of Northern Ireland—wives, mothers, and daughters—have borne an enormous share of the trauma of the Troubles. Now, their participation will be essential to build a future of peace and reconciliation. I've asked the First Lady to travel to Belfast to take part in this important conference.

We have seen around the world how Americans have rallied to help the lands of their ancestors. I hope the Irish-American community will continue to support the voices of peace in Northern Ireland. My administration will continue to do all we can to foster hope and healing in Northern Ireland and to help its people build a new age of peace for their families and future generations.

Statement on Senate Action on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

May 7, 1998

I am very pleased that IRS reform took a major step forward today with bipartisan passage of the Senate bill. We've worked hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer and more responsive to their needs and to support the many dedicated IRS employees who do want to serve them well. We've made progress, and final passage of this reform bill will help our efforts to give Americans the modern, customer-friendly IRS they deserve.

Vice President Gore and Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin last year completed a top-to-bottom review of customer service at the IRS. This effort has launched a complete revamping of customer service at the IRS. IRS offices and phones are open longer, problemsolving days have been instituted, and independent citizen advocacy panels are being launched. I've also appointed a new kind of IRS Commissioner. Charles Rossotti is an experienced businessman who understands technology and understands customer service. Certainly, not every problem will be solved overnight, but our new Commissioner is committed to ongoing reform and to correcting problems when they arise.

The Senate bill, like the House bill, will provide Commissioner Rossotti the tools he needs to succeed, and it will expand taxpayer rights. The new personnel flexibility provisions will allow the IRS to bring in talent and expertise from the private sector. The bill provides taxpayers with a stronger Taxpayer Advocate. It also advances the important goal of expanding electronic filing of tax returns to make it easier for taxpayers.

I urge the House and Senate to act quickly and send me a bill to sign that expands taxpayer rights and moves us forward towards delivering an IRS the American people deserve. We will continue to work with the Congress on a bipartisan basis on a final bill that advances our shared goals, that avoids unintended benefits for noncompliant taxpayers, and that is consistent with our commitment to fiscal discipline.

Remarks to the Arab American Institute Conference

May 7, 1998

Thank you, Jim. To Elie Abboud and Fuad Ateyeh, all the members of the Arab American Institute, the National Arab American Business Association, Palestinian American Congress; to Prince Bandar and the members of the diplomatic corps—all of you, thank you for coming. My fellow Americans: I like getting advice from Jim Zogby's mother. [*Laughter*] And she has a remarkable read on the world. Her son John, a renowned pollster, has nothing on her. In fact, I think her numbers are better than his for me sometimes. [*Laughter*] I also want to say a special word of appreciation to Jim for his advice over the years. He is a remarkable voice

for calm and clarity, no matter how heated the issues. But I can tell you, he is one of the most forceful, intense, and brutally honest people who ever come to the White House to see me. And you should be proud of that.

I understand that I am the first sitting President to address an Arab-American conference. [*Applause*] Thank you. I see Congressman Moran in the audience; he came here so the Irish would not be alone at the podium. And I thank him for that. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to be the first President, but I'm surprised, frankly, and also a little disappointed, because the Arab-American community has made an enormous contribution to this country with basic values that made us great: love of family, and belief in hard work and personal responsibility, and a passionate devotion to education, which I hope we will see engulf every single ethnic group in America today.

I congratulate you on the way you have found your voice, on speaking out on a wide range of domestic issues and not just on the questions involving the Middle East. A record number of Arab-Americans are now running for and serving in public office, including the United States Congress. But even the newest Yemeni immigrants, once poor farmers, are now small-business owners, achieving their rightful share of the American dream.

I wanted to talk with you very briefly tonight about how we can work together at home and around the world at the end of this century to prepare for the challenges and the staggering opportunities of the one about to dawn.

First, we must help all Americans see our diversity as our greatest strength. People ask me from time to time why I feel so passionately about this, and they assume rightly it's partly, maybe largely, because I'm a southerner and I grew up with the old and still unfinished business between black and white Americans. But I also grew up in a very unusual town for the South. My hometown had only 35,000 people, but it was a national park and a place with healing hot waters, and we had all kinds of people coming there to retire. So here I was a little boy growing up in the South in a town that had two synagogues—35,000 people—we had two synagogues, a Greek Orthodox Church, a huge Czech community, a Lithuanian community, and just about somebody from everywhere.

But my attitudes about Arab-Americans were first formed because I was good friends with a young immigrant named David Zorab who came to my home State after he was orphaned and grew up to become the valedictorian of my high school class. And he went on to become a brilliant physician in Pennsylvania. And I suppose that I always wanted all Americans to enjoy the kind of life I had as a child. And yet, a lot of people around me didn't have that life, because they were imprisoned by their own prejudices. We have to free this country of all those prejudices.

I know it is true that Arab-Americans still feel the sting of being stereotyped in false ways. I have done what I could to warn against that. The saddest encounter, I suppose, was when we went through the heartbreaking experience of Oklahoma City, and many people were quick to rush to judgment. And I remember that terrible day when I urged the American people not to do so.

I am very grateful not only to Jim but to others among you who have been an active part of my race initiative. And I'm very pleased that you're now working with Jewish-Americans and members of several European ethnic groups to organize, I think, six regional forums on race and diversity around our Nation over the coming year.

These sorts of things don't often make headlines in the news today because they work; therefore, they are not sufficiently contentious. And when there is no blood on the floor at the end of the meeting, they are often considered not newsworthy. They are profoundly important. And I believe that there is a deeper hunger among Americans of all kinds to discuss these matters in an honest and open way than even most of us appreciate.

I was amazed, I just got a letter from ESPN. They sponsored sort of a townhall on race the other night with athletes and coaches and others. And I think they were truly astonished because they had about the same viewership as they do for a pro basketball game. And moreover, the viewership picked up as the program went on, so the channel surfers saw it and decided they ought to hang on for a while. So I would encourage you to continue that. Don't let any American have the misfortune of never having known an Arab-American. You can do that if you try.

The second thing we have to do is keep working until we bring the spark of enterprise and opportunity to every corner of the Nation. It

may be hard to believe, since we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and the lowest inflation rate in over 30 years and the highest homeownership in the history of the country and a record number of small business starts in the last 5 years, including those started by many Arab-Americans, but not every American has had the chance to reap the rewards of this remarkable prosperity. You understand clearly the power and the dignity that comes from being able to earn a living to support a family. We have to bring this kind of opportunity throughout America. I have put before the Congress several proposals to close the opportunity gaps: empowerment zones, community development financial institutions, housing and other development initiatives. I hope they will be positively acted upon this year, and I ask you for your support.

The third thing we have to do is to build the world's finest education system. We have done so with our universities, and we are blessed to have people not only of all different races and ethnic groups in America attend them but people from all over the world. But no one would seriously assert that we had today the finest system of elementary and secondary education, and yet it is more important than ever before.

A couple of days ago, I had a fascinating conversation with the head of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, and we were talking about the phenomenal prosperity our country is enjoying and the number of the developments around the world. And he said, "You know, we really are completely now engulfed by an economy based on ideas." He said that there is an interesting measure of the total physical output of a country compared to its wealth. And he said our total physical output in terms of mass is hardly increased at all, while the stock market and our national wealth has exploded because we have an economy based on ideas. In such an economy, it is unforgivable neglect to permit children to grow up and go through the school system and not be able to participate in that economy because their minds have not developed to the point where they can. And it is not necessary.

Again, I have laid before the Congress a number of proposals that will make education our number one priority and result in dramatic improvements of our schools: smaller classes, better teaching, higher standards, expanded choice, more discipline, greater accountability.

Today I met with a group of mayors who endorsed my proposal to end social promotion but to increase the amount of help we're giving to children who are having trouble in school, more after-school help, more summer schools, more support. In Chicago, where they are now requiring children who don't make the grade to go to summer school, they're seeing children in summer school gain as much as 2 years in reading and mathematics capacity, just in one intense summer effort.

So again I say to you—so many of you know you are the living proof that education is the key to opportunity. Just across the river from here, in Fairfax County, we have a school district with children from 180 different national and ethnic groups whose native languages number in excess of 100. Now, I think that's a good thing. I think that is a great thing for America in a global society. But you can only imagine what will happen if they're all well-educated, and unfortunately, you can only imagine what will happen if vast numbers of them are not well-educated.

So think about what brought you all here tonight and how you came to be here. And we have to do this. We have to do it. The Federal Government, the President, can only do so much. Parents have to do a lot; teachers have to do a lot; the kids have to do the most. But we owe it to them, as a society, to provide educational opportunity second to none and to make sure that every child's mind has a chance to be developed.

Now, the fourth thing that we have to do is to continue as Americans to lead the world toward peace and freedom. If we can set an example and live together across all the lines that divide us, not simply respecting but actually celebrating our differences and honoring them—not tolerating them but honoring them—we clearly have a responsibility to do that elsewhere.

Now that the cold war is over and people are not being drawn like magnets to two different economic and political systems, it is natural that people would reexamine the premises on which they are organized and on which they govern themselves. It is, I suppose, natural—at least it is predictable—that we would even have a resurgence of destructive ethnic impulses, as we have seen in Bosnia, as we see

in Kosovo even tonight, in other parts of the world; as we saw in the tragedy where somewhere between 700,000 and a million people were killed in Rwanda in the short space of 100 days, and without weapons of mass destruction, so that it had to be done in the grizzliest, most inhumane way.

But we can do better. In Northern Ireland, representatives of all the major parties have reached an historic agreement that I hope and pray will be ratified by the voters of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in just a few days. I think all of us, and especially all of you, should take a special measure of pride that those talks in Northern Ireland were chaired by George Mitchell, the former majority leader, who is, of course, also of Lebanese descent.

Today I met with members of a group of Irish people who had all lost sons or husbands or brothers in the Troubles. They are now working to help each other and others like them work for peace, both inner peace and peace among the Irish. And I suppose, in every part of the world, you can hardly have one without the other.

We are now also, as all of you know, working very hard to regain the momentum for peace in the Middle East. The last year has been so frustrating for the people of the Middle East, so frustrating for the peace-loving people in the Palestinian areas and in Israel, that it's easy to forget how far we have come in the last few years. We've had the Oslo accords, the Washington peace signing in September of '93, the Hebron agreement, unprecedented security cooperation, the open dialog that had been established; all these things were quite important. They have brought the possibility of peace closer than ever before. All I'm trying to do is to regain that momentum. We have an opportunity to get this process moving again and to move forward.

It has been my experience in life—and I've lived long enough now to see it—that in almost every area of human endeavor, opportunities do not last forever; they must be seized. And I hope this one will be seized. Difficult choices have been made—will have to be made—by Palestinians and Israelis alike. And we cannot impose a solution because we—even you—will not have to live out the consequences. But we must—we must—try to help find enough common ground to return to the dialog. Keep in mind, what we are trying to do is to get the parties over a hurdle so they can get into these final status talks, so we can stay on the timetable established a few years ago by both the Palestinians and the Israelis to finish the whole thing by this month next year. Now, I am sending Ambassador Dennis Ross back to Israel tonight to go the extra mile to help the parties seize this opportunity.

All of you know what invaluable benefits peace can bring to the people of the region. All of you know how much suffering has been undergone by people because of the absence of peace. All of you know how much extra suffering has been borne every time there is an interruption of normalcy. We have got to get this done. I am doing the very best I can, and I know you are, too.

I have given a lot of thought to what makes people get into downward spirals. We see it in horrible terms when violence occurs and life is lost, not just in the Middle East but anyplace—in Bosnia, where we were able to end a war, in other places. We see it in less violent ways when people in positions of public responsibility get into a downward spiral of destructive attempts to hurt each other for political reasons that have no larger public purpose.

We all have to struggle every day. I used to tell my daughter when she was at home that it's almost like all of us get up every day with an inner scale inside, with lightness and constructive, positive behavior on one side and all our darkest fears on the other. And the scales are always shifting in balance, and every day you have to get up and push the scale down on the right side. We all have to fight it. And when I get very discouraged about it, and I think, well, we're all just going to run up against a dead end, I try to remember the examples of people who have overcome more than I can imagine. I'll never forget the first time I talked to Nelson Mandela about how he actually made himself overcome his hatred of his oppressors so that he could wait and endure 27 long years until he could bring it all together. And he said, "You know, they took a lot from me when I was in prison. I never saw my children grow up. I lost my personal life. I was brutalized. I was humiliated. Finally, it occurred to me they could take everything away from me but my mind and my heart. Those things I would have to give away. I decided not to give them away."

I ask you to remain resolute and to remain passionate, but always to be large. Do not give away the best part of your own lives. Do not give away the best part of your hopes. We will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Elie Abboud, president, National Arab American Business Association; Fuad Ateyeh, president, Arab American Congress; Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States; James J. Zogby, president, Arab American Institute, and John J. Zogby, president, Zogby International, and their mother, Celia Zogby; and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

Remarks to the Delaware State Legislature in Dover
May 8, 1998

Thank you, Governor. I took good notes: No children on a child care waiting list; all poor 4-year-olds in Head Start; every classroom wired. I'll be saying that now every time I go to another city or another State; I'll be saying, if Delaware can do it, why can't you. And I thank you.

I want to thank the Governor, and Senator Sharp, Speaker Spence, Lieutenant Governor Minner, the members of the legislature, the judiciary, the State officials who are here; former Governors Peterson and Tribbitt, and other distinguished citizens of this State; Mr. Mayor. I'm delighted to be joined today by the Secretary of Defense, who is going with me to Dover Air Base when we finish here to thank our air men and women there for their distinguished service, and who has also been a leader in education, because the Department of Defense runs schools all over the world for American children; by our wonderful Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; by Mickey Ibarra, the Director of our Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; and others. We are all delighted to be here.

And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Congressman Castle for coming up here with me. He's an old friend of mine. We worked together on welfare reform more than a decade ago now. I have been trying to decide, when Mike and Tom changed jobs, which one really got the promotion. [*Laughter*]

I am delighted to be the first President ever to speak here. The others did not know what they were missing. I love your capitol building. I like the feel of your legislature. I like the size of your legislature. [*Laughter*] I wonder if it would take a constitutional amendment to reduce Congress to this size. [*Laughter*] It's a wonderful idea.

And I like the fact that the first State in the Nation is leading in doing the Nation's first business of educating our children. I've come here to talk about that work, why it is, in the States and in many communities around the country, and must be in Washington, the work of both Republicans and Democrats—why it must be a national crusade to give our children the world's best education.

We have a history of putting nation above party when the Nation's security and future are at issue. We did it for 50 years, which is why the cold war turned out the way it did. The tradition was deeply honored by Secretary Cohen, who left a distinguished career in the United States Senate as a Republican Senator from Maine to join our administration, and he is performing well for the American people as Secretary of Defense.

It is a tradition embodied by your Senators, Bill Roth and Joe Biden, who led the recent stunningly successful effort to expand NATO to include Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. And you should be very proud of both of them.

And I have seen it, having had the opportunity to work for years now with Mike Castle and Tom Carper when they were in both jobs in succession, on welfare reform, on child care, on the education of our children. And you can be very proud of both of them.

And Delaware, maybe because it's a small State and maybe because I came from a small State and was often ridiculed for it in national politics—my experience is that maybe because

we're smaller, people learn to treat each other as people. They learn to listen to people on opposite sides of the aisle. They learn that they don't have all the answers and that everybody's got a valuable perspective and that in the end, we all have to get together and do something that moves our country or our State or our community forward. And for all of that, I am very grateful to the State of Delaware.

Thomas Jefferson once said of your State that "Delaware is like a diamond, small, but having within it inherent value." If he were today here giving this speech, he might say, being as he was a modern thinker, Delaware is like a silicon chip—[*laughter*]—small, but having within it enormous inherent value; namely, the power to shape the future.

You have always looked to the future, from the time you did become the first State to ratify the Constitution. It was the beginning of many firsts: Delaware was the first State to produce a transatlantic iron steamship; then there was the first commercial telephone call between an airplane and a moving car, 100 years later—some of us would probably like it if telephone calls on airplanes and cars were not possible—[*laughter*]—all the way to the remarkable innovations now being dreamed up in the DuPont labs.

All of this is dramatically changing the world. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, came by the White House for one of our periodic meetings a few days ago, and we were talking about this incredible economy. And he said, you know, we really are living in an economy of ideas. He said there is a measure of a nation's output in wealth compared to its physical output, the literal physical density of all the goods that are produced. He said the measure is more skewed now than ever before; there is hardly any increase in the mass of what we're producing, but the wealth of what we're producing is exploding. Why? Because ideas are driving the increase in the wealth of the Nation.

Today we learned that our unemployment rate has dropped to 4.3 percent, the lowest since 1970. That is particularly impressive in light of the fact that inflation now is the lowest in more than 30 years; homeownership is at an all-time high; the welfare rolls are the lowest in 27 years; the crime rate is the lowest in 24 years.

Our social fabric is mending. We saw that teen pregnancy had had a substantial drop for the second year in a row, something I know that the Governor has been passionately committed to. Our leadership in the world is still unrivaled, although we seem sometimes to be in some doubt about it here at home.

In Delaware, your unemployment is all the way down to 3.4 percent. You've had tens of thousands of new jobs, twice the rate of new business growth as 5 years ago.

The thing I would like to say about all this is, no one can claim full responsibility for it, there was not a totally coordinated strategy, but it did not happen by accident. America has been on the same page, from our strategy in Washington to balance the budget, invest in our people, and expand trade, to the entrepreneurs, to the scientists and technicians, to the teachers in our schools and the people who run our business and the folks who work in our factories. We have been on the same page. Good things don't happen by accident, even when millions—even hundreds of millions of people are responsible.

And we must be on the same page when it comes to education. Before I get into what I want to say about education, I want to make a point I tried to make in the State of the Union. I've had a lot of people—people who are primarily political people, good people but people who normally think about things in political terms—say to me, "Well, you know, why don't you just relax and start playing golf three times a week? I mean, you've got low unemployment, low inflation; people are suspicious of Government; why don't—just don't do much and everybody will be happy."

There is an answer to that. And the answer is that that might be a decent prescription for a static time, but in a dynamic time where things are changing very rapidly, the fact that things are good in the moment does not guarantee they will be good 5 months or 5 years from now, because they're changing. So you have to keep working to stay ahead of the curve. And those of us in public life have to work no less than entrepreneurs do. If you go to Silicon Valley, you don't see anybody out there sort of laying down on the job just because the stock prices are high, because they know how dynamic the world is.

And there is a second answer, which is that we still have some very profound challenges that, if left unmet, will come back to haunt

us in the 21st century. What are they? I can only tell you what I think they are.

I think, first of all, in Washington we have to reform our major programs of social cohesion, Social Security and Medicare, for the needs of the 21st century and for the reality that the baby boomers are going to retire, and when they do, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The present systems are unsustainable as they are. We have to change them, consistent with our values and the real facts.

Two, we have to prove that you can grow the economy without destroying the environment. And we have to convince people in developing countries that they can and to embrace new technologies to do that. Just a few days ago, I was out in California at a low-income/moderate-income housing development which is cutting by 40 percent the energy usage on low-income housing, using solar panels that are not now those big, heavy things you've seen on the roof but that look just like ordinary shingles, using windows that keep over half the heat in in the wintertime and over half the heat out in the summertime and still let more light in, and other basic things like that. We have to prove that we can make environmental preservation and economic growth go hand in hand.

The third thing we've got to do is to bring the spark of enterprise to poor inner-city communities and rural communities, including Native American ones, that haven't felt it.

The fourth thing we have to do is to prove that we can live together as one America in an increasingly diverse society.

The fifth thing we have to do, I would argue, is to prove that we can lead the world after the cold war in a consistent, firm way toward peace and prosperity and freedom and democracy.

But none of that will matter if we don't save our children. And that's what I want to talk about today—only one aspect of it, but in some ways the most important one. And Delaware, again, is leading the Nation. So I may be preaching to the choir, but that's not all bad. I'll polish the sermon and see if I do better in other places.

The condition of education in America and the importance of it and the impact it's going to have on all our futures, as well as all our children, demands action from all of us, in Washington, in State capitals, in communities all across the country. Many of our greatest challenges don't fall under the authority of Washington, nor should they. I have supported giving States more authority in the area of welfare reform and in many other areas. Secretary Riley has cut by two-thirds the burden of regulations coming out of Federal education aid. We started two new programs, Goals 2000 and School-to-Work, without a single new Federal regulation.

The Federal Government can't do all this. Some of our major challenges don't even fall primarily under State government, nor should they. The power and the responsibility of America to meet the challenges of the 21st century rests with all levels of government and with all sectors of society—sometimes more with the private sector; sometimes more with its most fundamental unit, the American family. And that is as it should be.

But just because responsibility and power are dispersed doesn't mean that we don't all have to ask ourselves, what power do we have to have a positive impact? What is our responsibility? And then we have to move, because a revolution in education will not occur by accident any more than the revolution in the American economy has occurred by accident, even though there will be millions of people working on it and we may not all be calling each other on the phone every day.

Yesterday I talked to mayors from all over the country; I received their report on what they think should be done. Their agenda is very much like yours and very much like mine.

I suppose that I've spent more time on education than any other thing in my 20 years and more in public life now. Nearly 10 years ago, when I was a Governor of my State, I stayed up almost all night down at the University of Virginia at President Bush's Education Summit, working with Republican Governors to write goals for education for the year 2000. It was clear then, it was clear way back in 1983 when the "Nation At Risk" report was issued, and it is certainly clear today that if we are going to prepare our children for the 21st century, we cannot hope to do it unless we can say with a straight face, "We are giving them the best education in the world, not just a few of them but all of them."

And we can all say, "Well, we can't be responsible for every teacher. We can't be responsible for every principal. We can't be responsible for every home. We can't be responsible for every

unmotivated child." That's all true, but we can play the odds. Secretary Cohen runs, arguably, the most effective organization in the entire United States. Not every soldier, not every airman, not every marine, not every sailor is a stunning success, but they've got a pretty good system. And it didn't happen by accident. And we should take that as our responsibility.

It seems to me the keys are high expectations, high standards, and high performance, fueled by more opportunity, more accountability, and more choice. Secretary Riley and I have worked at this for more than 5 years. In one area, we have been especially successful and widely supported across partisan lines and in States and local communities. We've opened the doors to higher education wider than ever before.

The Balanced Budget Act I signed last year represented the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the GI bill was passed 50 years ago, with college tuition tax credits, including the $1500-a-year HOPE scholarship for the first 2 years of college, education IRA's, expanded Pell grants, deductibility of interest on student loans, 300,000 more work-study slots, another 100,000 young people earning education credits by serving in the national service program, AmeriCorps, and lifetime learning credits for adults who have to go back to school.

All of these things together mean that any American who is willing to study and work hard can get an education in college, and that is very important. It will change the face and the future of America. We learned in the 1990 census that Americans—younger American workers who were high school dropouts, high school graduates, or who had less than 2 years of post-high-school education were likely to get jobs where their incomes went down over time, compared to inflation. Those that had at least 2 years of post-high-school training were likely to get and keep jobs where their incomes went up. So that was fundamentally important, and we can all be proud of it. And many States have done more to try to give scholarships and make college more affordable, and that's important.

The Senate just this week—and I want to compliment them—passed 91 to 7 what I have called the "GI bill" for workers. It basically consolidates this incredible tangle of Federal training programs into a skills grant, so that if a person is unemployed or underemployed and eligible, you just get basically the skills grant and then you decide where to take it. Since nearly every American lives within driving distance of a community college or some other very efficient institution, we no longer need the Federal Government micromanaging the definition of all these training programs, and we don't need anybody in the way of it.

Now, we have some provision, particularly that the Governors wanted who live in rural areas—who have lots of people in rural areas that may not have readily available services, but this is very important. And we've got to resolve the differences now in the House and the Senate bill and pass it. This is a huge thing. And the Congress can be proud of it, and the country can be proud of it.

But with all that said and done, I don't think there is a person here who would dispute the following two statements: We have the best system of higher education in the world; we do not have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. You don't have to criticize your favorite teacher. You can honor the PTA leaders and the school board members. No one believes it's the best in the world. And until it is, we can't rest. That is the bottom line.

The budget that I have presented, which is a balanced budget, has the biggest commitment in history from the Federal Government to K-through-12 education. But we all know that's less than 10 percent of the total. Still, I think it's important that the National Government focus on results, because things don't happen by accident. I think we should focus on high standards, real accountability, more choice, and finally I'd like to say a word about safe schools, because that is a problem in some parts of our country.

First, there's no substitute for standards. I want to compliment Delaware for what you're doing. This week, 3d, 5th, 8th, and 10th graders all over the State are participating in your new assessment process to see how well they're doing in reading, writing, and math. And you're going to add other subjects, the Governor told me, in the next couple of years. You also have done something that may give us a key to how to solve the national issue, which is that about a quarter of your exam questions are apparently taken from the National Assessment of Education Progress, which is a national test most States participate in, but by definition it's only given to a representative sample of students,

not all students. I compliment you on that. I think that is a brilliant reform.

And I think it's important that we find a way to have national standards and exams at least in the basics. It is very important. Secretary Riley and I were talking on the way out; he was talking about South Carolina still having quite an old State test. We had some old State tests when I was Governor of Arkansas. Our kids just knocked the top off of them, the same test we'd been giving for years. And then when we took a national test that was current, we didn't do so well. So without in any way undermining local control of the schools or the constitutional responsibility of the States for education, we need to have a set of national standards and an accountability system which tells us all honestly how we're doing.

We're working hard now with an independent nonpartisan board—the acronym known to all the education experts in the audience is the NAGB Board. We've got Republicans and Democrats on the board and people I don't even have any idea what their political affiliation is, all of whom are simply committed to educational excellence. And we want to find ways to coordinate with the States and the State tests to avoid unnecessary costs and burdens. You may have found a way to do it in Delaware, by having a test that is both rooted in your State standards and encompassing national questions. But it's a very good start.

The second thing we have to do—and I understand the Governor said you were debating that—that may be tougher is figure out what the accountability system is. Now, a lot of these questions should definitely be decided by people at the State and the local level. But let me, first of all, say that no test is worth a flip unless there is some consequences, not just negative ones but positive, not just what you do to the students but what the rest of us have to do for the education system based on the consequences of the test.

We have to start by demanding accountability from the students, and I strongly believe that we should end the practice of so-called social promotion everywhere in the country. For many years there was a current theory in America that, well, it hurt a child's self-esteem too much to be held back and the child could maybe pick it up next year. And besides that, children do learn at different paces. That is absolutely true, especially in the early years, the dramatically different learning patterns of children in the early years.

Then sooner or later, somehow, parents figured out that one reason kids dropped out of school in the 9th or 10th grade is because the material was going over their heads. It didn't mean anything to them, so why should they sit around, because they weren't able to do the work. And then even the kids figured out that being 20 years old and not being able to fill out an employment application and not being able to even read your high school diploma was far more destructive of self-esteem than spending another year in some grade along the way.

Then, school districts began to figure out that they didn't necessarily have to hold people back if they had proper after-school help and a little help in the summer, where a lot of kids having learning problems forget huge chunks of what they learned the year before.

So we're now kind of coming to grips with this. I have often talked about the Chicago system; it probably had the most widely condemned school system in the country because they had a strike every year whether they needed it or not, for one thing, and because they weren't producing results. Now, the Chicago summer school system—they've ended social promotion. You have to go to summer school if you fail the test and you want to go on to the next grade. Their summer school is the fifth biggest school district in America—the summer school. They have thousands of children going to school after school so many hours that thousands of them actually take three hot meals a day in the schools, in an inner-city environment where they're safe, they're not getting in trouble, and nobody's hurting them.

Now, if a place that has those kinds of challenges can take them on, every place in America can take them on. I've asked Congress to pass what we call education opportunity zone legislation, that will basically give extra resources to schools in poor communities if they will insist on high standards in social promotion, demand performance from students and teachers, and actually support the kids that are in trouble and give them the extra help they need. I hope Congress will pass it.

Again, I say, in many ways we're following your lead. And I urge you to have a big vigorous debate on this—what are the consequences of this exam. And I wouldn't presume to tell you what to do, but I can make two observations

based on 20 years of working, and hours and hours and hours spent in classrooms listening to teachers and watching things unfold.

One is, nobody will take your system seriously unless there are consequences. Two is, if there are consequences, whatever you decide they are, they cannot be exclusively negative ones; they must also be positive, because you have to believe that—in order to believe in democracy, you have to believe that almost everybody can learn almost everything they need to know to make this country run right, which means almost everybody in the world can succeed in school. And if they're not, it's probably not entirely their fault. So there should be consequences; some of them should be negative. But there must be positive ones as well. And I wish you well, and I can assure you the rest of us are going to be watching.

The next thing I think we have to do is to develop and demand accountability and performance from teachers but also support them. I had the great pleasure this week—or last week—of hosting the Teachers of the Year at the White House. And that's one of the happiest days of the year. You'll never find 50 more upbeat people than the teachers that are selected Teachers of the Year. And you talk to these people, and you can't imagine that there's ever been a problem in American education.

The man who was named National Teacher of the Year is a teacher from Virginia who teaches history and social studies and who makes his kids role-play. So they play ancient Athenians and Spartans debating the Greek wars. They play Jefferson and Adams debating each other about fundamental questions of what the real notion of the Union that we all belong to is. I mean, it was exhilarating.

Those are the kind of teachers that we wish all our children had all the time. And I think we need to do more to reward teachers who strive for excellence. One of the things that we can do at the national level that I hope you will support, that Tom and Mike's former colleague Governor Jim Hunt has worked his whole career on, is to support the master teacher program, the National Board for Professional Teacher Certification. It's a completely voluntary thing which qualifies teachers based on, number one, their complete academic preparation for the course they're teaching, and number two, their success in teaching, and thirdly, I might add, their ability to help other teachers improve their teaching skills.

Now, today there are only a few hundred master teachers in America. My balanced budget contains enough funds to certify 100,000 master teachers. When we get one of these teachers in every school building in America—every school building in America—going to the teachers' lounge, going to the faculty meetings, talking to the principals, it will change the culture of education in America. Every other profession in the country, just about, has national board certification. And believe me, this is a good thing that is a worthy investment.

Finally, let me say, I believe that if teachers don't measure up after getting all the support and help they need, there ought to be a swift process, fair but swift—it should not be endless—to resolve the matter in a satisfactory way. Because you're not doing anybody any favors—no one—fundamentally, nobody is happy doing something they're not good at. You can never make me believe anybody is really happy when they know deep down inside they're not doing the job. So there has to be some system that is perfectly fair to every teacher but doesn't take from now to kingdom come to resolve the matter in a way that allows the education system to go forward.

Now, I also think as we demand responsibility for results from the schools, we have to give the tools they need to the students and the teachers. I've said that, and I will say it again. Let me just mention one or two things. First, smaller class sizes. Children in some classes in America are in classes that are so big and crowded, there is no way any teacher—I don't care how good he or she is—can deal with all the challenges that are presented, where classes are so big where the students are barely known by name to the teacher, much less the particular circumstances of their lives. Given the fact that so many kids have so many troubles today, it's very, very important. In classrooms like this, teachers are often forced to teach to the middle, leaving both the best kids and the most troubled kids behind.

The Department of Education and Secretary Riley today are releasing a report on class size and learning, basically reaffirming what Hillary and I have long believed. We adopted very rigorous class sizes for our State 15 years ago. When class sizes go down enough, learning goes up—that's what the report shows—especially in

the early years. And when children come from disadvantaged backgrounds, small classes can make an even greater difference.

Let me just give you a few examples from the study. In Tennessee, test scores were consistently higher among students that were in classes of fewer than 20 students. These children kept the edge even when they moved into larger classes in their later years of schooling. From Wisconsin, North Carolina, and classrooms across the country, other studies confirm the same findings.

Governor Carper and many of you here today are trying to reduce class size. I just want to encourage you and tell you that I have presented to the Congress a plan to do the same thing, which would not in any way conflict with what you're doing, but will enable you to get some funds to support it.

Today I'm sending legislation to Congress cosponsored by Senators Murray and Kennedy and Congressman Clay that will make class size reduction a national goal and, if enacted, would help school districts to hire another 100,000 teachers, which is about the number necessary, properly distributed across the country, to give us average class size of 18 in the first 3 grades. It would also require the new teachers to pass competency exams to make sure they have the training and preparation they need. Many States now require this anyway.

The second thing I'd like to say is, Delaware may be the only State now where every classroom is wired, but every classroom should be wired. You remember, I'm sure, a few years ago, the Vice President and I went to San Francisco and got with a lot of people from the big computer companies and said that we wanted to try to wire every classroom and library by the year 2000. And we are making great headway. We've got more than twice as many classrooms and libraries wired today as we did just 3½ years ago when we did that. We have in the budget now funds to continue this urgent national priority. I hope that will pass.

But finally, let me say, believe it or not, we've got—an enormous percentage of the school buildings in this country are ill-equipped to take the wiring because they're so old. We have cities in this country with average school buildings—average school buildings—over 65 years old and in terrible shape. I was in a small, growing district in Florida the other day where there were not 1, not 5 but 17 trailers outside the main school building there for the kids.

Now, when you come to work here every day in this capitol, it makes you feel good, doesn't it? It's a beautiful building, and you've obviously put a lot of funds into restoring it. And it makes you feel good; it says you're important. It matters to be a member of the Delaware Legislature. One of the ways you know without anybody telling you is, you come into this nice building. And it's important. And if grownups are affected by their surroundings, children are even more so.

What does it say to an inner-city kid from a poor family if they go to a school building every day and one of the whole floors is closed for want of repair? What does it say about how important those children are if every day they walk through the front door and they look up and see three or four broken windows? What does it say if the blackboard is only half there because it's been cracked? What about the kids in the crowded school districts? You know, the first year or two, if you show up and there are a lot of housetrailers, it's kind of exciting because it means you've got a growing district and a lot of stuff going on. After 5 or 6 years, it means things aren't getting better. It's a very different message. And the important thing is not whether the buildings are old or not, it is whether they are safe, clean, light, whether they send the message that this is a place where learning can occur and this is a place where children are important.

Now, I think education is a part of the national infrastructure. That's why I wanted the Federal Government to help places who need it wire all the classrooms and libraries. And I have proposed for the first time that we help with the infrastructure needs of school districts—again, not in any way that would conflict with what any State or local school district is doing but, instead, to reinforce it.

This budget contains funds that would help us to modernize 5,000 schools and build 1,000 new ones. It would be a very good start on the incredible infrastructure needs of America's schools. And for people who say it doesn't matter, just think how you feel when you come through these doors every day. It does matter, and I hope we can pass it.

The third thing I'd like to emphasize very briefly is that we need greater choice in our schools. We do need more competition. You

mentioned the Charter School of Wilmington, Governor, and other charter schools in your State. When I was elected President in 1992, there was only one charter school in the entire country, public schools that tailor their programs to meet the needs and demands of their customers, the students and their parents. Since then, I've done everything I could to support them.

Today, there are 800 charter schools; 32 of our 50 States authorize them. Just last week in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, California voted in the legislature to create another 100 charter schools a year in our largest State. That's great, great news—100 a year. They had a 150 cap, I think, on the whole State. They blew off the cap and said, "This is working"—and I've been in some of them out there, they are working—"We want 100 a year."

Now, my goal is to have 3,000 by the year 2000 in the whole country, and I have presented a budget to Congress which would give communities around the country any start-up funds they need to do this. It's not so easy to do if you've never thought about it and never done the work and if you come from a place with limited resources. So I did present some money in the budget to do that. But I hope you will support that.

Delaware has been at the forefront of the charter school movement. It is a good, good thing to do, along with having statewide public school choice plans. And I applaud you for yours.

The fourth thing I'd like to talk just a little about is school safety. You know, it's pretty hard to learn if you feel insecure. One of the main reasons that I supported the school uniform movement, not as a mandatory thing but where people needed it, was that I thought it would make our schools safer. And I've been around the country and seen a lot of schools that had terrible discipline problems. And we're worried about the safety of the kids going to and from school. And in every case where they had a terrible problem and adopted a uniform policy, it made a big difference. We want to do more to ensure our children's safety. We want to make sure that our children are exposed to teachers and team leaders, not drug dealers and gang leaders.

There are a lot of things we can do. Let me just mention one thing. We are trying in this budget to give States and communities more funds to support even wider and more extensive after-school programs, not only because they're important educationally—which they are, and that's their primary mission—but because almost all kids get in trouble after school lets out and before the folks get home from work. A huge percentage of juvenile crime is committed between 3 and 6 or 7 at night. And if we can have extensive after-school programs, we can make our children safer and our schools safer. Let me also—even one hand is good on that. [*Laughter*]

Today the Department of Education is releasing a report which also shows we're doing a better job as a country in detecting guns in the schools. That's really good—that's the good news. The bad news is there are a lot of guns in the schools and other weapons. In 1997 more than 6,000 students were expelled for bringing firearms to school. But I think that means we must continue and bear down on this policy of zero tolerance for guns in our schools.

And again, it works to prevent problems. The superintendent of the Alexandria, Virginia, schools—which, by the way, is now the most diverse school district in America; Fairfax County has kids from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, speaking over 100 native languages. But because they have a rigorous zero tolerance program, they have cut suspendable offenses over the past couple of years by more than 40 percent. It works. And we can have those results all over the country.

But let me say, going back to an issue you're debating, Secretary Riley asked all these school security experts what they thought we could do as a people, not just the Federal Government, to make the schools safer. And they said, interestingly enough, one of the most important things we could do is to create the smallest possible classes in the early grades, because the kids with problems would be found by the teachers. And then the teachers and the families and the counselors could work together to try to prevent these kids from getting in trouble in the first place. I thought it was a stunning thing, amazing.

So Delaware is leading the Nation, and the Nation must follow. And we must, Republicans and Democrats together, all Americans, make a commitment to a revolution in standards and accountability, in choice and safety, based on high expectations, accountability, and performance. It will take all of our commitment to do

the job, but the challenge must be met because America can't become what it ought to be if we don't.

We can do this. This is not rocket science. This is an affair of the mind which most of us can comprehend. Fundamentally, it is also an affair of the heart. We know—we know—that the best days of this country are still ahead. You may be the oldest State, but you still want to have the longest future. And the only way we can do it is with this.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. in the Senate Chamber. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tom Carper and Lt. Gov. Ruth Ann Minner of Delaware; President Pro Tempore Thomas B. Sharp, Delaware State Senate; Speaker Terry R. Spence, Delaware State House of Representatives; Russell W. Peterson and Sherman W. Tribbitt, former Delaware Governors; Mayor James L. Hutchinson of Dover; Philip Bigler, 1998 National Teacher of the Year; and Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation on Class-Size Reduction and Teacher Quality

May 8, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and enactment the "Class-Size Reduction and Teacher Quality Act of 1998." This legislative proposal would help States and local school districts recruit, train, and hire 100,000 additional well-prepared teachers in order to reduce the average class size to 18 in grades 1 through 3 in our Nation's public schools. It is an essential part of our overall effort to strengthen public schools throughout the Nation.

As schools across the Nation struggle to accommodate a surge in enrollments, educators and parents have become increasingly concerned about the impact of class size on teaching and learning, particularly in the critically important early grades, where students learn reading and other basic skills. This concern is justified: rigorous research confirms what parents and teachers have long believed—that students in smaller classes, especially in the early grades, make greater educational gains and maintain those gains over time. These gains occur because teachers in small classes can provide students with more individualized attention, spend more time on instruction and less time on discipline, and cover more material effectively. Moreover, the benefits of smaller classes are greatest for poor, minority, and inner-city children, the children who often face the greatest challenges in meeting high educational standards.

Smaller classes will have the greatest impact on student learning if the new teachers brought into the classroom are well qualified to teach reading and to take advantage of smaller learning environments. For this reason, my proposal emphasizes not just class-size reduction but also professional development for educators, and it will give school districts adequate time to recruit and train staff while phasing in smaller classes. Furthermore, all new teachers hired under the program would be required to pass a State teacher competency test and would also have to be certified to teach or be making satisfactory progress toward full certification.

We can help all of our students learn to read independently and well by the third grade, get a solid foundation in basic skills, and reach high educational standards if we start them off with small classes and well-prepared teachers in the early grades.

Under my proposal, the Department of Education would provide $20.8 billion in mandatory appropriations over a 10-year period (beginning with $1.1 billion in fiscal year 1999) to States. The States would then distribute the funds to local school districts based on their relative class sizes in grades 1 through 3, as well as on their ability and effort to finance class-size reductions with their own resources. The bill would provide States with considerable flexibility in distributing these funds, while ensuring that the most needy school districts receive a fair share.

Moreover, because my proposal would actually appropriate the funds needed to carry out the program, States and local communities could count on these funds without the need for separate congressional appropriations each year. This proposal is fully paid for within my Fiscal Year 1999 Budget, and therefore would not reduce the budget surplus.

School districts would use these funds to reduce class sizes in grades 1 through 3. Just as importantly, these funds would also be available for a variety of activities to ensure that students in the early grades receive sound and effective instruction, such as making sure that teachers know how to teach reading and other subjects effectively in small classes.

This proposal includes strong accountability for results. Participating school districts would produce "report cards" documenting reductions in class sizes and the achievement of their students in reading, based on rigorous assessments. Schools whose students fail to make gains in reading would be required to undertake corrective actions. In addition, the Department of Education would undertake a comprehensive national evaluation of this program and its impact on reading achievement and teaching.

I urge the Congress to take prompt and favorable action on this proposal. Its enactment would help school districts reduce class sizes in the early grades and improve instruction and achievement in reading, issues that are of major importance to parents and to the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 8, 1998.

Remarks to the Community at Dover Air Force Base

May 8, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your wonderful remarks and your sterling leadership of the Department of Defense. To Governor Carper and Congressman Castle, Colonel Grieder, Colonel Keitel, Mayor Hutchinson; to the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, who is here with me today; to all the members of the United States Air Force, their families, their friends, and thank you especially for bringing the children today. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to the Dover High School Band for their welcome and their music. I don't know if the recruiting officer has been to see them, but they have sufficient enthusiasm to be in our military service. Great job.

I am delighted to be here, back at Dover Air Force Base, home of the 436th Military Airlift Wing and the 512th Reserve Wing, those of you who work around the clock to support and defend our freedom. I've already had a chance to be on the C–5 and speak with some of you individually. I'd like now to say a few words to all of you.

Delaware calls itself "Small Wonder." It's not too small, however, to have two leading United States Senators, Bill Roth and Joe Biden, who play very important roles in our national security, most recently in leading the struggle in the Senate to make Europe a safer place by guiding NATO and offering membership to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. The people of Delaware can be very proud that they have two Senators playing a leading role in such an important national security area.

And Delaware is not too small to house these mammoth C–5's to do so much of America's heavy lifting, not too small for a new 60,000-pound Tunner loader moving heavy cargo on and off the giant planes. I know it's hard for the logistics people here to wrestle with those pallets, but hopefully the new loader makes things just a little easier.

Your efforts are essential. We live in a time of enormous promise, but you know from your own work that there is also a tremendous responsibility for the United States out there both to take advantage of the promise and to meet the challenges of the post-cold-war era.

From Guatemala to Mozambique, from Bosnia and now to Ireland, peace is taking hold in countries and regions that have endured terrible violence. Revolutions in technology and

communications are spurring enterprise and opportunity all across the globe. Today we saw that the unemployment rate in America has dropped to 4.3 percent, the lowest since 1970. And that's good news for America.

But one-third of our growth, one-third of the over 15.2 million jobs the American people have enjoyed—new jobs—since 1993, comes from our trading relations with other countries. Like it or not, our future and the future of every child in this audience today is bound up with our ability to maintain leadership for peace and freedom and security and opportunity throughout the world.

In March, I was in Africa. I visited Uganda, not so long ago run by a brutal dictator, now a country with strong economic growth and a commitment to educating all its children. I was in Senegal, where American soldiers are working with African soldiers to establish new peacekeeping units run by Africans in Africa, to support their continent's security. I was in South Africa, where citizens are building a strong, multiracial democracy. And guess what? On my whole trip, you provided the transportation, you provided the helicopters, and you provided the communications. I thank you. The trip to Africa was good for America.

Last month, I was in Chile, once ruled by terror, now a thriving open society, at the second Summit of the Americas, after the first one I convened in 1994 in Miami. Thirty-four of the thirty-five nations of the Americas are now democracies, and we plotted a common future in the area where our trade is growing the most and where freedom has taken deepest hold. And guess what? You provided my transportation and communication, and I thank you.

In a few days I will leave for Europe, where the powerful yearning of the people for liberty has provided the chance not only to end the war in Bosnia, but through expanding NATO and making an agreement between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine, we've now got the chance to build a Europe that is peaceful, undivided, and free for the first time in all of history. It will be a very important meeting, and if nothing happens to the chain of command, you're going to provide my transportation and communication, and I thank you for that.

Because freedom is on the march and because of all the changes going on in the world, the 21st century in which these children will grow up will be America's greatest time, if we do our part to protect freedom and security, to stand for human rights, and to stand for our interests and our values around the world. For the world is still not free of dangers, not by a long shot.

All of you know that, clearly. In fact, all of the openness, the communications revolution, what all you can find on the Internet, all of the things that have given so much opportunity in the world and brought us so much closer together have created a new vulnerability to the organized forces of destruction, to the terrorists, the organized criminals, the narcotraffickers. We still see the incredible power—the flaming power of religious, ethnic, and regional conflicts and hatreds. We know that not all of our democracies are solid. We know that natural disasters, environmental destruction, the spread of disease can cross national borders and threaten the lives and welfare of the American people.

In this environment, our leadership is more important than ever. In order to make the American people safe at home and give them all a brighter future, the United States must continue to lead in the world, and that means we need you more than ever.

Here at Dover, you are leading the way. A strategic airlift capacity is crucial to our strategy of global engagement, and you are responsible for a full 25 percent of America's strategic airlift. You supply our troops in the Persian Gulf, and Saddam Hussein knows we're serious because our diplomacy is backed by the finest military in the world. We could not send them there and keep them there if you couldn't supply them.

You led the way by helping to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Just 3 weeks ago, two of your C–5's and their crews secured dangerous nuclear material in the Republic of Georgia and transported it for safekeeping to the United Kingdom. The material could have posed a tremendous risk if it had come into the wrong hands. You made sure that it didn't. And now you know it's someplace safe, and we're all more secure because of it. I thank you for that.

You supply our troops in Bosnia, where, with a remarkable lack of violence, we have been able to see the end of a conflict and the beginning of a peace taking hold. If our troops hadn't been there, the war would still be raging. They couldn't be there without you, and you should

be very, very proud of helping to end the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the end of World War II. I hope you are.

You lead the way in providing humanitarian relief to people in the former Soviet Union. When a ferocious typhoon struck Guam, you brought water and blankets and electricity to people there. When flooding destroyed or damaged 90 percent of the homes around Grand Forks, North Dakota, you brought relief and comfort to the victims there. For all that, for the many sacrifices you make, I want to say a profound thank you.

As most of you know, this Tunner loader that everybody talked to me about today is not called a Tunner because it lifts a lot of tons. It was named for the late General William Tunner, who commanded three historic airlifts: the airlift of supplies and personnel over the Himalayan Hump from India to China in World War II; the massive Berlin airlift in 1948 and '49, 277,000 flights that supplied food and fuel to the people of West Berlin during Stalin's blockade; and the Korean War Combat Cargo Command, which airdropped supplies to our troops trapped in North Korea. General Tunner said, "We can carry anything, anywhere, anytime."

Now, next week, by coincidence, I will be in Germany to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Berlin airlift. Like you, the people who were involved in that effort used airlifts to protect freedom. When the Soviet leaders finally abandoned the blockade, it might have been because they had witnessed our staggering capabilities to airlift supplies to the people in West Berlin. Perhaps it was because they read what General Tunner said about his supply line: "We can keep pouring it on for 20 years if we have to." That kind of confidence I know invigorates the work you do here. I know you are ready for any challenge anytime, whenever America calls for your help.

So let me just say this in closing. When your joints ache from muscling pallets, when you've stared at one load plan too many, when you fly all night through turbulent skies, when you're too far from home and you wonder sometimes what you are doing it for, please remember, in ways large and small, you are making a huge difference in making the world a better place for the children that share this roof with us today. Children all over the world have food to eat, clothes to wear, safe streets to walk, all because you at Dover make it happen. You deliver. You are essential to America's security. You make this a better country, and you make us all very proud.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in Hangar 706. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Felix Grieder, USAF, Commander, 436th Airlift Wing, and Col. Tom Keitel, USAFR, Acting Commander, 512th Airlift Wing.

Statement on the Minnesota Tobacco Settlement and Tobacco Legislation

May 8, 1998

Every day, 3,000 young people start a habit that will kill 1,000 of them before their time. Three years ago, appalled by these trends, I committed this administration to stopping the sale and marketing of cigarettes to children. Now, thanks to our efforts and the persistence of State attorneys general, we have the best opportunity ever to pass comprehensive tobacco legislation that will save millions of our children from premature death.

Today we have learned that Minnesota has won important new concessions from the tobacco industry. The Minnesota settlement, like those reached earlier in Mississippi, Florida, and Texas, will help us combat tobacco industry marketing to kids. This action provides still further momentum to our effort to pass bipartisan comprehensive tobacco legislation this year. All our Nation's children are at risk from tobacco, and we must have comprehensive national legislation to stop young Americans from smoking before they start, by raising the price of cigarettes, putting into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, imposing penalties on the industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to children, ensuring that the FDA has authority to regulate tobacco products, and protecting farmers and farming communities.

The President's Radio Address
May 9, 1998

Good morning. Tomorrow is Mother's Day, a special moment to express the gratitude, respect, and love we feel all year round. Our mothers give us life; they offer us unconditional love, strong guidance, and the sense that we can grow up to do anything we can dream of. From our first moments, mothers are our best teachers and most selfless friends. And like my own mother, whom I miss very much, especially on Mother's Day, they rarely ask for thanks. A mother's main wish is to see her children grow up healthy and happy.

Today I want to talk about a few ways we, here in Washington, can give all mothers that peace of mind, whether they work in an office, a factory, a hospital, or at home. To make that tribute to motherhood, we must all take responsibility for the care of our children. For many mothers who work, as my mother did, peace of mind requires affordable, quality child care. Millions of American women have full-time jobs outside the home. Three of five mothers with children under 6 are working to meet their obligations to their children and their employers. Juggling those responsibilities is even more difficult when quality child care is either hard to find or too expensive to afford.

That's why I've included in my balanced budget a significant new investment in child care. I urge Congress to join me in making child care better, safer, and more affordable for those who need it.

To help parents find the best care for their children, today I'm releasing a report by the Department of Health and Human Services. It's a consumer guide to child care quality that recommends four steps for parents: One, interview the potential caregivers; two, check the references; three, evaluate how the caregiver meets your child's needs; and four, stay involved. As Mother's Day reminds us, governments don't raise children, parents do. There is no substitute for a mother's love or a parent's responsibility.

We, too, in the National and State Governments, however, have a responsibility. A big one is to protect America's children from abuse and neglect. Nothing gives mothers peace of mind like the knowledge their children are in safe hands. Today I'm also releasing a new Justice Department set of guidelines for screening child care workers and other caregivers. And again, I urge Congress to act on a proposal I've put forth to facilitate background checks on child caregivers. There is strong bipartisan support for this proposal, and I'm hopeful that members of both parties will move quickly to give America's children the care they deserve.

There is one other thing I'd like to talk about that we must do to protect our children. Fathers must take their share of responsibility, too. Children deserve to be raised by both parents, but when that's not possible, children must still receive the support they need. The unfortunate division of families cannot mean the end of child support. That's why we have worked so hard to toughen enforcement of child support laws, and since 1992 we've raised collections by 68 percent a year.

We've worked too hard for too long toughening enforcement of child support laws to let our progress be accidentally undone. But that could happen if Congress goes ahead with one part of bankruptcy reform legislation now under consideration. I'm willing to work with Congress to pass responsible and fair bankruptcy reform. However, under one leading proposal, when a father declares personal bankruptcy, a mother may have to compete with powerful banks and credit card companies for the money they're owed. That's not the law now, and if that competition starts, we all know who will lose the contest: our children.

Parents have to step up to their responsibilities, and so does Congress. Some changes to consumer bankruptcy laws are in order, but mothers and children should keep their priority under the child support laws. They shouldn't have to stand in line for the support they need.

America's mothers hold a special place in our hearts. In return, we owe them the love and respect they have given us. On Mother's Day, we do so with cards, bouquets, and gifts. But today and every other day, we should also do everything in our power to give our mothers the peace of mind they deeply deserve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:56 a.m. on May 8 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 9.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Boston, Massachusetts

May 9, 1998

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the warm welcome. I thank Elaine and Gerry more than I can say. This has not been the easiest couple of weeks in their lives, and the fact that they continue to work and to have this event means an especially great deal to me tonight, and I thank you so much.

I'd like to thank all the people who are here tonight. Senator Kerry, thank you for coming, and thank you for your leadership, especially on behalf of our Nation's children in the Capital. I thank Mayor Tom Menino and Angela for being here. When you said that Tom Menino's approval ratings, Steve, were in the eighties, my reaction was what the other 20 percent could possibly be thinking about. [*Laughter*] I don't know how anybody could do a better job as mayor than Tom Menino's doing; I don't think it's possible.

Everywhere I go in America now, when I talk to serious people who care about dealing with our challenges, people want to know how Boston went over 2 years with no child under 18 being killed. And I said it did not happen by accident. And I guess that's part of what I want to say tonight. Of course, this evening didn't happen by accident either. So I want to thank not only Elaine and Gerry but all the other cochairs: Jim and Kathy Daley; Sherry and Alan Leventhal—Alan and Fred have been through the fires for me for a long time, and I thank them for that; Lyle Howland and Jack Manning. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Alan and Susie Solomont; Alan did do a fabulous job for us at the DNC. And Steve and Barbara Grossman, thank you. And you can see from Steve's speech tonight that he is not beaten down from the rigors of his job and he's doing a wonderful job. Massachusetts should be very, very proud of him.

I also appreciate Lester Thurow coming tonight. I wish he could give the speech, and I could learn about how to improve the economy some more. [*Laughter*] And my good friend James Taylor, thank you for being here.

You know, when I was standing in front and we were taking pictures, one of you came through the line and said, "You know, Mr. President, Boston has become your ATM machine." [*Laughter*] But she said, "That's okay. We like it; we like it." [*Laughter*] I am profoundly grateful to the people of this city and this State for being so good to me and to Hillary and to the Vice President, to our administration. You all know we've got the highest percentage of the vote we received in any State in Massachusetts in 1996. We had an all-Democratic sweep in our congressional elections. And some of them were quite tough, indeed. And I am profoundly grateful to all of you. And that didn't happen by accident.

You heard all the things that Elaine said. I feel an enormous amount of gratitude for the strength of our economy, for the lowest unemployment rate since 1970 and the lowest inflation rate in 30 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years and the lowest crime rates in 24 years. I'm grateful for that. I think the question is, what do we intend to do with that? And that really is the great question sort of looming over Washington. In that sense, I rather like the fact that the El Nino gods were not too nice to us tonight. It keeps us humble. If you like this, you'll love it if we don't do anything about climate change.

And that makes the point I want to make. When times are really good—in political life when times are good you can have, it seems to me, three responses. You can sort of play more golf and relax, which is appealing to me. [*Laughter*] Or you can think you can afford to be petty and mean and self-serving and groping and divisive politically, which is appealing to some. Or if the times are dynamic and things

are still changing very profoundly and rapidly, you understand that complacence and smallness are not really viable options.

And I've been going around the country trying to convince the American people that these good times give us an enormous opportunity and impose upon us a significant responsibility. The American people have confidence again. They believe this country can work again. They believe we can make things happen again.

But things are changing very profoundly in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other, the way we relate to the rest of the world. And I believe that this is a time that we should be big, think big, and act big. And I am doing my best, with the help of our Democrats in Washington, to push the country in that direction, because I think the only way you can continue to enjoy good success in a dynamic time is to bear down, not let up.

If you go out to Silicon Valley, for example, where Lord knows how many people have been made millionaires and more people than I can count on my two hands have been made billionaires, you won't find people going to work at noon and leaving at 3 o'clock, because they understand that in an economy of ideas you have to keep working to stay ahead of the curve. Not only that, it's interesting; it's fun; it's more fulfilling. That's the way our country should behave.

And in that sense, I would say to you, for me, we should have a short-term agenda and a long-term agenda. We should be committed to working like crazy this year in this session of Congress, even before this election, to earn our keep for the American people. And as we look to the next 2 years, in the barely 600 days we have until the start of a new century, a new millennium, we ought to promise ourselves that we are not going to start that new era without having seriously addressed what we know right now are the biggest challenges facing us.

So even though we've had a good time, I'd like to be just a little serious for a moment and just briefly tell you what I think we should be doing both now and over the long term. This year the first thing we need to do is to say we're glad we balanced the budget for the first time in 30 years, but it hasn't actually happened yet. We're glad we're apparently going to have a big surplus for the first time in 30 years, but we don't actually have it yet.

And we know we have real, serious, significant challenges awaiting us out there as the baby boomers retire and as everyone begins to live longer in reforming Social Security and Medicare, so we should not—we should not—squander this surplus we've waited 30 years to materialize until we've saved Social Security and prepared financially for the 21st century for the entire country. We should resist the easy temptation to either spend the money or give it back in a tax cut until, first, it materializes and, second, we know how we're going to deal with Social Security and Medicare.

The second thing we ought to do is realize we have a historic public health opportunity and pass comprehensive tobacco legislation to protect our kids from the dangers of tobacco. Now, let me just say again, this is not a small thing. We have more people die from tobacco-related illnesses than all other health problems put together. Three thousand kids start smoking every day, even though it's not legal, and we know 1,000 of them are going to die sooner because of it. What else can you do to save 1,000 lives a day? And we ought to do it this year in this congressional session. And if it's up to me and up to our caucus, that's exactly what we're going to do, and I hope you'll support us.

We have an ambitious education agenda: national standards, national exams to measure them; help the school districts to build more buildings and to hire more teachers so we can have smaller classes in the early grades; we can repair older buildings; we can build new ones where the classes are bursting at the seams.

Finally, we have a group of students in our school years who are bigger than the baby boom generation, for the first time since the baby boom generation. There are cities in this country where the average school building is 65 years of age or older. There are communities—I was down in Florida the other day to do a makeup date for the little school district I was supposed to visit when I tore my leg up over a year ago. In this lovely little school district, there's a beautiful old school building, and outside there are not one, not 5 but 17 trailers housing the children in the school.

Now, you ask yourself—you say, we're Democrats; we want every kid in this country to have a chance. And we know they can't have a chance unless they get good educations. What does it

say to a child from a poor inner-city school if they go to a school building where one of the floors is completely closed because the building is not maintained? How would you feel if you went to work every day and you walked up steps and you looked up at the floor and the first thing you saw as you looked at the building were three or four broken windows that never got fixed? You wouldn't tolerate it. You wouldn't permit your employees to do it. You wouldn't want your children to do it.

We say education is our most important mission. I'm telling you we need to pass an education agenda this year, based on standards, based on choice, based on technology. We're trying to hook up every classroom in the country to the Internet. The mayor says he'll have all the schools fixed here in a matter of a few months. You know that there are huge numbers of school buildings in this country where kids are going to school right now that literally cannot be hooked up to the Internet because they're too deficient in their basic infrastructure.

So we have an education agenda. We have got a families agenda that includes letting elderly people who are not old enough to be on Medicare, or near elderly—people about my age—people who aren't old enough to be on Medicare but are early retired, buy into the Medicare program at cost. Even the Republican congressional analysis says that it won't do anything to hurt the Medicare program. We're trying to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. With over half the American people in HMO's today, I think it's important. There are lots of other things in the family area we're trying to do.

We have international responsibilities we are not fulfilling. I am trying my best to get the Congress to pay our debt to the United Nations. We get a lot out of being in the U.N. People share our burdens; they work with us. We can't say, "We'd like to be the leading country in the world but, oh, by the way, we're having a domestic political spat so we don't think we'll pay our dues." We say we wanted Kofi Annan to be the Secretary-General. We said we wanted all these reforms in the U.N. They went about enacting our reforms, and now I can't get the Congress to pay our dues.

We say we're worried about the financial crisis in Asia, but I can't get the Congress to pay what we owe to the International Monetary Fund, without which we cannot be an active participant in the long-term rebuilding of a lot of those Asian economies. So we have a short-term agenda.

But over the long term—and just think about it, how you think we ought to spend the next 600-and-some-odd days. I got yesterday—I can keep up with it; I finally got one of these little millennium clocks in the mail. And my wonderful secretary has it up on her desk now: "602 days to the 21st century," you know, how many hours and minutes and seconds and all. And it's exciting right now. It may get boring before the time passes, but it's exciting. [*Laughter*] But it's very helpful to me because it also is, minus about 20 days, all the time I've got left to work for you—no, no, 385 days, since we're measuring at 2000 instead of 2001.

And I think you ought to think about it. What would you do if you were marking off the days every day? What are the big challenges still out there for us? I'll tell you what I think they are. First of all, if you want to hold this country together in a responsible way, we have to reform Social Security and Medicare. When all the baby boomers get into the Social Security system, if we continue to work and retire at the same rates we are now, there will be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. If we keep seeing the life expectancy of the American people go up and the wonders of technology come on, the Medicare system as presently structured will not be sustainable after another several years.

So what we've got to do is to change that. I think that all of you would like it if Democrats were making those decisions, but you should insist that the Democrats who are elected be willing to make those decisions. We have proved now that we are the party of constructive change, and that's a big issue for America.

What's the second big issue? We can't stop working on education until our elementary and secondary schools are the best in the world. No person doubts that our system of higher education is the best in the world. No person doubts that our system of elementary and secondary education is not the best in the world. And we could stay here until dawn talking about that, but I can tell you, for 20 years I believe that I have spent more time on education than any other public issue. I believe in it passionately. But I can tell you, we will never, ever, ever be able to say America is a place in which everyone has an opportunity unless we can do something about it.

What's the third big challenge? We have to do something to bring the spark of enterprise and opportunity to the inner-city poor. It is stunning to think that in an economy with a 4.3 percent unemployment rate, there are still neighborhoods in America where the unemployment rate is 15 percent or 20 percent. And it is not necessary. We have a huge program before the Congress right now that will do a lot to bring the spark of enterprise to the inner cities. If it isn't passed in this session, we have to keep working until we've done more.

The third thing we've got to do is to prove we can grow the economy while we improve the environment. I believe the global warming phenomenon is real. I think it is significant. I do not believe we can regulate our way out of it. I think we have to prove that we can grow our way out of it.

I was in California about a week ago at a housing development for moderate- and low-income working people, where the energy usage on average in the homes was 40 percent less than typical because you can now have solar panels on your home that look like ordinary shingles, they're so thin. You can now buy a window for a low-income home that lets in more light but keeps the heat in in the wintertime and the heat out in the summertime. And if you'll pay twice as much money to get light bulbs, they'll last 3 to 4 times as long.

Now, we have to do these things on a huge scale in America. If we get to the point where we can build fuel-injection engines, fuel cells in our cars, we can cut greenhouse gas emissions from transportation by 80 percent. They won't cost any jobs; they'll create jobs. They won't hurt the economy; it will improve the economy. I cannot tell you how important I think that is.

Just two more things I think are big long-term challenges. We've got to prove that we really can be one America. We talk about it all the time. We've got to prove we can do it. And I think the two most critical things are, one, developing not only tolerance but respect and appreciation for people who are different than we are in every way. And you know I've worked pretty hard on that. Some people have made fun of me for doing it; some people have outright condemned me for doing it. But it's not only because I grew up in the South but also because I've been your President. I've seen what happens—from Bosnia to Kosovo, to Rwanda, to Haiti, to Northern Ireland, to the Middle East—when people decide that they only matter when they've got somebody to look down on, and that what is really important in their lives is that thank God they're not like those other people.

I've seen what happens when people believe their lives only have meaning when they descend into an ever-escalating cycle of violence. And I'm telling you, things like that could happen here on a smaller scale. But the flip side is, if we can prove we are the world's most truly integrated diverse democracy, we can be a model for the 21st century that will give us a moral force in the world that cannot be overestimated.

There is one school district across the Potomac River from the White House in Virginia that has children now from 180 different racial and ethnic and national groups, speaking as their native tongues over 100 different languages. It's not just a black-white-Hispanic deal anymore. And that's exciting to me. In a global economy, rooted in ideas and communication, it is a godsend. But we cannot take it for granted.

And the second thing I want to say is perhaps the best way we can help to build that one America is to inculcate in our children a sense of citizen service. Elaine mentioned this, but I'm very proud of the fact that AmeriCorps, which was in large measure modeled on City Year and my experiences here in Boston when I ran for President, will soon have 100,000 young people who will have earned college credit by serving in local communities, helping people to make the most of their own lives.

When people work together and learn together and play together and serve together, they're far more likely to get along together. So this is very important.

The last thing I want to say is, I have done my best as President to convince the American people that there is no reasonable dividing line any longer between foreign and domestic policy, in economics, in security, in many ways.

What are the major security problems of the 21st century? Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction falling into the wrong hands, narcotraffickers, organized crime, people who can get in an airport and fly someplace else. These things require a high level of cooperation and a recognition that we live in an interdependent world. If you want the United States to lead the world, we must be willing to fulfill

our responsibilities. If you want other people to help us share the load, we must do that.

One of the greatest things about what happened in ending the war in Bosnia is that we are there, shoulder-to-shoulder not only with Russian troops but with troops from two dozen other countries. If we want to continue to have that kind of influence, we can't run away from our obligations to trade with the rest of the world. We have to keep expanding trade, not trying to close up trade. Congress ought to give me the authority to have trade agreements. We have to keep cooperating with other countries in environmental matters, in health matters, in all these things. But the American people have got to believe deep in the marrow of their bones that every part of our national life has to require us to have an international global perspective.

I fought very hard to save our space program, which was in danger when I became President. And one of the things I've asked the Congress to do is to invest in the 21st century research fund as a gift to the millennium that will dramatically increase all our research and development budgets. But one of the things that made it possible is that the international space station has European contributors, Japanese contributors, Canadian contributors, and a Russian contribution. And that's good. If you're going to have a place where people can go and stay a long while in space that's bigger than a football field, we need to work together.

And we cannot have an attitude in Congress or in the country that says, we will be involved in the world only when it suits us, only our own terms, and we reserve the right to have some sort of fight here at home which will allow us to walk away from our obligations.

And let me just give you two examples that go to the heart of Boston: the Irish peace process and the Middle East peace process. If I took a vote in Boston about whether I did the right thing to finally get America involved in the peace process in Ireland, even though it required us to break a few eggs at the time, most people would say that we did the right thing and you're glad we did. Yesterday we announced a modest but significant package of initiatives that we want to put into Northern Ireland, and we hope that it will be positive in persuading undecided voters there to vote in the next few days in the Irish referendum for the peace process and for it to implement the agreement that has been made.

I had a great talk with Prime Minister Major, and we talked about whether there is anything we can do when we meet together in just a few days in Europe. Why? Because there are more Irish in Massachusetts than there are in Ireland. Because your heart is there, and you know it.

If I took a vote in this crowd tonight and I said, do you want America to be a positive force for peace in the Middle East, and would you expect us, if the parties could make an agreement, to make more investments there, to grow the economy, and to guarantee the security of the parties so that we can unravel this incredible knot about peace versus security so that everybody can believe they can only have one with the other, whether you agree with everything I've said or everything the current government in Israel does, you agree with both of us or disagree with both of us, that proposition would pass overwhelmingly here in Boston.

Yes, the United States should reach out a hand. Yes, we should be faithful to our friendship with Israel. Yes, we should be faithful to our passion for peace in the Middle East. Yes, if the Palestinians are going to enforce security and stop terrorism, we ought to help them have a decent life, and it's terrible that their per capita income has dropped 30 percent since the Oslo accords were signed. You would all say, "Yes, let's do that."

Now, that's good, but you are also citizens of the world. We're not just Irish-Americans and Jewish Americans. We have to say that America now is composed of people from everywhere. I'm going to India and Pakistan and Bangladesh later in the year. I'm about to leave for China. You don't have to be a Chinese-American to understand how important our relationship with China is. And you don't have to be from the Indian subcontinent to know that in 30 years India will be the biggest country in the world. They already have the biggest middle class in the world. And if somehow the Indians and Pakistanis could unravel their differences, their future potential as an economic market for us and as a force for peace in Asia, bearing responsibilities that otherwise we might have to bear, is absolutely staggering, even though you may never read a newspaper article about it.

So I ask you here in Boston not only to be proud of your Irish roots, not only to be proud of your Jewish heritage but to be passionate about the role that America has for peace and

freedom and prosperity in the world, because the only way we can make the 21st century America's greatest days is if we do the right things at home and the right things abroad.

The last point I want to make is this. I have the great good fortune, being President, that people send me books all the time. Even Lester sends me books from time to time. And because I travel around a lot, I read a lot of them. And one of the things that I've tried to do the last 2 years is to read a lot about periods of American history that most Americans don't know much about.

For example, a lot of Americans know about what happened in the Constitutional Convention and during the Revolutionary War and then in George Washington's and Thomas Jefferson's and John Adams' Presidency. And then a lot of Americans know about what happened in Abraham Lincoln's Presidency and immediately thereafter. Most Americans don't know very much about what happened between James Madison and Abraham Lincoln. Most Americans don't know much about what happened between Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. Most Americans don't even know a great deal about what happened between Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt.

So I've really tried to read about this. I just read a magnificent biography by Robert Remini of your fellow Massachusetts citizen Daniel Webster, which tells a lot about what happened in one of those gaping periods.

But if you look at all the great breakpoints in American history—how we started, what happened in the Civil War, what happened in the industrial revolution, what happened in the Depression and the Second World War, the civil rights revolution—you look at every time there was a great challenge in this country's history, we always had to do three things over and over and over again as we rose to a higher and higher and higher level of democracy. Every time, we had to deepen the meaning of freedom to include more people and to make their freedom real; we had to widen the circle of opportunity so that citizenship meant your chance at the brass ring; and we had to strengthen the bonds of our Union.

Now, you remember that. The Democratic Party, I'm sad to say, was not always on the right side of all three of those issues in the 19th century. But since Woodrow Wilson became President, throughout the 20th century, we haven't always been right on every issue, but we've always been on the right side of our history. And I am determined that when we start this new century, this country will have deepened our freedom, widened our opportunity, and strengthened our Union. If we do the right things, our kids will have the best America ever.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Elaine and Gerald Schuster; Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston and his wife, Angela; Fred Seigel, president, Energy Capital Partners; Steve Grossman, national chair, and Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; economist Lester C. Thurow; and musician James Taylor.

Statement on the Middle East Peace Process

May 11, 1998

I have just met with Secretary Albright, National Security Adviser Berger, and Ambassador Ross. Unfortunately, there will not be a meeting today with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat to launch the permanent status talks. I regret that.

I have asked Secretary Albright to meet later this week with Prime Minister Netanyahu while he is in Washington. The objective of those discussions will be to seek to overcome the remaining differences so that we can proceed immediately with accelerated permanent status talks.

Secretary Albright will then report to me whether, as a result of her discussions with the Prime Minister, the basis exists to launch those talks in Washington.

Statement on Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman
May 11, 1998

Secretary Herman has served me and this administration with distinction. She is a person of integrity, a dedicated public servant, and an asset to working families all over America. I know her well, and I am confident she will not be distracted from the important work she is doing. It is unfortunate that, despite no findings of wrongdoing by the Secretary, the Independent Counsel Act compels the Attorney General to recommend the appointment of an independent counsel in these circumstances. I look forward to the speedy resolution of this investigation. I am confident that in the end, investigators will also conclude that Ms. Herman did nothing wrong.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Food Safety Legislation
May 11, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

The report to be released today by the General Accounting Office (GAO) calls on Congress to give the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to ensure that food eligible for import to the United States is produced under food safety systems that will provide the same level of protection as the safety systems in place in the United States. This report is further confirmation of the need for Congress to pass the Safety of Imported Food Act, which I called for in October 1997, which Senators Mikulski and Kennedy, and Representatives Eshoo and Pallone have introduced.

This important legislation will do what the GAO says is necessary: it will ensure that the FDA denies the entry of imports of fruits, vegetables, or other food from a foreign country or facility that does not meet U.S. food safety requirements or otherwise achieve the level of protection required in the United States. It will give FDA the authority it urgently needs, comparable to the Department of Agriculture's existing authority to prevent the importation of unsafe meat and poultry, to protect the safety of the food Americans eat. I have taken several further steps to begin implementing standards to ensure the safety of imported food. My FY '99 budget committed approximately $25 million to enabling the FDA to dramatically expand its international food inspection force in order to implement the pending legislation. In March of this year, I released a report on how the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Secretary of Agriculture, and in cooperation with the agricultural community, will develop guidance on good agricultural and manufacturing practices that will apply to both domestic and foreign producers.

There is no more important task our government faces than ensuring the safety of the American food supply. That is why last year Vice President Gore and I announced my comprehensive new initiative, "Food Safety from Farm to Table"—which detailed a comprehensive program including surveillance, outbreak response, education and research. The Safety of Imported Food Act is another vital step in protecting the safety of all the food Americans eat, and I urge you to pass it promptly.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; Richard K. Armey, House majority leader; and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Institute of Building Sciences
May 11, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the requirements of section 809 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701j–2(j)), I transmit herewith the annual report of the National Institute of Building Sciences for fiscal year 1996.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 11, 1998.

Remarks on the International Crime Control Strategy
May 12, 1998

Thank you very much, Mary, for your remarks and your work. Thank you, Mr. Vice President, members of the Cabinet and Congress, Mayor Barry, members of the city council, and to all the law enforcement officials who are here. We are here to talk about building a safer world for the 21st century.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

So before I begin my remarks about the subject of the day, I want to make it very, very clear that I am deeply disturbed by the nuclear tests which India has conducted, and I do not believe it contributes to building a safer 21st century. The United States strongly opposes any new nuclear testing. This action by India not only threatens the stability of the region, it directly challenges the firm international consensus to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I call on India to announce that it will conduct no further tests and that it will sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty now and without conditions. I also urge India's neighbors not to follow suit, not to follow down the path of a dangerous arms race. As most of you know, our laws have very stringent provisions, signed into law by me in 1994, in response to nuclear tests by nonnuclear weapons states, and I intend to implement them fully.

International Crime Control Strategy

Now, in a few hours I will be leaving to travel to Europe, to meet with the leaders of other industrial democracies in a time of great hope. Because of what is happening in Bosnia and Ireland, it is clear that if we work together, the 21st century can be a time of unprecedented democracy, prosperity, and peace. But it is equally clear that there are threats to our common future that cross national lines. Today I want to announce new plans to address the growing problem of international crime.

We all know the globe is shrinking every day with global TV networks, instantaneous communications over the Internet, increasing world travel. European nations have adopted completely opened borders, and many of them have already voted to create a common currency.

The American people in general benefit greatly from the process of globalization, with more economic opportunities and more opportunities to become enriched through contact with different cultures. Our values—democracy, human rights, the rule of law—will ultimately prevail when there is free trade in ideas.

But more porous borders, more affordable travel, more powerful communications increasingly also give criminals the opportunity to reach across borders, physically and electronically, to commit crimes and then retreat before they can be caught and punished. Many Americans really don't realize the extent to which international crime affects their daily lives, which is why we were so pleased to have Agent Riley with us today.

Con artists, operating overseas, mail phony financial offers and then disappear with investor dollars—hundreds of millions of dollars' worth. Sometimes they lure citizens abroad and use violence to get what they want.

Car theft rings move stolen vehicles across the border—200,000 a year, worth about a billion dollars—resulting in higher insurance costs for all Americans.

As Agent Riley's remarks suggest, cybercriminals can use computers to raid our banks, run up charges on our credit cards, extort money by threats to unleash computer viruses.

Smugglers engage in port running—speeding vehicles past our border points—putting people in danger and aiding the thriving trade in gangs, drugs, and guns. Others smuggle people across our border for prostitution and jobs in illegal sweatshops.

Two-thirds of counterfeit U.S. money—two-thirds—is printed overseas. Illegal copying of our products costs us jobs and tens of billions in revenue. Spies seek important industrial secrets, and worse, materials to make nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Up to $500 billion in criminal proceeds every single year, more than the GNP of most nations, is laundered, disguised as legitimate revenue, and much of it moves across our borders. International crime rings intimidate weak governments and threaten democracy. They murder judges, journalists, witnesses, and kidnappers and terrorists have attacked Americans abroad and even at home with brutal acts like the World Trade Center bombing.

Wrongdoing flows two ways. U.S. criminals also operate across borders, victimizing people in other nations. All these activities threaten our common safety and prosperity. To combat them, we must act broadly, decisively, consistent with our constitutional values to leave criminals no place to run, no place to hide.

The job of law enforcement officials behind me, from 12 different agencies, is to protect the American people from crime. But the job of our Congress, and my job, is to give these officers the tools they need to do the job.

Therefore, today I announce for the first time a comprehensive international crime control strategy for America. At its core is a simple but compelling truth: International crime requires an international response. America is prepared to act alone when it must, but no nation can control crime by itself anymore. We must create a global community of crimefighters, dedicated to protecting the innocent and to bringing to justice the offenders.

This week, nations at the G–8 summit will announce significant new joint anticrime activities. But let me tell you what I plan to do already by taking better advantage of existing laws and asking Congress for new legislation.

First, we will work with other nations to create a worldwide dragnet capability to promptly arrest and extradite fugitives from justice. Our bill asks for wider authority so America can extradite more suspected criminals. We'll also press for international cooperations so criminals will forfeit their ill-gotten gains.

Second, because none of us is safe if criminals find safe havens abroad, we'll work to ensure other nations are also ready to fight international crime—with global standards and goals, training and technical aid, and programs to modernize criminal laws elsewhere.

Third, we will work with our allies to share information on growing crime syndicates, to better derail their schemes. And we will work with industries to protect against computer crime.

Fourth, we will put more law enforcement personnel abroad, to aid our Embassies in identifying criminals before they attack Americans. And I'm seeking new authority to prosecute more violent offenses against Americans overseas.

Fifth, we will strengthen border security, with 1,000 new Border Patrol Agents, new technologies, and stiffer penalties, to put more smuggling rings out of business. I also want tough new sentences for port runners and for smugglers who refuse to stop for our Coast Guard.

Sixth, I will ask Congress to enact strict provisions to bar drug and arms traffickers and fugitives from justice from entering our country and to expel them if they do come here.

Finally, I will seek new authority to fight money laundering and freeze the U.S. assets of people arrested abroad. And we'll improve enforcement of existing laws against counterfeiting and industrial espionage.

To focus our efforts, we will complete within 6 months a comprehensive analysis of the threat Americans face from international crime. I've asked Vice President Gore to organize a global meeting to set a common agenda for fighting corruption and strengthening the rule of law. Some of the criminals have sophisticated tools, so ours must be also. They can form temporary cross-border alliances, based on greed and self-interest, so we must strengthen the community of nations based on a community of values.

They care about no one but themselves, while we care so deeply about our children and their future. It is our most profound strength, the strength that will allow us to prevail. For we cannot, we must not, we will not accept a world in which American children and children abroad grow up paralyzed by crime, fear, and violence.

Together, America and our allies can attack this scourge and build a secure and prosperous future for all our people. Again, let me say to all of you, especially to the law enforcement officers here, I thank you very, very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Agent Mary Riley, Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service; and Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., of Washington, DC.

Joint Statement on United States-United Arab Emirates Relations
May 12, 1998

At the invitation of President Clinton, His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayid Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, is visiting Washington, where he met with the President in the Oval Office today. Crown Prince Shaikh Khalifa conveyed the greetings of H. H. President Shaikh Zayid bin Sultan Al Nahyan and the people of the UAE to President Clinton and the American people. The Crown Prince then met separately with Vice President Gore, who hosted a working lunch. He is due to meet later with key Cabinet members and Congressional leaders.

The relationship between the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America is defined by strong bilateral ties. Today, this relationship has expanded greatly to include mutually productive cooperation in the fields of commerce, educational exchange, and security. The present close ties have become instrumental in safeguarding the security and stability of the Gulf region.

Over the past decades, the two sides have forged substantial economic links as a result of numerous initiatives by government and private sectors on both sides. Thousands of Americans live and work in the United Arab Emirates; thousands of UAE nationals study in the United States, and thousands more visit here each year. The UAE has become the United States' second-largest market in the Gulf region. Growing numbers of American firms are doing business and are based in the UAE because of its excellent infrastructure and welcoming environment.

While the regional environment has spawned a number of new threats in the last three decades, the strategic consultations between the UAE and the United States remain a key factor in securing the national interests of both countries. The signing of the 1994 Defense Cooperation Agreement is indicative of the strength of the relationship between the two sides.

Both sides agreed to encourage trade, investment, economic, and cultural cooperation and in this context, agreed on the desirability of reaching mutual agreements to cover these topics.

The two sides discussed recent developments in Iran. They shared the hope that the new Iranian leadership would change those policies that threaten the peace and stability of the region; at the same time, they agreed that the new Iranian Government has yet to prove it has abandoned its threatening policies. An important issue that remains unresolved is the continued occupation by Iran of three islands, Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb. The UAE and the United States continue to reiterate their call for the peaceful resolution of the issue either through bilateral talks or through the International Court of Justice.

Both governments expressed great sympathy for the Iraqi people and call upon Iraq to comply fully with all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. The two sides agreed that UN Security Council Resolutions must be enforced. They also made it clear that the Iraqi Government bears full responsibility for the misery of the Iraqi people.

Both sides affirmed that there is an urgent need to achieve genuine progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process in order to reach a lasting, comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. Such a comprehensive peace should be based upon UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace principle in addition to the fulfillment by both sides of their obligations under the Oslo Accords. The UAE side expressed its concern about the Israeli Government's policy toward the peace process and the rights of the Palestinian people. The two sides also agreed on the importance of achieving progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

Today, Crown Prince Khalifa and Vice President Gore announced the UAE's acquisition of 80 F–16 Block 60 fighters from the United States as a significant step towards strengthening the UAE's defense capabilities. In essence, the deal will enable the UAE to achieve a credible and effective defense through the establishment of a conventional deterrent capability based on quality. This acquisition will allow the two countries not only to add a significant stabilizing element to the overall strategic balance in the region but also to further strengthen and fortify the already close security relations between the two countries.

President Clinton conveyed his sincere greetings to the President of the UAE, His Highness Shaikh Zayid bin Sultan Al Nahyan, wishing him good health and long life.

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

Statement on Senate Action on Agricultural Research Legislation

May 12, 1998

I am very pleased that the Senate today passed with an overwhelming majority the bipartisan conference report on the agriculture research bill. This vital legislation makes needed reforms and provides funding in several areas that are priorities for my administration. The legislation provides important benefits to America's farmers and to those who have come to this country seeking a brighter future. I would like to extend my warm gratitude to Senators Lugar and Harkin for their vision and hard work stewarding a bill that ably balances crop insurance, agriculture research, rural development, and Food Stamps for legal immigrants in need.

The last hurdle that remains for this bill is for the House of Representatives to pass the conference report. I urge the House to act quickly on this legislation.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in Potsdam, Germany

May 13, 1998

Chancellor Kohl. Mr. President, dear Bill, it is a great pleasure and a great honor for me to welcome the President of the United States to this historic place, and at this historic time, and to welcome him on behalf of the German people, on behalf of the German friends.

We talked about this earlier today, and I tried to explain the importance of the day and the fact that you have come here today, after what's happened in the second half of our century. You, as the President of the United States of America, you've come here to also see to the reunited Germany. So it's not just one of similar events, not one of similar days, because when the last American President came to Potsdam, he came on the occasion of the Potsdam Conference in 1945, and at that time, Germany—and the chances of Germany belonging to the free nations of our continent—looked very bad. And this is last, but not least—the fact that we've been able to overcome that part of our

history is something we owe last, but not least, to our American friends.

Allow me to say that all American Presidents since Harry S. Truman, up to the present President, William Jefferson Clinton, by showing their support, by expressing their friendship, by extending the hand of partnership, have prepared the ground for German reunification.

We have come together at an historic site, a site where the memory of Frederick the Great is very much alive. This is where he was buried. He was a man who enjoyed high esteem in the United States because he was an enlightened spirit, a cosmopolitan, literal-minded person. He was the first to sign the first Prussian trade and commerce agreement with the United States, then newly independent. So I think it is apt that we meet here today, on the threshold of the next century at a moment where we in Europe have taken decisions on the introduction of a single European currency, at a moment where we are about to build the European house, a house that is big enough for all European nations to have a room in it, but also a house—and that is very much a German wish—where our American friends will have a permanent right of residence.

The American President, my friend Bill Clinton, when visiting Berlin, said, "The Americans have come here, and they will stand by you today and forever." He said, "America is on your side, now and forever." And I think that that is a practical expression of a policy that serves peace, that wants to establish freedom for all nations, that wants to offer opportunities for future generations to continue to live in peace and freedom. And that was the purpose of our talks today. We talked about the topical issues, about what is going on in the world right now, and we talked about how we can make a contribution to peace and freedom. This is also the purpose, Mr. President, of the many meetings that we have, more or less continuously. We talk on the phone; we meet very often. And I hope that that practice will continue.

Once again, I bid you a very warm welcome, Mr. President.

President Clinton. First let me thank the Chancellor for another opportunity to come to Germany to represent the United States and to enjoy his wonderful hospitality and the friendship that he has had for the American people and for me. I have particularly enjoyed having the opportunity to come to Potsdam today to talk about the next 50 years of history between the United States and Germany and a united Europe—a much different and more hopeful conversation than the one President Truman had here over 50 years ago.

Before I say more about our discussions, I think it is important that I make a comment about the nuclear tests by India. I believe they were unjustified. They clearly create a dangerous new instability in their region. And as a result, in accordance with United States law, I have decided to impose economic sanctions against India.

I have long supported deepening the relations between the United States and India. This is a deeply disappointing thing for me, personally. The First Lady and our daughter had a wonderful trip there; I have stayed in regular touch with the leaders of India for the last 5 years; I have looked forward to a very bright and different future. But the nuclear tests conducted by India, against the backdrop of 149 nations signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, demand an unambiguous response by the United States.

It is important that we make clear our categorical opposition. We will ask other countries to do the same.

I hope the Indian Government soon will realize that it can be a very great country in the 21st century without doing things like this. Chancellor Kohl and I just talked about our conversations and efforts with President Yeltsin. I'm hoping that the Russian Duma will soon ratify START II so we can go on to START III and continue to dramatically reduce the nuclear threat in the 21st century. It simply is not necessary for a nation that will soon be the world's most populous nation—it already has the world's largest middle class—that has 50 years of vibrant democracy, a perfectly wonderful country, it is not necessary for them to manifest national greatness by doing this. It is a terrible mistake.

I hope that India will instead take a different course now. I hope they will adhere without conditions to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And as I mentioned to the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Sharif, today, I also urge India's neighbors not to follow the dangerous path India has taken. It is not necessary to respond to this in kind.

Now, let me say just a few other words about the relationship between the United States and Germany, about which Chancellor Kohl spoke so movingly. When I was here in 1994, we talked about our shared vision for a united Europe and a strong United States-European partnership in the 21st century. I think it's fair to say that the progress that has been made in the years since is greater than we would have imagined just 4 years ago.

Europe is increasingly integrating around the commitment to democracy, open markets, and security alliances. Europe's East is joined more closely than ever before to the West. Some of the most seemingly intractable conflicts on this continent, in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, are giving way to peace and cooperation. All that has happened in the last 4 years.

And Chancellor, I believe that Europe has come so far in so little time in no small measure because of your leadership for German unification, for European Monetary Union, for freedom in free markets, and an undivided democratic Europe at peace. The world is in your debt, and America is pleased about the prospects for our common future because of what has happened.

We talked a lot today about what we have to do now to continue this process of integration and to strengthen our transatlantic partnership. I'm delighted that both our countries have ratified the invitation of NATO to Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland to become our new members. I also believe the United States should continue to support other efforts at European unity, including EU enlargement, including the historic decision this month of 11 European countries including Germany to establish the European Monetary Union. A strong and stable Europe with open markets and healthy growth is good for the world, and it is certainly good for America.

We also talked a lot about the importance of Russia and Ukraine; their success is critical to our future security. We strongly support Russian reform, and both of us are looking forward, as I indicated earlier, to talking to President Yeltsin in a few days in Birmingham.

Finally, let me say we're quite concerned about the crisis in Kosovo. The news that President Milosevic and Dr. Rugova will meet this week to start a dialog without preconditions is a sober first step toward resolving a very dangerous conflict. And we want them to make good on their commitment to serious dialog.

Let me just say one other thing. I want to thank the Chancellor for his emphasis and his urging to me to do more to promote people-to-people exchanges between the United States and Germany. That will be even more important as we enter the new century. I'm pleased the American Academy in Berlin will open its doors in the fall, bringing our artists and cultural leaders to Germany for study. I'm working closely with Congress to get the funds to begin construction of our new embassy in Berlin just as soon as possible, so that when the German Government takes up its work in Germany's new capital, it will have an American partner in place and ready to do business.

Chancellor, thank you again for the warmth of your welcome and the depth of your friendship to the United States. I'm glad to be back.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, President Clinton, the Indians have answered your warnings of yesterday with two more nuclear blasts today. What does that tell you about India's intentions and your ability to influence them?

President Clinton. Well, I don't know about my ability to influence them. I just know what the United States law requires, and it's a very stiff sanctions law. It basically says, no more aid. It requires us to vote against aid for India in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and other international fora. It cuts off export credits and basically says we can't do anything but ship humanitarian supplies and food. And I think it's a very sad thing.

But I don't think it's too complicated. I believe—they may think that their security requires this, but I think it's more likely, if you just listen to the rhetoric of the party in power, that they believe that they have been underappreciated in the world as a great power. And they think one reason may be that they're not an out-front, out-of-the-closet, open nuclear power.

Well, I think they've been underappreciated in the world and in the United States, myself. They're a very great country. And they will soon be the most populous country in the world. They already have the biggest middle class in the world. Indian-Americans have the highest level of education of any ethnic group in the United States.

But to think that you have to manifest your greatness by behavior that recalls the very worst events of the 20th century on the edge of the 21st century, when everybody else is trying to leave the nuclear age behind, is just wrong. It is just wrong. And they clearly don't need it to maintain their security vis-a-vis China, Pakistan, or anybody else.

So I just think they made a terrible mistake. And I think that we, all of us, have a responsibility to say that and to say that their best days are ahead of them, but they can't—they have to define the greatness of India in 21st century terms, not in terms that everybody else has already decided to reject.

Q. Mr. Chancellor, is Germany going to support sanctions against India and, if so, how?

Chancellor Kohl. Well, we will take a very close look at the sanctions that individual countries are going to take, but there's no doubt whatsoever that the Federal Government—that is to say, that the Germans, who have been traditionally linked in a very close friendship with India and the Indian people, will make it very clear that this was the wrong decision for them to take, that we do not accept that decision, and that we do not see any reason that would justify such a decision and that we are deeply concerned about the positive effect that this decision might have in a region that is already marked by tensions.

The objective of an international peace policy must be to reduce tensions and not to increase tensions. This decision will make a contribution to increasing tensions in the region because it, too, is in a way a direct challenge to the neighboring countries, whether justified or not, but the neighboring countries might react.

Q. Mr. President, how long do you expect the sanctions to remain in place against India? What would it take to lift them? And finally, if Pakistan were to undertake its own nuclear tests, would the United States feel obliged to impose sanctions against it?

President Clinton. If you look at the law as it has been in place since 1994, I believe, we actually have no discretion. In order to lift the sanctions, as I read the law, Congress would have to vote to do it. And the only thing I could do in the Indian situation, for example, is to delay—or any other similar situation—if a nondeclared nuclear state undertakes nuclear testing, under our law the President must impose sweeping sanctions immediately or delay for up to 30 days to see if something can be worked out. But even if that happens, the President—unlike most of our laws, the President does not have the power to waive. I can just delay for 30 days, during which time the Congress would then have the opportunity to repeal the sanctions or revise them in some way.

And so, I can't answer any of your questions until I have a chance, A, to consult with Congress and, B, to see what the next steps are with India.

Q. Mr. President, did you talk about Turkey?

President Clinton. [*Inaudible*]—but we have before, but not this time.

Q. Mr. President, there's been a lot of criticism of the U.S. intelligence community and whether or not we knew beforehand of the first series of nuclear tests. Did we know beforehand of this second series of nuclear tests? If not, what does that say? If we did, were we powerless? And in your conversations with the Pakistani Prime Minister, do you have any reason to believe that they will not now follow suit?

President Clinton. Well, that's a lot of questions. Let me say, first of all, on the intelligence question, before this round of tests started, I did not know it was going to start. And I made that clear to all the other people in the region. I don't ever discuss our intelligence operations, and I won't now. I will say that I've asked Director Tenet for a thorough review of them.

Now, on the Pakistani question, let me say, I had a very good, respectful conversation with Prime Minister Sharif. He has tried in the past to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan. I encouraged him to stay on that path. I encouraged him to resist the temptation to respond to an irresponsible act in kind.

I understand the pressures on him at home are probably enormous. You can just imagine how the public feels about it in Pakistan and the kind of ripple, traumatic effect this is having in their country. So I can't say for sure what is going to happen. I can only tell you that we had what I thought was a very good and respectful conversation, and I hope that neither Pakistan nor any other country will respond in kind to this.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Do you blame Netanyahu for the deadlock in the peace process in the Middle East?

President Clinton. Well, my experience in these things, which is mounting up now, indicates that the public placement of blame is not very productive if what you really want to do is get the parties to talk again.

Let me tell you what the facts are. Fifteen months ago we were asked by Prime Minister Netanyahu to explore whether or not there was some way we could facilitate, if you will, an acceleration of the Oslo process, which was embodied in the peace signing in September of '93 in Washington, to move, more or less, immediately to final status talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

He pointed out that a lot of these issues were highly contentious, especially for his government, and it would be better to make—to put them all together in one big package and try to make—have as few votes as possible to ratify the process. And I, frankly, thought he had a good idea. I thought it then, and I think it now.

And for a year and some odd months, we have worked very hard to try to find a formula which will enable the parties to take one more step in the process started at Oslo, and then go to final status talks. In other words, we haven't tried to find a formula to resolve all the issues; we've tried to find a formula to get them over the hurdle to get into final status talks. We came up with a set of ideas. In principle, but not in all the details, but in principle, Mr. Arafat accepted them. Mr. Netanyahu was not in a position to do so. He went home to Israel; he asked Mr. Ross, my Middle East Ambassador, to go out there and talk to him. He did. He's coming back now; he's on his way, or he may already be in the United States. Secretary Albright has stayed behind. They will talk some more.

I'm hoping that we can find an agreement based on the ideas we've presented which will enable these two parties to get together and go into final status talks.

I think, frankly, there is still some mistrust between them. And I think, frankly, there is still some difference of calculation among some of the actors in the Middle East drama about whether they are or are not benefited by a delay, by a stall. I can only tell you that I have seen a lot of doors open and close in the last 5½ years, and my view is that it is neither in Israel's nor the Palestinian Authority's interest to promote delay; that far more bad things are likely to happen than good things by a deliberate strategy of delay.

So I'm hoping that we'll be able to unlock this problem and worry about responsibility in the future and get results now.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3:48 p.m. on the terrace of Sans Souci Gardens. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Ibrahim Rugova, leader, Democratic League of Kosovo; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. Chancellor Kohl spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Situation in Kosovo
May 13, 1998

I welcome the news that President Milosevic and Dr. Ibrahim Rugova will meet on May 15 in Belgrade to initiate a dialog without preconditions.

As Ambassadors Holbrooke and Gelbard announced earlier today, the parties have also agreed to continue this dialog in a series of talks in Pristina.

This is a sober first step towards resolving a very dangerous conflict that clearly has the potential to spill over into neighboring countries and destabilize the region.

There is a great deal more to be done, however, before all the peoples of Kosovo enjoy the peace, security, and human rights they deserve. The parties face a complex challenge, but success is up to them. We expect each to make

good their commitment to serious and productive dialog.

We should be mindful of the difficult road ahead, but we are encouraged to see this process underway.

Message to the Congress Reporting the Detonation of a Nuclear Device by India

May 13, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 102(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, I am hereby reporting that, in accordance with that section, I have determined that India, a non-nuclear-weapon state, detonated a nuclear explosive device on May 11, 1998. I have further directed the relevant agencies and instrumentalities of the United States Government to take the necessary actions to impose the sanctions described in section 102(b)(2) of that Act.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 13, 1998.

NOTE: The memorandum on sanctions against India is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

May 13, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on developments since the last Presidential report of November 25, 1997, concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c). This report covers events through March 31, 1998. My last report, dated November 25, 1997, covered events through September 30, 1997.

1. There have been no amendments to the Iranian Assets Control Regulations, 31 CFR Part 535 (the "IACR"), since my last report.

2. The Iran-United States Claims Tribunal (the "Tribunal"), established at The Hague pursuant to the Algiers Accords, continues to make progress in arbitrating the claims before it. Since the period covered in my last report, the Tribunal has rendered one award. This brings the total number of awards rendered by the Tribunal to 585, the majority of which have been in favor of U.S. claimants. As of March 31, 1998, the value of awards to successful U.S. claimants paid from the Security Account held by the NV Settlement Bank was $2,480,897,381.53.

Since my last report, Iran has failed to replenish the Security Account established by the Algiers Accords to ensure payment of awards to successful U.S. claimants. Thus, since November 5, 1992, the Security Account has continuously remained below the $500 million balance required by the Algiers Accords. As of March 31, 1998, the total amount in the Security Account was $125,888,588.35, and the total amount in the Interest Account was $21,716,836.85. Therefore, the United States continues to pursue Case No. A/28, filed in September 1993, to require Iran to meet its obligation under the Algiers Accords to replenish the Security Account.

The United States also continues to pursue Case No. A/29 to require Iran to meet its obligation of timely payment of its equal share of advances for Tribunal expenses when directed to do so by the Tribunal. Iran filed its Rejoinder in this case on February 9, 1998.

3. The Department of State continues to respond to claims brought against the United States by Iran, in coordination with concerned government agencies.

On January 16, 1998, the United States filed a major submission in Case No. B/1, a case in which Iran seeks repayment for alleged wrongful charges to Iran over the life of its Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, including the cost of terminating the program. The January filing primarily addressed Iran's allegation that its FMS Trust Fund should have earned interest.

Under the February 22, 1996, settlement agreement related to the Iran Air case before the International Court of Justice and Iran's bank-related claims against the United States before the Tribunal (see report of May 16, 1996), the Department of State has been processing payments. As of March 31, 1998, the Department of State has authorized payment to U.S. nationals totaling $13,901,776.86 for 49 claims against Iranian banks. The Department of State has also authorized payments to surviving family members of 220 Iranian victims of the aerial incident, totaling $54,300,000.

During this reporting period, the full Tribunal held a hearing in Case No. A/11 from February 16 through 18. Case No. A/11 concerns Iran's allegations that the United States violated its obligations under Point IV of the Algiers Accords by failing to freeze and gather information about property and assets purportedly located in the United States and belonging to the estate of the late Shah of Iran or his close relatives.

4. U.S. nationals continue to pursue claims against Iran at the Tribunal. Since my last report, the Tribunal has issued an award in one private claim. On March 5, 1998, Chamber One issued an award in *George E. Davidson* v. *Iran*, AWD No. 585–457–1, ordering Iran to pay the claimant $227,556 plus interest for Iran's interference with the claimant's property rights in three buildings in Tehran. The Tribunal dismissed the claimant's claims with regard to other property for lack of proof. The claimant received $20,000 in arbitration costs.

5. The situation reviewed above continues to implicate important diplomatic, financial, and legal interests of the United States and its nationals and presents an unusual challenge to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The Iranian Assets Control Regulations issued pursuant to Executive Order 12170 continue to play an important role in structuring our relationship with Iran and in enabling the United States to implement properly the Algiers Accords. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 13, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

May 13, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, and a related Protocol, signed at Kingstown on January 8, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking of testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence;

serving documents; locating or identifying persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets; restitution; collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and related Protocol, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 13, 1998.

Remarks to the People of Germany in Berlin
May 13, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. President, Chancellor Kohl, to the leaders and members of the Bundestag and Bundesrat, members of the Cabinet, members of the diplomatic corps, Professor Schneider, and all the people who have made us feel so welcome here at the beautiful Schauspielhaus. Let me begin by thanking the German Symphony Orchestra for playing one of my favorite pieces, the "Eroica." You were wonderful. Thank you very much.

Mr. Mayor, thank you for your remarks. And Chancellor, thank you for all that you said.

I am delighted to join all of you in the historic heart of free and unified Berlin. Fifty years ago the United States and its allies made a commitment to the people of Berlin. It began with the heroic airlift of 1948, continued through the showdown with Soviet tanks at Checkpoint Charlie in 1961, and includes nearly 100,000 American soldiers who defended this city over the course of 40 years and grew to love its people.

It lasted until East Germans bravely reached out across the wall and tore it down, thus freeing all of us to make real a Europe we had only dreamed of, an undivided continent of thriving democracies where states deal with each other not through domination but dialog; where societies are governed not by repression but by the rule of law; where the only barriers people face are the limits of their own dreams. Today, Berlin is a symbol of what all Europe is striving to become.

Former Chancellor Willy Brandt, who was mayor of West Berlin on the day the wall went up, declared on that magical November night as the wall was coming down, *"Es wachst zusammen was zusammen gehort"*—"what belongs together is growing together." You have shown, citizens of Berlin, that he was correct. From the construction on the Spree turning Berlin into Germany's capital for the future to the renewal of Potsdammer Platz as a dynamic center of business, Berlin's rebirth embodies all our hopes for the future. And from Munich to Potsdam, from Hamburg to Dresden, people throughout Germany's old and new states have struggled and sacrificed to make the larger dream of German unity come true. Now, barely 600 days before the beginning of a new century and a new millennium, we must make unity our mission for the Continent as a whole and for a new transatlantic community.

For more than 1,000 years, from the time of Charlemagne to the founding of the European Community, a unified Europe has captured this continent's imagination. Now, for the first time, the dream is within reach, and not through conquest but through the decision of free people.

In 1994 I came to Europe to support your unity and to set forth a vision of partnership between America and a new Europe, rooted in security cooperation, free markets, and vibrant democracies. I asked all our countries to adapt our institutions for the new time, to help the new market economies of Europe's eastern half to thrive, to support the growth of freedom and the spread of peace, to bring the peoples of the Euro-Atlantic community more closely together.

On all fronts, we have made remarkable progress. NATO is taking on new missions and new members, building practical ties with Russia and Ukraine, deepening cooperation among the

44 nations of the Partnership Council. The European Union is growing, and America and the EU are working together to tear down more trade barriers and strengthen new democracies. The OSCE, Europe's standard bearer for human rights and freedoms, is now helping to make those standards real, from supervising elections in Albania to monitoring arms reduction in Bosnia.

With support from America and the European Union and especially with Chancellor Kohl and Germany's farsighted leadership, new market economies are taking root all across this continent. Russia has privatized more property than any nation in this century. Poland and Estonia are among Europe's fastest growing economies. Since 1991, U.S. and EU investment in Central and Eastern Europe has quadrupled and trade has doubled.

We've encouraged Europe's newly freed nations from helping citizens groups in the New Independent States to monitor their elections to strengthening the independence of their judicial systems. In Russia alone, thousands of civic groups are beginning to take a role in shaping the destiny of this century. President Yeltsin has a new government of young reformers, fully capable of leading Russia decisively into the future.

We have helped to make the peace take hold from Bosnia to Northern Ireland. Every day our ordinary citizens work to link our nations together, from sister cities such as Leipzig and Houston, to American students flocking to all European countries, to young Romanians and Bulgarians now enrolled in our military academies.

With all of this progress, as the Chancellor noted, many challenges still remain to our common vision: the ongoing struggles of newly free nations to consolidate their reforms; the unfinished work of bringing Europe's eastern half fully into our transatlantic community; the fear of those who lack the skills to succeed in the fast-changing global economy; the voices of hatred, intolerance, and division on both sides of the Atlantic, whether masked in patriotism, cloaked in religious fervor, or posing as ethnic pride; Bosnia's fragile peace; Kosovo's volatility; Cyprus' stalemate; the dangers that all our nations face and cannot defeat alone—the spread of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, environmental degradation.

And so my friends, 1998, no less than 1989, demands our boldness, our will, and our unity. Today I call on our nations to summon the energy and the will to finish the work we have started, to keep at it until every nation on the Continent enjoys the security and democracy we do and all men and women, from Seattle to Paris to Istanbul to St. Petersburg, are able to pursue their dreams in peace and build an even better life for their children.

This is the opportunity of generations. Together, we must seize it. We must build a Europe like Germany itself, whole and free, prosperous and peaceful, increasingly integrated, and always globally engaged.

If you will forgive me a personal observation based on my service in the last 5½ years, I must note that this magic moment in history did not simply arrive. It was made, and made largely by the vision and determined leadership of Germany and its Chancellor for 9 years.

Consider the historic changes you have wrought. You committed Germany again to lead in a united Europe—this time through cooperation, not conquest. You took the risk of pushing for the European Monetary Union, knowing there would be bumps along the way, especially with the strength of the deutsche mark and the power of your own economy. You shouldered the enormous cost of your own reunification to make sure the East is not left behind and to ease as much as possible the unavoidable dislocation and pain that goes along with this process.

And you have done this while also taking on the challenge that West Germany must face in making a difficult transition to a global economy, in which preserving opportunity for all and preserving the social contract is a challenge even for the wealthiest nations, as we see in America every day. All this you have attempted to do, and largely achieved, in 9 short years.

Though many German citizens may be uncertain of the outcome and may not yet feel the benefits of your farsighted, courageous course, you are clearly on the right side of history. America honors your vision and your achievements, and we are proud to march with you, shoulder-to-shoulder, into the new millennium. We thank you.

We begin our common journey with one basic premise: America stands with Europe. Today, no less than 50 years ago, our destinies are joined. If Europe is at peace, America is more

secure. If Europe prospers, America does as well. We share a common destiny because we move to a logic of mutually beneficial interdependence, where each nation can grow stronger and more prosperous because of the success of its neighbors and friends. Therefore, we welcome Europe's march toward greater unity. We seek a transatlantic partnership that is broad and open in scope, where the benefits and burdens are shared, where we seek a stable and peaceful future not only for ourselves but for all the world. We begin with our common security of which NATO is the bedrock.

Next year the leaders of countries across Europe will gather in Washington to celebrate NATO's 50 years of success, to welcome the first new democracies from Eastern Europe as members, to keep NATO's door open to others as they are ready to assume the responsibilities of membership, to chart a course for the century ahead with threats more diffuse but no less dangerous than those our founders faced.

Yesterday's NATO guarded our borders against direct military invasion. Tomorrow's alliance must continue to defend enlarged borders and defend against threats to our security from beyond them: the spread of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic violence, regional conflict. NATO must have the means to perform these tasks. And we must maintain and strengthen our partnership with Russia, with Ukraine, with other nations across the Continent who share our interests, our values, and our dreams.

Advancing security also requires us to work for peace, whether in Northern Ireland, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kosovo, Bosnia, or Cyprus, to stand against intolerance and injustice as much as military aggression. For racism and inequality have no place in the future we are building together. We must fight them at home and abroad.

Second, we must do more to promote prosperity throughout our community. Transatlantic commerce, as the Chancellor said, is already the largest economic relationship in the world, encompassing more than half a trillion U.S. dollars each year, supporting millions of jobs in both America and Europe.

Consider this: America's investment in Europe roughly equals that in all the rest of the world put together. And Europe's investment in America has now created so many jobs that one of 12 U.S. factory workers is employed by a European-owned firm.

Still, we must face the stark fact that prosperity is not yet everyone's partner. Europe's new democracies confront the daunting challenge of transition to market economies in an age of globalization, which, as I have already said, makes it more difficult to preserve equality of opportunity, a strong social safety net, and a general sense of fairness. We must continue to help these struggling countries, even as those of us in wealthier nations confront our own challenges on these fronts.

America will continue to support Europe's march toward integration. We admire the determination that has made your economic and monetary union possible, and we will work with you to make it a success. We will continue to encourage your steps to enlarge the EU as well, eventually to embrace all central Europe and Turkey.

Our third task is to strengthen the hand and extend the reach of democracy. One important tool is the OSCE. Its broad membership projects a unity and moral authority unparalleled on the Continent. Today, the OSCE is taking action on the ground from advancing human rights in the Balkans to supporting democratic institutions in Belarus.

At next year's OSCE summit, we should encourage even greater engagement in the areas where democracy's roots are still fragile, in the Balkans and central Asia and the Caucasus, and we must develop practical new tools for the OSCE, such as training police to support peacekeeping missions and dispatching democracy teams to build more open societies. Only in this way can we deter and defuse crises that threaten our values and our securities before they get out of hand.

Now, the secure, the free, the prosperous Atlantic community we envision must include a successful, democratic Russia. For most of this century fear, tyranny, and isolation kept Russia from the European mainstream. But look at the future Russians are now building, and we have an enormous stake in their success. Russia is literally recreating itself, using the tools of openness and reform to strengthen new freedom and restrain those who abuse them, to ensure more competition, to collect taxes, fight crime, restructure the military, prevent the spread of sensitive technologies. We must support this Russian revolution.

We will redouble our efforts with Russia to reduce our nuclear arsenals, to lower the limits

on conventional forces in Europe, to fight the spread of materials and technology for weapons of mass destruction, to build a partnership with NATO in practical ways that benefit all of us, to develop the ties between our people that are the best antidote to mistrust. And we must not forget Ukraine, for it, too, has the opportunity to reach both east and west and be a great force for Europe's peace, prosperity, and stability. We should encourage reform and support it. The moment in Ukraine is historic, and it is not a moment to lose.

Our fourth and final task is strengthening our global cooperation. Let us make common cause of our common concerns, standing together against threats to our security from states that flout international norms to the conflict brewing in Kosovo, from deterring terrorists and organized criminals to helping Asia restore financial stability, from helping Africa to join the global economy to combating global warming. In a world grown smaller, what happens beyond our borders touches our daily lives at home. America and Europe must work together to shape this world.

Now, as we pursue this agenda, there will be times when we disagree. But occasional lack of consensus must never result in lasting cracks in our cohesion. Nor should the quest for consensus lure us into the easiest, lowest common denominator solution to difficult, high-urgency problems. When the world needs principled, effective, strong leadership, we must rise to the responsibility.

These are our challenges. They are ambitious, but attainable. They demand of nations constant unity of purpose and commitment, and they require the support and the courage of our citizens. For without the courage of ordinary people, the wall would not have come down, and the new Europe would not be unfolding. Now it falls to each of us to write the next chapter of this story, to build up from what has been taken down, to cement together what is no longer walled apart, to repair the breaches that still exist among our peoples, to build a Europe that belongs together and grows together in freedom.

Our success in this endeavor will make the new century the greatest that Germany, America, Europe, and the world have ever known. This is an effort worthy of the rich legacy of Berlin, the visionary leadership of modern Germany, and the enormous obligation we share for our children's future. Let us embrace it with gratitude, joy, and determination.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the Schauspielhaus. In his remarks, he referred to President Roman Herzog of Germany; Professor Frank Schneider, director, Berlin Schauspielhaus; and Mayor Eberhard Diepgen of Berlin.

Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President Roman Herzog of Germany in Berlin

May 13, 1998

Mr. President, Chancellor, members of the German and American delegations. First, Mr. President, let me thank you for your wonderful toast and for the spirit in which it was delivered. It has been a truly wonderful day to be in Berlin and to be in Potsdam. I am struck more than ever by the friendship that joins our two nations.

Today I have been given many gifts, Mr. President, but to come here tonight to hear Bach on the saxophone is more than I could have ever dreamed. [*Laughter*] I thank you.

I am delighted to be in this historic hotel where once one of my predecessors, Theodore Roosevelt, stayed. As I'm sure all Germans here know, who are students of America, Theodore Roosevelt was a lifelong admirer of the German people. As a young man he spent time in Dresden, and he later wrote, "From that time to this, it would have been quite impossible to make me feel that the Germans were really foreigners."

The rebuilding of the Adlon is one of the many steps taken in recent years to build a new future upon the foundation of Berlin's and Germany's past. Here, close to the Brandenburg

Gate and the Reichstag, we see a united Germany that will be a force for peace and prosperity in the next century. Tomorrow. we will commemorate the airlift, the *Luftbrucke,* the bridge we built together almost 50 years ago.

But long before that, the people of Germany helped America to build bridges, too. The Brooklyn Bridge was designed by a German-American, John Roebling. And German-Americans have been building other kinds of bridges since the beginning of our country. After all, Germans helped to create our Nation through revolution, helped to preserve it through civil war, and they are still helping to advance our democracy in the twilight of the 20th century.

One hundred years ago tomorrow, a distinguished American summed up the lessons of the century that was then drawing to a close. Carl Schurz served in the Cabinet of a President, as a United States Senator, and as a general in the Army. He was a close friend of Abraham Lincoln. He was also a German, one of many who came to the United States after the Revolution of 1848. I might say that as a result of that revolution, the State from which I come has towns named Stuttgart and Ulm, where we grow more rice than any other place in the United States. [*Laughter*] Carl Schurz lived quite a long life. And as he reflected back on it, he was proud to have stood for democracy on two continents, in two nations. He never forgot the friends he left in Germany or the two goals that animated the younger generation of 1848: representative government and German unity. In his speech to a gathering of old '48ers on May 14, 1898, Carl Schurz swore that he would never stop working to spread liberty around the world.

Mr. President, you have led Germany toward these same goals: liberty, representative government, and unity. In countless ways, you have worked for unity, reaching out to neighboring countries, building consensus, laying the ground work for a new and peaceful Europe. You have made democracy work at home.

Mr. President, you recently wrote, "Even a superpower needs friends." [*Laughter*] Truer words were never written. [*Laughter*] And so Mr. President, I thank you for the friendship that unites us personally and for the unbreakable friendship that joins our people.

And ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in raising a glass to President Roman Herzog and to the people of the Federal Republic of Germany.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Hotel Adlon. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Herzog.

Remarks at the Berlin Airlift Remembrance Ceremony in Berlin
May 14, 1998

Chancellor Kohl, members of the German Government, Mr. Mayor, members of the diplomatic corps, the veterans of the *Luftbrucke*, and to the people of Germany: Fifty years ago this airstrip was a pivotal battlefield in a war that had not yet been named. In 1948 the world could not yet speak of another war.

World War II had left Europe devastated and divided. Nowhere was the crisis more acute than here in Berlin. People were hungry and homeless. A hundred years earlier, Karl Marx had declared that a specter is haunting Europe, the specter of communism. In 1948 the specter's shadow fell across half a continent. The edge of that shadow was the runway here at Tempelhof Airport. The last European battlefield of World War II became the first battlefield of the cold war.

On June 24, 1948, Stalin threw down a gauntlet, refusing to allow supplies to be sent to Berlin. It was war by starvation, with more than 2 million lives hanging in the balance. The blockade stymied the British, the French, the American allies. Some saw no solution and reluctantly advised evacuation.

The fate of free Berlin hung by a thread, the thread of air support. No one really thought it was possible to supply a city by air. A few visionaries, however, were convinced it could be done. They had no precedent, just the simple rules of conscience and ingenuity that determine all our best actions. And they had a President.

On June 28, in a small meeting at the White House, Harry Truman said, "There is no discussion on that point. We stay in Berlin, period."

From the moment the largest airlift in history began, the Western allies became protectors, instead of occupiers, of Germany. There are so many stories from that proud period: the leadership of General Clay and General Tunner; the American, British, and German casualties we must never forget; the countless acts of individual kindness, like Gail Halvorsen, the famous *Rosinenbomber* who dropped tiny parachutes of candy to Berlin's children. She is here with us today, and I'd like to ask her to stand. Thank you very much. [*Applause*] Thank you, sir. Thank you—he's here. Thank you, sir.

If the Communists could fight with fear, then we would fight back with friendship and faith. Today I salute, along with the Chancellor, all the American veterans who came back to celebrate today. I would like to ask any of them who are here to please stand. [*Applause*] And I salute the people of Berlin. Thousands of Berliners from doctors to housewives rolled up their sleeves to help Americans expand this airfield, building Tegel Airport from scratch, unloading and maintaining the planes. Your fearless mayor, Ernst Reuter, inspired Americans and Germans alike when he stood before a rally and said, "We cannot be bordered. We cannot be negotiated. We cannot be sold."

And finally, I salute the 75,000 people from all around Europe who helped the airlift in some capacity and made it a triumph for people who love freedom everywhere.

Between June of 1948 and May of 1949, over a quarter million sorties were flown around the clock, day and night, in weather good and bad, roughly a plane every 90 seconds at its height. But the most precious cargo did not come in the well-named CARE packages. It was instead the hope created by the constant roar of the planes overhead. Berliners called this noise a symphony of freedom, reminding you that Berlin was not alone and that freedom was no flight of imagination.

Today, a new generation must relearn the lessons of the airlift and bring them to bear on the challenges of this new era, for the cold war is history, a democratic Russia is our partner, and we have for the first time a chance to build a new Europe, undivided, democratic, and at peace. Yet we know that today's possibilities are not tomorrow's guarantees. For all the promise of our time, we are not free from peril.

That is why I hope both Americans and Germans will always remember the lesson of what happened here 50 years ago. We cannot relinquish the responsibilities of leadership, for the struggle for freedom never ends.

In the heat of the Berlin crisis, General Clay wrote, "I believe the future of democracy requires us to stay." Well, that was the best investment we could have made in Germany's future. It would be difficult to imagine a better friend or ally than modern Germany.

How proud those who participated in the airlift must have been when Germany reunified, when Germany led the effort to unify Europe, and when the modern equivalent of CARE packages were sent to Bosnia, Afghanistan, and other places ravaged by war—when the people of Germany were among the first to send them. It was a good investment in democracy to stay.

Now, we must continue to build bridges between our two peoples. The Fulbright program between Germany and the United States is the largest in the world. This fall the American Academy in Berlin will open, bringing our leading cultural figures here. We will be working hard to expand our support for the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange, which has already given more than 10,000 German and American students the chance to visit each other's countries. The next century of our cooperation for freedom has already begun in our classrooms. Let us give our young people the chance to build even stronger bridges for the future.

In his "Song of the Spirits Over the Waters," Gunther wrote, "Man's soul is like the water. From heaven it descends, to heaven it rises and down again to Earth, it returns, ever repeating." To me, these lines express the heroism of the airlift, for more than food and supplies were dropped from the skies. As the planes came and went and came and went again, the airlift became a sharing of the soul, a story that tells people never to give up, never to lose faith. Adversity can be conquered. Prayers can be answered, hopes realized. Freedom is worth standing up for.

My friends, today, and 100 years from today, the citizens of this great city and all friends of freedom everywhere will know that because a few stood up for freedom, now and forever, "*Berlin bleibt noch Berlin*"—"Berlin is still Berlin."

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11 a.m. at the Tempelhof Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Lucius D. Clay, USA (d. 1978), Commander in Chief, European Command; and Maj. Gen. William H. Tunner, USAF (d. 1983), Commander, Combined Airlift Task Force. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chancellor Kohl.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion at the General Motors Opel Plant in Eisenach, Germany

May 14, 1998

[*The discussion is joined in progress.*]

U.S. Investment in Germany

Q. Mr. President, do you regard Germany as an attractive country for American investors, and if so, for what main products and services?

The President. Well, the short answer to your question is yes. One of the reasons that I was so excited about coming here is that I felt that if the Chancellor and I were to come here together and there would be widespread news coverage of our trip, then back in America, and indeed, in other places, there would be people who say, "Well, maybe we should look at investing there."

Investors are like all other people—you assume they know everything, but no one knows everything. No one has every possible option for activity in his or her head all the time. And so I think that one of the great challenges that Germany faces, obviously, is to bring the eastern *Lander* up to the employment levels and the income levels, generally, of the western part of the country. One of the great challenges Europe faces is to bring all the countries that were part of the Warsaw Pact up to the level of employment and income of the rest of Europe. And the only way this can be done is by people who believe in—your counterparts, who believe in you and your potential, investing their money and putting people to work.

Because of your geographical location, I would imagine that any kind of manufacturing operation would be a good operation here, because there are good transportation networks in and out of here to the rest of Europe and because, frankly, the Continent is not that large. I don't think there is any kind of thing you can't do. I think that—Chancellor Kohl has already said that you would have a greater advantage probably in the areas where you already have a proven track record. But most manufacturers in America are prepared to go anywhere there is a work force that can be trained, where people will work hard and work in the kind of teamwork spirit that you have demonstrated here at this plant.

So I hope that our coming here will help more of your fellow citizens to get good jobs. And that's one of the reasons we wanted to come.

[*At this point, the discussion continued.*]

Administration Accomplishments and Goals

Q. Mr. President, which domestic or foreign policy problem would you wish to be solved most urgently, and which achievement would you regard as the highlight in your term of office?

The President. Well, first let me say, I suppose our most important achievement is turning the American economy around in ways that benefit ordinary Americans so that we not only have high growth and low unemployment, but it's working in a way that most people feel more secure, and they have the freedom to make more good decisions for themselves. There are many other things that I have done, specific things that I am very proud of, but I think, generally, doing that has made a big difference.

And in the world, I hope that putting America in the center of the future after the cold war will be a lasting achievement: future trading relationships with Europe and Latin America and Asia; our future efforts to combat the problems of terrorism and the weapons spread; our future efforts to save the environment of the world; our future efforts to work with countries to help

solve problems, like the problems in Bosnia. And Helmut reminded me, the work we're doing now on nuclear weapons, because we're a little concerned that India had a test about that in the last couple of days. So, at home, making the economy work for all our people; abroad, involving the United States in the challenges of the 21st century and not letting America withdraw from the world.

Now, what would I still like to do, what problems are we still trying to solve? There are many things I could mention at home, but I would just say two things. First of all, after World War II, in almost every country there was a huge increase in the birth rate. People came home from the war, and they wanted to have babies, and they did, in record numbers in the United States. When these so-called baby boomers—and I'm the oldest one; I was born in 1946—when all of them retire in all the advanced countries of the world, they will put enormous pressure on the retirement and health care systems. And if we don't make some changes in them in our country, we will put unfair burdens on our children and on our children's ability to raise our grandchildren. On the other hand, if we throw them out the door, then our people will be divided. We won't be preserving our obligations and our social contract. So I would still like to reform those things in a way that protects our people but allows our children to go forward and build a good life.

The other thing I would say is that in our country, where we have so many people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, not everyone—particularly a lot of people in our inner cities—has participated in this economic recovery yet. We still have some neighborhoods in our cities where the unemployment rate is too high, the education level is too low, the crime rate is too high. And I would like to find a way before I leave office to bring the spirit of enterprise to all those people, the opportunities.

Around the world, I hope before I leave office that we will have secured a peace agreement in the Middle East that will last for a long time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. in an outdoor tent at the plant. In his remarks, he referred to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany. The press release issued by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the opening remarks of the President or the entire roundtable discussion.

Remarks to the People of Eisenach
May 14, 1998

Thank you. Chancellor Kohl, President Vogel, Mayor Brodhum, to the people of Eisenach, especially to all of the young people who are here, thank you for making us feel so welcome.

Now I have some idea of why Martin Luther called Eisenach "my beloved city." And I have some sense of the spirit and independence that inspired Johann Sebastian Bach, who as a young composer experimented with counterpoint, annoying the elders of the church where he played the organ but thrilling everyone else in the world.

As has already been said, after American soldiers arrived here at the end of the Second World War, one of their first acts was to issue an order to permit the rebuilding of the Bach House. I am still proud of that historic action by our forces. As you know, by previous agreement Eisenach was placed under control of Soviet forces, but our soldiers never forgot this wonderful city, and you never forgot what the feel of freedom was like.

Just think, 15 years ago, how many of us would have thought that today an American President and a German Chancellor could stand on this spot in a united Germany, in a uniting Europe?

Thanks in no small measure to the leadership of your Chancellor, Germany today is one nation, in harmony with its neighbors, at the center of Europe's efforts to make the 21st century one of democracy, prosperity, and peace.

I know that throughout the eastern lands, the efforts to unify and rebuild have not been easy. I know that sacrifices have been made. I know that still work must be done, but do not forget

the great progress you have made in such a short time. And do not underestimate what you can do with your dreams as free people.

We have just toured your General Motors Opel plant, established in 1991. It is now a model for the entire world, with its technology, with strong worker participation in decisions, with innovative efforts to protect the environment. I am proud that American companies like GM have invested in your future. I want more of them to do it until every person in every part of Germany has a chance to live up to the fullest of his or her God-given abilities.

As you march into the future, you have not forgotten your past. You honor Luther and Bach and teach the world of their gifts, and you honor America by recalling our role in your journey to freedom.

As the mayor said, you have a sister city in the United States, in Waverly, Iowa. In your city hall there is a quilt handmade by women from Waverly, Iowa, most of them of German heritage, one of them 101 years old when she worked on the quilt. Through your darkest years, these long-lost German cousins of yours never lost faith that one day you would be free.

On this beautiful Thuringian day in the spring, we are bathed in the light and the warmth of freedom. May it always shine across Germany, across this continent, across the world, and may you have every opportunity you have waited so long and are working so hard for.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:42 p.m. in Market Square. In his remarks, he referred to Minister President Bernhard Vogel of Thuringia; and Mayor Peter Brodhum of Eisenach.

Statement on the Death of Marjory Stoneman Douglas

May 14, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of one of America's greatest environmentalists, Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Mrs. Douglas was 103 when I had the honor of awarding her the Medal of Freedom, and throughout her life, she was always ahead of her time. Long before there was an Earth Day, Mrs. Douglas was a passionate steward of our Nation's natural resources, particularly her beloved Florida Everglades. She was both inspiration and mentor for a generation of American conservationists, and her legacy will continue to call us to action on behalf of the environment.

Statement on Bipartisan Tobacco Legislation

May 14, 1998

I want to commend Representatives Hansen, Meehan, and Waxman for the strong bipartisan support they have marshaled for the legislation they are introducing today to reduce youth smoking in this country. The Hansen-Meehan-Waxman bill contains tough company penalties for failure to reduce youth smoking, full FDA authority to regulate tobacco, strong restrictions on advertising and youth marketing of tobacco products, and key protections against exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. With the introduction of this important bipartisan bill, the House of Representatives can follow the lead of the Senate and finally get down to the serious business of reducing youth smoking in this country. I look forward to working with Representatives Hansen, Meehan, Waxman, and all of their House colleagues to pass a comprehensive tobacco bill this year that includes effective measures to reduce youth smoking and that protects farmers and farming communities.

Memorandum on Privacy and Personal Information in Federal Records
May 14, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Privacy and Personal Information in Federal Records

Privacy is a cherished American value, closely linked to our concepts of personal freedom and well-being. At the same time, fundamental principles such as those underlying the First Amendment, perhaps the most important hallmark of American democracy, protect the free flow of information in our society.

The Federal Government requires appropriate information about its citizens to carry out its diverse missions mandated by the Constitution and laws of the United States. Long mindful of the potential for misuse of Federal records on individuals, the United States has adopted a comprehensive approach to limiting the Government's collection, use, and disclosure of personal information. Protections afforded such information include the Privacy Act of 1974, the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, and the *Principles for Providing and Using Personal Information* ("Privacy Principles"), published by the Information Infrastructure Task Force on June 6, 1995, and available from the Department of Commerce.

Increased computerization of Federal records permits this information to be used and analyzed in ways that could diminish individual privacy in the absence of additional safeguards. As development and implementation of new information technologies create new possibilities for the management of personal information, it is appropriate to reexamine the Federal Government's role in promoting the interests of a democratic society in personal privacy and the free flow of information. Accordingly, I hereby direct the heads of executive departments and agencies ("agencies") as follows:

It shall be the policy of the executive branch that agencies shall:

(a) assure that their use of new information technologies sustain, and do not erode, the protections provided in all statutes relating to agency use, collection, and disclosure of personal information;

(b) assure that personal information contained in Privacy Act systems of records be handled in full compliance with fair information practices as set out in the Privacy Act of 1974;

(c) evaluate legislative proposals involving collection, use, and disclosure of personal information by the Federal Government for consistency with the Privacy Act of 1974; and

(d) evaluate legislative proposals involving the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information by any entity, public or private, for consistency with the Privacy Principles.

To carry out this memorandum, agency heads shall:

(a) within 30 days of the date of this memorandum, designate a senior official within the agency to assume primary responsibility for privacy policy;

(b) within 1 year of the date of this memorandum, conduct a thorough review of their Privacy Act systems of records in accordance with instructions to be issued by the Office of Management and Budget ("OMB"). Agencies should, in particular:

(1) review systems of records notices for accuracy and completeness, paying special attention to changes in technology, function, and organization that may have made the notices out of date, and review routine use disclosures under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(3) to ensure they continue to be necessary and compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected;

(2) identify any systems of records that may not have been described in a published notice, paying special attention to Internet and other electronic communications activities that may involve the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information;

(c) where appropriate, promptly publish notice in the *Federal Register* to add or amend any systems of records, in accordance with the procedures in OMB Circular A–130, Appendix I;

(d) conduct a review of agency practices regarding collection or disclosure of personal information in systems of records between the agency and State, local, and tribal governments in accordance with instructions to be issued by OMB; and

(e) within 1 year of the date of this memorandum, report to the OMB on the results of the foregoing reviews in accordance with instructions to be issued by OMB.

The Director of the OMB shall:

(a) issue instructions to heads of agencies on conducting and reporting on the systems of record reviews required by this memorandum;

(b) after considering the agency reports required by this memorandum, issue a summary of the results of the agency reports; and

(c) issue guidance on agency disclosure of personal information via the routine use exception to the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(3)), including sharing of data by agencies with State, local, and tribal governments.

This memorandum is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan and an Exchange With Reporters in Birmingham, United Kingdom

May 15, 1998

President Clinton. Let me say just very briefly that I'm delighted to have another chance to meet with Prime Minister Hashimoto. The partnership we have had with Japan is obviously one of the most important relationships the United States has had and will have in the future.

I have invited the Prime Minister to come for an official visit in July, and I hope he will be able to come. We're working hard on a number of things. Our security relationship has been critical to both of us. Our people have been working together on a deregulation initiative, and they've made some significant progress. I hope we can discuss the situation in Indonesia, as well as the Indian nuclear tests. And I welcome the very strong statements and actions that the Prime Minister has taken in the wake of the nuclear tests.

And finally let me say, it is very much in the interest of regional Asian economic development and the United States, long term, for Japan to have a strong and growing economy. And I believe that the economic package the Prime Minister has announced is significant and will have a positive impact. And I know he looks forward to implementing it. We believe that some steps will still have to be taken on the banking reform front, and I know that the Prime Minister has given that a lot of thought, and I look forward to discussing that with him.

But on balance, the American people should feel good about our relationship with Japan and very good about the leadership Japan has been exercising in the world.

Would you like to say something? Shall I hold the microphone? [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Hashimoto. I feel very much honored to be officially invited to the United States by the President. I am extremely pleased to be able to accept it, provided that my wife will say yes. So I have to have this major task of having her say yes to this invitation.

The many issues that Bill just raised, those are the issues of common concern and interest to both of us, so I very much hope to have very vigorous conversation with Bill on these issues.

We have been extremely concerned about both the second nuclear experiment by India and also the developing situations in Indonesia. Our cooperation is most critical in tackling those two issues that have been arising in the past few days. At the same time, I'm very much looking forward to the explanations, in part, by Bill on the issues of Asian economies, as well

as the Japanese economy, and I very much hope to explain our positions on those issues, as well.

And for the Asian economies to recover, both the United States and Japan have to maintain our markets as wide open as possible so that the two markets can absorb as much import. As far as the import from Asia is concerned, dollarwise, the Americans import the most from Asian countries and Japan is the second. But if you compare it per capita, Japan is the largest importer of Asian goods and services in the world.

And also, on deregulation, I'm very pleased that there is very positive appreciation by the U.S. Government on deregulation efforts. But I must emphasize that this is a two-way dialog, and we have made many requests to the United States Government and very much look forward to the implementation of deregulation on the U.S. side.

As leaders participating in this summit, he is the big brother to me, so I will listen to many advices from my big brother so that we can work together on many important issues—although he doesn't look that old. [*Laughter*]

President Clinton. Mr. President, could I say just one other thing? I forgot to say one thing. We also reached an agreement on the principles we will adopt together in approaching electronic commerce, which is a huge issue for the future. And we published the agreement on the Internet so you can all pick it up.

Prime Minister Hashimoto. Yes, that is a good agreement.

Situation in Indonesia

Q. Mr. President, do you believe it's time for President Soeharto to step down, now that the chaos has gotten out of hand in Indonesia?

President Clinton. Well, obviously I think—we're both very concerned about the situation in Indonesia. It's a very large country. It's a very important country. And the loss of life and the other destructive developments have been heartbreaking.

The question you ask is one the Indonesian people have to decide. What we do believe is important, is that the present government and the President find a way to open a dialog with all elements of the society, and that it leads to a general—a genuine sense of political reform and reconciliation, as well as continue to implement the economic reforms.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, do you believe it's inevitable that the Pakistanis will detonate a nuclear device? Is it inevitable, sir?

President Clinton. No. But they're under a lot of pressure to do so. I hope we can find a formula—perhaps those of us here at the G–8 can make a contribution to that—I hope we can have a formula within which they will find it possible, politically possible, not to go forward. It would be a—show a great act of statesmanship and restraint on their part. You can imagine, when you put yourself in Pakistan's position, you can imagine the overwhelming political pressure that must be building up on them at home. But I really believe that if we work hard, we might be able to find a way that the Pakistani people would also support, to avoid this. An arms race on the Indian subcontinent in nuclear weapons is not in the interest of sustaining the future of Pakistan.

Q. Are you going to offer them their money back from the F–16's, sir?

Q. What would you offer them?

President Clinton. Well, we've been working on a resolution of the F–16 matter literally for 5 years. I don't think many Americans who understand this issue feel very good about the position that was taken several years ago, before I became President, that they had paid for these planes, and then because of the later findings, we couldn't deliver the planes, but they couldn't get their money back. So it's been a very frustrating thing for me. I think the Pakistanis have a genuine grievance, a legitimate grievance against the United States on this count. And I believe we found a way to work through that before this incident developed.

But obviously that might be one part of the resolution to this, but this is something that I think requires a lot more discussion. Perhaps we'll have more to say before the G–8 is over, but I hope that all of us together can find a way in which the Pakistani Government and the Prime Minister can avoid the tests, and the people can accept and embrace that approach.

Q. Sir, you and Prime Minister Hashimoto obviously agree on sanctions, but what about this summit? What kind of a statement do you hope the entire summit will come up with since the other leaders apparently are not too agreeable to sanctions?

President Clinton. Well, from my point of view, I hope it will be as strong and unambiguous as possible. I will say again, I have followed very closely the events in India since the tests. I have watched on the news and listened very carefully to the statements by the representatives of the Indian Government, including the Prime Minister.

I believe that—you know, soon India will be the largest country in the world, in population. They have the biggest middle class in the world. They're going to have a very large say in the 21st century. And no less than other countries that are emerging—China, a new democratic Russia, which Prime Minister Hashimoto has done a lot of work on in the last several months—these countries will have to decide how they will define their greatness, and will they define it in 21st century terms, in terms of the achievements of their people and their ability to lead through example and cooperation, or will they define it in the starkest terms of the 20th century, including how many nuclear weapons they have?

I'm doing my best to reduce the nuclear threat. If the Russian Duma ratifies START II, which I hope they will in the near future, I'm anxious to get to work on START III to reduce our own nuclear levels lower. So I personally don't believe that's the best way to guarantee India's security or its greatness, to basically call up the darker elements of the 20th century.

We just have to keep working on this, and we have to be both firm and unambiguous on the one hand, and then on the other hand try to find a constructive way out of this for India, for Pakistan, and for all the countries involved. And I'll do my best.

Death of Frank Sinatra

Q. Mr. President, do you have anything to say about Mr. Sinatra's death?

President Clinton. I do. I'd like to say something about that. When I became President, I had never met Frank Sinatra, although I was an enormous admirer of his. I had the opportunity after I became President to get to know him a little, to have dinner with him, to appreciate on a personal level what hundreds of millions of people around the world, including me, appreciated from afar.

And I would like to offer my condolences to his wife and to his children. I saw Nancy not very long ago in California. I think every American would have to smile and say he really did do it his way.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Discussions With Prime Minister Hashimoto

President Clinton. Let me just say very briefly that I am delighted to have this opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Hashimoto. We have met many times. We have worked closely together. I am grateful for the partnership that we have had. I would like to especially thank him for the strong statement and actions that he made in response to the nuclear tests in India. I think it was a very good example for the rest of the world.

And I would like to say that we have noted with great respect the efforts the Prime Minister has made to bring growth back to the Japanese economy. We support the economic package that he has announced and think it is a strong one.

We believe that still some things will have to be done in the area of banking reform, which I hope we can discuss. But I want to make it clear that for the United States a strong and growing Japanese economy is very much in our interests and in the interests of all the people who live in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the Japanese people.

Finally, let me say I have invited the Prime Minister to come on an official visit to Washington in July, and I hope he will be able to accept so that we can continue to work together.

Prime Minister Hashimoto. I'd like to say a few words myself. I'm very honored to have this official invitation to visit Washington, DC, in July, and I'm very pleased that I will be able to accept it.

And I totally share the President's, Bill's, intention that the international community must issue a strong and unequivocal statement on the nuclear experiment by India. We have to stop the contagious effect of this experiment in the region. And also the developing situations in Indonesia, in both our minds this is an issue of common concern, so I look forward to discussions on these issues.

And also I would like to state the Japanese positions on the issues of Asian economies, as well as the Japanese economy, to the President. And since he's the big brother in the summit

for me, I would like to listen to his advices as well.

And also I'm very pleased that the two Governments are issuing the agreed statement on electronic commerce today. And also, we are to confirm the progress on the deregulation issues, confirming the direction and contents of our efforts.

And I must stress that the deregulation dialog is a two-way street, so I very much look forward to very positive responses by the American Government on the issues that we are raising.

But if we talk too much here today, we will be having fewer minutes for our discussion. So I'd like to stop here.

Japanese Economic Recovery Program

Q. Mr. President, let me ask about the Japanese tax cut issue. Are you going to discuss this issue with the Prime Minister?

President Clinton. Well, we will probably discuss it in the meeting, but I believe the—as I said, the Prime Minister has proposed what I believe is an aggressive economics program. I think that the tax cut and the investment and spending initiatives also have to be accompanied by effective banking reform, and we need to discuss that. And I agree with what the Prime Minister said. We want to have a mutual deregulation initiative, and we've talked about this in several areas, and we've made some progress. I hope we will be able to put out statements for you before we—at least before the summit is over, some time in the next couple of days, which will indicate what we're doing so that both of us will be seen to be doing more to try to restore growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. at the Swallow Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Soeharto of Indonesia; Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan; and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India. Prime Minister Hashimoto spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jacques Chirac of France in Birmingham, United Kingdom

May 15, 1998

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, will you be trying to persuade the other summit leaders to impose sanctions on India?

President Clinton. First of all, I would like to thank President and Mrs. Chirac for the wonderful reception that Hillary has received in France. She was there for a couple of days; she was able to go out with Mrs. Chirac to her constituency. And she called me last night very, very excited and very pleased. And I thank you for your hospitality. It was wonderful.

President Chirac. The visit to Correze was simply fascinating, as we heard. And I certainly agree with that.

President Clinton. We're going to discuss this. As you know, I think it's important that we take a clear position. I hope we can convince Pakistan not to engage in testing. I'd like everyone to sign on to the Comprehensive Test Ban and work together to reduce the nuclear threat. There are ways for a great nation to preserve its security without nuclear weapons, and that's what I want to focus on.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, there were eight people killed on the West Bank. Is that a sign people are losing hope in the peace process there, and what can you do?

President Clinton. Well, we know there's a lot of frustration there, and I regret very much the loss of life as well as the tensions which occurred there. I saw the—all I know is what I saw on television last night. But for me, the larger lesson is that delay is not the friend of peace and that we need to work very hard. I'm encouraged that Secretary Albright and Prime Minister Netanyahu are still working, and we need, I think of all us, to try to come to terms with the difficult issues that would at least get the parties into the final status talks.

We have been more than a year now without any substantial progress. And I think the larger message here, apart from the tragedies involved for everybody, is that delay is not the friend of the peace process. It's time to move.

Situation in Indonesia

[*At this point, a question was asked in French, and a translation was not provided.*]

President Clinton. Would you translate for the Americans?

President Chirac. Well, of course, we would like to have a peaceful solution to the Indonesian crisis—all the more, considering that Indonesia needs the international community in order to overcome the financial crisis. And of course, we will encourage fully any solution that would be liable to settle the political crisis in Indonesia.

President Clinton. Let me say, first, we have been working since last November with President Soeharto and with Indonesia to try to work through the financial crisis. The IMF has modified its plan on a couple of occasions to try to make it possible to have both reform and to minimize the harm to ordinary citizens in Indonesia.

In terms of who should govern Indonesia, that is a question for the Indonesians to decide, not the G–8. But I do believe that resolving the crisis now requires not only economic reform but also a genuine dialog between the Government and all the elements in society to try to determine how they should go forward. That, to me, is the most important thing. The result of that dialog is for them to decide, not us.

President's Health

Q. Mr. President, how is your back?

President Clinton. Great. Much better today.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:52 p.m. at the Swallow Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to President Chirac's wife, Bernadette, Councillor General, Correze Department; and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel. President Chirac spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Prior to a Working Luncheon With President Jacques Chirac of France in Birmingham, United Kingdom

May 15, 1998

I was playing on a basketball team in Oxford, and I can remember playing the University of Birmingham. But it's changed very much. I learned today Birmingham has more meters of canals than Venice. I didn't know that, either. And I went walking—it's amazing—you should take a little time to go for a walk on the canal. It's utterly amazing; it's beautiful—it's beautiful. Mostly it's new development, mostly in the last 10 years, new pubs, new stores. But they have a lot of the old hooks lifting things off the barges—[*inaudible*]—factories, heavy industry.

But it's very, very beautiful. It's amazing what they've done. I now see why Tony wanted us to come. I mean it's a real symbol of—[*inaudible*]—in a new direction. Even if you just have a few minutes, I think, to walk along the canal and have some local person explain how it works, as I did, it's fascinating.

So we have to go to work, everyone. [*Laughter*]

They have to work, too. They work hard. When we go on these walks, they have to carry all this heavy equipment. I feel so badly for them. You didn't even get a beer, did you, when we were done? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. at the Swallow Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Exchange With Reporters During Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom in Birmingham

May 15, 1998

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Prime Minister, have you been talking about the further—accord in Ireland?

Prime Minister Blair. Obviously, we have discussed it, and I think that the reason why it's so important for people to understand in Northern Ireland that this is a way forward for the future is that it entrenches for the very first time the principle of consent in both the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland and in the agreements between all the parties. And I want to emphasize particularly that at the heart of this agreement is the belief that we only make progress if people give up violence for good.

And we will make sure in the legislation that comes before our Parliament in order to give effect to this agreement that we make that commitment, very, very clearly expressed in that legislation, so that if people are supporting this agreement, they are supporting an end to violence once and for all.

Q. Mr. President?

President Clinton. Well, first let me say that, obviously, the impending vote is being watched very closely in America. Especially Irish-Americans, Protestant and Catholic alike, are passionately interested in what will happen. But we think it's clearly a decision for the Irish to make.

And I would just say that, to me, as a friend from the outside, it appears to be the chance of a generation for peace. We will stand with those who stand for peace, but I want to make it equally clear that anyone who reverts to violence, from whatever side and whatever faction, will have no friends in America. We have supported this peace process. We applaud the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Ahern and all those who were involved in it, all the parties. And we intend to stand with the people who stood for peace. Those who do not, if there's any reversion of violence, as far as I'm concerned those people will have no friends in America.

Q. Sir, why did you decide not to go to Northern Ireland or Ireland on this trip?

President Clinton. Well, we consulted with the parties, but my instinct was, all along, that while I think we—that the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic know that the biggest Irish diaspora is in the United States, and they know that I personally care a lot about this. It is, after all, their future, their lives. They will have to live with the consequences of it.

It's not like having Prime Minister Blair and Prime Minister Ahern or Mr. Major going up there. Northern Ireland is a part of this nation. And so, no matter how friendly an outsider I am, I still am an outsider. I won't have to live with this. And my instinct was that unless there was an overwhelming sense that I should go, it would be better to send my messages from without the country until after the vote occurs, because it's their decision to make.

But I just want every single person in Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic to know that we will support the peace process and the people who do it. And anybody who returns to violence, we will not befriend, because this is the chance of our lifetimes, anyway, to do this. And I hope it will not be squandered.

Thank you.

Group of Eight Summit

Q. How was the meeting today?

President Clinton. Very, very good, actually. We have a good leader. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 6 p.m. at the International Convention Center. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom.

Statement on the Situation in Indonesia
May 15, 1998

I am deeply concerned about the upsurge in violence in Indonesia. I intend to discuss my concerns today with my other colleagues.

The recent deaths in Indonesia are tragic, and I call on the Indonesian Government and the security forces to avoid violence and exercise maximum restraint.

I strongly urge the Indonesian Government to initiate quickly a dialog on reform with its citizens. Giving the people of Indonesia a real voice in the country's political affairs can make a real contribution to restoring political order and stability based on human rights and the rule of law.

We are working closely with our friends and allies to help the Indonesian people meet their humanitarian needs. I believe that if the Government of Indonesia pursues the needed economic and political reforms, Indonesia can return to the path of recovery and growth.

Statement on the Death of Frank Sinatra
May 15, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to hear of the death of a musical legend and an American icon—Frank Sinatra. Early in his long career, fans dubbed him "The Voice." And that was the first thing America noticed about Frank Sinatra: that miraculous voice, strong and subtle, wisecracking and wistful, streetwise, but defiantly sweet. In time, he became so much more. Sinatra was a spellbinding performer, on stage or on screen, in musicals, comedies, and dramas. He built one of the world's most important record companies. He won countless awards, from the Grammy—nine times—to the Academy Award, to the Presidential Medal of Freedom. And he dedicated himself to humanitarian causes.

When I became President, I had never met Frank Sinatra, although I was an enormous admirer of his. I had the opportunity after I became President to get to know him a little, to have dinner with him, to appreciate on a personal level what fans around the world, including me, appreciated from afar.

Frank Sinatra will be missed profoundly by millions around the world. But his music and movies will ensure that "Ol' Blue Eyes" is never forgotten. Today I think every American would have to smile and say he really did do it his way.

Hillary and I would like to offer our condolences to Frank's wife, Barbara, and to his children, Nancy, Frank, Jr., and Tina. Our hearts are with them today.

United States-Japan Joint Statement on Electronic Commerce
May 15, 1998

Electronic commerce will be an engine of economic growth in the Twenty-first Century, with the potential to invigorate economies by enhancing productivity, streamlining distribution, and revamping corporate structures.

Electronic commerce will enhance the standard of living of citizens in the United States and Japan, as well as the rest of the globe, by creating new, high-paying jobs and opportunities. Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, will benefit from new opportunities to sell their products to a worldwide market.

The Governments of the United States and Japan recognize the importance of working together to promote global electronic commerce.

We support and endorse the following fundamental principles and policies, which should guide the development of electronic commerce.

I. General Principles

1. The private sector should lead in the development of electronic commerce and in establishing business practices.
2. Both governments should avoid imposing unnecessary regulations or restrictions on electronic commerce. Government actions, when needed, should be clear, transparent, and predictable to the private sector.
3. Governments should encourage effective self-regulation through codes of conduct, model contracts, guidelines, and enforcement mechanisms developed by the private sector.
4. Cooperation and harmonization among all countries, from all regions of the world and all levels of development, will assist in the construction of a seamless environment for electronic commerce.

II. Policy Issues

5. Tariffs.

There are currently no customs duties on electronic transmissions. The United States and Japan will work toward a global understanding that this duty free environment should remain, for free trade in electronic commerce will promote the growth of electronic commerce and economic growth worldwide.

The United States and Japan welcome the announcement of the Quad Ministers to work toward a comprehensive work program in the WTO on the trade-related aspects of electronic commerce, and both nations will actively participate in this process. In the meantime, both nations will adopt a standstill, as outlined in the Quad statement, that preserves the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions.

6. Taxes.

We will actively participate within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to work toward developing framework conditions for the taxation of electronic commerce. Close cooperation and mutual assistance are necessary to ensure effective tax administration and to prevent tax evasion and avoidance on the Internet.

7. Electronic Authentication/Electronic Signatures.

Governments should support the development of a global framework that will recognize, facilitate and enforce electronic transactions worldwide. Authentication methods and technologies are developing rapidly, and the range of uses is expanding. The United States and Japan support the development worldwide of legal structures that will support a variety of authentication methods and technologies, as well as a variety of implementation models. As nations review their own legal framework to address authentication methods, including digital signatures, they should observe the following principles:

a. The efforts of the private sector in constructing rules and guidelines should be encouraged.
b. Electronic signatures should be recognized as functionally equivalent to handwritten signatures, and acceptable for legal purposes.
c. Furthermore, parties to a transaction should have the opportunity to prove in court that the authentication technique used in the transaction is valid.
d. Parties to a transaction should be permitted to determine the appropriate technological and business methods of authentication for their transaction.
e. Governments should take a non-discriminatory approach to electronic signatures and authentication methods from other countries.

8. Privacy.

Ensuring the effective protection of privacy with regard to the processing of personal data on global information networks is necessary as is the need to continue the free flow of information. With regard to frameworks for personal data protection, governments and businesses should consider consumers' concern about their private information. Since content, usage, and the method for collection of private information differ from industry to industry, means for privacy protection should be considered by each industry. Enforcement mechanisms would be developed and implemented by the private sector, including preparing guidelines and developing verification and recourse methodologies, and supported by the public sector. If data in a certain industry is highly confidential, legal methods can be considered for that industry.

9. Content.

Content should be transmitted freely across national borders in response to a user's request. The Internet will promote cultural diversity by expanding the selection and reach of low cost distribution options for content, so trade barriers to the free flow of content should be avoided. Governments should not impose stronger restrictions on content on the Internet than exist in the real world. In instances where users do not wish to receive certain types of content, such as that which is unsuitable for children, filtering/blocking systems or other tools should be made available. On-line service providers should not be asked to monitor all the content being transmitted over their network, but should be expected to work with domestic law enforcement authorities as well as with their international counterparts to stem the transmission of illegal content.

10. Electronic payments.

Developments in this area should recognize the importance of private sector leadership, and should promote both a competitive market for and user confidence in electronic payment systems.

11. Intellectual Property Rights.

Growth of electronic commerce depends on the adequate protection of intellectual property rights including industrial property rights and copyrights. The global protection of patents concerning infrastructure of electronic commerce is essential for the progress of electronic commerce. The protection of copyrights will be assisted by the prompt ratification and implementation of the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.

12. Domain Name System.

In order to reach its full potential, the system for registering, allocating and governing domain names should be global, fair and market-based and reflect the geographically and functionally diverse nature of the Internet. The said system should also give business the confidence that trademark rights are to be protected by establishing a self-regulatory regime on a global basis.

13. Consumer Protection.

Electronic commerce should afford consumers the same level of protection as is provided in other forms of commerce.

III. Future Work

We will continue to work together to support the development of global electronic commerce in the future, through:

14. Close policy coordination between the United States and Japan to promote electronic commerce.

15. Continuing substantive bilateral discussions at the experts level on issues regarding electronic commerce.

16. Encouraging private sector leadership through dialogue and cooperation between the private sectors of both countries, for example, the Working Group on Electronic Commerce of the U.S.-Japan Business Council.

17. Close cooperation between the United States and Japan at international fora—which may include, for example, WTO, OECD, WIPO, UNCITRAL and APEC—to support the development of global electronic commerce.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 15 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

The President's Radio Address
May 16, 1998

Good morning. This week I want to speak to you about a matter of grave concern to the United States and the international community: India's nuclear test explosions. These tests were unjustified and threaten to spark a dangerous nuclear arms race in Asia. As a result, and in accordance with our laws, I have imposed serious sanctions against India, including an end to our economic assistance, military financing, and credit or loan guarantees.

I'm at the G–8 summit of the major industrial powers in Birmingham, England, where the major nations here, along with friends and allies

around the world, have joined us in condemning India's actions

This is especially disappointing to me because I have long supported stronger ties between the United States and India. After all, India will soon be the world's most populous country. Already it has the world's largest middle class and 50 years of vibrant democracy to its credit. And America has been immeasurably enriched by the contributions of Indian-Americans who work hard, believe in education, and have really been good citizens.

For all these reasons, the United States and India should be close friends and partners for the 21st century. And they make it all the more unfortunate that India has pursued this course at a time when most nations are working hard to leave the terror of the nuclear age behind. So in this instance, India is on the wrong side of history.

Over the past few years, we've made remarkable progress in reducing nuclear arsenals around the world and combating the spread of nuclear weapons. Building on the work of the Reagan and Bush administrations, we entered that START I treaty into force, lowering both Russian and American nuclear arsenals. And we ratified START II to go further. Now, when Russia's Parliament approves START II, we'll be on course to cut American and Russian nuclear arsenals by two-thirds from their cold war height.

We also worked with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to return to Russia the nuclear weapons left on their land when the Soviet Union broke apart. We extended indefinitely and unconditionally the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which makes it harder for states that do not now possess nuclear weapons to acquire them. And just last month, working with the United Kingdom and the Republic of Georgia, we helped to secure a small amount of bomb-grade uranium in the Republic of Georgia that could have posed a serious danger if it had fallen into the wrong hands.

Two years ago I was proud to be the first national leader to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, first proposed by President Eisenhower, advanced by President Kennedy, and brought to conclusion by my administration working with almost 60 other nations. This treaty, called the CTBT, bans all nuclear explosions, thus making it more difficult for the nuclear states to produce more advanced and dangerous weapons and much harder for nonnuclear states to develop them in the first place. Already, 149 other nations have signed on.

The CTBT also strengthens our ability to detect and deter nuclear testing by other countries. That's a mission we must pursue, with or without this treaty, as India's actions so clearly remind us. The CTBT's global network of sensors and the short-notice on-site inspections it allows will improve our ability to monitor and discourage countries from cheating.

I submitted the treaty to the Senate last fall. Now it's all the more important that the Senate act quickly, this year, so that we can increase the pressure on and isolation of other nations that may be considering their own nuclear test explosions.

The Indian Government has put itself at odds with the international community over these nuclear tests. I hope India will reverse course from the dangerous path it has chosen by signing the CTBT immediately and without conditions. And India's neighbors can set a strong example of responsibility for the world by not yielding to the pressure to follow India's example and conduct their own nuclear tests. I hope they won't do that.

We have an opportunity to leave behind the darkest moments of the 20th century and embrace the most brilliant possibilities of the 21st. To do it, we must walk away from nuclear weapons, not toward them. Let us renew our determination to end the era of nuclear testing once and for all.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:20 p.m. on May 15 at the Swallow Hotel in Birmingham, United Kingdom, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 16.

Interview With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom by David Frost of the British Broadcasting Corporation in Weston-under-Lizard, United Kingdom

May 16, 1998

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Mr. Frost. Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. President, it's a great joy to be talking. And let's begin on the subject that's on everybody's minds today, the subject of Northern Ireland. The vote may be more perilously close than was hoped a week or 2 ago. What is your message that each of you have right now to persuade doubting Unionists or doubting Catholics to persuade? How would you both begin?

Prime Minister Blair. I think it's in many ways a battle between fear and emotion on the one hand and reason and hope on the other. And the fear and the emotion is totally understandable, but it is important that people vote for reason and hope. And I say that because people ask me for reassurances on certain of the key items of the agreement. They say, "Reassure us that the IUC is not going to be disbanded or stop being a proper police force." I give that reassurance. That will be plain.

I give the reassurance, the absolute commitment that, if the cross-community provisions in the agreement to exclude people from office if they engage in violence, if those don't work, then they will be changed. That will be in the legislation. I give the explicit commitment to people that decommissioning will be a factor that we take into account, a factor there, specified in the legislation, so that, if people aren't abiding by the decommissioning arrangements of the independent commission on decommissioning, then that can mean their exclusion or removal from office.

I give the explicit commitment that people, whether in the assembly or the shadow assembly, cannot sit in office in Northern Ireland if they're engaged in the ballot box and the gun as a twin strategy.

Now, all those reassurances I can give. But in the end, it depends whether people are really wanting to give themselves the chance for stability and prosperity in the future, because the alternative is not where we are now. The alternative is for Northern Ireland to slip back. So I hope that people will take that chance for the future.

Mr. Frost. What's the reassurance? What's the message you want to get across?

President Clinton. Well, of course, the United States is the home of the largest Irish diaspora, you know, both Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics. And so I suppose outside of the people involved, we care more about it than any other people. And I've worked hard to create the conditions within which the Irish could make their own peace. And what I would like to say is, first, I'm convinced there will be a great deal of increased interest in and investment in and partnership with Northern Ireland if this matter can be carried forward.

Secondly, I have made it as clear as I can that anyone who abandons the peace, if this agreement is embraced, anybody who returns to violence is never going to be a friend of the United States. We won't tolerate it. We won't support it. We will do everything we can to affirmatively oppose it.

But finally—I remember when I went there in December of '95. I remember the looks on the faces of the people, especially the young people, the schoolchildren I spoke with, both the Protestant and the Catholic children. And I'd just like to ask the voters to imagine what will happen if they vote no, and what do they really have to lose by voting yes, by giving this a chance? I mean, their leaders came up with this plan. Prime Minister Blair worked very hard on it. Prime Minister Ahern did. But the leaders in Northern Ireland agreed to this plan. What have they got to lose, really, by trying it? Nothing. But they have a great deal to lose by walking away, and I hope that they won't walk away.

Mr. Frost. And you mention, in terms of investment and so on, there are ways in which the new Northern Ireland—you could help the new Northern Ireland?

President Clinton. Oh, absolutely. Of course, we try every year now. We have an International Fund for Ireland. We have a very active group of American citizens from both the Protestant and Catholic communities, Irish citizens who try to increase investment. But I can tell you that the wave of elation that will sweep the friends

of Ireland in the United States, should this be accepted, will be enormous. And there will just be a lot more willingness to get involved here and try to help build a future.

Mr. Frost. And in terms of the people, Prime Minister, who say, well, you've got, on the one hand, Sinn Fein saying this is a step toward a united Ireland; you've got David Trimble saying, on the other hand, that this strengthens the Union. How can both be true?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I think the point is the principle of consent—in other words, that you can argue your case, whether it's for Northern Ireland remaining inside the U.K. or a united Ireland—the principle of consent means you have to argue it by democracy, not violence. And so people are free to argue their case. But it's a way of arguing it that is peaceful.

And one of the strange things about the debate in Northern Ireland is that people aren't actually arguing now about the principle of consent. That was what, for 50, 60 years, divided people in Northern Ireland. People now accept that. They're not even arguing about the institutional structures, the cross-border bobbies, the Northern Ireland Assembly. That in a sense is agreed, as well. It is this fear and emotion, as I say. You see, prisoners is an example of it. And let me again try and go right to the heart of what I think people feel in Northern Ireland. They see the scenes of the Balcombe Street Gang or Michael Stone and they say, "Well, this is wrong," and the "no" campaign then say, "Oh well, the prisoners will be back on the street if you vote for this agreement."

Again, the facts are these: Michael Stone and the Balcombe Street Gang were allowed out under provisions on day release made many, many years ago before I even came to government. It had nothing to do with the agreement. Most of the prisoners now in jail in Northern Ireland will be out within a few years anyway. But they'll be out, of course, without the agreement and without stability if there's no vote.

So again, I understand the concerns that people have, but I do ask them to realize that if no is the vote next week, what is the future? What are we going to offer children in Northern Ireland?

President Clinton. You know, if I could just say sort of as an interested friend, an outside observer—as you know, I've been very involved in the Bosnian peace, in the Middle East peace process—I think, essentially, the people that are for this want a better future for their children and don't want any more violence and like the fact that there is now a process which has been agreed upon for moving forward. If you really listen to the arguments of the people that are against it—and I've tried to listen very respectfully—it is that they still don't trust those on the other side because of all the things that have gone before.

In 1993 Yitzhak Rabin, right before we signed the agreement between Israel and the PLO, said to me, "I have spent my life as a soldier. I have killed a lot of these people, and they have killed a lot of my people. But," he said, "Mr. President, you don't make peace with your friends. You make peace, and then you make friends." And I think that's important here. But in Northern Ireland the people live much more closely together. They have in some ways—they haven't killed each other in the way the Bosnians did. With all the horrible things, they can get over this if they just will—it's a little bit of a leap of faith, but the risks of doing it are so much less than the risks of walking away.

Mr. Frost. And I think that example is a very relevant one, of Yitzhak Rabin, because that is the problem with the moderate Unionists, some of them, who've got concern. I think you've dealt with the point about the prisoners. You said that a lot of them would be coming out in the next few years anyway, and that links in with their fear of decommissioning of arms and that, therefore, there will be lots of killers running around with arms and so on. But how do you respond to that?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I respond to it by saying that we will make it quite clear, explicitly in the legislation, that the twin strategy of ballot box and gun is not going to be permitted. And that all the things, in terms of seats in the Northern Ireland executive, in terms of accelerated prisoner release, they can only happen if there's real peace, a real end to violence, an end to violence for good, not temporarily, permanently, an end to violence.

I think it's possible that we can achieve that. But we've got to achieve it with people really making this agreement work. And all the time that we spent trying to put this together, it was agonizingly difficult. And yet in the end, I think there is the will out there amongst people in Northern Ireland; there is the hope to make it work.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Mr. Frost. We'll come back to that subject before the end of the conversation. But you've been examining a lot of other issues and two issues have come up to take up a lot of your time at this conference. And obviously, one of them is India and, obviously, a slight difference of emphasis on what you think should be done and what you have done than the other members of G–8. Why do you feel the way you do, Mr. President?

President Clinton. Do you mean why do I think that we should not only condemn the Indian action but take some economic action against India?

Mr. Frost. Yes.

President Clinton. I just think we need to do as much as possible to make it clear that, in the world of today and tomorrow, it is simply unacceptable to build a nuclear arsenal. And it is unrealistic to believe you can build one and you won't use it under any circumstances. Therefore, the main purpose of doing it is to establish yourself as a great nation. That is not a way to define a nation's greatness in the 21st century. And I say that because I think the firmer we are here, the more likely we are to be able to persuade Pakistan, or perhaps other countries lining up behind Pakistan, that they should not test, that they should not try to become public members of the nuclear club. We need to move the world away from it.

I'm trying to get Russia to ratify START II now so we can dismantle our arsenals further and then go to START III and dismantle our arsenals further. I'm trying to take America and Russia in the opposite direction. I'm afraid in our own countries, we'll have people who say, "Oh, we better not do that if India and Pakistan and other countries are going to build up their arsenals." It's just—it's not the way to the future.

Mr. Frost. And so the message to Pakistan—there's rumors that they may be testing next week in western Baluchistan, or whatever—would be that you would take—you feel you should take the same action against them if they did?

President Clinton. Well, under our law, we'll have no choice. In other words, it's an automatic under our law. But what I would say to them is, help us work with you to find a way, first of all, to guarantee your security without nuclear weapons, and secondly, to reconcile with India.

I mean, look at Pakistan and India. You've got one country with 950 million people, another country with nearly 140 million people. They are arguing principally over Kashmir, not entirely but principally. Now, if they could resolve this, if you look at the success of Indians and Pakistanis in the United Kingdom or in the United States and you look at the talent in those two countries and you realize, if they would liberate themselves from this argument between themselves, it is quite conceivable that for the next 50 years they could have the highest growth rates and not just economic success but the richest and most textured quality of life on the Indian subcontinent of any place on the globe. And so I think they should be imagining a different future for themselves, both of them.

Have the rest of us failed to appreciate them as much as we should have? Probably. Have we failed to acknowledge India the incredible achievement of maintaining 50 years of democracy under the most adverse conceivable circumstances? Probably. We should do better. But the answer is not for India to become a nuclear power and then for Pakistan to match it stride for stride, and then for China to be brought in to support the Pakistanis and move troops to the Indian border, and then for Russia to come in and recreate in a different context the conflicts of the cold war. It is a nutty way to go. It is not the way to chart the future.

Mr. Frost. And in fact, you spoke to the Indian Prime Minister. Did you think that the optimists might have a point when they say that now they've done this test; maybe they'll sign the nonproliferation and the test ban treaties; they just needed to do this. So it's good news? Or is that just whistling in the wind?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I certainly hope that they are prepared to do that, and there will be very, very strong pressure from the international community for them to come, unconditionally, into both treaties. And I think it's tremendously important they do so. Because as the President was saying, I mean, if we have nuclear proliferation in the world—India—then if Pakistan were again to defy what is a very, very strong plea to them from the rest of the world not to engage in this, then you've got the danger of other states as well. So I mean, we're dealing with extremely serious and threatening present dangers.

Situation in Indonesia

Mr. Frost. What about Indonesia, talking of serious and threatening dangers? I mean, there's not much that could be done, is there? I mean, you've all said you're not going to seek to get rid of Mr. Soeharto, although you probably wouldn't sob if he decided to step down of his own accord. But what is there that the rest of the world can do about a situation like that, or is it an example of where you can do nothing?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I don't think you can do nothing. We can't interfere in their own internal politics, it is true. But a lot of the discussions that we have had over this past couple of days have been about we bring about greater stability in the financial systems of the world, because the crisis in Asia that has rocked many of the economies there will have an impact right round the world, is already having, may have an even more serious impact in the future. So what we can do is try and devise the right architecture, if you like, for the financial systems of the world which lead to greater stability, more openness, more transparency, and where we keep the advantages of global markets and trade, but try and make sure that that happens within a system that's properly regulated.

President Clinton. Keep in mind, Indonesia is the fourth or fifth largest country in the world in population. So, even though what we've seen on the television is very troubling, this is a vast country, the largest Muslim country in the world, with a very complex society that has been through a very traumatic several months. And I think it's important to point out that the world community has not been idle. We've been working hard since November—at least since November to try to help Indonesia come out of its economic problems.

But we have felt all along that ultimately, to build a stable modern economy and to avoid this crisis, there would have to be some way for the Government and the President to deal with all elements of society on some sort of democratic basis. And that's what our statement says. So what we want is to see Indonesia come out of this whole and healthy. They should decide the fate of all their leaders; it should be up to the people to decide. But this is not a hopeless situation yet. This is a great country full of talented people with staggering economic achievements in the last 30 years—staggering. So I think that what we have to do is to hope for the best and try to guard against the worst and keep working with them.

Asian Economies

Mr. Frost. And do you feel—you mentioned there as we led into that, the subject of the Asian situation. Mr. President, do you feel that the worst is over in the Asian economic crisis, that it's on the mend, or is still on the jaws of——

President Clinton. I think it's hard to generalize. I think the Philippines have done very well and a tribute to their leadership. Thailand is doing better. Korea is clearly coming back, which is very good, because it's a big part of the economy. And Malaysia is having a difficult time, but they have a lot of strong economic underpinnings. And Indonesia is the big question. The other thing, of course, is that Japan—Prime Minister Hashimoto is struggling mightily now to put together a package that will restore growth in Japan. If growth comes back to the Japanese economy, that will—because it so dwarfs the others in size, it will cure a lot of these problems.

Prime Minister Blair. I mean, the fundamentals are strong, actually, in the Asian economies, but we've just got to work together to put the right system around it so that both systems are helped.

Third World Debt Relief

Mr. Frost. Does all these other issues mean that you'll make less progress on the whole area of Third World debt at this G–8 than you both hoped, or can you catch up?

Prime Minister Blair. No. I think, in fact, we've had a very good meeting on Third World debt, and we've agreed on a number of specific measures, including greater help for countries, particularly if they're in a post-conflict situation or there's been conflict there, and for the highly indebted countries. Because for many of these countries—in Africa—the President has just been there recently and so knows better than most of us—but there is tremendous potential there. But they're struggling under this huge burden of debt. Often their political systems have been a tremendous handicap to them, but there is progress on the democratic front there. But we've got to give them the help that we can, whilst making sure that we're not just channeling aid, but we're actually making sure that

that money, when it goes in, is going to be used properly and where we're trying to alleviate the debt burden so that they can come out of this situation of crisis that they've been in.

President Clinton. I think to be fair, when Prime Minister Blair took over the head of the G–8, one of his initiatives was to have the right kind of debt relief. And we have embraced, now for a little more than a year, a strategy for the highly indebted poor countries that says we will—we know we should do debt relief, but it won't do any good unless they do things to help themselves. So we'll have a structured system where we'll give much, much more help to the highly indebted poor countries that actually undertake their own reform, so that we believe the debt relief will actually amount to money being invested in their future in a positive way.

And when I went to Africa, one of the things I saw was the countries with honest governments can channel the energy, the intelligence, the passion of a wonderful people and get a lot done. So I'm more optimistic about Africa than I was before I went there. But I do believe that we should help those who are trying to help themselves.

Prime Minister Blair. It's interesting. It's one of the great lessons of the 20th century that democracy and prosperity in the end go together.

The Euro and the Dollar

Mr. Frost. In terms of prosperity, one lightening question occurs to me. The euro—we're talking about the euro here—what will be the implications of a strong euro on the dollar, Mr. President? Could it be bad news for the dollar?

President Clinton. I don't think so. It could become, some time in the future, an alternative currency. You know, people might trade in the euro as well as the dollar. It could become—a lot of transactions might be done in the euro as well as the dollar. But I don't see that as a threatening thing. I think anything that brings free people closer together and increases prosperity in a democratic way, that makes it more likely to be broadly shared, is positive.

So I think as long as that's what's going on—you know, Europe—a unified Europe, it seems to me, is still committed to freedom, still committed to openness, still committed to a certain generosity of spirit, and I think that has to be good for the world. What we're trying to do, slowly but surely, is to integrate political and economic and social systems of the world not in ways that diminish national sovereignty but that alleviate the problems of the world and enable us to tackle together those things we can't solve alone.

Advice for Prime Minister Blair

Mr. Frost. And you have a great working relationship, the two of you, but one difference between you, of course, is that Mr. President, you are in your second term and the Prime Minister is early in his first term. What is the most important advice to someone in their first time in order to get into their second term?

President Clinton. Oh, I think he's doing it. I think that—the most important thing I think he can do is to keep the commitments he made in the campaign and to stay in touch with the people and to not be deterred from doing the public's business. You know, people, when they hire you to do these jobs, they want you to work on their affairs. And then when you get in them, there's all sorts of static designed to break your concentration. You have to ignore it and stay at the business.

But I think my advice would be to—he had a very detailed theory about why he wanted to be Prime Minister and where he wanted Great Britain to go, and of course, I have a lot of sympathy with the ideas he put forward, and he's doing a good job of doing what he promised to do. And I think that's the most important thing. And then I think as—the more you get into it, then I think the more you begin to think about what's it going to be like when my children are my age; what's it going to be like when my grandchildren are here. And the more he serves, the more he'll have an impact on that as well.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Mr. Frost. And along the way, one of the things you've both had to also conquer is to bring up your families under the glare of all that publicity when the children go to school and all of that. But that's fascinating.

Well, at the end of our time, let's return for a moment to where we began. Are you both confident, but not complacent as politicians always say, are you confident that the Northern Ireland people on Friday will take a decision which you believe passionately is the right decision, a positive decision, that they will feel the

hand of history on their shoulder? Are you confident about that?

Prime Minister Blair. I mean, I am confident, but I do know that they are considering this really with their heart and their head, and they're going into tremendous detail. And I think that over this next few days it's important that people put their concerns to people like myself and, perhaps, particularly to me and that I answer those concerns, so that people go in and vote yes, in a spirit of real optimism and confidence themselves about the future. And they can do that.

Mr. Frost. And do you have to have, or not—you don't have to have a majority of over 50 percent in each community in Northern Ireland, don't have to have that. Do you want that? Do you need it?

Prime Minister Blair. No, we don't have to have it, but I want as big a vote as possible in both communities. And I want this to be an agreement where we, for once and for all, we get rid of the zero-sum game in Northern Ireland politics which says if one side is happy with something, that means I'm unhappy. Both communities, both traditions, if you like, within Northern Ireland can be satisfied with this, because for the Unionists, the principle of consent is there; for the Nationalist community there is fairness and equity of treatment, the recognition of the Nationalist identity.

That's what this is—you know, I said this on Good Friday after that marathon negotiation we went through, that in the end it's not a fudge, this agreement; it is an historic settlement of Nationalist and Unionist aspirations. And what it means is that in a new world, 2 years off the millennium, where everything is changing around the Republic of Ireland, Europe, Britain, our relations with the rest of the world, where people can argue their case free in the knowledge that they can do so democratically rather than by resorting to violence—now, that's the historic settlement. And that's why I want as many people in both communities to come out and support it.

Mr. Frost. What are your thoughts, Mr. President? Are you confident? Can this be a win-win situation for both sides?

President Clinton. Oh, absolutely. There's no question in my view that, if they vote for the accord, it will turn out to be a win-win. I mean, think about where the world is going to be in 12 years. Just think about 12 years from now—2010. You will have a much more globalized economy; you'll have both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland more involved in the European economy, more involved in the rest of the world, and more involved with each other, meeting at the tip of Northern Ireland, economically and psychologically, no matter what the legal framework is.

Now, the people that are at that vortex are going to have a very interesting, very rich, very good life if they vote to live it together. If they vote to stay apart, they're still going to be frustrated, distrustful, angry, and a little bit left out. And I think all of us, we have hope and fear inside. I say all the time, we all have little scales inside, and some days we wake up with hope weighing down, some days with fear weighing down. I think on election day the clearheadedness of the Irish people will prevail in Northern Ireland. I think that both communities will go in and vote for the future.

I just ask them to think about what the world will be like, what these islands will be like just 12 years from now, and what they want Northern Ireland to be. We know that democracies of diverse people are interesting places to be when your uniqueness is valued, but you understand that what you have in common as human beings is more important than what divides you. That's a fundamental thing we know. And I believe they'll accept that on election day.

Mr. Frost. Thank you so much. Because the other part of it is that when Mr. Willy Ross says, or is quoted as saying, "Look, if there's a no vote, then they'll all just get in and renegotiate it." That's not on, is it?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, no. I mean, look, I always say to people, of course, "We're here, and we'll try and pick up the pieces as best we can." But I mean it would be fundamentally wrong to say that to people. We would be in a situation, too, where it wouldn't be the status quo, where actually there is quite a lot of hope about, and people do feel they're making progress. We go backwards.

I mean the one thing I've learned in this whole process is if it doesn't go forward, it goes backwards. It never stays in the same place. So of course, we're the government, we pick up the pieces when everything goes wrong. But I think what the President has just said there, and has said as a visionist, what people can aspire to——

President Clinton. And the answer to that is, this agreement—I mean, I can see that even as an outsider—this agreement sets up a framework to embody in a thousand ways the principle of consent. If he doesn't like some detail, then the people will be perfectly free to modify it in the future within the framework of the agreement. So why take the risk that this moment won't present itself again for another generation, when anything that he believes is wrong with it, if he thinks he can persuade a majority he's right, can be modified by the people themselves in the future?

Mr. Frost. Thank you, both, very much, indeed. Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. President, thank you so much.

President Clinton. Thank you, David.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:37 p.m. in the Weston Park estate for later broadcast on "Breakfast With Frost" on BBC1 television. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; President Soeharto of Indonesia; and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan. Prime Minister Blair referred to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Mr. Frost referred to Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble and Member of Parliament Willie Ross; and Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral of India. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom by John King of the Cable News Network in Weston-under-Lizard

May 16, 1998

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Mr. King. Let me start by thanking both of you for sharing some time on what is obviously a very busy day. We're in the closing days of the campaign for the peace initiative in Northern Ireland, and suddenly there seems to be apprehension, a lot of opposition. You see some slippage in the public opinion polls, the critics saying that you see these people, terrorists, criminals, at rallies being hailed as heroes.

Each of you, if you could share your thoughts on what you think of the tone of the campaign, and do you share that apprehension? And how do you counter the message of those who say, vote no?

Prime Minister Blair. I think before we get a vote as important as this, there is bound to be a lot of apprehension, consideration by people, and it's right that they treat this seriously, because it affects their future. And one of the fascinating things is there has been very little debate in this referendum campaign about the institutional structure, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the relationship with the Republic of Ireland, because the thing has wrecked every attempt to have a peace agreement in Northern Ireland for the past 50, 60 years. Instead, people are worried, as you say, about things like prisoners.

But as I say to people, when you look at the facts, these guys who were out on the platform the other day under day-release schemes, they were done years ago. The vast majority of prisoners will be out within a few years anyway. And in the end, people have got to look at the package as a whole and say, "What is the best for the future: to have stability and prosperity and the chance to bring up your children with some prospect of staying in Northern Ireland and doing well, or to slip back into the ways that Northern Ireland knew for decade upon decade of division and bitterness and hatred?"

President Clinton. I think some of the reservation has come from people who wonder: Well, is there some sort of trick here; can somebody have it both ways; can they be part of the political life of the country; and can they sort of condone violence? And I can tell you, at least from America's point of view, the answer to that is no. Anybody who resorts to violence will have no friends in the United States. I don't care what side they're on or what their heritage is or what their previous ties are.

And I think I can speak for the overwhelming majority of Irish-Americans in both the Catholic and Protestant communities, that all we have

ever wanted was a just peace. This peace embodies the principle of consent. It gives the Irish people of both traditions the right to chart their future in Northern Ireland and to make of it what they will. I think, if it is embraced, you'll see a big increase in involvement of Irish-Americans and other Americans eager to invest in Northern Ireland, eager to lift prosperity and to show people the benefits of peace.

And so I very much hope that they will take that leap of faith and ask themselves a simple question: What is the downside risk of going forward? It is so much lower than the downside risk of blowing this opportunity.

Mr. King. You, at one point, considered visiting at the end of this trip, going to Northern Ireland, to the Republic of Ireland, decided not, perhaps that it would be viewed as meddling. Now in the last 24 to 48 hours, you've decided to speak out again forcefully, publicly. Why did you feel that necessary? And in your view, what role can you play in that process?

And sir, what role do you think the people of Ireland will consider as they listen to the American President?

President Clinton. Well, I decided to speak out because I think that the people of Northern Ireland know that I care a lot about the peace process, that the United States has been involved in it, that we've tried to not only—I think it's important to point out not only has Mr. Adams, the Sinn Fein leader, been to the United States a lot, but I have spent far more time with Mr. Trimble and other leaders, Unionist leaders, than any American President ever has.

I've tried to listen to both sides, to learn, to just encourage them to make their own peace and chart their own future. And so I think it's appropriate for me to speak out. I just was afraid if I went there—I can remember when people from outside used to come to my home State and try to influence elections. It never worked, because in the end voters instinctively know they have to live with the consequences of their decision. So that's different.

But if a journalist like you asks me a question about what I think the arguments are, I think that it's important for me to answer. And I hope that people on all sides of the issue will listen to what I have to say, because at least I have some experience here; I know something about this. I know something about what happened in Bosnia; I know something about what happened in the Middle East; I know something about people who are divided and the difference in peace and war, or peace and sort of purgatory with violence. And peace has unfailingly been better, in the toughest of circumstances.

Mr. King. As to people who actually get a vote listen to him, your friend, why should they listen to him?

Prime Minister Blair. I think people do listen because people know the President is sincere, deeply committed, and actually knowledgeable about what has happened in Northern Ireland. And I can say, right from the time I became Prime Minister, but actually before that when the President visited Northern Ireland in 1995 I think it was, that his visit made a huge impact. People felt that he was someone that understood. Perhaps more than any other American President, people really feel that President Clinton both understands, knows, and people, they can also feel his willing them to do well. And I think people certainly will listen to that very much.

Mr. King. As you look forward to this vote, take us back if you will. You have described this process as agonizingly difficult. In the last few hours, you had a series of transatlantic conversations yourselves. Mr. President, you were on the phone with Mr. Adams I believe twice, Mr. Trimble at least once, John Hume. Can you take us inside those conversations, pacing, raising your voice? You had people on each side that, "Nevermind, I can't do this. I'm going to back out." How did you keep it together, and how did you interrelate personally as you went through this process?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I don't think it was so much a question of raising our voice or—obviously, these are conversations that you have with people at a particularly difficult moment, and you don't go right back over them the whole time. But I think in many ways what I found was tremendously useful in respect to the President's intervention was that people did and do respect his views on it, because, obviously in part, he's the President of the United States, but actually it's more to do with him personally, having shown commitment all the way through, having listened to all sides in the conflict, and therefore having some standing because of this own personal commitment, some credibility, if you like, to say to people, "Look, the eyes of the world are upon us. Let's see if we can go for this thing and make it happen."

Mr. King. And as Thursday night turned to Good Friday, at any point did you think: This isn't going to happen; it's going to collapse?

Prime Minister Blair. I'm afraid I thought that pretty regularly, at about hourly intervals. But in the end—I mean, what always comes back home to me is we're 2 years off the year 2000; there is so much happening in the world, so many changes that I've seen in the last 10 or 15 years of my lifetime. I can't believe 2 years off the millennium that a place like Northern Ireland, which has got this extraordinary potential, where the people are tremendous people, as you know if you've been there, I cannot believe we can't find a way to live with each other 2 years off the new millennium with all the changes in the world, with all the possibilities there are. So even though a lot of the time I was sitting there thinking, "Can we really make this happen," I have a sort of inner optimism about it.

Mr. King. And what was your message in those phone calls? You were probably half asleep as you started some of them.

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I just—when I talked to Prime Minister Blair or Prime Minister Ahern or George Mitchell, I was mostly listening. But when I talked to the parties, what I heard from them actually was very like what you're hearing from the general public now. It was sort of the darkness before the dawn. It was like, "Okay, we made this deal, and oh, there's a few things down the road that we'd like to improve," but what they really needed was not me to talk about the specifics; what they really needed was for me to remind them of the big picture, that it was time to join hands and jump off the diving board together and get in the pool and swim to shore.

And I say that not in a disrespectful way but in a respectful way. It's very hard, once you've been estranged from people for a long time, to overcome your fears and distrust. And as I have said repeatedly, I'll never forget Prime Minister Rabin telling me before Israel signed the agreement with the PLO, that everybody was reluctant to do it, but you don't make peace with your friends. You have to make peace with those and then make them your friends, because of the estrangement of the past. That's what I want people to think about.

If every voter in Northern Ireland says, "What are we going to look like in 2000, and what's it going to look like in 2010," Britain here—Mr. Blair is the President of the EU in this cycle. Britain leading the united Europe; Ireland a part of the united Europe with one of the best reforming economies, the Republic of Ireland; Northern Ireland, where Britain and Ireland join in some sort of fashion no matter what decision they make.

Now, they're going to be at the vortex of something very, very big, if they can just liberate themselves it could change the past. They don't have to give up their traditions; they can value them. They've agreed to the principle of consent. They have set up a mechanism by which they can chart their own future. What remains is really just to take the leap of faith and realize that the risk of going forward is infinitesimal, tiny, compared to the risk of letting this opportunity slip away.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Mr. King. We're short on time, so if I could ask each of you in closing, tensions in another part of the world have been a major theme of discussion here at your meeting, the Pakistani Prime Minister today saying he was disappointed in the communique relating to condemning India for the nuclear test. If I could ask each of you your reaction to that and how you see that process going forward in the days ahead.

Prime Minister Blair. It's a very strong statement in the communique, condemning the Indian nuclear tests and, what's more, putting strong pressure on India to sign up unconditionally for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And I urge Pakistan now, as we all do in our communique, not to follow them down that route because the world is a dangerous enough place as it is, and we fear for the future if these nuclear tests carry on.

President Clinton. Well, first, it's the strongest possible statement we could have gotten. Some of our members are philosophically opposed to the imposition of sanctions under virtually any circumstances. And as you know, the United States, Japan, Canada, perhaps others will follow, did impose economic sanctions. But it's a strong statement. What we have now to do is to build on it. We have to tell the Pakistanis, "If you're willing to not go down this road, which we believe is a loser, let's work together to try to define a way to protect your security without becoming a nuclear power."

And we have to go back to the Indians and say, "Let's find a way to protect your security and honor the greatness of your democracy without becoming a nuclear power. This is a bad thing, but let's minimize this. This is not a good thing for the world. The Russians and the Americans, we're trying to lower our nuclear arsenals. We're trying to make this problem go away for the world. And we do not need to just have a whole lot of other people with smaller nuclear arsenals on the assumption that they'll never be used. You can't do that."

Mr. King. Thank you both.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:10 p.m. in the Weston Park estate. In his remarks, the President referred to Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams; Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland. Mr. King referred to Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume; and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Birmingham Group of Eight Summit Statement
May 16, 1998

Drugs and International Crime

1. Globalisation has been accompanied by a dramatic increase in transnational crime. This takes many forms, including trafficking in drugs and weapons; smuggling of human beings; the abuse of new technologies to steal, defraud and evade the law; and the laundering of the proceeds of crime.

2. Such crimes pose a threat not only to our own citizens and their communities, through lives blighted by drugs and societies living in fear of organised crime; but also a global threat which can undermine the democratic and economic basis of societies through the investment of illegal money by international cartels, corruption, a weakening of institutions and a loss of confidence in the rule of law.

3. To fight this threat, international cooperation is indispensable. We ourselves, particularly since the Lyon summit in 1996, have sought ways to improve that cooperation. Much has already been achieved. We acknowledge the work being done in the UN, the EU and by other regional groupings. We welcome the steps undertaken by the G8 Lyon Group to implement its 40 Recommendations on transnational organised crime and the proposals G8 Justice and Interior Ministers announced at their meeting in Washington last December. By working together, our countries are helping each other catch criminals and break up cartels. But more needs to be done. There must be no safe havens either for criminals or for their money.

4. We have therefore agreed a number of further actions to tackle this threat more effectively:

—We fully support efforts to negotiate within the next two years an effective United Nations convention against transnational organised crime that will provide our law enforcement authorities with the additional tools they need.

—We agree to implement rapidly the ten principles and ten point action plan agreed by our Ministers on high tech crime. We call for close cooperation with industry to reach agreement on a legal framework for obtaining, presenting and preserving electronic data as evidence, while maintaining appropriate privacy protection, and agreements on sharing evidence of those crimes with international partners. This will help us combat a wide range of crime, including abuse of the internet and other new technologies.

We welcomed the FATF decision to continue and enlarge its work to combat money-laundering in partnership with regional groupings. We place special emphasis on the issues of money laundering and financial crime, including issues raised by offshore financial centres. We welcome the proposal to hold in Moscow in 1999 a Ministerial meeting on combating transnational crime. We agreed to establish Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) where we do not already have them, in line with our national

constitutions and legal systems, to collect and analyse information on those engaged in money laundering and liaise with the equivalent agencies in partner countries. We agreed on principles and the need for adequate legislation to facilitate asset confiscation from convicted criminals, including ways to help each other trace, freeze and confiscate those assets, and where possible, in accordance with national legislation, share seized assets with other nations.

—We agree on the need to explore ways of combating official corruption arising from the large flows of criminal money.

—We are deeply concerned by all forms of trafficking of human beings including the smuggling of migrants. We agreed to joint action to combat trafficking in women and children, including efforts to prevent such crimes, protect victims and prosecute the traffickers. We commit ourselves to develop a multidisciplinary and comprehensive strategy, including principles and an action plan for future cooperation amongst ourselves and with third countries, including countries of origin, transit and destination, to tackle this problem. We consider the future comprehensive UN organised crime convention an important instrument for this purpose.

—We endorse joint law enforcement action against organised crime and welcome the cooperation between competent agencies in tackling criminal networks. We agree to pursue further action, particularly in dealing with major smuggling routes and targeting specific forms of financial fraud.

—We endorse the Lyon Group's principles and action plan to combat illegal manufacturing and trafficking of firearms. We welcome its agreement to work towards the elaboration of a binding international legal instrument in the context of the UN transnational organised crime convention.

5. We urge the Lyon Group to intensify its on-going work and ask our Ministers to report back to our next Summit on progress on the action plan on high tech crime, the steps taken against money laundering and the joint action on trafficking in human beings. We also welcome the steps agreed by our Environment Ministers on 5 April to combat environmental crime.

6. There is a strong link between drugs and wider international and domestic crime. We welcome the forthcoming UNGASS on drugs. This should signal the international community's determination in favour of a comprehensive strategy to tackle all aspects of the drugs problem. For its part, the G8 is committed to partnership and shared responsibility in the international community to combat illicit drugs. This should include reinforced cooperation to curb illicit trafficking in drugs and chemical precursors, action to reduce demand in our countries, including through policies to reduce drug dependency, and support for a global approach to eradicating illicit crops. We welcome the UNDCP's global approach to eliminating or significantly reducing illicit drug production, where appropriate through effective alternative development programmes.

16 May 1998

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 16 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Birmingham, United Kingdom

May 17, 1998

Group of Eight Summit

The President. Let me just say a couple of things, and then I know you have some questions, and I'll try to answer a few of them.

First of all, I want to commend Prime Minister Blair and all of his team for putting on what I thought was one of our best G–8 meetings. This shows the benefit of these meetings not just for dealing with the issues that are

in the news now—Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and other issues that are presently in the news—but also dealing with the long-term challenges we face. We did some serious work here on employment issues, on environmental issues, on crime issues, on dealing with conversion of computers in all of our countries at the turn of the century and what kind of challenges will be presented by that, and how we can work together on them. It was a very stimulating, interesting meeting that will actually have an impact on the lives of the people that we all represent. So I thought it was quite good, and I felt good about that.

Secondly, I just had a very, very good meeting with President Yeltsin in which, once again, he assured me that he was doing his best to ratify the START II Treaty in the Duma. And we agreed that we wanted to immediately begin work on START III as soon as the ratification is secured there. I think all of us, because of the India nuclear tests, feel an even greater sense of urgency to change the debate again over nuclear issues toward less, not more; to change the whole direction here. And I think if we can get early Duma ratification, we know pretty well where we are on a lot of these big START III issues, and we'd like to really get after it and turn this, the nuclear tide, back in the right direction, away from more weapons toward fewer ones. So I was quite encouraged by that.

We still have some areas where we're working with them hard to get greater results and cooperation, especially in the whole area of technology transfer to Iran, and all of you know about that. And we went over that in some significant detail and, I think, reached some understandings which will bear fruit in the days ahead; so I'm hopeful of that.

Anyway, it was a good meeting. He was in very, very good form, excited about his new government, proud of them, and seemed to be in as good a health and good a spirits as I've seen him in quite a long time.

So, questions?

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, Pakistan's Foreign Minister told Reuters that he was very close to certain his country would conduct a nuclear test. He told the Associated Press it's not a matter of if but when. Sir, what does this do to regional stability? And could this have been avoided had, for example, Russia and France joined the U.S. in sanctions against India?

The President. Well, first of all, based on our best information, it hasn't happened yet. I also saw the Foreign Minister on television last night making substantially the same statement, but I understand it's still being debated in the Cabinet.

I understand also that they're under a lot of pressure. You can only imagine what the pressures might be. But I will say this: I still have hopes that the Prime Minister and the Pakistani Government will not go through with a nuclear test. And I believe that we can—the rest of us who would support that can work with them in a way that meets their security interests without the test.

Furthermore, I think that over the long run, and indeed before then, the political, the economic, and the security interests of Pakistan and in Pakistan's standing in the world would be dramatically increased if they walked away from a test. The whole rest of the world would think they were stronger and would be profoundly impressed, and I think it would help us to resolve these issues more if they did not. So I hope they will not. And if they do, we'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

Now, do I think that the result would be different if everyone had as hard a line on this as we do? I can't really say that. I think if you go back and look at the statement we've put out here, this is a—everybody condemned the Indian action, including countries that were very close to India. And every country said their relations would be affected by it. And when I came here, that's the most I thought we could get, because there are lots of countries in the world that basically are opposed to sanctions under almost all circumstances except under rare cases when the UN votes for them. So we just have a different view on that.

I'm glad that we've done what we've done, even though I have enormous admiration for India's democracy and for its progress in the last several years. But all I can tell you is I'm going to do what I can to get this back on track. I hope that Pakistan won't test. I think it will help us to get it back on track, and I think it will help Pakistan immeasurably in the world community, and it will have, I believe, specific political, economic, and security benefits to the country if it does not test.

So I'll keep working on it.

Q. Mr. President, if sanctions aren't possible, are there any other specific actions you want these other countries to take when they go home?

The President. Well, for one thing, I think a lot of countries are taking economic action: Japan is; Canada is; a number of European countries are. The European Union is going to have to debate this. I think that's one of the reasons that Prime Minister Blair, who otherwise took quite a hard line here with us—he was quite good on the language of the resolution—but I think that he thinks, as head of the EU, he has to give all these other countries the chance to be heard. I think a number of European countries will take economic actions here.

And I think that we just have to—we're going to have to work this situation to turn it back around, because what you don't want is the—insofar as possible, the best of all worlds would be that this is an isolated event. And then India signs the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; then Pakistan says it will sign if India does, so they sign. That would be the best conceivable result.

The worst conceivable result would be for everybody that's ever worked on this to think they ought to conduct some sort of test and that this is now—it's sort of the new measure of either national security or national greatness. That's a terrible signal for the rest of us to send the world, especially when the Russians and we are doing our very best to put everything in the opposite direction and to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world.

So we just have to—I'm going to spend a lot of time thinking through this and coming up with an affirmative strategy to try to deal with all the elements of it and all the aspects of the problem. And in the meantime, I hope that Pakistan will find the strength necessary to walk away from a test.

1996 Campaign Financing

Q. Mr. President, there's new evidence that the Chinese Government funneled money into the American election campaign. Did you or anybody in your administration make decisions based on the influence of Chinese money?

The President. No.

Q. And what do you feel about that evidence?

The President. For one thing, first of all, I understand there's a new allegation about that. I have two things to say about it. First of all, all of the foreign policy decisions we made were based on what we believed—I and the rest of my administration—were in the interests of the American people. Now, if someone tried to influence them, that's a different issue, and there ought to be an investigation into whether that happened. And I would support that. I have always supported that. But I can tell you that the decisions we made, we made because we thought they were in the interests of the American people.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the Chinese in your visit?

The President. Well, I want to see—when I get back home, I want to see, number one, what is the substance of this; how serious is it; what are the facts; what evidence is there? Is this just somebody saying, or is there some reason to believe there is objective evidence to support this? But in any case, I think the investigation ought to proceed, and then whatever the facts are, we'll take appropriate action at the time.

Russian Ratification of START II Treaty

Q. You mentioned President Yeltsin giving you assurances on START II ratification. He's done that, in the past, several times.

The President. He has, but one of the things he pointed out this time is he said this thing is now in the Duma; it's actively being considered; there are a lot of committees working on it; and that he will, obviously, not only push for its ratification but argue that it ought to be considered in an even more timely fashion now because of the Indian test.

Q. Will you go to Moscow only if it is ratified, or do you have assurances now——

The President. Well, I think it ought to be ratified because then we can get more business done. We can't really do anything on START III until START II is ratified. And I'm hoping that it will. And I'd like to leave it there. I'd like to leave it there.

Q. How long would it take to ratify START III?

The President. I don't know. But I think—but actually, I think START III could be done in fairly short order because we have been, Boris Yeltsin and I have been, talking about these issues for years now, and I think we know what the parameters of our two positions are, what our national security considerations are. And so I would expect that it could be done fairly quickly once we get START II out of the way.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. outside the Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gohar Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan.

Birmingham Group of Eight Summit Statement
May 17, 1998

Northern Ireland

We warmly welcome the Belfast Agreement reached on 10 April. We commend all those involved in achieving an outcome which reflects the fundamental aspirations of both parts of the community in Northern Ireland and secures their rights. We recognise that the Agreement must win the support of the people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. While acknowledging that it presents challenges to all parties, we hope it will achieve the widest possible support, not only as a basis for political stability and peace but also as an opportunity for economic development and prosperity for all Northern Ireland's people. We pledge our countries' support for this process.

Indonesia

We are deeply concerned at the situation in Indonesia, especially the recent upsurge of violence and the loss of life. We deplore the killings and urge the authorities to show maximum restraint, to refrain from the use of lethal force and to respect individual rights. We call on the public to express their views peacefully. It is essential to avoid an escalation of violence.

We recognise the hardship the economic crisis has caused. We believe the economic reform programme agreed with and supported by the international financial institutions is the only way to restore confidence and growth, and fully support the government in implementing it. But successful economic reform and international support for it will require sufficient political and social stability. We will continue to work, together with the international financial institutions, to support reform and alleviate hardship.

The current social unrest indicates that, to resolve the crisis, political as well as economic reform is necessary. The need for political reform is widely acknowledged in Indonesia. We encourage the authorities to respond rapidly, by opening a dialogue which addresses the aspirations of the Indonesian people and by introducing the necessary reforms.

FRY/Kosovo

The continuing violence in Kosovo has revived fears of a new Balkans war. The region has already seen too much bloodshed. A political solution to the problem of Kosovo is vital for the peace and well-being of all the people of the region. We consider the meeting on 15 May between President Milosevic and Dr Rugova to be a positive first step. It is particularly important that President Milosevic has assumed personal responsibility in the search for a resolution of the problems of Kosovo, including its future status. We urge both sides to ensure that the dialogue now begun leads rapidly to the adoption of concrete measures to lower tensions and stop violence. Resolving the issue of Kosovo's status will be difficult but is essential for the good of all those living in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Peace and stability in Europe rest on the principles that borders are inviolable and that political change must come about through peaceful means. We reject terrorism and violence from any side to achieve political goals or to stifle dissent. The states of the region should themselves contribute to a non-violent solution to the crisis. All states should cooperate in addressing the problem of refugees and displaced persons.

We underline the importance of cooperation with the Gonzalez mission. We stand ready to promote a clear and achievable path towards the FRY's full integration into the international community. But if Belgrade fails to build on recent progress and a genuine political process does not get underway, its isolation will deepen.

The elections in Montenegro on 31 May must be free, fair and in keeping with democratic

standards and their results must be respected by all.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

We welcome the progress that has recently been made on peace implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and support the High Representative's active role in promoting the peace process. This is a critical year for consolidating peace in Bosnia, especially for refugee returns and democratic development, with nationwide elections scheduled for September. While the people of Bosnia have accomplished a great deal under very difficult circumstances, we look to Bosnia's leaders to work harder to create a stable and prosperous future for all the country's citizens.

Middle East Peace Process

We are deeply concerned at the continuing stalemate in the peace process, with concluded agreements not yet being implemented. We encourage all efforts to help revive the peace process. We strongly support the efforts to gain the agreement of the parties to a package of constructive and realistic ideas which have already been presented by the United States, including a second Israeli redeployment. We welcome Palestinian agreement in principle to these ideas which, if accepted by all sides, would lead to the resumption of final status talks. We call on Israeli and Palestinian leaders to refrain from unilateral acts which pre-determine the final status negotiations and undermine confidence. We remain determined to work with all the parties—Israel, the Palestinians, Syria, Lebanon—for a comprehensive peace. A resumption of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would build confidence in the region and help to restore momentum to the peace process as a whole. A continuing blockage on the other hand could have grave consequences for security throughout the region.

Indian Nuclear Tests

We condemn the nuclear tests which were carried out by India on 11 and 13 May. Such action runs counter to the will expressed by 149 signatories to the CTBT to cease nuclear testing, to efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime and to steps to enhance regional and international peace and security. It has been met by immediate international concern and opposition, from governments and more widely. We underline our full commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as the cornerstones of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundations for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. We express our grave concern about the increased risk of nuclear and missile proliferation in South Asia and elsewhere. We urge India and other states in the region to refrain from further tests and the deployment of nuclear weapons or ballistic missiles. We call upon India to rejoin the mainstream of international opinion, to adhere unconditionally to the NPT and the CTBT and to enter into negotiations on a global treaty to stop the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. India's relationship with each of us has been affected by these developments. We are making this clear in our own direct exchanges and dealings with the Indian Government and we call upon other states similarly to address their concerns to India. We call upon and encourage Pakistan to exercise maximum restraint in the face of these tests and to adhere to international non-proliferation norms.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 17 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Group of Eight Birmingham Summit Communique
May 17, 1998

Introduction

1. We, the Heads of State or Government of eight major industrialised democracies and the President of the European Commission, met in Birmingham to discuss issues affecting people in our own and other countries. In a world of increasing globalisation we are ever more interdependent. Our challenge is to build on

and sustain the process of globalisation and to ensure that its benefits are spread more widely to improve the quality of life of people everywhere. We must also ensure that our institutions and structures keep pace with the rapid technological and economic changes under way in the world.

2. Of the major challenges facing the world on the threshold of the 21st century, this Summit has focused on three:

—achieving sustainable economic growth and development throughout the world in a way which, while safeguarding the environment and promoting good governance, will enable developing countries to grow faster and reduce poverty, restore growth to emerging Asian economies, and sustain the liberalisation of trade in goods and services and of investment in a stable international economy;

—building lasting growth in our own economies in which all can participate, creating jobs and combating social exclusion;

—tackling drugs and transnational crime which threaten to sap this growth, undermine the rule of law and damage the lives of individuals in all countries of the world.

Our aim in each case has been to agree concrete actions to tackle these challenges.

Promoting sustainable growth in the global economy

3. In an interdependent world, we must work to build sustainable economic growth in all countries. Global integration is a process we have encouraged and shaped and which is producing clear benefits for people throughout the world. We welcomed the historic decisions taken on 2 May on the establishment of European Economic and Monetary Union. We look forward to a successful EMU which contributes to the health of the world economy. The commitment in European Union countries to sound fiscal policies and continuing structural reform is key to the long-term success of EMU, and to improving the prospects for growth and employment.

4. Overall global prospects remain good. However, since we last met, the prospects have been temporarily set back by the financial crisis in Asia. We confirm our strong support for the efforts to re-establish stability and growth in the region and for the key role of the International Financial Institutions. Successful recovery in Asia will bring important benefits for us all. Therefore:

—we strongly support reforms underway in the affected countries and welcome the progress so far achieved. With full implementation of programmes agreed with the IMF we are confident that stability can be restored. The underlying factors that helped Asia achieve impressive growth in the past remain in place. Implementation of agreed policies together with the action taken by ourselves and other countries to avoid spillover effects provide the basis for a firm recovery in the region and renewed global stability;

—we believe a key lesson from events in Asia is the importance of sound economic policy, transparency and good governance. These improve the functioning of financial markets, the quality of economic policy making and public understanding and support for sound policies, and thereby enhance confidence. It is also important to ensure that the private sector plays a timely and appropriate role in crisis resolution;

—we are conscious of the serious impact of the crisis in the region on the poor and most vulnerable. Economic and financial reform needs to be matched with actions and policies by the countries concerned to help protect these groups from the worst effects of the crisis. We welcome the support for this by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and bilateral donors and the increased emphasis on social expenditure in programmes agreed by the IMF;

—we are concerned that the difficulties could trigger short-term protectionist forces both in the region and in our own countries. Such an approach would be highly damaging to the prospects for recovery. We resolve to keep our own markets open and call on other countries to do the same. We emphasize the importance for the affected countries of continued opening of their markets to investment and trade.

5. Looking ahead to the WTO's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the GATT next week, we:

—reaffirm our strong commitment to continued trade and investment liberalisation within the multilateral framework of the WTO;

—call on all countries to open their markets further and resist protectionism;
—strongly support the widening of the WTO's membership in accordance with established WTO rules and practices;
—agree to promote public support for the multilateral system by encouraging greater transparency in the WTO, as in other international organisations;
—reaffirm our support for efforts to complete existing multilateral commitments, push forward the built-in agenda and tackle new areas in pursuing broad-based multilateral liberalisation;
—confirm our wish to see emerging and developing economies participate fully and effectively in the multilateral trade system; commit ourselves to deliver early, tangible benefits from this participation to help generate growth and alleviate poverty in these countries; and undertake to help least developed countries by:
  —providing additional duty-free access for their goods, if necessary on an autonomous basis,
  —ensuring that rules of origin are transparent,
  —assisting efforts to promote regional integration,
  —helping their markets become more attractive and accessible to investment and capital flows.

6. The last point highlights one of the most difficult challenges the world faces: to enable the poorer developing countries, especially in Africa, develop their capacities, integrate better into the global economy and thereby benefit from the opportunities offered by globalisation. We are encouraged by the new spirit of hope and progress in Africa. The challenges are acute, but confidence that they can be overcome is growing. We commit ourselves to a real and effective partnership in support of these countries' efforts to reform, to develop, and to reach the internationally agreed goals for economic and social development, as set out in the OECD's 21st Century Strategy. We shall therefore work with them to achieve at least primary education for children everywhere, and to reduce drastically child and maternal mortality and the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty.

7. To help achieve these goals, we intend to implement fully the vision we set out at Lyon and Denver. We therefore pledge ourselves to a shared international effort:
—to provide effective support for the efforts of these countries to build democracy and good governance, stronger civil society and greater transparency, and to take action against corruption, for example by making every effort to ratify the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention by the end of 1998;
—to recognise the importance of substantial levels of development assistance and to mobilise resources for development in support of reform programmes, fulfilling our responsibilities and in a spirit of burden-sharing, including negotiating a prompt and adequate replenishment of the soft loan arm of the World Bank (IDA 12) as well as providing adequate resources for the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility of the IMF and for the African Development Fund;
—to work to focus existing bilateral aid and investment agency assistance in support of sound reforms, including the development of basic social infrastructure and measures to improve trade and investment;
—to work within the OECD on a recommendation on untying aid to the least developed countries with a view to proposing a text in 1999;
—to support the speedy and determined extension of debt relief to more countries, within the terms of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative agreed by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Paris Club. We welcome the progress achieved with six countries already declared eligible for HIPC debt relief and a further two countries likely to be declared shortly. We encourage all eligible countries to take the policy measures needed to embark on the process as soon as possible, so that all can be in the process by the year 2000. We will work with the international institutions and other creditors to ensure that when they qualify, countries get the relief they need, including interim relief measures whenever necessary, to secure a lasting exit from their debt problems. We expect the World Bank to join the future financial effort to help the African Development Bank finance its contribution to the HIPC initiative;

—to call on those countries who have not already done so to forgive aid-related bilateral debt or take comparable action for reforming least developed countries;

—to enhance mutual cooperation on infectious and parasitic diseases and support the World Health Organisation's efforts in those areas. We support the new initiative to "Roll Back Malaria" to relieve the suffering experienced by hundreds of millions of people, and significantly reduce the death rate from malaria by 2010. We will also continue our efforts to reduce the global scourge of AIDS through vaccine development, preventive programmes and appropriate therapy, and by our continued support for UNAIDS. We welcome the French proposal for a "Therapeutic Solidarity Initiative" and other proposals for the prevention and treatment of AIDS, and request our experts to examine speedily the feasibility of their implementation.

8. We see a particular need to strengthen Africa's ability to prevent and ease conflict, as highlighted in the UN Secretary General's recent report. We will look for ways to enhance the capacity of Africa-based institutions to provide training in conflict prevention and peacekeeping. We also need to consider further ways to respond to the exceptional needs of poor post-conflict countries as they rebuild their political, economic and social systems, in a manner consistent with democratic values and respect for basic human rights. In addition to immediate humanitarian assistance:

—we recognise the need for technical and financial assistance in creating strong democratic and economic institutions, supporting good governance alongside programmes of macroeconomic and structural reform supported by the IMF and World Bank. We call on the World Bank to play a strong role in co-ordinating bilateral and multilateral assistance in these areas;

—we also agree on the need to consider ways for debt relief mechanisms, including the HIPC initiative where appropriate, to be used to release more and earlier resources for essential rehabilitation, particularly for those countries with arrears to the IFIs.

9. A crucial factor in ensuring sustainable development and global growth is an efficient energy market. We therefore endorse the results of our Energy Ministers' Meeting in Moscow in April. We shall continue cooperation on energy matters in the G8 framework. We recognise the importance of soundly based political and economic stability in the regions of energy production and transit. With the objective of ensuring reliable, economic, safe and environmentally-sound energy supplies to meet the projected increase in demand, we commit ourselves to encourage the development of energy markets. Liberalisation and restructuring to encourage efficiency and a competitive environment should be supported by transparent and non-discriminatory national legislative and regulatory frameworks with a view to establishing equitable treatment for both government and private sectors as well as domestic and foreign entities. These are essential to attract the new investment which our energy sectors need. We also recognise the importance of international co-operation to develop economically viable international energy transmission networks. We shall pursue this co-operation bilaterally and multilaterally, including within the framework and principles of the Energy Charter Treaty.

10. Considering the new competitive pressures on our electric power sectors, we reaffirm the commitment we made at the 1996 Moscow Summit to the safe operation of nuclear power plants and the achievement of high safety standards worldwide, and attach the greatest importance to the full implementation of the Nuclear Safety Account grant agreements. We reaffirm our commitment to the stated mission of the Nuclear Safety Working Group (NSWG). We agreed to deepen Russia's role in the activities of the NSWG, with a view to eventual full membership in the appropriate circumstances. We acknowledge successful cooperation on the pilot project of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) and consider it desirable to continue international cooperation for civil nuclear fusion development.

11. The greatest environmental threat to our future prosperity remains climate change. We confirm our determination to address it, and endorse the results of our Environment Ministers' meeting at Leeds Castle. The adoption at Kyoto of a Protocol with legally binding targets was a historic turning point in our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We welcome the recent signature of the Protocol by some of us and confirm the intention of the rest of us to sign it within the next year, and resolve to make an urgent start on the further

work that is necessary to ratify and make Kyoto a reality. To this end:

—we will each undertake domestically the steps necessary to reduce significantly greenhouse gas emissions;

—as the Kyoto protocol says, to supplement domestic actions, we will work further on flexible mechanisms such as international market-based emissions trading, joint implementation and the clean development mechanism, and on sinks. We aim to draw up rules and principles that will ensure an enforceable, accountable, verifiable, open and transparent trading system and an effective compliance regime;

—we will work together and with others to prepare for the Buenos Aires meeting of COP4 this autumn. We will also look at ways of working with all countries to increase global participation in establishing targets to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We will aim to reach agreement as soon as possible on how the clean development mechanism can work, including how it might best draw on the experience and expertise of existing institutions, including the Global Environment Facility. We look forward to increasing participation from developing countries, which are likely to be most affected by climate change and whose share of emissions is growing. We will work together with developing countries to achieve voluntary efforts and commitments, appropriate to their national circumstances and development needs. We shall also enhance our efforts with developing countries to promote technological development and diffusion.

12. The recent devastating forest fires in south-east Asia and the Amazon, threatening not only our environment but even economic growth and political stability, illustrate the crucial importance of global cooperation, and of better and more effective frameworks and practical efforts designed to sustainably manage and conserve forests. In the year 2000 we will assess our progress on implementation of the G8 Action Programme published last week. We strongly support the ongoing work on forests under the auspices of the United Nations, and we look forward to continuing these efforts.

Growth, employability, and inclusion

13. All our people, men and women, deserve the opportunity to contribute to and share in national prosperity through work and a decent standard of living. The challenge is how to reap the benefits of rapid technological change and economic globalisation whilst ensuring that all our citizens share in these benefits by increasing growth and job creation, and building an inclusive society. To accomplish this, we recognise the importance of modernising domestic economic and social structures within a sound macro-economic framework. To these ends we strongly endorse the seven principles agreed by the G8 Finance, Economic, Labour and Employment Ministers at their London Conference in February on "Growth, Employability and Inclusion". We also welcome the conclusions of the Kobe Jobs Conference of November 1997, with their particular focus on active aging.

14. We discussed and welcomed the Action Plans we have each produced to show how the seven principles of the London Conference are being implemented. By sharing national experiences and best practices in this area, we can improve our policies and responses. We underlined the importance of the involvement of employers and unions in securing successful implementation of these Plans.

15. The Action Plans show that individually we are all making new commitments to improve employability and job creation in our countries. In particular, we have committed ourselves to:

—measures to help young, long-term unemployed and other groups hard hit by unemployment find work;

—measures to help entrepreneurs to set up companies;

—carrying out structural reforms, including making tax and benefit systems more employment friendly and liberalisation of product markets;

—measures to promote lifelong learning.

16. Each country confirmed its determination to introduce the measures set out in its Action Plans and to pursue the concept of active aging. Measures on active aging should explore what forms of work are appropriate to the needs of older workers and adapt work to suit them accordingly.

17. These measures will help generate soundly-based and equitable growth. We are also willing to share our principles and experiences, including in the relevant international institutions particularly the ILO, OECD and the IFIs, to help foster growth, jobs and inclusion not only in the G8 but throughout the world. We renew our support for global progress towards the implementation of internationally recognised core labour standards, including continued collaboration between the ILO and WTO secretariats in accordance with the conclusions of the Singapore conference and the proposal for an ILO declaration and implementation mechanism on these labour standards.

Combating drugs and international crime

18. Globalisation has been accompanied by a dramatic increase in transnational crime. This takes many forms, including trafficking in drugs and weapons; smuggling of human beings; the abuse of new technologies to steal, defraud and evade the law; and the laundering of the proceeds of crime.

19. Such crimes pose a threat not only to our citizens and their communities, through lives blighted by drugs and societies living in fear of organised crime; but also a global threat which can undermine the democratic and economic basis of societies through the investment of illegal money by international cartels, corruption, a weakening of institutions and a loss of confidence in the rule of law.

20. To fight this threat, international cooperation is indispensable. We ourselves, particularly since the Lyon summit in 1996, have sought ways to improve that cooperation. Much has already been achieved. We acknowledge the work being done in the UN, the EU and by other regional groupings. We welcome the steps undertaken by the G8 Lyon Group to implement its 40 Recommendations on transnational organised crime and the proposals G8 Justice and Interior Ministers announced at their meeting in Washington last December. By working together, our countries are helping each other catch criminals and break up cartels. But more needs to be done. There must be no safe havens either for criminals or for their money.

21. We have therefore agreed a number of further actions to tackle this threat more effectively:

—We fully support efforts to negotiate within the next two years an effective United Nations convention against transnational organised crime that will provide our law enforcement authorities with the additional tools they need.

—We agree to implement rapidly the ten principles and ten point action plan agreed by our Ministers on high tech crime. We call for close cooperation with industry to reach agreement on a legal framework for obtaining, presenting and preserving electronic data as evidence, while maintaining appropriate privacy protection, and agreements on sharing evidence of those crimes with international partners. This will help us combat a wide range of crime, including abuse of the internet and other new technologies.

—We welcome the FATF decision to continue and enlarge its work to combat money-laundering in partnership with regional groupings. We place special emphasis on the issues of money laundering and financial crime, including issues raised by offshore financial centres. We welcome the proposal to hold in Moscow in 1999 a Ministerial meeting on combating transnational crime. We agreed to establish Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) where we do not already have them, in line with our national constitutions and legal systems, to collect and analyse information on those engaged in money laundering and liaise with the equivalent agencies in partner countries. We agreed on principles and the need for adequate legislation to facilitate asset confiscation from convicted criminals, including ways to help each other trace, freeze and confiscate those assets, and where possible, in accordance with national legislation, share seized assets with other nations.

—We agree on the need to explore ways of combating official corruption arising from the large flows of criminal money.

—We are deeply concerned by all forms of trafficking of human beings including the smuggling of migrants. We agreed to joint action to combat trafficking in women and children, including efforts to prevent such crimes, protect victims and prosecute the traffickers. We commit ourselves to develop a multidisciplinary and comprehensive strategy, including principles and an action plan for future cooperation amongst ourselves

and with third countries, including countries of origin, transit and destination, to tackle this problem. We consider the future comprehensive UN organised crime convention an important instrument for this purpose.

—We endorse joint law enforcement action against organised crime and welcome the cooperation between competent agencies in tackling criminal networks. We agree to pursue further action, particularly in dealing with major smuggling routes and targeting specific forms of financial fraud.

—We endorse the Lyon Group's principles and action plan to combat illegal manufacturing and trafficking of firearms. We welcome its agreement to work towards the elaboration of a binding international legal instrument in the context of the UN transnational organised crime convention.

22. We urge the Lyon Group to intensify its on-going work and ask our Ministers to report back to our next Summit on progress on the action plan on high tech crime, the steps taken against money laundering and the joint action on trafficking in human beings. We also welcome the steps agreed by our Environment Ministers on 5 April to combat environmental crime.

23. There is a strong link between drugs and wider international and domestic crime. We welcome the forthcoming UNGASS on drugs. This should signal the international community's determination in favour of a comprehensive strategy to tackle all aspects of the drugs problem. For its part, the G8 is committed to partnership and shared responsibility in the international community to combat illicit drugs. This should include reinforced cooperation to curb illicit trafficking in drugs and chemical precursors, action to reduce demand in our countries, including through policies to reduce drug dependency, and support for a global approach to eradicating illicit crops. We welcome the UNDCP's global approach to eliminating or significantly reducing illicit drug production, where appropriate through effective alternative development programmes.

Non-Proliferation and Export Controls

24. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems threatens the security of every nation. Our countries have been in the forefront of efforts to prevent proliferation, and we have worked closely together to support international non-proliferation regimes. We pledge to continue and strengthen this co-operation. As a key element of this co-operation, we reaffirm our commitment to ensure the effective implementation of export controls, in keeping with our undertakings within the non-proliferation regimes. We will deny any kind of assistance to programmes for weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. To this end, we will where appropriate undertake and encourage the strengthening of laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms. We will likewise enhance amongst ourselves and with other countries our co-operation on export control, including for instance on the exchange of information. We will ask our experts to focus on strengthening export control implementation. And we will broaden awareness among our industrial and business communities of export control requirements.

Year 2000 Bug

25. The Year 2000 (or Millennium) Bug problem, deriving from the way computers deal with the change to the year 2000, presents major challenges to the international community, with vast implications, in particular in the defence, transport, telecommunications, financial services, energy and environmental sectors, and we noted the vital dependence of some sectors on others. We agreed to take further urgent action and to share information, among ourselves and with others, that will assist in preventing disruption in the near and longer term. We shall work closely with business and organisations working in those sectors, who will bear much of the responsibility to address the problem. We will work together in international organisations, such as the World Bank to assist developing countries, and the OECD, to help solve this critical technological problem and prepare for the year 2000.

Next Summit

26. We accepted the invitation of the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany to meet again next year in Koln on 18–20 June.

17 May 1998

NOTE: This communique was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 17 but was not issued as a White House press release.

An original was not available for verification of the content of this communique.

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in London, United Kingdom

May 18, 1998

Prime Minister Tony Blair. Thanks very much, ladies and gentlemen. Do sit down. I'm sorry there isn't a text yet, but you'll be provided with one shortly.

Can I, first of all, set out what I believe that we have achieved at this summit, and then ask the President of the European Commission and, finally, the President of the United States to speak to you?

As you know, there have been, for some years, serious differences over the U.S.'s sanctions policy and the EU's extraterritoriality. And what we established today is at least a basis for a lasting solution to these problems. We've avoided a showdown over sanctions with which we don't agree, and we've done it in a way that at least provides the chance of a solution to the problem in the future. And the President of the United States will set out the U.S. position in a moment. So there's still more work to do, but it is a real step forward.

In addition, today we have launched a major new transatlantic trade initiative, the Transatlantic Economic Partnership, which will further add momentum to the process of developing what is already the most important bilateral trade relationship in the world. We've also agreed to work ever more closely together to promote multilateral trade liberalization.

Finally, we have welcomed the very substantial report presented to us by our senior officials on the progress achieved since our last summit towards further implementation of the 1995 new transatlantic trade agreement. Some examples of this are: cooperation to prevent drug smuggling through the Caribbean; a joint decision to give awards to those in Central and Eastern Europe who have helped in recent years to entrench democracy and civil rights in those countries; and a joint EU-U.S. program in the Ukraine and Poland to warn women of the dangers of being lured into the sex trade in Western Europe.

So there are a series of measures that we have put together and agreed, and we have made very substantial progress on both the issues of sanctions and extraterritoriality, and of course, in taking forward our trade partnership through a major new trade initiative. And I'm delighted to be able to make those announcements to you today.

Jacques, do you want to add some words?

President Jacques Santer. Ladies and gentlemen, our summit today is the sixth between the European Union and the United States since the adoption of the new transatlantic agenda. These summits are becoming more and more important to the development of the transatlantic relationship. The breadth of issues we covered today and the substantial agreements we came to prove how worthwhile these meetings now are.

The 1995 new transatlantic agenda has led to much more intense cooperation across the Atlantic. It is not just a question of warm words but complete agreements. For example, today's signature of the mutual recognition agreement offers real benefits to business and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Today's summit is particularly important because we and the United States have struck a deal on the U.S. sanctions laws. This agreement, after weeks of intense negotiations with the U.S. administration, finally brings peace in this longstanding dispute.

The European Union has opposed the United States sanctions laws on investments in Iran, Libya, and Cuba not only because we believe they are illegal but also because they are counterproductive. We in Europe have always taken very seriously the fight to curb terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. But the U.S. sanctions laws make our cooperation on these issues more, rather than less difficult.

The deal today means that European companies and businessmen can conduct their business

without the threat of U.S. sanctions hanging over their heads. It's a deal that is good for European companies who now have protection from the sanctions. It's a deal that is good for the European Union which has shown that it can act together, united in important foreign policy issues. And it is good for the transatlantic relationship which can now develop further, free of this longstanding dispute.

There are obviously still some further steps that need to be taken before the deal can be completely implemented, but I am hopeful that these will be concluded as soon as possible. By getting rid of the biggest problem in our relationship with the United States, the door is now open to further deepen and enhance our cooperation across the Atlantic.

Today at the summit we agreed to a substantial new initiative to deepen the trade relationship called the Transatlantic Economic Partnership. In this initiative, first we address the further removal of barriers in our bilateral trade. It also says that the United States and the European Union will work together to achieve a substantial, further trade liberalization on a multilateral basis.

Today's agreement will add to the prosperity of both the United States and the European Union and, more generally, in the world. It will, thus, create better prospects for future jobs.

President Clinton, Prime Minister Tony Blair, and I will be in Geneva to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the GATT, an organization which has contributed so much to the stability and prosperity of the postwar world. Our agreements this morning sends a powerful message of transatlantic support to that meeting and to the further development of multilateral liberalization.

But of course, today's summit, as is usual on these occasions, was also an opportunity to discuss many key foreign policy issues including Turkey, Cyprus, Kosovo, and Ukraine. On Ukraine, we agreed to call on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to play its part in the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on nuclear safety concluded between the G–7 and the Ukraine.

In conclusion, this summit has placed the transatlantic relationship on an even stronger footing. We can now look forward to an even deeper partnership in the future.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you very much. I'd like to begin by thanking Prime Minister Blair for the creative and strong leadership that he has provided to the European Union and to the U.S.-EU partnership. And I thank President Santer for his years of work for European unity.

America welcomes a strong partnership with a strong and united Europe to improve the lives, the security, the well-being of our own people and others around the world. The EU, as I'm sure all of you know, is America's largest trade and investment partner. Two-way trade supports more than 6 million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Today I am very pleased that we have agreed to new steps to strengthen that economic partnership. First, we will work to dismantle trade barriers, both bilateral and multilateral trade barriers, in areas such as manufacturing, services, and agriculture, about a dozen in all, while maintaining the highest standards of labor and environment.

Now, let me also say that we have agreed in this effort that we will make an effort to give all the stakeholders in our economic lives—environmental stakeholders, labor stakeholders, other elements of civil society—a chance to be heard in these negotiations, in these discussions. And I believe that is a new paradigm which ought to be mirrored in trade negotiations throughout the world.

Indeed, as President Santer said, when we conclude here, I am going to Geneva, where I will speak about how we can work together to strengthen the world trading system on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. And I will argue that the WTO ought to embrace the kinds of things that we and the EU have agreed to do here, to give all the stakeholders a role and to do a better job of respecting the importance of preserving the environment and of making sure trade works for the benefit of all the people in all the countries involved.

I am also pleased that we have reached agreement today, as the Prime Minister and President Santer said, on an issue of vital importance to our own security and well-being. We share an interest in combating terrorism and limiting the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We understand, always, the problems with weapons of mass destruction, but we are, I hope, all more sensitive to them in light of the recent events in South Asia.

Here in London, the EU countries have committed to enhance their cooperation with us with

regard to Iran. They will step up efforts to prevent the transfer of technology that could be used to develop weapons of mass destruction. They have agreed to work toward the ratification of all 11 counterterrorism conventions. We've agreed to cooperate in the development of Caspian energy resources.

I'd also like to emphasize that Russia, too, has taken important steps to strengthen controls over the export of sensitive technology, notably but not exclusively to Iran, in effect establishing Russia's first comprehensive catchall export control system. We'll be watching and working closely with the Russians to help make sure this system works.

The actions taken by the EU and Russia advance Congress' objective in enacting the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. It is not primarily a sanctions act. It is an act that is designed to give the incentives for all of us to work together to retard the spread of weapons of mass destruction and to support more aggressive efforts to fight terrorism. Therefore, the waivers we have granted today are part of our overall strategy to deter Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and promoting terrorism. And it is an important new stage in our partnership.

We have also forged a pathbreaking common approach to deter investment in illegally expropriated property around the world, including but not limited to Cuba. Our governments will deny all forms of commercial assistance for these transactions, including loans, grants, subsidies, fiscal advantages, guarantees, political risk insurance. This understanding furthers the goals of protecting property rights in Cuba and worldwide, advances the interests of U.S. claimants, and protects U.S. investors, and does so far more effectively than the United States could have done alone.

It also furthers, as the Prime Minister said and as President Santer did, the objectives of the European Union in getting away from the unilateral sanctions regime.

We have finally agreed to work together with Russia to strengthen nuclear safety. This is also very important, especially with regard to nuclear waste removal and storage in northwest Russia. We will act together to encourage Ukraine to embark on bold economic reform and to speed the closure of the Chernobyl reactors that threaten safety and health.

Let me finally add that today we will honor 50 exceptional individuals from Europe's new democracies for their work in helping freedom take strong root across the continent. I believe about half a dozen of them are here today. From protecting human rights in Belarus to preserving the environment in Slovakia, these dedicated men and women, like so many others, are helping to make Europe free, peaceful, prosperous, and united. I thank them, and again, I thank the Prime Minister for his truly outstanding leadership.

Thank you very much.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. All three of you have spoken of the economic benefits which could flow to Northern Ireland, and in some cases, you've announced specific packages; in view of the polls which clearly show that the majority of the Unionist community has yet to be convinced. How conditional are those benefits on convincing the "yes" vote in the referendum on Friday?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I don't think anyone is trying to say that investment is conditional on how people vote. But what people are saying is: It's a matter of common sense; if there's peace and stability in Northern Ireland, there is a far greater chance of attracting investment; that people from Europe, from the United States, from right around the world see Northern Ireland as an immensely exciting investment opportunity. But obviously, it's far easier from them to come and invest if they're investing in the context of peace and stability.

And I know that there are still people in Northern Ireland yet to make up their minds. And in the end the decision has got to be for people in Northern Ireland. But I have answered very clearly and specifically some of the questions that people have put to me. I have tried to tell people why it is so important that they recognize that the choice is not between the future that we've outlined in this agreement, which is the only chance I've seen of a peaceful, successful future for Northern Ireland, and the status quos that exist now. The danger that we foresee is that the real choice is between the agreement and everything slipping back. And we want to do as much as we possibly can to avoid that, because we recognize, as your question implies, that if we can get real peace and stability there, well, the chances for people in Northern Ireland are just amazing. And we would like them to take advantage of that.

Mr. President.

President Clinton. Well, I agree with that. There's no sort of quid pro quo here. It's just a fact that, for example, the Irish community in America, both Protestant and Catholic, which desperately wants to see an end to the Troubles, will be more interested in trying to make sure that a courageous effort on behalf of peace by the people of Northern Ireland has a better chance to succeed by greater investment. I don't think there's any question about that.

I also would just say that I think that if the majority community—in any vote to change, you might argue that the majority will always be willing to change because they're in the majority; they say, "Well, we have what we like now." But they don't have peace now. They don't have maximum prosperity now. And if you think about the next 10 to 20 years, if I were an Irish Protestant, which I am, living in Northern Ireland instead of the United States, I would be thinking about my daughter's future and her children's future. And I'd say, "If you look at the framework, this protects us, no matter what happens to population patterns, no matter what happens to immigration patterns, no matter what happens. We're all going to be able to be protected and have a role in the democracy of our country, and I like that."

So I'm hoping that everyone will be thinking that way, thinking about the future, thinking about their children. And I think the risk of doing this is so much smaller than the risk of letting it blow apart, that I believe in the end a lot of the undecided voters will go in and vote their hopes instead of their fears.

President Santer. I only would add that the European Commission launched several years ago, as you remember, the peace program and also for the reconciliation for Northern Ireland and the surrounding counties. And I was very impressed, on my last trip in Northern Ireland several weeks ago, how many people are working across community levels in these schools, these programs. There are more, at this moment, more than 11,000 applications of this program, more than 200,000 people across the community working in these programs, and they are supporting, from grassroot levels, these peace and reconciliation programs.

Therefore, I think we have to support, also from an economic side, this peace process. It is a longstanding process, but nevertheless, I think that through our structures and programs that people are coming closer together and the cross-border community complying also to a lasting peace. And I wanted also that it would happen on Friday, and we ask that you would also have the possibility to support it for the next time.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, Secretary Albright and Dennis Ross are here in London after the talks in Washington with Prime Minister Netanyahu. Has the Prime Minister softened his resistance to the American proposal for Israeli troop withdrawals, pull-backs from the West Bank? What will Secretary Albright take to the meeting today when she sees Yasser Arafat? Could you give us some kind of update on these talks?

President Clinton. On a few occasions in the past I have given you an answer like this, and I hope you will abide my having to do so again.

The posture of the talks now is such that anything I say publicly to characterize the position taken by Mr. Netanyahu or anybody else in the back-and-forth would almost certainly reduce the chances of our being able to get an agreement which would move the parties to final status and reduce dramatically tensions in the region.

So I think I should reaffirm what I said earlier today. The parties are working. They have been working hard. In my judgment, they have been working in honest, earnest good faith. And we have our hopes, but I think it is important not to raise false hopes or to characterize the talks at this time. They are just in a period when anything we say publicly will increase the chances that we will fail. And if we get something we can say, believe me, I'd be the first one to the microphone. I'd be very happy. But I think it's important not to do more than that now.

Chequers Golf Outing

Q. Mr. President, we gather it's not been all work today and that you are reported to have introduced our Prime Minister to the mysteries of golf. How did he do?

President Clinton. You know, there's a golf course across the street from Chequers, and the first nine holes were a part of the Chequers estate until 1906. So it's at least 100 years old, the first nine holes. So this morning I got up early, and the Prime Minister went with me, and we walked about four and a half holes of the golf course. And he says, mind you, that

he has never hit a golf ball before in his life. And he asked me to drive two balls off of every tee of these four holes we played, and that he would play the rest of the way in.

So I told him how to hold the club, how to stand, how to swing. And it was embarrassing how good he was. And the guy that was going around with us was a four handicap. For those of you who play, that's nearly scratch; it's very good. And he thought, he just couldn't believe the Prime Minister was telling the truth, that he never hit the ball before. It was amazing.

All I had to do was get him off the tee, and he did very well. He three-putted no greens; he two-putted every green, all four greens. And he only just missed two shots. The rest of it, it was unbelievable. Either he is an unbelievable athlete, or I have a career as a golf instructor after I leave the White House. [*Laughter*] One of the two things must be true.

Prime Minister Blair. It's true. I'm ashamed to say I haven't played golf. But I had the best teacher I could possibly have. It's not everyone who says he's been given golfing lessons by the President of the United States of America. But we will put it down to beginner's luck, a bit like politics. [*Laughter*]

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, have you or will you contact the Indian or Pakistani Prime Ministers concerning the nuclear programs they're developing? What factors are you weighing in deciding whether to go ahead with your trip planned for later this year to those two countries? And did the agreement that you announced today, or understanding on sanctions that you announced today, provide any way through to resolving the dispute, that you had up at the G–8, on how to properly respond to India and Pakistan's programs?

President Clinton. The answer to the latter question is, no. The answer to the first two questions you asked is, I would like to talk to the Pakistani Prime Minister just to reassure him of my support for a decision not to test and my understanding of the difficulty of his position and what I think is the way out of this. I think Prime Minister Blair feels the same way.

I have made no decision about my travel plans. But keep in mind, what we need here is a way to break out of this box. What we need here is a way for both the national aspirations for security and for standing on the part of the Indians and the national aspirations for security and for standing on the part of the Pakistanis to be resolved in a way that is positive.

I mean, this is, indeed, a very sad thing because it has the prospect of spreading not just to Pakistan, but to others in a way that could reverse decades of movement away from the nuclear precipice, in ways that clearly will not increase the security of countries, no matter how many times they say over and over and over again they only want these weapons for defensive purposes.

And so that's what we have to do. And it's too soon for quick, easy answers on that. But I can tell you that my view is, we need—instead of saying, "We're not going to talk. We're not going to go here. We're not going to go there," what we really need to think of is Pakistan has been a good ally of ours, India has been, arguably, the most successful democracy in history in the last 50 years because they preserved the democracy in the face of absolutely overwhelming diversity and difficulty, and pressures internal and external, and they can't get along over Kashmir, and they have some other tensions. And then their neighbors sometimes turn up the tensions a little bit.

We've got to find a way out of this. We can't have a situation where every country in the world that thinks it has a problem, either in terms of its standing or its security, believes that the way to resolve that is to put a couple of scientists in a laboratory and figure out how to conduct a nuclear explosion. We just—that is not the right thing to do. But we have to find the right way, offer it, and work it through with these folks. And I think maybe we can.

But the answer to your question is, I'd like to talk to the Pakistani Prime Minister, not because I think I can pressure him into doing that—I don't think for a moment I can do that—but just because I would like to express my personal conviction about this in a way that I hope would allow them to think about it.

Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus

Q. Mr. President, did you have a chance to talk about Turkey's European case and, related with that, the Cyprus question with Mr. Blair and other world leaders?

President Clinton. Yes, I did. And if I had any sense, I'd just stop there. That's the answer to your question.

You know what I think, what the United States believes. The United States believes that there ought to be a path for Turkey to keep moving toward closer union with Europe. The United States supports the fact that Turkey and Greece are in NATO. The United States believes that there should be an honorable settlement to the Cyprus impasse because it is keeping Turkey and Greece, and the other Aegean issues—keeping Turkey and Greece from being genuine allies and being genuinely available to spend their time, their energy, and their resources promoting peace and development for their own people, and being enormous, stabilizing forces in their respective regions of Europe.

So, for me, this is a very important thing. To get there, I think we'll have to proceed on many fronts at once, and I think both the Turks and Greeks will have to make difficult decisions, which I believe the European Union and I know the United States will strongly support. But I don't think we can solve one problem in isolation from the other. I think we have to move forward on all these problems, the Cyprus, the Aegean jurisdictional disputes, the role of Turkey in Europe's future; all of that we have to move forward on. But I think that both the Greeks and the Turks have a bigger interest in a comprehensive resolution of that, and I know the rest of us do, than it appears just from following daily events. We have got to resolve this.

Prime Minister Blair. Can I just add to that, on behalf of the European Union, that I agree entirely with what the President has just said. And I think it's important to emphasize yet again that Europe wants a good and close relationship with Turkey. We want Turkey to feel included in the family of European nations. We have a deep concern over what has happened and is happening in Cyprus. And we believe it is essential that we make progress in this area.

Now, we know the difficulties that Turkey felt that it had following the Luxembourg conclusions last year, but I think we should and will redouble our efforts to give a very clear signal to Turkey about our proper and true intentions and also to do what we can to bring hope in the conflict in Cyprus.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. If I could ask the Prime Minister and President Santer, Pakistan is complaining about the lack of response to India's nuclear explosions. Specifically, at the G–8, there was no call for sanctions. Britain and the European Union are not following the lead of the United States, Canada, and Japan and calling for sanctions. Will Britain and the European Union impose sanctions on India for its nuclear explosions?

And to you, Mr. President, beyond words to Pakistan and beyond the possible delivery of those F–16's that Pakistan has already paid for, what specific concrete steps will you take to reassure the Pakistanis that might convince them not to go ahead with their own nuclear test?

Prime Minister Blair. Well, in respect to the first point, I mean, as the G–8 statement made clear, obviously, individual countries have their own individual positions vis-a-vis sanctions. But do not underestimate two very clear points of agreement that were established in our G–8 discussions. The first is our condemnation of the Indian nuclear tests. The second is our desire to see India integrate itself unconditionally into the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty process.

And I believe, if we need to look at the way forward from here, it is not merely a question of expressing our dismay and concern, which I did personally to the Indian Prime Minister last Friday; it is also finding the best way forward from now. And we expressed that very clearly at the G–8. I'm sure that is the position of all of the European Union countries, as well. And I think the most persuasive argument with Pakistan is to say very clearly to them that if India believes that it enhances its standing in the world by this action, it does not. And all of us are deeply conscious of the threat and danger to the security of the world that nuclear testing poses. So that is why I think it is important to see where we go from here. And the statement of the G–8 particularly in relation to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was most important and significant.

President Santer. I only want to add, first, that the European Union would, at the next European Ministerial Council on the 25th of May—so next Monday—discuss the relations about the European Union with India on the basis of the statements we made at the G–8 meeting last weekend.

Second, speaking from the European Commission, I must say that the main program we have—about 80 to 90 percent of our programs are humanitarian programs to India. We are focusing to the poorest people of this country. So I don't think that sanctions for these programs, the humanitarian programs, would not produce any deeper concern. But we have to reflect on our attitude and the concerted attitude to India on the next occasion—on Monday.

President Clinton. First of all, let me say, I think that it's important to point out that in addition to Japan, Canada, and the United States, the Dutch, the Swedes have announced that they intend to have economic—take economic actions, and I believe there will be other European countries as well.

And everybody who was at the G–8 said that there would be some impact on their relations with India as a result of this. So I thought it was quite a strong statement. And given the well-known positions of all the countries involved, I thought it was stronger than could have been predicted when we went in.

Now, what I would hope we could work with the Pakistanis on are specific things that would allay their security concerns and also make it clear that there will be political and economic benefits over the long run to showing restraint here. But the Prime Minister mentioned one of the things that I think could really help us out of this conundrum, which would be if India would say, "Okay, now we're ready to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty." Pakistan has said in the past that, if India signed, they would sign.

But again, I say somehow we've got to put this back on track. Remember, it wasn't very long ago that Argentina and Brazil had nuclear programs. And they just said, "We're not going to do this. We are not going to run the slightest risk that some future rift between ourselves would lead to some kind of explosion. We're not going to sink vast amounts of our national treasury into this when we have so many poor people in our country and we need this money freed up to other things. We are going to find other ways, number one, to take care of our security and, number two, to consider ourselves and have others consider us great nations."

And I think it would be fair to say that both of them have succeeded very well. I think it would be fair to say that at least all of us who live in the Americas believe they're enormously important countries and think more of them, not less of them, because they gave up their nuclear weapons. They have vigorous militaries, and they certainly feel themselves secure.

So we have to try to create that kind of condition under admittedly more difficult circumstances on the Indian subcontinent; that is, the previous tensions between India and China, the previous tensions between India and Pakistan. I understand they're different, but the fundamental fact is the same. So that's what I'm going to try to sell, and whatever happens, I'm going to work every day I'm President, until I leave office in 2001, I'm going to work for this because I do not want to see us slip back away. We're on the right track here as a world. We don't want to turn back.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, why is it that, if you feel it's so important to secure a yes vote in Northern Ireland, you decided it would be counterproductive to visit Northern Ireland before the vote?

And Prime Minister, are you concerned at opinion polls which suggest a slippage in the yes vote amongst the Unionist community? There is one in two Northern Ireland newspapers today, which you may be aware of, which suggests that only 25 percent of young Protestants, who've never known anything but violence, are prepared to vote yes.

President Clinton. Let me answer your question first, because I think your question to the Prime Minister is the far more important one.

I decided that I shouldn't go, first of all, because I felt that I'd have just as good a chance to have my message heard if I did something like the interview the Prime Minister and I did with David Frost, that would be widely heard, under circumstances that would not allow me to become the issue in the election for those that are opposed to this measure.

I believe—you have to understand what I believe. I believe that the voters who actually weigh the merits and the substance and think rationally about what the alternatives are, if this fails and if it succeeds, will overwhelmingly vote yes. I believe the voters who will vote no will be those who, frankly, don't trust the other side and don't feel that they can trust the other side and who, therefore, can get distracted. And I do not want to be a distraction.

The second reason I didn't want to do it is a lot of the leaders in Northern Ireland didn't think it would help. And my own experience is, I was the Governor of a State with not many more people than Northern Ireland had before I became President. And there were several times when the President of another party came into my State. At one time, I remember in 1984, President Reagan, who was immensely popular in my State, campaigning for my opponent. President Reagan got 62 percent of the vote, and I got 63 percent of the vote. So it had no impact. I did not want to become the issue. But I did want my commitment to the welfare of the people of Northern Ireland in both communities to be heard. So I hope I made the right decision, and I hope I was heard.

Prime Minister Blair. To answer your question, I think there's obviously still a tremendous amount of debate going on. The fear that people have on specific issues—I've addressed those fears, each one of them—and those fears really revolve around this question: Is it clear that if people want to take their seats in the Government of Northern Ireland or to benefits of any of the programs or an accelerated prison release or any of the rest of it, is it clear that they will have to have given up violence for good? The answer to that question is unequivocally yes. It's what the agreement states. And I've made it clear, we will clarify that and make it clear in the legislation.

But beyond that, it is a decision that people are going to have to weigh in their own minds. And the easiest thing in politics is simply to say no. The easiest thing in politics is to sit there and say, "Change is something I'm afraid of, and I'm therefore just going to refuse it." But I ask everyone who takes that attitude to reflect upon what the future holds if there is a "no" vote for this agreement. And all the way through this campaign I've tried to ask people and to say to them, in order to understand their fears, say to them, "Well, what is the alternative to this agreement? Because, after all, what unionism has fought for for 60, 70 years has been the principle of consent, and that principle is enshrined in terms in the agreement; in return, fairness and equal treatment for people from whatever side of the community they come from." Now, those are principles everyone can accept.

That's the agreement. That's the alternative I take to the table. I still don't know what the alternative is on the other side. And I just hope people reflect on that and really think about it, because every generation gets its chances; this is the chance for this generation in Northern Ireland. And we've all done our best to provide it for people, but in the end it's their decision. I can't make that decision for people. I can only tell them honestly what I believe and feel.

Microsoft Antitrust Case

Q. Mr. President, Microsoft has said that preventing it from distributing its Windows '98 software would cripple the computer industry and slow U.S. growth. Given the breakdown of talks over the weekend, do you now see a collision between Microsoft and the Justice Department as inevitable, and do you concur with their assessment of the economic consequences?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, as you know, as a general principle, I have taken the view that I should not comment on matters within the jurisdiction of the Justice Department that could be the subject of legal action. At this time, I do not think I should depart from that policy on this case, even though it obviously will have a big impact on an important sector of our economy. But I would have to say, based on what I know to date, I have confidence in the way the antitrust division in the Justice Department has handled the matter.

I say this, what I said—I want to reserve the right at sometime in the future, if I think it's appropriate, to make a comment, because this is not just an open-and-shut case of one party sues somebody else. This is something that would have a significant impact on our economy. But I think that, based on what I know, I have confidence in the way the antitrust division has handled this, and while it's pending at this time, I think I should stick to my policy and not comment.

European Union-United States Trade

Q. It seems like every 2 or 3 years there's another statement by European and American leaders that there's been another major breakthrough in trade relations. Do you now, all three of you, think it's time to set a clear and firm objective of a full-scale free trade agreement in goods, services, and capital across the Atlantic?

And, secondly, for Mr. President—I think we're struck by your repeated use of the word

"stakeholders" in your comments upon the agreement that you have reached today. Does this have something to do with your discussions about the third way that you've been holding with Mr. Blair, and is this now a keyword in the process?

President Clinton. Well, let me answer, first of all. The question of whether there should be a U.S.-EU comprehensive trade negotiation is one more properly directed to the EU because there is—the United States has supported European Union and any devices, including the EMU, chosen by the leaders to achieve that union. We have also supported the broadest possible trade relationship with Europe and, as you know and have commented on elsewhere, a similar relationship in Latin America and in the Asia-Pacific region.

Now, as you know, to make full disclosure, I would have to have fast-track authority from the Congress to do some, but not all, of the things that we have contemplated in this agreement. I would be for an even more sweeping one, but I think, to be fair, it's more difficult, with all the other tensions and debates of unification going on in Europe, to get much further than we've gotten today, and what we have agreed to do is very considerable, indeed.

Now, the question you asked about the stakeholders, I have always believed that our country—that the United States could not succeed, in the end, economically and socially at home, in providing opportunity for everyone who is responsible enough to work for it, and in having a community that's coming together instead of being torn apart, unless we maintained our level of engagement and involvement in the rest of the world. I have always believed we could not sustain our involvement in the rest of the world in trade and other areas unless the American people thought we were doing it in a way that was consistent with their values when it comes to basic working standards, basic living standards, and preserving the global environment.

So what we have tried to do, without prescribing the end, is to set up a process here for our negotiation which will let all those folks into the trade debate. And what I am going to argue for at the WTO is an even more sweeping example of that. But Sir Leon Brittan—I think he's here today—commented earlier this year that, in the preamble to the WTO, it says that sustainable development should be the goal of increasing global trade, and that part of the trade agenda should be providing the means to preserve the environment and increasing the number of tools to do so.

That's just one example. Is it part of the so-called third way? I think you could say that, but it's not something that came out of our dinner conservation last night. This is something Prime Minister Blair and I have long believed ought to be done. But you can't—we don't exist as economic animals alone, and in fact, if we don't find a way to prove that increasing trade will lead to prosperity more broadly shared in all the countries in which we deal and will give us the tools to improve the environment, in the end, our trade policies will prove self-defeating.

President Santer. For our trade relations, I can only say that since we adopted the new transatlantic agenda in December 1995, we made a huge progress, a long way together. And Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, this morning, made a list of all we have delivered since '95. It is a very impressive list.

Now, it's coming the way how we can deepen these transatlantic partnership relations further. And that we did this morning. And I think that this is really a major result for the future. We are the biggest world partner, the United States and Europe, and we have a balanced trade relations. And we have also a balanced foreign direct investments on both sides of the Atlantic, and, therefore, it seems to me that's very important that we strengthen and that we deepen these relations step-by-step for the future and that we make it in a very comprehensive way.

That's not to say that we would not have sometime some difficulties; the partners always have some difficulties. I remember that also with the member states in the European Union—that's my daily life—I have to deal with difficulties. And even with our friends here, in the Presidency, we are discussing the same problems—[inaudible]—cultural fields as we are discussing sometimes also with the United States. So, the thing is only in what spirit we are dealing with these problems. And therefore, I think we have to be in a partnership-like spirit, and that's the real sense and the deepness, the depths of our partnership relation. And therefore, I think this summit, the sixth summit since 1995, is a very important one, and gives a new signal for a new direction.

Situation in Indonesia

Q. With regard to Indonesia, sir, do you anticipate using U.S. forces to safeguard the lives of Americans in that country, and would the United States be prepared to give Soeharto asylum if it would help ease him from power?

President Clinton. Well, with regard to the first question, I have been given no indication that it is necessary at this time. And with regard to the second, the prospect has not been presented. As you probably know, just as we were fixing to come in here, there are all kinds of new stories which may or may not be accurate about very rapidly unfolding developments in Indonesia. And I expect that all of you may want to come back to me in 2 or 3 hours or 4 hours for comments on things that may be clearer then than they are now.

Let me just say again what I think the real issue is here. We want this country to come back together, not come apart. We want the military to continue to exercise maximum restraint so there will be minimum loss of life and injury. We want civil society to flourish there. We believe that Indonesia was headed for some tough times because there has to be some tough economic decisions taken no matter what government has been in. But the absence of a sense of political dialog and ownership and involvement obviously has contributed to the difficulties there. And then there has been a heartbreaking loss of life of all the people who burned to death, for example.

So what we're looking for now and what we're going to be working for is the restoration of order without violence and the genuine opening of a political dialog that gives all parties in this country a feeling that they are a part of it. They should decide, the Indonesian people, who the leader of Indonesia is. And then we're going to do our best, when things settle down and human needs are taken care of and there's order, to try to get them back on the road to economic recovery. Because all of us have a big interest in the future success of a country that has done some fabulous things in the last 30 years, but it had a very bad few moments here.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you very much, indeed.

President Santer. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 159th news conference began at 1:20 p.m. at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The President met with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Jacques Santer of the European Commission. In the news conference the following people were referred to: Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral of India; Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan; Sir Leon Brittan, Vice President of the European Commission; President Soeharto of Indonesia; and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

European Union/United States Joint Statement on Shared Objectives and Close Cooperation on Counterterrorism

May 18, 1998

1. The United States, the European Union and its member states are strategic allies in the global fight against terrorism—a grave threat to democracy, and to economic and social development. They oppose terrorism in all its forms, whatever the motivation of its perpetrators, oppose concessions to terrorists, and agree on the need to resist extortion threats. They condemn absolutely not only those who plan or commit terrorist acts, but also any who support, finance or harbour terrorists. They recognize that terrorism operates on a transnational scale, and cannot effectively be dealt with solely by isolated action using each individual state's own resources. They work together to promote greater international cooperation and coordinated effort to combat terrorism by all legal means and in all relevant bilateral and multilateral fora—from the Transatlantic Dialogue to the United Nations.

The International Legal Framework

2. Extradition and mutual legal assistance arrangements are in operation or will be developed between EU partners and the United States. The EU and US cooperate in the United Nations framework to elaborate the necessary international legal instruments for the fight against terrorism. They work in tandem to promote universal adherence to the eleven international counter-terrorism conventions. EU partners contributed to the rapid and successful negotiation of the most recent UN Convention (for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings) based on a draft proposed by the US. Now they are cooperating to consider the terms of a draft UN Convention on the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism.

Areas of current EU/US mutual interest

3. (i) Terrorist Fund-raising: EU partners are pooling their knowledge and experience to work to cut off terrorists' sources of funding. They have agreed a set of action points, and their operational agencies are working on joint initiatives against terrorist funding. The US participated in an EU seminar in 1997 which shaped this work, is briefed regularly on current developments in this key area, and will take part in a follow-up EU seminar in Vienna in October 1998.

(ii) Chemical/Biological Terrorism and other threats: During the UK Presidency the EU and US have shared their thinking and compared best practice in the areas of CB terrorism, Terrorist arms trafficking and Bomb scene management.

(iii) The Middle East Peace Process: The EU briefs the US regularly on its current 3-year programme of counter-terrorism cooperation to enhance the effectiveness of the Palestinian Authority in this key area, including an extensive programme of human rights training. To strengthen EU/Palestinian links still further in the fight against terrorism, a declaration creating a joint Security Committee was agreed in April 1998. The Committee now meets regularly to discuss security issues.

EU/US Consultation and Information Exchange

4. Policy cooperation is developed bilaterally and at EU/US level. Operational cooperation, including intelligence-sharing, is handled bilaterally by national law enforcement agencies, and is given high priority. To identify and assess the scale of the terrorist threat, the EU member states and the US exchange information and assessments on terrorist trends and latest developments. The regular meetings on counter-terrorism between the US and the EU Troika of the Second and Third Pillars are used to exchange views on all aspects of terrorism policy, including trends in countries of particular current concern in the Middle East and elsewhere. Information is also shared on significant developments on either side of the Atlantic, eg the creation of Europol, which will include terrorism within its remit soon after its launch. The US has updated EU partners on the impact of its decision last October to designate 30 foreign terrorist organisations.

Further Cooperation

5. While recognising the wide range of work successfully accomplished hitherto, both sides see scope to strengthen further their close ties in the field of counter-terrorism, and are working to do so—by additional information-sharing at their regular Troika meetings, enhanced bilateral intelligence exchanges, and sustained cooperation at the United Nations and in other fora to advance their common objectives.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 18 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

United States/European Union Declaration on Common Orientation of Nonproliferation Policy

May 18, 1998

The International Non-Proliferation Regime

The United States and the Member States of the European Union share a strong common interest in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

The United States and the European Union support universal adherence to international treaties covering weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. They are cooperating to ensure full and effective implementation of these treaties. This includes the effective implementation of the recently-strengthened safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency and verification procedures being implemented pursuant to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. They are also working toward agreement on an effective Protocol on verification for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

They are active participants in international export control regimes and arrangements:

—The Nuclear Suppliers Group.

—The Zangger Committee of countries committed to cooperation in interpretation and implementation of the export clause (Article III.2) of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

—The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

—The Australia Group of suppliers of goods and dual-use equipment potentially relevant to chemical or biological weapons.

Among their other responsibilities, the regimes provide mechanisms for the exchange of information about programs and activities of concern in the area of weapons proliferation which they address.

Export Control Policy

While promoting international trade and opportunities, and consistent with other relevant international obligations, the United States and the European Union take as a particularly important objective the denial of assistance to programs of weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery. This includes dual-use goods and technology subject to export control. The United States and European Union Member States have adopted policies and given guidance to licensing officials to prevent any export of controlled goods when they believe they might be used in programs of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. In this context, they should take into account, inter alia, evidence of an importer's prior association with such programs.

The European Union has adopted a comprehensive legally-binding Dual-Use Regime of export controls which contains stringent catch-all provisions covering equipment that might be used in or in connection with programs of weapons of mass destruction.

Regions of Proliferation Concern

The United States and the European Union have discussed regions of proliferation concern, including the Middle East and South Asia.

In this context, the United States and the European Union have recently noted their continuing serious concern about efforts by some countries in the Middle East and South Asia to acquire missile technology and their capability to produce weapons of mass destruction. The European Union noted that such concerns should figure into its political contacts with these countries, notably Iran.

The United States and the European Union reaffirmed their support of the work of UNSCOM in ensuring Iraq's implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction.

United States-European Union Consultations and Information Exchange

The United States and the European Union hold regular consultations on non-proliferation and will strengthen their close ties in this field.

The two sides also recognize that effective implementation of export controls will be greatly enhanced by the timely exchange of any relevant information about programs and activities of concern. To strengthen existing cooperation in this area, the two sides have agreed to:

—Additional information sharing in their regular meetings;
—Give further consideration, including the appropriate involvement of experts, of proposals to establish improved communications and data transmissions relevant to non-proliferation export controls. Due consideration will be given to practical aspects of this concept.
—Enhanced bilateral information exchanges.

Political Action With Suppliers

The United States and European Union countries have engaged key suppliers. Several European leaders and Foreign Ministers have raised their concern directly with their Russian counterparts about Russian technological assistance to Iran's ballistic missile program. These concerns have been reinforced in contacts between the European Union troika and Russian counterparts. The United States and European Union welcome actions taken by Russia to strengthen its export control regime.

The United States is open to a trilateral meeting with European Union and Russia on non-proliferation issues, but believes that careful preparation will be needed for such a meeting to be useful.

Agenda for Further Cooperation

The United States and European Union intend to continue working closely together to advance their common non-proliferation objectives. Some items on the agenda of work in the coming year are:
—Coordination of export control assistance programs to third countries. Exchanges of information about ongoing programs have already occurred.
—Cooperation to improve export control implementation.
—Consultation to ensure that intangible technology transfers do not contribute to proliferation. Ideas in this area have been advanced by both sides.
—Best practice in export control implementation, including discussion of means to strengthen verification of end-use and to prevent diversion through third countries. Controls of non-linked items (catch-all), software and technology.

NOTE: This declaration was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 18 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this declaration.

United States/European Union Joint Statement on Caspian Energy
May 18, 1998

The United States and the European Union recognize the importance of Caspian Basin oil and gas resources in contributing to the economic prosperity, energy security, and stability of the region.

These resources will be an important addition to world oil and gas supplies and require secure access routes to world markets.

Essential to this development will be the early availability of multiple pipelines. Major export pipelines from the Caspian will accordingly contribute to the secure delivery of an important new source of world energy supplies.

The European Union's INOGATE program is designed to promote the security of energy supplies. It includes work on: revitalization of the existing transmission network and on new oil and gas pipelines across the Caspian, Black Sea region and westwards to Europe; urgent renovation of hazardous infrastructure; strengthening regional cooperation; compliance with international standards; reform of the region's energy sectors; and protection of foreign investments. The European Union's TRACECA project supports the development of an east-west transport and trade corridor from Central Asia, across the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus, and the Black Sea, to Europe.

The United States strongly endorses commercially and environmentally sound projects to develop Caspian energy resources and their transport to international markets. U.S. technical assistance and training programs are helping many of the Caspian states improve their legal regimes

to encourage private investment in energy development and transport. The United States underscores that the Caspian Pipeline Consortium project is a critical component of a commercially driven multiple pipeline system for the entire region. The United States has provided a grant to Turkmenistan to complete a feasibility study for a trans-Caspian gas pipeline.

Commercial considerations will first and foremost determine decisions on the development of energy projects and export routes. It is the private sector that will make the investments and take the risks. Projects therefore need to be economically viable and competitive. They must also meet the highest environmental standards.

The United States and the European Union welcome the progress made by the littoral states towards formulating a legal regime for the Caspian that will enhance rapid development of the region's energy resources. They express the hope that the littoral states will reach early agreement.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 18 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

United States/European Union Joint Statement on Transatlantic Partnership on Political Cooperation

May 18, 1998

1. Under the New Transatlantic Agenda, launched in December 1995, the United States and the European Union made a commitment to further strengthen and adapt our partnership to face new challenges at home and abroad. We recognized that our political and economic cooperation is a powerful force for peace, democracy and prosperity. We agreed to move to common action to achieve these ends. We agreed to move to common action to achieve those ends. We have since taken specific steps to strengthen respect for human rights, to promote non-proliferation, to fight terrorism, to address crises in troubled regions and much more. Our experience has shown that, working together, the United States and the European Union are more effective in pursuing shared goals. When differences have emerged between us, however, this has reduced the effectiveness of our response.

2. In order to enhance our partnership, we undertake to intensify our consultations with a view to more effective cooperation in responding to behavior that is inimical to the goals agreed in the New Transatlantic Agenda or which threatens international stability and security, in which we have a shared interest. We have instructed senior officials to undertake early consultations when there is an evident risk of such behavior. To this end, we have agreed to principles that will guide us:

(a) We will seek through exchanging information and analysis and through early consultations to pre-empt, prevent and, as needed, respond to such behavior. Our objective is to achieve compatible and mutually reinforcing policy responses, which are practical, timely and effective.

(b) These responses should be carefully formulated as part of a coherent overall policy approach designed to change unacceptable behavior. They should also be in line with international commitments and responsibilities.

(c) We will make full use of diplomatic and political action to achieve our objectives.

(d) Economic sanctions are another possible response. Their use requires careful consideration. In general, they would be used only when diplomatic and political options have failed or when a problem is so serious as to require more far-reaching action.

(e) In such circumstances, the United States and the European Union will make a maximum effort to ensure that they economic sanctions are multilateral. They are likely to have the strongest political and economic impact when applied as widely as possible throughout the international community. Multilateral actions also distribute the costs of sanctions on the imposing parties more evenly. Whenever possible, effective measures taken by the UN Security Council are the optimal approach.

(f) When multilateral economic sanctions are imposed, our objective will be to exert the greatest possible pressure on those responsible for the problem, while avoiding unnecessary hardship and minimizing the impact on other countries.

(g) Where wider agreement on economic sanctions cannot be achieved, or in cases of great urgency, the United States and the European Union will consult on appropriate responses. In such circumstances either partner could decide to impose economic sanctions.

(h) To ensure the resilience of our partnership in such circumstances:

—a partner will not seek or propose, and will resist, the passage of new economic sanctions legislation based on foreign policy grounds which is designed to make economic operators of the other behave in manner similar to that required of its own economic operators;

—that partner will target such sanctions directly and specifically against those responsible for the problem; and

—the partner not imposing sanctions will take into account the interest of the other in formulating its own policy and continue to pursue, in its own way, those goals which are shared.

(i) It is in the interest of both partners that policies of governmental bodies at other levels should be consonant with these principles and avoid sending conflicting messages to countries engaged in unacceptable behavior. Both partners will work to achieve this goal.

3. The United States and the European Union will consult closely, including at senior levels, in applying these principles and resolving differences. Each side will also develop the necessary internal procedures to ensure effective implementation of the principles.

Understanding on Conflicting Requirements

The United States and the European Union, recalling the Understanding of April 11, 1997, which stated, inter alia, that they would "work together to address and resolve through agreed principles, the issue of conflicting jurisdictions, including issues affecting investors of another party because of their investments in third countries," wish to confirm in this Understanding their intention to propose jointly in negotiation of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment the following article regarding conflicting requirements:

"1. In contemplating new legislation, action under existing legislation or other exercise of jurisdiction which may conflict with the legal requirements or established policies of another Contracting Party and lead to conflicting requirements being imposed on investors or their investments, the Contracting Parties concerned should:

(a) have regard to relevant principles of international law;

(b) endeavor to avoid or minimize such conflicts and the problems to which they give rise by following an approach of moderation and restraint, respecting and accommodating the interests of other Contracting Parties;

(c) take fully into account the sovereignty and legitimate economic, law enforcement and other interests of other Contracting Parties;

(d) bear in mind the importance of permitting the observance of contractual obligations and the possible adverse impact of measures having a retroactive effect.

2. Contracting Parties should endeavor to promote co-operation as an alternative to unilateral action to avoid or minimize conflicting requirements and problems arising therefrom.

3. Contracting Parties should on request consult one another in accordance with paragraph ____ of Article ____ (Consultations section of Dispute Settlement provision) and endeavor to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions to such problems, it being understood that such consultations would be facilitated by notification at the earliest stage practicable.

4. If consultations under paragraph 3 do not result in a mutually satisfactory resolution of the claim, either of the Contracting Parties may bring the matter to the attention of the Parties Group. Pursuant to Article ____(The Parties Group), the Parties Group will consider the matter in light of the agreed principles in paragraph 1, with a view toward resolving the matter.

5. The Parties Group may review, in accordance with Article ____ (Review), the implementation and assess the effectiveness of this Article."

N.B.: It is understood that nothing in the MAI excludes this provision from MAI dispute settlement.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 18 but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Statement on Indictment of Mexican Bankers Involved in Laundering Drug Money

May 18, 1998

I am pleased that the Treasury Department and the United States Customs Service have joined today with the Justice Department to take a significant step to protect our Nation and its children from drugs. The indictments today send a clear message that those who help finance drug operations, who launder drug money, who make it possible for drug dealers to earn their illegal profits will not escape the long arm of our Nation's law enforcement. We still have much to do, but let no one doubt that we will press this fight relentlessly against the drug cartels and all their partners in crime.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Burma

May 18, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Burma is to continue in effect beyond May 20, 1998.

As long as the Government of Burma continues its policies of committing large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 20, 1998.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 18, 1998.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Senate Transmitting an International Labor Organization Convention Concerning Discrimination With Respect to Employment and Occupation

May 18, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith a certified copy of the Convention (No. 111) Concerning Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), adopted by the International Labor Conference at its 42nd Session in Geneva on June 25, 1958. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State, with a letter dated January 6, 1997, from then Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, concerning the Convention.

This Convention obligates ratifying countries to declare and pursue a national policy aimed at eliminating discrimination with respect to employment and occupation. As explained more fully in the letter from Secretary Reich, U.S. law and practice fully comport with its provisions.

In the interest of clarifying the domestic application of the Convention, my Administration proposes that two understandings accompany U.S. ratification.

The proposed understandings are as follows:

> "The United States understands the meaning and scope of Convention No. 111 in light of the relevant conclusions and practice of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations which have been adopted prior to the date of U.S. ratification. The Committee's conclusions and practice are, in any event, not legally binding on the United States and have no force and effect on courts in the United States.
>
> "The United States understands that the federal nondiscrimination policy of equal pay for substantially equal work meets the requirements of Convention 111. The United States further understands that Convention 111 does not require or establish the doctrine of comparable worth with respect to compensation as that term is understood under United States law and practice."

These understandings would have no effect on our international obligations under Convention No. 111.

Ratification of this Convention would be consistent with our policy of seeking to adhere to additional international labor instruments as a means both of ensuring that our domestic labor standards meet international requirements, and of enhancing our ability to call other governments to account for failing to fulfill their obligations under International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions. I recommend that the Senate give its advice and consent to the ratification of ILO Convention No. 111.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 18, 1998.

Remarks at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland

May 18, 1998

Thank you very much, Director General Ruggiero, Federal Councillor Couchepin. Your Excellencies, thank you for the opportunity to address you on this most important occasion.

Near the end of World War II, as leaders and ordinary citizens began to dream of a system that would prevent a return to war, President Franklin Roosevelt asked the people of the United States and the world to look ahead to peace with these words: He said, "A basic essential to permanent peace is a decent standard of living for all individual men and women and children in all nations. Freedom from fear is eternally linked with freedom from want."

It was that understanding that led a farsighted generation of postwar leaders, determined to

avoid past errors of protectionism and isolationism, to embrace what was then still a revolutionary idea, that freedom, freely elected governments, free markets, the free flow of ideas, the free movement of people would be the surest route to the greatest prosperity for the largest number of people.

They were also confident that growing economic interdependence would lead to greater peace among nations. The economic alliances and institutions they created—the IMF, the World Bank, the GATT—built a platform for prosperity and peace that has lasted down to the present day.

In the fullness of time, events have confirmed the convictions of the founders of the international system. World trade has increased fifteenfold; average tariffs have declined by 90 percent; the trading community has grown from 23 nations to 132, with 31 more working to join. Russia and China, where the shackles of state socialism once choked off enterprise, are moving to join the thriving community of free democracies. Trade is creating prosperity among the nations of the Americas and offers hope to the emerging economies of Africa and Asia.

On the edge of a new millennium, our people are creating a new economy, a very different one from that our founders faced 50 years ago. The new one is driven by technology, powered by ingenuity, rewards knowledge and teamwork, flexibility and creativity, and draws us closer across the lines that have divided us for too long.

On any given day, over 3 million people take to the air on commercial flights. Three decades ago phone lines could only accommodate 80 calls at one time between Europe and the United States. Today, they can handle one million calls at one time. In the United States alone, economic output has tripled while the physical weight of goods produced has barely changed. The world's new wealth largely comes from the power of ideas.

This new global economy of ideas offers the possibility but not the guarantee of lifting billions of people into a worldwide middle class and a decent standard of living, the opportunity to give their children a better life. Yet it also contains within it, as we all know, the seeds of new disruptions, new instabilities, new inequalities, new challenges to the balance of work and family, of freedom and security, of equal opportunity and social justice, of economic growth and a sustainable environment.

The challenge of the millennial generation here gathered is, therefore, to create a world trading system, attuned both to the pace and scope of a new global economy and to the enduring values which give direction and meaning to our lives. We took the first vital step when we created the World Trade Organization in 1995, a goal that had alluded our predecessors for nearly half-century. The Uruguay round that founded the WTO amounted to the biggest tax cut in history, $76 billion a year when fully implemented. Since that event, world trade has increased by 25 percent. Since 1995, we also have begun to build an infrastructure for this new economy, with historic agreements on information technology, telecommunications, and financial services, which together affect trillions of dollars in global commerce every year.

At the G–8 summit just concluded in Birmingham, the leaders worked on ideas to strengthen the international financial architecture so that private capital markets can spur rapid growth while minimizing the risk of worldwide economic instability. Now, we must build on these achievements with a new vision of trade to construct a modern WTO for the 21st century. I would like to offer you my suggestions.

First, we must pursue an ever more open global trading system. Today, let me state unequivocally that America is committed to open trade among all nations. Economic freedom and open trade have brought unprecedented prosperity in the 20th century; they will widen the circle of opportunity dramatically in the 21st. One-third of the strong economic growth we have enjoyed in America these past 5 years was generated by trade. For every country engaged in trade, open markets dramatically widen the base of possible customers for our goods and services. We must press forward.

Redoubling our efforts to tear down barriers to trade will spur growth in all our countries, creating new businesses, better jobs, higher incomes, and advancing the free flow of ideas, information, and people that are the lifeblood of democracy and prosperity. At the U.S.-EU summit in London today, we embraced this goal and committed ourselves to reducing barriers and increasing trade in a dozen important areas.

No matter how much some people might wish otherwise, globalization and the technology revolution are not policy choices; they are facts. The choice is whether we shape these forces of a new economy to benefit our people and advance our values or retreat behind walls of protection to be left behind in the race for the future.

At a moment when, for the first time in all human history, a majority of the world's people live under governments of their own choosing; when the argument over which is better, free enterprise or state socialism, has been won; when people on every continent seek to join the free market system, those of us who have benefited most from this system and led it must not turn our backs. For my part, I am determined to pursue an aggressive market opening strategy in every region of the world. And I will continue to work with Members of our Congress, in both parties, to secure fast-track negotiation authority.

Second, we must recognize that in this new economy, the way we make trade rules and conduct trade affects the lives, daily, and the livelihoods and the health and the safety of ordinary families all over the world. Therefore, our efforts to make the trading system more open must themselves be made more open.

In order to build a trading system for the 21st century that honors our values and expands opportunity, we must do more to ensure that spirited economic competition among nations never becomes a race to the bottom in environmental protections, consumer protections, or labor standards. We should be leveling up, not leveling down. Without such a strategy, we cannot build the necessary public support for continued expansion of trade. Working people will only assume the risks of a free international market if they have the confidence that the system will work for them.

The WTO was created to lift the lives of ordinary citizens. It should listen to them. I propose the WTO, for the first time, provide a consultative forum where business and labor and environmental and consumer groups can provide regular and continuous input to help guide further evolution of the WTO. The U.S. and the EU agreed today to provide such a forum as part of our new trade agenda. It is far more important for the WTO to follow suit. When this body convenes again, the world's trade ministers should sit down with representatives of the broader public to begin to do this.

Third, we must actually do more to harmonize our goals of increasing trade and improving the environment and working conditions. Expanded trade can and should enhance the environment. Indeed, the WTO agreement, in its preamble, explicitly adopts sustainable development as an objective of open trade, including a commitment to preserve the environment and to increase the capacity of nations to do so. Therefore, international trade rules must permit sovereign nations to exercise their rights to set protective standards for health and safety, the environment and biodiversity. Nations have a right to pursue those protections, even when they are stronger than international norms.

I am asking that a high-level meeting be convened to bring together trade and environmental ministers to provide strong direction and new energy to the WTO's environmental efforts in the years to come, a suggestion that has already been made by Sir Leon Brittan of the European Commission.

Likewise, the WTO and the International Labor Organization should commit to work together to make certain that open trade does lift living standards and respects the core labor standards that are essential not only to worker rights but to human rights. I ask the two organizations' secretariats to convene at a high level to discuss these issues.

This weekend, the G–8 leaders voiced support for the ILO's adoption of a new declaration and a meaningful followup mechanism on core labor standards when the ILO ministers meet next month here in Geneva. I hope you will add your support. We must work hard to ensure that the ILO is a vibrant institution. Today I transmitted to our Senate for ratification the ILO convention aimed at eliminating discrimination in the workplace.

Because this new economy is based on ideas, information, and technology, the return on investment in education has never been higher, and the adverse consequences of being without skills has never been greater. These trends cannot be reversed. Our goal, therefore, must be to help more people benefit from the possibilities of the new economy, even as we ensure that the forces of technology and new trade patterns do not aggravate inequality or reinforce poor labor conditions.

Here I must add even as we do more to harmonize our goals of more trade and higher incomes for ordinary people, each nation must

do more to provide universal access to quality education and training. Without that, no trade rules, however wisely conceived or effected, can guarantee individual success to the people we are really trying to reach.

Fourth, we must modernize the WTO by opening its doors to the scrutiny and participation of the public. Through long trial and error, we have learned that governments work best when their operations are open to those affected by their actions. As American Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said a long time ago, "Sunshine is the best of disinfectants."

The WTO should take every feasible step to bring openness and accountability to its operations. Today, when one nation challenges the practices of another, the proceeding takes place behind closed doors. I propose that all hearings by the WTO be open to the public and all briefs by the parties be made publicly available. To achieve this, of course, would require a change in the rules of this organization. But each of us could do our part now. The United States today formally offers to open up every panel we are a party to, and I challenge every other nation to join us in making this happen.

Today, there is no mechanism for private citizens to provide input in these trade disputes. I propose further that the WTO provide the opportunity for stakeholders to convey their views, such as the ability to file amicus briefs to help inform the panels in their deliberations. Today, the public must wait weeks to read the reports of these panels. I propose that the decisions of the trade panels be made available to the public as soon as they are issued.

Fifth, we must have a trading system that taps the full potential of the information age. This revolution in information technology is the greatest force for prosperity in our lifetimes. The Internet is the fastest growing social and economic community in history, a phenomenon with unimagined revolutionary potential to empower billions around the world. It has been called the "death of distance," making it possible for people to work together across oceans as if they were working together across the hall.

When I became President, there were only 50 sites on the World Wide Web. Four years ago there were still less than 3 million people with access to the Internet. Today, there are over 100 million people, with the number doubling every year.

Today, there are no customs duties on telephone calls, fax messages, E-mail, or computer data links when they cross borders. We have spent 50 years tearing down barriers to trade in goods and services. Let us agree that when it comes to electronic commerce, we will not erect these barriers in the first place. I ask the nations of the world to join the United States in a standstill on any tariffs on electronic transmissions sent across national borders. We cannot allow discriminatory barriers to stunt the development of the most promising new economic opportunity in decades.

Earlier today at the summit of the EU, we agreed to deepen our collaboration in this area. And last week, the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Hashimoto, and I, agreed to move forward together with a market-oriented, private-sector-led approach to enhance privacy, protect intellectual property, and encourage the free flow of information and commerce on the Internet. I hope we can build a consensus that this is the best way to harness the remarkable potential of this new means of communication and commerce.

Sixth, a trading system for the 21st century must be comprised of governments that are open, honest, and fair in their practices. In an era of global financial markets, prosperity depends upon government practices that are based upon the rule of law rather than bureaucratic caprice, cronyism, or corruption. Investors demand it. And their loss of confidence can have sudden, swift, and severe consequences, with ripples throughout entire regional economies.

With its insistence on rules that are fair and open, the WTO plays a powerful role toward open and accountable government. But the WTO must do more. When we meet next year, all members of the WTO should agree that government purchases should be made through open and fair bidding. This single reform can open up $3 trillion worth of business to open competition around the world. And I ask every nation to adopt the antibribery convention developed by the OECD. Both these steps would promote both investor confidence and stability.

Finally, we must develop an open global trading system that moves as fast as the global marketplace. In an era in which new products' lifecycles are measured in months and information and money move around the globe in seconds, we simply can no longer afford to take 7 years to finish a trade round, as happened

during the Uruguay round, or to let decades pass between identifying and acting on a trade barrier we all know ought to fall.

In the meantime, new industries arise, new trading blocs take shape, and governments invent new trade barriers every day. We should explore what new type of trade negotiating round or process is best suited to the new economy. There must be a way to tear down barriers without waiting for every issue in every sector to be resolved before any issue in any sector is resolved. There must be a way to do this that is fair and balanced to nations large and small, rich and poor. Surely we can negotiate trade agreements in a way that is faster and better than the way we have followed to date.

For example, agriculture, which I understand has been discussed quite a bit here, is at the heart of our economy and many of yours. Tearing down barriers to global trade is, I believe, critical to meeting the food needs of a growing world population. Starting next year, we should aggressively begin negotiations to reduce tariffs and subsidies and other distortions that restrict productivity and the best allocation of food. We must develop rules rooted in science to encourage the full fruits of biotechnology. And I propose that even before negotiations near conclusions, WTO members should pledge to continue making annual tariff and subsidy reductions so that there is no pause in reform.

We have to recognize that the fastest growing area of economic activity in the world is services, the one least disciplined by WTO rules. So when services negotiations are launched, I think it is essential to engage in wide-ranging discussions to ensure openness for dynamic service sectors, such as express delivery, environmental, energy, audiovisual, and professional services.

We have to continue our strong momentum to dismantle industrial tariffs. A good place to start would be an agreement on the sectors from chemicals to environmental technology proposed by APEC. And we must move forward in strengthening intellectual property protection.

These are my proposals for a 21st century trading system: one that is more open and accountable; one that listens to the voices of citizens; that works to protect the environment and lift the lives and incomes of ordinary people; one that is in sync with the information age; that promotes honest, effective government; and that makes better, faster decisions. In short, a trading system based on the new economy and old, enduring values. To move forward, I am inviting the trade ministers of the world to hold their next meeting in 1999 in the United States.

I ask you to think about the opportunity that has been presented to all of us: the chance to create a new international economy in which open markets and open economies spark undreamed of innovation and prosperity; in which the skills of ordinary citizens power the prosperity of entire nations; in which the global economy honors those same values that guide families in raising their children and nations in developing good citizens; in which poor people, at last, find opportunity, dignity, and a decent life; in which increasing interdependence among nations enhances peace and security for all.

This will be the world of the 21st century if we have the wisdom and determination, the courage, and the clarity of our forebears 50 years ago.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 p.m. at les Palais des Nations in a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. In his remarks, he referred to Renato Ruggiero, Director General, World Trade Organization; Pascal Couchepin, Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Public Economy of Switzerland; Sir Leon Brittan, Vice President of the European Commission; Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan; the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD); and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

Remarks on Proposed Tobacco Legislation
May 20, 1998

Thank you very much. First of all, I'd like to thank Tara and Emily. There's really nothing much more to say after their presentations. They weren't so muted and shy; I think we all got the point. Didn't you think they were terrific? Give them another hand. [*Applause*] I thought they were great.

I'd like to thank all the Members of Congress who are here. I think they were all mentioned except we missed Congressman Borski who is in the first seat. No minister would do that in a congregation. [*Laughter*] Thank you for being here, all of you. Thank you, Reverend Jackson. I thank the public health advocates who are here. I thank the young people who are here, both behind me and a few out there in the audience. I thank the parents of our speakers who came and other parents who are here for what they have done.

I can't thank the Vice President enough for his longstanding and absolutely passionate, indeed, all-consuming interest in this issue. I think it would be fair to say—he talked about how we looked at the issue and all the obstacles to it, and I went ahead. The people that had the most influence on me were the Vice President, the First Lady, and our daughter. And that was three—if there were 300 million on the other side, the three would have a majority. So I thank them all, and especially the Vice President, for years and years and years of dedicated work on this issue.

This morning I was thinking that when I was the age of—even younger than most of the people here in the audience, most of the children here, the biggest public health threat to us was polio. America went to work and conquered the disease, and I was actually part of the first group of children to be immunized against polio.

Today, we all know our greatest public health threat to our children, and indeed to all Americans, are all the related things that can happen to people who are addicted to tobacco. I was a little older than most of the children here when the Surgeon General sounded an alarm that has grown louder, clearer, and more difficult to ignore every year, the warning that smoking kills.

For a generation, Americans of all ages and walks of life, including young people just like those whom we honor here today, have answered that alarm by fighting tirelessly to conquer this deadly threat to protect the health of our people. In the face of very powerful opposition, our Nation has actually won some victories, both large and small, requiring all cigarette packages to carry warning labels, prohibiting cigarette advertising on the airwaves, banning smoking on domestic airline flights. But today, we stand on the verge of passing legislation that will do far more than anything we have ever done to stop the scourge of youth smoking.

This week, as all of you know, the Senate is considering historic, comprehensive, bipartisan legislation, proposed by Senator McCain and Senator Hollings. Over the last few weeks, we have worked very hard with Senators in both parties to strengthen this bill, protecting Americans from the dangers of secondhand smoke in public buildings, dramatically increasing health research, and funding a nationwide advertising campaign to tell young people not to smoke, toughening look-back surcharges to make reducing youth smoking the tobacco companies' bottom line.

This bill includes a significant price increase to discourage youth smoking and affirms the FDA's authority to regulate tobacco products. I hope that in the next few days, the Senate will make sure we do everything we possibly can, also, to protect tobacco farmers and their communities.

This bill is our best chance to protect the health of our children, to keep them from getting hooked on cigarettes ever. It is a good, a strong bill. Congress should pass it and pass it now. Let me also say that I believe the presence of the young people here and their active support of the Tobacco-Free Kids movement is absolutely critical. There are still cynics who say, "Well, this is not the kind of problem that requires this sort of solution. After all, nobody forces these people to start smoking." The young people here wearing their T-shirts, willing to look into the eyes of the lawmakers, are a stunning rebuke to that kind of cynicism. I thank

them for saying no to tobacco and yes to their own bright futures.

And I want to tell you that you may well be able to have a bigger impact on Capitol Hill, than all the things that we say here in the White House, on the remaining undecided voters. Our lawmakers must not let this historic opportunity slip away under pressure from big tobacco lobbying. I want you to go and see them. I know you're going to Capitol Hill. When you're up there, I want you to ask every Member of Congress to go home tonight and think about how they can look you in the eye and say no to your future.

We now know from the release of previously classified documents that for years the tobacco companies looked on you as, and I quote, "the replacement smokers" of the 21st century. But here we have more than 1,000 unique children who cannot be replaced, the scientists, the artists, the teachers, the Olympic champions, the engineers, the leaders, perhaps a future President in the 21st century. The rest of us have an obligation to see that these children and all their counterparts in every community in our country have a chance to grow and live to the fullest of their God-given abilities.

That is what this bill is all about. This is more than just another bill in the legislature. This is more than a culmination of a historic fight between powerful political forces. We have no higher obligation than to give the young people we see here today the brightest, best future we possible can. That's what this bill is about, and we must pass it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Tara Lipinski, 1998 Olympic figure skating gold medalist; Emily Broxterman, 1997 midwest regional winner, Youth Advocate of the Year Award; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; and the late Luther L. Terry, former Surgeon General.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Tobacco Legislation

May 20, 1998

Dear Mr. Leader:

I applaud the Senate for taking up comprehensive, bipartisan legislation to dramatically reduce teen smoking. Every day, 3000 teenagers start smoking regularly, and 1000 will die prematurely of smoking-related diseases as a result. I urge the Senate to move swiftly to pass comprehensive legislation that could save those children's lives.

Last September, and in my budget plan, I set forth five principles for comprehensive tobacco legislation:

- Raising the price of cigarettes by $1.10 a pack over 5 years with additional surcharges on companies that continue to sell to kids;
- Affirming the FDA's full authority to regulate tobacco products;
- Getting companies out of the business of marketing and selling tobacco to minors;
- Promoting public health research and public health goals; and
- Protecting our tobacco farmers and their communities.

I have made protecting tobacco farmers and farming communities a top priority for this legislation, and I believe Senator Ford's LEAF Act fully meets this standard. I am deeply troubled by the Senate Leadership's recent attempt to undermine protection for tobacco farmers and their communities. I urge the Senate to work through this impasse and ensure that small, family farmers are protected.

If that issue can be resolved to my satisfaction, the bill before the Senate, as amended by Senator McCain's Manager's Amendment, is a good, strong bill that will make a real dent in teen smoking. Congress should pass it without delay.

I applaud Senator McCain and others in both parties who have worked hard to strengthen this legislation. I am particularly pleased that the bill contains significant improvements which will help reduce youth smoking and protect the public health:

- Tough industry-wide and company-specific lookback surcharges that will finally make reducing youth smoking the tobacco companies' bottom line;
- Protection for all Americans from the health hazards of secondhand smoke;
- No antitrust exemption for the tobacco industry;
- Strong licensing and anti-smuggling provisions to prevent the emergence of contraband markets and to prosecute violators;
- A dedicated fund to provide for a substantial increase in health research funding, a demonstration to test promising new cancer treatments, a nationwide counteradvertising campaign to reduce youth smoking, effective state and local programs in tobacco education, prevention, and cessation, law enforcement efforts to prevent smuggling and crackdown on retailers who sell tobacco products to children, assistance for tobacco farmers and their communities, and funds for the states to make additional efforts to promote public health and protect children; and
- The elimination of immunity for parent companies of tobacco manufacturers, an increase in the cap on legal damages to $8 billion per year, and changes to ensure that the cap will be available only to tobacco companies that change the way they do business, by agreeing to accept sweeping restrictions on advertising, continue making annual payments and lookback surcharges even if those provisions are struck down, make substantial progress toward meeting the youth smoking reduction targets, prevent their top management from taking part in any scheme to promote smuggling, and abide by the terms of the legislation rather than challenging it in court. Because the First Amendment limits what we can do to stop the tobacco companies' harmful advertising practices—which lure so many young people to start smoking—we can do far more to achieve our goal of reducing youth smoking if the companies cooperate instead of tying us up in court for decades. If a cap that doesn't prevent anybody from suing the companies and getting whatever damages a jury awards will get tobacco companies to stop marketing cigarettes to kids, it is well worth it for the American people. I, therefore, oppose the Gregg Amendment to strike the liability cap.

I strongly support these improvements, and I urge the Senate to pass this legislation without delay.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Trent Lott, Senate majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Radio Remarks on Cuban Independence Day

May 20, 1998

I want to say hello to all listeners of Radio Marti. On behalf of the people of the United States, I offer you warmest wishes on this Cuban Independence Day.

The United States is determined to help Cuba achieve a peaceful transition to democracy. And as part of our effort, I announced in March that the U.S. would permit direct humanitarian flights, transfers of money from families in the United States to relatives in Cuba, and streamline procedures for the sale of medicines to your country.

These steps are aimed at building on Pope John Paul's historic visit to Cuba, increasing humanitarian relief and supporting the role of the church and other elements of civil society. We're committed to helping Cuba's courageous democracy and human rights advocates as they work for a brighter future. We continue to be concerned about those who languish in Cuban jails. We urge the Cuban Government to release all political prisoners and reintegrate them into Cuban society.

Cubans will never be free until Cubans are free to speak out and organize for fundamental

change. We send you a message of hope; we must work together to promote freedom in the only country in our hemisphere which does not yet enjoy it. I believe the Cuban people want democracy and that they will relish it and prosper in every realm—political, economic, and cultural—once they are free.

Before I sign off, let me congratulate the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, home to Radio and TV Marti, as it begins broadcasting from its new headquarters in Miami today. Here, closer to their listeners, Radio and TV Marti will continue to bring information, hope, and encouragement to the people of Cuba.

My best wishes to all of you, and thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 11:30 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was embargoed for release until 1:30 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Washington Conference on Humanitarian Demining
May 20, 1998

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Washington Conference on Global Humanitarian Demining.

This conference fulfills a commitment I made last October when Secretary Albright and Secretary Cohen announced the "Demining 2010 Initiative." We set as our goal the elimination, by the end of the next decade, of the threat posed by landmines to civilians. Landmine contamination is not only a pressing humanitarian problem, but it affects virtually every aspect of life in countries recovering from civil war or armed conflict.

We long ago realized that reaching this goal would require a concerted effort by the international community, and we have been heartened by the response—your response—so far. Each of the countries and organizations represented at this conference plays a critical role in this effort, and your presence here is testimony to the importance the international community attaches to this enormous task.

Almost 4 years ago I called for the global elimination of landmines. Since then, the U.S. has been at the forefront of the efforts to rid the world of these hidden killers. Not only have we destroyed millions of landmines in our own arsenal and banned their export, but we have also provided a substantial share of the global resources for humanitarian demining.

The Washington conference is an opportunity for us to set a course for the future together and move toward a goal we all share: to eliminate as quickly as possible the scourge of antipersonnel landmines that kill and main civilians. This conference builds on the efforts of many other countries and individuals, including, of course, the remarkable accomplishment of the Ottawa process, making this a truly global endeavor.

We have come a long way, but much remains to be done. It is my hope that the Washington conference will inspire a new commitment on the part of all present to ensure an increase in the level and effectiveness of effort and resources the world dedicates to the challenge of humanitarian demining.

Statement on the Resignation of President Soeharto of Indonesia
May 20, 1998

We welcome President Soeharto's decision, which provides an opportunity to begin a process leading to a real democratic transition in Indonesia—an opportunity for the Indonesian people to come together and build a stable democracy for the future. We urge Indonesia's

leaders to move forward promptly with a peaceful process that enjoys broad public support. The United States stands ready to support Indonesia as it engages in democratic reform.

Statement on the Conclusion of the World Trade Organization Meeting
May 20, 1998

I am pleased and proud that the members of the World Trade Organization ("WTO") have accepted my invitation to hold the 1999 WTO Ministerial meeting in the United States. This meeting will enable us to advance the ambitious agenda I laid out earlier this week to shape the world trading system to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Next year's meeting will bring home for Americans the important stake that we all have in the global economy. And I welcome the decision by the WTO to ask United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky to chair that meeting.

In Geneva, we made important advances on our proposal to free the potential of electronic commerce. I am particularly pleased that the WTO members joined the United States in a standstill on any tariffs on electronic transmissions sent across national borders. We cannot allow discriminatory barriers to stunt the development of the most promising new economic opportunity in decades. This worldwide proposal builds on far-reaching agreements we reached within the last week with the European Union and Japan.

As we build a trading system for the 21st century that honors our values and expands opportunity, we must do more to ensure that spirited economic competition among nations never becomes a race to the bottom, in environmental protections, consumer protections, or labor standards. Without such a strategy, we cannot build the necessary public support for continued expansion of trade. I will work to ensure that the WTO and other international institutions are more responsive to labor, the environment, consumers, and other interests so that we can build the public confidence we need in our trade expansion initiatives.

I want to thank Ambassador Barshefsky; Secretary Glickman; Ambassador Rita Hayes, our Ambassador to the WTO; and all the representatives of the U.S. business community and other participants in the Ministerial who worked to make this meeting a success.

Message to the Senate Returning Without Approval Legislation on Public Education in the District of Columbia
May 20, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S. 1502, the "District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act of 1998."

If we are to prepare our children for the 21st Century by providing them with the best education in the world, we must strengthen our public schools, not abandon them. My agenda for accomplishing this includes raising academic standards; strengthening accountability; providing more public school choice, including public charter schools; and providing additional help to students who need it through tutors, mentors, and after-school programs. My education agenda also calls for reducing class size, modernizing our schools and linking them to the Internet, making our schools safe by removing guns and drugs, and instilling greater discipline.

This bill would create a program of federally funded vouchers that would divert critical Federal resources to private schools instead of investing in fundamental improvements in public schools. The voucher program established by S. 1502 would pay for a few selected students to attend private schools, with little or no public accountability for how those funds are used, and

would draw resources and attention away from the essential work of reforming the public schools that serve the overwhelming majority of the District's students. In short, S. 1502 would do nothing to improve public education in the District of Columbia. The bill won't hire one new teacher, purchase one more computer, or open one after-school program.

Although I appreciate the interest of the Congress in the educational needs of the children in our Nation's Capital, this bill is fundamentally misguided and a disservice to those children.

The way to improve education for all our children is to increase standards, accountability, and choice within the public schools. I urge the Congress to send me legislation I have proposed to reduce class size, modernize our schools, end social promotions, raise academic standards for all students, and hold school systems, schools, and staff accountable for results.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 20, 1998.

Radio Remarks on the Northern Ireland Peace Accord Referendum

May 20, 1998

Tomorrow the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have an opportunity to join hope to history. I know that as you go to the polls and consider the merits of the April 10 accord, you will reflect on the past three decades, so marred by hatred and bloodshed, fighting and fear. I hope you will also reflect on the decades to come and the opportunity you now have in your hands to build a lasting peace for yourselves and your children. This Friday, you can turn the common tragedy of Northern Ireland's past into a shared triumph for the future.

As you face the future, you can count on America. We were blessed with the arrival of your ancestors and relatives who helped to build our Nation. We want to return the favor with trade and investment, with friendship and partnership. But to those of any party or persuasion who would revert to violence, you must know that you will find no friends in America.

To everyone voting tomorrow, let me say, you can do nothing to erase the past, but you can do everything to build the future. The world is with you, but the choice is yours. May you make the right choice for peace, for your children, for your future. And may God bless you all.

NOTE: The remarks were recorded at approximately 11:35 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House on May 20 for later broadcast, and they were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 21. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Senate Ratification of the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

May 21, 1998

Thank you very much. I suppose I should begin with an apology for having to dash off and pick up the paper, but I would hate to lose this document after all the effort we put into getting to this point. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Vice President, thank you for your leadership on this issue. Senator Roth, Senator Biden, Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, General Ralston, Mr. Berger, to the Ambassadors of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the other members of the diplomatic corps who are here, to Senators Levin and Lieberman and Lugar, Mikulski, and Smith, I thank all of you so much.

Ladies and gentlemen, before we begin, I would like to make a couple of brief comments.

First of all, let me say I know that all Americans are heartbroken by the terrible shooting at the school in Springfield, Oregon, today. And I would just like to say on behalf of the American people that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the people who were killed and wounded and with that entire fine community.

Next let me say that I welcome the wise decision made less than 24 hours ago by President Soeharto in Indonesia. It now gives the Indonesian people a chance to come together to build a stable democracy for the 21st century. I hope that the leaders will now move forward promptly, with an open and peaceful transition that enjoys broad public support. Indonesia is a very great nation, populous, wide ranging, diverse, with remarkable accomplishments to its credit in the last few decades. It has a great future. The United States stands ready to work, as we have with other nations in the past, to support Indonesia's leaders and people as they pursue democratic reform.

Finally, by way of introduction, let me say, since we're here to talk about Europe today, I'd like to put in one last plug for the vote in Ireland and Northern Ireland tomorrow. And I suspect all of you agree with me. And I hope that those fine people will lift the burden of the last 30 years from their shoulders and embrace a common future in peace.

Let me say notwithstanding my good friend Senator Biden's overly generous remarks, we are here today because of the efforts of a lot of people who supported this effort: Members of Congress and former Members of Congress, present and former national security officials, present and former military leaders, representatives of our veterans, business unions, religious groups, ethnic communities. I especially thank Senators Lott and Daschle, Senators Helms and Biden, and you, Senator Roth, the chairman of our NATO observer group.

You behaved in the great tradition of Truman and Marshall and Vandenberg, uniting our country across party for common values, common interests, and a common future.

It's really amazing, isn't it, that Bill Roth and Joe Biden come from Delaware. I want you to know there is no truth to the rumor that I agreed to move the NATO headquarters to Wilmington in return for this vote. [*Laughter*] However, it does say a lot for those small States that these two remarkable men have made such an indispensable contribution to this effort. I thank the other Senators who are here for their passionate commitments.

I'd also like to mention one other person, my adviser on NATO enlargement who managed the ratification process for the White House, Jeremy Rosner. Thank you, Jeremy. You did a great job, too, and we thank you.

I see so many people here that—and I don't want to get into calling names, but I thank Mr. Brzezinski, Ambassador Kirkpatrick, General Joulwan, and so many others who are here who have been a part of America's effort over the last 50 years to make sure that, after World War II, freedom triumphs.

We learned, at great cost in this century, that, if we wanted America to be secure at home, we had to stand up for our interests, our ideals, and our friends around the world. Because of the alliances we've built and the work that our people have been able to do here, we near the end of this great century at a remarkable pinnacle of peace, with prosperity and declining social problems at home, and for the very first time ever, a majority of the world's people living under governments of their own choosing.

Since World War II, no alliance for freedom has been more important or enduring than NATO. And as we look ahead to the next 50 years, we have to imagine what the world will be like and what it is we expect to do and, in particular, in this case, what about NATO. Today we welcome Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, finally erasing the boundary line the cold war artificially imposed on the continent of Europe, strengthening an alliance that now, clearly, is better preserved to keep the peace and preserve our security into the 21st century.

For the 16 of us already in NATO, enlarging our alliance will create three new allies ready to contribute troops and technology and ingenuity to protecting our territory, defending our security, and pursuing our vital interests. The 60 million people who live in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, they now know that what they build in peace, they will be able to keep in security. And America now knows that we have new allies to help us meet the new security challenges of the 21st century, something that our partnership in Bosnia so clearly demonstrates.

I would say also to the nations who have joined with us in the Partnership For Peace, and others who have considered doing so, and those who hope still someday to become NATO

members, we are in the process of adapting this organization to the security challenges of the 21st century, and those who are with us in the Partnership For Peace, those who have been part of our endeavor in Bosnia, we appreciate you as well. We respect your aspirations for security; we share your devotion to your freedom; and we hope this is a day which you can celebrate as well.

We come to this day thanks to many acts of courage: courage that toppled the Berlin Wall, ended the cold war; sacrifice by those who raised freedom's banner in Budapest in 1956, in Prague in 1968, in Gdansk in 1980; people like Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel, Arpad Goncz, so many others. The selfless investment of blood and treasure the American people made in European freedom in the 20th century is also something we ought to stop and remember here today. There are so many people whose families gave so much in two World Wars and the cold war who should feel a personal sense of satisfaction and triumph because of this day. And I hope they do.

As we look ahead to the 21st century, again I say, we have to see what we're doing in NATO in the larger context of preparing for a different era. Our goal is to help to build a Europe that is undivided, free, democratic, at peace, and secure, a Europe in which Russia, Ukraine, and other states of the former Soviet Union join with us to make common cause; a dynamic new Europe with partnership for commerce and cooperation. Therefore, we have supported the expansion of NATO and the Partnership For Peace. We have also supported all efforts at European integration and the expansion of European institutions to welcome new democracies. And we will continue to do so.

We want to imagine a future in which our children will be much less likely to cross the Atlantic to fight and die in a war, but much more likely to find partners in security, in cultural and commercial and educational endeavors. The expansion of NATO and the Partnership For Peace make the positive outcome much more probable.

This is a day for celebration but also a day for looking ahead. Our work to adapt all our institutions to the challenges of the new century is far from done. On Monday, I had the opportunity to go to Geneva to lay out a seven-point plan for the changes, I believe, the world trading system must embrace in order to fully and faithfully serve free people in the 21st century.

And just very briefly before I close, let me mention the things that I believe we still have to do with NATO. We have to build closer ties with the Partnership For Peace members. We have to reinforce the practical cooperation between NATO and Russia, and NATO and Ukraine. We have to see through our efforts to secure a lasting peace in the Balkans, and we cannot walk away until the job is done. We must achieve deeper reductions in our nuclear forces and lower the limits on conventional arms across the European continent.

Yes, we have more work to do, but for today, we remind the people of Europe that in the efforts that lie ahead, they can continue to count on the United States. And we remind the world that tomorrow, as yesterday, America will defend its values, protect its interests, and stand by its friends. So that years from now another generation may gather in this place and bask in the warm glow of liberty's light, because in our time we fulfilled America's eternal mission: to deepen the meaning of freedom, to widen the circle of opportunity, to strengthen the bonds of our union among ourselves and with others who believe in the primary importance of liberty and human dignity.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador to the U.S. Jerzy Kozminski and former President Lech Walesa of Poland; Ambassador to the U.S. Gyorgy Banlaki and President Arpad Goncz of Hungary; Ambassador to the U.S. Aleksandr Vondra and President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic; former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski; former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane J. Kirkpatrick; and Gen. George A. Joulwan, USA (Ret.), former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

Message to the Senate on Ratification of the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

May 21, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I am gratified that the United States Senate has given its advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The Senate's decisive vote was a milestone on the road to an undivided, democratic and peaceful Europe. The message this vote sends is clear: American support for NATO is firm, our leadership on both sides of the Atlantic is strong, and there is a solid bipartisan foundation for an active U.S. role in transatlantic security.

I thank Majority Leader Lott, Minority Leader Daschle, Senators Helms and Biden, Senator Roth and the members of the NATO Observer Group, and the many others who have devoted so much time and energy to this historic effort. The continuous dialogue and consultation between the Administration and the Congress on this issue was a model of bipartisan partnership. I am committed to ensuring that this partnership continues and deepens as we proceed toward NATO's 50th anniversary summit next year in Washington.

The resolution of ratification that the Senate has adopted contains provisions addressing a broad range of issues of interest and concern, and I will implement the conditions it contains. As I have indicated following approval of earlier treaties, I will of course do so without prejudice to my authorities as President under the Constitution, including my authorities with respect to the conduct of foreign policy. I note in this connection that conditions in a resolution of advice and consent cannot alter the allocations of authority and responsibility under the Constitution.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1998.

Message to the Congress Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution for the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

May 21, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 30, 1998, I hereby certify to the Congress that, in connection with Condition (5), each of the governments of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are fully cooperating with United States efforts to obtain the fullest possible accounting of captured and missing U.S. personnel from past military conflicts or Cold War incidents, to include (A) facilitating full access to relevant archival material, and (B) identifying individuals who may possess knowledge relative to captured and missing U.S. personnel, and encouraging such individuals to speak with United States Government officials.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1998.

Message to the Congress Reporting Certifications Required by the Ratification Resolution for the Protocols of Accession to NATO for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic

May 21, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 30, 1998, I hereby certify to the Senate that:

In connection with Condition (2), (i) the inclusion of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO will not have the effect of increasing the overall percentage share of the United States in the common budgets of NATO; (ii) the United States is under no commitment to subsidize the national expenses necessary for Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic to meet its NATO commitments; and (iii) the inclusion of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO does not detract from the ability of the United States to meet or to fund its military requirements outside the North Atlantic area; and

In connection with Condition (3), (A) the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council do not provide the Russian Federation with a veto over NATO policy; (B) the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the Permanent Joint Council do not provide the Russian Federation any role in the North Atlantic Council or NATO decision-making including (i) any decision NATO makes on an internal matter; or (ii) the manner in which NATO organizes itself, conducts its business, or plans, prepares for, or conducts any mission that affects one or more of its members, such as collective defense, as stated under Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty; and (C) in discussions in the Permanent Joint Council (i) the Permanent Joint Council will not be a forum in which NATO's basic strategy, doctrine, or readiness is negotiated with the Russian Federation, and NATO will not use the Permanent Joint Council as a substitute for formal arms control negotiations such as the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, done at Paris on November 19, 1990; (ii) any discussion with the Russian Federation of NATO doctrine will be for explanatory, not decision-making purposes; (iii) any explanation described in the preceding clause will not extend to a level of detail that could in any way compromise the effectiveness of NATO's military forces, and any such explanation will be offered only after NATO has first set its policies on issues affecting internal matters; (iv) NATO will not discuss any agenda item with the Russian Federation prior to agreeing to a NATO position within the North Atlantic Council on that agenda item; and (v) the Permanent Joint Council will not be used to make any decision on NATO doctrine, strategy, or readiness.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Mexico-United States Extradition Treaty Protocol With Documentation

May 21, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Protocol to the Extradition Treaty Between the United States of America and the

United Mexican States of May 4, 1978, signed at Washington on November 13, 1997.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol. As the report explains, the Protocol will not require implementing legislation.

This Protocol will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of both countries. The Protocol incorporates into the 1978 Extradition Treaty with Mexico a provision on temporary surrender of persons that is a standard provision in more recent U.S. bilateral extradition treaties.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for the Humanities
May 21, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to present to you the 32nd annual report of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Federal agency charged with advancing scholarship and knowledge in the humanities. The NEH supports an impressive range of humanities projects advancing American scholarship and reaching millions of Americans each year.

The public has been enriched by many innovative NEH projects. These included a traveling exhibit, companion book, and public programming examining the history and legacy of the California Gold Rush on the occasion of its Sesquicentennial. Other initiatives promoted humanities radio programming and major funding for the critically acclaimed PBS series, "Liberty! The American Revolution."

The NEH is also utilizing computer technologies in new and exciting ways. Answering the call for quality humanities content on the Internet, NEH partnered with MCI to provide EDSITEment, a website that offers scholars, teachers, students, and parents a link to the Internet's most promising humanities sites. The NEH's "Teaching with Technology" grants have made possible such innovations as a CD–ROM on art and life in Africa and a digital archive of community life during the Civil War. In its special report to the Congress, "NEH and the Digital Age," the agency examined its past, present, and future use of technology as a tool to further the humanities and make them more accessible to the American public.

This past year saw a change in leadership at the Endowment. Dr. Sheldon Hackney completed his term as Chairman and I appointed Dr. William R. Ferris to succeed him. Dr. Ferris will continue the NEH's tradition of quality research and public programming.

The important projects funded by the NEH provide for us the knowledge and wisdom imparted by history, philosophy, literature, and other humanities disciplines, and cannot be underestimated as we meet the challenges of the new millennium.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 21, 1998.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Air Force Academy Falcons

May 21, 1998

The President. General Shelton, General Ryan, Senator Thurmond, Lieutenant General Oelstrom, Coach Fisher DeBerry; to the entire Air Force Academy team, at least the first classmen who are here today, and all of our other guests, friends, and members of the Air Force football staff, and others, I am very pleased to present the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Air Force Academy again. [*Laughter*]

This is the 11th time the Air Force has won the trophy. Since I have been President, I have presented it to the Falcons every year except 1996. That's 5 out of 6 years. I'm good luck for you folks. [*Laughter*] You might ought to think about repealing the 22d amendment. [*Laughter*]

The record of the Air Force Academy is so remarkable that I have asked Secretary Cohen to include a special analysis of your success in the next quadrennial defense review. We may try to apply it to other areas of our endeavor. [*Laughter*]

This team showed real character, winning its first 7 games, ending up 10 and 2. Charles Gilliam rushed for 741 yards. Lane Morgan rushed for six touchdowns and threw for 975 yards. Chris Gizzi, whom I just met, had 179 tackles, the second highest number in school history. And he proved over and over again, I understand, that he has a real nose for football. [*Laughter*] For the members of the press that are here, I understand he had his nose stitched up after every game.

Coach DeBerry, as always, you deserve a lot of credit for this team's outstanding performance. You're the winningest coach in Academy history. Your knowledge of the game, your calm leadership are always indispensable to the team's success.

I understand, and I have seen on occasion, that you tend to excite your team with unexpected displays of emotion on the sideline. And I was told, before I came out here, that part of the reason that these Falcons flew so high is that they were supremely pumped up by the chicken dance you did after beating Navy and Army. [*Laughter*]

One of my predecessors, and one of my favorite predecessors, Teddy Roosevelt, would admire this team. In 1900, he wrote a book called "The Strenuous Life," in which he said: "In life, as in a football game, the principle to follow is hit the line hard." Your competitive drive, teamwork, and hard work brought you here. And I hope you will continue to hit the line hard in your careers and in your service to our Nation.

All of us here are very, very proud of the Academy football programs at all three of our service academies and the fine example you set as scholar athletes. But the 1997 Falcons have proven beyond question that they deserve the Commander in Chief Trophy. Your timing couldn't have been better. Last fall we celebrated in the 50th anniversary of the Air Force, and you gave something extra to cheer for.

Again, let me repeat my congratulations to the team, the coach, to the entire Air Force Academy. You not only aim high, you find what you aim for. Congratulations.

Now I'd like to ask Lieutenant General Oelstrom to come up and continue the program.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point, team members presented gifts to the President, including a U.S. Air Force Academy football jersey.*]

The President. You know, I sometimes don't have the best of timing. Tomorrow is the day in my annual rotation that I have to give the commencement address at the Naval Academy. [*Laughter*] So, if you'll forgive me, I think I'll start wearing this day after tomorrow on the golf course. [*Laughter*]

You're great representatives of the United States. We're all proud of you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force; and Lt. Gen. Tad Oelstrom, USAF, Superintendent, and Fisher DeBerry, Football Coach, U.S. Air Force Academy.

Remarks at a Reception for the Sons of Italy Foundation
May 21, 1998

Thank you very much. I thought they were all talking, so I made them come up here. [*Laughter*] But I thank Secretary Cuomo and Paul Polo and Phil Piccigallo for making me feel so welcome. I got here in time to hear Steve Forbes talking, and I appreciate his warming the crowd up. [*Laughter*] That's the most high-class warm-up act I've had this year. [*Laughter*]

Ambassador Foglietta, Ambassador Salleo; Regis Philbin, thank you for welcoming me; and to my good friend, Tony Bennett, welcome. I'd like to also congratulate tonight's honoree, Philip Guarascio, and thank all of you for giving me a chance to come by and share a few moments of your 10th anniversary.

For over 90 years, the Sons of Italy has been a community organization in the truest sense. For 10 years, you've given out this National Education and Leadership Award, finding what I think is one of the very finest ways you could ever express your pride and your ethnic heritage and your devotion to the next generation.

I asked before I came on the stage if I could have an opportunity to personally congratulate the scholarship recipients here tonight, and I hope that I can do this, because they, after all, represent not only your commitment but all our futures.

The Italian-American tradition of work and family, faith and community is just as alive today as it was when the Sons of Italy first began to meet. As President, I have tried to pursue policies that embody those values, values that led so many Italian-American families to such great success in America.

We've got a lot to be thankful for tonight: the lowest unemployment in 28 years; the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years; the lowest inflation in 32 years. But we all know that we've got a lot to do and that we can't stop until we can see the values that embody the Sons of Italy alive and well in every neighborhood in America. I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Secretary Cuomo for his extraordinary work in trying to make sure that we get that done.

I'm told that tonight everybody who is here can claim to be Italian. I see my favorite Italian with an Irish name, Senator Leahy, out here. [*Laughter*] It's shameless. He's the only man I know who can show up at every Irish and every Italian event, claim to be one of you, and always be telling the truth. It seems an unfair advantage even in America. [*Laughter*]

Tonight I know you're also celebrating the life of Frank Sinatra. I had, as one of the many perks of becoming President, the chance to get to know Frank Sinatra a little and to appreciate on a personal level what people all over the world appreciated in his music and his movies. I think it's important tonight, because of what you stand for, to note that while we have lost his remarkable voice, we have also lost a generous spirit of a man who raised more than a billion dollars for charity and left a lot as well, and really did, as I said a couple of days ago, always manage to do it his way.

I want to thank you for everything you do, but especially, in closing, I want to say that, if you look ahead to the 21st century, we will be living in an economy that is increasingly based on ideas, but our ability to take advantage of it will rest more and more on the strength, the depth, and the character of our soul, on whether we can learn to live together across all the lines that divide us to find a home among people who aren't exactly like us but, down deep inside, have more in common with us than what divides us.

Tomorrow, in the land of my ancestors, Ireland and Northern Ireland, the people will be voting on whether to discard decades of war and hundreds of years of conflict to chart a new path for peace for their children. We are working hard to preserve a peace in Bosnia among people of different religious traditions. We see on the Indian subcontinent new tensions among people of different religious and ethnic groups. We struggle still to make peace in the Middle East at a time when computers have made instantaneous the transfer of money and information and ideas across the globe.

If we are to make the most of the education that you have worked so hard to give to the children of Italian immigrants, then we truly must work just as hard to embody the values by which you have lived and through which

you have found a true home in the United States.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:42 p.m. in the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Paul S. Polo, president, and Philip R. Piccigallo, national executive director, Sons of Italy Foundation; Malcolm S. (Steve) Forbes, Jr., publisher, Forbes magazine; Thomas M. Foglietta, U.S. Ambassador to Italy; Ferdinando Salleo, Italian Ambassador to the United States; entertainer Regis Philbin, who introduced the President; singer Tony Bennett; and Philip Guarascio, vice president and general manager, advertising and marketing, North American Division, General Motors Corporation.

Commencement Address at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland

May 22, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much. Secretary Dalton, thank you for your generous introduction and your dedicated service. Admiral Larson, thank you. Admiral Johnson, General Krulak, Admiral Ryan, Board of Visitors Chair Byron; to the faculty and staff of the Academy; distinguished guests; to proud parents and family members, and especially to the brigade of midshipmen: I am honored to be here today. And pursuant to longstanding tradition, I bring with me a small gift. I hereby free all midshipmen who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses. [*Applause*] There was so much enthusiasm, I wonder if you heard the word "minor" offenses. [*Laughter*]

You know, the President has the signal honor of addressing all of our service academies serially, one after the other in appropriate order. This is the second time I have had the great honor of being here at the Naval Academy. But I began to worry about my sense of timing. I mean, what can you say to graduating midshipmen in a year when the most famous ship on Earth is again the *Titanic?* [*Laughter*] But then I learned this is a totally, almost blindly confident bunch. After all, over in King Hall you eat cannonballs. [*Laughter*] Now, for those of you who don't know what they are, they're not the ones Francis Scott Key saw flying over Fort McHenry; they're just huge apple dumplings. Nonetheless, they require a lot of confidence. [*Laughter*]

I will try to be relatively brief today. I was given only one instruction: I should not take as long as your class took to scale Herndon Monument. Now, at 4 hours and 5 minutes, the slowest time in recorded history, I have a lot of leeway. [*Laughter*]

But you have more than made up for it. You have done great things, succeeding in a rigorous academic environment, trained to be superb officers. You have done extraordinary volunteer work, for which I am personally very grateful. In basketball, you made it to the NCAA's for the second time in a row. You defeated Army in football last year. In fact, you were 26 and 6 against teams from Army this year. And while I must remain neutral in these things—[*laughter*]—I salute your accomplishments. [*Laughter*]

Let me also join the remarks that Secretary Dalton made in congratulating your Superintendent. Admiral Larson has performed remarkable service as an aviator, submarine commander, Commander in Chief in the Pacific, twice at the helm of the Academy. I got to know him well when he was our Commander in Chief in the Pacific. I came to appreciate more than I otherwise ever could have his unique blend of intelligence and insight and character and passionate devotion to duty.

In view of the incident on the Indian subcontinent in the last few days, I think it's important for the historical record to note that the first senior official of the United States who told me that there was a serious potential problem there and we had better get ready for it was Admiral Chuck Larson, several years ago.

When I asked him to return to the Academy, I thought it was almost too much, and then I realized it might have been too little, for he loves this Academy so much this is hardly tough duty. He met all its challenges. He taught you

midshipmen to strive for excellence without arrogance, to maintain the highest ethical standards. Admiral, on behalf of the American people, I thank you for your service here, your 40 years in the Navy, your devotion to the United States. We are all very grateful to you.

I also have every confidence that Admiral Ryan is a worthy successor, and I wish him well.

As I speak to you and other graduates this spring, I want to ask you to think about the challenges we face as a nation in the century that is just upon us and how our mission must be to adapt to the changes of changing times while holding fast to our enduring ideals. In the coming weeks, I will talk about how the information revolution can widen the circle of opportunity or deepen inequality, about how immigration and our Nation's growing diversity can strengthen and unite America or weaken and divide it.

But nothing I will have the chance to talk about this spring is more important than the mission I charge you with today, the timeless mission of our men and women in uniform: protecting our Nation and upholding our values in the face of the changing threats that are as new as the new century.

Members of the Class of 1998, you leave the Yard at the dawn of a new millennium, in a time of great hope. Around the world, people are embracing peace, freedom, free markets. More and more nations are committed to educating all their children and stopping the destruction of our environment. The information revolution is sparking economic growth and spreading the ideas of freedom around the world. Technology is moving so fast today that the top-of-the-line, high-speed computers you received as plebes today are virtually museum pieces. [*Laughter*]

In this world, our country is blessed with peace, prosperity, declining social ills. But today's possibilities are not tomorrow's guarantees.

Just last week, India conducted a series of nuclear explosive tests, reminding us that technology is not always a force for good. India's action threatens the stability of Asia and challenges the firm international consensus to stop all nuclear testing. So again I ask India to halt its nuclear weapons program and join the 149 other nations that have already signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And I ask Pakistan to exercise restraint, to avoid a perilous nuclear arms race.

This specter of a dangerous rivalry in South Asia is but one of the many signs that we must remain strong and vigilant against the kinds of threats we have seen already throughout the 20th century, regional aggression and competition, bloody civil wars, efforts to overthrow democracies.

But also, our security is challenged increasingly by nontraditional threats, from adversaries both old and new, not only hostile regimes but also terrorists and international criminals, who cannot defeat us in traditional theaters of battle but search instead for new ways to attack, by exploiting new technologies and the world's increasing openness.

As we approach the 21st century, our foes have extended the fields of battle, from physical space to cyberspace; from the world's vast bodies of water to the complex workings of our own human bodies. Rather than invading our beaches or launching bombers, these adversaries may attempt cyberattacks against our critical military systems and our economic base. Or they may deploy compact and relatively cheap weapons of mass destruction, not just nuclear but also chemical or biological, to use disease as a weapon of war. Sometimes the terrorists and criminals act alone. But increasingly, they are interconnected and sometimes supported by hostile countries.

If our children are to grow up safe and free, we must approach these new 21st century threats with the same rigor and determination we applied to the toughest security challenges of this century. We are taking strong steps against these threats today. We've improved antiterrorism cooperation with other countries; tightened security for our troops, our diplomats, our air travelers; strengthened sanctions on nations that support terrorists; given our law enforcement agencies new tools. We broke up terrorist rings before they could attack New York's Holland Tunnel, the United Nations, and our airlines. We have captured and brought to justice many of the offenders.

But we must do more. Last week, I announced America's first comprehensive strategy to control international crime and bring criminals, terrorists, and money launderers to justice. Today I come before you to announce three new initiatives: the first broadly directed at combating terrorism; the other two addressing two

potential threats from terrorists and hostile nations, attacks on our computer networks and other critical systems upon which our society depends and attacks using biological weapons. On all of these efforts, we will need the help of the Navy and the Marines. Your service will be critical in combating these new challenges.

To make these three initiatives work, we must have the concerted efforts of a whole range of Federal agencies, from the Armed Forces to law enforcement to intelligence to public health. I am appointing a National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism, to bring the full force of all our resources to bear swiftly and effectively.

First, we will use our new integrated approach to intensify the fight against all forms of terrorism: to capture terrorists, no matter where they hide; to work with other nations to eliminate terrorist sanctuaries overseas; to respond rapidly and effectively to protect Americans from terrorism at home and abroad.

Second, we will launch a comprehensive plan to detect, deter, and defend against attacks on our critical infrastructures, our power systems, water supplies, police, fire, and medical services, air traffic control, financial services, telephone systems, and computer networks.

Just 15 years ago, these infrastructures—some within government, some in the private sector—were separate and distinct. Now, they are linked together over vast computer-electronic networks, greatly increasing our productivity but also making us much more vulnerable to disruption. Three days ago, we saw the enormous impact of a single failed electronic link when a satellite malfunction disabled pagers, ATM's, credit card systems, and TV and radio networks all around the world. Beyond such accidents, intentional attacks against our critical systems already are underway. Hackers break into government and business computers. They can raid banks, run up credit card charges, extort money by threats to unleash computer viruses.

If we fail to take strong action, then terrorists, criminals, and hostile regimes could invade and paralyze these vital systems, disrupting commerce, threatening health, weakening our capacity to function in a crisis. In response to these concerns, I established a commission chaired by retired General Tom Marsh, to assess the vulnerability of our critical infrastructures. They returned with a pointed conclusion: Our vulnerability, particularly to cyberattacks, is real and growing. And they made important recommendations, that we will now implement, to put us ahead of the danger curve.

We have the best trained, best equipped, best prepared Armed Forces in history. But as ever, we must be ready to fight the next war, not the last one. And our military, as strong as it is, cannot meet these challenges alone. Because so many key components of our society are operated by the private sector, we must create a genuine public-private partnership to protect America in the 21st century. Together, we can find and reduce the vulnerabilities to attack in all critical sectors, develop warning systems including a national center to alert us to attacks, increase our cooperation with friendly nations, and create the means to minimize damage and rapidly recover in the event attacks occur. We can and we must make these critical systems more secure, so that we can be more secure.

Third, we will undertake a concerted effort to prevent the spread and use of biological weapons and to protect our people in the event these terrible weapons are ever unleashed by a rogue state, a terrorist group, or an international criminal organization. Conventional military force will continue to be crucial to curbing weapons of mass destruction. In the confrontation against Iraq, deployment of our Navy and Marine forces has played a key role in helping to convince Saddam Hussein to accept United Nations inspections of his weapons facilities.

But we must pursue the fight against biological weapons on many fronts. We must strengthen the international Biological Weapons Convention with a strong system of inspections to detect and prevent cheating. This is a major priority. It was part of my State of the Union Address earlier this year, and we are working with other nations and our industries to make it happen.

Because our troops serve on the front line of freedom, we must take special care to protect them. So we have been working on vaccinating them against biological threats, and now we will inoculate all our Armed Forces, active duty and reserves, against deadly anthrax bacteria.

Finally, we must do more to protect our civilian population from biological weapons. The Defense Department has been teaching State and local officials to respond if the weapons are brandished or used. Today it is announcing plans to train National Guard and reserve elements in every region to address this challenge. But

again, we must do more to protect our people. We must be able to recognize a biological attack quickly in order to stop its spread.

We will work to upgrade our public health systems for detection and warning, to aid our preparedness against terrorism, and to help us cope with infectious diseases that arise in nature. We will train and equip local authorities throughout the Nation to deal with an emergency involving weapons of mass destruction, creating stockpiles of medicines and vaccines to protect our civilian population against the kind of biological agents our adversaries are most likely to obtain or develop. And we will pursue research and development to create the next generation of vaccines, medicines, and diagnostic tools. The human genome project will be very, very important in this regard. And again, it will aid us also in fighting infectious diseases.

We must not cede the cutting edge of biotechnology to those who would do us harm. Working with the Congress, America must maintain its leadership in research and development. It is critical to our national security.

In our efforts to battle terrorism and cyberattacks and biological weapons, all of us must be extremely aggressive. But we must also be careful to uphold privacy rights and other constitutional protections. We do not ever undermine freedom in the name of freedom.

To the men and women of this Class of 1998, over 4 years you have become part of an institution, the Navy, that has repeatedly risen to the challenges of battle and of changing technology. In the Spanish-American War, 100 years ago, our Navy won the key confrontations at Manila Bay and off Cuba. In the years between the World Wars, the Navy made tremendous innovations with respect to aircraft carriers and amphibious operations. In the decisive battle in the Pacific in World War II at Midway, our communications experts and code breakers obtained and Admiral Nimitz seized on crucial information about the enemy fleet that secured victory against overwhelming odds.

In the cold war, nuclear propulsion revolutionized our carrier and submarine operations. And today, our Navy and Marine Corps are fundamental to our strategy of global engagement, aiding our friends and warning foes that they cannot undermine our efforts to build a just, peaceful, free future.

President Theodore Roosevelt put it succinctly a long time ago. "A good Navy," he said, "is the surest guaranty of peace." We will have that good Navy, because of you, your readiness, strength, your knowledge of science and technology, your ability to promptly find and use essential information, and above all, your strength of spirit and your core values, honor, courage, and commitment. I ask you to remember, though, that with these new challenges especially, we must all, as Americans, be united in purpose and spirit.

Our defense has always drawn on the best of our entire Nation. The Armed Forces have defended our freedom, and in turn, freedom has allowed our people to thrive. Our security innovations have often been sparked and supported over and over by the brilliance and drive of people in non-military sectors, our businesses and universities, our scientists and technologists. Now, more than ever, we need the broad support and participation of our citizens as your partners in meeting the security challenges of the 21st century.

Members of the Class of 1998, you are just moments away from becoming ensigns and second lieutenants, and I have not taken as much time as you did to climb the Monument. [*Laughter*] I thank you for giving me a few moments of your attention to talk to you and our Nation about the work you will be doing for them for the rest of your careers. You will be our guardians and champions of freedom.

Let me say just one thing in closing on a more personal note. We must protect our people from danger and keep America safe and free. But I hope you will never lose sight of why we are doing it. We are doing it so that all of your country men and women can live meaningful lives, according to their own rights. So work hard, but don't forget to pursue also what fulfills you as people, the beauty of the natural world, literature, the arts, sports, volunteer service. Most of all, don't forget to take time for your personal lives, to show your love to your friends and, most of all, to your families, the parents and grandparents who made the sacrifices to get you here, in the future, your wives, your husbands, and your children.

In a free society, the purpose of public service, in or out of uniform, is to provide all citizens with the freedom and opportunity to live their own dreams. So when you return from an exhausting deployment or just a terrible day, never forget to cherish your loved ones, and always be grateful that you have been given

the opportunity to serve, to protect for yourselves and for your loved ones and for your fellow Americans the precious things that make life worth living and freedom worth defending.

I know your families are very proud of you today. Now go, and make America proud.

Good luck, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. in the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Charles Larson, USN, Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Adm. Jay L. Johnson, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; Gen. Charles C. Krulak, USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps; Vice Adm. John R. Ryan, USN, incoming Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Beverly Byron, Chair, U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors; Gen Robert T. (Tom) Marsh, USAF, Chairman, President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on Transportation Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

May 22, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Today Congress will take an important step toward preserving and expanding our prosperity in the new century. I am pleased that Congress likely will answer my call to pass a historic bill to strengthen our transportation system and maintain our commitment to fiscal discipline and investing in our people. It is a bill that will help our communities to modernize and build the roads and bridges, the railways and buses that link people of our great and vast country together, that keep our economy strong and vibrant.

I have said I would strongly support legislation that meets my core principles: First, it must keep our budget balanced, must preserve the budget surplus until we have saved Social Security first; and then it must not undermine other national priorities, including education, health care, child care, and the environment.

The bill being considered by the Congress this afternoon meets those principles. The measure does spend more than we wanted, but I am pleased that we have persuaded Congress to cut $17 billion of excess spending from this bill. Therefore, we have reached, what I consider to be, a principled compromise. At the same time, the bill fulfills the transportation priorities I set forth in my balanced budget. It strengthens our commitments to encouraging mass transit, to protecting the environment, to expanding opportunities to disadvantaged businesses, to moving more Americans from welfare to work with transportation assistance.

But I am deeply disappointed by one thing that is missing from the bill. Congress has refused to lower the national drunk driving standard to .08 percent blood alcohol content. We must have zero tolerance for irresponsible and reckless acts that endanger our children and loved ones traveling on our roads. We must make .08 the law in every State, and I will continue to work until that happens.

Finally, let me say, this bill does show that fiscal responsibility and investing in our future go hand in hand toward preparing our people and our country for the next century. I want to thank Secretary Slater and Larry Stein, especially, and the members of my economic team for the hard work they did starting from a very difficult bargaining position to reduce the spending in this bill. If Congress does, in fact, pass the bill, as expected, I will be pleased to sign it into law.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, did the Pakistani Prime Minister give you any assurances that he will resist any nuclear test at this point, and did you offer him anything, including a request of Congress to release the F–16's?

The President. Well, as you know, I talked to him on Monday, and I told him I would call him back at the end of the week, and I did so. And we had a good, long conversation about where we go from here to deal with some of their security concerns and other concerns. I continued to urge him to refrain from testing, and I told him that I had done everything I could do to get other world leaders involved in both supporting him, if he would refrain from

testing, and encouraging the Indians not to further aggravate the situation with precipitous comments or action in Kashmir or elsewhere. And we talked about some other things, but until we have resolved our conversations, I don't think I should get into any more detail.

I am impressed with the depth of understanding that the Prime Minister showed and with his genuine concern that he both protect the security of his country and do nothing to upset the decades-long effort now the world has been making toward nonproliferation. And we'll keep working on it and hoping for a good result.

Q. Mr. President, do you feel more optimistic in this situation now? Is there any reason to believe that the Pakistanis will not test?

The President. I think that anything I say to characterize the Prime Minister's present position would only make it more difficult for him and for others. I think they're having an honest debate within their government. I believe they want to do the right thing by their people. But they want to do the right thing by this great issue that affects even more than India and Pakistan.

All I can tell you is I'm working hard on this. I have spent an enormous amount of time on it in the last several days and will continue to do so. And if there are definitive developments about—in this area, I will be happy to tell you. But today we had a very long conversation, and it was a good one, and I'll continue to work on it and expect to have more for you over the next few days.

School Shootings

Q. Mr. President, what will you do about these school shootings? Will you demand, perhaps, a Federal age limit? This child actually owned the rifle he used.

The President. Well, let me say I'm going to address that in my radio address tomorrow. And then, after that, I'll be available to answer more questions about it.

China's Satellite Launch Capability

Q. Mr. President, you've been criticized by Congress for giving the approval for a U.S. satellite to go up on a Chinese rocket. Documents released today, apparently by the Justice Department, indicate that you may have been told that giving that approval could harm a criminal investigation of Loral and Hughes Corporation. Given that knowledge—is that correct, and given that knowledge, was that the right thing to do?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the decision was the correct one. And I am glad that the documents, which have been turned over to the committee and apparently some have been released—I hope that at the appropriate time everybody will have access to the decision document. Let me back up and say that that decision, like every decision I make, was made based on what I thought was in the national interest and supportive of our national security.

About 10 years ago, it became obvious that our country had an interest in developing a globally competitive commercial satellite system and that we had more satellites that needed to get up in space than we had launchers to provide. So we needed to supplant satellite launches in America with satellite launch capacity in other countries, that included China but also Russia and Europe.

President Reagan adopted a policy then. President Bush continued the policy, and I continued the policy. There were about nine satellites launched in the 4 years of the Bush administration. I believe there have been about 11 launched under my administration under this policy .

This particular launch, the one in question, had to be recommended by the State Department. Then, after the State Department recommended it, it was concurred in that decision by the Defense Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The National Security Council here sought the views of the Justice Department because of the matter to which you alluded; they raised a question about it. The NSC evaluated their concerns along with the decision of the State Department that it ought to go forward with the concurrence of the Defense Department, which was fully aware of the matters, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and concluded that, on balance, we should go forward.

I got a decisionmaking memo to that effect, and I approved it. It was handled in the routine course of business. I believe the facts will show that. There was absolutely nothing done to transfer any technology inappropriately to the Chinese as a result of this decision. I believe it was in the national interest, and I can assure you it was handled in the routine course of business, consistent with the 10-year-old policy.

Secret Service Testimony

Q. Mr. Clinton, there's been a decision made that the Secret Service will not be allowed to use privilege in the case of the grand jury. Do you feel that by allowing Secret Service agents to testify that it would, in fact, harm future Presidents?

The President. Well, that's the Secret Service position. And President Bush agreed with them.

Q. Do you agree with them?

The President. And I think there's a serious possibility that that could occur, probably in a different sort of context. At least it will have a chilling effect on—perhaps on the conversations Presidents have and the work that they do and the way they do it. But it is true that there is no legal—there's no statute there.

But all these investigations have been carried out over the last 25 years in a climate of intense pro-investigation, and yet I don't think anyone ever thought about it because no one ever thought that anyone would ever abuse the responsibility the Secret Service has to the President, to the President's family. So there are some things that you ought not to have to make a law about, and I think that's basically where we are, that it never occurred to anybody that anyone would ever be so insensitive to the responsibilities of the Secret Service that this kind of legal question would arise.

What the law would be on appeal or whether the Secret Service will appeal, I don't know because I haven't been involved in it. I don't think it's appropriate for me to be involved in it. But I think—yes, I think it will raise some serious questions and present a whole new array of problems for managing the Presidency and for the Secret Service managing their responsibility. And because previous people have understood that and cared enough about it, I don't think that anybody has ever even considered doing this before. But we're living in a time which is without precedent, where actions are being taken without precedent, and we just have to live with consequences.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Stein, Assistant to the President and Director of Legislative Affairs; and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Agricultural Research Legislation

May 22, 1998

I am deeply disappointed that today the House did not approve the conference report on the agricultural research bill. This carefully crafted legislation balances a broad range of agricultural and nutrition concerns including: crop insurance, agriculture research, rural development, and food stamps for legal immigrants in need. It provides critical funding to ensure the viability of the crop insurance program as the basis of the farm income safety net; to improve food safety and the competitiveness of our farmers through better research; to restore needed food stamps to children, the elderly, and disabled, and refugees among our legal immigrants; and to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

I am grateful that the House today overwhelmingly defeated a rule that would have stripped the food stamp immigrant provisions from the bill and destroyed the delicate compromise in the conference report. Support across the country for these programs and this bill is wide and deep. Today's vote in the House and the Senate's overwhelming vote of 92–8 in passing the conference report is a reflection of the strong backing by farm groups, universities, church organizations, and advocates for the poor.

The House leadership today let down farmers, let down consumers, and let down the children, elderly, and disabled who need the food assistance contained in this bill. I urge the House of Representatives to complete its work and move expeditiously to pass the conference report without change, upon return from the Memorial Day recess.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on United States Citizens Missing in Cyprus
May 22, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with Public Law 103–372, I hereby submit the enclosed "Report to Congress on the Investigation of the Whereabouts of the U.S. Citizens Who Have Been Missing from Cyprus Since 1974." The report was prepared by retired Ambassador Robert S. Dillon, with significant contribution by former State Department Associate Director of Security Edward L. Lee, II. Their intensive investigation centered on Cyprus, but it followed up leads in the United States, Turkey, Greece, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The investigation led to the recovery of partial remains that were identified through DNA testing (done at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology DNA Identification Laboratory) and other evidence as being those of one of the missing Americans, Andreas Kassapis. The report concludes that Mr. Kassapis was killed shortly after his capture in August 1974. The report also concludes that, although their remains could not be recovered, the other four missing U.S. citizens in all likelihood did not survive the events in Cyprus in July and August 1974.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 22, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Czech Republic-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation
May 22, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Czech Republic on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on February 4, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including terrorism, other violent crimes, drug trafficking, money laundering, and other "white-collar" crime. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: locating or identifying persons or items; serving documents; taking testimony or statements of persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; executing requests for searches and seizures; immobilizing assets; assisting in proceedings related to forfeiture of assets, restitution, and criminal fines; and providing any other assistance consistent with the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 22, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

May 22, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, with Annexes, done at Caracas December 1, 1996, (the "Convention"), which was signed by the United States, subject to ratification, on December 13, 1996. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Convention.

All species of sea turtles found in the Western Hemisphere are threatened or endangered, some critically so. Because sea turtles migrate extensively, effective protection and conservation of these species requires cooperation among States within the sea turtles' migratory range. Although the international community has banned trade in sea turtles and sea turtle products pursuant to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention I am transmitting is the first multilateral agreement that actually sets standards to protect and conserve sea turtles and their habitats.

In section 609 of Public Law 101–162, the Congress called for the negotiation of multilateral agreements for the protection and conservation of sea turtles. In close cooperation with Mexico, the United States led a 3-year effort to negotiate the Convention with other Latin American and Caribbean nations. Once ratified and implemented, the Convention will enhance the conservation of this hemisphere's sea turtles and harmonize standards for their protection.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to its ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 22, 1998.

The President's Radio Address

May 23, 1998

Good morning. This weekend marks the time when we honor the brave men and women who gave their lives to serve our country and we thank the hundreds of thousands of Americans in uniform who protect and defend us every day all around the world. But this Memorial Day weekend, Americans are also praying for the people who lost their lives and for those who were wounded when a 15-year-old boy with semiautomatic weapons opened fire in Springfield, Oregon, this Thursday.

Like all Americans, I am deeply shocked and saddened by this tragedy, and my thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. Like all Americans, I am struggling to make sense of the senseless and to understand what could drive a teenager to commit such a terrible act. And like all Americans, I am profoundly troubled by the startling similarity of this crime to the other tragic incidents that have stunned America in less than a year's time: in Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Pearl, Mississippi; and Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

We must face up to the fact that these are more than isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a changing culture that desensitizes our children to violence; where most teenagers have seen hundreds or even thousands of murders on television, in movies, and in video games before they graduate from high school; where too many young people seem unable or unwilling to take responsibility for their actions; and where all too often, everyday conflicts are resolved not with words but with weapons, which, even when illegal to possess by children, are all too easy to get.

We cannot afford to ignore these conditions. Whether it's gang members taking their deadly

quarrels into our schools or inexplicable eruptions of violence in otherwise peaceful communities, when our children's safety is at stake we must take action, and each of us must do our part.

For more than 5 years, we have worked hard here in our administration to give parents and communities the tools they need to protect our children and to make our schools safe, from tighter security to more police to better prevention. To promote discipline and maintain order, we are encouraging and have worked hard to spread curfews, school uniforms, tough truancy policies. We instituted a zero tolerance for guns in schools policy. It is now the law in all our 50 States. And we'll work hard to make it a reality in all our communities to keep deadly weapons out of the hands of our children and out of our schools. And we will continue to demand responsibility from our young people with strong punishments when they break the law.

This year Congress has an opportunity to protect children in our schools and on our streets by passing my juvenile crime bill, which will ban violent juveniles from buying guns for life and take other important steps. We shouldn't let this chance pass us by.

But protecting our children and preventing youth violence is not a job that Government can or should do alone. We must all do more, as parents, as teachers, as community leaders, to teach our children the unblinking distinction between right and wrong, to teach them to turn away from violence, to shield them from violent images that warp their perceptions of the consequences of violence.

We must all do more to show our children, by the power of our own example, how to resolve conflicts peacefully. And we must all do more to recognize and look for the early warning signals that deeply troubled young people send before they explode into violence. Surely, more of them can be saved and more tragedies avoided if we work at it in an organized way with sensitivity and firm discipline.

This weekend we grieve with the families of Springfield, Oregon. We may never understand the dark forces that drive young people to commit such terrible crimes, but we must honor the memories of the victims by doing everything we possibly can to prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future and to build a stronger, safer future for all of our children.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:30 p.m. on May 22 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 23. In his remarks, the President referred to Kipland P. Kinkel, who was charged with the May 21 shooting at Thurston High School in Springfield, OR, in which 2 students were killed and 22 wounded.

Radio Remarks on the Passage of the Northern Ireland Peace Accord Referendum

May 23, 1998

Today we are rejoicing at the news from across the Atlantic. The people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have decisively approved the April 10th peace accord. It is the culmination of a springtime of peace, and it must be the beginning of a long season of happiness and prosperity.

I salute the leaders who stood for hope against fear, the future against the past, unity against division. Most of all, I congratulate the Irish people for having the courage and wisdom to vote for a brighter future for their children.

As of today, peace is no longer a dream, it is a reality. You have indeed joined hope to history. All over America, the eyes of Irish-Americans, and indeed all our peace-loving citizens, are smiling. We are very proud of you.

We pledge that we will work with you to build a better future for all of your people and ours.

NOTE: The President's remarks were prerecorded for later broadcast in Ireland. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Passage of the Northern Ireland Peace Accord Referendum

May 23, 1998

Today history truly joined with hope in Ireland as the people of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic cast their ballots decisively in favor of the April 10 peace accord and a new political arrangement for Northern Ireland. I join all Americans in congratulating the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland for seizing this unique opportunity for a lasting peace.

I pledge that my administration will work with Northern Ireland's leaders as they seek to transform the promise of the accord into a reality, with new democratic institutions and new economic opportunities for all of Northern Ireland's people. Working through the International Fund for Ireland and the private sector, we will help the people seize the opportunities that peace will bring to attract new investment to create new factories, workplaces, and jobs, and establish new centers of learning to prepare for the 21st century.

Today's vote is a beacon to peoples around the globe in places where strife prevails and peace seems remote. You have set an example for the world and established a strong foundation for a future of lasting peace.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia

May 25, 1998

Thank you. Secretary Slater, Secretary West, Deputy Secretary Gober, National Security Adviser Berger, Congressman Skelton, Secretary Dalton, General Shelton, General McCaffrey, Superintendent Metzler, Chaplain Cooper, the leaders of our veterans organizations, veterans, members of the Armed Forces, friends and families, my fellow Americans: I would like to begin this Memorial Day service in a somewhat unusual fashion but, I think, an entirely appropriate one.

Major General Foley, who just spoke, the Commander of the Military District of Washington, is about to move on to higher responsibilities. He is, I believe, now the only person still serving in uniform to have won the Medal of Honor, which he won for repeatedly risking his life for his comrades in Vietnam, and I thank him for his service. Thank you, sir; thank you, sir.

As spring turns to summer, Americans around the Nation take this day to enjoy friends and family. But we come again to Arlington to remember how much was given so that we could enjoy this day and every day in freedom. We come to this sacred ground out of gratitude and profound respect for those who are not here but who gave all so that we might be here.

Memorial Day began with our most deadly conflict, the Civil War. To this very day, the children of Gettysburg spread flowers over the graves of those who fell there. But the debt began to run up, of course, much earlier, for our Nation emerged from a war to establish a truly revolutionary new society which enshrined life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as the birthright of all Americans and dedicated our Nation to the permanent mission of forming a more perfect Union. To preserve and advance those birthrights and that mission, our Founders pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor. Those we honor today paid the ultimate price to redeem that pledge.

From the American Revolution onward, from Concord to Khe Sanh to Kuwait, America's men and women have stood up for their country. Often we have erected monuments to them. Happily, the most recent one is the Women in Military Service for America Memorial dedicated here at Arlington last October to the 1.8 million women who have served our Nation, and we thank them.

Thanks to these heroes, our Nation, in over 220 years, has grown into something truly extraordinary. We have so much to be grateful for today: peace, prosperity, the spreading power

of our original ideas. For the first time in history, a majority of the people on this Earth live under governments of their own choosing. In 1,000 different languages, people are saying yes to democracy and to a new era of international cooperation. Around the world, people are struggling to overcome ancient animosities by embracing the idea that if we are all equal in God's eyes, then what we have in common surely must be more important than our differences of politics, race, or religion.

Today we are especially grateful for the overwhelming vote for peace in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic to which so many of us trace our roots.

As we look toward the future, Memorial Day also invites us to remember the past and apply its lessons. Let me recall just two events from 50 years ago, at the time when democracy was imperiled by the dawn of the cold war. I was recently in Berlin, where we commemorated the airlift that supplied 2½ million people for 11 harrowing months between 1948 and 1949. Those were difficult days for freedom, but America never soared higher. I would like to salute especially today the men and women who participated in that remarkable humanitarian effort, a reminder that the will for freedom can always find a way.

And 50 years ago our Armed Forces helped to promote greater democracy at home, too. For it was in the summer of 1948 that President Truman ordered the integration of America's Armed Forces because he felt strongly that all those willing to risk their lives for our country should enjoy the full rights of citizenship. Today, United States troops set a shining example of how well different people can work together as one.

As we ask other nations to resolve their differences and as we continue to work on the business of resolving ours, we are strengthened by the powerful message of hope that comes from our own military, so strong in its diversity, giving everyone a chance, holding everyone to high standards, meeting every challenge with flying colors, a model for the world.

When you walk out of here today and look once again at all the gravestones, imagine that the story of all we have become as a nation is written in these hills, each headstone a page of our history. George Washington is a part of the history of this hallowed ground. There are graves here from the Revolution and every conflict since.

On these stones are engraved the names of the most famous Americans and those who are familiar only to their families and loved ones. On each tablet is a name, a date of birth, a date of death, the name of a State, a religious symbol, perhaps a few details about rank and service—simple facts on simple stones, each standing for a person who believed the idea of America was worth fighting for. And all the stones standing together are the enduring monument to our greatness and eternal promise, including the stones which have no names.

Eleven days ago a Vietnam veteran was removed from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was the right course of action, because science has given us a chance to restore his name and bring comfort to his family, and we had to seize it. But whatever happens, we must always remember that that stone represents the many unknown soldiers still in Vietnam and Korea, in other theaters where Americans lie far away from home, missing in action, still with us in spirit. They may be unaccounted for, but we must all be accountable for their memories as well.

We take comfort in something Chaplain Leo Joseph O'Keeffe reminded us of at the ceremony on May 14th, that if some names are unknown to us on Earth, all names are known to God in heaven. I ask Americans to join me in a moment of remembrance at 3 o'clock today, eastern daylight time, to honor the known and the unknown who gave their all for our Nation.

And ladies and gentlemen, during that moment we can give special thanks on this Memorial Day. Last December we negotiated an agreement with North Korea that entitled us to send five teams to their country to search for Americans. Early this morning at 2 o'clock, the remains of two soldiers believed to be Americans were repatriated to the UN Command Honor Guard at Panmunjom on the DMZ. They are coming home this Memorial Day.

I thank all the veterans here today from all the wars of the 20th century for giving all of us the chance to be here with you. I think of the children here today who will spend most of their lives in the next century. The youngest among them will not even remember the 20th century. It is possible, with medical advances, that they may glimpse the 22d century.

For them, we must do our duty to enhance freedom and opportunity at home, to strengthen the bonds of our own Union as we grow more diverse, to advance the causes of democracy and human rights, prosperity, and peace, around the world. We must strengthen our own freedom by maintaining America's role in leading the world. That is the central lesson of the 20th century: We abdicate responsibility at our peril. To do so now would be to renounce the sacrifice of 10 generations of Americans.

Yet often today, we hear voices urging us to abandon our obligations to the multinational organizations we did so much to create or to the causes of peace we are winning in cooperation with our allies, as in Bosnia. Too often we hear calls for actions in our foreign policy which would isolate us from our allies without achieving our objectives.

As the world grows smaller and smaller for the children here and we become more and more interconnected with our neighbors in every way, we must strengthen the ties that bind free people, work with those who share our values and really want to share our burden. Of course, we must always be prepared to act alone when our values and our interests demand it. But whenever we can, we ought to work with our friends to make a better world together.

We can make the 21st century a century of peace. We can write a new chapter of unprecedented possibility and prosperity in our Nation's history. In so doing, we can extend the glory of the patriots who lie here, missing from our lives but eternally present in our memories. My fellow Americans, on this Memorial Day, let us commit ourselves to a future worthy of their sacrifice.

Thank you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to John C. Metzler, Jr., superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery; and Capt. George D. Cooper, USN, chaplain, Naval District Washington.

Remarks on the Federal Budget and an Exchange With Reporters

May 26, 1998

The President. Thank you, Jack. And let me thank the other members of the economic team.

This is of course very good news for the American people, as the chart shows. Now it's official that this year, well ahead of the most ambitious schedule, America has balanced the budget. In fact, as the chart shows, the achievement of the American people will not stop there; OMB predicts that the budget surplus will be $39 billion this year, the largest dollar surplus in our history, the largest surplus as a share of the economy in more than 40 years. America can now turn off the deficit clock and plug in the surplus clock.

Given the speed with which our Nation has reached this remarkable milestone, it is perhaps all too easy to forget how hard it was and how far we've come. Just 6 years ago, because of the drag of deficits, our people were running in place; our Nation was falling behind. Interest rates were high, and so was unemployment. On the day I took office, the deficit was projected this year to be $350 billion.

How did this greatest projected deficit in history turn into the greatest projected surplus? The old-fashioned way: We earned it. Our Nation earned it as a result of hard work by the American people. And as the Vice President said, we earned it here in Washington with the help of two visionary actions in Congress: first, the courageous vote by the Democrats in 1993 in the midst of withering, extreme criticism that led to a cut in the deficit of 90 percent; and then the truly historic bipartisan balanced budget agreement passed by Congress last year that finished the job.

I think it would also be wrong if I didn't mention, as Mr. Lew did, that the reinventing government efforts headed by the Vice President played a major role. We not only have the smallest Government since the Kennedy administration, with more than 300,000 fewer people, we also have savings in excess of $130 billion during the budget period as a result of those efforts. And Mr. Vice President, I am very grateful for what you have done.

Now that we're about to have the first surplus since Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon, we face a crucial decision about what to do with it. We can use these good times to honor those who've put in a lifetime of work and prepare for the future retirement of the baby boomers by saving the Social Security system for generations to come, or we can give into the temptation in this election year to squander our surpluses the moment they start coming in.

I think the choice is clear. We got to where we are today—with 4.3 percent unemployment, more than 15 million new jobs, the lowest inflation in over 30 years, low interest rates, high growth, the highest homeownership in history—by doing what was right for the American economy over the long run. That is what we should do now. Social Security has been a cornerstone of our society for the last six decades, but the present system is not sustainable as we look forward to the full retirement of the baby boom generation. We have to protect it for the 21st century.

I was deeply heartened after I spoke about this at the State of the Union, that there were broad public statements of support from the leaders of both parties in both Houses in Congress about saving Social Security first. However, in recent weeks, senior Republican leaders in the House of Representatives seem to have retreated from that pledge. In this election year, some now want to raid the surplus for initiatives instead of preserving every penny of the surplus until we strengthen Social Security.

We cannot ignore the long-term challenge, which we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to meet now, in favor of short-term schemes that, however popular in the moment, could compromise our future.

Let me be clear: I will oppose any budget that fails to set aside the surpluses until we have strengthened Social Security for the 21st century. Let me also be clear: That does not mean that in the future there could never be a tax cut. It simply means that we need to know how we're going to pay for the challenges of reforming Social Security. Once we know that—and we should know that sometime next—I would hope early next year because of the work being done this year—then we can have a debate about what ought to be done if there are funds that still are unaccounted for and unobligated.

Today, our economy is the envy of the world. But the progress was not predestined nor is its future guaranteed. We cannot abandon the strategy of fiscal discipline and investments in the future which has brought us to this moment.

Instead, we should work together across party lines to maintain fiscal responsibility, to save Social Security first, to prepare for an even brighter future. Again, let me thank the members of the economic team, those who are here and those who preceded them, for their work in this remarkable effort and every Member of Congress whose votes have contributed to it.

Thank you very much.

Year 2000 Computer Bug

Q. Mr. President, over the weekend, those same Republican leaders—I defer to Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service].

Q. [*Inaudible*]—overcome the disruption which we face with the computers as millennium starts April 1st, 1999. That will disrupt all——

The President. Well, let me say that we're very concerned about that, Sarah, and I asked John Koskinen, formerly a deputy at OMB and before that a man who had a very distinguished career in the private sector, to come back into public service to supervise and coordinate our efforts to deal with the computer 2000 problem.

It's not something that grabs the headlines every day, but it is in fact a profound challenge, not only for the United States but for every country—which is every country now—that has extensive reliance on computers. And there are a lot of very complex questions. There are computer hookups where people at both ends have computers that can be programmed to move easily to 2000, but there's something in the connection in between which won't. So this is a very complicated problem.

Interestingly enough, we discussed it in some detail at the G–8 meeting in England recently, and I can tell you that we are working very hard on it. We're working very hard, first of all, to monitor the progress of every Government agency to see that they're ready, and some are doing better than others because some have more profound challenges than others. And secondly, we want to do what we can to be supportive of the private sector in the United States and their efforts to make these adjustments. But it is a very big problem.

And I would urge—since you've asked the question, I would urge everyone in America who hears this exchange to make sure that they have done everything they can do within their own business sectors to be ready for this.

And we also agreed, by the way, when I was in England, to work with other countries so that we can help share information and do everything we can do make sure that when the new millennium starts, it's happy event and not a cyberspace headache.

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, over the weekend Republican leaders called on you to postpone your trip to China, or at the very least, not have a welcoming ceremony in Tiananmen Square. What will you do, sir?

The President. I think it would be a mistake to postpone the trip to China. Our partnership with China has succeeded in persuading the Chinese not to transfer missile technology and other dangerous materials to nations that we believe should not have them. We have seen some advances on the human and political rights fronts recently. We have worked closely with them in North Korea. Today, we are working with them to try to diffuse the tension and prevent a new nuclear race in South Asia.

So I think we have a broad range of issues to deal with, and I think we have enough evidence now to justify the partnership that we've had. So I believe we ought to go forward.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jacob J. Lew, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget.

Memorandum on Improving Financial Management

May 26, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Actions to Further Improve Financial Management

My Administration has made a significant commitment to achieving the highest standards of financial management and accountability for the American people. Since the enactment of the Government Management Reform Act of 1994, the Federal Government has made substantial progress toward achieving our goals of fiscal discipline and reporting reliably to the American people on the Government's operations and fiscal condition.

An important step in this direction has been the efforts of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board to develop accounting standards for the Federal Government. This effort was consistent with the recommendations of the National Performance Review led by Vice President Gore. These standards formed the basis for the first ever government-wide financial statement of the Federal Government, issued on time on March 31, 1998.

While our financial management program has resulted in significant improvements, there are several areas in which agencies must focus additional attention. Financial auditors reported accounting system weaknesses and problems with fundamental accounting practices across the Federal Government. These specifically include practices related to the Government's property, Federal credit programs, liabilities related to the disposal of hazardous waste and remediation of environmental contamination, Federal Government employment-related benefits liabilities, and transactions between Federal entities. My FY 1999 budget request to the Congress outlined my commitment to addressing these problems and obtaining an "unqualified audit opinion"—the highest opinion available from auditors—on the Government's financial statements for FY 1999.

To achieve these goals, I am now directing the additional steps set forth below:

1. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) shall identify agencies subject to reporting under this memorandum and monitor agency progress towards the goal of obtaining an unqualified audit opinion on the FY 1999 consolidated Federal Government financial statements.

2. The head of each agency identified by the OMB shall submit to the OMB a plan, including milestones, for resolving by September 30, 1999, financial reporting deficiencies identified by the auditors. The initial agency plan is due to the OMB by July 31, 1998.

3. The head of each agency submitting a plan shall provide quarterly reports to the OMB, starting on September 30, 1998, describing progress in meeting the milestones in their action plan. The head of each affected agency shall report to the OMB any impediments that would impact the government-wide goal.

4. The OMB shall provide periodic reports to the Vice President on the agency submissions and government-wide actions taken to obtain an unqualified audit opinion of the Government's FY 1999 financial statements.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
May 26, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period February 1, 1998, to March 31, 1998. The previous submission covered events during December 1997 to January 1998.

U.S. efforts on the Cyprus issue intensified following the February 15 completion of the Cypriot Presidential elections. In my letter of congratulations to President Clerides on his reelection, I reiterated U.S. support for the U.N. process to achieve a settlement based on a bizonal, bicommunal federation and expressed the hope that both parties would bring new ideas and creativity to the table. A parallel message was sent to Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash. Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas J. Miller visited the region March 7–13 to consult with the leaders of both Cypriot communities, as well as Turkish and Greek officials, on how best to address the core issues of the dispute. The Greek Cypriot decision to purchase S–300 antiaircraft missiles and the Turkish Cypriot suspension of bicommunal contacts continued to be of concern.

It is also important to note that U.S. investigators recovered remains from northern Cyprus that were identified as those of Andrew Kassapis, a Cypriot-American who disappeared during the 1974 conflict. Under separate cover, as required by law, I have transmitted a full accounting of the investigation conducted by the U.S. Government on the fate of Mr. Kassapis and four other U.S. citizens missing from Cyprus. I hope that this report will serve as a catalyst for progress on other cases of Greek and Turkish Cypriot persons missing as a result of intercommunal violence.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Burma
May 26, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Burma that I declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, pursuant to section 570 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997, Public Law 104–208 (the "Act") and

the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of IEEPA, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047.

On May 20, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13047 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 28301, May 22, 1997), effective on May 21, 1997, to declare a national emergency with respect to Burma and to prohibit new investment in Burma by United States persons, except to the extent provided in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued in conformity with section 570 of the Act. I renewed this order on May 19, 1998. The order also prohibits any approval or other facilitation by a United States person, wherever located, of a transaction by a foreign person where the transaction would constitute new investment in Burma prohibited by the order if engaged in by a United States person or within the United States. This action was taken in response to the large-scale repression of the democratic opposition by the Government of Burma since September 30, 1996. A copy of the order was transmitted to the Congress on May 20, 1997.

By its terms, Executive Order 13047 does not prohibit the entry into, performance of, or financing of a contract to sell or purchase goods, services, or technology, except: (1) where the entry into such contract on or after May 21, 1997, is for the general supervision and guarantee of another person's performance of a contract for the economic development of resources located in Burma; or (2) where such contract provides for payment, in whole or in part, in (i) shares of ownership, including an equity interest, in the economic development of resources located in Burma; or (ii) participation in royalties, earnings, or profits in the economic development of resources located in Burma.

On May 21, 1998, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued the Burmese Sanctions Regulations (the "BSR" or the "Regulations"), 31 C.F.R. Part 537, to implement the prohibitions of Executive Order 13047. The Regulations apply to United States persons, defined to include U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens wherever they are located, entities organized under U.S. law (including their foreign branches), and entities and individuals actually located in the United States. The sanctions do not apply directly to foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms, although foreign firms' activities may be affected by the restriction on United States persons' facilitation of a foreign person's investment transactions in Burma.

The term "new investment" means any of the following activities, if such activity is undertaken pursuant to an agreement, or pursuant to the exercise of rights under such an agreement, that is entered into with the Government of Burma, or a nongovernmental entity in Burma, on or after May 21, 1997: (a) The entry into a contract that includes the economic development of resources located in Burma; (b) the entry into a contract providing for the general supervision and guarantee of another person's performance of a contract that includes the economic development of resources located in Burma; (c) the purchase of a share of ownership, including an equity interest, in the economic development of resources located in Burma; or (d) the entry into a contract providing for the participation in royalties, earnings, or profits in the economic development of resources located in Burma, without regard to the form of participation.

Since the issuance of Executive Order 13047 on May 20, 1997, OFAC, acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury, has implemented sanctions against Burma as imposed by the order. OFAC has issued several determinations with respect to transactions provided for by agreements and/or rights pursuant to contracts entered into by United States persons prior to May 21, 1997. One license was necessary to authorize a United States person's disinvestment in Burma, since this transaction facilitated a foreign person's investment in Burma.

On May 21, 1997, OFAC disseminated details of this program to the financial, securities, and international trade communities by both electronic and conventional media. This included posting notices on the Internet, on ten computer bulletin boards, and two fax-on-demand services, and providing the material to the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon for distribution to U.S. companies operating in Burma.

In addition, in early July, OFAC sent notification letters to approximately 50 U.S. firms with operations in or ties to Burma informing them of the restrictions on new investment. The letters included copies of Executive Order 13047,

provided clarification of several technical issues, and urged firms to contact OFAC if they had specific questions on the application of the Executive order to their particular circumstances.

The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from November 20, 1997, through May 19, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Burma are estimated at approximately $370,000, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), and the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and the Office of the Legal Adviser).

The situation reviewed above continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Burma contained in Executive Order 13047 in response to the large-scale repression of the democratic opposition by the Government of Burma since September 30, 1996, reflected the belief that it is in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States to seek an end to abuses of human rights in Burma, to support efforts to achieve democratic reform that would promote regional peace and stability, and to urge effective counter-narcotics policies.

In the past 6 months, the State Law and Order Restoration Council, recently renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), has shown no sign of willingness to cede its hold on absolute power. Since refusing to recognize the results of the free and fair 1990 elections in which the National League for Democracy won a vast majority of both the popular vote and the parliamentary seats, the ruling junta has continued to refuse to negotiate with pro-democracy forces and ethnic groups for a genuine political settlement to allow a return to the rule of law and respect for basic human rights. Burma has taken limited but insufficient steps to counter narcotics production and trafficking.

The net effect of U.S. and international measures to pressure the SPDC to end its repression and move toward democratic government has been a further decline in investor confidence in Burma and deeper stagnation of the Burmese economy. Observers agree that the Burmese economy appears to be further weakening and that the government has a serious shortage of foreign exchange reserves with which to pay for imports. While Burma's economic crisis is largely a result of the SPDC's own heavy-handed mismanagement, the SPDC is unlikely to find a way out of the crisis unless political developments permit an easing of international pressure. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks to the Welfare to Work Partnership Board

May 27, 1998

Thank you very much. Secretary Herman, Secretary Shalala, Administrator Alvarez, Director Lachance, thank you. Let me begin by thanking all of you for coming. I thank especially three Members of the House of Representatives who are here, Congressmen Payne, Gordon, and Davis, who are up here on the front row. I can't thank Eli Segal enough for the wonderful work he has done. He has now given birth to two of the most important initiatives of this administration: first, our national service corps project, AmeriCorps, which now has about 100,000 alumni to its credit who have earned money for college by serving in their communities; and now the Welfare to Work Partnership.

I want to thank Gerry Greenwald for being willing to take on the leadership of this operation when no one could have known that it would turn out as well as it has. I thank the members of the board of directors and the other business supporters who are here. I thank the former welfare recipients and others who have supported them who are here.

I want to say a word about Rhonda, but first I want to tell you that Tonya Oden, who is over here sitting to my left, spoke on a program like this at the Cessna Corporation in Wichita, Kansas. And she did a great job, and all of her folks were cheering for her. And I was listening to Rhonda, thinking, the best part of this program is over—after she finished, I thought, the best part of this program is over. [*Laughter*]

When you hear someone like Rhonda talk, you look at the people who are here and see these fine children, this is really a case where a picture is worth a million words. We will see a lot more of Rhonda pretty soon because the Welfare to Work Partnership is airing some new national public service announcements with her as the spokesperson. And I want to thank Time Warner for helping us to put them on the air and say that I am quite confident that she will inspire a lot of other people to follow her lead.

The Welfare to Work Partnership was based on the simple premise that now that we have passed the welfare reform law which required all able-bodied people who could work to work, we had a moral obligation as a society to provide a job to all those people who were about to lose their guaranteed benefits for idleness. It began with an understanding that we had to change the welfare system. And the conversation Rhonda related between herself and her daughter says more than I could ever say.

I began working on this problem almost 20 years ago now. And I used to—when I was a Governor, I used to gather up former welfare recipients and put them on panels and make Governors listen to people talk about the difference in their lives as parents, as citizens, the difference in their self-image when they were productive members of society.

After I became President, we worked with 43 different States to get them out from under Federal rule so they could start programs that would help move more people from welfare to work. And then in 1996 I signed a historic bipartisan welfare reform law that literally ended the old welfare system as we knew it. It said that we would continue to guarantee health care and nutrition to low-income families and children, but that after a certain amount of time, people who could go to work had to go to work. It also said that we had to provide more in the way of child care and other supports for people who did move from welfare to work.

But that left a big gap. How were all these people going to find jobs? Would the existing system do it? That's what led to the creation of the Welfare to Work Partnership a year ago. And again let me say, I am profoundly indebted to the business people who are here and those who they represent.

We announced a year ago 100 companies had joined the partnership. We set a goal of reaching 1,000 companies within a year. We underestimated by a factor of 5; there are now more than 5,000 companies in this partnership. And what Eli and Gerry didn't say that I want to make clear is, they didn't just put their name on the dotted line. All sorts of businesses, large and small and middle-size, have together in the last year hired 135,000 welfare recipients who are now employees thanks to what they have done. That's an astonishing record in only a year, and I thank them for it.

Let me point out to the skeptics, 70 percent—70 percent—of that 135,000 jobs are full-time jobs with full health benefits. [*Applause*] Yeah, that's really worth clapping for.

Now, as Gerry pointed out and as many of the members of the board of directors told me earlier, right before we came over here, this is not just good for America and not just good for these families; it's also turned out to be good for the businesses involved, many of whom find that these new workers stay on the job longer, with less turnover, and later work to motivate their coworkers.

We've tried to do our part. Aida Alvarez and the Small Business Administration are trying to connect new workers to small businesses to make sure that our most vibrant, growing sector of the society, in terms of employees, takes on a fair share of people from welfare to work. We've tried to mobilize religious and civic and nonprofit groups under the Vice President's leadership to provide mentoring and support and help people get into and stay in jobs. The Federal Government has hired 4,800 people from welfare to work in the last year; our goal is 10,000 by the year 2000, and we will make

that. Seven work in the Executive Office of the President, and I'm particularly proud of them. The balanced budget agreement I signed into law last summer provides $3 billion to help our communities move long-term, harder-to-place welfare recipients into jobs.

Now, these combined efforts have produced, along with the rising economy, rather stunning results. When I took office, there were more than 14 million people on welfare, about 5½ percent of the Nation's population. It actually peaked in February of '94; it's the highest percentage we'd ever had. Today, there are fewer than 9 million people on welfare, 3.3 percent of the population, the lowest percentage of the population on welfare since 1969.

Now, this is a very hard-won victory for everybody who was a part of it. But the most important part of it are the families. I think when we look at Rhonda, when we look at Tonya, when we look at Rhonda's kids there, when we look at all of the other people who have moved from welfare to work who are here, we have to ask ourselves, what else do we have to do? Because I can promise you that there still are going to be people who can be moved from welfare to work who aren't there yet.

First, we have to find more private sector jobs. I would like to ask the Welfare to Work Partnership in 1998 to double the number of people they hire and to double the number of companies that are participating. Now, that sounds outrageous, but I just asked for 1,000 companies and you produced 5,000, so—[*laughter*]—mathematically I'm asking for less. [*Laughter*] I got good grades in math; I know about that. [*Laughter*]

And again, I hope that the people who will watch the public service announcements that Rhonda will do will understand this is an enormous opportunity. One of the things that our economists sit around and worry about here in Washington all the time is, they say, "Well, we've got 4.3 unemployment; we've averaged way over 3 percent growth the last couple of years; how can we keep growing this economy without having inflation?" The answer is, go into the neighborhoods where there are still a lot of poor people who are unemployed and on public assistance and give them a chance to be a part of the American free enterprise system. That's an inflation-free way to expand the American economy. So we have to do this.

The second thing we have to do is to help more welfare recipients succeed in the workplace. The employers today told me that one of the hardest things for people moving from welfare to work is still providing transportation, providing child care, making sure for the smaller businesses that may not be able to afford all the training and education that there's support there. We have to do more.

Let me say that the highway bill, which just passed the Congress, I'm proud to say, has a substantial amount of money in it to help defray the transportation costs of people moving from welfare to work. The tobacco bill, which has not yet passed but which I hope and pray will pass, has in it or will have in it a provision, if the agreement we've made with the Governors prevails, which will lead to a substantial investment in helping to defray the child care costs. The Labor Department has awarded grants to support 49 innovative efforts around the country that provide training and education that help people move from entry-level jobs to higher paying positions, that help fathers go to work so they can take more responsibility for their children. So we have to do more, and we're going to.

Now, finally, I think we've got an obligation to continue to fix—we've already made a good start—but to continue to fix parts of the welfare reform bill that didn't have anything to do with welfare reform. Last year Congress acted—and I appreciate it—to restore important disability and health benefits to legal immigrants, people who come here legally and have a right to work and have, in my view, a right to supports.

Two weeks ago the Senate voted overwhelmingly to restore food stamps to elderly, disabled, and very young legal immigrants. And I hope the House will follow their lead. That's the right thing to do. At this moment of prosperity, when we're trying to support each other, move more people into the workplace, when a lot of immigrants are filling needed work positions and we have low unemployment, we owe it to ourselves to do the right thing here.

Now again, let me say that the best part of this program was before I ever got up here. And I want you to remember when you walk out of here what Rhonda looked like when she got up here and what her kids looked like when they stood up, being proud of their mother, and how Gerry's happier doing this than he would have been if he'd won that $100 million

lottery. [*Laughter*] He may not know that, but he is. [*Laughter*] And I want us to go out and double our results by next year.

We've got to prove that we did the right thing in welfare reform for all the American people that are willing to do the right thing by themselves, their children, and our country. And if we ever needed evidence that it is right, we've got it here today in full.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Office of Personnel Management Director Janice R. Lachance; Representative Danny K. Davis; Eli Segal, president and chief executive officer, and United Airlines executive Gerald Greenwald, chairman, Welfare to Work Partnership; former welfare recipients Rhonda Costa and Tonya Oden; and Ms. Costa's daughters, Lakiyah and Lashana.

Remarks at the Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies Dinner
May 27, 1998

Thank you, Ann; thank you, Jo Carole Lauder. Thank you very much, Robin Duke, for your remarkable work, and your partner John Whitehead out there. I thank our good friend Lee Annenberg and Walter and the people from the Packard Foundation, the Sara Lee Corporation, and the others who have contributed to the FAPE Gift to the Nation program.

I'd like to thank all the Members of Congress who are here and to say to Chuck, there still is, albeit smaller, a deep level of bipartisan support for the arts. And to the extent that it still exists, those who are part of it should be given even more credit because it's harder for them today. And I thank the Republicans and the Democrats who are here tonight for their support of the arts and our country's future.

I had the enormous privilege of giving Roy Lichtenstein the National Medal of the Arts a couple of years ago. He was especially treasured by us here in the White House for many reasons that Dorothy knows, but I want to thank you, Dorothy, for giving this wonderful gift. And I want to thank you, Chuck, for giving this wonderful gift and making Roy be here in a way tonight. I'm particularly grateful.

I understand that when Chuck paints and he's feeling especially good about his work, he does it to the music of Aretha Franklin, which brings him into my ambit of the arts. [*Laughter*] And judging by the energy of your work, I may issue an Executive order instructing all agencies to play Aretha Franklin from 9 to 5 every day from here on out. [*Laughter*]

I want to also thank all of you who are here who are in the diplomatic corps, who both benefit our country and are benefited by the generosity of those who place the arts in our Embassies. I have been literally exhilarated and stunned with surprise from time to time as I've gone into our Embassies all around the world and seen the result of your efforts. And it is altogether fitting that the world's oldest democracy should have a program like this.

In 1935 President Roosevelt said "the conditions for democracy and art are one. The arts cannot thrive except when men are free to be themselves and to be in charge of the discipline of their own energies and ardors." Our freedom and our diversity has stimulated some of the most remarkable art in the world, and FAPE and the Arts in Embassies program are sustaining that art and brightening its exposure to people all around the globe.

Tonight a young man whom I met in a different context came up to me tonight and showed me the card he got to certify that he was eligible to vote in the Irish election last week. And I think even those of you who aren't Irish felt a certain absolute exhilaration when the Irish people, both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, voted for peace, and when the Protestants as well as the Catholics voted for peace.

And I think that we felt it not only because it was a good thing in itself but because we are so animated and often frustrated by seeing conflict after conflict after conflict after conflict in this allegedly blissful post-cold-war era, where people are fighting each other over ancient differences. And yet when you think about it, when you strip the external veneer that being in the

Communist or the anti-Communist world provided all of us a sort of comfortable identity, each individual and each group of people and each nation then are confronted with what is a very elemental human question: How can you recognize that you're different from other people without thinking that you're better than they are and that there is something wrong with them and that therefore you have to do something to them in order to really count for something yourself? Or is there another way in which you can recognize your differences, be proud of what is unique to you and to your tribe or your clan, and still believe that underneath you're connected by something that's even more important than what is different?

I submit to you that that dilemma is being played out in some of the great epic battles around the globe today and in some of the more pedestrian and, for me, occasionally frustrating battles in this city today. And that in this context, when we look ahead to the 21st century—when Hillary convinced me we should start this millennium project, she said we would name it "Honoring the past, and imagining the future." And I submit to you that it happens to be that we're on the verge of a new millennium, but because of all that's happened in the last few years, there is upon this country and upon all of us and, indeed, thoughtful people throughout the world, an enormous obligation to imagine the future in a way that honors our past but does not chain us to its darkest moments.

So what kind of future are we going to create? How would we go about honoring the past? How will we meet the challenges of the future? What real gifts will we give to our children and our grandchildren? Our artists will have to help us find those answers. And every time someone walks into an American Embassy anywhere in the world, I want them to see that in America we are many people—we are many religions; we are many races; we are many backgrounds; we fight like cats and dogs—but we believe in the common values of freedom, and ultimately we believe that what unites us is far more important than what divides us, and it finds expression in the creative genius of the art they will see on the walls of our Embassies. That is what I hope.

And if somehow we can permeate the world with the sense of possibility that was so manifest in that Irish election, then all over the world we'll be giving people with and without the brilliance of artistic gifts a chance to live as God meant them to live. That is your ultimate gift, and I'm very grateful to you.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:45 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ann Gund, president, and Jo Carole Lauder, chair, Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies (FAPE); Robin Chandler Duke and John Whitehead, cochairs, FAPE Millennium Project; Leonore Annenberg, chair emeritus, FAPE, and her husband, Walter, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom; Dorothy Lichtenstein, whose gift of an original painting, "Reflections on Senorita 1990," by her late husband, artist Roy Lichtenstein, was unveiled at the dinner; and contemporary artist Chuck Close, whose lino cut entitled "Roy" was also unveiled at the dinner.

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights

May 28, 1998

Not much left for me to say, is there? [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first of all, how much I appreciate the work that Secretary Shalala and Secretary Herman have done on our quality health care commission. Dr. Benjamin, thank you for your life's work and for your leadership. Mr. Vice President, thank you for everything you've done in the last 5½ years on health care. And thank you, Ricka, for reminding us of what this is really all about. I have a number of things I would like to say about this that I hope will not be repetitive.

Detonation of a Nuclear Device by Pakistan

But because of the explosion of the nuclear tests this morning by the Government of Pakistan, I'd like to make a brief statement about

that first, since this is my only opportunity to communicate with the media and the American people on that issue.

First, I deplore the decision. By failing to exercise restraint and responding to the Indian test, Pakistan lost a truly priceless opportunity to strengthen its own security, to improve its political standing in the eyes of the world. And although Pakistan was not the first to test, two wrongs don't make a right. I have made it clear to the leaders of Pakistan that we have no choice but to impose sanctions pursuant to the Glenn amendment as is required by law. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now I want to say again, it is now more urgent than it was yesterday that both Pakistan and India renounce further tests, sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and take decisive steps to reduce tensions in South Asia and reverse the dangerous arms race.

I cannot believe that we are about to start the 21st century by having the Indian subcontinent repeat the worst mistakes of the 20th century, when we know it is not necessary to peace, to security, to prosperity, to national greatness or personal fulfillment. And I hope that the determined efforts of the United States and our allies will be successful in helping the parties who must themselves decide how to define their future to defuse tensions and avoid further errors.

Patients' Bill of Rights

Now, if I might, I'd like to say just a few words about what we have been talking about here. And we have seen the human face of this issue in Ricka's story and in Dr. Benjamin's testimony. If you just back a step away, if you think about all the exciting things that are happening and how the world is changing, how technology and globalization and scientific advances are changing the way we work and live and relate to each other, it is clear that we are living in a moment of really pivotal change in human society.

At every such moment, the trick is to take advantage of the changes that are positive and not be consumed by their negative aspects or, to put it in another way, to meet the challenges of the future without giving up but, instead, enhancing the most enduring values of the society.

Now, that's what we've been trying to do throughout the last 6 years on a whole lot of issues. Yes, we balanced the budget, and earlier than anybody thought we could, but we continued to invest in education and health care and the environment and research. Yes, I want to have this surplus, but I don't want to spend a penny of it, even for things that I would like, until I know that we have secured the Social Security system for the 21st century so that when the baby boomers like me retire we don't bankrupt our kids and keep them from raising our grandkids properly.

So you don't do the easy thing in the moment; you show a little restraint and think about the long-term interest of the country. You take advantage of the change of a healthier economy and a balanced budget and the surplus, but you don't just do what is right at hand. You think about the long term.

Now, yesterday we celebrated the year anniversary of our Welfare to Work Partnership—that's all these companies that help us to hire people from welfare. So yes, we said the welfare system wasn't working and people who are able-bodied ought to have to go to work, but by the way, they shouldn't wreck their responsibilities as parents. So they have to have jobs; they have to have child care; they have to have health care; they have to have transportation.

And if you think about this issue in this way, I think it will help us all to think about all the other challenges that we're facing. I mean, we've been very fortunate in America to have had the national wealth and the infrastructure of health care that we've had and the huge number of dedicated people we have here, physicians and nurses and other health care providers and support personnel. And because of technological and scientific advances and because we're learning how to do more outreach and preventive care, we now have the lowest infant mortality rate and the highest life expectancy in our history.

Because of the human genome project and because of the mapping that it will make it possible to do for young children, we actually have people seriously saying that babies who are born at the tip end of the 20th century may actually live to see the 22d century, not the 21st century. This is all great, if you have access to it.

Now, if you look at what managed care has done—I mean, first we had a system which was basically pay as you go. When my mother started being a nurse anesthetist, people didn't have

money; there was no Medicare; there was no Medicaid. I remember one time a fruit picker bringing her five bushels full of peaches to pay for his wife's surgery. And you know, I was young, and I thought it was a lot better than money. [*Laughter*] But it wasn't so good if—you couldn't pay your electric bill with peaches, you know. [*Laughter*]

So then we went into more and more insurance. We had Medicare; we had Medicaid; we had employer assisted insurance. Then we had this huge inflation in medical costs which led to two other trends. One was, unfortunately, fewer employers covering their employees at work. When the Vice President and I took office, about 40 percent of health care dollars were public dollars; now it's up over 45 percent.

The other trend that occurred was, in an attempt to preserve the employer, private based health insurance plan and not have the whole thing go broke by having inflation go forward at 3 times the national average, new management systems were put into place. So I don't think we should overlook the fact that managed care was a part of a response to an unsustainable situation with inflation and health care costs, and some good came out of it. But it's like every other change: If there are no brakes, if there's no value base, then the logic of the change will consume itself. I mean, that's basically the story you just heard.

So is managed care, per se, bad? No. Who could say it's bad to stop health care costs from going up at 3 times the rate of inflation? It was unsustainable. Eventually it would have consumed the whole economy. But no change is inherently good without being anchored in basic values.

Now, that's all this Patients' Bill of Rights is about. It says: Okay, go have your managed care; get rid of all the waste; be more efficient; don't let us bankrupt ourselves; but don't ever send me another story like this. I don't want to hear any more like that. That's what this bill says. This bill says, you know, how can you let some person with the mentality of an accountant who will only see the number of what it costs to have somebody do her surgery, who will only see the number at the bottom line of what the chemotherapy costs, make a decision? We're not that kind of people. We're not that kind of society. And if we have to endure a smidgen more inflation, bring it on. That's all this is about.

Now, let me also say one other thing. This is urgent. You know, there have been a lot of other things going on during this session of Congress, and let them go on, but there ought to be some time taken to do the business of the American people. This is urgent.

How many more stories do we have to hear like Ricka's before we actually act? Believe me, there's another one; there's one right now, just while we're sitting here, that somebody else just like her somewhere in America going through something like she went through. And it will be somebody else tomorrow and somebody else the next day and somebody else the next day. This is not rocket science. This is a simple decision by a society to say, okay, we want all the benefits we can possibly get from better and more efficient management and cost controls, but we don't intend to chunk out the values that make this a decent place to live and give up all the benefits we've gotten out of medical research and advances in the last 30 years by just throwing it away on this kind of stranglehold technique. We're not going to tolerate it anymore.

Now, I think—what I hope will happen, because all of you have come together here today, is that we will have, first of all, a general up feeling in the country that we have to do more on this to get this done in this session right now; secondly, that the people who are part of all your organizations or affiliates around the country will become more active; and thirdly—and Secretary Shalala and Dr. Benjamin in different ways alluded to this—that we will have a special increase in intensity among women in America about this.

We have a report which was handed to me—you probably saw them hand it to me, because they forgot—[*laughter*]—on a State-by-State analysis of what this bill would mean to women. Now, in addition to the points that were made by previous speakers about this, I think it's important to note that according to all the research that we have, three-quarters of all the health care decisions in this country are made by women. In many households, women are taking care of sick children, taking them to the doctor, caring for elderly parents, paying the medical bills. Women also, unfortunately, more frequently suffer from chronic illnesses that require constant and specialized medical attention. So there are special stakes here for the women of America.

There's another point I want to make that was mentioned by the Vice President, but I want to hammer this home. This really is a problem that must have a national solution. People say to me all the time, "Well, you know, you used to be a Governor. Let the States do this; there's State legislation passing all the time." Well, first let me say I'm grateful for that State legislation, and I thank Governors of both parties who have supported it. Forty-four States have passed some kind of legislation. But some of the States have only passed one of the provisions of the many provisions in the Patients' Bill of Rights, first of all. Secondly, there are 122 million Americans, out of a population of 260 million—122 million of us are enrolled in plans not fully governed by State law. For example, just take California, our most populous State. If California passed the bill now pending in Congress, which is quite comprehensive, there would still be 13 million of the 30 million Californians who'd be totally unaffected by it, because as Secretary Herman said, because of the way ERISA works. So there has to be a national solution.

Now, all of you know that there are some pretty powerful special interests who are up here working against this bill. My answer is the previous speaker. So I think if you go back home and you think about this and you try to mobilize your friends and the people that are affiliated with it, first of all, think about how this is a specific example of the kind of challenges we face at this moment in our history—all this technology, all these changes, everything going on. And it is fundamentally the test of a decent society and certainly a great democracy like ours that we embrace all the changes that are going on, but we do it in a way consistent with the basic values that got us where we are over the last 220 years. Secondly, remember to put a human face on it, and remember every day that goes by that this bill does not pass—every single day—somewhere in America there's another story like Ricka's. There ought not to ever be another one, and with your help we can stop it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Ricka Powers, breast cancer patient who introduced the President; and Regina Benjamin, M.D., member, board of trustees, American Medical Association.

Statement on Signing an Executive Order on Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government

May 28, 1998

Today I have signed an Executive order entitled "Further Amendment to Executive Order 11478, Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government." The order provides a uniform policy for the Federal Government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in the Federal civilian workforce and states that policy for the first time in an Executive order of the President.

It has always been the practice of this administration to prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation in the civilian workforce, and most Federal agencies and departments have taken actions, such as the issuance of policy directives or memoranda from the agency heads, to memorialize that policy. The Executive order I have signed today will ensure that there is a uniform policy throughout the Federal Government by adding sexual orientation to the list of categories for which discrimination is prohibited in Executive Order 11478 (i.e., race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age).

This Executive order states administration policy but does not and cannot create any new enforcement rights (such as the ability to proceed before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Those rights can be granted only by legislation passed by the Congress, such as the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." I again call upon Congress to pass this important

piece of civil rights legislation which would extend these basic employment discrimination protections to all gay and lesbian Americans. Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serbs

May 28, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), as expanded to address the actions and policies of the Bosnian Serb forces and the authorities in the territory that they control within Bosnia and Herzegovina, is to continue in effect beyond May 30, 1998.

On December 27, 1995, I issued Presidential Determination No. 96–7, directing the Secretary of the Treasury, *inter alia,* to suspend the application of sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and to continue to block property previously blocked until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. This sanctions relief, in conformity with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1022 of November 22, 1995 (hereinafter the "Resolution"), was an essential factor motivating Serbia and Montenegro's acceptance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina initialed by the parties in Dayton on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris on December 14, 1995 (hereinafter the "Peace Agreement"). The sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) were accordingly suspended prospectively, effective January 16, 1996. Sanctions imposed on the Bosnian Serb forces and authorities and on the territory that they control within Bosnia and Herzegovina were subsequently suspended prospectively, effective May 10, 1996, also in conformity with the Peace Agreement and the Resolution.

Sanctions against both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serbs were subsequently terminated by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1074 of October 1, 1996. This termination, however, did not end the requirement of the Resolution that blocked funds and assets that are subject to claims and encumbrances remain blocked, until unblocked in accordance with applicable law. In the past year, further substantial progress has been achieved to bring about a settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia acceptable to the parties. Additional elections occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as provided for in the Peace Agreement, and the Bosnian Serb forces have continued to respect the zones of separation as provided in the Peace Agreement. The ultimate disposition of the various remaining categories of blocked assets is being addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Until the status of all remaining blocked property is resolved, the Peace Agreement implemented, and the terms of the Resolution met, this situation continues to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 30, 1998.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Announcing the COPS Distressed Neighborhoods Pilot Project
May 29, 1998

Thank you very much, Commissioner, and congratulations on your new position as the superintendent of the Chicago police. Mayor White, thank you, as always, for your astounding leadership. Madam Attorney General, thank you for faithfully and vigorously pursuing the partnership with law enforcement we did talk about so long ago now. Mr. Vice President, thank you for all you have done to make this a safer country. And I'd like to thank all the mayors, the police officers who are here, and say a special word of welcome to Congressman Cummings for his presence and for his support.

Death of Barry M. Goldwater

Let me say, just before I came out here I received word that a few moments ago Senator Barry Goldwater passed away at the age of 89. He was truly an American original; I never knew anybody quite like him. As all of you know, we were of different parties and often different philosophies. But in the last several years, he was uncommonly kind to me and to Hillary. And I had occasions to visit with him, and I always came away, every time I met him—from the first time back when I was a senior in college, until the last time just a couple of years ago—with the impression that he was a great patriot and a truly fine human being. So our prayers will be with his wife and his family today. And our gratitude for his life of service to our country is very, very strong.

COPS Distressed Neighborhoods Pilot Project

As you have heard, our country has made a lot of progress in the fight against crime in the last few years. We've made a lot of progress on a lot of areas. We just announced that we would have a budget surplus this year for the first time since 1969. We have the lowest unemployment rate since 1970, the lowest inflation rate in over 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, and of course, the lowest crime rates in a quarter century.

All of these things are a great tribute to the American people in their communities, working at their lives. When I took office, I determined to make the Federal Government a genuine partner in building a better future for the American people everywhere. And it seemed to me that we could never do that unless we had a sensible strategy to make people feel safer in their streets. It is very difficult to feel like you're living in a free country as a free citizen if you don't feel safe walking the streets, if you don't think your children are safe when they're walking the streets or in the park or going to school, if you don't even feel safe in your own home.

So we have worked on the strategy that has been outlined by the previous speakers. I'd like to emphasize especially the work that was done to give law enforcement officers the tools to do the job, the community policing program to put 100,000 more police on the street, and the effort to enlist ordinary citizens in the work of helping police to prevent crime and to solve crimes and to give them the tools to do the job.

Now, this all shows that whether it's the crime, the budget deficit, welfare reform, homeownership, anything—any challenge this country faces, we can only solve it if we work together. But when we do work together, we invariably make progress, sometimes astonishing progress. The principle behind community policing in a way is the principle behind everything we tried to do domestically. It embodies the concept of working together, to get more police out of the station houses, out from behind the desks, onto the streets, working with people in the ways that Superintendent Hillard just outlined.

We pledged to put 100,000 on the street in the campaign of '92 and then in 1993 in the

budget. Finally, in the crime bill in '94, we succeeded in getting that commitment enacted into law. We knew it would be a long-term effort, and we said we would try to achieve it in 6 years. Now we have reached a milestone: In only 4 years, we have now funded 75,000 of that 100,000 community police. We're ahead of schedule on the thing that is doing the most to make America a safer place, thanks to those of you in law enforcement.

I might also say thanks to the Attorney General and to you, Chief. We're not only ahead of schedule; we're also under budget. So if you guys will keep us under budget, we may go over 100,000 police.

But as the Attorney General has said, and as all of you know, there are still some neighborhoods in America, and too many of them, where crime hasn't receded far enough or fast enough. Congressman Cummings told me this morning that he lives in one of those neighborhoods, and we need to do more. We have to focus our resources on high-crime, high-need neighborhoods to bring the benefits of community policing to every community. And in the difficult areas, that means we have to reach a critical mass of police officers in community policing before it can make the necessary difference.

So I am pleased to say today that the Department of Justice will fully fund over 700 new community police officers who will be on the beat specifically in troubled areas: 150 in Chicago fighting drug-related crime; 100 in Baltimore to fight drugs and violent crimes; 170 in Miami to take back the streets in neighborhoods along the Miami River; Hartford will put their officers to work to fight a new surge of violent gang activity.

Now, as we extend the reach of community policing in our cities, we in Washington have a responsibility to continue to advance this strategy that has brought success. We have more to do to protect our children, more to do to fight juvenile crime, more to do to keep our kids and our schools free and safe from guns and from drugs. The same community policing techniques that are helping to make our streets safe again are the best way to help keep our schools safe. In March we began to make funds available to achieve this objective, and we should do more.

We have to do more and more to push back the frontiers of violence. The recent wave of shootings in our schools reminds us again that more police, more prosecutors, tougher laws, more vigilant neighborhoods, and more positive opportunities for our kids to stay out of trouble in the first place. All of those things have to be done by those of us in authority.

But the parents, the teachers, the community leaders, all of them have to do more, too, to teach our children right from wrong, to teach them to turn away from violence, to identify troubled children before they do something irrevocably destructive. We have to do more to show our children by the power of example and the power of outreach that we care about each and every one of them.

Finally, let me say that I want to say what has been said by others—what the Attorney General said. You're doing a good job, and the rest of us are grateful. We can say, "Well, crime has dropped 27 percent," or "It's the lowest in 25 years." Those are statistical abstractions. There are children who are playing free today because of what you have done. There are people who are alive today because of what you have done. There are businesses functioning in neighborhoods today that would be closed if it hadn't been for what you have done. You have given our people a deeper freedom. And as we stand on the brink of a new century, we should all be very, very grateful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Terry Hillard, superintendent of police, Chicago, IL; and Mayor Michael White of Cleveland, OH. The related proclamation on the death of Barry M. Goldwater is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Russia's Economic Situation

May 29, 1998

I strongly welcome Russia's announcement today of its new economic program for 1998. This program, developed in consultation with the IMF, signals Russia's commitment to a bold economic reform agenda to strengthen financial stability and encourage investment and growth. The United States intends to support this program when it is reviewed by the IMF Board.

Yesterday President Yeltsin called me to discuss Russia's strategy for creating strong economic growth. In addition, Prime Minister Kiriyenko called the Vice President. President Yeltsin underscored that he and Prime Minister Kiriyenko will spare no effort in implementing this program. Recent months have been difficult for Russia and other emerging markets. President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Kiriyenko aim to establish a firm defense against financial market turmoil.

Russia's new economic plan puts in place a solid strategy for fiscal reform. It gives Russian officials the authority they need to collect taxes, crack down on companies that ignore their obligations to the Government, and control spending in line with revenues. What is now important is to carry out these reforms decisively and resolutely. The United States will continue to encourage strong IMF and World Bank engagement in support of reform.

Statement on Withdrawal of Medicare Funding for Ravenswood Hospital in Chicago, Illinois

May 29, 1998

Today my administration informed the president of Ravenswood Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, that the hospital will lose its Medicare funding on June 21, 1998, unless the facility takes steps to ensure that the events that led to the tragic death of 15-year-old Christopher Sercye are never repeated.

On May 16, Christopher died of gunshot wounds just 35 feet from Ravenswood, where friends had brought the young man for help. There is simply no excuse for this. No one should be left untreated just footsteps from a hospital entrance. No health care professional should turn the other way, and no supervisor should direct an employee not to intervene in a medical emergency.

That is why the Health Care Financing Administration delivered a letter today advising Ravenswood Hospital that unless it provides credible evidence that its policies have been restructured, it will lose all Medicare funding next month. This administration stands ready to take the same strong action against any facility that does not assist in a medical emergency.

I am also extremely pleased that the American Hospital Association has released new guidelines that advise hospitals to change any policies that prevent taking appropriate actions in a medical emergency. We cannot reverse this inexplicable tragedy, but we can and must take action so that it does not happen again.

The President's Radio Address

May 30, 1998

Good morning. I want to talk to you today about the role of faith in our lives and in the education of our children.

Our Nation was founded by people of deep religious beliefs, some of whom came here to escape oppression because of their beliefs. Their

trust in God is enshrined in one of our most treasured documents, the Declaration of Independence. Today, Americans are still a profoundly religious people, and our faith continues to sustain us.

Our Founders believed the best way to protect religious liberty was to first guarantee the right of everyone to believe and practice religion according to his or her conscience and, second, to prohibit our Government from imposing or sanctioning any particular religious belief. That's what they wrote into the first amendment. They were right then, and they're right now.

But resolving these two principles has not always been easy, especially when it comes to our public schools. Just as our religious faith guides us in our everyday lives, so, too, do our Nation's public schools strengthen the moral foundation of our society. We trust our schools to teach our children and to give them the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life.

But schools do more than train children's minds. They also help to nurture their souls by reinforcing the values they learn at home and in their communities. I believe one of the best ways we can help our schools to do this is by supporting students' right to voluntarily practice their religious beliefs, including prayer in school, and to pursue religious activities on school grounds. Studies show that children who are involved in religious activities are much less likely to use drugs. In a world that increasingly exposes children to images of violence and immorality, common sense tells us they are more likely to stay out of trouble and live up to their full potential when they're spiritually grounded.

There's no question that the issue of prayer in schools is a complex and emotional one for many Americans. It has long been a matter of great controversy in our courts. But nothing in the Constitution requires schools to be religion-free zones where children must leave their faiths at the schoolhouse door.

To help clear up the confusion about what kind of religious activity is and must be permissible in public schools, in 1995 we issued comprehensive guidelines to every school district in America. These guidelines represent a very broad consensus of many religious groups. Here is what is at their core: students have the right to pray privately and individually in school; they have the right to say grace at lunchtime; they have the right to meet in religious groups on school grounds and to use school facilities, just like any other club; they have the right to read the Bible or any religious text during study hall or free class time; they also have the right to be free from coercion to participate in any kind of religious activity in school.

Now, since we've issued these guidelines, appropriate religious activity has flourished in our schools, and there has apparently been a substantial decline in the contentious argument and litigation that has accompanied this issue for too long.

The guidelines have encouraged communities to develop common understandings about what kind of religious activity is permissible in schools and help them to avoid costly lawsuits and divisive disputes. For example, after parents sued the school board because their son was wrongly punished for praying quietly in the cafeteria, St. Louis used the guidelines to adopt more explicit policies for the future. In suburban Atlanta, where schools hold workshops and distribute the guidelines to teachers at the beginning and middle of every school year, disputes about religious activity have all but disappeared.

To make sure our national guidelines are consistent with current court cases, so that more school districts follow these communities' lead, we are reissuing the guidelines with minor modifications, and we're mailing them to every school district in the country. I call on all districts to make sure the guidelines are understood and used by school principals, teachers, parents, and students themselves.

Helping communities to find common ground about religious expression is the right way to protect religious freedom. There's also a wrong way: amending the Constitution. Some people say there should be a constitutional amendment to allow voluntary prayer in our public schools. But there already is one; it's the first amendment. For more than 200 years, the first amendment has protected our religious freedom and allowed many faiths to flourish in our homes, in our workplaces, and in our schools. Clearly understood and sensibly applied, it works. It does not need to be rewritten.

George Washington once said that Americans have, and I quote, "abundant reason to rejoice that in this land, every person may worship God according to the dictates of his own heart." Americans still have cause to rejoice that this most precious liberty is just as strong today as

it was then, and it will still be there for our children in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:11 p.m. on May 29 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 30.

Statement on Further Nuclear Testing by Pakistan

May 30, 1998

The United States condemns today's second round of nuclear tests by Pakistan. These tests can only serve to increase tensions in an already volatile region. With their recent tests, Pakistan and India are contributing to a self-defeating cycle of escalation that does not add to the security of either country. Both India and Pakistan need to renounce further nuclear and missile testing immediately and take decisive steps to reverse this dangerous arms race.

I will continue to work with leaders throughout the international community to reduce tensions in south Asia, to preserve the global consensus on nonproliferation.

I call on India and Pakistan to resume their direct dialog, to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty immediately and without conditions to reverse the arms race there, and to join the clear international consensus in support of nonproliferation.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting the Detonation of a Nuclear Device by Pakistan

May 30, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to section 102(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, I am hereby reporting that, in accordance with that section, I have determined that Pakistan, a non-nuclear-weapon state, detonated a nuclear explosive device on May 28, 1998. I have further directed the relevant agencies and instrumentalities of the United States Government to take the necessary actions to impose the sanctions described in section 102(b)(2) of that Act.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The memorandum on sanctions against Pakistan is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Support for Russian Reform

May 31, 1998

On Friday, I welcomed Russia's new economic program for 1998 and encouraged strong IMF and World Bank engagement in support of reform. Implementation of this program will strengthen the fundamentals of the Russian economy and foster maintenance of a stable ruble. Following my conversation with President Yeltsin last week, we directed our officials to consult on the Russian economic and financial situation. The United States endorses additional conditional financial support from the international financial institutions, as necessary, to promote stability, structural reforms, and growth in Russia.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Action To Facilitate Positive Adjustment to Competition From Imports of Wheat Gluten
May 30, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to section 203(b)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, I am transmitting to you copies of my proclamation and memorandum describing the action I have taken, and the reasons therefor, under section 203(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 concerning wheat gluten.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1. The proclamation and memorandum of May 30 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Joint Statement on the Visit of His Highness Shaikh Essa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, the Amir of the State of Bahrain
June 1, 1998

President Clinton received His Highness Shaikh Essa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, the Amir of the State of Bahrain at the White House on June 1, 1998. The Amir's visit reflects the close and long-standing relationship between the State of Bahrain and the United States of America as well as the commitment of both governments to high-level consultations on a broad range of issues of mutual interest.

The President and the Amir discussed the deep and enduring ties between their two nations, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the U.S. Navy's relationship with Bahrain and the one hundredth anniversary of the American hospital in Bahrain. The President recognized the United States' historic friendship with Bahrain and underscored our commitment to build on this strong foundation of partnership by continuing this close relationship into the twenty-first century.

The two parties discussed issues of mutual concern, focusing particularly on their shared commitment to peace, security and stability in the Middle East. Both His Highness and the President pledged to continue their close cooperation in pursuit of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace. The President reviewed America's ongoing efforts to reinvigorate the peace process. Bahrain expressed its respect and appreciation for these efforts. Both sides agreed that the best way to achieve the peace so greatly desired is by the full implementation of each side's obligations under the Oslo and Washington Accords. The two sides recognized the importance of resuming negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks as soon as possible and expressed their support for the implementation of Resolutions 425 and 426.

The President and the Amir discussed the situation in the Gulf, affirming their shared commitment to upholding regional security in the face of external threats. Both sides recognized the importance of stable boundaries between states, and emphasized the need to resolve the outstanding territorial disputes throughout the region by peaceful and legitimate means acceptable to the parties.

The United States and Bahrain call upon Iraq to fully implement all Security Council resolutions including full disclosure of its Weapons of Mass Destruction. As members of the Security Council, Bahrain and the United States continue to support the mission and functioning of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM). Both governments expressed great sympathy for the Iraqi people and call upon Iraq to comply fully with all United Nations Security Council

Resolutions. The two sides agreed that UN Security Council Resolutions must be enforced and made clear that the Iraqi government bears sole responsibility for the misery of the Iraqi people. They welcomed the adoption of Resolution 1153 to expand humanitarian assistance and to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people.

The two sides reviewed with interest recent developments regarding Iranian policy and welcomed the emerging moderate tone in Iran's statements. They looked forward to seeing Iranian substantive policies consistent with these statements and conducive to the improvement of Iran's relations with neighboring states and with the international community. They agreed that Iran's continuing commitment to the principle of non-interference in the affairs of neighboring states will reflect on Tehran's interest in promoting peace and security in the region.

President Clinton and His Highness reviewed international economic developments and agreed to continue their close consultations on means to improve opportunities for trade and investment in the region. The United States recognized the potential of Bahrain's economy due to its highly developed infrastructure and suitable environment for investment opportunities. They agreed to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the United States Economic Dialogue with the Gulf Cooperation Council to advance progress and prosperity throughout the region.

The United States and Bahrain expressed their concern at the increased risk of a nuclear arms race escalating and urged India, Pakistan and other non-signatory countries to accede to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) without conditions. The United States and Bahrain also call on the Governments of India and Pakistan to announce a moratorium on future tests and experimentation on delivery systems. The Amir expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality accorded to him and to his accompanying delegation by President Clinton during the visit. The President conveyed the warm greetings and best wishes of the American people to the citizens of Bahrain and wished His Highness good health and long life. His Highness the Amir extended an invitation to President Clinton to pay an official visit to the State of Bahrain.

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

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on the 2000 Census in Houston, Texas

June 2, 1998

The President. Thank you. Thank you for that wonderful welcome, and thank you, Marta, for the wonderful work you're doing here. I enjoyed my tour. I enjoyed shaking hands with all the folks who work here and the people who are taking advantage of all your services. And I'm glad to be here. Mr. Mayor, you can be proud, and I know you are proud of this center and the others like it in this city.

I'd like to thank all the Members of Congress who are here from the Texas delegation, and a special thanks to Representatives Maloney and Sawyer for coming from Washington with me today and for their passionate concern to try to get an accurate census.

I thank the Texas land commissioner, Garry Mauro, for being here; and the members of the legislature, Senator Gallegos, Senator Ellis, Congressman—Representative Torres, and others, if they're here; the other city officials; Mr. Boney, the president of the city council; Mr. Eckels, the county executive judge; Rueben Guerrero, the SBA Regional Administrator. If there are others—I think our Deputy Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Mallett, is here, who is from Houston. I thank you all for being here.

Before I say what I want to say about the census, I think since this is the first time I have been in Texas since the fires began to rage in Mexico that have affected you, if you'll forgive me, I'd like to just say a word about that. The smoke and the haze from these fires has become a matter of serious concern for people in Texas and Louisiana and other Gulf

States. It has gotten even further up into our country. And of course, the greatest loss has been suffered by our friends and neighbors across the border in Mexico. Now, we are doing everything we know to do to help, both to help the people of Mexico and to stem the disadvantageous side effects of all the smoke and haze coming up here into the United States.

I had an extended talk with President Zedillo about it. And, of course, here we had the EPA and Health and Human Services and FEMA monitoring the air quality. We're working very hard with the Mexican Government to help them more effectively fight these fires. We provided more than $8 million in emergency assistance to Mexico since January, with 4 firefighting helicopters, an infrared imaging aircraft to detect fire hotspots, safety, communications, and other firefighting equipment for over 3,000 firefighters. Over 50 experts from our Federal agency have provided important technical advice. And tomorrow our Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, and our AID Administrator, Brian Atwood, are going to Mexico to see these fires firsthand and to see what else we can do in consultation with Mexican officials.

I think that we will be successful, but this has been a long and frustrating thing. As you probably know, we've had extended fires over the last year in Southeast Asia as well and in South America. This is a terrific problem that requires change in longstanding habits on the part of many people in rural areas in a lot of these countries, but it also is a function of the unusual weather conditions through which we have been living. And we'll continue to work on it.

Now, let's talk about the census. Since our Nation's founding, the taking of the census has been mandated by the Constitution. How we have met this responsibility has changed and evolved over time as the country has grown in size and population, and as we've learned more about how to count people. Today I want to talk about the newest changes that we propose to make and how important it is to your work and your community. That's why we're here, so that we can put a human face on the census and its consequences.

We do this every 10 years. The first time we had a census, Thomas Jefferson, who was then the Secretary of State, actually sent Federal marshals out on horseback to count heads. We relied on this system of sending workers out to count our people, household by household, person by person, for nearly two centuries. But as the population grew and people began to move more frequently, this process became increasingly both inefficient and ineffective, even as it became progressively more expensive. By the time we finished counting, we'd have to start all over again for the next census.

In 1970, therefore, we started counting people by mail. For three decades now, Americans have been asked to fill out census forms that come in the mail and send them back for processing. Now we know that this method, too, needs to be updated. For a variety of reasons, millions of people, literally millions of people, did not send their 1990 census form back. For the first time, the census in 1990 was less accurate than the one before it. Before that, the census had become increasingly more accurate.

We know now that the census missed 8 million Americans living in inner cities and in remote rural areas. We know, too, interestingly enough, that it double-counted 4 million Americans, many of whom had the good fortune to own 2 homes. [*Laughter*] The number of people not counted in Los Angeles—in Los Angeles alone—was enough to fill a city as big as Tallahassee, the capital of Florida. The census missed 482,738 people in the State of Texas, 66,748 of them here in Houston.

Now, if we are really going to strengthen our country and prepare for this new century, we have to have a full and accurate picture of who we are as a people and where we live. We rely on census statistics every day to determine where to build more roads and hospitals and child care centers, and to decide which communities need more Federal help for Head Start or Federal training programs, or for the WIC program. Marta and I just visited your WIC program here in this center, and we saw a baby being weighed and measured. The baby liked being weighed more than it liked being measured. I don't blame him. [*Laughter*]

The WIC program is just one example. The Congress, with all the fights that we've had over the last 6 years, we've had pretty good success in getting a bipartisan majority to continue to put more money into the WIC program, because people know that it makes good sense to feed babies and take care of them and provide for them when they're young. But the funds, once appropriated, can only flow where they're needed if there is an accurate count of where the

kids are. So, ironically, no matter how much money we appropriate for WIC, unless we actually can track where the children are, the program will be less than fully successful.

Now, more than half of the undercounted in the last census were children. A disproportionate number of undercounted Americans were minorities. That means some of our most vulnerable populations routinely are omitted when it comes time to providing Federal funds for critical services. An inaccurate census distorts our understanding of the needs of our people, and in many respects, therefore, it diminishes the quality of life not only for them but for all the rest of us as well.

That's why we have to use the most up-to-date, scientific, cost-effective methods to conduct an accurate census. That's why—to go back to what Congressman Green said—we should follow the National Academy of Sciences' recommendations to use statistical sampling in the next census.

Scientists and statisticians are nearly unanimous in saying that statistical sampling is the best way to get a full and fair count of our people for the 2000 census. It is estimated that if we use good statistical sampling, supplemented by what are called quality checks, where you go out into selected neighborhoods and actually count heads to make sure that the sampling is working, that we can cut the error rate to a tenth of a percent, or that in the next sample we would miss, out of a country of nearly 300 million people by then, only 300,000, as opposed to 8 million in the 1990 census.

Now, as far as I know, nobody in this room had anything to do with coming up with this proposal. All of us just want an accurate count. Whatever the count is, wherever the people are, this is not a political issue; this is an American issue. But the people who know what they're doing tell us that this is the way we should do it. There is no serious dispute among the experts here.

It is, therefore, I think, quite unfortunate that some in Congress have so vociferously opposed sampling, because improving the census shouldn't be a partisan issue. It's not about politics; it's about people. It's about making sure every American really and literally counts. It's about gathering fair and accurate information that we absolutely have to have if we're going to determine who we are and what we have to do to prepare all our people for the 21st century.

In Texas, I would think every Republican would be just as interested as every Democrat in seeing that every Texan is counted, so that this State does not lose another billion dollars—or maybe 2 or 3 billion dollars by then—in undercounting, in ways that will help you to meet the challenge of your growing population and to seize the opportunities that are out there for all of you.

So that's what we're here for. And all the folks on this panel, I want to thank them in advance for their willingness to be here, because I'm basically just going to listen to them now give you what I hope will be a fuller picture of what the consequences of this whole census issue are in very stark, clear human terms. But remember, it's not a political issue; it's a people issue. Nobody has got an ax to grind for any method; we should all want the most accurate method. And when it's all said and done, all we should want is to have every one of us properly, accurately, fairly, and constitutionally counted.

Thank you very much. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Well, as I said earlier, everybody here, around this panel, has a different perspective on the importance of the census. And I would like to hear some specific illustrations now about how the census is used and why the accuracy is important. And maybe we should start with Dr. Craven and with Dr. Kendrick—if you could start.

[*Dr. Judith Craven, president, United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast in Houston, explained the importance of accurate census numbers to funding for services in the area.*]

The President. So this is very important because—so what you're saying is, when United Way funds are distributed, private funds——

Dr. Craven. That's correct.

The President. ——you need the census, first of all, to tell you where the problems are, and secondly, to know how much to give.

Dr. Craven. How much to give and how we can leverage what's already being done by the Government, and making sure that Government dollars have come in an equitable amount to leverage and maximize the resources here to deliver those services.

The President. This as an important point because it's something you almost never hear, that

because of the work of United Ways all over America, and because of the way they work, and because of the generosity of the American people, if the census is inaccurate, it has an indirect, bad effect on private investment in people, in community needs, as well as on Government investment.

Dr. Kendrick.

[*Dr. Mary des Vignes-Kendrick, director, City of Houston Health Department, said that accurate census data was critical to public health and described its use in calculating community health data to identify problems, target resources, and measure the impact of interventions.*]

The President. Thank you very much. Maybe we could be a little more specific about what some of the specific repercussions are, or have been, as a result of the undercount in the 1990 census.

Mr. Moreno, could you respond to that?

[*Gilbert Moreno, president and chief executive officer, Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans, described the impact that the census would have on the Mexican-American community.*]

The President. Dr. Mindiola.

[*Dr. Tatcho Mindiola, Jr., director, Center for Mexican-American Studies at the University of Houston, applauded the President's support of the statistical sampling method, explaining that the area of Houston in which the discussion was being held was likely to be undercounted if traditional methods were used.*]

The President. Thank you.

Reverend Clemons.

[*Rev. Harvey Clemons, Jr., pastor, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, described how an accurate and comprehensive census count would help provide the tools needed to bring about community revitalization in hard-to-develop areas which had been traditionally undercounted.*]

The President. What about the business community? Ms. Joe, would you like to talk about that?

[*Ms. Glenda Joe of Great Wall Enterprises, a marketing, advertising, and public relations firm catering to Asian-American markets and demographics, said that inaccurate census data discouraged corporate ventures and investment in the region and also reduced funding allocations for Asian nonprofit organizations. She noted that the sharp growth of the Asian-American community in the Gulf Coast region of Texas had not been accurately reflected in the census.*]

The President. If I might say—this is a problem—this particular problem she has mentioned is a bigger problem with Asian-Americans than with any other minority group, but it is also a general problem in the work that we're trying to do around the country in revitalizing the inner cities.

If you look at the American unemployment rate now, which is about 4.3 percent—it's the lowest it's been since 19—I think '74, '73, something like that, now—and when I became President, the conventional theory among economists—we had these huge arguments, I remember, after I was elected in '92 and before I took office, and we got everybody down around the table at the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock and talked about this. Conventional economic wisdom was that if unemployment dropped much below 6 percent, you would have terrible inflation, the economy would be in bad shape, and we'd have to run it back up again.

Well, the American people have proved that that's not so, through high levels of productivity and technology. But then you ask yourself, well, how can we keep this economy growing now that—if the national unemployment rate is down to 4.3 percent? How can we grow the economy without inflation? The obvious answer is, go to the places where the unemployment rate is still higher, where people will work for competitive wages, and where they can create markets because they do have money to spend if people invest it there.

So, you see this also in Hispanic communities in places like Los Angeles, where we've put together a $400 million community development bank to go into these neighborhoods and make small loans to entrepreneurs to start businesses. You see it in these community development banks we've put up in New York and elsewhere. In New York City, the unemployment rate is still almost 9 percent, so obviously there is an enormous opportunity there for growth. And a lot of the unemployed people in New York are Hispanic, African-American, Asians, people from the Caribbean—not counted. So you go and you say, "Well, make me a loan, and I'll go start

this kind of business, and there are this thousand many people in my neighborhood and in my market area." And somebody picks up a census and says, "No, there are not, there are only half that many."

So this is a free enterprise issue as well, because I'm convinced that we have an opportunity that we've not had in 30 years to really crack the unemployment and the underemployment problem and the lack of business ownership in inner cities throughout this country. But to do it, even if you have generous and sympathetic bankers and a Government program that says you're supposed to target low-income areas, you've got to know what the market is.

So it's a problem—the one you said is not just specific to you in here, it's a huge general problem throughout America that an accurate count would help. So it actually, I believe, would help us to keep the growth of the economy going and help us to lower the unemployment rate further by knowing where investment capital could flow.

Let me just ask—and I guess I'd like to start with Dr. Klineberg because he started the Houston area survey—how possible do you think it is to get an accurate survey, and what do you think—what steps need to be taken? And what arguments do you think we could make to the skeptics who say no statistician with a computer can compete with people going around door-to-door and counting heads?

This is a—you know, it's kind of like a—it's not an easy argument to win. You know, the average person, you just come up to somebody and say, "We're here to figure out how many people are in this room. Would you think it would be better to have an expert look in the room and guess or have somebody walk up and down the rows and count?" So we've got to figure out how to—we've got to win this argument with average American people who aren't used to thinking about these sort of things. And we have to prove that we can do it. So maybe we ought to talk about where we go from here. But, Doctor, would you like to say a few things?

[*Stephen Klineberg, professor of sociology, Rice University, described how the census was used and why accuracy was important to the work of sociology and political science in understanding America at a time of great demographic change, from an amalgam of European nationalities to an amalgam of worldwide nationalities. Reverend Clemons commended the President for his support of statistical sampling, but urged collecting detailed data in the census.*]

The President. Let me ask you another way, because this is where I think—obviously, I'm here in part because I was—because I wanted to come here to illustrate the importance of the census. I'm also here in part, to be candid, because the outcome of this battle is not clear. We all know that. That's why Congressman Sawyer and Congresswoman Maloney came all the way from Washington with me today.

And suppose I got all of you, and I put you in a van. We all got in the van; we drove across town; and we stopped at a little real estate office. The people had never had any contact at all with the census except they always filled out their form—or we stopped in a service station, and we met a couple guys that—they never thought about this issue for 5 minutes. They're not conscious that it affects them at all. How can we convince ordinary citizens in all the congressional districts, whether they're represented by Republicans or Democrats, without regard to party, that statistical sampling will give them a more accurate count than hiring 6 million people to go door to door? What can you say that is consistent with the experience of ordinary working Americans that will make them understand that?

Dr. Mindiola.

Dr. Mindiola. Mr. President, if I were you I would tell them this story. Most Americans, I think the vast majority of Americans, go for medical checkups, and during that process, they do a blood test. But when you go get your blood test, the doctor or the nurse does not draw 100 percent of your blood out of your body. They draw a sample. And based upon that sample—[*laughter*]—and based upon that sample, they can tell your cholesterol level, whether you have too much acid in your blood, et cetera, et cetera. And I think in those common, everyday terms, the average American citizen should be able to understand the validity of sampling, because that's a common, everyday experience,

The President. That may go down in history as the Dracula theory of the census. [*Laughter*] That's pretty good, though.

Go ahead, Marta.

[*Marta Moreno, director, Magnolia Multi-Service Center, a Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) program facility, stated the importance of making people feel comfortable with filling out the census form and advocated public service announcements to achieve that goal. She also suggested hiring minority census personnel to improve communication with the households visited.*]

The President. Gilbert.

Mr. Moreno. I think that transportation ultimately is one of the most impacted areas, and boy, in Houston if you're sitting in that rush hour traffic, you're going to have our vote, because you're sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic in 100 degree weather.

The President. So you'd make a practical argument.

Mr. Moreno. It is. Houston, as you know, is the fourth fastest growing city in sheer numbers. Dallas is third. The towns in south Texas are growing at an incredible rate, and they're stacked on a very poor highway that links those cities.

The President. We're trying to build you one, though.

Mr. Moreno. Yes, exactly. It's dangerous to drive from San Antonio to Houston on a Sunday night because the traffic is just stacked.

The President. You know, one of the things that I find works sometimes is the analogy to political polling. I mean, most people understand that a poll taken before an election is a statistical sample. And sometimes it's wrong, but more often than not it's right. And there you may only sample a thousand people out of millions of voters. I mean, there are ways to do this, but I just think—I wish you would all think about it because, again—the other point that I think is important that a lot of you have pointed out is that, a lot of people, you can send all the forms you want to their house, and they either won't or can't fill out the forms. And we know that in some cases, almost—and maybe even without an attempt to deceive, people have gotten census forms if they have a vacation home or two homes, so that ironically, the most overcounted people tended to be upper income people who would be the least likely to benefit from a lot of these investments, and they might have innocently filled out the forms twice, not necessarily wanting to be overcounted, and just done it.

So I think that that's—the other thing is to point out that people are moving all the time, and sometimes people aren't home, and sometimes somebody is home and somebody is not, which means that even if you thought sending out 10 million people to physically count the other 200 and—how many people did you say we were—268 million of us—it may not be physically possible to do. So that even if you could do it, even if we could put 10 or 15 or 20 million people on the street for a couple of months, it might do no more of an accurate job than a very good sample.

The only place I know that probably got a good head count recently—well, you may have seen the press, where they have a much more controlled society, where people don't get to move around on their own, is Iraq, where they shut the whole country down for a day. You remember that? Nobody moves; everybody stays home; kids have to play in front of their house—stay there. That doesn't seem to me to be a practical alternative for us. [*Laughter*]

Glenda.

[*Ms. Joe said it was necessary to convince citizens that the accuracy derived from statistical sampling would serve their self-interest. Reverend Clemons agreed that minorities were reluctant to answer the census because they believed the information would do harm rather than good and that reversing that perception was essential. Dr. Mindiola stated that the census was not a political issue since people who were not willing to fill out a census form were also not likely to vote. Dr. des Vignes-Kendrick commended facilities such as the Magnolia Multi-Service Center and underscored the need for accurate census data in order to more fully serve their communities. She stated that if census data could be demonstrated to link service, resources, and opportunity to the community, participation would increase.*]

Mr. Moreno. Mr. President, we're about out of time, but we did want to thank you tremendously for your visit to the East End of Houston. This is a real historic visit. It's my understanding that you're the first President since FDR to visit and so——

The President. Is that right?

Mr. Moreno. Hopefully, it won't be that long again.

The President. Thank you. Let me say one other thing. I would like to close this—thank

you all for your participation, and thank all of you—but I would like to close by putting this issue even in a larger context if I might, just to close.

To me, having an accurate census is a big part of having a strategy for racial reconciliation in America and building one American community that works. Why? Because if people feel they're undercounted, and they don't get—their children don't get the help they need, whether it's an education or health care or whatever—it will breed, inevitably, a sense of resentment, a sense of unfairness, a sense that people aren't really part of the mainstream and the future. And this is really important.

I know a lot of people think I'm obsessed with this, but I think the fact that we are growing more diverse as the world gets smaller is an enormous, enormous asset for the United States in the 21st century if we really live together on terms of the quality and harmony and cooperation—and if we're growing together, not being split apart.

But if you look at what I have to spend my time doing as your President when I deal with countries around the world, how much of it is dealing with people who are burdened down with group resentments? Why were we all rejoicing when the Irish voted for the peace accord? Because the Catholics and the Protestants had given up their group resentment to work together for a unified future. What is the problem in Kosovo, a place that most Americans had never heard of before a few months ago? Ethnic Albanians and Serbs fighting over group resentments. What was Bosnia about? The same thing. What is going on in the Middle East? What is the dynamic within India now? It's just all in the news because of the nuclear test, where you have a Hindu party claiming that the Hindus historically have been insufficiently respected and oppressed by the Muslim minority, and you have group resentments.

I mean, this whole world is so full of people's resentments because they think that the group they're a part of is not getting a fair deal from everybody else if they happen to be bigger or richer or whatever.

We have—with all of our problems in America—we have slowly, steadily, surely been able to chip away at all of the those barriers and come together. That, in the end, may be the largest issue of all about the census: Can we succeed in building one America without knowing who we are, how many we are, where we are, and what kind of situation we're living in? I think the answer to that is, it will be a lot harder. And if we do it right, we'll be a lot stronger.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. at the Magnolia Multi-Service Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Lee Brown of Houston; State Senators Mario Gallegos, Jr., and Rodney Ellis; State Representative Gerard Torres; Jew Don Boney, Jr., president, Houston City Council; Robert A. Eckels, Harris County Commissioners Court; and President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Reception in Houston

June 2, 1998

Thank you so much. First, let me join in thanking Richard and Ginni for welcoming us into their magnificent home and this magnificent art gallery. [*Laughter*] You know, it's amazing how you use cliches year-in and year-out, and sometimes something happens that it gives whole new meaning. This lunch has given a whole new meaning to the Democratic Party as the party of the big tent. [*Laughter*] It's really very, very beautiful, and we're grateful to you.

I want to thank all the Members of Congress who are here, all the candidates for Congress who are here; my great longtime friend Garry Mauro; and Jim Mattox and Ann Richards, who had to go. And I thank you, B.A. Bentsen, for being here, and thanks for giving us a good report on Lloyd.

Ladies and gentlemen, what was just said about Martin Frost is true and then some. Right before I came up here, I was sitting down there,

and Mary—[*inaudible*]—asked me about my dog, Buddy. I don't know if you've ever had a Labrador retriever, but they're smart, and they're loving, but, Lord, are they insistent. [*Laughter*] And about once a day my dog comes into the White House, to the Oval Office, and he'll go in the back room—he knows where all his toys are—and he'll sort through his toys, and he'll go get his ball, and he comes and throws the ball down at my feet. And you know, I could be talking to Boris Yeltsin on the phone—[*laughter*]—but he doesn't care. He just starts barking. [*Laughter*] The whole Federal budget could be an issue. Buddy doesn't care. He just starts barking. [*Laughter*] And he'll keep right on barking until I go out and throw that ball with him for a while.

That's the way Martin Frost is about these events. [*Laughter*] If I'd had thought about it, I'd have called Buddy "Martin." But I say that out of real admiration, because somebody's got to do this work—somebody's got to do this work. In 1996 we would have won the House back if we hadn't been outspent in 20 close districts in the last 10 days, about 4 to 1. That's not an exaggeration. Now, we had a long way to come back, and we had to spend some money along the way, and it's not going to be that bad this time. But Martin Frost understands that.

And this is a completely thankless job. In Texas, at least you can express your appreciation for him, you can support, you know. But he's out there helping people in Connecticut, in Colorado, in Washington, Wisconsin, and California. And it's a completely thankless job except to people who understand that the future of the country is in large measure riding on our ability to be competitive in a lot of these races. So I want to say—I make a lot of fun of Martin barking at me, but I love him for doing it. And I thank you, sir, for what you've done.

I'd also like to remind everybody that this is not just an election year; it's an election in which there are high stakes and important issues. I have done my best to not only turn the country around but to do it with a Democratic Party that was rooted in our oldest values and pointed toward the 21st century. A lot of you in this room have helped me to do that. I'd like to say a particular word of appreciation to Bill White for what he's done as chairman of the Democratic Party here and what he did in my administration. And a thank you for over 25 years of friendship to my friend Billie Carr, who is just celebrating her 70th birthday, but she doesn't look it. And I love you for it.

Keep in mind what people—what the Republicans used to say about the Democratic Party. In 1992, when I ran for President, I thought they might get away with it one more time. You know, they, after 12 years of stewardship of the country, we had to quadruple the national debt, and they said, "Well, it's only because of the Congress," even though the Democratic Congress had, in fact, appropriated slightly less money then the Presidents had asked for in the previous 12 years. But they had one-half the country convinced that we couldn't be trusted with the economy; we couldn't be trusted with the deficit; we couldn't be trusted with taxes; we couldn't be trusted with welfare, or crime, or the management of the foreign policy of the country, or anything else that amounted to anything to a lot of Americans.

And when I presented my economic program in which then Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen was spearheading in 1993, a lot of the leaders of the Republican Party, including a certain Senator from Texas, said that if you do this, it will bring on a recession; it will increase the deficit. Well, we're about to have the first surplus since Lyndon Johnson was President, and it's not an accident that he was a Democrat, too.

So the first thing I want to say is that all the people here who helped me—Mayor Brown, who was my drug czar; Bill was in the Energy Department; a lot of you just helped in the Congress and the administration—you should be proud of the fact that no one can now say, with the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 30 years, the lowest interest rates in 32 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, and the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the biggest expansion of trade in American history—no one can say that the Democrats cannot be trusted with the economy or with social policy or with the safety of our streets.

And all of you played a role in that. And I'm proud of the success that the country has had, but I think it's also important to say that as we look ahead we have to say, what else still needs to be done for the 21st century? Because elections are always about the future, and the fact that you did a good job in the time you were given, all that means is that that's

some evidence that you might do a good job if you get another term.

So we have to continue to press our agenda for the future. And I'd just like to remind you that these are important things that affect every American. There are people up in Washington that want to spend the surplus before it's materialized. I don't want to spend one red cent of it until I know that we have saved the Social Security system for the 21st century so we don't bankrupt our kids when the baby boomers like me retire. That's an important thing to do.

I believe and I think you believe that we will never have the America we want, where everybody can participate in this prosperity, until we can offer every child a world-class education. That means we have to continue to work on our schools.

We now can say that one of the achievements of this administration is we've now opened the doors of college to everybody who will work for it, with the tax credits, the scholarships, the grants, the work-study program, the AmeriCorps program. We've done that. Now what we have to do is to improve our public schools and give our kids the tools they need to succeed. We've got an agenda of smaller classes and more teachers and higher standards and computer technology for everyone. That's our agenda. And we're fighting, and there are differences between the parties on this issue.

We have a health care agenda. We ought to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, and I am impatient that it hasn't already passed through this Congress.

I was telling the folks around our table at lunch today, I did an event in Washington this week with a woman from Minnesota, a perfectly beautiful woman who came—I had never met her before—and she got up and talked about how she had a lump in her breast 2 years ago. And she asked her HMO to have it checked out, and they took x rays but no biopsy, and they said, "You're fine." Two years later, the lump is still there. She paid for her own biopsy 5 weeks ago—stage two breast cancer. She's going to go in and have surgery, and they say, "You can't have a breast specialist. You can only have a general surgeon." She makes 123 phone calls—123 phone calls—no satisfaction; finally hires her own breast specialist. And when she's under the knife, in surgery, she gets a call finally from the HMO saying, "Well, we'll cover this procedure, but we're probably not going to cover your chemotherapy."

Now, I personally believe it's a good thing that we've gotten into better management of our health care resources. We couldn't continue to have health care costs go up at 3 times the rate of inflation. It would have consumed all the money in the country. But every change we adopt has to be rooted in basic values and the kind of decent things that allow people to build a life, build a family, and hold the society together. That's why we need the Patients' Bill of Rights. That's part of our agenda that we're trying to pass. And it's worth doing.

And I think—if you look at how many people there are in America today that are retired early, some of them have been forced into early retirement, and they can't buy any health insurance. We've got a proposal that doesn't cost the Medicare Trust Fund one red cent to let people who are over 55 years of age, who through no fault of their own lost their health insurance, buy into it—or their kids can help them buy into it. At least they'll have access to some insurance. That's a part of our program.

We've got an environmental proposal before the country that everybody in Texas ought to be for now, because you've been eating all this smoke from these fires that are the direct consequence of El Nino and the climate warming up. And we're going to have more of these unless we prove that we can continue to grow our economy while we reduce the things we do that heighten the temperature of the Earth.

In the 1990's, in this decade alone, the 5 hottest years since 1400 have occurred. This is not some bogus scare issue, this whole issue of climate change. We don't need to be panicked; we need to change our patterns of production in a way that will help us to grow the economy while we reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But also, parenthetically, it would be very good for the natural gas industry in Texas. But that's not why I'm saying it. It's the right thing to do, and we can do it and grow the economy. We have an initiative on that. That's good for the economy, not bad for the economy.

And finally, let me just mention, if I might, two other things. I think it is unconscionable that we have not already passed comprehensive legislation to protect our kids from the problems that are associated with the fact that one-third, now, almost, of teenagers are smoking tobacco even though it's illegal. It's the biggest public

health problem in America. More people die from tobacco-related illnesses than all other conventional forms of problems every year combined. It's illegal for every kid in the country to be able to buy cigarettes. We've got a program before the Congress that passed 19 to one out of a Senate committee, and we can't seem to get a vote on it. And they've promised to kill it in the House. I believe if we could pass it out of the Senate, we could pass the bill in the House, and we can do something historic for public health and for our children's future.

And I don't understand why this is a political issue. Republicans have children just like Democrats. This is not a political issue; this is an American issue. And I hope you will make your voices heard and say, "We may not understand every detail. We may not be able to write every line of this bill, but the American people are smart enough to know that we are either going to do something, or not." And I am determined in this Congress to see that we do something on this tobacco issue. We've been fooling with it for 3 years, and the time has come to act.

Now, that's what we're for. So we've got a good record. The things they used to say about us in Texas so most people thought they could never vote for us aren't true anymore. And we've got the best program for the future. And that's what you're contributing to.

And I just want to leave you with this thought: Many of these Members of Congress and I just came from a neighborhood health center here in Houston, in Gene Green's district, where we met with Hispanics, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, plain old white Anglo-Saxon Protestants like me, a lot of people that look like Houston and that look like America. We talked about the census. I've already said what I have to say about that. We just ought to get an honest count; we ought not to politicize it.

But I was looking at that crowd today and thinking, this is the future of America, and in a world that is smaller and smaller and smaller—where we're only 4 percent of the world's population and we've got 20 percent of the wealth, so if we want to keep it, we've got to be dealing with the other 96 percent of the people—it is a godsend that we are growing more diverse, if we can get along with each other and avoid the kind of group think and group resentment that's caused so much trouble elsewhere in the world.

And in some ways maybe that's the most important reason to be a Democrat today. My heart was rejoicing when the land of my ancestors in Ireland voted for the peace process that a lot of us worked very hard to bring to fruit. What did they have to do? They had to give up group resentments. You now have to read about Kosovo every day in the newspaper like you used to have to read about Bosnia. What's it about? Albanians and Serbs believing that they can't trust each other, and there is group resentment. That's what Bosnia was about. Fundamentally what's holding up the next step of the Middle East peace process? A lack of trust between the two groups. Fundamentally what happened in Africa when 800,000 people were slaughtered in a matter of weeks in Rwanda? Tribal resentments.

I'm telling you, now that we have stripped off the veneer of the cold war, there's still some people that are just miserable if they're not hating somebody for something. And there are a lot of people who don't believe they matter unless they've got somebody to look down on. And then, to be fair, there are a lot of real problems out there that people have had for a long time that would make it hard for you if you were in their shoes to trust people who were different.

Our ability to be a great nation in the 21st century consists in no small measure in our ability to live together here at home. So when people look at us, they do not see the same devils that are tearing their own hearts out. And if we want people to listen to us, in other countries, in other parts of the world, we have to be able to hold up to them a shining light of America where people are judged, as Martin Luther King said, by the content of the character, not the color of their skin, not their religion, not anything else other than whether they show up every day and do their best. That's another thing that our party stands for, and I'm proud of it. And God willing, with your efforts, the American people will ratify it this November.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:44 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Richard and Ginni Mithoff; Texas Attorney General candidate Jim Mattox; former

Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; Texas Land Commissioner Garry Mauro; former Senator Lloyd Bentsen and his wife, B.A.; Representative Martin Frost, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Mayor Lee Brown of Houston.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Dallas, Texas
June 2, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. First of all, Ray—can you hear me? I feel rather pathetic even needing a microphone after the last demonstration of music we had. [*Laughter*] Let me begin by saying that I know I speak for all of us when I say a profound word of thanks to Ray for welcoming us into his home and for bringing his art into this tent and bringing the wonderful music here. This has been a magnificent night, and I have loved it. I love the time you and your daughters took to show me through your home to see your art.

Once, many years ago, before I ever could have known I would be here and you would be here, we would be doing this, I visited you in your office, and you showed me some of your wonderful artwork. And I thank you for being a great citizen and for helping us by having us all here tonight. Thank you so much.

I'd like to thank my good friend of many, many years, Roy Romer, for being here. He is not only the senior Governor in the United States but most people believe the best one. And it is our great good fortune to have him as our chair of the Democratic Party. I thank Len Barrack, who has come all the way from Philadelphia to be here, our finance chairman, tonight; Congressman Martin Frost; my friend of more than 25 years, Garry Mauro; Bill White; and all the cochairs. I thank you. And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to all the people who performed tonight. They were magnificent. And to you, my friend Denyce Graves, thank you for being here. I wish I could stay in Fort Worth and hear your concert.

You know, Ray was talking about the support that Hillary and I have tried to give to the arts. Tomorrow night I'm going back to Washington to have the annual PBS "In Performance" night at the White House. We've had all different kinds of music there. We've had jazz and blues and classical music. One year, we had women in country. Tomorrow night—you can see this on educational television—tomorrow night we're having a gospel fest. And tomorrow night, unlike all the others, I actually picked some of the performers and some of the music. So if you don't like it, you can partially blame me, as well.

But I was thinking—and I saw all those wonderful performers who came from little towns in America, as they were introduced—I don't know if that wonderful man really did come from a town called Resume Speed, South Dakota, but it's a great story. [*Laughter*] And I intend to tell it as if it were true for the rest of the year. [*Laughter*]

But anyway, I was thinking about what Ray said, about the support that Hillary and I have tried to give the arts. We're celebrating the millennium in 2000. It will be the last year of my Presidency. We have devised this great national endeavor called "Honoring the past, and imagining the future," and among the things we're trying to do are to preserve the great treasures of our natural and national heritage, like the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence. We're trying to get record amounts of research into biomedical and other critical areas of research. And we're trying to preserve and elevate the role of the arts in our lives, at the very time when many leaders in the other party still seem determined to de-fund the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

But I don't really want to talk about the funding issue tonight. I want to talk about what lies behind all this. Why do we get a thrill out of seeing some young man or woman stand up and sing as they sang tonight? What is it that moves us when we look at this art, when we walk out there among the magnificent pieces of sculpture? Why do we like it better when we feel elevated and when we feel sort of united by a common bond of humanity that we feel

coming back to us from a piece of artistic genius? Because we know that we feel more alive and we feel better about ourselves, better about other people, and better about life in general when we're feeling and being and reaching big, rather than when we're feeling and being and digging small.

And if you think about a lot of what I have to do as President, a lot of what I try to do, what I really tried to do when I got here was to clean away a lot of the underbrush that was holding America back and to try to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and to build good families and strong communities and make our Nation stronger and reach out to the rest of the world, so that we could be our better selves.

And it may sound kind of corny and old-fashioned and Pollyanna, but I really believe that that's the secret of America's success, that we try to capture every day in some way, in all the work we do and the way we live our lives, the way those performers made us feel tonight. And whenever we don't, we sort of disappoint ourselves, and we disappoint the rest of the world.

So, to me, I'm very grateful that I had the chance to serve in these last 6 years. I'm grateful that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years and the lowest crime rate in 25 years, and we're going to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years. And we've got the highest homeownership in history. I'm grateful for all that. But you've got to understand why I'm grateful for all that. I'm grateful for that because all that means, when you strip it all away, is that people are freer, and they have more capacity to live big lives instead of small ones, to be happy and to give happiness and to find fulfillment, instead of just clawing out a miserable existence in conflict with their fellow human beings.

And that really, I think, is what our party has come to represent. All the things they used to say about us, "Well, you can't trust the Democrats to run the economy or handle the welfare system or get the crime rate down or manage trade or foreign policy or national defense" and all that—all that is gone now. And I'm grateful for that.

But your presence here tonight will help us to take a message into this election season in 1998 about where we're going into the 21st century: What should our agenda be; what is the unfinished business of America; and maybe more important than anything else, what will be the dominant spirit that pervades the Nation's Capital and the Nation's public business?

If you think about where we are and where we still have to go, we've still got a lot to do. Shoot, we haven't balanced the books in 30 years, and I've already got folks up there in Congress trying to spend money we don't have yet. I don't think we ought to spend a nickel of that surplus until we secure the Social Security system well into the 21st century so us baby boomers don't bankrupt our kids and our grandchildren. That's an important thing about the future that will enable us to be big. We're not going to feel very big when all the baby boomers retire and our kids have to pay money they can't afford to support us because we allowed the Social Security system to go bankrupt. So that's a big issue that will enable us to keep going in the right direction.

I think we ought to keep working until we have not only the best system of college education in the world, which we already have, but the best system of elementary and high school education in the world. That's why I'm working for all the smaller classes and the higher standards and the computers for all the kids, and all those things—because the world we live in imposes a heavy penalty on people who cannot learn for a lifetime and gives a rich reward for those who can.

Those of you in Texas have had a very personal experience in the last few weeks with all the residue from the fires in Mexico coming over the skies here. Believe me, it is just a sign of more to come unless we face the fact that the 5 warmest years since 1400 have occurred in the 1990's. All those people that tell you global warming and climate change is some big ruse are not right. We are putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than it can absorb without heating up the planet. We're going to have more extreme events which will manifest itself and more extreme weather conditions, heat and cold and rain and sleet and snow, and more fires in places where they're vulnerable.

We've got to find a way to use American ingenuity and technological advances to prove we can live in closer harmony with the environment and still keep growing the economy. I know we can do that. I believe in the possibility

of America, but it's a big part of our challenge. As I said in Houston earlier today, parenthetically, it's also good for people who are in the natural gas business in Texas. But I say it when I'm other places as well. We have to prove we can do this.

We have to prove that we can maintain the world's best health system and make it available to everybody, and not let managed care be more than it should be, which is managing care. We shouldn't take the care out of managed care. That's why we're for this Patients' Bill of Rights. That's why I think people that lose their health insurance who are older ought to be able to buy into Medicare.

But all these things—all the specifics are not as important to me as the big issue. I'm just trying to do what I think is necessary to take this country into the 21st century with the American dream alive for everybody, with our leadership in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity unquestioned, and with the country coming together instead of being divided.

Look at the foreign policy issues, for example, that it's been my responsibility to deal with as your President in the last few days. Let me just give you a few of them, just in the last 30 days. I went to Geneva, Switzerland, to talk about the trading system we need for the 21st century. Some of my fellow Democrats think we don't need to expand trade anymore. I think we need to expand it faster. There are 4 percent of the population in America, with 20 percent of the income; you don't have to be a genius to figure out we've got to sell something to the other 96 percent of the people if we're going to maintain our standard of living. But we have to do it in a way that helps other people with their lives as well.

Then I went to Birmingham, where we worried about the economic crisis in Indonesia and the political crisis there, and we've been working on the economic challenges that Russia is facing.

I recently came back from Africa, where I went to Rwanda, and we're trying to help them deal with the aftermath of 800,000 people killed in tribal murders, and building up the good things that are going on in Africa at the same time.

And of course, the number one problem—and I could mention many others—I've been for the last month heavily involved in trying to get the Middle East peace talks back on track. We were involved happily in a success in Ireland, where the people voted for peace there, which I'm very proud of. And for the last couple of weeks, I've spent more time than anything else on the tensions between India and Pakistan that were manifested in the nuclear testing by both countries.

But if you back away from all the specifics again and you look at the general problem, what is it? Why did these nuclear tests occur? Because, two things: One, the two nations felt insecure as compared with each other, and for India against China, there wasn't enough trust there; and secondly, they felt they had to define themselves as big in a way that I think is fundamentally negative. I don't think they're more secure now than they were when they set off those nuclear tests. And I think whenever we try to define ourselves as big in a way that's negative, by putting somebody else down or separating ourselves from others, we inevitably pay a price.

One of the reasons I've worked so hard for the last year on this One America Race Initiative, to try to get people together across all the lines that divide us, is I actually believe the increasing diversity of America is, in a fundamental way, our meal ticket to the future in a world that's smaller and smaller and smaller, where there are—I don't know—more than a million people a day being added to the Internet, all these homepages coming on now at rapid rates, 100 million users now. It will be 200 million by the end of the year around the world. There were only 50 websites 6 years ago when I became President—only 50.

In a world that's coming together like that, a country that is both free and economically successful, that has people from everywhere living there, from all walks of life and all kinds of religious and ethnic and racial backgrounds, where things aren't perfect but where we get along and we're driven by values that say we're going to be big, not little; we're going to be united, not divided; we're going to try to let people's spirits flow and unleash them; and we're not going to be small and mean and petty; and we're not going to be caught in the same trap with the people we're trying to help by dividing our power by negative ways, or defining our power in negative ways—that is very important.

And if you really look at all of it, if you go back to the point Ray made, the position we've taken on the role of arts in American life, the importance of pursuing and preserving

the National Endowment for Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities is nothing more than a metaphor for the differences in the two parties approach to national politics today.

Our approach to the future is optimistic. It's united, and it's big. It believes the heart is as important as the mind and that it's important that we go forward together. And we believe that America can only lead the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity if we are a worthy example.

So I'm grateful that the approach we started back in '93 has worked as well as it has. I'm grateful for all the support all of you have given to me and to our party, and I'm grateful for your presence here tonight. But in some ways, the biggest battles are yet to be fought, because sometimes when people enjoy a great deal of success, it makes them downright dumb. How many of us—haven't all of you been—had at least a moment of being downright dumb when you were really successful? Is there a person who is here who can say with a straight face you never had one moment of stupidity in the aftermath of some success you enjoy? Nobody can say that.

So what are we going to do with our success? Are we going to get bigger and bolder and better? I want us to feel as a country the way we felt in this wonderful setting tonight when those great American young people were singing. America should be singing. We've got a lot to be grateful for and a lot to do. And thanks to you, our party has more than an average chance now to be successful in doing our part.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host Ray Nasher; and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Action Against Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia and Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for China

June 3, 1998

Good morning. Secretary Albright and Mr. Berger and I have just had a meeting before Secretary Albright leaves to go to Geneva for tomorrow's meeting of the Permanent Five Foreign Ministers, convened at our initiative, on the situation in South Asia. Our goal is to forge a common strategy to move India and Pakistan back from their nuclear arms race and to begin to build a more peaceful, stable region.

Secretary Albright will speak to our agenda in Geneva in just a moment, and I understand later will be at the State Department to answer further questions. But I'd like to take a few moments to put this problem in its proper context. The nuclear tests by India and Pakistan stand in stark contrast to the progress the world has made over the past several years in reducing stockpiles and containing the spread of nuclear weapons. It is also contrary to the ideals of nonviolent democratic freedom and independence at the heart of Gandhi's struggle to end colonialism on the Indian subcontinent.

Through the START treaties, the United States and Russia are on their way to cutting nuclear arsenals by two-thirds from their cold war height. With our help, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan agreed to return to Russia the nuclear weapons left on their land when the Soviet Union dissolved. We secured the indefinite, unconditional extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Brazil, Argentina, and South Africa each voluntarily renounced their nuclear programs, choosing to spend their vital resources instead on the power of their people. And to date, 149 nations have signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty which bans all nuclear explosions, making it more difficult for nuclear powers to produce more advanced weapons and for nonnuclear states to develop them.

Two years ago, I was the first to sign this treaty at the United Nations on behalf of the United States. The present situation in South Asia makes it all the more important that the Senate debate and vote on the Comprehensive

Test Ban Treaty without delay. The CTBT will strengthen our ability to deter, to detect, and to deter testing. If we are calling on other nations to act responsibly, America must set the example.

India and Pakistan are great nations with boundless potential, but developing weapons of mass destruction is self-defeating, wasteful, and dangerous. It will make their people poorer and less secure. The international community must now come together to move them to a diverse course and to avoid a dangerous arms race in Asia.

In just the last week, NATO, the NATO Joint Council with Russia, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, and today the OAS condemned the tests. That is about 80 other nations who want to work with us to move the world to a safer place.

And we must do more. We are determined to work with any countries who are willing to help us, and we want very much to work with both India and Pakistan to help them resolve their differences and to restore a future of hope, not fear, to the region.

Let me now express my appreciation to China for chairing the P–5 meeting to which Secretary Albright is going. This is further evidence of the important role China can play in meeting the challenges of the 21st century and the constructive Chinese leadership that will be essential to the long-term resolutions of issues involving South Asia.

This is an important example of how our engagement with China serves America's interests: stability in Asia, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, combating international crime and drug trafficking, protecting the environment. At the same time, we continue to deal forthrightly with China on those issues where we disagree, notably on human rights, and there have clearly been some concrete results as a result of this engagement as well.

Trade is also an important part of our relationship with China. Our exports have tripled over the last decade and now support over 170,000 American jobs. But just as important, trade is a force for change in China, exposing China to our ideas and our ideals and integrating China into the global economy.

For these reasons, I intend to renew MFN status with China. This status does not convey any special privilege. It is simply ordinary, natural tariff treatment offered to virtually every nation on Earth. Since 1980, when MFN was first extended to China, every Republican and Democratic President who has faced this issue has extended it. Not to renew would be to sever our economic and, to a large measure, our strategic relationship with China, turning our back on a fourth of the world at a time when our cooperation for world peace and security is especially important, in light of the recent events in South Asia.

This policy clearly is in our Nation's interest, and I urge Congress to support it. Now I'd like to ask Secretary Albright to say a few words about our objectives in Geneva in the days and weeks ahead.

Madam Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.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 Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright. The memorandum on most-favored-nation trade status for China is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Waiver on Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for China

June 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act"), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to the People's Republic of China. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination

that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the People's Republic of China will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determinations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 3, 1998.

NOTE: The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Waiver on Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for Belarus

June 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act"), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the Republic of Belarus will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination. I will submit separate reports with respect to Vietnam and the People's Republic of China.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 3, 1998.

NOTE: The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Waiver on Most-Favored-Nation Trade Status for Vietnam

June 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "Act"), as amended, with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to Vietnam. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 3, 1998.

NOTE: The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the City Year Convention in Cleveland, Ohio
June 3, 1998

The President. Thank you. Well, since 600 City Year members like Lesley and Casey wrote and invited me, I thought the least I could do was to show up. I want to thank Lesley for that very wonderful introduction and for the terrific letter. I thank Casey for what he said. When he started talking about his mother, I almost started to cry, too. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to thank Harris Wofford and Eli Segal. I'd like to thank Mayor White and Congressmen Stokes and Sawyer for coming with me today. Father Glynn, thank you for making us feel so welcome here at John Carroll. I thank the City Year Board of Trustees for their service, and the county and city officials and State officials here for their service. Thanks again, Lesley and Casey. And let me also say a special word of thanks to Alan Khazei and Michael Brown, the founders of City Year.

I found City Year, you know, back in 1991, when it was a much smaller program, beginning in Boston. And I was there as a candidate for President with about a one percent name recognition in Massachusetts. And so I had a lot of time on my hands. [*Laughter*] And I spent the better part of a day, as I recall, talking to the young people in City Year.

I wanted to be President because I felt that our country needed to take a new course if we were going to prepare for the 21st century so that for all of you the American dream of opportunity would be alive for everyone who was responsible enough to seize it; so that our country would still be the leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity and security in the world; and so that we would come together across all the lines that divide us into one America, bound in no small measure by citizen service.

Now, since 1991 and the election of 1992, my belief that our country could do better has certainly been vindicated. I am grateful beyond measure that, thanks to people like you and my friends in Congress and Americans throughout the country, we've been able to change America. I'm grateful that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rates in 25 years. I'm grateful.

But what I want to say to you today is that all of these achievements basically leave us free to chart the right course for America toward the 21st century. Part of it must be done in Washington; part of it must be done in the hearts and minds and lives of our citizens, where the greatness of America has always resided.

One of the things I think I ought to mention today, because it's so timely in Washington, is that we have a chance to pass comprehensive legislation to protect young people from the dangers of tobacco, and we ought to do it and do it right away. I just came from an elementary school here in Cleveland where I met a lot of City Year/AmeriCorps volunteers. They had worked with young children in this elementary school, the Stephen Howe Elementary School, to write 1,500 book reports this year, to build a new playground.

But one of the things I'd like for every child in that grade school to know is this: Smoking-related illnesses kill more people every year than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murder, suicides, drugs, and fires combined—combined. And 90 percent of all smokers started before they were 18, even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to children under 18. Three thousand young people start smoking every day; 1,000 will have their lives shortened because of it. So I say again, while there are some in Congress who seem determined to stall, stop, or kill the tobacco bill, we will never have a better chance to save 1,000 lives a day and save a million kids in the next few years. And I hope you will help me send a loud message back to Washington, DC, to act and act now.

There are a lot of other things that we are working on back there that will shape the world you will dominate as adults. We're about to have our first balanced budget and a surplus in 29 years, and before we spend a penny of it, I want us to make sure we know how we're going to save Social Security so we don't bankrupt your generation when my generation retires. It's not right.

While we're strong and prosperous, I want us to do everything we can to invest in education so that not only our colleges but our grade schools, our junior high schools, and our

high schools are the best in the country and every child of whatever race or income or station in life can get a world-class education starting at kindergarten.

I want the Congress and the country to accept changes in the Earth's climate as real and commit ourselves to reduce the problem of global warming, even as we continue to grow the economy. We have to face the environmental challenges of the 21st century, and the sooner we get at it, the better off we're going to be.

There are many other things I want the Congress to do in health care and campaign finance reform and adopting the initiative that the First Lady and I have tried to advance for a 21st century fund to put money into research, in biomedical research and scientific research to build the next generation of the Internet, and also to preserve our precious natural heritage.

But I will tell you this. If America hasn't learned anything from you in the last 4 years since we've had the AmeriCorps program going, we should have learned that in the end, we will never be the country we ought to be, we will never meet the challenges that are there before us, we will never fully seize the opportunities that are there, until America believes in and practices citizen service.

As I said, when I started running for President in 1991, I had this idea—but it was just an idea in my mind—that we had two big problems. We needed more idealistic, energetic young people out there working on our communities—helping to solve problems at the grassroots level and touching other children one on one, helping people that would otherwise be forgotten, going to places where the private economy would not otherwise send them—and we also needed to open the doors of college to everyone. So I had this general idea, and then when I went to City Year in Boston, the lights came on in my mind, and I said, "This is what I want to do."

You know, out of the national service of our soldiers in World War II came the GI bill, which educated a whole generation of my parents and created the great American middle class. Out of the all too short service of President Kennedy came the Peace Corps, which took the idea of citizen service around the world. And I still see it as I travel for America, our best ideas and our greatest humanity manifest in these Peace Corps volunteers all across the world. I saw them recently when I was in Africa.

Out of AmeriCorps has come a blending of the two, taking the idea of service and the idea of education. It's almost like the Peace Corps comes home, in larger numbers, with a "GI educational bill" for citizen service. That is what we have done.

In only 4 years, nearly 90,000 young people have served through AmeriCorps in their communities; nearly 50,000 have become eligible for the education benefits. This year alone, more than 40,000 AmeriCorps positions are being filled around the country. And every young AmeriCorps volunteer, as anyone else could see from your enthusiasm, typically will generate 12 more volunteers helping on whatever the service is.

Last year AmeriCorps members taught or tutored 500,000 students, mentored 95,000 more, recruited 39,000 more volunteers, immunized 64,000 children, helped with disasters in over 30 States, worked with over 3,000 safety patrols, with local law enforcement and civilian groups, trained 100,000 people in violence prevention, built or rehabilitated 5,600 homes, helped put 32,000 homeless people in permanent residences, worked with people with AIDS and other serious diseases, and did a whole raft of environmental projects. Because of AmeriCorps, the Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, America is a better place today.

I am especially proud of our America Reads program, which relies on all our national service programs, because one of the most important things we can do is to make sure every 8-year-old in America—and many of them don't have English as their first language now—can read independently by the time they leave the third grade. It's just terribly important to all other learning.

We now have—I learned this morning just before I came here that we now have over 1,000 colleges and universities that are allocating work-study positions or other volunteers to help make sure that by the year 2000, every 8-year-old can, in fact, read. And a lot of AmeriCorps volunteers have helped to mobilize, organize, and train those tutors, and I am very grateful for that.

I was also proud of the word used in my introduction, "enabling," that I had enabled service. I think that's important because we don't dictate anything about AmeriCorps from

Washington. You know that City Year is a grassroots, community-tied organization, even though it's a national network. We have enabled organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs, the Habitat for Humanity, hundreds of other nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations—6,000 young AmeriCorps volunteers in faith-based organizations this year—to select and use AmeriCorps members to continue and enlarge the work that they are doing.

Here in Cleveland, more than 200 citizens of all ages and backgrounds are serving in 14 different AmeriCorps programs, including those serving with City Year Cleveland. In Cleveland, AmeriCorps does everything from tutoring children to building homes, to organizing neighborhood watches, to cleaning streams. I guess the next message I'd want you to help me send back to Washington today is that AmeriCorps works, and it should be extended by Congress into the 21st century so more young people have the opportunity to do that.

Now, I want to make one other point about AmeriCorps and citizen service. As you bring volunteers to communities in need, you also bring people together. I mean, just look around. The first thing I remember blazed in my mind when I first went to AmeriCorps—to the City Year project in Boston was that there was a young person who had been in an Ivy League school who dropped out of school for a year to work full-time, working side by side with a young person who had gotten in trouble in New Hampshire and the juvenile authorities said, "If you'll go work for City Year, that's the best rehabilitation you could do." They learned a lot from each other, those two young people. And they both did very well in the future as a result of it.

If you look around at this crowd today, it's a pretty good picture of America. And I have always believed that in the 21st century, America would have its greatest days in no small measure because we are growing more diverse as the world grows smaller. So it simply stands to reason that we're better off if we have people who look like people from everywhere in the world, who share their cultures, their language, and their religions, but who are bound together by common devotion to American ideals, to personal responsibility, expressed through constructive citizenship.

I believe that the key to solving a lot of our racial tensions in America is to make sure we keep living together, working together, learning together, and, in some ways most important of all, serving together, giving together. It can unite us across all the lines that divide us. It can even unite us across political lines. And after spending a few days in Washington, I sometimes think those are the deepest divides of all.

Last year I was so honored to be with Presidents Bush and Carter and Ford, Mrs. Reagan, and General Colin Powell at the Presidents' Summit on Service in Philadelphia. Some of you were there. I believe everybody who was there felt this enormous sense of excitement and also a great sense of possibility as we defined an agenda that we wanted every child to be a part of. We wanted every child to have a caring adult in his or her life, a safe place to grow up, a good school to attend, a healthy start in life, and a chance to serve the community.

Now, since that summit we've worked to do our part in Washington. Again, there's some things the Government should do. We've worked to expand health insurance to 5 million children. We've worked to expand access to child care so parents can be more effective at home and at work. We've worked to implement something called the High Hopes mentoring program that will involve young people like you with other kids who are younger, starting in junior high school, for 6 years. And also we'll give you an extra tool; you'll be able to tell those seventh graders, "Look, if you learn, if you stay in school, if you live a good life, I can tell you right now here's how much college aid you will get to guarantee you can go to college when you get out of high school."

We've been helped by corporations, by nonprofits, by other organizations who've committed fabulous sums of money to try to implement this agenda under the leadership of General Powell around the country. We want to do more, because in the end you know and I know from what you're doing that the most important thing we can still do in America with a lot of human problems is to make one-on-one contact and that you can put up all the money in the world, but hands build houses, hands clean streams, hands immunize children. People have to do these things.

So what I want to say today is I'd like to do some more to fulfill the goals of the Presidents' Summit on Service. And the Corporation for National Service is now prepared to commit another additional 1,000 Ameri-Corps leadership

positions targeted only to the goals of the Presidents' Summit. These AmeriCorps volunteers will support these State and local efforts. But you think about it, 1,000 volunteers trained to be leaders of community efforts. Wouldn't you like to know that when you finish and when you start your careers that every American child has a safe place to grow up, a good school, a healthy start, a caring adult, and a chance to serve just like you're doing? I think it's worth our making that effort.

I hope that one of the legacies of this period at the end of the 20th century will be a renewed spirit of community, a renewed sense of idealism, a renewed commitment to service. I hope, in other words, that when I finish my work and you finish yours we will have helped to make real the pledge that you take when you join AmeriCorps in the lives of all Americans. Indeed, I wish every American would take that pledge. I think it might be well again to send that message to the country.

So if you'll help me, I'd like us to conclude with that AmeriCorps pledge. I'll say it, then you say it:

I will get things done for America to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier. I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflicts, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere. I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond. I am an AmeriCorps member. And I am going to get things done.

[*Audience members repeated the pledge line by line after the President.*]

The President. Let me say to all of you, in every generation young Americans are called upon to renew our country, to deepen what it means to be free, to widen the circle of opportunity, to strengthen the bonds of our national community. Because of the progress that has been made in this time, your generation has an incredible opportunity. You can finish the work that was done when I was your age by the people you saw in that video.

Thirty years ago this week, Robert Kennedy was killed. Thirty springtimes ago, we lost both Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Their effort to bring America together and lift America to higher ground was delayed by a lot of the things that happened along the way. But now that we have regained our sense of confidence—that we know we can make our economy work, we know we can make our schools work, we know that we can make our streets safe, we know we can take poor people and give them a second chance and give them a chance to work and succeed in raising their children as well as working, we know that America can be more and better and that we can live up to our highest ideals—your generation will have a chance to make that the history of the 21st century.

I am so proud of you. I can't even convey what it feels like for me to stand here and look into your eyes. I know now that one of the best decisions I ever made was to fight to create AmeriCorps and to fight to keep others from taking it away and to fight to give you the chance to serve.

But remember—remember what you promised in the pledge, that you will serve now and beyond. For when you no longer wear these jackets or T-shirts every day, if you continue to believe and you continue to serve and you continue to have the feelings inside toward your fellow human beings that you have today, then you will write a remarkable history for America in the 21st century. We need you to do that, and I believe you will.

God bless you, and godspeed.

[*At this point, Stephen Spaloss, coexecutive director, City Year Philadelphia, made brief remarks and presented the City Year Lifetime of Idealism Award to the President.*]

The President. Thank you. Let's give him a hand; he was great. [*Applause*] I want you to know that I still have Stephen's sweatshirt, and I'll have it with me forever to remember when I first met him and I first met City Year. You keep it with you forever, too.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the gymnasium at the Don Shula Sports Center at John Carroll University. In his remarks, he referred to City Year members Lesley Frye of Chicago and Casey Hunt of Cleveland; Eli Segal, president and chief executive officer, Welfare to Work Partnership; Mayor Michael R. White of Cleveland; Rev. Edward Glynn, president, John Carroll University; and Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth.

Remarks at a Reception for Gubernatorial Candidate Lee Fisher in Cleveland

June 3, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen; I am delighted to be here. I'm sorry to have kept you waiting, and I know it's a little warm. If it makes you feel any better, yesterday I was in Dallas. It was 105. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to begin by thanking Mayor White for his truly outstanding leadership in Cleveland. It's been a great pleasure for me to be able to work with the city of Cleveland and to support the initiatives that he has done so much to implement.

I thank my good friend Lou Stokes. I will miss him terribly, and he has done a magnificent job for this city, for all of Ohio, and for the country.

I thank Congressman Tom Sawyer for being here, and I congratulate Stephanie Tubbs Jones, and I wish Mary Boyle well. And Hillary is going to be here for her in a few weeks, and I hope you will all support her. I'd like to say to Michael and Frankie Coleman, I'm glad you're taking this great adventure with Lee and Peggy, and I think you'll be proud of the trip when it's over. And especially to Lee and Peggy Fisher, I thank them for just giving me the opportunity to be here to try to repay in some small measure the friendship and support they have always given to me.

This State, as I'm sure most of you in this crowd today know, has been very, very good to me. In 1992 I officially got enough votes to be nominated on the first ballot of the Democratic Convention when the Ohio primary results were announced, and then when we had the convention in New York, Ohio's votes put me over the top. And then on election night in 92, the election was called after the vote from Ohio came in, and I appreciate that. In 1996 we tripled our victory margin here, thanks to a lot of you in this room, and I thank you for that.

People—all kinds of people from Ohio have been critically important to the success of our administration. There's a wonderful young woman from Cleveland named Capricia Marshall who now runs the White House for us. And Mike White mentioned the tensions we're having now in the Indian subcontinent in the nuclear tests. Dick Celeste is now our Ambassador to India, and we couldn't have a better person there to deal with this very significant problem, and I appreciate that.

So I'm glad to be here, and I'm feeling pretty good about things in our country and about Ohio. I just came from—Mike and I, as he mentioned, were at the national conference of a group called City Year, which is one of our AmeriCorps national service projects. And they have people here in Cleveland, 200 of them, who do everything from tutor in schools to work with seniors to environmental cleanup projects. They represent the spirit of citizen service I've tried to spread across this country. And the young people are also earning credits for college. They can earn money for a year's worth of service to City Year to help them pay for their college tuition. One of the lesser known but perhaps, over the long run, more important achievements of this administration is that now in the last 4 years, 90,000 Americans have given a year or 2 years of their lives to serve in our national service program in community projects like this all across America. So I'm very, very proud of that.

Let me say, I'm here partly because I want to help Lee and Peggy and Michael and Frankie, but mostly because I'd like to do Ohio a favor. I think Lee Fisher becoming the Governor would be doing Ohio as big a favor as Ohio would be doing for Lee Fisher. This is a subject on which I can speak with some authority, because I was a Governor for 12 years before I became President. I had almost gotten the hang of the job before I left it. [*Laughter*] And I can tell you that—the first thing I'd like to say is that it's more important now than it used to be, and I've worked hard to make it that way because, while I have wanted a more aggressive National Government, I've also wanted one that was more focused, more centralized, and that left more decisions about how to achieve our national objectives to Governors and to mayors.

The Federal Government is now 310,000 people smaller than it was when I took office; it's the smallest since John Kennedy was President.

We've eliminated hundreds of programs, thousands of pages of regulations, cut two-thirds of the regulations in the Education Department alone. We have tried to give more freedom to Governors and to mayors. But when you do that, it means the person you elect is more important than he or she used to be. Their judgments matter; their values matter.

And I've known Lee Fisher a long time. I associate him with children, families, public safety, and the future. I named him to be the Chairman of the President's Commission on Crime Control and Prevention. And we have worked on a lot of these issues for a long, long time.

Let me just give you a couple of examples of what I mean. When we signed the balanced budget bill last year, which will produce, by the way, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years this year, one of the lesser known provisions of the bill provided enough funding to the States to extend health insurance coverage to 5 million children who don't have it. Almost all these kids are the children of working families on modest incomes, where they don't get health insurance at work. And we know from painful experience that children who don't have access to good health care run far greater risks of having problems in childhood and later in life.

Now, that's the good news. But the second part of the story is it's up to the States to design and implement a program that will actually work to add 5 million kids to the ranks of the insured and give peace of mind to the couple of million families or so who are the parents of those children.

The next Governor of Ohio will have a heavy responsibility there: Is this program going to be carried out properly or not; is it going to be designed well, or not; what will happen to those children, those families? And if you're on the board of a local hospital, what will happen to you if you have people in emergency care that ought to be getting funded that aren't? Every Ohioan has a stake in this decision.

Let me give you another example. I'm working very, very hard now to pass comprehensive tobacco legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. Three thousand kids a day start smoking, even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to kids; 1,000 will die earlier because of it. More people die from tobacco-related illnesses than die from cancer, AIDS, murders, accidents, and fires combined every year.

Now let's assume we pass the legislation. It will, among other things, require a substantial increase in the tobacco tax, which all the surveys show huge majorities of the American people, including adult smokers, support. But the rest of the story is this: A substantial portion of that money will be given back to the States, and then there will be a laundry list only—not a specific directive but a laundry list—of the kinds of things that the States can spend this money. We're talking major money to a large State like Ohio. One of the things on that list will be to make child care more affordable, one of the most significant challenges we face in the country. Now, there will be all kinds of other things that deal with trying to help kids stay off tobacco or out of trouble and to help build up the quality of health in this State. The Governor will have to make recommendations about how that's going to be spent. To some extent, the Governor will be able to decide, although the legislature will be involved as well. It really matters who's going to be the next Governor of Ohio if we pass this, because this is a huge set of decisions that will affect your lives.

I'll give you another example on which there has been a lot of publicity in this State, and that's welfare reform. I'm very proud to have been involved in now a 6-year effort which has given us, along with an improving economy, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years. But there's a twofold objective here. You don't just want to move people off the welfare rolls. You want people who used to be on welfare to be successful as workers and to be successful as parents.

We just passed a new transportation bill, by the way. It provides a lot of funding to help people who are very poor who don't have cars get from their homes to their work. But the States have to decide, how is that going to be done, working with the local communities. So it really matters who the Governor is and what the Governor's vision is for making families succeed at home and at work and building a community which we can all pull together.

One final example: We have a great task in this country today to try to continue to lead the world away from this incredible rash of violence and potential violence rooted in ethnic, racial, and religious hatred. It's the new problem at the end of the cold war. And the prospect that that might get mixed with weapons of mass destruction is what troubles people about the

nuclear tests in South Asia. And it's what troubles us when we demanded the inspections in Iraq be complied with, because we don't want to see a country that might foment trouble build up chemical and biological weapons capacity.

In order to continue to do that work, which sometimes has a happy success like the recent vote in Ireland—and I met with a number of Irish Ohioans today who thanked me for our administration's efforts there; which has ongoing importance in our work in the Middle East; which has ongoing importance in our work in the Balkans, where we've got the Bosnian peace process working, but new troubles in Kosovo between the Serbs and the Albanians; and which has special meaning now in South Asia, we have to prove that in America we can set a good example.

And if you look at Ohio and the heartland of the country, if you look at Cleveland, if you look at the diversity of Ohio, if you look at the endless fields that I saw in 1992—the best corn crop I ever saw in my life I saw on the bus trip across Ohio—and you compare and contrast the life that people in small towns and rural areas in Ohio have with the bustling, incredible diversity of Cleveland, it matters that there is a Governor who is sensitive to the importance of that, that Ohio reflect the very best in America, not only the best of our past but the best of our future.

I was talking to some of our folks coming in today about the pivotal role that Ohio played in our country's history between the Civil War and the turn of the last century, when, frankly, if you were a Republican and you fought for the Union Army and you were an officer and you were from Ohio, you had about a 50 percent chance of getting elected President of the United States. [*Laughter*] I mean, you had Grant and Hayes and Harrison and McKinley. By the time they got around to McKinley, I don't think he ever made general, and he still got to be President. [*Laughter*]

But Ohio had a pivotal role. If you think about the 21st century and the fact that your State is generally considered to be a bellwether in so many ways, Ohio will play a pivotal role again. Now, who the Governor is really matters. What kind of people will be in this government? Well, you get a pretty good indication from looking at this team. What will the values be? What will the message be? Will everybody feel that they have a seat at the table? This is very important.

Now, I know you were kind of expecting me to give you a stump speech today, but I want you to think about this because it's a long time between now and the election. And you need to go out and talk to people about this. I know Lee Fisher well. And too often, elections get decided based on slogans. Well, if somebody wants to talk about being tough on crime, he should win that argument. But the thing that I like about him is he's also smart about crime. That is, sure, you have to punish people who are doing dumb things and bad things and evil things and who deliberately hurt other people, but even better is to work with police officers and community leaders and concerned parents to keep our children out of trouble in the first place. So you want somebody that understands these things, that has character, depth, experience.

And I think—I would just like to ask you—I thank you for contributing to this campaign; it makes a big difference. But I think there's something going on today in our politics which are very important. Yesterday we had a raft of elections in America, and there were any number of campaigns where the person who won did not, as it happens, spend the most money. They had to have enough money, and that's why I'm glad you're here. [*Laughter*] You have to have enough to be heard. But there were many places where the person with the most money didn't win yesterday because the people who won were thought to be more closely connected, more deeply rooted to the communities, more in tune with what people wanted and the better future that we're all trying to build. And I make no judgment about the outcome of any of those primaries. I just think that's an interesting thing for me to tell you because what that means is that voters are taking their responsibility seriously in this election. I think that is a good thing for Lee Fisher.

But you have to go about and talk about these things I shared with you. And remember, it will have a lot to do with what 21st century Ohio looks like, what your children and your grandchildren have to look forward to. And I believe that if you work hard, you're going to win, and when you do, you can be very, very proud.

Thank you. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. at the Cleveland Playhouse. In his remarks, he referred to Cuyahoga County Prosecuting Attorney Stephanie Tubbs Jones; Mary Boyle, candidate for U.S. Senate; Michael Coleman, candidate for Lieutenant Governor, and his wife, Frankie; and Lee Fisher's wife, Peggy.

Remarks at WETA's "In Performance at the White House"
June 3, 1998

First, welcome to the White House and to another year of celebrating the beauty, the power, the diversity of American music. All our music is an important part of our national heritage. We must and we're going to do more to celebrate it as we move forward toward the millennium.

We've had in this White House, since I've been privileged to be here, jazz music and classical music, country music and rock music, rhythm and blues. We've had just about everything you can imagine. But tonight we celebrate music that is truly an American gift. Wedded to the powerful message of faith and conviction, gospel lifts our hearts and minds and soothes our souls, calms our spirits.

Gospel grew out of the musical traditions of Africa. Its roots were nourished by the blood, the sweat, the tears of millions of people who were held captive in slavery. Throughout this century, particularly during the civil rights era, the amazing grace of gospel music has been a sustaining force for countless Americans. It's a voice of hardship and hope, of pain and triumph.

And as we'll see tonight, gospel music's appeal now embraces Americans of very many different backgrounds and religious affiliations. Tonight we have with us people with great voices and great hearts: the Morgan State University Choir; Phil Driscoll; Mickey Mangun and the Messiah Singers from Louisiana; and our terrific mistress of ceremonies, CeCe Winans.

CeCe has an extraordinary ability to blend the wide range of popular styles into traditional gospels. She and her brother BeBe did a wonderful job at my Inaugural church service. She's had a terrific career. She's got a great gift. And I am honored to welcome her here tonight to begin this wonderful performance.

CeCe, come on out.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Phil Driscoll and Mickey Mangun. The performance was videotaped for later broadcast on PBS television.

Remarks at the SAVER Summit
June 4, 1998

First let me say a special word of thanks to the Members of Congress who are here and especially those who sponsored the legislation which created this summit. I thank Governor Allen and Secretary Herman for doing their sort of bipartisan introduction thing. I couldn't help wondering what all of us look like up here to all of you. [*Laughter*] I bet we look like a bunch of schoolboys in the spelling bee dying for the recess bell. [*Laughter*] But this has actually been rather—it's been enlightening for me.

The most encouraging thing of all that was said to me, from a purely selfish point of view, was when the Speaker said, "If I got to be 50, I could look forward to living another 30 years." Yesterday I was in Cleveland, and I went to an elementary school to see some work that some of the AmeriCorps volunteers are doing, and I was shaking hands with all these little kids. And it really is true that they say the darnedest things. And this young boy was 6 or 7 years old, maybe, a little bitty boy, and he

said, "Are you the real President?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "And you're not dead yet?" [*Laughter*] And I realized—I didn't know what he meant. First I thought he'd been reading the local newspaper here. [*Laughter*] And then I realized that to him the President was George Washington or Abraham Lincoln, and he actually thought it was a qualification of the job that you had to be deceased to hold it. [*Laughter*] It was an amazing encounter. But now I've been reminded of the actuarial tables, and I'm ready to go back to work. [*Laughter*]

Let me say just a couple of words by way of introduction. Most of what should be said has already been said and very eloquently, and I thank all the previous speakers. But I would like to make one point that has been alluded to, but I want to try to drive it home.

We're living in a time where we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, the smallest Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in history. And we're about to have a balanced budget and a surplus for the first time in 29 years. This has given this country enormous self-confidence. We know that when we work together, we do get things done. We do not know when we'll have a time like this again.

All of our reading of human history teaches us that nothing ever stays the same forever. If we can't deal with this issue now, when will we ever deal with it? We have an obligation to deal with this challenge and deal with it now. And we have an opportunity to do so.

The balanced budget has freed up capital. It's led to an increase in—the efforts at fiscal responsibility have led to a significant increase in our national savings rate, even as individual savings has gone down. And that's been very good to this point because it's enabled us to have lower interest rates, higher investment, and higher growth. And you see here the relationship between savings and investment and growth, which has already been alluded to. So we've had an increase in net national savings and a decline in the budget rate, and it's led to more growth.

But the problem is that we have to have more personal savings as well. And we have to deal with the problems presented especially by Social Security and by the fact that there are 50 million Americans without private pensions and by the fact that very few people are doing any savings above Social Security in whatever pension they have or don't have for their own retirement. So this is a deeply personal issue that Senator Lott, I thought, grippingly discussed, and it's also a big issue for our country.

We have the opportunity and the obligation, I believe, to deal with a lot of our other long-term challenges. But a lot of our other long-term challenges affect our children and affect children who have a poverty rate much higher, almost twice as high as senior citizens. Unless we deal with this issue, unless we nail down Social Security for the 21st century and stabilize it, and unless we deal with the need for more private pension coverage, and unless we deal with the need for more savings, it will also—make no mistake about it—it will impair in a direct financial way our ability to fulfill our responsibilities to our children who are living in difficult circumstances and who now we can help to chart a different future, and eventually it will undermine the self-confidence we're now enjoying, and it will make people very short-sighted again when we could be dealing with these issues that will shape the future 10, 20, 30, 50 years from now. So I think it's a very, very important thing.

And the answer to Senator Lott's question, let's begin with Social Security. And I want to thank him for what he said and for what he said to me in private. And to both the Speaker and Senator Lott and the other Democratic leaders of the Congress, I believe, while I think this SAVER Summit should keep meeting, I don't believe we should wait until all of your meetings, years in advance, to deal with the Social Security issue. The demographics are too clear. We now have until 2032 before it starts to run a deficit, but that's very misleading. With modest changes now, we can have huge impacts later. If you wait, the closer you wait, the more dramatic the changes you have to make just to pay the bills.

So my view is that we should continue to have these forums around the country, these bipartisan forums; we should continue to solicit advice; but our goal ought to be to have the Congress take up Social Security reform as the first order of business early next year and finish in the first half of 1999, saving Social Security for the 21st century, so that we baby boomers do not bankrupt our children in their ability

to raise our grandchildren. And my commitment is to try to get that done on that timetable.

In order to do it, I have to say I still believe that we have to resist two temptations with the budget surplus. The first temptation is to say, "Well, it's large and projected to be growing," and maybe I've just been in executive positions too long in public life, but those projections don't mean a lot because sometimes they don't pan out.

Now, we've been real lucky for the last 5 years; all our projections have been too conservative, and we've done better than we've projected. But I think the first thing we have to do is to resist the tendency to spend the surplus on spending or tax cuts until we have dealt with the Social Security issue. The second thing I think we have to do is to resist the temptation to take one thing, even it seems like a very good thing to a large number of people, like the individual accounts, and deal with that without knowing how you're going to deal with the whole system. So what my view is—that we ought to say that we're going to pass comprehensive reform. And I don't rule in or out any ideas here on that. That's not my purpose. And I solicit all of your ideas.

But I just think it would be a big mistake, knowing what the magnitude of the money we're talking about is, to miss this chance to say we're going to hold on to this surplus until we pass comprehensive reform. Then if there is money over and above that after we do this—I hope in early 1999—we can have a wonderful, old-fashioned American political debate about what the best way to proceed is, whether we should cut taxes, invest the money, pay down the debt. We can have that debate. But I think we should commit ourselves again to the idea that saving Social Security first is the right policy for America and the right thing for the 21st century. And I hope we will do that.

Now, let me say, in addition to that, we have some very specific proposals which I think respond at least in part to the concerns which were raised by earlier speakers on pension matters. The Vice President mentioned the Retirement Protection Act, which passed, I believe, with an almost unanimous vote in Congress in late 1994, to protect the pension benefits of more than 40 million workers. But I want to build on that.

In the balanced budget proposal that I have presented to Congress, I proposed to offer tax credits to small businesses who start pension plans to help them deal with the problems, the costs that you mentioned of starting it, starting the programs up and getting the advice. It could be worth, I think, in the first year, about $1,000 for small business, which should cover the costs involved in the startup.

It would encourage employers who don't provide pension plans to give workers the option of contributing to IRA's through payroll deductions, the budget would. The budget also cuts the vesting period for 401(k)'s from 5 years to 3 years. Eventually—I'll make a prediction—it may not happen in our time here, but eventually we will have to figure out how to have people paying, investing continuously, no matter how frequently they change jobs, because you're going to have—if you look at all modern advanced societies, you have a higher and higher percentage of people doing part-time work, you have a higher and higher percentage of people doing more than one job, and you have more rapid turnover. You have a very high rate of vitality and activity in the business community. It means a lot of places being started, but the more businesses that start, the more you're going to have that also won't go on, that won't make it. And in the increasingly churning, dynamic world, we are going to have to focus very carefully on that.

This is something I believe, by the way, that I think the SAVER Summit could really work on in the years ahead because of the congressional legislation, you know, having you meet again in a couple of years and then again in a couple of years after that. But for right now—we know enough now to know we can preserve financial stability in a responsible way and cut this vesting period from 5 to 3 years. And I hope very much that we'll be able to do that in the budget discussions with the legislation that passes this year.

Finally, there's an easy-to-administer, defined benefit plan that's part of our budget proposal, and I hope the Congress will pass that.

Also, in an effort to encourage more workers to enroll in the 401(k)'s that are already available to them, we have made it clear that employers can automatically enroll workers in the 401(k) plans unless the workers themselves choose to opt out. Now currently, most companies require the employees to opt in to the 401(k) plans,

a process that takes some time and some paperwork. Companies that have cut out the paperwork with automatic enrollment policies that then the employees can opt out of report participation rates of about 90 percent, as compared with an overall participation rate of 67 percent for companies offering 401(k)'s. So that's something that you will discuss. It sounds like a small thing, but it's one thing that can really affect a very large number of people in getting them into the business of saving for their own retirement.

Let me just say, lastly, we all know we have to do more about personal savings. We have worked together in a bipartisan way to expand the availability of IRA's and the attractiveness of them so that people could invest in IRA's and then withdraw tax-free if the money were used for education purposes or health emergencies or other things of that kind. But we need, clearly, to do more. And this is an area where, quite apart from the 401(k) issues and the pension areas, I invite you to give your best ideas to the administration and to the Congress, because—let me just give you an idea of what a difference it could make. A person who could afford to save $5 a day for 40 years would have $300,000 by the time he or she retired, at just a modest return, above and beyond Social Security and pensions. Young people have a unique opportunity, if we can get it into their minds early: If you save $2,000 a year beginning at age 25 and you retire at 65, you have $328,000; if you wait until you're 45 to start, you only have $78,000. So that really matters.

And let me finally say that—let me begin—let me end where I began. This is a moment of real self-confidence for our country. People have the emotional space to think about the long term. If you just think about your own businesses, your own families, raising your kids; if your child is sick and you're really worried and your child is 10 years old, it's hard to work up the emotional space to think about where your child is going to college and how much it will cost. If you think you can't pay the electric bill at your business, it's pretty hard to think about whether you're going to buy a piece of expensive equipment next year that will make you productive 5 years from now.

Events intrude on nations just as they do on people in their individual, personal, and business lives. We have been given a gift, and we have to use it. This is a wonderful moment, but it is a moment of responsibility that we dare not squander.

Some of you probably know this, but it makes the point, finally, that if we have a saving nation, it means we have a nation of people who think about the future and who believe in it. When Benjamin Franklin died—you know, "a penny saved is a penny earned"—he left £2,000 sterling to the cities of Boston and Philadelphia, with only one caveat: Nobody could spend any of it for 200 years. By 1990, the £2,000 sterling had matured into $6.5 million, quite conservatively invested.

By leaving that money to people 200 generations removed from himself and his family—I mean, 200 years removed, Benjamin Franklin made a simple, powerful, eloquent statement that he believed in the promise of America, he believed in the future of America, and he was prepared to contribute to it in a truly astonishing way. Well, we don't have to ask the American people to save for 200 years, but we do have to make sure they can think about tomorrow and prepare for it. And this is a magic moment to do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel to participants in the national summit on retirement income savings authorized by the Savings Are Vital for Everyone's Retirement (SAVER) Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–92), to be convened again in 2001 and 2005. In his remarks, the President referred to former Gov. George Allen of Virginia.

Remarks to the Democratic Leadership Council National Conversation
June 4, 1998

Thank you, Antonio, for that wonderful introduction. Thank you, Senator Lieberman, Governor Romer, Al From, and Will, and all the other folks here from the DLC. I thank Governor Carper and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, all the other elected officials who are here. I thank Jill Docking for her work on this important project.

And let me say, I'm very glad to be here, and I wish that I could sit here for a couple of hours and listen to you, instead of the other way around. I find I nearly always fail to learn things when I am doing the talking. But I am honored to be here. And I just took a little picture in the next room with the elected officials who are here, and I was thinking that we have come a long way since 1984, a long way since the New Orleans Declaration, a long way since Cleveland, and that all of you should be very proud to be a part of a growing national movement that at the same time is bearing faithfully our most treasured American traditions and ideas.

I think it's worth remembering that in the early 19th century when the Democratic Party—when the term began to be used, very often the term was shortened from "Democratic Party" to just "Democracy"; people used to refer to our predecessors as the Democracy, because we believed we were representing all Americans. And I think that that may be a better name for us now, even than it was then. Our party is again a party of hope, a party of the future, a party that empowers individuals and gives them a chance to be part of a larger national progress and unity.

The credo of Andrew Jackson's day that I've heard Al From say a thousand times, "opportunity for all, special privileges for none," is still a big part of what we believe. Thomas Jefferson believed that we needed more freedom and more responsibility, and that's still what we believe. Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman believed that America had to lead in this increasingly interdependent world if we wanted to advance the cause of freedom and peace and prosperity and security. That's still what we believe.

And we have fundamentally, especially here at the DLC, been a group of Democrats committed to ideas. And in that sense, we have embraced one of the central gems of wisdom of the greatest Republican President, Abraham Lincoln, who, in a very eloquent series of statements that I'm sure many of you remember by heart, reminded us that we could never build our country up by tearing others down. I am proud to be a New Democrat with all of you.

We have called our approach "the third way," with a Government that is more active, more effective, less expensive; one that can bring us together and move us forward, not drive us apart and set us back.

I am profoundly grateful to the American people that in two Presidential elections we have been entrusted with the leadership of the country into the 21st century. I believe it is not an accident that this has happened. I do not believe it is a figment of the fertile imagination of me or any political expert that worked for us. I think this happened because we had good ideas that were rooted in old values; that we were able to tell the American people in a convincing way that we could transform our Nation, and in the process transform our party, in a way that would enable us to do the eternal business of America; that in the face of new challenges and new opportunities we would find a way to change while still anchored in our basic values; and that we could bring good results to the American people.

That is what I think brought about those two election victories. And I believe that history, when people look back on it, will show that. And in that sense, every one of you who have been a part of all we have done here for more than 10 years, and especially since the issuance of the New Orleans manifesto, can really take a lot of pride in the good things that have happened to America. We are, in effect, building an American example for the new millennium right now.

Now, just think how far we've come. Think about how America was in 1990, in 1991. We not only had problems, we were not only drifting apart and stagnating economically and our social problems were deepening, but there was

a real belief on the part of many people that nobody was really concerned enough to do anything about it. And more and more we had folks in the other party saying, "Well, there's a reason we're not concerned. We can't do anything about it, because Government is the problem, and we just have to let this stuff happen, and if we don't, it will just get worse. If we try to make it better, it will just get worse."

And you remember all their speeches, "The Democrats would mess up a two-car parade," and all that sort of thing. That was the basic prevailing conventional wisdom that they tried to hammer home: "So, yes, we have these problems, but we really can't deal with them because Government is inherently the problem. Now, if you trust the Democrats, they'll just make it worse by trying to help."

And then, to make the climate worse, there were politicians who really tried to make these social differences in our country bigger, when I'm trying so hard to make them smaller. Every time they saw a point of tension in our society, they saw that as an opportunity for what the professionals call "wedge issues." And there were even people who believed, looking at all this, that our country was in some sort of long-term decline. And all the experts believed—the political experts believed that it would be a very, very long time before any Democrat could be elected, because the other party said, "Government is inherently bad, and besides that, the Democrats can't run the economy, manage foreign policy. They're weak on crime, weak on welfare, and they'll run the deficit up. It will be a disaster." You remember all that.

Where is all that? It's all gone. What drove it away? Reality. [*Laughter*] You should be proud of that. You should be proud that you have been a part of that. We tried in this administration to be faithful to what we said in Cleveland in 1991, to stay with the themes of opportunity and responsibility and community. We've tried to make sure that our ideas were driven by our values, and our politics were driven by our policies, not the other way around. This really has been an administration of ideas.

Yesterday I had the pleasure to go celebrate one of those ideas. I went to Cleveland to the national convention of City Year, one of our AmeriCorps affiliates. I saw 1,000 young people that are changing the futures for tens of thousands of other people all across America. It's been a stunning success. Nearly 90,000 young people have now come into national service in the last 4 years. And over half of them have earned the credits to go to college; that was a very essential part of the DLC idea of national service and earning money for education. And it is making America a better place. If you didn't read about it, it's only because no one had a fight or called anyone a name. But it actually happened yesterday, and it was quite wonderful. And it was very, very moving to see that an idea that all of us nourished for such a long time was actually out there alive.

One of the young men who spoke said, "The first time my mother ever said she was proud of me was when I became an AmeriCorps volunteer and I started working with children." A young man that I met 7 years ago in Boston when I was running for President came up and reminded the audience that he'd given me the T-shirt off his back—the sweatshirt off his back so I'd never forget the service project he was involved in. And I kept it and ran in it and still have it to this day. And he kept the service to this day; he now does it full-time.

There are young people like this all over America. How did this happen? It happened because the DLC developed this concept of national service. We had an election; it was part of the election debate; and the Congress ratified the judgment of the people in the election of 1992. And it changed America. There are lots of other ideas like this.

The DLC talked a lot about reinventing Government and how we had to change the way Government worked and brought in a lot of people to actually go through the details of it. And a lot of that is kind of boring, you know, and it doesn't make great high-flown lines in speeches. But a huge percentage of the savings that we will enjoy over the next 5 years that are helping us to balance the budget came because of the reinventing Government efforts that the Vice President led. And we now have over 300,000 fewer people, and 16,000 pages of unnecessary regulations gone, and more than 250 programs gone, and 640,000 pages of internal rules gone. We saved a lot of trees—[*laughter*]—with this RIGO movement. It's worked. The efforts have saved $137 billion. Years ago, reinventing Government was a New Democrat idea. Today, it's an American success story. You ought to be proud of that.

If you think about community policing, we just celebrated the fact that we're ahead of

schedule. We've now funded 75,000 of our 100,000 community police that we promised in the campaign of 1992, a DLC idea. We're ahead of schedule and under budget. What was a New Democratic idea is now an American success story. The crime bill with the community policing, the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, the prevention efforts to do smart things in local communities with community leaders—all these things were part of the original, tough, smart crime package of the DLC. They were New Democratic ideas; now they're American success stories.

We promised to ease the burden of taxes for working people, to reward work, to lift millions of working families out of poverty. When we doubled the earned-income tax credit, we made the American dream real for people who work full-time. We said, "No matter how little you make, you shouldn't live in poverty if you're working full-time and you've got kids in the house." That earned-income tax credit today is worth about $1,000 a year to a family of four. It was a New Democrat idea; now it's part of America's success stories.

There are over 2 million children who have been lifted out of poverty because of an idea that started in a meeting like this held by the DLC and then appeared on a piece of paper and is now a part of the life of the United States. What you do here matters. Ideas matter. Work like this matters.

Now, I could give you lots of other examples. When I became President, I think there was one charter school in America. Today, there are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds. The State of California just voted to take the cap off of the number of charter schools that they could have. It's sweeping America. For most people, it started as an idea being promoted by the DLC.

You can see it in the balance of tough child support enforcement with more support for children in welfare families. You can see it in the family and medical leave law. You can see it in our trade policy, in the empowerment zones and all the other initiatives to bring the spark of enterprise to the inner city. You can see it in the HOPE scholarships, and, yes, you can see it in the balanced budget. They were New Democrat ideas; now they are American success stories.

And what are the results? Just think about it. If I had told you on Inauguration Day in 1993 that in 5½ years, I'd be able to come back here and assert to you that we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, the smallest Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in American history, and, oh, by the way, along the way we opened the doors of college to every American willing to work for it and made dramatic advances for peace and freedom and security in the world, you would have said, "I don't believe it, but if it happens, I'll be proud." You should be proud because you're a part of it.

Now, that brings me to why you're here: because we're not nearly through. We still have to work to expand our own ranks within our party and to win elections with our adversaries in the election process. The American people need to understand even more clearly than they do now what the connection is between these ideas and the early actions that were taken and the consequences that have happened. But the most important thing to remember is this: Elections are always about the future. If all you have done is a good job, you're entitled to a gold watch. Elections are always about the future.

I remember one time in 1990, I was thinking about running for Governor again, and I was out at Governor's Day at the State fair, and I said—this old guy came up to me in overalls. He said, "Are you going to run for Governor again?" And I said, "Well, if I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yeah, I always have." I said, "Well, I've been Governor 10 years. Aren't you sick of me after all these years?" He said, "No, but nearly everybody else I know is." [*Laughter*] And I said, "Well, don't they think I've done a good job?" He said, "Oh, they think you've done a wonderful job, but that's what we paid you for all those years." [*Laughter*]

Very important to remember: Elections are always about tomorrow. And that's the importance of this process in which you are engaged now. And what I'd like to say to you is, if you think about all these things I just said, what we'd really like is if that were more the normal condition of America. I mean, we'd really like it if we could sort of keep this thing going.

But what I want to say to you is that this is a moment where maybe the most important

thing is Americans are upbeat again. They're optimistic. They have a sense of possibility, a sense of confidence. Even trust in Government, notwithstanding everything else they've been told, has begun to edge up. Why? Because reality is out there. And no matter how much people may try to fill the atmosphere with other things, there is a reality out there.

The point I'm trying to make is, this reality has given us a sense of collective self-confidence and security to be honest about what still needs to be done in America and to think about what the long-term challenges are to build the country we want for the 21st century. Now, let me just mention a few of them because I think there are clearly New Democrat approaches there.

The first thing I want to say is that we need to candidly tell the American people, "Yes, things are going well now, but if we are complacent, short-sighted, selfish, we will fritter away an opportunity to make sure that this country fulfills its potential in the 21st century, because we still have some very big challenges."

What are they? The first thing we've got to do is figure out how to deal with the coming retirement of the baby boomers and the increasing life expectancy of people, which is looking better to me all along. [*Laughter*] I think that's a high-class problem. [*Laughter*] But we have to figure out a way to deal with this without bankrupting our children and undermining our children's ability to raise our grandchildren, while still honoring the need of the senior population for a certain level of predictability and security and a decent life.

So the first thing I would say is, we have to maintain fiscal discipline. We shouldn't spend the surplus before it materializes, and we shouldn't spend a penny of it until we have secured Social Security for the 21st century, and we ought to craft the reform in early 1999.

Secondly, we also have a Medicare Commission chaired by another DLC leader, Senator Breaux, and we have to recognize that we have to deal with that. And we ought to deal with that also in 1999. And the Democrats should not run away from making the necessary reforms in Social Security and Medicare. They are our programs. We brought them to America. They are the great gift of our party in the 20th century. Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson and their friends in the Congress gave this gift to America.

Who can say anything other than "hallelujah" that less than 11 percent of our seniors live in poverty? But when we get to the point when there are two people working for every person drawing Social Security at present rates of retirement, life expectancy, childbirth, and immigration, even if we succeed in providing quality health care more or less in line with the rate of inflation, you don't have to be a mathematical genius to know that we don't want to be responsible for destroying that which we have created. And therefore, if we don't want to destroy that which we have created, we should take the lead and tell the American people they should trust us to take the lead to reform it in a way that will be consistent with our values and that will preserve the gains of the last 50 years but drive them into the next 50 years with a 21st century system that meets the challenges of this day. And the Democrats ought to take the lead on that.

Furthermore, on health care, I think we have to continue to support both the Patients' Bill of Rights and increased access to health insurance, especially for selected groups where they're really often left out. And we have both addressed in different ways the need to deal with people who are not old enough to be on Medicare but are, through no fault of their own, left without health insurance. It's a terrible problem. Everywhere I travel in the country, somebody else comes up to me and talks about it.

This Patients' Bill of Rights is a big issue because it's a way of saying we support managed care in its benefits, but any system which is rooted in process only, that gets disconnected from the values, the purpose of the endeavor, in this case providing a healthier population, will get into trouble.

There was a woman with me from Minnesota the other day who, 5 weeks ago, was diagnosed with stage two breast cancer. Two years ago she had a lump in her breast. She went to her HMO. They said "Well, we took a picture of it, and it looks all right to us." But it never went away. Finally, she paid for her own biopsy. So this was about 6 weeks ago—she was here last week—they said, "You've got stage two breast cancer." So then she goes to her HMO, and they said, "Well, you can't have a breast cancer surgeon, but we'll give you a general surgeon to do this surgery." She said, "I don't think so." She made 123 phone calls trying to

get them to give her a qualified doctor to do the surgery. So she said, "Well, I can't afford it, but I'll pay for it myself." When she was under the knife, the HMO called her home and said they would cover it, but then they wouldn't cover her chemotherapy afterward.

Now, this may be an extreme case, but I promise you, something like that is happening somewhere today. Now, part of it is the extreme financial pressure these folks are under. But if you put health care decisions in the hands of people who don't understand health care, then you have taken efficiency a step too far. And I believe it's a mistake.

I also believe, however—it's just like Social Security reform. I think we had to have some managed health care. We couldn't continue to have health care costs go up to 3 times the rate of inflation. Eventually it would have consumed the whole economy. But if you don't remedy the abuses and set aside a system, then you may wind up destroying the whole concept that you can manage the health care system in an efficient way.

So we ought to be out there out front on these issues. We ought to be continuing to support education reform until the charter school movement and public school choice is the rule in America, not the exception. We ought to support my initiatives for smaller classes and better teachers and higher standards and access to technology for all students. We ought to continue to support initiatives in juvenile crime and to rescue our inner-city neighborhoods generally, further economic issues, further public safety issues, further supporting community efforts that have been proven to be successful in rescuing kids and keeping them out of trouble before they go to jail in the first place.

In the end, that's what we've got to do. We can't jail our way out of the juvenile crisis in America. We can punish people who ought to be punished, but in the end, we have to be smart enough to figure out how to save more of these kids. We need them for our future, and we can't let them go. And we ought to be on the forefront of doing that.

And let me just make one other—there are lots of other issues I could mention, but I'd like to mention one. I think that we need—and the DLC and the New Democratic forces need to do a lot more to define what our stakes are in the world of the 21st century. I'll just give you a few.

I went to Geneva the other day for the 50th anniversary of the World Trade Organization and urged them to do 7 things to modernize the trading system for the 21st century. As a Democrat, I believe that we ought to have more trade. America's got 20 percent of the world's wealth and 4 percent of the world's population, and you do not have to be a mathematical genius to figure out that we have to sell something to the other 96 percent if we want to maintain our standard of living. But as a Democrat, I also want our trading relations with other countries to lead to improvements in the conditions of life for ordinary people in those countries, because that's the only way that freedom and free markets will be widely supported and that will sustain themselves throughout the new century.

So I do think we have to find ways to push that. But the answer is not to run away from expanding trade. The answer is to broaden our agenda in aggressive and creative way that other countries will have an interest in supporting. I think we ought to be out there doing that.

I think we ought to recognize that there are new security threats in the 21st century that include, but are not limited to, biological and chemical weapons, the spread of disease because people are so much more interconnected with each other, and the sweeping implications of cross-border environmental problems, the most significant of which is climate change. We have got to find a way to convince our neighbors around the world that you can grow the economy and improve the environment.

I just got back from Texas, where they are acutely aware of the interconnection of nations with the environment, because all those wildfires that are raging in Mexico are now coming across the Texas border with the smoke, undermining the quality of the air. We're working very hard on that. Whether we like it or not, this wildfire problem is not a Mexican problem. We had the same thing this year in South America; we had the same thing several months ago in Southeast Asia—we had two boats—ships on the ocean crash into each other because they were blinded by smoke from wildfires from the rain forest in Southeast Asia—all a function of the changing climate of the world.

These are security issues. We should see them as such, and we should be totally unwilling to say that we all have to go back to the stone age economics to preserve the environment

when that is clearly not true. But we do have to be aware of it.

Well, there are lots of other things I could say. I would like to say one thing just very briefly, and I don't want to—the Secretary of State is working on this, as you know, at this moment. But I'd like to say one thing about the problems on the Indian subcontinent because I think they're important for you to think about in a 21st century context.

First of all, they show you that there's still a combustible mix if you have old ethnic, religious, and national tensions combined with access to modern technology. Secondly, it shows you—and this may be the more important point—that as much as we're trying, there are still a lot of people who believe that being a great nation in the 21st century should be defined by the same terms that defined it in the 20th century.

An enormous part of my time as your President has been spent trying to develop policies and then make arguments to people like the President of Russia and the President of China that the definition of greatness should be different tomorrow than it was yesterday, that we should want to be measured by our ideas and our achievements and our ability to raise our children and our ability to relate to each other, and that national strength and greatness should be measured in different terms.

The present tensions between India and Pakistan and the tests are a sober reminder in a larger scale, because of the nuclear tests, of the challenges we still face in the Middle East, the challenges we still face in the Balkans with our unfinished business in Bosnia, in Kosovo, the challenges we still face in Africa in trying to get over what happened in Rwanda, throughout the world.

One of the important things about what you're doing is that other people in other parts of the world are now interested in taking this kind of approach. And they're trying to figure out whether they can find a politics that is both humane and sensible, that works. And so I would urge you to devote even more of your thoughts in the months and years ahead in this forum to how we can convince the American people, first of all, that we need to lead the world and we need to invest the money it takes to lead the world and we get a lot out of it, not just on trade but in other areas; and secondly, how we can best make alliances with people in other nations.

There must be people who think like you in India and people who think like you in Pakistan, just like there were in the new Labour Party in Great Britain or in the Government in the Netherlands or the Government in Italy or the Government in Brazil. And we need to engage people in trying to define national greatness in a way that is inclusive and constructive, not divisive and destructive. It is very important.

The last point I want to make: We are celebrating this week—celebrating is the wrong word. We are observing this week the 30th anniversary of the death of Robert Kennedy. I remember it like it was yesterday because it happened just a couple of days before I graduated from college. And I remember staying up with one of my roommates who worked in Senator Kennedy's office in Washington to watch the results of the California primary, and I turned the television off 5 minutes before Robert Kennedy was shot.

In so many ways, what he was trying to do then for the Democratic Party and for our country has great parallels to what we have been about in the last few years, trying to get people to give up the old dogmas, trying to bring people together, trying to go beyond the sort of stale liberal-conservative name calling and figure out a policy that was both humane and effective. A lot of what he said and did prefigured what we have tried to do in our time.

But in that springtime in 1968, when both Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were killed and when our country was so profoundly troubled and divided over issues at home and abroad, it was after those events not possible for a very long time to try to put the pieces of an American progressive movement back together because America's mind and heart was too easily divided and distracted and was too uncertain.

And I'd like you to think about it as you read things about Senator Kennedy; over the next couple of days there will be a lot in the press. He never had a time like this in which to serve. And a lot of what Martin Luther King wanted to do in civil rights was complicated because of all the other problems that came into American society over the Vietnam war, and we became divided in other ways.

This is a time—I read all those statistics off to you—28, 29, 30 years, and you were all clapping. It's really exhilarating, isn't it? But what you have to think about is, this doesn't happen all that often. And we have space now and confidence and a sense of possibility, and we cannot squander it.

Robert Kennedy used to quote Tennyson, saying it is not too late to seek a newer world. Well, it isn't too late. But I don't care how good things are—believe me, I've now lived long enough to see things change—it's not too late, but we don't have a moment to waste. And we've only just begun.

So I want you to celebrate what you've done. I want to thank you for what you've done, but I want you to think about the next 50 years and realize what a precious gift as citizens we have been given to mobilize together, to think about the large matters of our children and grandchildren's future, and to actually to do something about them. And keep in mind, we're where we are because we had ideas and we had action.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Antonio Riley, Wisconsin State Representative; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council; William Marshall, president, Progressive Policy Institute; Gov. Tom Carper of Delaware; Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; and Jill Docking, cochair, Kansas Justice Commission.

Remarks at a Reception for the SAVER Summit

June 4, 1998

Thank you very much, and welcome to the White House. I want to say again a special word of thanks to Senator Breaux and the other Members of Congress who have pushed this summit. I believe that Congressmen Neal, Payne and Clay are here, and there were others, of course, with us earlier in the day. I thank Secretary Herman for her outstanding leadership.

I think it is truly remarkable that Louisiana State has gone so far in the baseball finals. [*Laughter*] And I say that as a neighbor. I've actually known about John Breaux—John Breaux and I first ran for office in 1974, and we had the same ad person, so I knew about John Breaux sort of from a distance. And my guy, who was his guy, kept saying, "You're so earnest. You just don't have the kind of moves that Breaux does." [*Laughter*]

And Louisiana—I grew up in Arkansas, so he's my neighbor, and it's just different down there. [*Laughter*] Really. Baseball—it's the only State in the country where, in all probability, everybody on the baseball team has to slow down to play that sport, instead of speed up. [*Laughter*] It's just an amazing place.

I quoted Benjamin Franklin today and told you all the story about his leaving the £2,000 to Boston and Philadelphia. Franklin also once said, it's better to go to bed without supper than to wake up in debt. And we're almost out of debt, so we're giving you drinks and not supper here tonight. [*Laughter*] But at least we're making progress. And if we're quick enough, at least you'll be able to have supper. [*Laughter*]

There was a good feeling in that room today when all of us were there. I think you all felt good about it; I felt good about it. The reason we felt good about it is because you like to see your leaders working together and listening to you. And that's the way it ought to work around here all the time.

I keep telling people I have to travel out in the country and see people and just sit and listen on a regular basis to remind myself that I'm supposed to be working for you instead of against them, and vice versa—that that's really what we're all here for. And I think the fact that we have this level of common commitment is some evidence that we understand this is a big deal, and you don't have the luxury of engaging in petty politics.

Here you are in this remarkable East Room, with this wonderful picture of Theodore Roosevelt, the only American President ever to win the Nobel Prize for Peace, for helping to settle

the war between Russia and Japan in 1905. And there's this very famous picture of George Washington that was painted by Gilbert Stuart in 1797. We bought it for $500. It's worth slightly more than that today. [*Laughter*] It's appreciated even more than Benjamin Franklin's £2,000. [*Laughter*]

And I think about it because that picture was hanging in this room, and there was food all over the room, and there was a banquet being prepared, when James Madison was President. And he was the last President ever to actually be the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. He actually rode into battle with our forces in the War of 1812. And in 1814 when the British came up the river and burned the White House, Madison was in Maryland, near here, with the troops, thinking that he would be able to cut them off. But they came up the river instead.

And so they sent word to Mrs. Madison and to the others to get out of here and abandon the banquet. So when the British got here, they found all this food. They sat down and ate our food, and then they burned the house—[*laughter*]—which was a sort of an efficient thing for them to do, I guess. [*Laughter*] But the point is, James Madison said, "Leave and don't take anything but that picture." Because that picture symbolized our roots. It is a truly priceless American treasure now, which would not have been there but for the fact that Dolley Madison had the presence of mind, with the British breathing down her throat, to cut it out of its frame, roll it up, preserve it, and get to safety.

We have a remarkable way of coming together as a democracy when our existence is threatened. When we have a chance to do something really big, we have a remarkable way of coming together, as I think we had enormous support across party lines for the constructive role the United States played in the peace process in Ireland, for example. And now I believe there's a great deal of support for what we have done in Bosnia, because it's working.

It is harder to get a democracy together when you're dealing with a very large problem, but it's not right on your doorstep; it's 10, or 20, or 30 years down the road. And one of the most impressive things to me about the young people—the young people who work here, for example, at the White House, the young people I meet at the colleges and universities or in workplaces around the country—is that I find they really do spend a fair amount of time thinking about what America will be like in 20, or 30, or 40 years. And it's a tribute to their parents; it's a tribute to their educators; and more than anything else, it's a tribute to them.

But those of us who are, like Senator Breaux and Secretary Herman and I, sort of on the cutting edge of the baby boom burden, we've had a pretty good run in this country. This country has been very good to us. We've had an amazing life. But we also have not had many opportunities, because of the divisions of the last 30 years, to really coalesce our country and to take on these big, long-term challenges.

Now, in trying to deal with the challenges of Social Security and the other savings issues, of Medicare, preserving the environment for the long time while we grow the economy, and all the other big challenges of the country—those of us who are in our middle years or later, who are in a position to really make decisions here, this is the opportunity of a lifetime for us. And for reasons, as I said earlier today—for reasons, I think, largely due to the success our country is enjoying now, our democracy will permit us to do it. And our children are demanding that we do it.

And so I think you should be mindful of that, and you should be happy about it, because not every citizen gets to do what you're being asked to do, not every generation has a chance to do—to preserve the country and keep it strong and united and growing for a whole generation, as you're being given the chance to do.

So I hope you will not only take this seriously, as I know you will, but enjoy it. And then when you leave here, do what you can to convey this sense of both possibility and urgency to the people with whom you come in contact with across the country, because we have to maintain this sense in the country that this is something their democracy ought to produce, that this is not something that just leaders can do alone but is something we can do together. And with your leadership and energy, I believe we will.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at the South Dakota Victory Fund Dinner
June 4, 1998

Thank you so much, Senator Daschle. I wish I had taped that—[*laughter*]—and every time I'd get kind of discouraged or down, I could just flip on the tape and listen to Tom's voice.

Thank you all. I thank the other Members of the Senate for being here. And Mayor Barger, thank you for coming. And some of you have come from even further away than South Dakota, and I thank all of you for being here for a truly magnificent leader of the Senate and of our party and for our country.

I had a very interesting few days and sort of thinking about the past, the present, and the future. I had my 30th college reunion over the weekend. And I thought, I don't know where all those years went. I had occasion to go to Texas and do a little work for our party and for the Members of the House of Representatives but also to go into an Hispanic neighborhood that no President had visited since Franklin Roosevelt, to talk about the relationship of the census to the service of the community in building it up.

Then I came back for a meeting on the situation in India and Pakistan and sent Secretary Albright off to meet with the Foreign Ministers of China and Russia and Great Britain and France. And they issued a very fine statement today, and we're working hard on that.

Then I went to Cleveland, where I had the chance to go to the annual convention of something called City Year. It's one of our AmeriCorps national service projects that began in Boston. And I visited with them in 1991 when I started out, and there were just 100 people. And now, there are all these young people from all over America, part of nearly 90,000 people who have been in our AmeriCorps program serving our country, earning credits for college.

And then today I had a chance to appear at the SAVER Summit, where delegates from both parties and all walks of life in America talked about how we can save Social Security for the 21st century and increase pension savings and private savings, something that really matters to the long-run health of the country. And I got to appear at, in effect, a homecoming for me: I went to the Democratic Leadership Conference for a meeting of elected local officials around the country.

And it's just been great, because it's been—for me, it's been a week where I've gotten to reflect on the last 30 years and think about the next 30 to 50 years—and also to be humbled a little along the way. I was in this great school yesterday in Cleveland, seeing what my AmeriCorps volunteers are doing, and I was shaking hands with all the kids. And I came up to this young man; he was about so tall. He couldn't have been over 7; he was probably 6. And he looked up to me and he said, "Are you really the President?" I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "You aren't dead yet?" [*Laughter*] At first I thought, what's a 6-year-old kid doing reading the Washington press every day? [*Laughter*] And then I realized that, in fact, "the President" was George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—he thought part of the job qualification was being dead. [*Laughter*] It was a wonderful thing. I say this just to kind of make a setting for the very brief points I want to make.

When I ran for President in 1992, I thought the country needed a different direction. And I came with a certain set of ideas and ideals and some very specific proposals to implement. And I couldn't have done it if it hadn't been for Tom Daschle.

Then when we went into the minority in the Senate, and Tom was elected leader, and we had to work so closely together or we never would have gotten a balanced budget that also opened the doors of college to all Americans who are willing to work for it, through tax credits and scholarships and grants and work-study positions—we just wouldn't have been able to do it. We never would have been able to get a balanced budget that also added 5 million children to the ranks of those with health insurance in our country. We never would have been able to get a balanced budget that would continue to grow the economy, but still invest in the environment and in medical research and all the things that will build our future.

And I never cease to marvel about how much he knows and has to deal with and how he has to deal with all these substantive issues

which I deal with, but unlike me, he also has to figure out how to wind his way through the Senate rules and the personalities and this stuff. I just never—people asked me these questions; I said, "I'll call Tom. He'll know what to do." [*Laughter*] I don't have to worry about that.

And I don't think you can possibly imagine how much it means to a President to know that there is a leader in the Senate with that kind of brain power, that kind of integrity, that kind of energy, and that kind of deep compassion for our country. And it's a great national resource. He's good in a fight and good when we're making a principled compromise. And he's always trying to do what's right for the country. And along the way, he sometimes gets me to do a thing or two for South Dakota. [*Laughter*]

Now, I say that to make this point: We are all very lucky here, each in our own way. We wouldn't be able to be here if we hadn't enjoyed some good fortune in life. And maybe in our less reflective moments we think we earned everything we got, but most of us were not born in a log cabin we built ourself. And most of us have had a break or two along the way. And I think—the point I'd like to make tonight is I think we're very fortunate to be living in this time.

I'm proud of the fact that we have the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years. We're going to have the first balanced budget and a surplus in 29 years. We've got the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in history. That makes me feel proud of our country.

But the point I want to make—and I guess it's just because I've been thinking about it as much as I have this week, although I've felt this way always—is that the country is now working as it ought to work, and therefore we now have both the freedom, the emotional space, the financial means, and the sense of confidence to look at the larger challenges facing us, the long-term problems.

That's why I liked that SAVER Summit today. When all the baby boomers like me get into the retirement, if present trends continue, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing. We have got to reform the Social Security system, or we won't be able to have a decent retirement without unfairly burdening our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. That's a big long-term issue; same thing is true about Medicare.

We got a person or two here today, I think, from Texas—people in Texas have had a real good, fresh impression of what climate change is doing because of all the wildfires raging in Mexico that are bringing the smoke over into Texas and affecting the quality of air and the health care, the health of the people there. We don't have to give up economic growth to preserve the planet, but we have to change the strategy by which we pursue it. And we're smart enough to do that. That's a big long-term problem that we need to face.

We have a great economy, but we don't have the world's best public schools—even though we have the world's best colleges. We can't stop until every child in this country has the chance to get an excellent education.

We have this great economy with a low unemployment rate, but there's still pockets in America, from inner cities to Native American tribes in South Dakota, where there has been virtually no impact of the free enterprise revolution. And we now have a chance to bring it there.

Now, if we were up to our ears in alligators and we were worried about going broke with the debt and we were worried about all the problems that were bearing down on this country when I became President, we wouldn't have the space or the confidence or the sense of possibility to think about these things. But now we do, and now we must, because this window will not stay open forever. In the nature of human events, things change. And we are so fortunate.

It was this week 30 years ago that Robert Kennedy was killed, culminating a pretty awful spring for America, just a couple of months after Martin Luther King was killed and Washington, DC, burned. I remember it very well. I was a student here working for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and I put a red cross on my car, and I drove down into Washington and delivered supplies to people who were living in church basements because they'd been burned out.

In so many ways, for me, at least, as a young man, what Robert Kennedy represented—an attempt to break out of the old orthodoxies, to bring people together across the lines that divided us, to kind of go beyond politics as usual to actually get something done that would touch people's lives and move this country forward

together—represents what I have tried to do as President.

For 30 years, because of all kinds of problems we had, divisions too often triumphed over unity, and we were too often preoccupied with things that were right in front of our nose. Now we have a chance to deal with the long-term challenges of the country. Now we have a chance to prove that we can be an even more diverse, multiethnic, multireligious, multiracial democracy and be more unified. And in a world where other people are having trouble dealing with that in almost every continent, that's more important than ever before. And for me, I think we have a chance to restore not only our country but also our party to the direction that was basically interrupted 30 years ago when the country divided over war and race and two of our greatest leaders were killed within a few weeks of each other.

None of that is happening now. And I'm telling you, we have an opportunity, but it is also a profound obligation, to give our children and grandchildren the America they deserve and the America of our dreams, the America most of us growing up thought we could create and missed terribly when it wasn't possible. If we do that, it will be in no small measure because of the unusual service, in a very difficult position of the person we are here to honor tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. at the Sheraton Luxury Collection Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Brenda Barger of Watertown, SD.

Commencement Address at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts

June 5, 1998

Thank you, Dr. Vest. I think you're the real thing. [*Laughter*] Chairman d'Arbeloff, Dr. Gray, members of the corporation, the faculty, especially to the members of the Class of 1998 and your families, the Classes of 1948 and 1973, Mayor Duehay, members of the City Council. I thank the Brass Ensemble for the wonderful music before. Let me say I am profoundly honored to be here on the same platform with Dr. David Ho and grateful for the work he has done for humanity.

When we met a few moments ago in President Vest's office with a number of the students and other officials of the university, I said you had a good representation of speakers today, the scientists and the scientifically challenged. [*Laughter*]

But my administration has been able to carry on in no small measure because of contributions from MIT. Sixteen MIT alumni and faculty members have served in important positions in this administration, including at least two who are here today, the former Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnall, and the Deputy Secretary of Energy, Ernie Moniz. Four of your faculty members and your president have done important work for us. I thank them all.

And I come here today with good news and bad news for the graduates. The good news is that this morning we had our latest economic report: unemployment is 4.3 percent; there have been 16 million new jobs in the last 5 years; there are numerous job openings that pay well. The bad news is that you now have no excuse to your parents if you don't go to work. [*Laughter*]

MIT is admired around the world as a crucible of creative thought, a force for progress, a place where dreams of generations become reality. The remarkable discoveries and inventions of the MIT community have transformed America. Early in your history, MIT was known for advances in geology and mining. By mid-century, MIT pioneered x rays and radar. Today, it's atomic lasers, artificial intelligence, biotechnology. MIT has done much to make this the American Century. And MIT will do more to make America and the world a better place in the 21st century, as we continue our astonishing journey through the information revolution, a revolution that began not as our own did, here in Massachusetts, with a single shot heard around the world, but instead was sparked by many catalysts, in labs and libraries, startups

and blue chips, homes and even dorm rooms across America and around the world.

I come today not to talk about the new marvels of science and engineering; you know far more about them than I do. Instead I come to MIT, an epicenter of the seismic shifts in our economy and society, to talk about how we can and must apply enduring American values to this revolutionary time, about the responsibilities we all have as citizens to include every American in the promise of this new age.

From the start, our Nation's greatest mission has been the fulfillment of our Founders' vision: opportunity for all, best secured by free people working together toward better tomorrows and what they called "a more perfect Union." Americans believe the spark of possibility burns deep within every child, that ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Our history can be understood as a constant striving, on foreign fields and factory floors, in townhalls and the corridors of Congress, to widen that circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to perfect our Union, to make real the promise of America. Every previous generation has been called upon to meet this challenge. And as we approach a new century and a new millennium, your generation must answer the call.

You enter the world of your tomorrows at a remarkable moment for America. Our country has the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest National Government in 35 years, and the highest rate of homeownership in our history. Such a remarkable time, a period of renewal, comes along all too rarely in life, as you will see. It gives us both the opportunity and the profound responsibility to address the larger, longer term challenges to your future.

This spring I am speaking to graduates around the country about three of those challenges. Last month, I went to the Naval Academy to talk about the new security challenges of the 21 century, terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, global climate change, the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Next week at Portland State in Oregon, I will discuss how our Nation's third great wave of immigration can either strengthen and unite America or weaken and divide it. And I thank Dr. Ho for what he said about immigration and our immigrants.

Today I ask you to focus on the challenges of the information age. The dimensions of the information revolution and its limitless possibilities are widely accepted and generally understood, even by lay people. But to make the most of it we must also acknowledge that there are challenges, and we must make important choices. We can extend opportunity to all Americans or leave many behind. We can erase lines of inequity or etch them indelibly. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known, or allow the engine to stall.

History has taught us that choices cannot be deferred; they are made by action or inaction. There is no such thing as virtual opportunity. We cannot point and click our way to a better future. If we are to fulfill the complete promise of this new age, we must do more.

Already the information age is transforming the way we work. The high-tech industry employs more people today than the auto industry did at its height in the 1950's. Auto and steel industries in turn have been revived by new technologies. Among those making the most use of technology R&D are traditional American enterprises such as construction, transportation, and retail stores.

It's transforming the way we live. The typical American home now has much more—as much computing power as all of MIT did in the year most of the seniors here were born. It is transforming the way we communicate. On any business day, more than 30 times as many messages are delivered by E-mail as by the Postal Service. And today, this ceremony is being carried live on the Internet so that people all over the world can join in.

It is transforming the way we learn. With the DVD technology available today, we can store more reference material in a 3-inch stack of disks than in all the stacks of Hayden Library. It is transforming the way our society works, giving millions of Americans the opportunity to join in the enterprise of building our nation as they fulfill their dreams.

The tools we develop today are bringing down barriers of race and gender, of income and age. The disabled are opening long-closed doors of school, work, and human possibility. Small businesses are competing in worldwide markets once reserved only for powerful corporations. Before too long, our children will be able to stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting every painted, every symphony ever controlled.

For the very first time in our history, it is now possible for a child in the most isolated inner-city neighborhood or rural community to have access to the same world of knowledge at the same instant as the child in the most affluent suburb. Imagine the revolutionary democratizing potential this can bring. Imagine the enormous benefits to our economy, our society if not just a fraction but all young people can master this set of 21st century skills.

Just a few miles from here is the working class community of East Somerville. It has sometimes struggled to meet the needs of population that is growing more diverse by the day. But at East Somerville Community School, well-trained technology teachers with equipment and support from Time-Warner Cable have begun to give first to eighth graders an early and enormous boost in life. First graders are producing small books on computers. Sixth graders are producing documentaries. The technology has so motivated them that almost all the sixth graders showed up at school to work on their computer projects over winter break.

That small miracle can be replicated in every school, rich and poor, across America. Yet today, affluent schools are almost 3 times as likely to have Internet access in the classroom; white students more than twice as likely as black students to have computers in their homes.

We know from hard experience that unequal education hardens into unequal prospects. We know the information age will accelerate this trend. The three fastest growing careers in America are all in computer related fields, offering far more than average pay. Happily, the digital divide has begun to narrow, but it will not disappear of its own accord. History teaches us that even as new technologies create growth and new opportunity, they can heighten economic inequalities and sharpen social divisions. That is, after all, exactly what happened with the mechanization of agriculture and in the industrial revolution.

As we move into the information age, we have it within our power to avoid these developments. We can reap the growth that comes from revolutionary technologies and use them to eliminate, not to widen, the disparities that exist. But until every child has a computer in the classroom and a teacher well-trained to help, until every student has the skills to tap the enormous resources of the Internet, until every high-tech company can find skilled workers to fill its high-wage jobs, America will miss the full promise of the information age.

We cannot allow this age of opportunity to be remembered also for the opportunities that were missed. Every day, we wake up and know that we have a challenge; now we must decide how to meet it. Let me suggest three things.

First, we must help you to ensure that America continues to lead the revolution in science and technology. Growth is a prerequisite for opportunity, and scientific research is a basic prerequisite for growth. Just yesterday in Japan, physicists announced a discovery that tiny neutrinos have mass. Now, that may not mean much to most Americans, but it may change our most fundamental theories, from the nature of the smallest subatomic particles to how the universe itself works and, indeed, how it expands. This discovery was made in Japan, yes, but it had the support of the investment of the U.S. Department of Energy. This discovery calls into question the decision made in Washington a couple of years ago to disband the super-conducting supercollider, and it reaffirms the importance of the work now being done at the Fermi National Acceleration Facility in Illinois.

The larger issue is that these kinds of findings have implications that are not limited to the laboratory. They affect the whole of society, not only our economy but our very view of life, our understanding of our relations with others and our place in time.

In just the past 4 years, information technology has been responsible for more than a third of our economic expansion. Without Government-funded research, computers, the Internet, communications satellites wouldn't have gotten started. When I became President, the Internet was the province of physicists, funded by a Government research project. There were only 50 sites in the world. Now, as all of you know, we are adding pages to the World Wide Web at the rate of over 100,000 an hour, and 100 million new users will come on this year. It all started with research, and we must do more.

In the budget I submit to Congress for the year 2000, I will call for significant increases in computing and communications research. I have directed Dr. Neal Lane, my new Adviser for Science and Technology, to work with our Nation's research community to prepare a detailed plan for my review.

Over the past 50 years, our commitment to science has strengthened this country in countless ways. Scientific research has created vast new industries, millions of jobs, allowed America to produce the world's most bountiful food supplies and remarkable tools for fighting disease. Think of what today's investments will yield. Dr. Ho will unravel the agonizing riddles of AIDS. There will be a cure for cancer; a flourishing economy that will produce much less pollution and move back from the brink of potentially devastating global warming; high-speed wireless networks that bring distance learning, tele-medicine, and economic opportunity to every rural community in America.

That is why, even as we balanced our budget for the first time in 29 years, we have increased our investments in science. This year I asked Congress for the largest increase in research funding in history, not just for a year but sustained over 5 years. It is a core commitment that must be part of how every American, regardless of political party or personal endeavor, thinks about our Nation and its mission. [*Applause*] Thank you—those are the people who received the research grants over there. [*Laughter*]

I want you to know that we are also working to address the threat to our prosperity posed by the year 2000 bug. I tried and tried to find out what the class hack project was for the Class of '98, and I failed. But I did learn that in the year 2000, the graduating class is proposing to roll all of our computers back by 100 years. And I am determined to thwart you. I will do my best. [*Laughter*]

The second thing we have to do is to make sure that the opportunities of the information age belong to all our children. Every young American must have access to these technologies. Two years ago in my State of the Union Address, I challenged our Nation to connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000. Thanks to unprecedented cooperation at national, State, and local levels, an outpouring of support from active citizens, and the decreasing costs of computers, we're on track to meet this goal.

Four years ago when you came to MIT, barely 3 percent of America's classrooms were connected. By this time next year, we will have connected well over half our classrooms, including 100 percent of the classrooms in the Nation's 50 largest urban school districts.

But it is not enough to connect the classrooms. The services have to be accessed. You may have heard recently about something called the e-rate. It's the most crucial initiative we've launched to help connect our schools, our libraries, and our rural health centers to the Internet. Now some businesses have called on Congress to repeal the initiative. They say our Nation cannot afford to provide discounts to these institutions of learning and health by raising a billion dollars or so a year from service charges on telecommunications companies, something that was agreed to in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that passed with overwhelming bipartisan majorities in both Houses.

I say we cannot afford not to have an e-rate. Thousands of poor schools and libraries and rural health centers are in desperate need of discounts. If we really believe that we all belong in the information age, then, at this sunlit moment of prosperity, we can't leave anyone behind in the dark.

Every one of you who understands this I urge to support the e-rate. Every one of you here who came from a poor inner-city neighborhood, who came from a small rural school district, who came perhaps from another country where this was just a distant dream, you know that there are poor children now who may never have a chance to go to MIT unless someone reaches out and gives them this kind of opportunity. Every child in America deserves the chance to participate in the information revolution.

The third thing we have to do is to make sure that all the computers and the connections in the world don't go to waste because our children actually have 21st century skills. For 5 years now I've done my best to make education our number one domestic priority, creating HOPE scholarships, expanding Pell grants, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first 12 are today. We've passed tax credits, reformed the student loan program, expanded work-study, created AmeriCorps to open the doors of college to every young person who is willing to work for it.

We're working to make our public schools the best in the world, with smaller classes, better facilities, more master teachers and charter schools, higher standards, an end to social promotion. But the new economy also demands that our Nation commit to technology literacy

for every child. We shouldn't let a child graduate from middle school anymore without knowing how to use new technologies to learn.

Already, 10 States with an eye to the future have made technology literacy a requirement of graduation from high school. I believe we should meet this goal in the middle school years. I believe every child in every State should leave middle school able to use the most current tools for learning, research, communication, and collaboration. And we will help every State to meet this goal.

If a State commits to adopt a technology literacy requirement, then we will help to provide the training that the teachers need. I propose to create a team of trained technology experts for every American middle school in every one of these States and to create competitions over the next 3 years to encourage the development of high-quality educational software and educational websites by students and professors and commercial software companies.

All students should feel as comfortable with a keyboard as a chalkboard, as comfortable with a laptop as a textbook. It is critical to ensuring that they all have opportunity in the world of the 21st century.

Today I pledge the resources and unrelenting efforts of our Nation to renew our enduring values in the information age. But the challenges that we face cannot be met by Government alone. We can only fulfill the promise of this revolution if we work together in the same way it was launched together, with creativity, resolve, a restless spirit of innovation.

While this mission requires the efforts of every citizen, those who fuel and enjoy the unparalleled prosperity of this moment have special responsibilities. The thriving new companies that line Route 128 in Silicon Valley—I challenge them to use their power to empower others, to invest in a school, embrace a community in need, endow an eager young mind with opportunity, not to rest until every one of our children is technology literate. Many of you are doing such work already, and many of them are; but America needs all such companies to participate.

And finally, to the graduates of the class of 1998, I, too, offer my congratulations and, as your President, my gratitude for your commitment, for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You, your parents, and your friends should be very proud today and very hopeful, for all the possibilities of this new age are open to you. You are at the peak of your powers, and the world will rightly reward you for the work you do.

But to make the very most of your life and the opportunities you have been given, you, too, must rise to your responsibility to give something back to America of what you have been given. As the years pass, your generation will be judged and you will begin to judge yourselves not only on what you do for yourself and your family but on the contributions you make to others, to your country, your communities, your generation of children. When you turn your good fortune into a chance for others, you then will not only be leaders in science and industry, you will become the leaders of America. Twenty-first century America belongs to you. Take good care of it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at Killian Court on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In his remarks, he referred to Charles M. Vest, president, MIT; Alexander d'Arbeloff, chairman, and Paul Gray, former chairman, the Corporation of MIT; Mayor Francis H. Duehay of Cambridge; Dr. David D. Ho, scientific director, Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center; and Ernest Moniz, Under Secretary of Energy.

Question-and-Answer Session With Students at the Thoreau Institute in Lincoln, Massachusetts
June 5, 1998

Writings of Henry David Thoreau

Participant. I'm Liz Coogan from Concord Middle School here in Massachusetts, and this question is for you, Mr. President and Mr. Henley. What do Thoreau's writings and Walden Woods mean to you?

The President. To me they mean two things. First, when I was very young and was first exposed to Thoreau's writings, he crystallized the feelings that I had when I was in nature and awakened in me a sense of profound obligation to respect and to preserve the natural environment.

The second thing that impressed me about Thoreau from the very beginning is how much he learned about himself and about human nature and society by living apart from it for a while, how much, in effect, he learned about life by being a solitary person living alone for an extended period of time.

It made a huge impression on me because most people wouldn't think that you could learn that much about life living alone. But when I saw what he wrote about solitude, for example, he persuaded me that you could learn quite a lot.

[*At this point, musician Don Henley, founder of the institute, responded that Thoreau had helped him discover spirituality in nature, as well as a sense of place. Hillary Rodham Clinton said she also appreciated Thoreau's emphasis on the importance of nature, calling him one of the founding fathers of the Nation's environmental movement. Russian students at the Municipal Children's Ecological Center in St. Petersburg, Russia, who participated by live video hookup, then presented Mrs. Clinton with a copy of an artwork they had previously presented to the Thoreau Institute.*]

Environmental Issues Education

The President. I would just like to say that I very much appreciate the work that you're doing at the institute to teach the Russian children about the environment and how we have to preserve it.

Most adults in all industrial countries were raised to believe that in order to have a strong economy you have to destroy part of the environment, and we have to change that. We have to raise a whole generation of young people who believe that the only way to preserve the economy over the long run is to take care of the environment. And if we all work at it together, we'll be successful.

Russian Participant. I think, Mr. President, that we cannot only be hopeful that everything will be the way you said right now, but we can be positive that it is going to be like that in the future.

The President. Spacibo [Thank you].

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:34 p.m. in the Education Center. Participants present at the institute were students from Boston Latin School, Lincoln-Sudbury High School, and Concord Middle School. The Russian video participant spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at the Grand Opening of the Thoreau Institute in Lincoln
June 5, 1998

Thank you; please sit down. Well, we've been here a long time in this beautiful setting, and if Thoreau were here, he would say we need more silence and less talk. But I have immensely enjoyed what has been said.

Senator Kerry has been a consistent, devoted supporter of the environment, and he was profoundly eloquent about it today. Senator Kennedy has worked so hard for projects like this one for so long now, but he has a way of telling a personal story that brings home to

people, who might not otherwise be engaged, the importance of the moment.

You know, I thought I'd get a few brownie points for coming here and saying, because of his work here, I gave Don Henley the National Humanities Medal last year. But that's nothing compared to Ted Kennedy coming here and calling him the "big fish" and the "distant drummer" at the same time. [*Laughter*]

I would very much like to thank all the people who Don mentioned. I know Ed Begley, Jr., and Tony Bennett were on before; they've been good friends of ours. I thank Jimmy Buffett and Joe Walsh and all the musicians and other friends of Don who have helped. I thank you, Kathi, for your magnificent work. And I'm grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for supporting this project. And I thank you all for clapping when we said we weren't going to let it be done away with, along with the NEA.

I'd like to recognize two people who aren't here today, but who played an important role in getting this endeavor off the ground with Don: the late Paul Tsongas and the late Michael Kennedy. Thank you, to them.

Hillary and I got to walk a little along the path coming down here today. It's very frustrating being where we are now because back when we had real lives, we used to walk in the woods a lot. [*Laughter*] And so to be able to come here and only be able to walk 200 yards so that our friends with the cameras could at least get a good picture, so the American people could get a real feel for the magnificent work that's been done here—it winds up almost being more real to them than it is to us sometimes. [*Laughter*] But it was enough just to see what moved Thoreau to move here on July 4, 1845, so that he could live deeply and deliberately.

In a way, he was engaging in his own experiment in independence, in the finest tradition of American citizenship. A lot of you know that Thoreau was a friend of Emerson, who talked about our Revolution as "the shot heard 'round the world." In many ways, Thoreau's sojourn here at Walden was also a shot heard 'round the world. And it continues to echo today. That's why, as Hillary said, we have to, all of us, support saving it, along with our other national treasures.

I want to reiterate something Don said in a rather delicate, soft, Southern fashion: They need more money here. [*Laughter*] And since we'll probably be on television, if anyone within the sound of my voice—[*laughter*]—who ever read Thoreau, who was ever inspired by his writings and what he stood for, we have to raise a $12 million endowment and pay off a construction loan. Send a check. [*Laughter*] You'll be proud you did. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Well, let me get back to the point I mentioned. Thoreau has echoed over the decades and now more than a century. And what do we have to learn from him, and what does it mean in 21st century terms? First, we have to live in harmony with nature. What does that mean? That's one thing for one guy living on a pond. You've got 260 million people in this country; they can't do that. What does it mean?

For us, it means that we have to completely give up the notion that we can only grow our economy if we destroy the environment, and we'll just do it little by little. We have to learn a whole new way of thinking so that we grow our economy by improving the environment and living in greater harmony with ourselves here in this country and around the world. It is a fundamental insight that Americans of all political factions, all backgrounds, all walks of life must embrace.

Second, in an era where for the first time in history more people on the globe live under governments of their own choosing than do not, the first time ever a majority of people live under governments of their own choosing, it is well to remember that oppression still lives in the world and that there is a great deal of tension and, as the Good Book says, wars and rumors of war. We must not forget both the power and moral superiority of civil disobedience over violence in the face of injustice.

As Hillary said, Dr. King, Gandhi, Mandela, all were moved by the insights of Thoreau. We must not forget that today. We must not forget for a moment the value of self-reliance; nor must we forget the fact that Thoreau came here and wrote about solitude, that he learned more about his fellow human beings and the proper relations among people from his solitude, because if he had too much contact with other people, he thought you came to take too much for granted and frittered too much away. We must be both self-reliant and interdependent, and that is a lesson that Thoreau learned that we can learn from him today. And in a world

that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller, it is a very important lesson, indeed.

Finally—I love this quote, so I want to close with it. We have to understand that in a fundamental, moral way we are interconnected not only with nature but with all other people, and that any attempt to define ourselves in a way that elevates us at someone else's expense, any effort anywhere in the world by people to put themselves in a group that can only succeed if they're putting someone else down, is wrong and, in this world, unaffordable. Listen to what Thoreau said: "Let us settle ourselves and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of prejudice and delusion till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place which we can call reality."

It is a great mistake to think this man was just a dreamer. Like all truly wise people, he understood that altruism was the ultimate form of enlightened self-interest, that no one can pursue self-interest and material things devoid of a heart or a spirit.

Today we still have a whole lot of "mud and slush of prejudice and delusion" in this and every other society. With all our prosperity, we still can't afford it; there is too much to be done.

So let us hope and pray that Walden Pond will flourish. Let us hope and pray that people will come to these woods forever from now on, to learn not only more about themselves and their relationship with nature but the proper order of human society and the responsibility of every citizen to preserve it. If that happens, Don Henley and all of his cohorts will have given an astounding gift to America's future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:30 p.m. on the lawn of the Institute. In his remarks, he referred to musician Don Henley, founder, and Kathi Anderson, executive director, Thoreau Institute; actor Ed Begley, Jr.; singer Tony Bennett; musicians Jimmy Buffett and Joe Walsh; and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

Statement on House of Representatives Support for Tobacco Legislation
June 5, 1998

I am pleased to see that momentum for tobacco legislation is now building in the House of Representatives. The bipartisan comprehensive legislation proposed by Representatives Hansen, Meehan, and Waxman now has over 90 cosponsors committed to reducing youth smoking. This is a good, tough bill. It reaffirms the FDA's full authority over tobacco and includes strong restrictions on advertising and marketing of tobacco products to young people. It contains important protections against exposure to environmental tobacco smoke and tough company-specific surcharges to encourage companies to reduce youth smoking. I look forward to working with Representatives Hansen, Meehan, Waxman and all of their House colleagues to improve this bill in order to protect farmers and farming communities. With this change, I would be pleased to sign this bill. I call upon the House of Representatives to take it up and get down to the serious business of reducing youth smoking in this country.

Statement on the House of Representatives Republican Budget Proposal
June 5, 1998

Over the past 5 years, we have followed an economic strategy of fiscal discipline coupled with smart investments in education, health care, and the environment. That strategy has eliminated the deficit and helped spur economic growth and the creation of more than 16 million new jobs. The House Republican budget is an unfortunate step backwards that would mean severe and unnecessary cuts in education, the environment, and health care. At a time when

Washington is seeing its first surplus in almost 30 years and spending as a share of the economy is at its lowest level in a quarter century, this budget is not the right approach. As Congress readies its final budget, I urge Members to continue our strategy of fiscal discipline and strategic investments to prepare our country for the 21st century.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Agricultural Research Legislation

June 5, 1998

I commend the House of Representatives for joining the Senate in passing by an overwhelming majority the bipartisan agriculture research bill. This legislation restores benefits to thousands of deserving legal immigrants who will now be able to rely on much-needed food stamp assistance. It builds on our success last year in reversing harsh cuts in SSI and Medicaid benefits for legal immigrants that had nothing to do with our goal of moving people from welfare to work. With these actions, the Congress has gone a long way toward fulfilling the commitment I made to reverse this unfair treatment of legal immigrants. At the same time, the bill funds crucial agricultural research, crop insurance, and rural development priorities which will strengthen the farm safety net and enhance the quality of life in rural America.

I would like to congratulate Representatives Smith and Stenholm for their excellent work in crafting and stewarding through the House this important legislation.

NOTE: In his statement, the President referred to Robert F. Smith, chairman, and Charles W. Stenholm, ranking minority member, House Committee on Agriculture.

The President's Radio Address

June 6, 1998

Good morning. Before I begin today's address, I want to speak very briefly about the most important issue before the Congress right now, one that affects our children most of all: the tobacco bill.

This is a critical moment of truth for Congress. Senator McCain and Senator Hollings and others have brought to the floor a landmark proposal to protect our children from tobacco. There's broad consensus for this bill. It's reasonable, bipartisan, in the best interest of our children. But for weeks now the Senate hasn't acted, as a few Members have done everything they could to protect big tobacco by putting off a vote.

Today I say to them: The delay has gone on long enough. You are not just trying to kill the tobacco bill; you are standing in the way of saving 1 million children's lives. The American people will not stand for it. The Senate should do nothing else until it passes tobacco legislation, and it should pass it this week.

Thirty years ago, like millions of young Americans, I scaled the heights of hope with Robert F. Kennedy in his campaign for President. I watched intently in the last days before my graduation from college as he took his case to the American people, confronting new challenges, posing new questions, reaching across the racial divide, and reaching out to the forgotten Americans. Thirty years ago today I, like so many others around the world, felt pain, despair, a sense of deeply personal loss, and a sense of loss for my country that our troubled land had been denied a leader who could bind us together, change course, and move us forward.

Today I'm pleased to be speaking to you from the home of Congressman Joe Kennedy in Massachusetts, where Hillary and I have gathered with Mrs. Kennedy and her children, Senator

Edward Kennedy, and other members of the Kennedy family to observe this day. Robert Kennedy would wish us not to dwell upon his loss but to celebrate his life and carry on his legacy. In his all too short life, he lost much, but he never lost faith. In suffering, he struggled to find wisdom.

On the night our Nation lost Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy appeared before a shocked and grieving crowd in Indianapolis. The night was cold; the moment, tense. Hunched in a black overcoat, he stood before the crowd and said, "Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago, 'to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.' "

Like Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy dedicated himself to that, and his life enriched and ennobled our Nation. Robert Kennedy ran for President, he said, to close the gaps between black and white, between rich and poor, between old and young. In a time of division, more than any American, he bridged those gaps, reaching out to starving families in the Mississippi Delta and to factory workers in Chicago, to migrant workers in Northern California and struggling teens in Harlem. He touched their lives and, just as important, they touched his.

He changed and grew as a result, becoming a fuller person and a better, wiser leader. In changing times, Robert Kennedy was one of the first to see that old solutions did not always fit new challenges, either at home or abroad. We can do better, he so often said, and he pushed his Government and himself to do no less. To him, in a time of change, labels like "left" and "right" meant little. Dogmas that kept us from moving forward were to be discarded. But he did not discard his passionate convictions or his steely determination to act on them. They infused his public service and his last campaign with a power and purpose we can still feel today.

Yes, Robert Kennedy's legacy is alive today in the work of his family in public service, in the work of those of us he inspired, in the hearts of his fellow Americans. The distance of three decades cannot silence the strength of his words or lessen the impact of his actions. We still hear his voice appealing to the best qualities of the American spirit. We still strive to answer his insistent challenge to do good and to do better.

And on this day of reflection, when the thoughts of all Americans are with his large and loving family, we can do the memory of Robert Kennedy no greater honor than to dedicate ourselves as he did, to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:45 p.m. on June 5 at a private residence in Boston, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 5, but the first three paragraphs were embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m. on June 6. The remainder of the transcript was made available for immediate release on June 5.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in New York City

June 8, 1998

Mr. Secretary-General, President Udovenko, Executive Director Arlacchi, distinguished fellow leaders: Today we join at this Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly to make common cause against the common threat of worldwide drug trafficking and abuse.

Let me begin by thanking my friend President Zedillo for his vision in making this session possible and for his courageous resolve against drugs. And I thank all the nations represented here who are committed to fight for our children's future by fighting drugs together.

Ten years ago, the United Nations adopted a pathbreaking convention to spur cooperation against drug trafficking. Today, the potential for that kind of cooperation has never been greater or more needed. As divisive blocs and barriers have been dismantled around the world, as technology has advanced and democracy has spread, our people benefit more and more from nations

working and learning together. Yet the very openness that enriches our lives is also exploited by criminals, especially drug traffickers.

Today we come here to say no nation is so large and powerful that it can conquer drugs alone; none is too small to make a difference. All share a responsibility to take up the battle. Therefore, we will stand as one against this threat to our security and our future.

The stakes are high, for the drug empires erode the foundations of democracies, corrupt the integrity of market economies, menace the lives, the hopes, the futures of families on every continent. Let there be no doubt, this is ultimately a struggle for human freedom.

For the first time in history, more than half the world's people live under governments of their own choosing. In virtually every country, we see the expansion of expressions of individual liberty. We cannot see it all squandered for millions of people because of a perverse combination of personal weakness and national neglect. We have to prove to the drug traffickers that they are wrong. We are determined, and we can make a difference.

Nations have shown that with determined and relentless efforts, we can turn this evil tide. In the United States, drug use has dropped 49 percent since 1979. Recent studies show that drug use by our young people is stabilizing, and in some categories, declining. Overall cocaine use has dropped 70 percent since 1985. The crack epidemic has begun to recede. Last year, our Coast Guard seized more than 100,000 pounds of cocaine. Today, Americans spend 37 percent less on drugs than a decade ago. That means that over $34 billion reinvested in our society, rather than being squandered on drugs.

Many other nations are making great strides. Mexico set records for eradication in 1997. Peruvian coca cultivation has been slashed 42 percent since 1995. Colombia's growing aerial eradication program has destroyed tens of thousands of hectares of coca. Thailand's opium poppy growth is steadily decreasing, this year alone down 24 percent.

The United States is also a partner in global law enforcement and interdiction efforts, fighting antidrug and—funding antidrug and crime training for more than 8,250* officials last year. In 1997 Latin American and Caribbean governments seized some 166 metric tons of cocaine. Better trained police, with improved information sharing, are arresting more drug traffickers around the world.

Joint information networks on suspicious financial transactions are working in dozens of countries to put the brakes on money laundering. By the end of the year 2000, the United States will provide assistance to an additional 20 countries to establish and strengthen these financial intelligence units. We must and we can deprive drug traffickers of the dirty money that fuels their deadly trade.

We are finding strength in numbers, from the antidrug alliance the Western Hemisphere forged at the recent Summit of the Americas, to the steps against drugs and crimes the G–8 leaders agreed to take last month. The U.N. International Drug Control Program, under Executive Director Arlacchi's leadership, is combating drug production, drug trafficking, and drug abuse in some of the most difficult corners of the world, while helping to make sure the money we spend brings maximum results. I applaud the UNDCP's goal of dramatically reducing coca and opium poppy cultivation by 2008. We will do our part in the United States to make this goal a reality.

For all the achievements of recent years, we must not confuse progress with success. The specter of drugs still haunts us. To prevail we must do more, with dynamic national strategies, intensified international cooperation, and greater resources.

The debate between drug supplying and drug consuming nations about whose responsibility the drug problem is has gone on too long. Let's be frank: This debate has not advanced the fight against drugs. Pointing fingers is distracting. It does not dismantle a single cartel, help a single addict, prevent a single child from trying and perhaps dying from heroin. Besides, the lines between countries that are supply countries, demand countries, and transit countries are increasingly blurred. Drugs are every nation's problem, and every nation must act to fight them on the streets, around the kitchen table, and around the world.

This is the commitment of the United States. Year after year, our administration has provided the largest antidrug budgets in history. Our request next year exceeds $17 billion, nearly 6 billion of which will be devoted to demand reduction. Our comprehensive national drug control strategy aims to cut American drug use and

* White House correction.

access by half over the next 10 years, through strengthened law enforcement, tougher interdiction, improved treatment, and expanded prevention efforts. We are determined to build the drug-free America and to join with others to combat drugs around the world.

We believe attitudes drive actions. Therefore, we wage first the battle in the minds of our young people. Working with Congress and the private sector, the United States has launched a major antidrug youth media campaign. Now, when our children turn on the television, surf the Internet, or listen to the radio, they will get the powerful message that drugs are wrong and can kill them.

I will be asking Congress to extend this program through 2002. With congressional support and matching dollars from the private sector, we will commit to a 5-year, $2 billion public-private partnership to teach our children to stay off drugs.

Other nations, including Mexico, Venezuela, and Brazil, are launching similar campaigns. I had the pleasure of talking with the President of Brazil about this at some length yesterday. I hope all our nations can work together to spread the word to children all around the world: Drugs destroy young lives; don't let them destroy yours.

The United States is also working to create a virtual university for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, using modern technology to share knowledge and experience across national borders. We will launch this effort next month in New Mexico, with an international training course on reducing drug demand. Government officials and other professionals from Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras will work with experts on drug abuse and gang prevention from the U.S. The course will be linked via satellite to the U.S. Information Agency's WORLDNET system, so that anyone with access to WORLDNET can tune in.

Our National Institute for Drug Abuse in the United States, which funds 85 percent of global research on drugs, will post on the Internet live videotapes of its drug prevention and treatment workshops. This means that anyone, anywhere, with access to a computer and modem—a parent whose child is addicted to drugs, a doctor trying to help, a researcher looking for a cure—anyone will be able to obtain the latest, most advanced medical knowledge on drugs.

Such sharing of information, experience, and ideas is more important than ever, and that is why I am especially pleased to announce the establishment of an international drug fellowship program that will enable professionals from all around the world to come to the United States and work with our drug-fighting agencies. The focus will be on the priorities of this special session: demand reductions, stimulants, precursors, money laundering, judicial cooperation, alternative development, and eradication of illicit crops. These fellowships will help all of us. It will help our nations to learn from one another while building a global force of skilled and experienced drug crusaders.

Together we must extend the long arm of the law and the hand of compassion to match the global reach of this problem. Let us leave here determined to act together in a spirit of trust and respect, at home and abroad, against demand and supply, using all the tools at our disposal to win the global fight against drugs and build a safe and healthy 21st century for our children.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; U.N. General Assembly President Hennady Udovenko; Pino Arlacchi, Executive Director, U.N. Drug Control Programme; President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; and President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Reception for Gubernatorial Candidate Barbara B. Kennelly in Westport, Connecticut

June 8, 1998

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much. Let me first thank Martha Stewart for having us here. I had a wonderful time going through this wonderful enterprise, and I love the food. And I know it's all supposed to be light, but if you eat enough of it, it's still—[*laughter*]—it was a wonderful, wonderful lunch.

I think of the great following Martha has throughout the country; there's no telling how much she's broadened my base today by giving me a chance to come here. [*Laughter*] There will be millions of people listening to me that never paid any attention to me before, just because I came here today. And I'm very grateful. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank two Members of the United States Congress from Connecticut, who are not up on this platform but are out in the crowd, for being here today and for their service for you and our Nation, Congressman Maloney and Congressman Rosa DeLauro. Thank you for being here, so much, thank you. I thank our Democratic Party chair, Ed Marcus; your great attorney general and my old classmate and longtime friend, Richard Blumenthal, I thank him.

You all know I owe Connecticut a great deal. I mean, I came to law school here; I met Hillary here; I worked in Joe Duffy's campaign in 1970 and did a little work for Joe Lieberman. I've made friends that are still friends of mine forever. I actually have known both your Senators now for nearly 30 years. I knew them when all three of us were young, ungray—and frankly, most of our friends would have been astonished to know how any of us turned out. [*Laughter*] And being friends with them has been a great experience. I've loved in later years being—especially, serving with Joe Lieberman in the Democratic Leadership Council. You all know how grateful I am to Senator Dodd for chairing our Democratic Party at a particularly challenging time. I also appreciate the fact that Chris Dodd will still play golf with me, since Barbara Kennelly no longer has time to play golf with me. [*Laughter*] So I'm very thankful for that.

I'm going to tell you a story today. I'm going to do something highly impolitic involving Barbara Kennelly. This is impolitic but, as God as my witness, it is true. Last summer Barbara Kennelly called me, and she said, "I want to talk to you about running for Governor." I said, "Okay." I said, "Do you want me to tell you what you want to hear, or do you want me to be honest with you?" She said, "I want you to be honest with me; we've been friends a long time." So Barbara Kennelly came to Martha's Vineyard, where Hillary and Chelsea and I were on vacation, and we went out and played golf together, and then Barbara and her son came and had dinner with Hillary and me that night. And we talked about this. And I said, "Barbara, I was Governor for 12 years, and I loved it. A lot of people thought I ran for President because I was bored being Governor. I was happier on the day I left than the day I showed up. [*Laughter*] I loved the job."

But I said, "It is almost an unwritten rule of American politics that if the economy is good, you can't beat an incumbent Governor unless he does something real dumb." You've virtually got to have a lobotomy, and you can still get reelected if the economy is good if you're Governor—no offense to Governor Rowland, I didn't mean that he had. [*Laughter*] I didn't mean that. I didn't mean that. [*Laughter*] No, I didn't mean that. No, I'm serious, I didn't mean that. I told her the truth. I said, "This is like rolling a rock up a hill, if the economy is good."

But she said, "Look," she said, "I can be reelected to Congress, and I love my job. But I'm concerned about my State. How many times do you have good times? And you should do more with good times, not less." And it made a profound impression on me. We sat there and talked. And like I said, this is all very impolitic, what I'm telling you, but you need to know the truth. She knew what she was getting into. And she said, "You should do more with good times, not less. You shouldn't take the easy way out just because times are good, because as a practical matter, when times are good, if you've got the right kind of leadership you can get things done that you can't get done

in tough times. So I'm going to run anyway, and I'm going to do my best to win."

Now, the first thing you need in a Governor is strength of character. Anybody who would take on those odds just because she believes in you and your future and what kind of future your children have deserves serious consideration and support from the Democrats of her State.

Now I want to give you a second reason that you ought to support Barbara Kennelly in this race. Our country is doing pretty well now, and I am gratified beyond measure that in the last 5½ years we have worked hard together and worked with the American people. And we now have the lowest crime rates in 25 years, 16 million jobs and the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest percentage of our people on welfare in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the United States of America. I'm proud of that. [*Applause*]

What I want to say to you is it didn't happen by accident, and our role in it—that is, our administration and the National Government's role—came after the people voted in 1992 to take a different direction, to move out of this old debate between those that said Government was the problem and would mess up a two-car parade and should go away, and those who said we just want to defend the old status quo Government. We wanted to do something different.

We had a whole different economic philosophy. We thought we could actually reduce the deficit and balance the budget and still invest more in education, in the environment, in health care, and the future of our people if, at the same time, we were expanding trade and creating more markets for American products. That was our strategy. I'd say, on balance, it's worked pretty well.

But it was different. It's important that you know it was different, and it was extremely vulnerable to attack because it was different. And the first big test of the strategy was the vote on our economic plan in 1993. My now-Treasury Secretary, Bob Rubin, who was then my economic adviser, and Lloyd Bentsen, the then-Treasury Secretary, came to me and said, "We have talked to the financial markets; we have talked to Mr. Greenspan; we've talked to all these people; we believe we'll never get out of this recession unless we take at least $500 billion off this deficit so we can drive interest rates down and make investments more attractive and free up capital. You've got to do it, and you've got to make some tough decisions. And you're going to have to do some things that are very unpopular."

And we put that economic plan before the Congress. And Barbara Kennelly was in the Congress; so was her opponent. And everything you just clapped for was riding on what we did, because the crime rate is down because of our crime bill, but it wouldn't be down this much if the economy weren't better. The welfare reform rates are down because of welfare reform, but they wouldn't have come down as much if the economy hadn't been better. Everything was riding on it—all of our education initiatives—everything.

It passed by one vote in the House and by one vote in the Senate. If Chris Dodd had said no, if Joe Lieberman had said no, if Rosa DeLauro had said no, and if Barbara Kennelly had said no—just one of them—all those numbers I just read you, that you clapped for, would probably not be on a list that anyone can say today.

Everything was hanging in the balance. And everybody that got up to vote for it knew it was unpopular. Why? Because not a single, solitary member of the other party voted for it. They were terrifying people. They said if the President's economic plan passed, everybody's taxes will go up; the economy will go down; we'll have a terrible recession; the deficit will get bigger.

Everybody's forgotten about all that now. Why have you forgotten? Because they were wrong. [*Laughter*] I have no more elections to run, so I'm not asking you to do anything for me. [*Laughter*] Just once, I'd like to see people really know what happened and reward those who were right, and at least hold accountable those who were wrong.

So you know what happened in the ensuing 5 years. So what happens now? States all over America have more money than they had in a long time. And in 1994, the Republicans went out and told everybody how terrible we were and what an awful thing we had done, how we were going to bankrupt the economy. They won the Congress, and they got a majority of the Governorships, and they were wrong about

everything. And because they were wrong, they've all been reelected ever since because the economy has been good. That's the truth.

Now, I believe when you think about what you're going to do with your prosperity, you have a key decision which helped to bring about your prosperity, and the two people running were on opposite sides—all I can tell you is, when it would have been very easy to walk away, Barbara Kennelly stood up, stayed hitched, and Connecticut and America are better places today because of it. And that's a good reason to vote for her.

Here's the last thing I want to tell you; this is the third reason to vote for Barbara Kennelly and to work for her and to talk to people. And again, I say this having been a Governor for 12 years. I know something about this job. When I read you the laundry list of achievements, I said we had the smallest Federal Government in 35 years. That's true. Part of the reason it's smaller is that we've gotten rid of, for example, two-thirds of the regulations the Department of Education imposed on States for education funds. We say, here's the purpose; you decide the how's. We did a lot of that, because I had been a Governor, and I realized the Federal Government couldn't micromanage all the how's, but I always thought it was legitimate for them to tell me what the money was supposed to be spent on if they sent me the money.

Now, because of the changes we have made and are making now, the next Governor of Connecticut will have unique tools to deal with some of the long-term challenges you face. Connecticut is one of the most interesting States in America. You have overall one of the highest per capita incomes and two or three of the poorest cities. You struggle with trying to build a community of people and bring people together and give everybody opportunity.

Now, in the next 4 years you will have an unprecedented opportunity to do the following things: Because of the Balanced Budget Act passed last year, the next Governor will have an unprecedented opportunity to add children, poor children, to the ranks of those with health insurance because of what Congress—what the Democrats demanded to be a part of that balanced budget plan. So it really matters who the Governor is, because the Governor will decide what are the components of this effort, how will we do this. It matters how important it is to the Governor. And it matters how much of that kind of experience the Governor has. That's one thing. Children, whether they—often it may be the difference in life or death for them. It certainly may be the difference in how healthy they are.

Secondly, if we pass tobacco legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, we will be sending back to the States substantial amounts of money. One of the things the States will have to decide to do is how much money to invest in increased child care for working people on modest incomes. This is a huge deal. If you want all the folks in the lower income neighborhoods of the big cities of Connecticut to stay off welfare and go to work, if you want people to work for modest wages even in times when they don't have a lot extra left over at the end of every pay period, and you want them to be successful parents, you want to want your State to do more to help them have affordable, decent child care. Who do you think is more likely to make the right decisions about what kind of child care ordinary families have with their children?

Representative Kennelly. Me! [*Laughter*]

The President. I'll give you three more examples. I'm going to go back tomorrow—I guess it is—I think it's tomorrow—but sometime in the next few days I'm going to sign the transportation bill. And that transportation bill has a lot of money in it that will go to States to help move people from welfare to work, literally pay the transportation bills. One of the biggest problems we have in getting poor people who are on welfare to go to work is that very often the jobs aren't anywhere they can walk to, and they don't have cars, and they may not be able to afford or even have access to transit. There's a lot in there. So it really matters. If you want the welfare reform to work and you believe that people should work if they can, but you want them to be successful parents, it matters who the Governor is.

And the last thing I can't say enough about is education. Barbara mentioned it. But we still have enormous challenges. She mentioned the Internet. I gave a speech at MIT last Saturday about how we can make sure we make democratic—not party, small "d"—make democratic the gains of the technological revolution. We have to hook up every classroom to the Internet. We have to make sure that all of our children have access to the benefits of the technology

revolution. We have to make sure there are smaller classes in the grades when kids start out, especially if they have—they don't have the support at home that they need.

All these things will matter. So you've got education, welfare, child care, health care. If you do these things right, you can bring Connecticut together; you can lift the State up; you can go forward into the 21st century together. It will matter a lot who the Governor is.

So I can tell you, she's got the strength of character to serve. When the whole future of the country's economy and Connecticut's was riding on the line and we didn't have a vote to spare, she stood right there, toe-to-toe, knowing what a price she could pay. And when you look at what powers will be there for the Governors in the next 4 years and what you want from Connecticut, I don't think there's much of a question. Barbara Kennelly deserves your support, and I thank you for being here for her today.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the studios of the "Martha Stewart Living" homemaking television program. In his remarks, he referred to Martha Stewart, host of the reception and the television program; State Democratic Party Chair Ed Marcus; and Gov. John G. Rowland of Connecticut.

Statement on the Resignation of Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton

June 8, 1998

It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I accept the resignation today of John Dalton as Secretary of the Navy. Whether as a young midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, in his business career, or in the 5 years he led the Navy, John has always been a shining example of the best America has to offer.

During Secretary Dalton's tenure, the Navy and Marine Corps have truly risen to the challenge of change, while reaffirming the core values that have always defined the Department of the Navy. His business acumen has helped to streamline and strengthen operations, and he has worked ceaselessly to extend opportunity to every sailor and Marine, helping draw strength from our rich diversity.

I thank him for his service, and for his friendship.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Penalties for Drug Traffickers Who Carry Firearms

June 8, 1998

I applaud the Supreme Court's decision today to make sure that drug traffickers who carry firearms, whether on their person or in their car, are subject to the stiffest penalties possible. Crime rates have fallen in America for 6 years in a row, but guns and drugs remain serious problems among our youth and in many of our neighborhoods. Today's decision is one more victory for law enforcement and law-abiding citizens in the fight against crime and drugs.

Joint Communique With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico
June 8, 1998

The President of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo, and the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, met today in New York City.

During their conversation, both Presidents expressed their satisfaction regarding the convening of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Illicit Drugs. They agreed with the comprehensive approach to deal with the problem of drugs based on the principle of shared responsibility on the part of all nations.

The Presidents of Mexico and the United States reviewed the many improvements that have taken place in the bilateral relationship. Trade was among the specific topics discussed. They noted that the increase in the bilateral trade of goods and services has been remarkable. In this regard, the Presidents agreed to seek solutions to pending disagreements in the trade agenda, in order to further eliminate obstacles to the free flow of goods and services between both countries.

Regarding migration issues, both Presidents underscored the priority that their governments give to the protection of the human rights of migrants and to a safe and orderly border. They agreed to continue broadening and strengthening specific measures to achieve these objectives.

President Clinton praised the courageous efforts of the Mexican people in fighting the recent forest fires in their country. President Zedillo conveyed appreciation for the assistance provided by the United States Government in this endeavor.

Bilateral cooperation against drug trafficking was given special consideration. The Presidents underscored the importance of combating all drug trafficking, in conformity with the laws in each country. They noted that this objective is best accomplished through improved cooperation and mutual trust, with full respect for the sovereignty of both nations. They agreed to strengthen mechanisms in their countries to deal with antidrug and money laundering efforts, and to improve cooperation, communication and information exchange between both governments.

The Presidents reaffirmed their governments' commitment to further the objectives and fully comply with the principles stated in the "Declaration of the Alliance against Drugs", which both signed in Mexico City, in May 1997. They therefore welcomed and endorsed agreement between Attorneys General Reno and Madrazo to develop a process for improved consultation and collaboration on law enforcement operations of mutual interest and avoid actions that could have undesirable effects on the bilateral relationship, and through this process strengthen that relationship. The U.S. and Mexican Attorneys General working in consultation with their respective Treasury and Hacienda officials will intensify efforts to investigate and prosecute narcotics trafficking and money laundering networks. They also will determine additional measures, such as regulations, enforcement techniques and actions, that should be taken in their own countries to deter organized crime, drug trafficking and money laundering in the future. The two Attorneys General will meet again in the days to come to define the common agenda.

Presidents Zedillo and Clinton reaffirmed their commitment to continue to work together in all aspects of the bilateral agenda and to further pursue the mature relationship and the friendship that is vital for the well-being of both peoples.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of this joint communique.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in New York City

June 8, 1998

Thank you very much, "Mr. Speaker"—has a nice ring to it, don't you think? [*Laughter*] Let me thank the very large number of House Members who are here or who have been here, in addition to Congressman Gephardt and Congressman Frost: Congressman Rangel and Congresswoman Lowey and Congresswoman Maloney, Congressman Pallone, Congressman Nadler, Congressman Hinchey, Congressman Ackerman, Congressman Engel. And Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher is here from California, where in the California primary she won 55 percent of the vote against nine Republicans. That's a good sign for our future.

Let me tell you, in California, for those of you who don't know it, everybody just runs and all the votes get added up together, and the top voting Democrat and the top vote-getting Republican then run against each other in the fall. If I were the Republican in her race, I would reconsider.

Let me also thank Judith Hope for her work for the Democratic Party, and Mayor Dowden, thank you for coming. We have two candidates here. I don't know if they were mentioned earlier, but Paul Feiner from the 20th district and William Holtz from the 1st, thank you for running. We can't win if we don't have candidates. And for all of you that had anything to do with putting this event together, I thank you.

I do want to apologize to Congressman Frost's mother for comparing Martin to my dog, Buddy. That's not exactly what I did. I said if I'd been thinking clearly I would have named my dog Martin, instead of Buddy—[*laughter*]—because Martin Frost is so insistent, it's just like a dog biting you on the leg; you know, until you do what he wants to do, he will not let go of your leg. And so here I am, and I'm honored to be here.

Let me say to my long-time friend Chevy Chase, that deal on the Bosnian vowels is one of the funniest things I've heard in a long time. [*Laughter*] But you have persuaded me that it ought to be done. [*Laughter*] But I do want to make an announcement about it. I've worked a long time to eliminate deficit spending, too long to change course now. I'm also against deficit voweling. And therefore, we are going to have to reduce our vowels in order to increase our gift to Bosnia. [*Laughter*] And Chevy, you lost the lottery. We are taking your vowels. From now on, your stage name will be "Chv Chs." [*Laughter*] I will write your first note to that effect tomorrow. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I feel good about where our country is; I feel good about where our party is. I feel profoundly honored to be associated with all of these Members of Congress who are here tonight. I guess I would like to make just a couple of points.

When I became President, I was not very interested in politics as usual. I had the same reaction to a lot of what goes on in Washington. It is so plainly and blatantly and nakedly political and so clearly divorced from the way ordinary people live out there in the country, that many of you expressed to me tonight when you walked through the line.

I was, in the words of one of my distinguished opponents, "just a Governor from a small Southern State." But I did have these old-fashioned ideas, and some fairly modern ones as well. I thought that, yes, we needed new ideas, consistent with Democratic Party's enduring values. But I also had this really old-fashioned idea that if somebody just sort of showed up in Washington and went to work every day and worried about how many things you could get done, at the end of a year or two you'd actually get a lot of things done; and that if we spent more time trying to pile up accomplishments for the American people, instead of pile up negative words on each other, we would get a great deal done indeed.

And I have to say to you now, 5½ years into my Presidency, I am more optimistic today than I was the day I took the oath of office for the first time about the potential for this political system to do what needs to be done for the American people, to empower them to make the most of their lives in the 21st century, to create conditions of peace and security, to move us forward together. But it takes sustained effort.

Now, I look back on the last 6 years, and here is the story we can say—and if someone had told me this on Inaugural Day, I would have said, I'll take it proudly—because today we have the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and 16 million new jobs, the lowest percentage of our people on welfare in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 35 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership rate in the history of the United States. That is the record of the Democratic Party at the eve of the 21st century.

Now, yes, it is true, as Mr. Gephardt said and I've never hesitated to say, that Government did not do this alone. But in each case, Government had a role to play that was indispensable. The American people deserve the ultimate credit for anything that's achieved in this country; that is, first of all, in the nature of the democracy, and secondly, in the nature of essentially a private economy and a private society. But there is a role to play here.

And it is critical to point out, if you go back to 1993, I don't believe any serious observer believes the economy would have come back as much as it has if we hadn't passed the economic plan, without a single vote from the other party and without a vote to spare. I don't believe any serious analyst believes that the crime rate would have come down as much as it has if it hadn't been for the economy coming back and for the passage of the crime bill and a commitment to put 100,000 police on the street and ban assault weapons.

And I could go through the whole litany. So I'm very proud. As a Democrat, to be able to stand up here and say that this country is now working for ordinary Americans, based on these numbers, is very important to me. We have last year—it's working for all kinds—we have a record number of new Hispanic-owned businesses, the lowest black unemployment rate ever recorded. Last year, for the first time in history, there was statistically no difference between the African-American high school graduation rate and the graduation rate of the white majority.

These are stunning indicators of forward progress, and I'm proud of that. I'm proud of the fact that along the way we were also able to pass the Family and Medical Leave Act. And we cut taxes for families with modest incomes of under $30,000; it took 2.2 million children out of poverty.

I'm proud of the fact that we reformed the adoption laws, the child support laws, and the pension protection laws, helping tens of millions of Americans. I'm proud of the fact that we put a record amount of money into research, especially into medical research; that we opened the doors of college to everybody willing to work for it, with tax credits and scholarships and work-study programs.

I'm proud of our national service program, AmeriCorps, that's given almost 100,000 young people a chance to serve in their communities. I'm very proud of the fact that, according to our Interior Secretary, Bruce Babbitt, we have now protected more land in perpetuity for the American people than in any other administration in the history of the country except those of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt. All of those things are things we can be proud of.

And what I am here to tell you tonight is we could do a lot more if we all start rowing in the same direction. No one can seriously say of the Democratic Party now, "They are not a party of fiscal responsibility." No one can seriously say of the Democratic Party now, "They are not a party that believes in the primary value of work and family." No one can say we don't believe in public safety. No one can say that we can't be trusted with the foreign policy of the country and the national security of the country. All the negative things that our adversaries said about us for years and years and years have no currency in life at the present state of affairs.

Now we have a chance and, I would argue, a profound obligation as a people, and for those of us who are Democrats, as a party, not to just try to coast along through this good time but to say, "Hey, it's been a long time since we had a time like this. And no time lasts forever." We have a special obligation to take this moment of high confidence and real possibility to deal with the remaining challenges that the people of the United States face, the real long-term challenges.

That's why I thank Mr. Gephardt and our entire caucus for saying that we should not spend the surplus we expect to accumulate this year until we first have developed and passed a plan to save the Social Security System, so that the baby boom generation doesn't bankrupt

our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Over the next 2 years, we have to face the challenges that Social Security and Medicare present us. We had a very gripping conversation around our dinner table tonight about the enormous financial pressures on the health care delivery system here in New York, occasioned by the growth of managed care, the tightness of Government budgets, and the declining percentage of Americans who get health insurance with their work. We have to deal with these challenges. And you have to pick a party. The American people have to pick a party to deal with them in the next 2 years.

We have continuing education challenges and huge debates in Washington where the Democrats have been strong in support of our agenda of smaller class sizes, higher standards, connecting every classroom to the Internet, better trained teachers, more after-school programs to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. Dick Gephardt is right: Yes, we have to punish people who misbehave; yes, we have to be tough on the gangs. We can't jail our way out of this crisis. We have got to find these children before they get in trouble and save more of our kids. And we know what to do about it. The question is, are we going to take this opportunity to do it? We have the means to do it, and we know what to do. The question is, will we do it?

We're just finishing a huge rough period, and we have a few more weeks to go, of El Nino, where the fires have been raging in Mexico; the fires have been raging in South America and in other places. There's a big story in the morning paper that, based on the first 5 months of this year, if present trends continue, 1998 will be the hottest year ever recorded since we have been measuring temperatures. Already we know that the 5 hottest years since 1400 have occurred in the 1990's. This climate change business is not just some—as some would have you believe—some academic theory.

Now, on the other hand, there are some who would have you believe that we can't deal with the problem of climate change and global warming without essentially shrinking the economy. That's not true either, and that's a Hobbesian's choice we don't have to make.

I am committed to dealing with this issue to prove we can improve the environment; we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions; we can stop the rapid pace of global warming and continue to grow the American economy if we do it in a responsible way. And if you have from now to midnight, I could give you 50 examples to win that argument.

But the answer is not, as our adversaries on the other side do, to call these hearings in Congress and attack administration witnesses and attack environmental specialists and claim that global warming is some big academic conspiracy designed to break the economy of the United States. I'm telling you, the 5 warmest years since 1400 have occurred in this decade. We have lots of evidence.

But the good news is, this is just like buying an insurance policy. We don't lose anything. If we change our course in a responsible way, we can continue to enjoy high rates of growth with less destructive energy practices. And I am committed to doing that.

Let me just mention one or two other things. I want very badly to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. The American Medical Association is supporting us; consumer groups are supporting us. On balance, the managed care movement was coming to America and, on balance, it started out as a very good thing, and it has done a lot of good things. We could not sustain an economy with medical costs going up at 3 times the rate of inflation every year forever; it was an unsustainable pattern.

But any management technique that gets divorced from the underlying purpose of the enterprise will eventually get you into trouble. I don't care what your enterprise is; when you get technique over principle, you're going to get in trouble. And because of the things I mentioned earlier, we have a crisis there. And I think I can speak for every American, or nearly every American, that we want people who are sick or whose illnesses can be avoided to get whatever the appropriate amount of medical care is.

We don't want to waste any money. We want the tightest management possible. But we cannot afford to see this great country where life expectancy has been going up, where the quality of life has been improving, where we now see laboratory tests on animals that are actually restoring severed spines and getting movements in lower limbs of animals, and where we identified two of the genes that are very important in forming breast cancer, and where we're just about through—in the next 2 years, we'll finish this gene-mapping project so we'll actually be

able to develop software to analyze all of our genetic problems and solve Lord only knows what other health problems—this is the last time we want to get into the business of basically stripping from our physicians and other health care professionals the ability to give basic care in a decent, humane, caring way. We can surely figure out how to manage as well as possible without doing that.

Look, I could go through a lot of other issues. The bottom line is this—I do want to talk a little about two other issues—but the bottom line is this: We Democrats have an agenda. We're not trying to sit on these good times. There's not a single person here asking you to vote for them just because they've done a good job. If you think about it, that's pretty remarkable.

There are people in New York City that care about the fact that the unemployment rate in America that's highest are on Native American reservations out in the high plains. There are Democrats from suburban districts with 3 percent, 2 percent unemployment that want to pass Secretary Cuomo and the Vice President and our urban empowerment zones to get investment back in the inner-cities and get the unemployment rate down in the highest unemployment areas of New York.

Why? Because we have an agenda, because we believe that this is a time that comes along once in a generation. And if we just sit on our laurels and enjoy it, we'll be paying for it for a generation. This is a time when we have the confidence and the means and the knowledge to face the long-term challenges of America to guarantee that this will be the greatest country in the world for the next 50 years. That's what we're about.

And I just want to close with two issues. The first is the fact that the Democrats are committed to making a virtue of our diversity. We know that in an increasingly shrinking world, the fact that we come from everyplace, represent all religions, all races, all ethnic groups, all different kinds of cultural experiences and understandings, that if we can be bound together by a common set of American values, our diversity is the greatest asset we will take into the 21st century.

And the second thing I would say is that we believe we have to be a force for peace and freedom and security. Chevy mentioned the speech I gave at the U.N. conference on drugs today. There were 40 heads of state there—this would have been unheard of just a few years ago—people saying, "Nobody's big enough to solve this problem alone, and no nation is too small to make a difference. We're going to work together."

I ask you to support the decision I've made to go forward with my China trip. I hope you will support the efforts we're making to move India and Pakistan back from the nuclear brink. They are great nations. They can have a great future. We can work this out. But the answer is not to start another nuclear arms race on the Indian subcontinent. The answer is to find another, more constructive, secure way for both nations to be great nations and successful with their people and in the world.

I ask you to continue to support our efforts to fashion a peace in the Middle East and to assure you that the people there are still working on it, and we are moving. I thank those of you who helped me over 5 long years, with the result we celebrated with the Irish election in the last few days. I thank you for doing that.

But this is the last point I want to make. We cannot go into this new world alone. You know, you may not agree—some people didn't agree with me when I sent the troops into Bosnia. Some people didn't agree with me when I went into Haiti. Some people didn't agree with me when I extended credit to Mexico—they turned out to be a pretty good risk, I might add—paid us back early with a big profit. And I haven't been right on every decision. But I am confident that the big decisions are right.

We need an alliance with Asian countries where we work not only for greater prosperity but for greater security and greater freedom. We need an alliance with our neighbors in the Americas where we work to make sure that this increasing prosperity lifts the fate of all people together. We need an alliance with Russia to build a democratic Russia that is also prosperous. We need to keep working in constructive partnership with the Chinese so that they will define their greatness in the 20th century in a more constructive way than many nations did in the—in the 21st century they will be more constructive than many other nations were in the 20th century. We need to bring Africa into the family of nations.

In New York you think about these things. This is an argument we have to win in Main Street America. We are 4 percent of the world's

population; we have 20 percent of its wealth. We exercise sometimes far more than 20 percent of its influence in matters of foreign affairs. We cannot continue to do it unless we are responsible members of the world community. We have to cooperate as well as lead.

And that's what this is all about. It's about what your children and your grandchildren will live like in the 21st century. It's about what the world they have will be like. Those of you who are at least as old as I am, and those of you—a few of you are a little older—understand what I'm saying. A time like this comes along just every now and then.

Chevy Chase mentioned the 30th anniversary of Robert Kennedy's death. This weekend I had the privilege of going to Congressman Joe Kennedy's home in Boston to gather with his mother and many of his brothers and sisters and Senator Kennedy. And we had a lunch with a lot of the people who worked for Robert Kennedy in his Senate office and his Presidential campaign. And I gave my weekly radio address on Robert Kennedy. For those of us who were just coming of age when he was killed, there were stunning parallels between what he sought to do and what we are now in the process of trying to do: bringing people together across racial and ethnic lines, trying to lift the poor up on a combination of self-reliance and decent support for successful parenting and childrearing, trying to be engaged in the world, but on terms that are consistent with American values. It's almost as if we've been given the opportunity to redeem the promise of our party and, in a larger sense, of our Nation, that kind of strayed and was divided for quite a long time.

That's what this election is about. I'm telling you, we've got good ideas; we've got a good track record. We're not asking anybody to elect us because the status quo is fine. We believe we can do better in the 21st century, and we want you to get out there and help us win these elections and win that House back so we can do that for America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. at the Waldorf Astoria. In his remarks, he referred to Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; Mayor James T. Dowden of Bridgewater, NJ; and comedian Chevy Chase.

Remarks Welcoming President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea

June 9, 1998

I am proud to welcome President Kim Dae-jung and the entire Korean delegation to the United States and to the White House.

We live in remarkable times. In the 1980's, some of the greatest heroes of freedom were the political prisoners of repressive regimes: Lech Walesa in Poland, Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, Nelson Mandela in South Africa, and Kim Dae-jung, who faced a death sentence in South Korea after years of unjust and brutal treatment by the government.

How very different things are now. Lech Walesa was elected Poland's President; Vaclav Havel and Nelson Mandela are the Presidents of their countries; and Kim Dae-jung is here today as President, after the first-ever democratic change of power from the governing party to the opposition in the 50-year history of the Republic of Korea.

The irresistible longing for freedom, human rights, and democracy has carried Kim Dae-jung to the Presidency of his country and now back to America, where he once lived in exile and where there has long been strong bipartisan support for Korean democracy.

Mr. President, you have the admiration of the American people. We will work together to deepen democracy and economic opportunity.

President Kim has spoken of the powerful link between democratic governments and market economies. In the 21st century, nations will not be able to sustain great economic power unless their people are empowered, free to speak their minds and create their own futures, unless there is equal opportunity and the rule of law.

America strongly supports the economic reforms President Kim is pursuing: opening markets, making financial institutions, businesses,

and government more accountable. We will work with South Korea as it moves toward a full recovery and broader prosperity, with increased trade and investment that will benefit both our nations.

Mr. President, your leadership will guide Korea's economic recovery, but so will your example. If one man can triumph over such great adversity, then surely the Korean people can surmount their current challenges. The American people, including more than 1 million Korean-Americans who contribute so very much to our country, stand with you.

Let me also reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to our security alliance. We will continue working together for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and across Asia.

As President, I stood on the Bridge of No Return where I saw the sacrifices made by American and South Korean troops to protect freedom. I also saw the young North Korean soldiers on the other side and imagined a future where people from North and South could walk freely across that bridge.

We strongly support South Korea's efforts to find common ground with North Korea. The United States also will continue to participate with China in the four-party efforts to build a permanent peace.

Let me conclude by saying something to men and women all around the world who work to protect human rights: Your work matters. You help transform nations and end tyranny. You save lives. Standing with me today is living proof—Kim Dae-jung, a human rights pioneer, a courageous survivor, and America's partner in building a better future for the world.

Today let us celebrate the freedom that has brought so much hope to the end of the 20th century. But let us also strengthen our efforts to build even greater democracy and peace and prosperity for all our children in the 21st century.

Mr. President, again, welcome to the White House, and welcome back to America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

The President's News Conference With President Kim of South Korea
June 9, 1998

President Clinton. Good afternoon. President Kim, members of the Korean delegation, let me first say again what a privilege it has been to welcome President Kim back to the United States and here to the White House. His remarkable life history reminds us that from Seoul to its sister city, San Francisco, people everywhere share the same aspirations for freedom, for peace, for the opportunity of prosperity.

President Kim once wrote from his prison cell, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?" This morning I reaffirmed to President Kim our deep confidence in his efforts to reform the Korean economy, liberalize trade and investment, strengthen the banking system, and implement the IMF program. As he has said on many occasions, open markets and open democracies reinforced one another. The United States will continue our strong support for Korea's reform efforts. In this context, I reaffirmed our commitment to provide bilateral finance if needed under appropriate conditions.

We also discussed a number of concrete steps to promote growth in both our countries. We explored ways to more fully open markets and to further integrate the Republic of Korea into the global economy, including new discussions on a bilateral investment treaty. We signed an Open Skies agreement which permits unrestricted air service between and beyond our countries. I expressed my appreciation for the decision by Korean Airlines to purchase over $1 billion worth of Boeing airplanes. And I'm pleased to announce that the Overseas Private Investment Corporation has determined that Korea is again eligible for OPIC programs, in response to recent steps taken to protect worker rights.

We also discussed the situation on the Korean Peninsula and reaffirmed the importance of our strong defense alliance. Korea is a safer place today than it was 5 years ago, with a reduced nuclear threat and improved dialog between North and South. The United States applauds

President Kim's efforts toward reconciliation. Now we hope North Korea will respond further to President Kim's gestures and that the four-party talks will soon resume, because we think they also can make a crucial contribution to progress.

I am pleased that yesterday, for the very first time, the United Nations command and the North Korean military reached an agreement to hold general officer talks designed to resolve and prevent armistice-related problems along the DMZ. On specific matters, I thanked President Kim for his commitment to provide peaceful sources of energy to North Korea, and I repeated our determination to resolve problems over funding heavy fuel oil for North Korea as part of our agreement, reached in 1994, to freeze its nuclear program.

We will continue to provide food and humanitarian assistance and urge our allies to do the same. And we pledge never to give up the search for missing Americans.

President Kim and I discussed and shared concerns about the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan. Korea has lived with the threat of war for nearly five decades. The last thing the people of Asia need now is a nuclear arms race. South Korea has set a shining example for nonproliferation by abandoning nuclear weapons, accepting safeguards, and developing a peaceful nuclear program that brings benefits to the region.

And the Korean people have demonstrated the universality of democratic aspirations, bringing a springtime of hope and encouragement to advocates for greater freedoms throughout Asia.

Over the last half century, America has been blessed by the presence of Korean-Americans and Korean students living and learning with us. Soon we will be offering new work-study benefits that will allow Korean students here in the United States to support themselves while in school.

Mr. President, your example reminds Americans what is very precious about our own democracy. I thank you for your visit. I thank you for your lifetime of commitment. When I go to Asia in 2 weeks, I will do so with a firm faith in the future of a dynamic and democratic part of the world, in no small measure because of your life and your triumphs.

Thank you.

President Kim. Today I had my first meeting with President Clinton since my Inauguration. We engaged in a broad exchange of views on the situation on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia as a whole.

At the time of President Clinton's first Inauguration, the United States faced a difficult economic situation. In the 5 years since then, President Clinton has transformed the American economy into the world's most competitive, producing new jobs, reducing unemployment, and achieving a balanced budget. President Clinton has also been unsparing in his efforts to maintain world peace, from Bosnia to Haiti, and to promote greater respect for human rights and democracy.

I attach great significance to my first summit meeting with a leader of such outstanding ability. In this meeting, President Clinton and I agreed to develop Korean-American relations to a higher level of partnership for the 21st century. We also agreed to work together to promote the security and prosperity not only of the Korean Peninsula but of the entire Asia-Pacific region, as well as the development of democracy in Asia on the basis of our shared values of democracy and market economy.

President Clinton and I are strongly of the view that close Korean-American relations are based above all on our security alliance for the preservation of peace on the Korean Peninsula. I explained my new administration's engagement policy toward North Korea and asked for the United States support and cooperation. President Clinton assured me of his full support and cooperation in this regard.

We agreed to further consider ways of promoting reconciliation and cooperation and the building of a lasting peace regime on the Korean Peninsula through the pursuit of the four-party peace talks and South-North dialog in a parallel and complementary matter. President Clinton and I agreed that progress in South-North relations and the improvement of U.S.-North Korean relations should be promoted in harmony. We also shared the view that the light-water reactor project in North Korea contributes to nuclear nonproliferation efforts on the Korean Peninsula and in the world as a whole, as well as to the strengthening of peace and security in Northeast Asia. We thus agreed to continue to cooperate closely to promote the project.

President Clinton and I also held in-depth discussions on the measures to overcome the

current economic crisis facing our nation. I expressed my gratitude for the timely assistance of the United States during our foreign exchange crisis. I explained the results of our efforts to stabilize the financial sector and reconfirmed our resolve for continued reforms. I explained the efforts of our Government to promote active and bold opening to induce foreign investments, and to institutionalize these efforts, we agreed to work out a bilateral investment treaty.

I also explained that for an early resolution of the economic crisis Korea needs increased investment and financial cooperation, and asked that the United States take a leading role in the assistance for our efforts to overcome the economic crisis.

President Clinton welcomed our efforts to overcome the financial crisis, including the economic reform measures. He said that our overcoming the economic crisis will have a positive effect on the resolution of the economic crisis in Asia and is in the interest of the United States, and that the United States will be unsparing in rendering all possible assistance.

President Clinton and I both strongly feel that the IMF, IBRD, and ADB have played important roles in enabling Korea to overcome the economic crisis. President Clinton and I also share the view that all economic trade issues between our two countries should be resolved in a mutually beneficial and amicable way through dialog and consultation, and agreed to work together toward that end.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you very much. Now we will alternate questions. I will call on a member of the American press corps, and then President Kim will call on a member of the Korean press corps. And we'll begin with Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Sanctions Against North Korea

Q. I have a question for each President. President Clinton, is the United States ready to lift sanctions against North Korea as proposed by President Kim?

President Kim, when will American troops be able to come home from the DMZ?

President Clinton. You're two for two there. First let me say that we discussed this matter in real candor. President Kim did not ask me to lift sanctions. What he asked me to do was to work with him to support a policy of reciprocity which would enable us to move forward with the reconciliation of the North and the South. And I said that I would be prepared to do that.

As you know, with regard to the specific sanctions, there are basically three categories of sanctions the United States has with regard to North Korea. At least one and perhaps two whole categories would require, in my view, some legislative change to be modified. But there is some executive flexibility here. What I told President Kim I would do is to work with him. I am encouraged at the bold vision and the confidence that he brings to this, and the genuine concern for the welfare of people in both nations. And I think that his initiatives, plus what we can do in the four-party talks with some issues that properly belong there, can really lead us to some progress here in the next few months and years. So I'm very hopeful.

President Kim. I do not intend to say anything that would interfere with American policymaking, but I do wish to say that our new government will approach the North Koreans based upon a strong security alliance with the United States but with flexibility and to forge an atmosphere in which we can induce the North Koreans to open up, to encourage the moderate elements in North Korea.

We have nothing to fear from North Korea. To induce them to open up will be beneficial to the interests of our two countries, but to the peace of the Peninsula and Northeast Asia in general. Thus, if the United States should ease sanctions against North Korea, the when and how and the content would be a decision for the American Government to make, but we would not oppose and we would cooperate.

Assistance to North Korea

Q. A question to Mr. Clinton, President Clinton. According to the Geneva agreement, the United States is to provide crude oil to the North, and South Korea plays a central role in providing the light-water nuclear reactors, but I understand the American Government has requested our Government to share some of the costs of the crude oil being provided to North Korea. What is your position now?

President Clinton. The North Koreans, as you probably know, have asked for the provision of crude oil and more under the agreement. And in the last few—several days, I have been able to invoke some provisions of American law

which will permit me to fulfill our commitment there. Once we fulfill our commitment there, then we have to see where we are with the North Koreans and whether others will have to do more.

But you're correct, the most important thing that President Kim can do is to reaffirm the commitment of South Korea to fund 70 percent of the light-water reactor, which he has done. And so I believe he has fulfilled his commitment, and I think I'm now quite confident that I will be able to fulfill America's commitment under this agreement.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Tobacco Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the tobacco bill appears on the verge of collapse in the Senate. Today the Senate rejected an attempt to force a vote on the bill. Would you accept a limited measure to reduce teen smoking and at the same time meet Republican objections that the McCain bill taxes too much and spends too much?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I don't agree with that. I think it's clear that one of the things that will lead to a reduction in teen smoking is making cigarettes more expensive. And secondly, it's clear that we need to raise some funds to help States and the Federal Government defray the costs of paying for health bills related to smoking and to do the necessary medical research and to have the antismoking programs.

Now, having said that, it's my information—and yours may be more up to date than mine—but I did talk to Senator Lott and Senator Daschle this afternoon, and we're working hard to get this thing back on track and get into a position where a good comprehensive bill can pass the Senate. And as of just a few minutes before I came over here, I think there may be some developments this afternoon and this evening which will make that possible. And so I'm just going to hang on and hope for the best and keep working at this.

Q. What are those developments?

President Clinton. Well, we'll see, we'll see. We're working on it. But I do believe that the possibility of getting a comprehensive bill out of the Senate is greater now than it was this morning. There are still problems, to be sure, but we're getting closer to, I think, a principled compromise. I hope we are.

President Kim, would you like to call on someone?

Four-Party Talks

Q. The two of you have said that you will pursue the four-party talks and enter Korean dialog in harmony. Do you recognize Korea's leading role in this process?

President Clinton. [*Inaudible*]—the difficulties on the Korean Peninsula, and I think when there is movement, as there is now, being led by the Korean President, the United States should do all in its power to support that movement. That is what we have tried to do in other parts of the world. That is the sort of thing that led to a successful conclusion recently to the Irish peace process, with a vote of the people in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

I do think there are some discrete issues which, because of the terms of the armistice, can perhaps best be handled in the four-party talks. But the lead in all this should be the lead taken in the resolution by the parties themselves, between North and South Korea. And we will do what we can to support President Kim in that regard and to support the North Koreans insofar as they respond in a positive way.

Would you like to answer, Mr. President?

President Kim. As President Clinton has said, I agree entirely. The nonaggression, arms reduction, these should be dealt with in the four-party talks. As for inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation, that should be dealt with in the bilateral inter-Korean dialog. The bilateral talks can be taken within the four-party framework or outside of that.

Situation in North Korea

Q. Mr. President—actually for both of you gentlemen. I wonder if you could give us your assessment of the situation in North Korea and just how dangerous the food shortages there make it, and also if the two of you could share your thoughts about the leader of North Korea, Kim Chong-il, who has remained kind of a mystery to much of the world. Do you feel he's someone who can be trusted?

President Kim. First of all, regarding Kim Chong-il, I don't think anybody knows well enough about him. Based upon our experience, it's very difficult to say that you can trust a Communist. But we feel the need to negotiate

and, once you've reached an agreement, to hold them up to that agreement.

The North Korean regime at present is faced with many difficulties still. It is relatively stable, and I don't think it is going to collapse all that easily. But of course, the food situation, the overall economic situation is very bad. Normally, you could say that you cannot continue a regime based on such a difficult economic situation, but our intent is to persuade North Korea, to make it feel safe in opening up and so that it can resuscitate itself, follow the model set by China and Vietnam, and so that it can overcome such a hard situation at present.

If it remains in such a hard situation, it may decide to go the road of military provocation, or if it stays the course, it may simply collapse and that will fall on our lap. So, for peace, for stability on the Korean Peninsula, we need to induce North Korea to open up and to regain the strength to live and grow on its own. And we have to help it in doing so.

President Clinton. I agree with President Kim's assessment of the leadership in North Korea. Let me just say, with regard to the food situation, it is serious, and we are concerned about it. The United States and South Korea have led the way in providing food to North Korea. And I'm actually quite concerned that the U.N. appeal which goes out periodically has not—to other countries—has not been fulfilled. And so I would hope that other countries that could also make a contribution, that typically have when the U.N. has made such appeals, will do so. I think we have to do whatever we can to avoid severe malnutrition or worse.

But ultimately, the answer is not an annual food appeal. Ultimately, the answer is structural change in North Korea that would permit them to feed themselves and to purchase whatever foodstuffs they need from beyond their borders that they cannot grow. And that, I think, requires a positive response to President Kim's outreach, a rapprochement, a beginning of a resolution and, as he said, an opening up.

It was very interesting—I never heard anyone say it quite this way before—President Kim said to me this morning that if China can begin to open up and Vietnam can begin to open up and they can have very good results from doing so, then it's predictable that North Korea would get the same kind of good results if they would take the same path.

Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization/Economic Assistance

Q. Regarding KEDO and the sharing of the cost, 90 percent for Japan and Korea; the remaining 10 percent is the problem. Korea has asked America to share that 10 percent. The other question is on economic cooperation. You agreed on an investment treaty, and you promised continued assistance and economic cooperation. Have there been other concrete pledges of assistance regarding the Korean economic situation?

President Clinton. Well, of course, we were very involved in the early assistance to Korea, and we have an emergency commitment should it be needed. My belief is that it will not be needed, because I think your country will do quite well now. In addition to that, I committed today to ask the Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Daley, to organize a trade and investment mission to Korea as soon as it can practically be carried out. And we will continue to do that.

With regard to KEDO, we have actively worked not only to secure funding to implement the accord we made with North Korea to suspend its nuclear program in all of its aspects but also to make sure the United States gave as much as we reasonably could. And this is a conversation that I hope President Kim will also be able to have with the leaders of the Congress, because I think there is a great deal of support for him in our Congress, even though there has been from time to time lukewarm support for KEDO. And I think many of our Members of Congress wrongly have viewed KEDO as something we were doing for North Korea instead of something we were doing for the stability of the Korean Peninsula, the safety and security of our allies and friends in South Korea, and for the cause of defusing nuclear tensions everywhere.

In the wake of these nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, I would think everyone all over the world would feel a bigger interest in seeing the agreement with North Korea be fully implemented.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN].

China

Q. Mr. President, a two-part question on your policy toward China. The first part is there is a broad range of human rights activists, from Gary Bauer on the right to Kerry/Kennedy/

Cuomo on the left, who have appealed to you to avoid a visit to Tiananmen Square during your upcoming visit to China. Will you go to Tiananmen Square, as some of your advisers say you must, given the protocol of the Chinese Government?

And the second part of the question is, why did you resist the advice of the Justice Department last February and give Loral a license to export another satellite to be launched on a Chinese missile, even while the Justice Department was in the midst of a criminal investigation of Loral for allegedly providing technology information to China?

President Clinton. Well, let me answer the questions in reverse order. I didn't resist the advice of the Justice Department. I took the advice of the National Security Council, the Defense Department, the State Department, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The statute gives the State Department the responsibility to make a recommendation, and then gets the opportunity—the Defense Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency are given the opportunity to concur. The National Security Council also gave the Justice Department the opportunity to make whatever comments they wanted, evaluated all that, and concluded that I should approve the satellite. It was sent to me in a decision memo which I approved.

And as you have seen from the practice in previous administrations and from all the evidence, it was, from my point of view, a pretty routine decision that I thought, on balance, if all those agencies felt that it was the right thing to do and it furthered our national interests, that I would do so.

Now, in terms of the trip to China, my own view is that if this is going to be a state visit to China and I am going to be the guest of the Chinese, that they should be designing the terms of the arrival ceremony, not me. I simply don't accept the proposition that observing their diplomatic protocol in any way undermines my capacity to advance the principles of the United States.

I appreciated the encouragement reflected in the ad I saw in the paper from a rather wide array of people, with the letter from Billy Graham and the statement from the Dalai Lama. President Kim and I talked about it today. I think in view of the—again I would say, in view of the recent economic events in Asia and the nuclear tests on the Indian subcontinent, it should be clearer than ever before that we have a strong national interest in developing a constructive, positive relationship with China.

Because of that relationship, I think it has been made more likely that political dissent would be more respected. Several political dissidents have been released from imprisonment since President Jiang came here. And I intend to make our views clear and unambiguous. But I think that what Americans should want me to do is to make sure that I am as effective as possible not only in advancing our interests but in standing up for our values. And I'm going to do what I think is likely in the short run and over the long run to make our country the most effective.

South Korean Social and Economic Policy

Q. [*Inaudible*]—increase of social vulnerables and thus it is very natural for Korean Government to try to use their own budget to help the social vulnerables. Having said that, one-third—roughly one-third of Korean budget is devoted to defense budget. And I want to know, are you in favor of an idea that we use the defense budget, to use that money to help the social problems?

And just one more question. I believe you have said that you have talked with President Kim to promote economic growth better, so what would be special measure to promote economic growth? Do you think that Korea might need a kind of Korean version of New Deal plan to promote economic growth, that Korea might need a kind of—[*inaudible*]—to stimulate Korean economy?

President Clinton. Let me try to answer both questions, and if I might, I'd like to answer the second question first.

Your country has had a remarkable record of economic growth by any standard over the last few decades. I believe what has happened here is a bump in the road, if you stay with the necessary reforms to reach the next level of development. All the evidence we have, not just concerning Korea but even concerning the United States and then countries that have a far smaller per capita income than Korea, is that no Government program can offset the flight of investment capital out of a country. And whether anyone likes it or not, all this money can move around the Earth in a matter

of seconds. Therefore, I believe that the best social policy for Korea right now is an economic policy that will restore real growth as soon as possible. That is what will drive down unemployment. It will drive up family incomes. It will help families stay together and take care of older family members and do all the things that make a society a good society.

If I could do anything in the world for Korea just as a magician, if I were dictator of the world, I would restore high growth rates to your country tomorrow, and then the Korean people themselves would work through these problems in no time.

So that brings me to the next point. I think, therefore, that the most important thing I can do as the United States President and the friend of Korea is to restore the Overseas Private Investment Corporation guarantees for financing, to make sure that you know there will be emergency support in the event you need it—that will make it less likely that you will need it; to get this investment mission going to your country; and to do anything else I can to try to support growth.

Now, your first question. I have to answer that the way President Kim answered the first question to me. That is, no President of one country can make a judgment about the national security needs of another country. But I will say this: Obviously, if the security situation in Korea improves to the point that you can reduce defense spending as a percentage of overall spending, that frees up investment for the other human needs of the country to build a stronger social contract.

However, security always comes first. Therefore, as an outsider I would say what President Kim is doing, in showing the vision and the confidence in your people to reach out to North Korea and encourage them to change and encourage a reduction in tensions, is the path most likely to change the security reality. As the security reality changes, then you can change the security budget. But the budget must follow the reality. And I think he's doing that.

Again, I would encourage the leader of North Korea and all those in influence there to respond to his farsighted overtures, and let's get this show on the road, as we say in America.

Thank you very much.

Kosovo

Q. Kosovo, sir? [*Inaudible*]—that situation?

President Clinton. If I could say one word about Kosovo——

Q. Whether U.S. forces might be needed?

President Clinton. Well, I have authorized and approved accelerated NATO planning. And we are supporting and working with the British to get the strongest possible resolution through the United Nations. We're still trying to work out the wording of the resolution, but we have no dispute over the phrase that you have focused on, which is to use all necessary means to try to avoid ethnic cleansing and the loss of human life.

Let me say, all of you know that this is a very thorny problem, and while we're all worried about—deeply worried about seeing a repeat of what happened in Bosnia, we know there are some factual and legal differences between the two entities. But the main thing is that I am determined to do all that I can to stop a repeat of the human carnage in Bosnia and the ethnic cleansing. And I have authorized, and I am supporting, an accelerated planning process for NATO. And as I believe both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense said yesterday, we have explicitly said that we do not believe any options should be taken off the table.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 160th news conference began at 3:40 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. President Kim spoke in Korean, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, the President referred to evangelist Rev. Billy Graham; and President Jiang Zemin of China.

Remarks on Signing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

June 9, 1998

Thank you, Robin. You're a pretty hard act to follow. [*Laughter*] And thank you, Secretary Slater, for doing such a good job and for giving such a good sermon today. I thought he was going to pass the plate. [*Laughter*] Then I realized that you had already given him all the money; he didn't need to pass the plate. [*Laughter*]

I, too, want to thank the Members of Congress who are here. There are 40 or 41 here. But I would like to specifically acknowledge and thank Senator Lott, Senator Chafee, and Senator Baucus, Congressman Shuster and Congressman Oberstar, Senators Byrd, D'Amato, and Sarbanes, all the others who are here who have worked for this. I thank you so much.

Thank you, Governor Schafer, for coming, and all the mayors who are here from all over our great country. Governor Voinovich wanted to come and be with us today, but he's back in Ohio with his mother who is ill. And our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Forty-two years ago this month, President Eisenhower signed the Federal Aid Highway Act into law. The bill was sponsored in the Senate by Albert Gore, Sr. It gave rise to the most efficient network of roads in the history of this country, connecting millions of Americans to the economic mainstream, ushering in two decades of unparalleled growth.

In 1992, when I got on that bus and rode across America, I was still the beneficiary of that farsighted action over 40 years ago. But I also saw that the concrete foundations built in the Eisenhower era were crumbling in some places, that more needed to be done in our cities, in our rural areas, and in all places in between.

It was clear to me then that if America were to roll into the 21st century at full speed, we had to be willing once again to make historic and long-term investments in our roads, our bridges, our transportation systems. We've worked hard to do that for 5 years with enormous bipartisan support in the Congress, even as we were cutting the deficit and reducing the size of the Federal Government to its smallest in 35 years.

Today I am proud to sign this bill, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. It meets the challenge of building the pathways of the future, while maintaining the fiscal discipline that allowed us to achieve the first balanced budget in 29 years and an accompanying very high rate of economic growth. The act will strengthen America by modernizing and building roads, bridges, transit systems, and railways to link our people and our country together and to permit a freer flow of goods. It supports, as you just saw, hundreds of thousands of jobs and a lot of good training.

The act will save lives by allowing us to develop advanced airbag technologies, to offer incentives for increased seatbelt use, to make our roads safer, to get bad drivers and vehicles off the road. The act will protect the environment. It expands recreational trails and bike paths, promotes mass transit, and helps communities to meet national standards for healthy air. The act will expand opportunity. It offers transportation assistance to enable more Americans to move from welfare to work. If you can't get to work, you can't go to work. It protects the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program so that minority and women owned businesses have an opportunity to compete for transportation projects.

That act will allow us to reserve our budget surpluses until we have saved Social Security for the 21st century. The bill is paid for, line by line and dime by dime, without squeezing other critical investments in education, health care, research and development, and the environment.

I have to say that I am disappointed that the bill does not go far enough to ensure a national standard of .08 blood alcohol standard in every State. I'll continue to fight for it and I hope we can pass it, because I believe it will save hundreds of lives.

I also would note for the record that, working with these Members of Congress, we were successful in removing several extraneous environmental riders from the legislation. But I hope that that process can be abandoned so that all environmental issues can be voted on in the clear light of day, up or down.

Let me finally say that now that we are honoring our commitment to build a 21st century transportation infrastructure, I hope that the bipartisan support I have already seen for a 21st century education infrastructure will result in a broad bipartisan bill there as well. For less than one-tenth of the cost of this bill and without spending a cent of the surplus, we can help to ensure that our children will be able to learn in safe, modern, well-equipped schools.

Now again, for all of you, just look at this array of Members of Congress who are here from both parties and both Houses. This shows what we can do when we bring honorable differences and an honest determination to solve a problem together in open and respectful dialog with an absolute commitment to getting to the end of the road. This kind of constructive bipartisan approach can do anything it sets its mind to do.

I talked to Senator Lott today, and I want to thank him and, in his absence, Senator Daschle, for the agreements which have been made today to allow votes to proceed on the tobacco legislation. I thank you, sir. We have another chance to save a million lives, reduce youth smoking, and make a massive contribution to the public health of America. The public expects us to work out our differences on this legislation and on other important bills. The public expects us to act as parents, not politicians. The public really expects us to bring the kind of bipartisan spirit that was brought to bear on this transportation bill to all our important work here.

And I must say again, the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to the United States Congress for the way they have done this work. Thank you. And I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here and gather around, and I'll sign the bill.

[*At this point, the President signed the bill.*]

Thank you all very much. We're adjourned.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Robin McNab, member, Operating Engineers Local 77, Suitland, MD, who introduced the President; Gov. Edward T. Schafer of North Dakota; and Gov. George V. Voinovich of Ohio. H.R. 2400, approved June 9, was assigned Public Law No. 105–178.

Statement on Signing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
June 9, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2400, the "Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century." This comprehensive infrastructure measure for our surface transportation programs—highway, highway safety, and transit—retains the core programs and builds on the initiatives established in the landmark Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

This Act achieves our transportation goals while maintaining fiscal discipline. My Administration worked with the conferees to eliminate excessive funding that would have undermined key Administration priorities for the environment, child care, and education. The resulting compromise, which is paid for with real offsets, funds a record level of guaranteed transportation investment while preserving the budget surplus for Social Security first. The Act also includes a new budget method for surface transportation programs, ensuring that certain transportation authorizations may not be reduced in order to increase spending for nontransportation purposes. I support this change.

I am deeply disappointed, however, that H.R. 2400 fails to include language that would help to establish 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration (BAC) as the standard for drunk driving in each of the 50 States. The experience of States that have adopted the 0.08 blood alcohol level shows that this stringent measure against drunk driving has the potential, when applied nationwide, to save hundreds of lives each year. Applying 0.08 nationwide is an important cornerstone of our safety efforts. My Administration will continue to fight for it. In the meantime, H.R. 2400 does establish a new $500

million incentive program encouraging the States to adopt tough 0.08 BAC laws.

I am pleased that H.R. 2400 adopts two complementary programs to further increase seat belt use: (1) a $500 million incentive program based on the medical cost savings to the Federal Government from increased seat belt use; and (2) an $83 million program that targets specific State laws and programs to increase seat belt and child safety seat use. The Act also promotes safety by adopting my Administration's proposal to restructure the motor carrier safety program. These provisions will allow the States to invest in areas where they determine the greatest safety payoff can be achieved. The Act strengthens Federal and State enforcement tools, provides innovative approaches to improving motor carrier compliance, and enhances the information systems that support motor carrier safety activities.

The Act also ensures an appropriate balance between highway and transit spending. The share of guaranteed funding allocated to transit will increase from 17 percent this year to 20 percent in 2002. This Act also includes several provisions that are based on Administration proposals. It creates a new grant program to promote greater cooperation among transit, labor, and health services, and assists social services recipients in gaining greater access to jobs and training opportunities. It gives local transit operators the flexibility to use capital funds for preventive maintenance and for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It helps level the playing field between employer-provided parking benefits and transit/vanpool benefits, giving transit and vanpool benefits comparable treatment to parking benefits provided under the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997.

This Act represents the only significant environmental legislation enacted thus far during this session of the Congress, and I am very pleased that it supports my environmental and natural resource program priorities. As I requested, the Act increases funding levels for key environmental programs to help communities meet national standards for clean air and support environmental enhancements to our surface transportation system. The Act also provides for a streamlined environmental review process for highway projects. In this regard, my Administration will ensure that the fundamental protections of the National Environmental Policy Act, which include environmental protection, public participation, and collaborative decisionmaking, are not compromised. The Act also increases funding for roads that serve Federal lands, helping to address construction and maintenance needs for our national parks, forests, refuges, and Tribal lands.

I am also pleased that the Act extends the ethanol tax incentives through 2007. These are commonsense investments that will help protect air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create new economic opportunity for farmers.

I continue to oppose strongly, however, the use of legislative riders on authorization or appropriation bills to address substantive environmental issues. Unfortunately, in the final hours of conference negotiations, efforts were made to add a variety of provisions that would have undermined environmental protection, and that were never debated or voted on during House or Senate consideration of the bill. Most such provisions were ultimately removed, although certain objectionable riders remain in the bill. For example, one rider could open the way for the use of motorized vehicles for portages in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area wilderness in Minnesota. A second rider provides funding for the consideration of a new transportation route into the heart of the Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska. I view the addition of these kinds of riders as an abuse of the legislative process. I call on the Congress to renounce this practice in the future and pursue environmental legislation through the regular authorization process with open debate and appropriate public scrutiny.

I am very pleased that H.R. 2400 continues the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program contained in previous statutes. This program has provided an opportunity for small, disadvantaged businesses to compete in highway and transit contracting undertaken with Federal funding. The Act also continues vital labor protections for America's transportation and construction workers.

The Act establishes a strategic planning process to determine national research and technology priorities and provides substantial funding for new and improved transportation technologies. It protects underground utilities, such as pipelines and fiber-optic cables, that transport critical energy supplies and information necessary to keep America's economy strong.

I am troubled by the many hundreds of special interest highway projects funded in this Act. I would have preferred a "cleaner" bill, with funds provided to States for projects of their choosing. Project selection decisions should be a State responsibility.

I would also have preferred a stronger program to support implementation of a key Federal responsibility—control of our Nation's borders. My Administration will work with the Congress to secure additional funds, within existing highway funding totals, to ensure that the Government has the technology and infrastructure in place to expedite cross-border traffic while continuing our vital efforts to stop contraband, including illegal drugs, from entering our country.

I am pleased that H.R. 2400 adopts the low student loan interest rate that the Vice President proposed in February on behalf of our Administration. I have serious concerns, however, about the subsidies that the Act would force taxpayers to pay to lenders on top of the payments made by borrowers. It is critical that we move toward a system that relies on market pressures, not political pressures, in setting subsidies for lenders and intermediaries. My Administration is committed to working with the Congress on a long-term, mutually acceptable solution that moves toward a market-based mechanism for determining lender returns.

Regrettably and unintentionally, H.R. 2400 contains a number of technical errors related to veterans benefits and important highway safety programs. I urge the Congress to complete action on and send me promptly the House-passed technical corrections bill, H.R. 3978, which addresses these concerns.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century represents a significant achievement in our efforts to meet our transportation needs in the next century. I commend the Congress for its diligent, bipartisan efforts to resolve differences and to pass this important legislation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 9, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 2400, approved June 9, was assigned Public Law No. 105–178.

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation

June 9, 1998

The balanced budget I submitted to Congress includes an ambitious initiative to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. America's working families and our Nation's children deserve our attention and action on this critical issue. Today House Democrats are unveiling an important proposal—sponsored by over 100 Representatives—to address the child care needs of working families. Like my child care initiative, this new package significantly increases child care subsidies for poor children, provides greater tax relief to help low- and middle-income families pay for child care, creates a tax credit for businesses that provide child care to their employees, increases after-school opportunities for children, promotes early learning, and improves child care quality.

I believe that by continuing to work together and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we can achieve legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more importantly, their responsibilities as parents. I welcome this important contribution from House Democrats, and I urge all Members of Congress to come together this year to improve child care for our Nation's working families.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials

June 9, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (the "Convention"), adopted at the Special Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) at Washington on November 13, 1997. The Convention was signed by the United States and 28 other OAS Member States on November 14, 1997, at the OAS Headquarters in Washington. So far, 31 States have signed the Convention and one (Belize) has ratified it. In addition, for the information of the Senate, I transmit the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

The Convention is the first multilateral treaty of its kind in the world. The provisions of the Convention are explained in the accompanying report of the Department of State. The Convention should be an effective tool to assist in the hemispheric effort to combat the illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials, and could also enhance the law enforcement efforts of the States Parties in other areas, given the links that often exist between those offenses and organized criminal activity, such as drug trafficking and terrorism.

The Convention provides for a broad range of cooperation, including extradition, mutual legal assistance, technical assistance, and exchanges of information, experiences, and training, in relation to the offenses covered under the treaty. The Convention also imposes on the Parties on obligation to criminalize the offenses set forth in the treaty if they have not already done so. The Convention will not require implementing legislation for the United States.

This treaty would advance important U.S. Government interests, and would enhance hemispheric security by obstructing the illicit flow of weapons to criminals such as terrorists and drug traffickers. In addition, ratification of this Convention by the United States would be consistent with, and give impetus to, the active work being done by the United States Government and this subject in other fora, such as the United Nations, the P–8 Group, and the OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD).

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 9, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Weapons of Mass Destruction

June 9, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, in response to the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons ("weapons of mass destruction") and of the means of delivering such weapons.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 9, 1998.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed International Crime Control Legislation

June 9, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting for immediate consideration and enactment the "International Crime Control Act of 1998" (ICCA). The ICCA is one of the foremost initiatives highlighted in my Administration's International Crime Control Strategy, which I announced on May 12, 1998. The proposed legislation would substantially improve the ability of U.S. law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute international criminals, seize their money and assets, intercept them at our borders, and prevent them from striking at our people and institutions.

Advances in technology, the resurgence of democracy, and the lowering of global political and economic barriers have brought increased freedom and higher living standards to countries around the world, including our own. However, these changes have also provided new opportunities for international criminals trafficking in drugs, firearms, weapons of mass destruction, and human beings, and engaging in fraud, theft, extortion, and terrorism.

In response to these formidable threats to the American people, I have directed the Departments of Justice, State, and the Treasury, as well as the Federal law enforcement and intelligence communities, to intensify their ongoing efforts to combat international crime. In order to carry out this mandate most effectively, the many departments and agencies involved need the additional tools in the proposed ICCA that will enhance Federal law enforcement authority in several key areas, close gaps in existing laws, and facilitate global cooperation against international crime.

The ICCA's provisions focus on seven essential areas to improve the Federal Government's ability to prevent, investigate, and punish international crimes and criminals:

(1) *Investigating and Punishing Acts of Violence Committed Against Americans Abroad*

- Broadens existing criminal law to authorize the investigation and punishment of organized crime groups who commit serious criminal acts against Americans abroad. (Current law generally requires a link to terrorist activity.)
- Provides jurisdiction in the United States over violent acts committed abroad against State and local officials while in other countries on official Federal business.

(2) *Strengthening U.S. Air, Land, and Sea Borders*

- Increases penalties for smugglers who endanger Federal law enforcement officials seeking to interdict their activities, introducing the Federal criminal offense of "portrunning" (i.e., evading border inspections, often through the use of force).
- Addresses gaps in current law relating to maritime drug interdiction operations, introducing the criminal offense of failing to stop ("heave to") a vessel at the direction of a Coast Guard or other Federal law enforcement official seeking to board that vessel.
- Provides clear authority to search international, outbound letter-class mail if there is reasonable cause to suspect that the mail contains monetary instruments, drugs, weapons of mass destruction, or merchandise mailed in violation of several enumerated statutes (including obscenity and export control laws).
- Broadens the ability to prosecute criminals smuggling goods out of the United States.

(3) *Denying Safe Haven to International Fugitives*

- Authorizes the extradition, in certain circumstances, of suspected criminals to foreign nations in two separate cases not covered by a treaty: (1) when the United States has an extradition treaty with the

nation, but the applicable treaty is an outdated "list" treaty that does not cover the offense for which extradition is sought; and (2) when the United States does not have an extradition treaty with the requesting nation.

- Provides for exclusion from the United States of drug traffickers and their immediate family members and of persons who attempt to enter the United States in order to avoid prosecution in another country.

(4) *Seizing and Forfeiting the Assets of International Criminals*

- Expands the list of money laundering "predicate crimes" to include certain violent crimes, international terrorism, and bribery of public officials, thus increasing the availability of money laundering enforcement tools.
- Broadens the definition of "financial institution" to include foreign banks, thereby closing a loophole involving criminally derived funds laundered through foreign banks doing business here.
- Provides new tools to crack down on businesses illegally transmitting money, and to investigate money laundering under the Bank Secrecy Act.
- Toughens penalties for violations of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.
- Criminalizes attempted violations of the Trading With the Enemy Act.

(5) *Responding to Emerging International Crime Problems*

- Enhances enforcement tools for combating arms trafficking, including requiring "instant checks" of the criminal history of those acquiring explosive materials from Federal licensees and clarifying Federal authority to conduct undercover transactions subject to the Arms Export Control Act for investigative purposes.
- Addresses the increasing problem of alien smuggling by authorizing the forfeiture of the proceeds and all instrumentalities of alien smuggling.
- Cracks down on the international shipment of "precursor chemicals" used to manufacture illicit drugs, primarily by authorizing the Drug Enforcement Administration to require additional "end-use" verification.
- Provides extraterritorial jurisdiction for fraud involving credit cards and other "access devices," which cost U.S. businesses hundreds of millions of dollars every year.
- Authorizes wiretapping for investigations of felony computer crime offenses.

(6) *Promoting Global Cooperation*

- Expands the authority of U.S. law enforcement agencies to share the seized assets of international criminals with foreign law enforcement agencies.
- Provides new authority, applicable in cases where there is no mutual legal assistance treaty provision, to transfer a person in United States Government custody to a requesting country temporarily for purposes of a criminal proceeding.

(7) *Streamlining the Investigation and Prosecution of International Crime in U.S. Courts*

- Authorizes the Attorney General to use funds to defray translation, transportation, and other costs of State and local law enforcement agencies in cases involving fugitives or evidence overseas.
- Facilitates the admission into evidence in U.S. court proceedings of certain foreign government records.

The details of this proposal are described in the enclosed section-by-section analysis. I urge the prompt and favorable consideration of this legislative proposal by the Congress.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 9, 1998.

Remarks at the State Dinner Honoring President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea

June 9, 1998

The President. Good evening. President Kim, Mrs. Kim, members of the Korean delegation, distinguished guests, Hillary and I welcome you to the White House.

On our two trips to Korea, we experienced the great kindness of the Korean people. We hope you have experienced that same feeling from the American people.

As you can see from looking around this room, the American people include more than 1 million Korean-Americans who make very strong contributions to the United States but never forget their brothers and sisters half a world away.

Mr. President, I hope you consider America your second home. I recall very well the day in 1992 we first met on the steps of the City Hall in Los Angeles, where we also met with citizens who were starting to rebuild their community after intense racial strife.

You spent much of your period of exile in our country, and you have many great friends here, some of whom are with us tonight. They have stood by you through times of trouble, and in turn, you have been a real inspiration to them.

In one of the many letters to your family from your prison cell, you recalled an old adage: Even if the heavens were to crash down, there is a hole through which to rise up; and even if taken in a tiger's teeth, there is a way to survive.

Mr. President, the story of your way is almost unbelievable: Raised on an island with no paved roads or electricity, you were captured by the North Koreans in the war and nearly executed; elected to the national assembly only days before the assembly was disbanded by a coup; denied the Presidency in 1971 after voter intimidation and fraud by the ruling party; injured when a 14-ton truck tried to ram your car; kidnapped, taken to sea, prepared for drowning by Government agents; sentenced to death again in 1981 after a 6-minute trial. Through it all, you never lost hope that democracy and human rights could rise up in your beloved land.

Now you are at the center of that democracy working to make the dreams of your people a reality. You are an inspiration, not only to your fellow Koreans but to people all around the world who seek freedom and a better life. Tonight we celebrate your triumphs and the triumph of democracy in so many nations that once were ruled by the iron hand of dictatorship. We also remember with gratitude those who bravely struggled for freedom but gave their lives before their dreams were realized. And we honor those around the world who still struggle to free their countries from tyranny. Their struggles and yours, Mr. President, remind us that we must never take freedom for granted.

As Abraham Lincoln, whose life and words you have studied, once said, "The fight must go on. The cause of liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one, or even 100 defeats." Mr. President, you remind us that, at the end of all the defeats and all the trials, there is victory for the human spirit.

Therefore, it is a great honor for me to ask all of you to join in a toast to President Kim, Mrs. Kim, the people of the Republic of Korea, the deep friendship between our nations, and the brilliant future for Korea that you will build.

[*At this point, a toast was offered, and President Kim made brief remarks.*]

The President. Mr. President, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lee Hee-ho, wife of President Kim. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Kim.

Remarks on Proposed Equal Pay Legislation
June 10, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. We gather here to recognize and reaffirm the historic commitment of this Nation to equal opportunity.

Murder in Jasper, Texas

Before I get into my remarks, I hope you will understand if I don't let the moment pass without making a brief comment about the shocking and outrageous murder of James Byrd, Jr., in Jasper, Texas. Federal law enforcement officials are on the ground there, assisting local law enforcement officials. Because it's an ongoing investigation, I can't comment on the facts of the case, but I can tell you this: We are determined that the investigation will be thorough, will be fair, and that the guilty will be brought to justice.

I ask for your thoughts and your prayers to be with the family of Mr. Byrd today and with the people of that community, because in the face of this tragedy, they must join together across racial lines to demonstrate that an act of evil like this is not what this country is all about. I think we've all been touched by it. I can only imagine that virtually everyone who lives there is in agony at this moment. But they must reaffirm, and so must we, that we will not tolerate this.

Proposed Equal Pay Legislation

Now, let me just say, I've had a wonderful time here today, and everything that needs to be said has been said. [*Laughter*] I thank Hillary and Al and Tipper. We care a lot about these issues. We spent hours in 1992—hours—talking about how we had to change the framework of American life so that people could succeed at work and at home; how we had to make it possible for everyone who was able-bodied to work, but how the most important work of any society was taking good care of our children. And we went through this whole long litany of things, of which unequal pay is clearly a big one, that are barriers to building strong families, strong communities, and the strongest possible economy.

I thank Senator Kennedy, Senator Boxer, and Congresswoman DeLauro and Delegate Norton and all the Members of the House who are here, and my special friend Dorothy Height for a lifetime of commitment to all this.

I'm here because, like Rosa DeLauro, I'm the son of a working mother. I had a working grandmother; I have a hard-working wife; and we have done everything we could to make sure that our daughter never faced any barriers to her dreams. That's what I want for every American young person.

Although, I must say—you remember when Senator Kennedy said that he talked about how much we'd closed the inequality gap in the last 3 or 4 years and if that pace of progress had been kept for the last 35 years, then women would be earning $1.71 for every dollar of men. And that's about the ratio of my earnings and Hillary's before I became President. [*Laughter*] And I liked it quite well. [*Laughter*] First thing you know, the people that don't agree with us on anything will be accusing me of some strategy to make men lazy. [*Laughter*]

We have indeed come a long way since Dorothy Height and Congresswoman Edna Kelly, Evvy, and others were here 35 years ago. President Kennedy said that the Equal Pay Act was basic to democracy, giving women the same rights in the workplace they have enjoyed at the polling place. You've already heard that we have moved in that 35 years from a period when, on average, women earned 58 cents for every dollar men earned, to a report released by the Council of Economic Advisers—and Dr. Yellen is here—saying that women now earn more than 75 cents on the dollar. But that's just three-quarters of the way home.

And to people who think it isn't very much, I ask you: If you had the choice, would you rather have 100 cents on the dollar or 75? You would think it was quite a lot after you had taken a few of those 75-cent dollars.

Here's something that's interesting that no one else has pointed out. The CEA study shows that the gender gap is persistent, though narrowing, despite women's gains in education and experience, and even accounting for the difficulties of balancing family and work so that there are more women in part-time jobs. When you

take account of every conceivable variable explainable by something other than plain old discrimination in equal pay for equal work, there is still this 25 percent gap.

And the Labor Department today—and I thank Deputy Secretary Higgins for being here—is releasing a report which shows a history of women's employment. It shows what the obstacles were, which ones have faded away, which ones still remain. To those of you who have been involved in this for a long time, I urge you to look at the Council of Economic Advisers report and the Labor Department report, and I think you will be persuaded that there is no explanation for the gap that is complete without acknowledging the continued existence of discrimination.

Now, this should not be a partisan political issue. In a funny way, it shouldn't even be a gender issue. More fundamentally, it is a civil rights issue; more fundamentally than that, it is a family issue, where I can testify that young boys eat at the table where the bread is earned by their mothers as well. And it is a matter of American principle. It's a question of what kind of America we want our children and our grandchildren to live in, in the 21st century.

That's why I strongly support the Equal Pay Act that Senator Daschle and Congresswoman DeLauro have introduced. Wage discrimination based on gender is just as wrong as wage discrimination based on race or any other artificial category.

This legislation will help us to close the last part of the gap; it will strengthen enforcement of the Equal Pay Act; it will toughen penalties for violations; and it will boost compensation for working women. It is tough; it is fair. Congress should pass it. And I join Congresswoman DeLauro in asking that it be scheduled for a vote. Let's give everybody in Congress the chance to vote on something good and the chance to do something good for the people back home.

We're coming up on the first anniversary of the President's Initiative on Race, so I've been thinking a lot about what it means to have a society with equal opportunity, where people are bound together celebrating their differences, but understanding there are things we have in common that are more fundamental.

There have been a lot of people who have written some interesting books and some that I didn't quite agree with over the last several years, talking about the inherent differences between men and women—Venus, Mars, Uranus, Pluto, whatever—[*laughter*]—and others on a more—with a more political overtone. But I believe that whatever your views on that are, surely all of us believe that the citizenship we share is unitary and that the guarantees of the Constitution are sweeping enough to embrace us all without regard to our gender. Therefore, it is ludicrous to say that 75 percent equality is enough.

You wouldn't tolerate getting to vote in three out of every four elections. [*Laughter*] You wouldn't like it if someone said you could only pick up three out of every four paychecks. But that is, in effect, what we have said to the women of America. Show up every month, show up every day—show up every day—but only three out of four paydays. It's not good enough.

The 21st century, as I have been pounding the podium about for the last 5½ years, will be the time of greatest opportunity in all human history, especially for our country. We cannot let it be known also for the opportunities that were lost and the people who were left behind. With your help, we will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:29 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Dorothy Height, chair and president emerita, National Council of Negro Women; and Evelyn DuBrow, special assistant to the president, Union of Needletrades and Industrial Textile Employees.

Message to the Congress on Economic Sanctions Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in Response to the Situation in Kosovo

June 10, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

In response to the ongoing use of excessive military force in Kosovo by the police and armed forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Serbia, which has exacerbated ethnic conflict and human suffering and threatens to destabilize other countries in the region, the United States, acting in concert with the European Union, has decided to impose certain economic sanctions. Consistent with decisions taken at the meetings of the Contact Group of countries, consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and Russia, in Birmingham, England, on May 16, 1998, and in Rome on April 29, 1998, the United States will impose a freeze on the assets of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, and a ban on new investment in the Republic of Serbia. It is our intent to exempt the Government of Montenegro from these sanctions wherever possible.

The Contact Group originally agreed in Rome on April 29 to impose these sanctions in response to the increasingly dangerous situation in Kosovo and Belgrade's failure to meet crucial requirements concerning the adoption of a framework for dialogue with the Kosovar Albanian leadership and a stabilization package, as set out in earlier Contact Group meetings in London on March 9, 1998, and in Bonn on March 25, 1998. The G8 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the need to impose sanctions at their meeting in London on May 8–9, 1998. The Russian Federation did not associate itself with these sanction measures.

At the May 16 meeting in Birmingham, England, the Contact Group welcomed the establishment of a dialogue between Belgrade and the Kosovar Albanian leadership. With the start of this dialogue, those Contact Group countries that had previously agreed to implement economic measures against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Serbia agreed that the proposed measure to stop new investment in the Republic of Serbia would not be put into effect and that they would review at their next meeting the implementation of the freeze on funds. However, the use of indiscriminate force by the police and armed forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Serbia has undermined the basis for dialogue.

The Contact Group has concluded that the current situation in Kosovo is untenable and the risk of an escalating conflict requires immediate action. It has also found that, if unresolved, the conflict threatens to spill over to other parts of the region. The United States attaches high priority to supporting the security interests of the neighboring states and to ensuring security of borders. It is also of particular importance that developments in Kosovo should not disrupt progress in implementing the Dayton peace agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This threat to the peace of the region constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

On June 9, 1998, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, I declared a national emergency to respond to the unacceptable actions and policies of the Belgrade authorities and issued an Executive order to implement the measures called for by the Contact Group. That order freezes the assets of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro that are under U.S. jurisdiction and, in concert with the other Contact Group countries, restricts access of those governments to the international financial system. That order also prohibits new investment by United States persons, or their facilitation of other persons' new investment, in the Republic of Serbia. It is our

intent to exempt the Government of the Republic of Montenegro, by means of licenses, from the prohibitions contained in the order wherever possible. That government has been included in the order to ensure effective implementation of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), of which the Republic of Montenegro is a constituent part.

The order carries out these measures by:

— blocking all property, and interests in property, of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, including the prohibition of financial transactions with, including trade financing for, those governments; and

— prohibiting new investment by United States persons, or their facilitation of other persons' new investment, in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

The order provides that the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. Thus, in the event of improvements in the actions and policies of Belgrade with respect to the situation in Kosovo, the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, would have the ability, through the issuance of general or specific licenses, to authorize any or all transactions otherwise prohibited by the order. Also, in implementing the sanctions, we intend to license transactions necessary to conduct the official business of the United States Government and the United Nations. We further intend to issue licenses to allow humanitarian, diplomatic, and journalistic activities to continue.

The declaration of a national emergency made under Executive Order 12808, and expanded in Executive Orders 12810 and 12831, remains in effect and is not affected by the June 9, 1998, order.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 10, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 11. The Executive order of June 9 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the National Geographic Society
June 11, 1998

Thank you very much, President Fahey. I don't know what to say about starting the day with this apparition. [*Laughter*] But it's probably good practice for our line of work. [*Laughter*] I try to read every issue of the National Geographic, and I will certainly look forward to that one.

Chairman Grosvenor, Members of Congress, members of the administration, and members of previous administrations who are here and others who care about the national security and national interests of the United States. First let me, once again, thank the National Geographic Society for its hospitality and for the very important work that it has done for so long now.

As all of you know, I will go to China in 2 weeks' time. It will be the first state visit by an American President this decade. I'm going because I think it's the right thing to do for our country. Today I want to talk with you about our relationship with China and how it fits into our broader concerns for the world of the 21st century and our concerns, in particular, for developments in Asia. That relationship will in large measure help to determine whether the new century is one of security, peace, and prosperity for the American people.

Let me say that all of you know the dimensions, but I think it is worth repeating a few of the facts about China. It is already the world's most populous nation; it will increase by the size of America's current population every 20 years. Its vast territory borders 15 countries. It has one of the fastest growing economies on Earth. It holds a permanent seat on the National Security Council of the United Nations. Over

the past 25 years, it has entered a period of profound change, emerging from isolation, turning a closed economy into an engine for growth, increasing cooperation with the rest of the world, raising the standard of living for hundreds of millions of its citizens.

The role China chooses to play in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction or encouraging it, in combating or ignoring international crime and drug trafficking, in protecting or degrading the environment, in tearing down or building up trade barriers, in respecting or abusing human rights, in resolving difficult situations in Asia, from the Indian subcontinent to the Korean Peninsula, or aggravating them—the role China chooses to play will powerfully shape the next century.

A stable, open, prosperous China that assumes its responsibilities for building a more peaceful world is clearly and profoundly in our interests. On that point, all Americans agree. But as we all know, there is serious disagreement over how best to encourage the emergence of that kind of China and how to handle our differences, especially over human rights, in the meantime.

Some Americans believe we should try to isolate and contain China because of its undemocratic system and human rights violation and in order to retard its capacity to become America's next great enemy. Some believe increased commercial dealings alone will inevitably lead to a more open, more democratic China.

We have chosen a different course that I believe to be both principled and pragmatic, expanding our areas of cooperation with China while dealing forthrightly with our differences. This policy is supported by our key democratic allies in Asia: Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines. It has recently been publicly endorsed by a number of distinguished religious leaders, including Reverend Billy Graham and the Dalai Lama. My trip has been recently supported by political opponents of the current Chinese Government, including most recently Wang Dan.

There is a reason for this. Seeking to isolate China is clearly unworkable. Even our friends and allies around the world do not support us—or would not support us in that. We would succeed instead in isolating ourselves and our own policy.

Most important, choosing isolation over engagement would not make the world safer. It would make it more dangerous. It would undermine, rather than strengthen, our efforts to foster stability in Asia. It would eliminate, not facilitate, cooperation on issues relating to weapons of mass destruction. It would hinder, not help, the cause of democracy and human rights in China. It would set back, not step up, worldwide efforts to protect the environment. It would cut off, not open up, one of the world's most important markets. It would encourage the Chinese to turn inward and to act in opposition to our interests and values.

Consider the areas that matter most to America's peace, prosperity, and security, and ask yourselves, would our interests and ideals be better served by advancing our work with or isolating ourselves from China?

First, think about our interest in a stable Asia, an interest that China shares. The nuclear threats—excuse me—the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan are a threat to the stability we seek. They risk a terrible outcome. A miscalculation between two adversaries with large armies would be bad. A miscalculation between two adversaries with nuclear weapons could be catastrophic.

These tests were all the more unfortunate because they divert precious resources from countries with unlimited potential. India is a very great nation, soon to be not only the world's most populous democracy but its most populous country. It is home to the world's largest middle class already and a remarkable culture that taught the modern world the power of nonviolence. For 50 years Pakistan has been a vibrant Islamic state and is today a robust democracy. It is important for the world to recognize the remarkable contributions both these countries have made and will continue to make to the community of nations if they can proceed along the path of peace. It is important for the world to recognize that both India and Pakistan have security concerns that are legitimate. But it is equally important for India and Pakistan to recognize that developing weapons of mass destruction is the wrong way to define their greatness, to protect their security, or to advance their concerns.

I believe that we now have a self-defeating, dangerous, and costly course underway. I believe that this course, if continued, not moderated and ultimately changed, will make both the people of India and the people of Pakistan poorer, not richer, and less, not more, secure. Resolving this requires us to cooperate with China.

Last week China chaired a meeting of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to forge a common strategy for moving India and Pakistan back from the nuclear arms race edge. It has condemned both countries for conducting nuclear tests. It has joined us in urging them to conduct no more tests, to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, to avoid deploying or testing missiles, to tone down the rhetoric, to work to resolve their differences, including over Kashmir, through dialog. Because of its history with both countries, China must be a part of any ultimate resolution of this matter.

On the Korean Peninsula, China has become a force for peace and stability, helping us to convince North Korea to freeze its dangerous nuclear program, playing a constructive role in the four-party peace talks. And China has been a helpful partner in international efforts to stabilize the Asian financial crisis. In resisting the temptation to devalue its currency, China has seen that its own interests lie in preventing another round of competitive devaluations that would have severely damaged prospects for regional recovery. It has also contributed to the rescue packages for affected economies.

Now, for each of these problems we should ask ourselves, are we better off working with China or without it? When I travel to China this month, I will work with President Jiang to advance our Asian security agenda, keeping the pressure on India and Pakistan to curb their nuclear arms race and to commence a dialog, using the strength of our economies and our influence to bolster Asian economies battered by the economic crisis, and discussing steps we can take to advance peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. I will encourage President Jiang to pursue the cross-strait discussion the PRC recently resumed with Taiwan, and where we have already seen a reduction in tensions.

Second, stopping the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons is clearly one of our most urgent security challenges. As a nuclear power with increasingly sophisticated industrial and technological capabilities, China can choose either to be a part of the problem or a part of the solution.

For years, China stood outside the international arms control regimes. In the last decade, it has joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, each with clear rules, reporting requirements, and inspection systems. In the past, China has been a major exporter of sophisticated weapons-related technologies. That is why in virtually all our high-level contacts with China's leadership, and in my summit meeting with President Jiang last October, nonproliferation has been high on the agenda.

Had we been trying to isolate China rather than work with it, would China have agreed to stop assistance to Iran for its nuclear program? To terminate its assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities such as those in Pakistan? To tighten its export control system, to sell no more antiship cruise missiles to Iran? These vital decisions were all in our interests, and they clearly were the fruit of our engagement.

I will continue to press China on proliferation. I will seek stronger controls on the sale of missiles, missile technology, dual-use products, and chemical and biological weapons. I will argue that it is in China's interest, because the spread of weapons and technologies would increasingly destabilize areas near China's own borders.

Third, the United States has a profound stake in combating international organized crime and drug trafficking. International criminal syndicates threaten to undermine confidence in new but fragile market democracies. They bilk people out of billions of dollars and bring violence and despair to our schools and neighborhoods. These are problems from which none of us are isolated and which, as I said at the United Nations a few days ago, no nation is so big it can fight alone.

With a landmass spanning from Russia in the north to Vietnam and Thailand in the south, from India and Pakistan in the west to Korea and Japan in the east, China has become a transshipment point for drugs and the proceeds of illegal activities. Last month a special liaison group that President Jiang and I established brought together leading Chinese and American law enforcement officials to step up our cooperation against organized crime, alien smuggling, and counterfeiting. Next month the Drug Enforcement Agency of the United States will open an office in Beijing. Here, too, pursuing practical cooperation with China is making a difference for America's future.

Fourth, China and the United States share the same global environment, an interest in preserving it for this and future generations. China is experiencing an environmental crisis perhaps greater than any other nation in history at a comparable stage of its development. Every substantial body of water in China is polluted. In many places, water is in short supply. Respiratory illness is the number one health problem for China's people because of air pollution.

Early in the next century, China will surpass the United States as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, which are dangerously warming our planet. This matters profoundly to the American people, because what comes out of a smokestack or goes into a river in China can do grievous harm beyond its borders. It is a fool's errand to believe that we can deal with our present and future global environmental challenges without strong cooperation with China.

A year ago, the Vice President launched a dialog with the Chinese on the environment to help them pursue growth and protect the environment at the same time. I have to tell you that this is one of the central challenges we face, convincing all developing nations, but especially China and other very large ones, that it is actually possible to grow their economies in the 21st century without following the pattern of energy use and environmental damage that characterize economic growth in this century. And we need all the help we can to make that case.

In Beijing, I will explore with President Jiang how American clean energy technology can help to improve air quality and bring electricity to more of China's rural residents. We will discuss innovative tools for financing clean energy development that were established under the Kyoto climate change agreement.

Fifth, America clearly benefits from an increasingly free, fair, and open global trading system. Over the past 6 years, trade has generated more than one-third of the remarkable economic growth we have enjoyed. If we are to continue generating 20 percent of the world's wealth with just 4 percent of its population, we must continue to trade with the other 96 percent of the people with whom we share this small planet.

One in every four people is Chinese. And China boasts a growth rate that has averaged 10 percent for the past 20 years. Over the next 20 years, it is projected that the developing economies will grow at 3 times the rate of the already developed economies. It is manifestly, therefore, in our interest to bring the Chinese people more and more fully into the global trading system to get the benefits and share the responsibilities of emerging economic prosperity.

Already China is one of the fastest growing markets for our goods and services. As we look into the next century, it will clearly support hundreds of thousands of jobs all across our country. But access to China's markets also remains restricted for many of our companies and products. What is the best way to level the playing field? We could erect trade barriers. We could deny China the normal trading status we give to so many other countries with whom we have significant disagreements. But that would only penalize our consumers, invite retaliation from China on $13 billion in United States exports, and create a self-defeating cycle of protectionism that the world has seen before.

Or, we can continue to press China to open its markets, its goods markets, its services markets, its agricultural markets, as it engages in sweeping economic reform. We can work toward China's admission to the WTO on commercially meaningful terms, where it will be subject to international rules of free and fair trade. And we can renew normal trade treatment for China, as every President has done since 1980, strengthening instead of undermining our economic relationship.

In each of these crucial areas, working with China is the best way to advance our interests. But we also know that how China evolves inside its borders will influence how it acts beyond them. We, therefore, have a profound interest in encouraging China to embrace the ideals upon which our Nation was founded and which have now been universally embraced: the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; to debate, dissent, associate, and worship without state interference. These ideas are now the birthright of people everywhere, a part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They are part of the fabric of all truly free societies.

We have a fundamental difference with China's leadership over this. The question we Americans must answer is not whether we support human rights in China—surely, all of us do—but rather, what is the best way to advance them? By integrating China into the community of nations and the global economy, helping its

leadership understand that greater freedom profoundly serves China's interests, and standing up for our principles, we can most effectively serve the cause of democracy and human rights within China.

Over time, the more we bring China into the world, the more the world will bring freedom to China. China's remarkable economic growth is making China more and more dependent on other nations for investment, for markets, for energy, for ideas. These ties increase the need for the stronger rule of law, openness, and accountability. And they carry with them powerful agents of change: fax machines and photocopiers, computers and the Internet. Over the past decade, the number of mobile phones has jumped from 50,000 to more than 13 million in China, and China is heading from about 400,000 Internet accounts last year to more than 20 million early in the next century. Already, one in five residents in Beijing has access to satellite transmissions. Some of the American satellites China sends into space beam CNN and other independent sources of news and ideas into China.

The licensing of American commercial satellite launches on Chinese rockets was approved by President Reagan, begun by President Bush, continued under my administration, for the simple reason that the demand for American satellites far out-strips America's launch capacity, and because others, including Russian and European nations, can do this job at much less cost.

It is important for every American to understand that there are strict safeguards, including a Department of Defense plan for each launch, to prevent any assistance to China's missile programs. Licensing these launches allows us to meet the demand for American satellites and helps people on every continent share ideas, information, and images through television, cell phones, and pagers. In the case of China, the policy also furthers our efforts to stop the spread of missile technology by providing China incentives to observe nonproliferation agreements. This policy clearly has served our national interests.

Over time, I believe China's leaders must accept freedom's progress because China can only reach its full potential if its people are free to reach theirs.

In the information age, the wealth of any nation, including China's, lies in its people, in their capacity to create, to communicate, to innovate. The Chinese people must have the freedom to speak, to publish, to associate, to worship without fear of reprisal. Only then will China reach its full potential for growth and greatness.

I have told President Jiang that when it comes to human rights and religious freedom, China remains on the wrong side of history. Unlike some, I do not believe increased commercial dealings alone will inevitably lead to greater openness and freedom. We must work to speed history's course. Complacency or silence would run counter to everything we stand for as Americans. It would deny those fighting for human rights and religious freedom inside China the outside support that is a source of strength and comfort. Indeed, one of the most important benefits of our engagement with China is that it gives us an effective means to urge China's leaders publicly and privately to change course.

Our message remains strong and constant: Do not arrest people for their political beliefs; release those who are in jail for that reason; renounce coercive population control practices; resume your dialog with the Dalai Lama; allow people to worship when, where, and how they choose; and recognize that our relationship simply cannot reach its full potential so long as Chinese people are denied fundamental human rights.

In support of that message, we are strengthening Radio Free Asia. We are working with China to expand the rule of law and civil society programs in China so that rights already on the books there can become rights in reality. This principled, pragmatic approach has produced significant results, although still far from enough. Over the past year, China has released from jail two prominent dissidents, Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan, and Catholic Bishop Zeng. It announced its intention to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which will subject China's human rights practices to regular scrutiny by independent international observers. President Jiang received a delegation of prominent American religious leaders and invited them to visit Tibet.

Seeking to isolate China will not free one more political dissident, will not open one more church to those who wish to worship, will do nothing to encourage China to live by the laws its has written. Instead, it will limit our ability to advance human rights and religious and political freedom.

When I travel to China, I will take part in an official greeting ceremony in front of the Great Hall of the People, across from Tiananmen Square. I will do so because that is where the Chinese Government receives visiting heads of state and government, including President Chirac of France and, most recently, Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. Some have suggested I should refuse to take part in this traditional ceremony, that somehow going there would absolve the Chinese Government of its responsibility for the terrible killings at Tiananmen Square 9 years ago, or indicate that America is no longer concerned about such conduct. They are wrong.

Protocol and honoring a nation's traditional practices should not be confused with principle. China's leaders, as I have repeatedly said, can only move beyond the events of June, 1989, when they recognize the reality that what the Government did was wrong. Sooner or later they must do that. And perhaps even more important, they must change course on this fundamentally important issue.

In my meetings with President Jiang and other Chinese leaders and in my discussions with the Chinese people, I will press ahead on human rights and religious freedom, urging that China follow through on its intention to sign the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that it release more individuals in prison for expressing their opinions, that it take concrete steps to preserve Tibet's cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage.

We do not ignore the value of symbols. But in the end, if the choice is between making a symbolic point and making a real difference, I choose to make the difference. And when it comes to advancing human rights and religious freedom, dealing directly and speaking honestly to the Chinese is clearly the best way to make a difference.

China has known more millennia than the United States has known centuries. But for more than 220 years, we have been conducting a great experiment in democracy. We must never lose confidence in the power of American experience or the strength of our example. The more we share our ideas with the world, the more the world will come to share the ideals that animate America. And they will become the aspirations of people everywhere.

I should also say we should never lose sight of the fact that we have never succeeded in perfectly realizing our ideals here at home. That calls for a little bit of humility and continued efforts on our part on the homefront.

China will choose its own destiny, but we can influence that choice by making the right choice ourselves, working with China where we can, dealing directly with our differences where we must. Bringing China into the community of nations rather than trying to shut it out is plainly the best way to advance both our interests and our values. It is the best way to encourage China to follow the path of stability, openness, nonaggression; to embrace free markets, political pluralism, the rule of law; to join us in building a stable international order where free people can make the most of their lives and give vent to their children's dreams.

That kind of China, rather than one turned inward and confrontational, is profoundly in our interests. That kind of China can help to shape a 21st century that is the most peaceful and prosperous era the world has ever known.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Gilbert H. Grosvenor Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to John M. Fahey, Jr., president, and Gilbert M. Grosvenor, chairman of the board, National Geographic Society; President Jiang Zemin of China; and Chinese Roman Catholic Bishop Zeng Jingmu.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Austria-United States Extradition Treaty With Documentation

June 11, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Austria, signed at Washington on January 8, 1998.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. As the report explains, the Treaty will not require implementing legislation.

This Treaty will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of both countries. It will thereby make a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts. This Treaty will supersede and significantly improve upon the Treaty between the Government of the United States and the Government of Austria for the extradition of fugitives from justice, signed at Vienna on January 31, 1930, and the Supplementary Extradition Convention signed at Vienna on May 19, 1934.

The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 11, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption

June 11, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, adopted and opened for signature at the conclusion of the Seventeenth Session of the Hague Conference on Private International Law on May 29, 1993. Thirty-two countries, including the United States, have signed the Convention, 17 countries have ratified it, and one country has acceded to it. The provisions of the Convention are fully explained in the report of the Department of State that accompanies this message.

The Convention sets out norms and procedures to safeguard children involved in intercountry adoptions and to protect the interests of their birth and adoptive parents. These safeguards are designed to discourage trafficking in children and to ensure that intercountry adoptions are made in the best interest of the children involved. Cooperation between Contracting States will be facilitated by the establishment in each Contracting State of a central authority with programmatic and case-specific functions. The Convention also provides for the recognition of adoptions that fall within its scope in all other Contracting States.

The Convention leaves the details of its implementation up to each Contracting State. Implementing legislation prepared by the Administration will soon be transmitted for introduction in the Senate and the House of Representatives. Once implementing legislation is enacted, some further time would be required to put the necessary regulations and institutional mechanisms in place. We would expect to deposit the U.S. instrument of ratification and bring the Convention into force for the United States as soon as we are able to carry out all of the obligations of the Convention.

It is estimated that U.S. citizens annually adopt as many children from abroad as all other countries combined (13,621 children in Fiscal

Year 1997). The Convention is intended to ensure that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of the children and parents involved, and to establish a system of cooperation among Contracting States to prevent abduction of, and trafficking in children. We have worked closely with U.S. adoption interests and the legal community in negotiating the provisions of the Convention and in preparing the necessary implementing legislation.

I recommend that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification of this Convention, subject to the declaration described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 11, 1998.

Remarks to the National Oceans Conference in Monterey, California
June 12, 1998

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Let me begin by saying how great it was to see and hear the Watsonville Marching Band again and my good friends there. You're always welcome back at the White House. And I like those uniforms. I liked them then; I like them now.

I want to thank Secretary Daley and Secretary Dalton for sponsoring this conference. I thank Secretary Slater and Secretary Babbitt, who was here; Administrator Browner, Dr. Baker, Katie McGinty. And I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to the Commandant of the Coast Guard and all the Coast Guard personnel and the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and all the Navy personnel for what they have done to help this be a success.

I thank all the Members of Congress. The Vice President has introduced them, but I am delighted to see them here, and I'm very proud of them. I thank the mayor of Monterey and all the State and city and county officials who are here. And I also want to say, it's good to see our old friend, citizen Panetta here. [*Laughter*] Leon and Sylvia have earned the right to come home, and after spending the day here, I don't know why they ever left. [*Laughter*] But I'm very grateful that they did. He made us a better administration.

Let me say a special word of appreciation to the award winners here today: My good friend Ted Danson, the president of American Oceans Campaign—[*applause*]—thank you. He has to go to a middle school graduation, but I think he may still be here. Dr. Sylvia Earle of National Geographic, Jean-Michel Cousteau, Bob Talbot, and Moss Landing Marine Lab, thank you all for your wonderful work and congratulations on your awards.

I owe a lot of whatever good we have been able to do in this position on the environment to my wife, who has always cared about this and expanded my horizons, and to the Vice President. I was sitting there listening to him talk, and my mind wandered back—no offense, Mr. Vice President, I was gripped by your speech. [*Laughter*] But my mind wandered back to the conversation we had when I asked him if he would join me on the ticket in 1992.

And I was remembering that, fittingly enough, when I called him to ask if he would come talk to me, he was at Rio, at the wonderful conference there on climate change, biodiversity. And I was thinking how influenced I had been already by his writings and his speeches. Even though we were neighbors, we didn't know each other particularly well. I knew him more through his work and the stands that he had taken. And I have to tell you, I was thinking again today as he stood up here, that's one of the two or three best decisions I ever made in my life.

Sometimes I think Presidents like to pretend their jobs are more special and unique and their insights more impenetrable by others than they may be. But I'll tell you, there is one subject on which I think perhaps only Presidents can really know the truth. And I can tell you that the scope, the depth, and the quality of the influence in a positive way that Al Gore has exercised on this country in the last 5½ years literally dwarfs that of any other Vice President

in the history of the United States. And I am very proud of what he has done.

Now, I thought Sylvia Earle made a very interesting presentation, and now I understand that why, when she was the chief scientist at NOAA, her friends called her the United States Sturgeon General. [*Laughter*] I had never thought about the idea that there are more fish than people in my domain. [*Laughter*] Now that I know it, I'm trying to figure out some way they can be represented in the Congress. [*Laughter*] That's no offense to those folks over there. They just need a little more help. [*Laughter*]

I also want to say hello to Tony Coelho and all the people watching us from the United States Pavilion in the Expo '98 in Portugal. It is a remarkable coincidence and a wonderful thing that the World's Fair this year is dedicated to the preservation of the oceans.

I first came to Monterey in 1971 in the summertime. And again, I owe my introduction to Monterey indirectly to my wife because she was then working in Northern California, and I was home in Arkansas, and I drove out here to see her. And I drove across the desert, and it was hot. And believe me, when I got here, I was happy. [*Laughter*] But I had always been entranced by this community, ever since I first saw it.

Monterey's favorite son, John Steinbeck, as all of you know, was a serious student of the seas. In his masterful account of the 4,000-mile marine expedition he launched just about a half mile from here, he summed up what for me is at the root of the work done at this conference, the understanding that man is related to the whole, inextricably related to all reality. Our abiding links to the world, to nature, and to the oceans, our mystic and mysterious seas, has led us to this historic conference.

We come to Monterey, all of us, with an appreciation for the divine beauty of this patch of coast which Al and I had a chance to see a little more of today, with two bright young people who showed us the harbor seals and the sea otters and some of the smaller life there. That's good. But we have to leave with a renewed determination to maintain the living, thriving seas beyond, not only for Americans but for the whole world.

When astronomers study the heavens for life, what do they look for? Water, the single nonnegotiable ingredient. Our planet is blessed with enormous sources of water. Our oceans are the key to the life support system for all creatures on this planet, from the giant tube worms in deep sea vents to cactuses in the most arid deserts.

In our daily lives, the oceans play a crucial role. They can drive our climate and our weather. El Nino taught us all about that and made people in Northern California wonder if the sun would ever come back for a while. They allow us global mobility for our Armed Forces. The fish from the sea are among the most important staples in our diet. And as the Vice President has just said, through fishing, shipping, and tourism, the oceans sustain one in six American jobs.

These oceans are so vast and powerful that I think most people still blithely assume that nothing we do can affect them very much. Indeed, that assumption has made its way into our common vernacular. How many times have you said in your life that something you did was a mere drop in the ocean? Well, now we know, and as many of you have highlighted over the last day and a half, something you do may be a mere drop in the ocean, but millions, even billions, of those drops in the oceans can have a profound effect on them and on us.

Two-thirds of the world's people live within 50 miles of a coast. Too much pollution from the land runs straight to the sea. One large city can spew more than 9 million gallons of petroleum products into the ocean every year. That's roughly the amount spilled by the *Exxon Valdez*. Polluted runoff from watersheds has led to deadly red tides, brown tides, and pfiesteria. Runoff from thousands of miles up the Mississippi River has been so severe that now there is a dead zone the size of the State of New Jersey in the Gulf of Mexico. Ten percent of the world's coral reefs have been destroyed; another 30 percent will all but disappear within 20 years. We have not learned everywhere the lessons of "Cannery Row," for more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries are overexploited, more than a third in steady decline.

As the Vice President highlighted at the White House earlier this week, we are also changing the temperature of the seas, something else the young people told me they had measured here. We've just learned that our oceans are the warmest they've been in 104 years. That's as long as we've been taking their temperature. It must be longer, since we now know

that the 5 hottest years since 1400 have all occurred in the 1990's, and if the first 5 months are any indication, this will be the hottest year ever measured.

We know that greenhouse gases are heating our planet and our oceans. Fortunately, we have learned that, along with the ability to harm, we also have the ability to heal. Through innovation and prudence, we've proved we can clean the water, the air, protect marine sanctuaries and wildlife refuges, phase out deadly pesticides and ozone-eating chemicals, and do it while still producing the world's strongest, most competitive economy.

With partnerships and persistence, we must extend this record of success to our oceans. If we want our children to inherit the gift of living oceans, we must make the 21st century a great century of stewardship of our seas.

Today I propose to intensify our efforts with a $224 million initiative to enhance the health of our oceans while expanding ocean opportunities in responsible ways for the environment.

First, it is clear we must save these shores from oil drilling. Here in California, you know all too well how oilspills from offshore drilling can spoil our coasts, causing not just the death of marine life but the destruction of fragile ecosystems—also, economic devastation in tourism, recreation, and fishing. Even under the best of circumstances, is it really worth the risk? In a few moments, I will sign a directive to extend the Nation's moratorium on offshore leasing for an additional 10 years, while protecting our marine sanctuaries from drilling forever. [*Applause*] Thank you.

As I do this, I want to say a special word of thanks to Senator Barbara Boxer, who has lobbied me relentlessly for years—[*laughter*]—who tracks me down every chance she gets, who has even used her grandson, who is my nephew, as an emotional wedge to make sure I do the right thing on this issue. [*Laughter*] And I thank her for it.

I'd also like to thank Sam Farr for his leadership in this conference and on this issue; Congresswoman Capps and all the other members of the California delegation who have expressed their opinion so clearly; and my good friend Lieutenant Governor Davis, who has talked to me about this personally.

Now, by standing firm against offshore oil drilling here in California and around the Nation, these people have helped to protect the most beautiful shores anywhere in the world, and we can continue to do that.

Second, we must do more to restore precious marine resources. To help create sustainable fisheries, we will help to rebuild fish stocks within 10 years, work with industry to develop new technologies to net only targeted species of fish, ban the sale and import of undersized Atlantic swordfish, and protect essential fish habitats. To protect and restore coral reefs, I have signed an Executive order to speed our efforts to map and monitor our reefs, research causes of their degradation, revive damaged reefs, and promote worldwide efforts to do the same. To reduce land-based pollution—[*applause*]—thank you—to reduce land-based pollution that threatens marine life, which is a horrible problem, I have got to have some help from the Congress. So again, I ask the Congress to fund my $2.3 billion clean water action plan to reduce the diffused pollution that has been running into our streams and oceans unchecked. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Third, we must deepen our understanding of the seas. As the Vice President announced yesterday and mentioned again today, the United States military will release previously classified data to help researchers track marine mammals, predict deadly storms, detect illegal fishing, and gain new insights into the complexities of climate change. By the year 2000, we will complete an advanced ocean monitoring system that will also provide data for climate change studies. And as Dr. Earle said, we must do more to explore the ocean depths. We propose to provide new submersibles and other advanced tools for mapping and exploring the world's last great frontier. I'd kind of like to go down there myself someday.

Fourth, we must create sustainable ports for the 21st century. International trade will nearly triple over the next two decades, and more than 90 percent of this trade will move by ocean. I propose a new harbor services fund to help our ports and harbors remain competitive in the new century, by deepening them for the newest and largest ships and by providing state-of-the-art navigation tools for preventing marine accidents. We must do both.

Just last week I released, or pledged, some extra money to the New York-New Jersey harbor project in the face of clear evidence that if we do not do it, the harbor will not remain competitive and thousands of American jobs could

be lost. We can do this and make those harbors environmentally safer at the same time.

Fifth, we must join the rest of the world in ratifying, at long last, the Convention on the Law of the Sea. [*Applause*] Thank you. The character of our country and, frankly, the nature of a lot of the economic and political success we have enjoyed around the world has rested in no small part on our continuous championing of the rule of law at home and abroad. The historic Convention on the Law of the Sea extends the rule of law to the world's oceans. There is not a scientist here in any discipline who seriously believes that we will ever turn the tide on these dangerous trends until we have a uniform legal system that can provide a framework necessary to give us a global approach to this problem. This convention assures the open seaways that our Armed Forces and our fishing, telecommunications, and shipping industries require. But it also, I will say again, gives us the framework to save the oceans while we grow as a people and while we grow economically.

This year, during this legislative session, the United States Senate should and must confirm its leadership role by making America a part of the community of nations already party to the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Finally, we must continue the critical dialog that has begun at this conference and build together, across party, regional, economic, and other interests, a comprehensive oceans agenda for the 21st century. Like every other great leap forward in environmentalism in the last 35 years, if we're going to do this right, we're going to have to do it together. We have to make this an American issue that transcends party and other philosophical differences, that is at the core of our own humanity and our obligation to our children and our grandchildren.

Today I am directing my Cabinet to report back to me one year from today with recommendations for a coordinated, disciplined, long-term Federal oceans policy. And I want to work with the Congress to create an oceans commission so that all the interests that have been represented here will have a voice on a permanent, ongoing basis as we forge a new strategy to preserve the incomparable natural resources of our oceans and seas. And I hope you will help me get that done. [*Applause*] Thank you.

During the marine expedition in the Gulf of Mexico which I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, John Steinbeck called hope, the idea that tomorrow can be better than today, the defining human trait. Now, just about every American knows that I believe that. And I've been reading Steinbeck for most of my life. I didn't know about that until I began to prepare for this conference. In spite of the fact that I agree with that, I think it's important to point out that we are also blessed as a species with two other crucial traits which make hope possible: creativity and imagination.

All of these traits, hope, creativity, imagination, will be required to meet the challenges that we face with our oceans. But they are, after all, the traits that first enabled and inspired explorers to take to the sea. They are traits that allowed us to look at our inextricable ties to our environment and invent new ways to protect our natural wonders from harm in the last three decades.

In the 21st century, these traits, hope, creativity, imagination, they must—they must—lead us to preserve our living oceans as a sacred legacy for all time to come. You can make it happen.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at San Carlos Park. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley and Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton, conference cochairs; Mayor Dan Albert of Monterey; former White House Chief of Staff Leon E. Panetta and his wife Sylvia; actor Ted president, American Oceans Campaign; Dr. Sylvia Alice Earle, explorer in residence, National Geographic Society, and chair, Deep Ocean Exploration and Research, Inc.; oceanographer Jean-Michel Cousteau; marine photographer Bob Talbot; Tony Coelho, U.S. Commissioner General, 1998 World Exposition in Lisbon, Portugal; Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California; and graduate students Nancy Eufemia and Raphael Sagarin, researchers at Hopkins Marine Station. Dr. Earle, Messrs. Danson, Cousteau, and Talbot, and the staff, faculty, and graduate students of Moss Landing Marine Laboratories were recipients of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Environmental Hero Awards. The Executive order of June 11 on coral reef protection is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Memorandum on Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from Leasing Disposition

June 12, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from Leasing Disposition

Under the authority granted in section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1341(a), I hereby withdraw from disposition by leasing through June 30, 2012, those areas of the Outer Continental Shelf currently under moratoria pursuant to sections 108–111 of Public Law 105–83.

I further withdraw from disposition by leasing for a time period without specific expiration those areas of the Outer Continental Shelf currently designated Marine Sanctuaries under the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, 16 U.S.C. 1431–1434, 33 U.S.C. 1401 *et seq.*

Nothing in this withdrawal affects the rights under existing leases in these areas. Each of these withdrawals is subject to revocation by the President in the interest of national security.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Barbara Boxer in San Francisco, California

June 12, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. First, let me say that I'm not sure it evidences good judgment to try to follow Barbara and Hillary to the microphone. [*Laughter*] But they certainly did a good job, and I enjoyed listening to them. Let me also thank, before I go too far, the San Raphael High School Advanced Jazz Band. They did a great job, and thank you all for playing.

I thank our State Democratic chair, Art Torres, for being here, and all the candidates and officeholders who have come to support Barbara. When I was listening to Senator Boxer and the First Lady talk, and I was watching you listen to them talk, I said to myself, "Well, all these people are for her anyway." [*Laughter*] "So what should I say that would help them get other people to be for her?" And that's what Hillary was trying to do.

Why should a farmer in the San Joaquin Valley vote for this not very tall sparkplug from Northern California who is supposed to be so liberal? [*Laughter*] Why should a businessman in the Silicon Valley? Why should a woman running a small tourist inn in the redwood forest? Why should someone struggling to make ends meet in Los Angeles? Why should someone in San Diego worried about whether there's too much pollution or illegal immigration or whatever on the border? Why should everybody else vote for her, people that aren't here today? That's the case you have to make, you know.

And if you think about the nature of our political debates and the nature of the way the political parties behave in Washington and what our administration has tried to do, I think it really comes down to whether you want progress or politics to dominate the national arena.

Barbara said some of this, and at the risk of being self-serving—I don't want to be—but I want to read this to you, because when I came to you in California in 1991 and '92, I said, "Look, you guys are having a tough time out here, and I know this is the biggest State in the country and my distinguished opponent says I'm just a Governor from a small Southern State, but I've got a few ideas about how we ought to do things differently moving towards the 21st century. And we've got to break out of this crazy, highly partisan divisive debate we've got and start putting people first and start thinking about the future to create a 21st century America where there's opportunity for everybody who's responsible enough to work for

it; where we're coming together as a community, respecting our diversity, and still valuing our unity, instead of being divided and weakened by it; and where we're committed to preserving America's leadership in the world for peace, and freedom, and prosperity. And I have some ideas about how to do that."

Well, 5½ years later, unemployment in California has dropped by almost 50 percent. Senator Boxer said some of this, but I want to say it again, not for me, but for her. Listen now. This country has the lowest crime rate in 25 years. It has the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and 16 million new jobs. It has the lowest welfare roll, as a percentage of the population, in 29 years. We're about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, and it will be, in dollar terms, the biggest one we've ever had. We're going to have—we've got the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest rate of homeownership in the history of the United States of America. That is the reality.

Now, in addition to that, I'm very proud of the fact that we have the lowest rate of African-American unemployment ever recorded, the highest rate of Hispanic business ownership ever recorded, dramatic increases in the number of Asian-owned and other minority-owned businesses, a tripling of Federal Government assistance to women-owned businesses, an increase—excuse me, a big decrease in inequality among working people for the first time in over 20 years, 2.2 million children taken out of poverty, 5 million kids getting health insurance who wouldn't have otherwise have gotten it. We've opened the doors to college to virtually all Americans now with the tax credits, the scholarships, the work-study programs. We have done a lot of good things together because we put old-time politics aside and put people first.

Now, we had to take on a lot of interest groups. We made a lot of people mad when we said tobacco is the number one public health problem in America; we're going to try to do something to keep kids alive. And they're still trying to stop us from doing it and putting out a lot of interesting misinformation in ad campaigns all across America. But every year, more people die from tobacco-related illnesses than accidents, murders, AIDS, cancer, combined, and a bunch of other stuff, too.

We said, "Look, if we're ever going to get the crime rate down in this country, we've got to quit talking tough on crime and do something that is both smart and tough." So we put 100,000 police on the street. We took assault weapons off the street, insofar as we could legally. We passed the Brady bill and kept hundreds of thousands of people who had criminal records from getting guns. And basically, the other side opposed us. The House of Representatives just put out a budget which would terminate the 100,000 police program, one of the most successful programs in the history of the United States of America in lowering the crime rate.

So here's what I want to say to you. You have to go out and say, "Look, whether you're a Republican or independent or a Democrat, whether you want to vote for a 7-foot tall man or a 4-foot 10-inch woman"—[*laughter*]——

Senator Boxer. Eleven!

The President. Eleven. [*Laughter*] Whether you're a—whatever your ethnic background, whatever you bring to this race, California is beginning to work; America is beginning to work; and this is not unrelated to the ideas. Nevermind the charisma or whether I give a good speech or Barbara looks beautiful up here and makes you feel good about all the energy and conviction she has, the country is moving forward because it is on a course that makes sense. And we should not change that course; we should speed that course up.

I was glad to make the announcement that Barbara has been beating up on me for over 2 years to make today. We not only extended the moratorium on offshore drilling for another decade, we made it permanent in certain precious sanctuary areas so there can never be any drilling there.

But what we want to do—we need to do more than that. We need to do more to try to make sure we can continue fishing without catching so many other unrelated fish in the nets that we're destroying the ecostructure. We need to do more research to see how we can reverse some of this pollution. We need to do a lot more to stop the pollution of the ocean from the land, because a lot of it is occurring from the land. We need to do more exploration. We now know more about the Moon than we do the ocean depths, and it's only 7 miles down to the ocean depths—long way underwater, isn't it? [*Laughter*] We've got a lot of things to do

that directly affect how our children and grandchildren will live. You heard Barbara talking about some of them.

We now have dramatically expanded preschool education, and we've made access to college virtually universal. But no one believes that our public schools, K through 12, are as good as they ought to be. California is doing a very good job, I think, now—the people of California and the grassroots movement—with things like the charter school movement. There was one charter school in America when I became President. When I started talking about them, most people thought that it had something to do with teaching people to draw maps. [*Laughter*] And our budget would take us up to over 3,000 over the next 4 years.

Our budget would make sure we finish the work of connecting every school, classroom, and library to the Internet by the year 2000. Our budget would give communities enough funds to build or rehabilitate 5,000 schools so we can have smaller classes, when we put the 100,000 teachers in, that work.

Our budget attempts to fund an initiative, along with some of the other legislation we have, to make our schools even safer, to deal with these horrible instances we've all had our hearts broken about in the last few months in our schools and other things that aren't so severe but are still very troubling, by not only dealing harshly with people who do wrong but by trying to prevent these things from happening in the first place. And we know that there are certain early warnings that come out in a lot of these instances that our schools are not organized to deal with, that our parents sometimes are not even attuned to.

We also know that if we had children who are from difficult backgrounds, who live in difficult neighborhoods, in and around the school more hours a day, they would get in less trouble. Our budget provides, as Barbara Boxer said, for a huge increase in after-school programs and summer school programs.

Let me just tell you one story. Hillary is from Chicago, and she will tell you that when we were serving in Arkansas, most people thought the Chicago schools were the worst big-city schools in America. And they had a strike there every year whether they needed to or not. [*Laughter*] They're not known for their teacher strikes anymore. They're known for their parent councils in every school. They're known for the fact that they have tens of thousands of children who now get three meals a day in the school. They're known for the fact that their summer school—they have mandatory summer school for people who don't score at a certain level from grade to grade. Their summer school is now the sixth biggest school district in the entire United States of America. And guess what? Juvenile crime has dropped through the floor, because they're taking care of kids and giving them something positive to live for and building them up. And that's what we want to do.

We have a lot of other things to do in the environmental area. We have a lot of other things to do in the health care area. This health care bill of rights, I heard you cheering for Barbara when she talked about that. I'm telling you, every hour in America—and I say that as somebody who has not been opposed to the managed care movement in principle. We couldn't have continued the way we were going, where inflation in health care was going up at 3 times the rate of inflation and income in America; that was unsustainable. But we can't continue the direction we're going now, where the only thing that controls health care decisions for people in HMO's is too often the bottom line. That is crazy. We cannot allow it, and we need a health care bill of rights to protect patients, to protect people, to make sure they get the care they need. You can have good management and still put quality health care first.

So there's a huge agenda out there. What I want you to go out there and say to your friends and neighbors and fellow Californians, who have been so good to me and the First Lady and the Vice President, is, "Look where we are now. Look where we were in 1992. Don't just look even at the budget surplus or the economy; look at all these things."

Ideas drive action and get results, good or bad. Now, we all have things happen that are beyond our control, and I don't claim full credit for every good thing that's happened in America. You and the other American people deserve most of the credit. You get up and lead your lives every day, and you've done things that make sense and do good. But you know as well as I do that we wouldn't have elections and give people authority to make decisions if the decisions didn't amount to anything. It matters.

So the first thing I want you to say to somebody who says, "Well, I'm too conservative to vote for Barbara Boxer," or, "I'm a Republican,"

or "I'm this," say, "Look, you're a Californian. You're an American. Look where you are now. Look where you were then. Their ideas were right. They put them in; they had good consequences. And they've got good ideas for the future. This is about progress over politics."

Then you ought to talk about these things that Barbara talked about for the future and ask people to vote as American citizens in this election, for their children and their grandchildren. And if you do that, she will have a great victory, California will have a great victory, and it will certainly be the right thing for America.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. at the Fairmont Hotel.

Statement on Compensation for Wrongful Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent

June 12, 1998

I am pleased that the Department of Justice has reached a settlement that will compensate Latin Americans of Japanese ancestry for their wrongful internment during World War II. The United States Government forcibly brought these individuals to the United States from their homes in Latin America during the war and interned them with U.S. citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry.

Through the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, our Nation offered redress to U.S. citizens and permanent residents who suffered serious injustice. This settlement addresses the injustice endured by Japanese Latin Americans who were interned.

Payments for this settlement will come from the fund established by the Civil Liberties Act. If the fund proves insufficient, I will work with the Congress to enact legislation appropriating the necessary resources to ensure that all eligible claimants can obtain the compensation provided by this settlement.

Statement on the Federal Communications Commission Decision on the E-Rate

June 12, 1998

I applaud the decision by the Federal Communications Commission to move forward with the "e-rate"—a critical initiative to connect our schools, libraries, and rural health centers to the Internet. Although I had urged that the e-rate be fully funded, I remain committed to the goal of ensuring that every child has access to the tools they need to compete in the 21st century.

The e-rate will help create opportunity in the information age for children and communities all over America. Together with our Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, the e-rate will ensure that for the first time in our Nation's history, a child in the most isolated inner city or rural town will have access to the same universe of knowledge as a child in the most affluent suburb. Parents will be able to communicate more frequently with teachers and keep up with the progress of their child in school. Our children will be "technologically literate" and better prepared for the high-tech, high-wage jobs our economy is creating in record numbers.

I call upon all Members of Congress to support the FCC's decision. I will steadfastly oppose any effort to pull the plug on the e-rate and our children's future or to thwart the FCC's ability to move forward with this initiative.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Darlene Hooley in Portland, Oregon

June 12, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very, very much. Stand up here, Darlene. You know, on my body clock it is 1:35—[*laughter*]—and Alexis and Darlene are hard acts to follow. [*Laughter*] I must say, I'm sorry that Alexis had to miss the Shania Twain concert, but if Shania Twain had heard her sing, she might have thought it was the other way around. She was great. You have a great gift, young lady, and I wish you well with it.

I thank the Rose City Brass Quartet for playing "Hail To The Chief." It sounded great—thought the Marine Band had come across the country to be here. Thank you.

I want to thank Governor Kitzhaber and Senator Wyden and Congressman Blumenauer for being here; and my old friend and classmate John Platt; and the candidates for the House, David Wu and Kevin Campbell. I admire your public officials here. They are visionary and practical, principled and pragmatic. They get things done, and they're a joy to work with. And I especially am proud to be here with Darlene Hooley. My only regret is that as President, I do not have her courage in footwear. [*Laughter*]

I got to thinking the other day that if Speaker Gingrich wore shoes like that, he might be in a better humor. [*Laughter*] We might change the whole psychology of the Republican caucus in the Congress—[*laughter*]—if they just had comfortable shoes every day. Maybe that's what the matter is. Maybe their shoes hurt them all the time. [*Laughter*]

I also want to say how profoundly indebted I feel to the people of Oregon who have been so good to me and to my wife and to the Vice President and Mrs. Gore, to our whole administration. You've given me your electoral votes twice and have unfailingly supported policies to move this country forward. And I just thank you from the bottom of my heart. I'm very grateful, more than you know.

I wanted to come out here for Darlene tonight for a number of reasons, not the least of which is on occasion she has stood up with me and for our country when it was not easy to do so. And she's the sort of independent-thinking person who also has a heart I believe we need more of in politics. She does a great credit to all of you.

Because we have a number of important races in Oregon this year, I'd just like to say a few things briefly. I know the hour is late. But every day I get up, and no matter what the challenges of the day are—and we've had a number lately, the financial challenges in Asia, the difficulties of the nuclear testing between India and Pakistan, the new trouble in the Balkan region in Kosovo, a number of things—but I just—I give thanks for the fact that compared to the day I was inaugurated, and Darlene said something about this, but I just want to read this off to you because you can take a lot of credit for this, but your country now has the lowest crime rate in 25 years. It has 16 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years. It has the lowest percentage of its people on welfare in 29 years. We are about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years. We have the lowest inflation in 32 years, with the smallest Federal Government in 35 years and the highest rate of homeownership in the history of the United States. That's pretty good for America.

And when I ran for President in 1992, and came and asked the people of Oregon to support me, I was deeply disturbed because our country was not moving forward and because our political leadership seemed trapped in a debate that had very little relevance to ordinary people in places like Oregon or in my home State of Arkansas. And I thought to myself, if we would think more about the future, if we would imagine what we wanted America to look like for our children in the 21st century and work back from that, we'd make more sense in what we said and what we do would be better.

And I know that sounds sort of simplistic, but that's actually what I tried to do. And before I ever ran for President, I sat down and asked myself, what do you want your country to look like when we cross that bridge to the 21st century? What do you want your country to look like when your daughter is your age?

And my answers are fairly straightforward: I want the American dream to be alive and well for every person who is willing to work for it. I want America to still be the leading force in a smaller and smaller world for peace and freedom and prosperity and for meeting the challenges that we face together, whether it's from terrorists or weapons of mass destruction or from global environmental destruction. And I want America to be able to enjoy this dramatically increasing racial and ethnic and other diversity in our country and still be able to live together as one community with shared values, where we respect our differences but we have some core things in common that are most important of all. That's what I want. And that's what I've worked for. That's what I've asked people to join me in doing.

And the first point I'd like to make is that I certainly can't claim full credit for all those statistics I just read off, but I do believe that our administration and those in Congress who have helped us have contributed to those good results, the lion's share of which belong to the American people.

Ideas matter. And actions based on ideas have consequences. That's why it's important to keep people like Darlene Hooley in the Congress. That's why it's important to give us a few more people who are more interested in progress than politics, more interested in unity and moving forward than being divided for short-term political power advantage. That's why it's important, because ideas and policies matter; they make a difference.

And it is very important that in this election season the American people say, "We want an honest debate about where we are, where we've come from, and where we're going, because ideas and actions matter. We are not going to be diverted. We are not going to be divided, and we are not going to be little. We are going to be large, and we are going to look to tomorrow, to our children's future." If we do, we'll have more people like Darlene in Congress.

We have big issues still to deal with. That's the other thing I want to say. The temptation is to say, "Well, I ought to just vote for a bunch of people who tell me what I want to hear and hope they won't do anything, because things are going well and I don't want to mess it up." [*Laughter*] And we have often done that. Societies everywhere often do that. That would be a mistake.

It would be a mistake for two reasons. Number one, we have big long-term challenges ahead of us—big long-term challenges ahead of us. That's why I say, don't spend any of that surplus that we're going to accumulate this year until we know that we have fixed Social Security for the 21st century. We have to reform Medicare for the 21st century.

We've opened the doors to colleges to virtually all Americans now, with our tax credits, our scholarships, our student loan program improvements, our work-study increases, our national service scholarships. But nobody thinks that we have the best system of public education uniformly in the world yet. And we've got things to do. We've got an agenda there, of smaller classes, better-trained teachers, more charter schools, technology in every single classroom, no matter how remotely rural or how poorly urban, in America. And I want to see that implemented.

We still have too many kids in trouble; Darlene talked about that. The after-school program—we have offered to the Congress a program to hugely increase after-school programs and summer school programs to give not only—not only say, well, we're going to find these kids that do bad things and punish them but to keep more kids out of trouble in the first place.

Let me just tell you one story. A lot of you know that Hillary comes from Chicago, and we spent a lot of time there. When I was a Governor, the Governor of Illinois—the then-Governor of Illinois was a friend of mine, and he and I both have one daughter. And I knew that there was one picture I could see in the newspaper once a year, when his daughter was with him in the Governor's office on the day that the teachers went on strike in Chicago. Every year it happened, whether they needed to or not. [*Laughter*] And there was this great estrangement, and everybody thought the schools were dysfunctional.

Today, in Chicago, there has been unbelievable harmony between the teachers and the administration. Every school has a parent council. No child can be promoted that doesn't perform to a certain level. They have mandatory summer school and a massive after-school program. There are literally tens of thousands of children now in the inner-city neighborhoods of Chicago who get three hot meals a day at school because their parents work. And their summer school,

the Chicago summer school, is now the sixth largest school district in America.

Now, what is the consequence? The juvenile crime rate has plummeted. Even better, more kids are learning more; more kids are having the opportunity to work; more children are going to have the chance to live the American dream. That's what we have to be mindful of.

You know, we will never reach a time when we can solve every problem for every child, when there will never be any tragedy, when there will never be any kind of thing that goes wrong in any family in this State or this country. But there's not a soul here that doesn't know we can do a lot better. We can do better with our schools, and we can do better with our children.

We have huge environmental challenges. I just flew up here from Monterey, California, where we had the first-ever national conference on the state of the oceans today, and particularly ours, the oceans that embrace our coasts all over America. And I announced a number of steps to try to improve our capacity to protect and recover the environmental quality of our oceans, the fishing stocks, and to preserve them into the future.

This is a huge deal that most people don't ever even think about. You know, one of the most common phrases in our vernacular is, "Oh, what I did was nothing. It's just a drop in the ocean." Nearly all of you have used it if you've lived any number of years. [*Laughter*] And—that's another way of saying I'm getting older. [*Laughter*] And it may have been true at one time, but once there are millions and billions of drops in the ocean, we run the risk of changing the entire ecostructure of the planet, even in Monterey, which is a pretty pristine place.

I met with young graduate students at Stanford today, and we walked out into the ocean. We looked at the sea otters and the harbor seals and the pelicans and a lot of the small ocean life there. And these young people told me that they were studying it, and they concluded two things: number one, that even there was a demonstrable warming of the ocean; and number two, that a lot of the small examples of life in the sea there were things that had moved from the south and that all the life was moving north. Anybody that is involved with salmon in Oregon or Washington or Canada knows that they're moving north.

This is a huge issue. We must come to grips with it. It is also closely related to the issue of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, which is, in the near term, an even bigger issue. But they feed on each other, because the more greenhouse gases we emit into the atmosphere, the more the polluted particles drift over the ocean, find their way into the ocean, and compromise the ocean's ecostructure.

Now, this may not be a burning issue in the election, but it's really important that you vote for somebody who will make some mental and emotional space to think about what your grandchildren are going to be facing if we don't deal with climate change, what your children and grandchildren are going to be facing if we don't deal with the deterioration of the oceans. So I just give you those things as an example. Ideas matter.

In the other party, they just passed a budget in the House which has, as nearly as I can tell, not very much money at all for our climate change policy; would eliminate our policy of putting 100,000 community police on the street before it's finished, when it has been the most successful anticrime strategy in modern American history; and would cut back on our investments generally in education and the environment at a time when we ought to do more. Ideas matter. There are consequences to this. And there are big issues out there—lot of others I could talk about.

But the second point I want to make is this: We feel good about our country now. You all clapped when I gave you all those numbers. [*Laughter*] The question is, what do you do when you feel good? You can go sit in the sun and wait for something to go wrong and enjoy it while it's good, or you can say, "Boy, when we have all this confidence now, when we finally have got some resources, when we finally have got the—literally, the space to breathe, to think about the long-term, that is the time to act." You don't wait to repair the roof until there's a rainstorm. We have a chance to build the right kind of house for America.

And yes, it's important who's President, and because of the 22d amendment, you'll get a chance to make another decision next time about that. [*Laughter*] But it really matters who's in the Congress, who the Governor is, what kind of decisions are made, what values they reflect, and whether you honestly believe that we ought to be doing everything we can

to create opportunity for everybody responsible enough to work for it, to maintain our leadership in the world, and to live together as one people.

I'm going to talk at Portland State tomorrow about immigration and this new wave of immigrants and how they're changing America. And I'm going to say that they all now are more likely to be different colors and different races, but they're not much different than when the Irish came over, when my people came over here. I got a letter the other day—I mean, a book the other day, from a friend of mine who's got a terrific sense of humor, that talked about how unfortunate it was that a lot of my forebears turned reactionary, because when we first came here, we were treated just like the recently freed slaves. And the title of this book is "How the Irish Became White"—[*laughter*]—tongue in cheek. You may have seen it. It's in the bookstores.

But the point I want to make is, this is important. You look at the whole rest of the world. Look at what I'm worrying about: the struggles between India and Pakistan, between the Hindus and the Muslims; in Kosovo, the struggle between the Albanians and the Serbs. What was the Bosnian war about? People that were biologically indistinguishable, who were Serbs and Orthodox Christians, Croats and Roman Catholics, Bosnians and Muslims. Eight hundred thousand people killed in Rwanda in a matter of weeks because they were two different tribes—and they had lived for 500 years on the same land. They weren't part of some artificial construct of colonialists. That was a distinct country.

And if you want your kids to live in a world that is moving beyond that, America has got to set an example. If you want me to be able to say—you know, it wasn't the only reason, perhaps not even the principal reason, but I can tell you it was a significant factor, when the Irish people voted for peace recently, that so many Irish-Americans were involved and committed, and they were Protestant, and they were Catholic, and after a time of going over there and working year-in and year-out and trying to get people together, it became indistinguishable what the faith of the Irish-Americans were committed to Ireland.

We have to build one America for these children if we expect America to be able to lead to a safer, more peaceful, more prosperous, more responsible, sustainable planet. That is very important.

So I say to you, I'm honored to be here with Darlene. I'm honored to be here with your other leaders. I respect them more than I can say. I respect Senator Wyden and Congressman Blumenauer. I respect Governor Kitzhaber. I respect Congresswoman Furse, and I regret that she's leaving. And I hope you'll replace her with a good Democrat who will help us keep going forward. But not because of party but because our party has embraced these ideas; our party has embraced the future; our party has resisted the politics of division and getting in office for the sake of holding power, and we're more interested in what we're going to do with it if we get it. And we want to build that kind of future for our country.

So I'm glad you're here. I'm glad so many young people are here. But you remember what I'm telling you. There's a long time between now and November. And I want you to go out of here committed to talking to your friends and neighbors about the nature of American citizenship at the close of the 20th century and about this incredible opportunity we have. Yes, we've done a lot of good things, and yes, the country is in good shape, but I want you to be grateful for that, pocket it, and ask yourself, now what am I supposed to do for my country and my children's future?

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. at the Tiffany Center. In his remarks, he referred to 8-year-old singer Alexis Ebert; singer Shania Twain; Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon; John C. Platt, husband of Representative Elizabeth Furse; and David Wu and Kevin M. Campbell, Democratic candidates for Oregon's First and Second Congressional Districts, respectively.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Situation in Guinea-Bissau and the Deployment of United States Forces
June 12, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On June 6, 1998, elements of Guinea-Bissau's army mutinied and attacked the government of President Vieira. Government forces mounted a counterattack, but have been unable to quell the revolt. Rebel forces, who occupy a military camp very near the U.S. Embassy compound in Bissau, came under attack from government and foreign forces on June 10, placing the Embassy and U.S. Government employees at risk.

As a result of the deteriorating situation in Bissau and the threat to American lives and property, a standby evacuation force of U.S. military personnel from the U.S. European Command was deployed to Dakar, Senegal, on June 10 to be prepared to evacuate American private citizens and government employees, as well as selected third country nationals in Bissau. Currently, both the airfield in Bissau and the main road to the airport are closed due to the fighting between government and rebel forces. Forty-four Americans have already been evacuated by a Portuguese vessel and a Senegalese ship from the city of Bissau, leaving our Ambassador and a staff of four in the U.S. Embassy there. Efforts are underway to coordinate the evacuation of 17 Peace Corps volunteers in upcountry areas.

The forces currently in Dakar, Senegal, include enabling forces, a Joint Task Force Headquarters, fixed-wing aircraft and associated support personnel, and a U.S. special forces company. Although U.S forces are equipped for combat, this action is being undertaken solely for the purpose of protecting American citizens and property. United States forces will redeploy as soon as it is determined that the evacuation is completed.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action to protect American citizens in Guinea-Bissau.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13.

The President's Radio Address
June 13, 1998

Good morning. Later today I will meet with families in Springfield, Oregon, families whose lives just a few weeks ago were irreparably changed by a 15-year-old boy with semiautomatic weapons.

We will speak, no doubt, of pain and loss and of the tragic, senseless nature of such acts. I'm sure we'll reflect, as Americans often have in recent months, on similar shocking incidents in Jonesboro, Arkansas; Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; Edinboro, Pennsylvania. This litany of loss is familiar to every American and has tragically grown longer. Now we must think as a nation long and hard about what we can do to stop this violence and save more of our children.

Around our kitchen tables, on our public airwaves, in our private thoughts, we all are asking ourselves, what are the root causes of such youth violence? This is an important and healthy discussion, but it must lead us to take action and take the responsibility that belongs to us all.

We're long past the question of whether culture makes an impact. Of course, it does. School shootings don't occur in a vacuum; they are, in part, symptoms of a culture that too

often glorifies violence. It is no wonder, as scores of studies show, that our children are increasingly numb to violence. They see and hear it everywhere, from TV screens to movie screens to computer screens, and in popular music.

When mindless killing becomes a staple of family entertainment, when over and over children see cinematic conflicts resolved not with words but with weapons, we shouldn't be surprised when children, from impulse or design, follow suit.

Those who create and profit from the culture of violence must step up to their responsibility. So too, must the rest of us remember our responsibility to monitor the content of what is seen by young eyes and heard by young ears and to constantly counsel young people that, though too much violence exists in our society, it is wrong and ultimately self-destructive to those who do it.

We have another important responsibility, to remember that unsupervised children and guns are a deadly combination. Parents cannot permit easy access to weapons that kill. We must get serious about gun safety. We must, every one of us, get serious about prevention.

That's why, for 5 years now, our administration has worked so hard to protect our children. School security is tighter. Prevention is better. Penalties are tougher. We've promoted discipline with curfews, school uniforms, and antitruancy policies. We have worked with gun manufacturers to promote child safety locks on guns, and we will continue to show zero tolerance toward guns in schools. During the 1996–97 school year, our policy led to the expulsion of nearly 6,100 law-breaking students and the prevention of countless acts of violence.

This year Congress has an opportunity to further protect America's children by passing the juvenile crime bill I proposed. It will ban violent juveniles from buying guns for life and take other important steps. Congress can also give communities much needed support. I've proposed that in our balanced budget, $95 million be allocated to the prevention of juvenile crime, including the promotion of after-school programs which provide positive alternatives and ways in which young people can fulfill themselves and learn more and be with other good people doing good things in the very hours when so much juvenile crime occurs.

I urge Congress to step up to its responsibilities, to listen to law enforcement professionals and reject special interest groups who are trying to defeat this bill, to invest in prevention so that we can stop more violent outbursts before they start.

In Springfield, and in far too many recent cases, troubled children announced their intentions before turning guns on their classmates. We've learned that terrible threats and rage in the face of rejection can be more than idle talk. To help adults understand the signs and respond to them before it's too late, today I'm directing the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to work with school officials and law enforcement to develop an early warning guide. It will be available to every school in America when classes start this fall and will help adults reach out to troubled children quickly and effectively. School children, too, should be taught how to recognize danger signals when they're sent.

All across America, communities are taking responsibility for making our schools and streets safer for our children. Over all, juvenile crime is going down. But we can and must do better at preventing these terrible tragedies. As individuals and as a nation, we must do more to teach our children right from wrong and to teach them how to resolve conflicts peacefully. In this way, we'll build a better, safer future for our children, freer of fear, and full of promise.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:30 a.m. on June 12 at the Benson Hotel in Portland, OR, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Kipland P. Kinkel, who was charged with the May 21 shooting rampage at Thurston High School in Springfield, OR, which killed 2 students and wounded 22.

Commencement Address at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon
June 13, 1998

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the wonderful warm welcome. President Bernstine, Provost Reardon, Senator Wyden, Representatives Blumenauer and Hooley, Treasurer Hill, General Myers, Superintendent Paulus; my good friend, your great former Senator, Mark Hatfield—I'm delighted to see you here today, sir; thank you. To the faculty, especially the faculty honorees today; State Board of Higher Education; the alumni; to the speakers, Theo Hall and Jane Rongerude—I thought they did a marvelous job on behalf of the students. Congratulations, Mr. Miller, and thank you for your contributions to Portland State.

And let me say to all the members of the class of 1998, I thank you for allowing me to come here today. I congratulate you on your tremendous achievement. I know the roads that you have traveled here have not all been easy. Some of you have worked full-time and cared for your families even while you carried a full course load, and I congratulate you on what you've done.

What I want to say to you in the beginning is that you will see that it was worth it. In the world in which we live, there is a higher premium on education than ever before, not only because of what you know but because of what you will be able to learn for the rest of your life. The education and the skills you take away from this campus will open doors for you forever. And I congratulate you on having the foresight as well as the determination to see this through.

Portland State is a very interesting institution to me. First of all, we're the same age. [*Laughter*] Portland State was born in 1946, out of the demand generated by the GI bill at the end of World War II, one of the most farsighted things that was ever done to explode opportunity across America. The GI bill helped to create the modern American middle class and the prosperity we enjoyed. It also helped to create a number of community-based institutions of higher education, which more and more now are beginning to look in their student bodies the way they did over 50 years ago.

More than half the students here are over 25. More than a few of you are considerably over 25. [*Laughter*] Still, you all look quite young to me. [*Laughter*] As was said earlier, I have worked hard, and our administration has, to open the doors of college to everyone who would work for it, with the HOPE scholarship and permanent tax credits for all higher education and more Pell grants and better student loans and the AmeriCorps program and work-study programs. We have to create a country in which everyone at any age believes that they have access to continue their education for a lifetime.

I want to focus on this institution again as an institution of the future. You know, a couple of years ago I came out here, and we had a conference on the Pacific Rim and our relationship to the Asia-Pacific region that Portland State hosted. And I have to say that one of your most distinguished alumni was a particular friend of mine, the late Congressman Walter Capps from California, one of the finest people I ever knew went to this school. And he was a person of the future in the Congress. His wife succeeded him, and we were talking just last evening, before I came here, about how grateful Congressman Capps always was to Portland State for giving him the ability to go out into the world and make a difference.

What I want to talk to all of you about, particularly the graduates, is the America of your future. We all know that at the edge of a new century and a new millennium, America is changing at breathtaking speed. We know that most of these changes have been good. We're grateful as a nation to have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the highest homeownership in history. We feel gratitude. We know that none of us alone is responsible for these things, but all of us together have come to terms with the challenges of the modern world and its opportunities and we're moving America in a good direction.

But this spring I have attempted to go out across the country and address graduates about

the challenges this new era poses, not only because even when there is a lot of good news out there, we should never forget that there are challenges but, perhaps even more importantly, because when times are good, it imposes upon Americans a special responsibility to take our confidence and our prosperity and look to the long-term challenges of the country, to address them in a forthright, constructive way so that our country will continue to grow and prosper.

This spring I have talked about three things. At the Naval Academy, I talked about defending our Nation against the new security threats of the 21st century, including terrorism, biological and chemical weapons, and global environmental degradation. At MIT, not very long ago, I talked about the challenges of the information age and the importance of bringing those opportunities to all Americans, bringing the Internet into every classroom, ensuring that every young student is computer-literate. Maybe I should have given that speech here. [*Laughter*]

Today I want to talk to you about what may be the most important subject of all, how we can strengthen the bonds of our national community as we grow more racially and ethnically diverse.

It was just a year ago tomorrow that I launched a national initiative on race, asking Americans to address the persistent problems and the limitless possibilities of our diversity. This effort is especially important right now because, as we grow more diverse, our ability to deal with the challenges will determine whether we can really bind ourselves together as one America. And even more importantly in the near term, and over the next few years perhaps as well, our ability to exercise world leadership for peace, for freedom, for prosperity in a world that is both smaller and more closely connected and yet increasingly gripped with tense, often bloody conflicts rooted in racial, ethnic, and religious divisions, our ability to lead that kind of world to a better place rests in no small measure on our ability to be a better place here in the United States that can be a model for the world.

The driving force behind our increasing diversity is a new, large wave of immigration. It is changing the face of America. And while most of the changes are good, they do present challenges which demand more, both from new immigrants and from our citizens. Citizens share a responsibility to welcome new immigrants, to ensure that they strengthen our Nation, to give them their chance at the brass ring. In turn, new immigrants have a responsibility to learn, to work, to contribute to America. If both citizens and immigrants do their part, we will grow ever stronger in the new global information economy.

More than any other nation on Earth, America has constantly drawn strength and spirit from wave after wave of immigrants. In each generation, they have proved to be the most restless, the most adventurous, the most innovative, the most industrious of people. Bearing different memories, honoring different heritages, they have strengthened our economy, enriched our culture, renewed our promise of freedom and opportunity for all.

Of course, the path has not always run smooth. Some Americans have met each group of newcomers with suspicion and violence and discrimination. So great was the hatred of Irish immigrants 150 years ago that they were greeted with signs that read, "No Dogs or Irish." So profound was the fear of Chinese in the 1880's that they were barred from entering the country. So deep was the distrust of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe at the beginning of this century that they were forced to take literacy tests specifically designed to keep them out of America. Eventually, the guarantees of our Constitution and the better angels of our nature prevailed over ignorance and insecurity, over prejudice and fear.

But now we are being tested again by a new wave of immigration larger than any in a century, far more diverse than any in our history. Each year, nearly a million people come legally to America. Today, nearly one in 10 people in America was born in another country; one in 5 schoolchildren are from immigrant families. Today, largely because of immigration, there is no majority race in Hawaii or Houston or New York City. Within 5 years, there will be no majority race in our largest State, California. In a little more than 50 years, there will be no majority race in the United States. No other nation in history has gone through demographic change of this magnitude in so short a time.

What do the changes mean? They can either strengthen and unite us, or they can weaken and divide us. We must decide.

Let me state my view unequivocally. I believe new immigrants are good for America. They are revitalizing our cities. They are building our new

economy. They are strengthening our ties to the global economy, just as earlier waves of immigrants settled the new frontier and powered the Industrial Revolution. They are energizing our culture and broadening our vision of the world. They are renewing our most basic values and reminding us all of what it truly means to be an American.

It means working hard, like a teenager from Vietnam who does his homework as he watches the cash register at his family's grocery store. It means making a better life for your children, like a father from Russia who works two jobs and still finds time to take his daughter to the public library to practice her reading. It means dreaming big dreams, passing them on to your children.

You have a lot of stories like that here at Portland State. Just this morning I met one of your graduates—or two, to be specific: Mago Gilson, an immigrant from Mexico who came here without a high school education; 12 years later she is receiving her master's degree in education, on her way to realizing her dream of becoming a teacher. She is joined in this graduating class by her son Eddy, who had dreams of his own and worked full-time for 7 years to put himself through school. Today he receives a bachelor's degree in business administration. And soon—there's more—soon her son, Oscar, whom I also met, will receive his own master's degree in education. I'd like to ask the Gilsons and their family members who are here to rise and be recognized. There she is. Give them a hand. [*Applause*]

In the Gilson family and countless like them, we see the spirit that built America, the drive to succeed, the commitment to family, to education, to work, the hope for a better life. In their stories we see a reflection of our parents' and grandparents' journey, a powerful reminder that our America is not so much a place as a promise, not a guarantee but a chance, not a particular race but an embrace of our common humanity.

Now, some Americans don't see it that way. When they hear new accents or see new faces, they feel unsettled. They worry that new immigrants come not to work hard but to live off our largesse. They're afraid the America they know and love is becoming a foreign land. This reaction may be understandable, but it's wrong. It's especially wrong when anxiety and fear give rise to policies and ballot propositions to exclude immigrants from our civic life. I believe it's wrong to deny law-abiding immigrants benefits available to everyone else; wrong to ignore them as people not worthy of being counted in the census. It's not only wrong, it's un-American.

Let me be clear: I also think it's wrong to condone illegal immigration that flouts our laws, strains our tolerance, taxes our resources. Even a nation of immigrants must have rules and conditions and limits, and when they are disregarded, public support for immigration erodes in ways that are destructive to those who are newly arrived and those who are still waiting patiently to come.

We must remember, however, that the vast majority of immigrants are here legally. In every measurable way, they give more to our society than they take. Consider this: On average, immigrants pay $1,800 more in taxes every year than they cost our system in benefits. Immigrants are paying into Social Security at record rates. Most of them are young, and they will help to balance the budget when we baby boomers retire and put strains on it.

New immigrants also benefit the Nation in ways not so easily measured but very important. We should be honored that America, whether it's called the City on a Hill, or the Old Gold Mountain, or El Norte, is still seen around the world as the land of new beginnings. We should all be proud that people living in isolated villages in far corners of the world actually recognize the Statue of Liberty. We should rejoice that children the world over study our Declaration of Independence and embrace its creed.

My fellow Americans, we descendants of those who passed through the portals of Ellis Island must not lock the door behind us. Americans whose parents were denied the rights of citizenship simply because of the color of their skin must not deny those rights to others because of the country of their birth or the nature of their faith.

We should treat new immigrants as we would have wanted our own grandparents to be treated. We should share our country with them, not shun them or shut them out. But mark my words, unless we handle this well, immigration of this sweep and scope could threaten the bonds of our Union.

Around the world, we see what can happen when people who live on the same land put race and ethnicity before country and humanity. If America is to remain the world's most diverse

democracy, if immigration is to strengthen America as it has throughout our history, then we must say to one another: Whether your ancestors came here in slave ships or on the *Mayflower,* whether they landed on Ellis Island or at Los Angeles International Airport, or have been here for thousands of years, if you believe in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, if you accept the responsibilities as well as the rights embedded in them, then you are an American. Only that belief can keep us one America in the 21st century.

So I say, as President, to all our immigrants, you are welcome here. But you must honor our laws, embrace our culture, learn our language, know our history, and when the time comes, you should become citizens. And I say to all Americans, we have responsibilities as well to welcome our newest immigrants, to vigorously enforce laws against discrimination. And I'm very proud that our Nation's top civil rights enforcer is Bill Lann Lee, the son of Chinese immigrants who grew up in Harlem.

We must protect immigrants' rights and ensure their access to education, health care, and housing and help them to become successful, productive citizens. When immigrants take responsibility to become citizens and have met all the requirements to do so, they should be promptly evaluated and accepted. The present delays in the citizenship process are unacceptable and indefensible.

And together, immigrants and citizens alike, let me say we must recommit ourselves to the general duties of citizenship. Not just immigrants but every American should know what's in our Constitution and understand our shared history. Not just immigrants but every American should participate in our democracy by voting, by volunteering, and by running for office. Not just immigrants but every American, on our campuses and in our communities, should serve; community service breeds good citizenship. And not just immigrants but every American should reject identity politics that seeks to separate us, not bring us together.

Ethnic pride is a very good thing. America is one of the places which most reveres the distinctive ethnic, racial, religious heritage of our various peoples. The days when immigrants felt compelled to Anglicize their last name or deny their heritage are, thankfully, gone. But pride in one's ethnic and racial heritage must never become an excuse to withdraw from the larger American community. That does not honor diversity; it breeds divisiveness. And that could weaken America.

Not just immigrants but every American should recognize that our public schools must be more than places where our children learn to read; they must also learn to be good citizens. They must all be able to make America's heroes, from Washington to Lincoln to Eleanor Roosevelt and Rosa Parks and Cesar Chavez, their own.

Today too many Americans and far too many immigrant children attended crowded, often crumbling inner city schools. Too many drop out of school altogether. And with more children from immigrant families entering our country and our schools than at any time since the turn of the century, we must renew our efforts to rebuild our schools and make them the best in the world. They must have better facilities; they must have smaller classes; they must have properly trained teachers; they must have access to technology; they must be the best in the world.

All of us, immigrants and citizens alike, must ensure that our new group of children learn our language, and we should find a way to do this together instead of launching another round of divisive political fights.

In the schools within the White House—excuse me, in the schools within just a few miles of the White House, across the Potomac River, we have the most diverse school district in America, where there are children from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, speaking as native tongues about 100 languages. Now, it's all very well for someone to say, every one of them should learn English immediately. But we don't at this time necessarily have people who are trained to teach them English in all those languages. So I say to you, it is important for children to retain their native language. But unless they also learn English, they will never reach their full potential in the United States.

Of course, children learn at different rates, and, of course, children have individual needs. But that cannot be an excuse for making sure that when children come into our school system, we do whatever it takes with whatever resources are at hand to make sure they learn as quickly as they can the language that will be dominant language of this country's commerce and citizenship in the future. We owe it to these children to do that.

And we should not either delay behind excuses or look for ways to turn what is essentially a human issue of basic decency and citizenship and opportunity into a divisive political debate. We have a stake together in getting together and moving forward on this.

Let me say, I applaud the students here at Portland State who are tutoring immigrant children to speak and read English. You are setting the kind of example I want our country to follow.

One hundred and forty years ago, in the First Lady's hometown of Chicago, immigrants outnumbered native Americans. Addressing a crowd there in 1858, Abraham Lincoln asked what connection those immigrants could possibly feel to people like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, who founded our Nation. Here was his answer: "If they, the immigrants, look back through this history to trace their connection to those days by blood, they will find they have none. But our Founders proclaimed that we are all created equal in the eyes of God. And that," Lincoln said, "is the electric cord in that declaration that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving people everywhere."

Well, that electric cord, the conviction that we are all created equal in the eyes of God, still links every graduate here with every new immigrant coming to our shores and every American who ever came before us. If you carry it with conscience and courage into the new century, it will light our way to America's greatest days—your days.

So, members of the class of 1998, go out and build the future of your dreams. Do it together, for your children, for your grandchildren, for your country.

Good luck, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Rose Garden Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Daniel O. Bernstine, president, and Michael F. Reardon, provost, Portland State University; Jim Hill, State treasurer; Hardy Myers, State attorney general; Norma Paulus, State superintendent of public instruction; Theo Hall III and Jane Rongerude, class representatives, class of 1998; and Robert G. Miller, president, Fred Meyer, Inc., and recipient of an honorary degree. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Departure for Springfield, Oregon, and an Exchange With Reporters in Portland

June 13, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. Several days ago, Senator Wyden got in touch with me and told me that the principal and the superintendent of Springfield would like for me to come down and visit with the people there while I am in Oregon. And I'm going because I want to listen; I want to learn; I want to be of whatever support I can. I also want to highlight the importance to all Americans of trying to prevent tragedies like this.

I have today instructed the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to prepare a guide for teachers, educators, parents, and others, that basically goes through the early warning signals that so many young people who are likely to take very violent destructive action often give, in the hope that it will help the schools and the families, and even other students to pick up such signals so that we can prevent these things in the future. So, for both those reasons, I'm going down, and I'm looking forward to it. And I'd like to thank the Senators and the two Representatives for going with me. I'm very much looking forward to it.

Q. Mr. President, what will you tell the families or the victims in Springfield this afternoon?

The President. Well, I'll—first of all, I want to listen to them and not tell them too much. But I—what I will tell them is that I hope that one way they can honor their children is to work with us to try to create a country and a set of circumstances which makes it far less likely that these things will be repeated. And I would think that any parent would want to do that.

Q. How much help do you think this guide will be, sir?

The President. Well, I think it might be quite a bit. One of the things that, frankly, I must say, I was not aware of until I started studying the facts more closely, is that if you look at the Jonesboro case, the Kentucky case, the Mississippi case, the Pennsylvania case, some other cases where there were shootings but not killings, as well as the one here, in quite a number of the cases, there was some behavior on the part of the young people involved which indicated that they were—they might do something very out of the ordinary. Now, if you're not—if you can't—first of all, these kinds of things are almost unimaginable. So, unless you have some way of knowing that what kind of behavior should set off the biggest warning signal in your mind, and you have something constructive to do about it, you know, where you can take these children and what you can do. Normally, what happens is people are just disturbed, and then they go on with their lives until something terrible happens. So, I really believe there's a chance, if we can get this guide up, if we can get it widely discussed in our schools and people can talk about it not in a paranoid or negative way but just in a open way, that there's a good chance it will really do some good.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:24 p.m. at Portland International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Bentz, principal, Thurston High School, and Jamon Kent, superintendent, Springfield Public Schools. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon
June 13, 1998

Thank you. First of all, I want to thank all of you for coming today, and I want to particularly thank the families who just met with me whose children were wounded and, in two cases, killed.

I thank Mr. Bentz and Superintendent Kent and Mr. Petersen of the school board and Mayor Morrisette. I'd like to thank the members of your congressional delegation who came down with me today, Senators Wyden and Smith and Representatives Hooley and Blumenauer who came with me, and of course Congressman DeFazio, who represents this community.

I was, frankly, glad but somewhat concerned when you—some of your leaders were kind enough to invite me to come down here today, because I didn't want to do anything to add to your burdens, and I was afraid all I could do was to tell you that your country has been thinking about you and praying for you and pulling for you. But after I had the chance to spend the time I did with the families, I'm very, very glad I came. And I thank you for giving me the chance just to meet all of you and to listen to you.

Let me say that this has been not only a horrible and traumatic experience for you; this has been a traumatic experience for all of America. As all of you know, there have been a series of these school shootings with terrible consequences, in Paducah, Kentucky; in Pearl, Mississippi; in Edinboro, Pennsylvania; and in my home State, in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

The first thing I'd like to tell you is that I am immensely impressed and proud of you for the way you're coming back from this and going on, the way you're determined to rebuild your communities, the way the school began to function again, the way you held your commencement and started your athletic competitions again.

The second thing I would say, that I know from my own experience with the community in Arkansas, which I know very well and I know a lot of the people who were involved there, you should feel good about your community and good about your school. And you should know that these terrible acts of violence are occurring at a time when the overall juvenile crime rate is actually going down in America, where our young people on the whole are doing better and doing better at staying out of trouble, getting into more positive endeavors.

I think we have to be honest, though, and see, as so many of the families said to me today, including the fathers of Mikael and Ben, we want something constructive to come out of this. Well, we have to acknowledge the fact that what we have is, in America, a very small number—nobody knows how many—of kids that are really troubled and disturbed and may have a lot of rage, with easy access to guns, in a culture where they've been exposed to lots and lots and lots of violence—and there are literally scores and scores of serious studies which show that the younger you are and the more you're exposed to it, the more kind of desensitized you are to it. And those three things can be a combustible combination.

So what I hope we can do is to do a better job of kind of alerting ourselves and identifying kids that may have problems, before these things happen, and then acting with greater strength and discipline to go forward. Many of the parents today gave me a lot of specific suggestions. I thank you for those. I know that Senator Wyden and Senator Smith just yesterday introduced a bill that said that any young person who brought a gun to school, which is in violation of Federal law, should be held for a 72-hour period of evaluation. And I think that's a very good suggestion.

Today I instructed the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to prepare a guidebook to be ready when school opens next year in every school in America, for teachers and parents and for students as well, to describe all the kinds of early warning signals that deeply troubled young people sometimes give, not just bringing a gun to school but maybe the other things as well.

Not to scare our people all across America or to trouble them, but everybody who has looked at you knows that this is a good community that they'd be proud to live in, and therefore, it could happen anywhere. So what we have to try to do is to, all of us, learn more about the people with whom we live and the kinds of signals that are coming out. And then we've got to make sure that we have the capacity to actually do something about these problems, if we can find them out, before they get out of hand.

And I know that—I believe, at least, that's what your commitment is. That's what a lot of people have told me, as I worked my way around the room today, as I met with your officials at the airport.

And so all I can tell you is, we'll do our very best to continue to help with whatever residual challenges you have here. And I'll do my very best to listen to what you have said to me today, and then to make something really positive happen in the country to increase our ability to prevent such things in the future.

I hope you will go on with your healing and go on with your lives and take a great deal of pride in the way your school and your community has responded to a terrible thing, in a human, strong, very positive way. For me and for all the people who came here with me today, this has been a great inspiration that we will never, ever forget.

Again, I thank all of you for coming out. And more than anything, let me say again to all the families who came to meet with me, I know it couldn't have been easy, but it meant more to me than I can possibly convey.

God bless you all, and good luck. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Bentz, principal; Jamon Kent, superintendent, and Alan Petersen, school board chairman, Springfield Public Schools; Mayor William W. Morrisette of Springfield; and Michael Nickolauson, father of Mikael E. Nickolauson, and Mark Walker, father of Benjamin A. Walker, whose sons died as a result of a May 21 attack in the high school cafeteria.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Beverly Hills, California

June 13, 1998

Thank you very much. I don't need to say anything, do I? [*Laughter*] Let me join all of you in thanking Lew and Edie for another wonderful evening. I love to come here. I'm always happy. I don't think the place has ever been more beautiful. And that's the nicest Presidential seal I have ever seen, Lew. [*Laughter*] And the only one that smelled intoxicatingly wonderful. [*Laughter*]

I do thank all of you for coming. I thank you for your support of our party. I thank Steve Grossman and Len Barrack for their efforts. And Steve and Hillary have already told you a lot about what we're trying to do. I want to begin with a few more thanks, too. I want to thank Senator Feinstein, who is here, and Senator Boxer and Congressman Waxman for what they have done to support our efforts to move this country forward. I want to ask you to do everything you can to make sure Barbara is reelected. Believe you me, she has earned it.

Yesterday I made that announcement that we would ban offshore drilling off the California coast for another decade and permanently in marine sanctuaries. And I told somebody when it was over, I said, "You know, I really believe in this, but if I didn't believe it, I'd do it just to get Barbara off my back." [*Laughter*] There's so many ways in which she represents California superbly, and I ask you to help her.

I also want to tell you, I was thrilled to see Gray Davis get more votes than his Republican opponent in the primary, which was an amazing feat. And we've got a chance to have our first Democratic Governor of California in quite a long time now. And believe me, we don't need to blow it. It's important for California; it's important for the country.

I had a chance to visit with Gray and Sharon today, and I was reminding Gray that it really matters a lot more today than it used to who the Governor is, because we now have given the States vast new responsibilities in dealing with the welfare of poor families. The States have been given vast new resources to guarantee that if people on welfare are required to go to work that they get transportation help they need, the child care help they need, so that you don't ask people to sacrifice their responsibilities to their children to take a job. But we don't run that in Washington; it really matters whether the Governor has a good plan and executes it and cares about it. It's a huge thing. It's very different now than it was just 4 years ago.

We passed—part of our balanced budget bill is the biggest increase in health care coverage for children in 30 years. It will add 5 million children to the ranks of those with health insurance. Over half the uninsured kids in the country are going to get health insurance if the States don't mess it up. And California, obviously, has the lion's share of those children, even a higher percentage of those kids than your percentage of the overall population. It really matters who the Governor is.

We're doing our best to pass a very aggressive, ambitious education agenda. It could bring funds to repair or build hundreds of schools here, to start literally hundreds of charter schools here, to do a lot of exciting things to make sure all the classrooms in the poorest neighborhoods in California are hooked up to the Internet. But all of it will just be sitting there—it matters whether the Governor has a plan and the compassion and the caring enough to execute it in a way that will benefit the people of this State.

So the stakes are high, and you have a wonderful candidate. And I'm going to be back out here doing what I can to help him get elected and to help Barbara. And I want all of you to stay there.

I also would like to say a particular word of thanks, as Hillary did, to Henry Waxman for his heroic efforts to pass comprehensive legislation to protect children from the problems of tobacco. We're fighting a terrible pitched battle in Washington now, and everywhere I go, I see the tobacco advertisements trying to convince you that we've got this dark scheme in Washington to build some new Federal bureaucracy, and it's the biggest load of hooey I ever heard in my life. [*Laughter*] We're trying to save 1,000 kids' lives a day; it's just as simple as that. And we're either going to do it, or we're not. But

if it gets done, it will be in no small measure because of years and years and years of dogged efforts by Henry Waxman, and I've very grateful to him for it.

The last thing I'd like to say in this regard is I'd like to join Hillary in thanking Dianne Feinstein for her efforts to save as many of our children as possible through trying to restrict access to assault weapons.

You know, I went to Oregon today—a lot of you know this. I went down to Springfield, Oregon, where that terrible school shooting occurred. And I met with the fathers of the two children who were killed. I met with a large number of the children who were wounded—many of whom still have the bullets in their bodies—and the families. I met with the school principal and the superintendent and the school board and the teachers, and I got a lot of terrific suggestions.

You and I know that no matter what we do, there will always be some tragedy in life. You can't make any society completely perfect. You can't make any life fully risk-free. But we should also be honest enough to know that you had a series, now, of these really horrible killings at schools, at the time when our overall juvenile crime rate is actually going down so we have fewer kids getting in trouble now. The crime rate among juveniles, the overall crime rate, is going down. And yet, you're having all this happen. And we all have got to be really honest about this and ask ourselves, why? Because I think every one of us has some responsibility in fixing it.

And I thought about this for years, and I have to tell you honestly, I think that what is happening is you've got a small number of children who are carrying a lot of rage and maybe a lot of other serious, serious emotional problems in a society where it's real easy to get a whole lot of guns. And as I have said here many times before, because of the pervasive influence of media on children from their earliest days, the average child is exposed to a lot of what seems to be, to a child, random and repetitive violence, and there are scores of studies which show that it makes children more deadened, desensitized to the immediate consequences of it. And you put all those things together, and you can have an explosive mix.

What we talked about in Oregon today was what we can do to set up a system in our country, school by school, community by community, that will set off some early warning lights when these kids are in trouble. If you have been reading about all these instances, in virtually every one there was some indication that somebody had, that something real bad was wrong. But nobody really thought, "Well, it could lead to this." The young man in Oregon was kicked out of school the day before for having a gun. One of the young people in Arkansas reportedly made threatening comments. The same thing happened in another place.

But we're going to work very, very hard over the next few months to analyze this and to come up with a guide we can give to all of our schools and our parents next year, so we can do a better job of this.

Now, let me say I also did some other things this weekend I want to talk about, and then I want to make the general point that Hillary was making. I spoke at Portland State University today, which is a community-based school, and I talked about immigration and why I thought it was a good thing. And I asked a family to stand up. There was a woman there named Mago Gilson who came to this country from Mexico 12 years ago without a high school diploma; today she got her master's degree in English. Today her son got his bachelor's degree in business administration after working full-time for 7 years to get his college degree. And her other son, next year, will get his master's degree in education. That is the best of the immigrant story in America.

And I pointed out to the people there that we're going through the largest wave of immigration that we've had in this century. And this country is changing dramatically. You think of Texas; most of you would be surprised to know that there's no majority race in Houston, Texas, now. Five years from now, there will probably be no majority race in California. About 55 years from now, there will be no majority race in the United States.

One-hundred and fifty years ago, Irish immigrants in this country were routinely characterized in the same breath with recently freed slaves. It's funny how things change. There's a hilarious book out now, kind of a cheeky book that we Irish like. It's called "How the Irish Became White." [*Laughter*] And it's sort of a sad commentary on how we forgot our peasant roots and abandoned the cause of racial equality and other things and then sort of later came back to it.

The point I'm trying to make is this: If we want to lead a world in which many of the problems that are tearing the heart out of the world today—from Bosnia and Kosovo to India and Pakistan to the Middle East to Rwanda—are rooted in racial, ethnic, and religious differences—if we want to do good in that kind of world, we have to be good at home. We have to prove that we can live together across all the lines that divide us.

And so I went to Portland State to talk about that because all those graduates, that's the world they're going to live in. And America has always been a nation of immigrants. And we have to redefine ourselves in that way so we accommodate even more diversity and have an even stronger sense of common purpose.

And then yesterday, Senator Boxer and others, we were down in Monterey at the oceans conference, the first time in American history we ever had a conference on the oceans, and we've got to do it because the oceans' quality is deteriorating. It's going to affect the lives of our children and our grandchildren.

Now, these are not the sort of things you normally hear bandied around in election years. But what I want to say to you is that it seems to me in a fundamental way, the people of California, when they vote for Congress or Governor or Senator, they're going to have to decide, as Americans will, what are we about right now, and what do we want to do? I just mention these 3 things because they're the things I have been doing the last 2 days.

But let me come back to the conditions that are in this country. When I carried California in 1992, the unemployment rate here was over 9 percent, and people thought this State had been neglected and that nobody had a plan to do anything. And I said, "Vote for me. You may not agree with me on everything, but I've got an economic plan, a crime plan, a welfare plan. I'm going to do things, shake things up. We've got ideas. We're going to move this country forward."

Five and a half years later, we have the lowest crime rates in 25 years; we have the lowest unemployment in 28 years and 16 million new jobs; we have the lowest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years; we're about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years; we have the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the United States. This country is moving in the right direction.

Now, I say that not to take full credit for it. The lion's share of the credit belongs to you and all of the other American people. This is a free society in which billions of decisions are made every day. But it does matter what the direction of the country is, and ideas translated into action have consequences.

I do not believe that the people in my party in the Congress, who have supported these ideas, translated them into action, and very often put their own lives on the line—political lives on the line to do it, have gotten the credit they deserve. I believe the American people have been very good and generous to me beyond all belief, but I don't think they yet have accepted the fact that there were only Democrats voting with me in 1993, when we put that first economic plan before the American people that took 2.2 million kids out of poverty, cut the deficit by $700 billion, and by the time the balanced budget bill passed that Republicans and Democrats voted for, 92 percent of the deficit had already disappeared. There are consequences to ideas and actions.

And the first point I want to make is, the people that I support here, in my party, I support not because they're members of my party but because their ideas and our ideas had good consequences for America when translated into action and because in Washington the primary fight today is between those who are for progress and those who just want to keep practicing politics as usual, divide people up, and hope they get by another election.

This election is fundamentally about progress versus politics as usual. And if the American people understand that, I think I know what decision they'll make. And I want you to help them, here in California and throughout this country.

The second point I want to make is we have to decide what to do with this time. You all clapped when I said things were good; I got a call from a guy the other day that had just spent some time with a lot of very conservative Republicans who said something like, "I don't really like that President of yours, but he sure has made me a lot of money." So even they recognize that things are pretty good.

What are we going to do with this good time? Democracies normally in times like this just relax, sort of lay in the sun, and enjoy it and

wait for things to go bad someday, knowing that they will. That would be a terrible mistake. I believe that the American people have the confidence today and the sense of well-being today necessary to look to the future and think about the long-term challenges we face.

Yes, we're going to have a surplus, but we also have to fix Social Security and Medicare before the baby boomers bankrupt their children and their grandchildren. And I want the Democrats to be a part of that. Yes, we're moving forward economically, and we've opened the doors of college to all Americans, but if we don't fix our public schools so that they're the best in the world, we will never become what we ought to be, and a lot of children growing up in this State will never have the lives they ought to have. You know that as well as I do.

I am proud of the fact that in our administration we set more land aside in natural preserves than any administration in the history of America except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. But if we don't do something about climate change and the quality of the oceans and the quality of the water here, our grandchildren will pay a terrible price for it.

I am proud of the fact that we have been able to add 5 million kids to the ranks of the health insured, but there are so many people in HMO's today that don't know what their rights are, that we need to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights to make sure that the quality of health care is also protected.

I'm glad that the juvenile crime rate is going down, but there are still a lot of kids in trouble. And part of our budget would provide funds that "Governor" Davis could give to school districts to keep schools open later and to have more kids in summer school and to give them good positive experiences so they've got something to live for and something to do that's good.

Hillary's hometown of Chicago now has a summer school that's so big—the summer school is the sixth biggest school district in the United States. And if you don't make a passing score at the end of the year, you've got to go to summer school. And guess what? Learning is up, and crime is down. And they led with prevention by getting people to do something good in the first place. These are the kind of things we ought to be thinking about now.

We shouldn't be—even the President, the Democrats in Congress, we should not be going around patting ourselves on the back because we've got 16 million new jobs and crime is down and welfare is down and everything is fine. We ought to be saying, "Thank God we have got this opportunity to look at the long-term challenges of the 21st century. Let's take this space we've been given, take a deep breath, look at these challenges, and go meet them together."

That's what I believe this is about. That's what I think this election ought to be about. And I would just implore you—California has always presented itself and thought of itself as a place of the future. Certainly, racially, ethnically, you are and will be. Certainly in terms of the high-tech economy and the entertainment economy, you are and you will be.

But the real question is, are we going to go into the future where we widen the circle of opportunity for everybody or just those that have a good education and understand what's going on? Are we going to widen and deepen the meaning of freedom so we don't permit discrimination against people because of whatever group they belong to? And can we prove we can go into the future together?

You know, we have a lot of very troubling problems that have arisen in the world, many of them just in the last few months. But I know that America can lead the world to a better place in resolving these things, to do the right thing if we can do right here at home, if the power of our example is still more important than the volume of our voice.

You can make that happen. And every one of these elections, in ways large and small, will etch the shape of 21st century America.

I thank you for being here tonight. I thank you for your contributions. But remember: You've got a brain; you've got a voice; you've got a heart. We've got to decide what to do with this time. A time like this comes along maybe once in a generation, where things seem to be all moving in a good direction. We dare not squander it in self-satisfaction or complacency. We need to look at our children, think about our grandchildren, and take on the big challenges of the 21st century. In Washington, we need to choose the future over politics as usual.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Lew and Edie Wasserman, dinner hosts; Steve

Grossman, national chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; California Lt. Gov. Gray Davis, Democratic candidate for Governor, and his wife, Sharon; Michael Nickolauson, father of Mikael E. Nickolauson, and Mark Walker, father of Benjamin A. Walker, whose sons died as a result of a May 21 attack at Thurston High School in Springfield, OR; Larry Bentz, principal, Thurston High School; Jamon Kent, superintendent, Springfield Public Schools; Kipland P. Kinkel, who was charged with the attack; and Portland State University students Eddy and Oscar Gilson.

Remarks to the Presidential Scholars
June 15, 1998

Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. I want to thank Bruce Reed for his service, and I want to thank him for making a joke about how young he looks and saving me the trouble of doing it. [*Laughter*]

Secretary Shalala, Deputy Secretary of Education Smith, to the Commission on Presidential Scholars and its Chair, Stuart Moldaw, to the cosponsors, the corporate sponsors, as well as the families and teachers and friends of the scholars here today, and most of all to you scholars, welcome to the White House. I hope you have enjoyed the day so far. I want to begin by thanking the United States Marine Band, this year celebrating its 200th anniversary as the President's band, playing for you.

The Presidential Scholars Award dates back to 1964 when President Johnson signed an Executive order, and I quote, "to recognize the most precious resource of the United States—the brainpower of its young people." Today I look out across a group of young people whose brainpower could light up this entire city. Someday, many of you doubtless will light up this entire city. Already you have enriched your communities by your activities in music, art, athletics, and citizen service. I'm especially grateful to those of you who have helped to mentor or tutor children who need your help.

As you look ahead to further academic success, let me say that I very much hope you will continue to pursue other interests as well, including community service. And I hope you will become increasingly involved as citizens in the great issues of today and tomorrow.

We are going through a period of profound change. You are on the edge of a new century and a new millennium. We are very fortunate that this is such a good time for America. And every day I get up and give thanks for the fact that we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years. We're about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years. We have the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, the highest homeownership in history. Inequality among different classes of working people is going down, and millions of children have been lifted out of poverty in the last 5 years. I am grateful for that.

But in that kind of environment, where the American people feel great confidence and where your future looks so bright, it seems to me that as a people we have two different choices: We can do what people usually do in good times—we can relax and enjoy them; or we can do what we should do—we should recognize that things are changing dramatically in our country and in the world, that we still have enormous challenges facing us in this new century, and we should be bold and look ahead to the future, to your future, to the world your children will live in, and act now, when we have the prosperity, the security, and the confidence to act on the long-term challenges of the country. There are many.

Next year I believe we have to reform Social Security and Medicare so that when we baby boomers retire, we don't bankrupt our children and undermine our children's ability to raise our grandchildren. I believe we have to make our public schools the best in the world, just like our colleges and universities are now. I believe we have to deal with the growing problems of crime and violence among children and families. I think we still have economic challenges in the inner cities and isolated rural areas. I

believe we have to prove that we can grow the economy and improve the environment, not continue to destruct it. I believe we have serious challenges, long-term, if we want to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom in the world, as the recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan indicate, as the continuing turmoil in Kosovo indicates, as all the ethnic and religious and racial strife in the rest of the world indicates.

So we have these big challenges. And I have been hammering and hammering and hammering these last several months, here with the Congress and out in the country, that we owe you—our generation owes you our best efforts to deal with the long-term challenges of the country in these good times, not simply to relax and enjoy them, because nothing like this lasts forever. It is an opportunity, an opportunity to relax or to move forward. I think we have to more forward.

I'd like to talk to you about one such issue today, because I think it is profoundly important to your future and to children coming along just behind you. And that is our obligation to curtail what has become a deadly epidemic of teenage smoking. In 1964, the very year President Johnson started the Presidential Scholars program—when, coincidentally, I was exactly your age, but unlike Bruce Reed, didn't win one—[*laughter*]—the U.S. Surgeon General presented the landmark report linking smoking and cancer. Today we're on the verge of making dramatic progress in our fight against teen smoking. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pass comprehensive antismoking legislation that can save a million Americans from premature, painful, preventable deaths just over the next 5 years.

Senator McCain and others have brought to the floor a principled and bipartisan proposal to protect children from tobacco. It raises the price of cigarettes by $1.10 a pack over the next 5 years, the single most important step we can take to reduce teen smoking. It imposes tough penalties on tobacco companies if youth smoking doesn't decline by two-thirds over the next decade. It gives the Food and Drug Administration full authority over tobacco products. It provides for a nationwide counteradvertising campaign for prevention, for smoking cessation programs, and tough enforcement measures to stop retailers from selling cigarettes to minors, something that is illegal now in all 50 States, even though a huge percentage of people under 18 but over 13 have tried cigarettes. It provides assistance to the tobacco farmers who have done nothing wrong. It funds a major increase in health research at the National Institute of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. And it returns to States funds to reimburse them for the massive amount of money they have already spent in helping to deal with the effects of smoking-related diseases, to be spent on health care and child care.

The McCain bill began as the strongest anti-youth-smoking legislation in history; it has been made stronger still. In the past week it has gained momentum as members of both parties offered amendments to fight teen drug use and to provide for tax relief for low and middle income families. I don't see how any Senator can now stand in the way of a bill that fights drugs, cuts taxes, and protects young people from a habit that kills.

It's been almost exactly a year since the State attorneys general proposal for a settlement brought comprehensive legislation to our Congress, a month since the Senate began to consider the issue. I urge the Senate to act now. Every day the Senate delays plays into the hands of the tobacco industry, which wants desperately to kill this bill and which is spending millions and millions of dollars on an advertising campaign designed to convince the American people this is nothing more than a big government tax increase to create huge big government bureaucracies. It is absolutely false.

I just came back from California and Oregon, and I traveled around a lot in automobiles and had the chance to hear some of the advertising being run by the tobacco companies. And I thought to myself, it's not true, but it sounds good. They basically say, "Forget about the fact that we didn't tell the truth to the American people for years, about our efforts to recruit teenagers to smoke illegally, about our memorandum which called them replacement smokers. Forget about the fact that we covered up for years the fact that we knew that tobacco was addictive. Just channel your well-known hatred of Government and taxes against this bill."

And unfortunately, the Cancer Society, the Heart Association, the Lung Association, the people who stand with us on this legislation, don't have anything like the money that the tobacco companies have to put on ads that answer that.

Those of us in politics know that unanswered ads can sometimes be fatal. Well, if they're fatal this year, they will be fatal to young children who continue to be seduced and sold illegally cigarettes that will shorten their lives.

Remember that every year smoking-related illnesses cause more deaths than AIDS, alcohol, drugs, car accidents, fires, and murders combined. This is an important thing to do. So I ask you all, remember that 3,000 young children start to smoke every day, illegally; 1,000 will have their lives shortened because of it. The delays must come to an end. I ask the American people to make their voices heard. I ask the United States Senate to think about the Presidential Scholars here and all the young people they represent and pass the McCain bill this week. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I know many of the scholars here feel just as strongly as I do. Patrick LaRochelle from Signal Mountain, Tennessee, has been running 4½ minute miles. I never did that. [*Laughter*] He would sooner put on lead shoes than smoke a cigarette. Alex Blane, from Charlotte, North Carolina, has aunts and uncles and friends who have worked on tobacco farms. Yet every single one of them is adamant that smoking should be a habit young people never start.

So I ask all of you whose communities look up to you: Help your young friends take a stand against peer pressure; help them take responsibility for their health in every way. At the national level we can and must make it more difficult from cigarette companies to market to teens. But to really cure our country of this significant public health challenge, we need the help of parents and siblings, teachers and coaches, and role models like you. The 21st century will be the time of greatest opportunity in all human history. I want every American young person to be able to enjoy it to the fullest.

Congratulations, and God bless you. Good luck.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention

June 15, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Attached is a report to the Congress on cost-sharing arrangements, as required by Condition (4)(A) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 15, 1998.

Remarks on Signing the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act and the Care for Police Survivors Act

June 16, 1998

Captain, thank you very much for your remarks and even more for your service. I think it's fair to say that everyone in America followed the harrowing trail that you were part of just a few months ago and grieved the loss of those two troopers and the others who were killed. And we thank you for your presence here.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for all the work you've done over the last 5½ years. And thank you, Attorney General Reno, for doing a superb job of one of the things I asked you to do when we first talked about your becoming Attorney General, and that is being a genuine

advocate for local law enforcement officials throughout this country.

I thank all the Members of Congress who are here and the extraordinary bipartisan support for actually two pieces of legislation that I will sign today, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act and the Care for Police Survivors Act.

All the Members of Congress have been introduced, but I think I should note, because not all the sponsors are here, that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act was cosponsored in the Senate by Senators Campbell and Leahy, and in the House by Representatives Visclosky and LoBiondo. The Care for Police Survivors Act was cosponsored in the Senate by Senators Hatch and Biden, and in the House by Congressman Schumer and Congressman McCollum. I thank them and all the others who are here.

This is a time of progress and prosperity for our country. We're grateful to have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and about to have our first balanced budget in 29 years. And we just learned that crime dropped in 1997, as the Vice President said, for a virtually unprecedented sixth year in a row. Murders have declined more than 25 percent, overall crime by more than 15 percent.

In many ways our country is seeing a return to personal responsibility—the welfare rolls are the smallest percentage of our population in 29 years—and to respect for the law—the crime rate last year dropped to a 25-year low. That makes a real difference in the lives of Americans. Our neighborhoods are safer; our families are more secure. Americans actually feel more free, and they are.

There has been a lot of debate in the country about the reasons for the drop in the crime rate. Of course, a better economy helps, and so do the neighborhood watch groups and all the efforts being made in communities across the country to keep kids away from crime, from school uniforms and curfews to after-school programs and tough truancy enforcement. But one thing is absolutely clear: A huge factor in the declining crime rate has been more police and better policing.

Across the country these men and women in uniform whom we honor here today are putting their lives on the line by joining their communities, getting out of the squad cars, protecting people. And America owes them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

When we passed the crime bill in 1994 we said in 6 years we would put 100,000 police on the street. I'm pleased to report that already we've helped to fund 76,000 of those 100,000. We're ahead of schedule and under budget. And I'm very proud of that because it makes all the Members of the Congress who have supported this partners in your fight against crime.

Just yesterday, for example, local officials and Federal agents together swept into one of the most troubled areas in Philadelphia as a part of Operation Sunrise. Working with local residents, they're targeting crimes and drugs, even graffiti. I applaud their efforts and hope they'll be replicated.

A crucial part of our 5½ year effort to make the Federal Government a partner with you for a safer America has been making sure that police officers have the tools to do the job. There are few tools more important than the body armor or bulletproof vests we see behind us. Over the past decade, body armor has saved the lives of more than 2,000 officers. The FBI estimates that the risk of a gun-related fatality is 14 times higher for an officer—let me say that again—14 times higher for an officer who does not wear a vest than for one who does.

The Vice President told you about Officer Margiotta and his vest. He's actually here today, and I'd like to ask him to stand, along with any other officer here who has ever been shot wearing a bulletproof vest. Will the others stand, please? [*Applause*]

The line of fire will always be a dangerous place. People can get hit in the leg in the wrong way and bleed to death. It will always be dangerous. But today we are making it less dangerous for those who are brave enough to walk that line. Every day all of you in uniform protect us; it's good to know that every once in a while there's something those of us on this end of the line can do to help to protect you.

So I'm proud to sign the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act. Twenty-five percent of the State and local law enforcement officers don't have this body armor to protect their lives. This legislation will help police departments provide it to them. It is a critical investment in the safety of those who have to be in harm's way.

Let me also say that as we do everything in our power to make police work a little less

dangerous, we have to recognize that every year there are all too many officers who do make the ultimate sacrifice for safe streets and children's futures. That is why I am also proud to be signing here the Care for Police Survivors Act, which supports counseling for families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty.

Last fall I also proposed to provide—help provide college scholarships for the children of slain officers. And again, I say, that I hope the Congress will pass that. That's an important investment and a small enough one to make in the children of those who give their lives to protect our children.

Community police are making children safer in our neighborhoods, and let me just say, once again recent events have reminded us of that in our schools. Just yesterday, I'm sure we all saw the story of a student who shot two people in a Richmond, Virginia, high school. They're expected to make a full recovery, and we thank God for that. And fortunately, the assailant was chased down several blocks and apprehended by Officer Ron Brown. Officer Brown was assigned to the school because of the COPS program our community policing program helped put in there. The COPS program is a good start, and I'm proud that he was a part of it, especially yesterday. Officer Brown is here today, and I'd like to ask him to stand. Thank you very much for your service, sir. [*Applause*]

Today I am asking Attorney General Reno and Secretary of Education Riley to report back to me before the start of the school year on ways that we can help to provide more police in our schools, just as we have provided more police for our communities. Congressman Jim Maloney has proposed legislation to do that, and I urge Congress to pass his bill as a back-to-school special for America's children.

America is grateful for the hard work that all of you in uniform and all of those whom you represent throughout this country do. Every day, as you make our lives safer and our people more free and our children's future brighter, we know that you're there, and we're grateful. We understand, too, that you can't always do it alone. All of us as parents and leaders must teach our children right from wrong and turn them away from violence. But by working together and giving you the tools to do your job, we will make this a better and a safer nation in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here for the bill signing. Officer Brown, why don't you come on up, and why don't we ask these police officers to come up with us today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Metayer, captain, Vermont State Police; and Henrico County, VA, police officer Andrew Margiotta. S. 1605, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1998, approved June 16, was assigned Public Law No. 105–181. H.R. 3565, the Care for Police Survivors Act of 1998, approved June 16, was assigned Public Law No. 105–180.

Remarks to the Super Bowl XXXII Champion Denver Broncos
June 16, 1998

Good afternoon. Thank you very much. Commissioner Tagliabue, Mr. Bowlen, Coach Shanahan, friends of the Broncos, I'm delighted to see all of you here. I want to especially acknowledge the presence here of Governor Romer and Senators Allard and Campbell and Hatch, Representatives DeGette, Schaefer, and Schaffer, and Mayor Webb, Ms. Martinez. And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary Federico Pena and his wife, Ellen. He has been mayor of Denver, the Secretary of Transportation, and now the Secretary of Energy. And this is his last public event before going into the private sector, and he is going out on a high. So, thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Let me say to all of you, I think every football fan loved the last Super Bowl. Denver had one of the toughest roads to the Super Bowl in history, winning as a wild card team with a 12-point underdog, and won a magnificent game.

I learned that—where's Terrell, where are you? [*Laughter*] I asked him if he thought I would look good in that five-button coat. [*Laughter*] And he said it wasn't Presidential. [*Laughter*] He was—I learned in doing a little research for this event that he's the only person to ever win the MVP Award in his hometown and the only person ever to score three rushing touchdowns. And not only that, he sat out a quarter, as you remember, with a migraine. So that's a pretty impressive performance, running behind the lightest but maybe the best offensive line in pro football. As you can look up here, "light" is a relative term. [*Laughter*]

There are a lot of things about this team I like. Three of the players actually have connections to my home State, which made me feel very happy. But I can tell you that maybe the most remarkable thing is the loyalty of the community, the steadfastness of John Elway. We're sorry he couldn't be here, and we're glad he's okay. Fifteen seasons, over 48,000 yards, and he's the oldest person ever to score a touchdown in the Super Bowl. That's like being light; "old" is a relative term. [*Laughter*]

And Coach Shanahan, you've only been there 3 years, which is a remarkable tribute to your ability, and also to the teamwork of this team. I'm sure that every 1,000-yard receiver or 1,500-yard rusher or star quarterback who's ever been part of a Super Bowl team would say that it's teams that win championships. And a great team won this championship. We're honored to have them in the White House today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Paul Tagliabue, commissioner, National Football League; Pat Bowlen, owner, Mike Shanahan, coach, Terrell Davis, running back, and John Elway, quarterback, Denver Broncos; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado; and Mayor Wellington E. Webb and City Councilwoman Ramona Martinez of Denver, CO.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner
June 16, 1998

Thank you very much. First of all, I want to thank Herb and Patrice for having us here—first in their beautiful home, now in this beautiful tent—sitting on these wonderful chairs. [*Laughter*] I have great feelings about Denmark and recently had a wonderful visit there.

I'd like to thank my good friend Governor Romer—and my colleague of many years—and Len Barrack for their work for our party; our former chairman, Don Fowler, is here; Carol Pensky, thank you for being here. And I'd like to thank the California Members of Congress, Representatives Becerra, Filner, and Sanchez, for coming.

And I want to thank Herb and many of you also in this room for your real passionate concern for the District of Columbia. I have never been around Herb Miller—and I've been around him a lot—I have never been around him when he didn't talk about DC. First I thought maybe he's a shy man who had limited interests. [*Laughter*] Then I realized he was a passionate man who was determined to change the future of this city, and I was mightily impressed.

Let me make just a couple of comments, one of which bears at least indirectly on the District of Columbia. In 1992, when I was running for President, in the beginning when only my mother thought I could win, I was the fifth best known candidate in New Hampshire. I ran because I was genuinely concerned about our country, because I didn't think we were moving in the right direction and I didn't think we had a unifying vision or a strategy to achieve the vision. And I knew what I wanted. I wanted this country to get ready for this new century and this whole new way of living and working and relating to each other.

And I believed that in order to do it, we would have to dramatically reinvigorate the system by which all Americans are given opportunity if they're responsible enough to work for it. I believed we would have to broaden our attitudes about freedom and equality. I believed we would have to strengthen the bonds of our

national community. I thought we would have to renew our commitment to lead in the world and take some tough decisions in places like Haiti and Bosnia and Northern Ireland and the Middle East if we expected to move the country—and the world—toward a better tomorrow.

And you know, tonight I am very, very grateful that this country has the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years. We're about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the country. I am very grateful for that.

But let me say, I say that not to be self-serving, because I can't claim all the credit for that. Most of the credit goes to the American people, all of you, and the billions of decisions that are made here every day. But it matters what the direction of the country is. It matters what the driving policies of the country are. And if ideas are translated into action, they have consequences.

So I'm proud of my party, too. I'm proud of the fact that we said we were going to leave behind the old, outdated political fights of the past, that we would work with the Republicans wherever we could; that we wanted a Government that was smaller but still strong enough to do the job, and it focused on giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. And I'm proud of the fact that we focused on a lot of big questions for ordinary people, like, how do you balance work and family; how can you get education for a lifetime; how can we open the doors of college to everybody who's willing to work for it?

And in addition to all of those statistics I gave you, we literally have just about opened the doors of college for everybody willing to work for it: a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; tax credits for the junior and senior year and for graduate school and for lifetime learning; and more Pell grant scholarships and work-study programs and the AmeriCorps national service program. I'm proud of that stuff. I'm proud of the Family and Medical Leave Act and AmeriCorps and the fact that we're extending health insurance to 5 million little children who wouldn't have it otherwise. But it all has to work together.

And here's the point I want to make tonight. I didn't come here to make this comment and say, therefore, you should only vote for Democrats for the rest of your life because we've had 5½ good years. I never will forget when I was contemplating running for a fifth term as Governor of Arkansas, and I'd already been Governor almost 10 years, and we had Governor's Day at the State Fair. And I went out to my little booth, and I'd sit there and visit with people all day long. This old boy in overalls came up to me, and no one had ever run for a fifth term to serve 14 years before, and I'd already been in 10 years, even though I was reasonably young. So this guy came up to me in overalls and he said, "Bill, are you going to run for Governor again?" And I said, "Well, if I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yeah, I will. I always have. I guess I will." I said, "Aren't you sick of me by now?" He said, "No, but nearly everyone else I know is." [*Laughter*] And I said, "Well, don't they think I've done a good job?" He said, "They think you've done a wonderful job, but that's what they hired you to do. You get a paycheck every 2 weeks like everybody else"—interesting thing—"that's what we hired you to do."

I say that to make this point. When a country has things going along pretty well, there are two conceivable responses: You can become smug and complacent and think you're doing everything right, and sort of lay back and relax and enjoy it; or if you're smart, particularly in a time like this, you realize that in spite of all the good things that have happened in America we still have challenges that are unmet here, and the waters are roiling, the changes are still going on in the globe. And the only way to keep the good times going is to keep ahead of change, and to keep pushing for change, and to take advantage of the fact that so much has been done and that frees us up to look at the long-term challenges.

Now, if I could just give you an example, I mean, 8 or 9 years ago, people looked at Japan and thought that they would never have another problem as long as any of them lived. They have a lot of problems. I say that not to be critical but to say that any great society has to continue to be willing at every turn, at every challenge, to make the difficult decisions necessary to keep moving forward.

And if you look at the level of uncertainty in the world, whether it's economic uncertainty

or political uncertainty, even though things are going great for us, that alone ought to be a big argument for the American people in this election year saying, "Okay, we're glad things are going well, but we want to know what we're going to do in the future. We want to take advantage of the financial stability we have and the emotional confidence we've been given to look at the long run."

And if I just might mention three or four other things that I believe our Democratic Party needs to be continuing to push. Now, I intend to continue to push until we either get it done or I leave office in January of 2001. One is we must not spend this surplus that we are finally going to accumulate after 30 years until we have first taken care of the responsibility we have to reform Medicare and Social Security, to take account of the retirement of the baby boomers. We have a moral obligation to people—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—we have a moral obligation not to bankrupt our children and undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren. And so I know that everybody wants to—you know, we'd all like to have a tax cut or maybe some spending program or something. First and foremost, if you look at the long-term financial trends, we must act now when, with more modest changes, we can strengthen this country for 50 years and have us coming together instead of being driven apart.

Second, we must do something to give all of our children access to world-class education from kindergarten through 12th grade. We've got the best system of higher education in the world. I was reading today, just an article about a Chinese entrepreneur in China—you know, a lot of the media are running stories about China now because I'm about to go there—and about how this fellow in China who was making a killing with an Internet company had gotten a Ph.D. at Texas Tech and how he hated to give up his cowboy boots and cowboy hat to go home to China, but his new riches were compensating for it.

Everybody knows we've got the best system of higher education in the world. No serious person believes that America will reach its full potential unless and until we give world-class education and can prove we can do it in K through 12. I can tell you that I have seen enough of the changes that have happened in the city of Chicago, which may have had the worst big city school system in the country a few years ago, to know that we can all do that. And time doesn't permit me to go into it, but that's a big challenge. That's something I think about all the time.

The third thing we have to do is prove we can grow the economy and preserve the environment. And I will just give you, if I might, a couple of examples. We had the first ever oceans conference last week in California at Monterey, on the beautiful Monterey Peninsula. There is a dead space in the Gulf of Mexico the size of the State of New Jersey. Why? Because of runoff into the Mississippi River, which in turn runs into the Gulf of Mexico. Is it inevitable? Would we have to give up economic growth to stop that? No, we wouldn't. If you go to Lake Tahoe, for example, which has other environmental problems, they don't have any runoff when they build a golf course there or a housing development, because they have agreed, among themselves, to high standards which will not permit that kind of pollution of that lake.

I'll give you another example, even more profound but related to the quality of the ocean. And let me say, if we upset a huge amount of the very fabric of life on Earth comes out of the ocean and sustains us—71 percent of the Earth's surface is ocean. The depths are—to the bottom of the deepest part of the ocean is about 7 miles down, and we know less about that by far than we know about the Moon. We now know less about it than we know about Mars. We need to go there. We need to know what's there. We need to preserve this. This is about how we live. It has nothing to do with hurting the economy.

The other thing I want to say is that I am absolutely convinced that the climate of this Earth is warming and that it is warming at an unsustainable rate and that we will pay a terrific price unless we find a way to grow the economy and reduce global warming by reducing greenhouse gases. The good news is we can do it. All we have to do is make up our mind to do it.

When I was in Monterey, two young Stanford graduate students—fine-looking young people, bright, full of life and energy—took me out into the bay there. When the tide went out, we were walking out on the rocks and looking at the sea otters and the harbor seals. And they started picking up little snails. And they said,

"You want some evidence of climate change and global warming? See these little snails here in Monterey? Fifty years ago, these snails were not found north of Los Angeles. But all the wildlife is moving north now."

I can tell you, one of my big problems with our best partner in the world, Canada, is that what our salmon fishermen are fighting all the time. You know why? Because all the salmon are moving north. So there are more in Alaska and fewer in Canada because of climate change.

Now, we have proved—every environmental challenge we've had for the last 30 years, we have proved we could lower pollution and increase growth. I have not proposed anything to deal with these challenges that will bankrupt the American economy, and I have proposed to deal with it in a free market, technology-oriented way. But I'm telling—to deny the fact that we are dramatically changing the environment in which our children and grandchildren will live is shear folly.

There's now a phenomenon which many people in international cities with international airports will tell you, called "airport malaria." And it's being spread primarily because mosquitoes carrying malaria are being found at higher and higher and higher and previously cooler climates, infecting people who've never had it before, who don't know they have it, get on airplanes, fly into Orly Airport, bump into you; you get back to New York, and you found out you got malaria. All of this is a function of both the increasing globalization of the economy and society and the warming of the climate.

Now, it may not make today's headlines, but when we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, I think you want your President and your Congress and your country thinking about what kind of problems are going to have to be solved if we're going to be the greatest country in the world 50 years from now.

Let me just give you another one, one that I mentioned about Herb. We have to do something about our inner cities, about our Native American reservations, and our rural areas, which have not felt this economic recovery, whether it's restructuring our tax system to finding other ways to get incentives in there, whatever it takes. If we're not going to do it now, when will we ever do it? If we can't do something about urban America, if we can't do something for people who are, in effect, in economic enclaves of disempowerment on Native American reservations and in rural areas, when are we ever going to do it?

The unemployment rate is under 5 percent. You think we could even think about this if the unemployment rate were 9 percent? If I were up here giving this speech, my successor, whoever it is, the unemployment rate goes up to 9 percent, you would think I had flipped a gasket. You'd want to know how we could get the whole show on the road.

But think about how we can continue to grow the American economy, lower the unemployment rate, and not have inflation, invest where there is underinvestment. It's good economics now; it won't be forever. That's why what Herb and a lot of you are trying to do in Washington, DC, is so important and why we need it going on everywhere and why the United States should have a framework to support it.

One other issue—I could give you a thousand, but really, I think there are only about eight big issues, but I only want to mention one other. I spoke at Portland State University, Saturday, about immigration and about the new challenge of race as we move into the 21st century. And I want you to think about what's happening in America as against what's happening in the rest of the world.

I introduced a family at Portland State, a Mexican-American immigrant who came here 12 years ago—a woman who came here 12 years ago, didn't speak a word of English, didn't graduate from high school in Mexico—got her master's degree in education last Saturday at Portland State, a community college organized—originally, it's a university now—it was originally organized to serve soldiers under the GI bill after World War II.

So she came here 12 years ago, didn't speak a word of English, got her master's degree. Her son got his bachelor's degree in business; he worked full-time for 7 years and went to school on the side to get his degree. And her second son is getting his master's degree in education next year. That's the best of the immigrant story.

Now, in a global economy and a global society, it seems to me that our increasing diversity is a huge asset as long as everybody is pulling their own load and everybody has a fair chance to pull their own load, and we don't feel like we're losing America. And I've really spent a lot of time trying to challenge the American people to think about this and get over our notion that America is about race. America is

not about race; it's about our common embrace of humanity. It's not even about a place; it's about a promise.

And if you look at the whole rest of the world today, all the places that are really just all torn up and upset, or having trouble because now that the cold war is over and we don't get to divide up into communist and noncommunist camps, like one team has on red uniforms, the other one's got on green—in too many places, we're reverting to lowest-common-denominator divisions: race, religion, ethnicity. Whether it's Northern Ireland, the Middle East, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, India and Pakistan, you name it, you find me a real hot place in the world, and I'll show you some people that are defining themselves by being able to look down on somebody else because they're of a different race or religion or ethnic group.

And so I say—that's the last thing—I think America should take this opportunity. We will never have any more self-confidence than we do right now. And now is the time for us to think about what it's going to be like when we are a truly multiracial, multiethnic democracy 50 years from now, when there is no majority race in the United States of America. Will it still be our America? You bet it will, if we do the right things.

So I say to you, I think you've done a good thing by coming here tonight, because you're financing what I hope will be a permanent engine of progressive ideas to move America into the future, moving beyond partisan politics and power politics for the sake of it, toward a rigorous, passionate focus on what's really best for our children. That's what I've tried to do, and that's what I think our party represents.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Herbert and Patrice Miller; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Donald L. Fowler, former national chair, and Carol Pensky, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; graduate students Nancy Eufemia and Raphael Sagarin, researchers at Hopkins Marine Station; and Portland State University graduate students Mago Gilson and her sons Eddy and Oscar.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

June 16, 1998

Thank you. I want you to look up on that screen. This is as close as I'll ever get to the BET jazz channel. [*Laughter*] You know, Bob was doing such a good job up here, I was kind of hoping he'd never call me up. [*Laughter*] Ramsey did such a good job on "Body and Soul," I was kind of hoping he'd never quit. [*Laughter*]

Let me thank Bob and Sheila for having us here, Debra, all the other people associated with BET and with this wonderful restaurant. It's a beautiful place; the food was terrific; the atmosphere is great. I thank all of you for coming. I especially want to thank Congressmen Charles Rangel and Don Payne and Bill Jefferson and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for being here. I think Mayor Webb from Denver is here along with Governor Romer, the chairman of our party. The hour is late; we've had good food, good music, and good companionship. And I won't give a long speech.

Let me say that I was very moved by what Bob had to say about our trip to Africa. It was for me, and for Hillary also, a truly transforming experience, although she had already been. I don't think I'll ever quite be the same again. I came back determined to continue to build our relationship with Africa, determined to work with Congressman Rangel and others to pass the Africa trade bill, determined to build a better future for all of us together.

Let me make just a couple of brief statements. When I ran—started running for President in late 1991, I was concerned about the direction of our country, not just the problems we had at the moment but the direction. And I had some ideas that I thought were both modern and consistent with what my party had always stood for. I wanted to get the country

moving again, get the society coming together again, and reassert our leadership for peace and freedom and prosperity and humanity around the world.

And the American people, in no small measure because of overwhelming support from the African-American community, gave me a precious chance to serve as President and gave our party a chance to try our ideas for the 21st century out on the country.

Five and a half years later, we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, the highest homeownership, the lowest African-American unemployment, and the highest rate of business formation among minorities in the history of the country. I think that's a pretty good record for 5½ years of our working together.

And I want to thank all of you who made that possible. There are a lot of people in this room tonight that started with me in '91 and '92. I will never forget that. A lot of you have come on, thanks to Bob and other friends, and I'm very grateful to you.

But I want to say, ideas, if they're translated into action, have consequences. And a great number of the things I have done never would have been possible if it hadn't been for the congressional support I have received. I think the people in this room and those that are running on the ticket with them in November deserve to be rewarded for being right. You know, when they voted for the economic plan in 1993, the other guys said it would bring a recession. Well, we've got 5½ years and 16 million jobs of experience. We know who was right and who wasn't.

When we passed a crime bill to put 100,000 people on the street and ban assault weapons and passed the Brady bill, the other side said we were going to take guns away from law abiding people, and the crime rate would skyrocket. Well, 5½ years later we've got 300,000 people with criminal records who couldn't get handguns and a crime rate at a 25-year low and 75,000 more police paid to go on the street. We know who was right and who was wrong.

And these Members of Congress here and those who are running with them deserve the chance to take the next steps, to take advantage of this economic opportunity to really make a dent in inner-city poverty where the recovery hasn't reached yet; to take advantage of this economic prosperity; to take a serious look at what we have to do to improve our school systems and make them the best in the world, like our colleges and universities are; to take advantage of this moment of real security and prove we can grow the economy and preserve the environment; to take advantage of this moment of security and reach out to Africa, to the Caribbean, to Latin America, to help our friends in Asia in their moment of trouble, so that we can build a unified world that is coming together instead of being torn apart; to take advantage of this moment to say to America, if you want to lead a world that is more and more bedeviled by racial and ethnic and religious conflicts—that is, if you, America, want to do good around the world, you must first be good at home. We have to do this right. And we have a unique opportunity to do that. That's what this is about.

These people need your help. They deserve your help. I'm not running anymore. I'm going out there working for them because I believe in what we have done together; I believe in what we can do in the next 2½ years, I believe what we can do in the next 10 years, if we get a chance to shape 21st century America. And you have done a very good thing tonight. I hope you will continue to be involved.

And again, let me say to Bob and Sheila, I'll never forget you for all the wonderful things you've done, but this was special tonight. Thank you, Ramsey Lewis. I always loved hearing you play, but I'll have dreams about "Body and Soul" tonight.

God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. at the BET On Jazz Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Robert L. Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer, and Debra Lee, president and chief operating officer, BET Holdings, Inc.; Mr. Johnson's wife, Sheila; and jazz musician Ramsey Lewis. The President also referred to BET On Jazz: the Cable Jazz Channel.

Remarks on the 21st Century Community Learning Center Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters

June 17, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here in the Rose Garden today for a subject that we care a great deal about. I thank especially Senator Jeffords for his leadership, Congressman Boswell, all the Members of Congress who are here. I thank Secretary Riley and the Attorney General for their consistent and dedicated efforts for our children and to improve the lives of our children. And Chief Frazier and Gloria Nava did, I thought, a marvelous job.

Let me say, as Hillary and Gloria made clear, for millions of Americans, "Home Alone" is not a funny movie; it is a serious risk that children and parents undertake every day all across this country. On any given school day in America, there will be as many as 15 million children left to fend for themselves, idle in front of the television sets or out on the streets and exposed to gangs and guns and drugs.

Incidents of violent crime by juveniles more than double in the hour after school lets out, and interestingly enough, our children are also at greatest risk of becoming victims of crime in the hours immediately after school. But in communities where children have something positive to do, youth crime is dropping and academic performance is on the rise.

The Justice Department and the Department of Education are today releasing a report to every school district in the country and to the public at large which shows just how much of a difference these after-school programs are making. In Chicago, for example, a program with which Hillary and I are familiar, the Lighthouse program is now reaching more than 110,000 children and nearly 250 schools around the city with intensive after-school instruction in reading and math. This remarkable program also provides children with three meals a day in the school. And I'm very proud that the Department of Agriculture, with its support, helps to make this possible. Since that program began, not surprisingly, gang activity is down, and reading and math scores are up.

We have to do everything we can to give every community in this country the tools to follow that lead. Today we are announcing $40 million in competitive grants that will help more than 300 schools to start after-school programs of their own. As all of you know, they're part of the 21st Century Community Learning Center Initiative, which was sponsored in 1993 in my first year in office by Senator Jeffords.

These grants will give now thousands more children a safe place to go before and after school and good things to do. San Francisco, for example, will use the grant specifically to target kids most at risk of joining gangs or using drugs. Baltimore County, which already has, as you heard, successful after-school programs, will focus on helping more children to improve their academic performance.

But I think it's important to note two things. One is*—notwithstanding the wind—[*laughter*]—this is a universally successful strategy. This is not complicated. This is something simple that has broad support, that saves lives, and improves learning. The second thing is, out there in America everybody has figured this out, so that for every grant we will be able to give, there were 20 schools that applied that aren't getting help today. So we have to do more.

In January, as part of my efforts to give quality affordable child care to all the families in this country who need it, I proposed the largest after-school commitment in America's history, $200 million a year over the next 5 years to expand the 21st Century Community Learning Center program, to reach a half a million children. Now, these programs have broad bipartisan support, and I very much hope that Congress soon will act to fund this request fully. Remember, there were 20 schools that had good programs that wanted this money for every one school on that map. We can do better, and we must.

Let me also say again to Senator Jeffords, this is the kind of bipartisan support that works for our country. Whenever we put the progress of the American people and the future of our

* At this point, a gust of wind rustled the trees in the Rose Garden.

children ahead of partisan politics in Washington, America wins. And that's what we need to do.

Tobacco Legislation

Before we close, I just have to mention—make a couple of other points. In that spirit, I have been working for 6 months to craft a comprehensive, bipartisan bill to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, the biggest public health problem for children in America today. As we speak, the Republican caucus in the Senate is meeting behind closed doors to discuss, perhaps even to decide, the fate of the tobacco bill. I urge them not to turn this meeting, literally, into a smoke-filled room—to protect the children and not the tobacco lobby.

We have worked very, very hard to make this legislation fair and bipartisan. We have met the majority in the Senate more than halfway. They said they wanted a tax cut to be part of the tobacco bill since we were raising the price of cigarettes to discourage children from buying them. We said, all right. They said they wanted some money in this bill to fight drugs as well as to discourage children from using tobacco. We said, fine.

Now, if there is a move to kill or gut this legislation, there can be no possible explanation other than the intense pressure and the awesome influence fueled by years of huge contributions of big tobacco. So I again call upon the Senate majority, and indeed all those in the Senate, to pass this tobacco bill. Let's get it over to the House, let them have a chance to pass a bill, and let's do something that will give this country a chance to have a lasting public health legacy in a bipartisan way.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, what will you do if the Senate decides to pull the tobacco bill, sir? What are your alternatives?

Japanese Economy

Q. Mr. President, about Japan, how far are you willing to go to support the yen?

The President. Let me—you all don't even need to sit back down. I'm going to answer this one question; then we'll visit.

The question was about the support of the United States for the Japanese yen. Let me say, I talked to Prime Minister Hashimoto last night, oh, for 20 or 30 minutes at about 11:30, our time. Japan is very important to the world, especially to the United States and to the efforts we're making to support an economic recovery in Asia, which is very important to keeping our own economic progress going. It is important that they take some critical steps, and as they do them, we will support them.

I was very encouraged by the Prime Minister's statement that he intends to pursue aggressive reform of their banking institutions and intends to do the things that are necessary to get the economy going again. And therefore, I thought it was important that we support them.

In terms of the details of our support, they are contained in Secretary Rubin's statement today, and I couldn't do a bit better than he has done. But we're doing the right thing, and I think the Prime Minister of Japan has done the right thing. And we've got a chance to turn that situation in Asia around before it gets any worse. And America needs a strong, growing, stable economy in Asia. And I am encouraged by what the Prime Minister said last night and heartened, and we're glad to help, and we hope we will be of some help today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Baltimore Police Commissioner Thomas C. Frazier; Tech. Sgt. Gloria I. Nava, Texas Air National Guard, a parent from San Antonio, TX, whose daughter attended an after-school program; and Prime Minister of Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan.

Remarks on Senate Action on Tobacco Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

June 17, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. The vote that was just completed in the Senate clearly shows that a bipartisan majority of 57 clearly supports tough legislation to protect the children of this country from tobacco. Needless to say, I am very disappointed that a Republican minority blocked the legislation from being voted on.

Today, like every other day, 3,000 young children start to smoke, and 1,000 of them will have their lives shortened because of it. If more Members of the Senate would vote like parents rather than politicians, we could solve this problem and go on to other business of the country.

I have been working for 3 years now to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. I want the tobacco lobby and its allies on Capitol Hill to know that, from my point of view, this battle is far from over.

Q. Sir, what's your strategy, what do you do now?

The President. Well, the Senate has to come back to it, but they have to do it in a hurry if we're going to act. After all, we only have 6 weeks until the August recess—not quite that—and then we have only a month or so when they come back, the month of September, because they will doubtless want to go home in October to campaign.

So the parameters of this bill are well-known—what has to be done to get a bill that can not only pass but can actually be effective, not only in raising the price of cigarettes but in limiting advertising and having smoking cessation programs and giving the public health money out there, the research money we need—everybody knows what has to be done.

We showed a lot of flexibility here in trying to work with the Members of the Senate. We had a tax cut in there to deal with the marriage penalty for people with incomes under $50,000. We had some more antidrug money in there. The lawyer fee issue was addressed in the amendment most recently adopted. We can do this, and we need to do it and do it promptly.

There is not a lot of time, but I think it would be a great mistake for those who believe that because of the $40 million ad campaign by the tobacco industry, which has gone unanswered and which has a lot of things in it which are just false, that they can now have a free ride on this to walk away from 1,000 lives a day. We don't have a free ride to walk away from 1,000 lives a day. And I believe we can do it.

Q. Is it really dead? Isn't it really dead, Mr. President?

The President. No, I don't think it is dead.

Q. You were depending on it for a lot of tax revenue, Mr. President. If you don't get it, where do you find that revenue?

The President. That's not entirely true. It is true that a lot of the things that I think should be funded in terms of giving this money back to the States, who are out a lot of money because they spent a fortune treating people on tobacco-related illnesses, could be used to help children and families with things like child care. The Senate voted for that, and I thought it was a good amendment.

But the most important thing here is not that. The most important thing is to protect children from the dangers of tobacco. And that is at the nub of this and that is what needs to be put front and center. And if they will do it, we can still do this. But they have to hurry. There's not a lot of time.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Mr. Bowles is handling all the details of this, and I think I should let him come up and talk about it.

Q. Mr. President, do you think there will be political consequences for the people if this bill fails?

The President. I certainly hope there will be, and there should be. I think that there are those who believe there won't be because the public has been treated to $40 million of unanswered advertising by their allies. And they believe that the opinion that may be held in certain selected districts or whatever today is the one that will hold at election day. I don't believe that's true. I think when the American people understand fully what has been going on, they won't like what they see, and they will be worried about these children. They nearly always—the public

almost always gets it right when they have enough time, and they've got plenty of time.

So I think we need to do this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles.

Remarks at the Pritzker Architecture Prize Dinner
June 17, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Piano, congratulations, and thank you for your marvelous remarks. Professor Scully, thank you for the almost breathtaking education in such a short few moments. I thank J. Carter Brown and the prize jury and Jay and Cindy Pritzker and indeed the entire Pritzker family for this prize and for their many contributions to our Nation.

Frank Lloyd Wright once said that every great architect is necessarily a poet. He must be a great original interpreter of his time, his day, his age. Renzo Piano has certainly done that, and we congratulate him and thank him for his many gifts to our age.

Your creations will endure as some of our century's most timeless gifts to the future. As Hillary said, we have invited all the American people to take part in a national celebration of the coming millennium, challenging individuals and communities across our country to think about what values and heritage we carry with us into the future, what gifts we want to leave to the future, what kind of millennium we want to build. I invite all of you to lead us in that celebration.

Professor Scully once said that architecture is the continuing dialog between the generations. Well, tonight I thank all of you who have shaped that dialog, and I ask you to help to tell the American story in a new century. Our buildings, our monuments embody our frontier spirit, our exuberance, our optimism, our determination. In honoring the past, you can help us to imagine the future that will continue to be full of all those good qualities.

Let me say, tonight I listened carefully to what everyone else said. I couldn't remember—I couldn't believe that Professor Scully remembered the story I told him about the Jefferson Monument. I don't believe anyone pointed out that while James Hoban as a relatively unknown young Irish architect actually built this White House, he did it by defeating an anonymous plan presented by Thomas Jefferson. [*Laughter*] But it is just as well, because Mr. Jefferson was the architect of something even more important than the White House. He built the American creed.

I might say parenthetically, in America ever since then, all politicians have tried to convince people that they were architects. If you listen to them speak long enough, you will be convinced that we were all born in log houses that we built ourselves. [*Laughter*]

But on a serious note, think of the American creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that we are all created equal, endowed by God with the right to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. We have bounded together ourselves because we cannot fully pursue, protect, or enhance these rights alone as individuals. And we dedicate ourselves to form a more perfect Union.

In other words, we dedicate ourselves to an act of creating and building that will never be finished. An architect conceived of that.

And I say that to you tonight on the edge of the millennium because Hillary and I and the members of our administration who are here, many in the Congress, and others, we've worked very hard these last 5½ years to build a good house for America where everybody has a home, where we share the same foundation and the protection of the same roof and the same walls, where we respect our differences and value our unity.

And now together we have to build at least the foundations for America's home and the world's home in a new century. Yes, it will need steel and stone and wood and glass and light and air and trees and garden, music and quiet; it also will need a lot of vision and hope.

The longer I serve in public life, in many ways, the more idealistic I become, but I see day-in and day-out that the world is composed of builders, wreckers, and idlers. And most people in politics are either builders or wreckers. All of you are, by nature, instinct, training, and will, builders. The country and the world needs its builders, those with imagination and hope and heart who understand that with all the differences that exist in the world, our common humanity and our common relationship to the eternal and to our earthly home is far, far more important.

In the end, that is what we have honored tonight, and America is in your debt. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Renzo Piano, 1998 Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate; Vincent J. Scully, Jr., Sterling professor emeritus, Yale University; J. Carter Brown, chairman, Pritzker Prize jury; and Jay A. Pritzker, president, Hyatt Foundation, and his wife, Cindy.

Remarks on the Nominations of Bill Richardson To Be Secretary of Energy and Richard C. Holbrooke To Be United Nations Ambassador and an Exchange With Reporters

June 18, 1998

The President. Senator Bingaman and Congressman Becerra, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you all here today as I announce my intent to nominate Ambassador Bill Richardson to become our Secretary of Energy, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to assume the portfolio of America's Representative to the United Nations. I'm especially pleased that their families could join me and the Vice President and, as you can see, our entire national security team.

Over the last 2 years, Bill Richardson's experience, energy, and tenacity have made a real difference in advancing our interests in the United Nations and around the world. With diplomatic skills honed in one of the most diverse congressional districts in our country, negotiating ability tested in some of the toughest hot spots on our planet, and a personal touch evidenced from his first day on the job, Bill Richardson has brought creativity and drive to our leadership at the U.N.

He has served the Secretary of State and me by tackling some of the toughest negotiating challenges from the Congo to Zaire to Afghanistan. He helped to rally the international community to speak and act as one in the crisis in Iraq. Today, the international inspectors are back on the job, working to end Iraq's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons threat, thanks in no small measure to his efforts. He has been a vigorous and articulate proponent of our engagement around the world and the importance of leveraging that engagement by living up to our United Nations obligations.

In short, if there's one word that comes to mind when I think of Bill Richardson, it really is "energy." But that is hardly the only reason I am appointing him to this job. [*Laughter*] For 14 years representing New Mexico, an energy-rich State that is home to two of our national Department of Energy labs, and his long service as an active member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, he has gotten extensive, firsthand experience in issues ranging from deregulating the oil and gas industries, to promoting alternative sources of energy, to ensuring that energy development meets tough standards of environmental safety. I thank him for his willingness to serve.

Let me also say that Secretary Peña has left a very impressive legacy upon which to build. I appreciate his 5 years of service to our Nation as both Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Energy, where he surprised, I might say, even his greatest admirers with the speed with which he mastered the incredible complex issues of the Department and the leadership he demonstrated in supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, in coming out with an electricity deregulation plan that will save consumers $20 billion a year, in helping to open all kinds of opportunities for energy conservation

and a clean energy future for America. Let me also thank him as Secretary of Transportation for his service there in advancing mass transit more than at any point in recent history and for opening up our air commerce with 40 other nations.

With Congress' support, Bill Richardson will do his part now to secure our energy future, at a time when that is inextricably bound up with our obligation as Americans to do our part to deal with the problem of climate change and our obligations as Americans to build a secure future for our country that allows economic growth and protection of the planet.

I believe that this challenge will require the greatest energy from our labs, from our scientists and technology, from an Energy Department that can work clearly with the private sector on what plainly will be one of America's most important priorities for years and years to come.

Ambassador Holbrooke, my new United Nations designate, is already a familiar face all around the globe. His remarkable diplomacy in Bosnia helped to stop the bloodshed, and at the talks in Dayton, the force of his determination was a key to securing peace, restoring hope, and saving lives. His ongoing service in the Balkan region has helped to keep Bosnia's peace on track through some difficult moments.

He has helped to advance our efforts to break the stalemate in Cyprus, and he's worked to defuse the alarming tensions and violence still brewing in Kosovo. His expertise rests on an outstanding career of diplomatic service, from his early days as one of the youngest ever Assistant Secretaries of State for Asia, an area where he has continued to be actively involved and which is very important today. Then he worked as my Ambassador to Germany and as Assistant Secretary of State for Europe.

His long experience in the private sector has given him a keen eye for the bottom line, economically and politically. He will help us to shape a U.N. that is leaner, more efficient, better equipped, that fulfills the best ideals of its founders and meets the challenges of the 21st century.

Ambassador Holbrooke understands, as do all the members of our national security team, the important role the United Nations can play in supporting our goals around the world, pursuing peace and security, promoting human rights, fighting drugs and crime, helping people lift themselves from poverty to dignity and prosperity. Our Nation will always be prepared to act alone if necessary, but joining our strength with our U.N. partners, we maximize our reach and magnify our effectiveness while sharing costs and risks.

In a world where developments beyond our borders have dramatic implications within them, from rogue states seeking nuclear weapons and chemical and biological weapons to pollution corroding the atmosphere, international cooperation is clearly more important than ever. I urge Congress to send me legislation, therefore, without unrelated issues, to live up to our legacy of leadership and pay our debt to the United Nations.

In closing, let me say that the Vice President and I feel very fortunate every day to have such a strong national security team, men and women of vision, of judgment, of commitment. We have worked closely together to make sure that our Nation remains the world's leading force for peace and freedom, for prosperity and security.

The line-up I announce today maintains that exceptional standard. I thank all of them for their willingness to serve. I especially thank Ambassador Holbrooke and Ambassador Richardson for their willingness to take on these important new tasks.

And now, I'd like to turn the floor over to them.

[*At this point, Secretary-designate Richardson and Ambassador Holbrooke thanked the President and made brief remarks.*]

Rapprochement With Iran

Q. Mr. President, are you softening your policy toward Iran? Are you softening your policy toward Iran? Did you find a new rapprochement?

The President. I agree with the remarks made yesterday by Secretary Albright. We talked about them extensively before she made her speech. What we want is a genuine reconciliation with Iran based on mutuality and reciprocity and a sense that the Iranians are prepared to move away from support of terrorism and distribution of dangerous weapons, opposition to the peace process.

We appreciate the comments that were made by the President several months ago, and we are exploring what the future might hold. We have not changed our principles, our ideas, or

our objectives. We believe Iran is changing in a positive way, and we want to support that.

Q. Are you contemplating a gesture, sir?

The President. I think Secretary Albright's words should stand for themselves right now. I thought it was a fine speech and an important one.

Tobacco Legislation

Q. Mr. President, do you have any plans to resurrect tobacco, perhaps in the House? And how?

The President. Well, yesterday many of the Republicans Senators whom I called—and I talked to 10 of them yesterday—said that they had been approached by Senator Lott about the prospect of putting some sort of special group together of 4 Republicans and 4 Democrats and maybe having them try just in a matter of a few days to come up with a bill they thought would actually not only pass the Senate but could be written into law. And if that's a good-faith effort they're willing to make, that's certainly one option that I would consider.

But I don't intend to continue—to stop fighting for this. I think it's obvious to everybody in the world what happened. This bill was voted out of the committee 19 to 1. Some of the people who voted for it in the Republican caucus then did not vote for it on the floor, even though every major amendment which was adopted to the bill was sponsored by a Republican Senator. And I think it's pretty clear what happened.

They may believe that the $40 million in advertising by the tobacco companies changed public opinion irrevocably and permanently and therefore it's safe to walk away from the biggest public health obligation that this country has today. I don't believe that.

But even if the politics have changed, the merits haven't. One more day will pass today when 3,000 more children will start to smoke even though it's illegal to sell them cigarettes, and 1,000 of them will have their lives shortened because of it. And for us to sit here and do nothing in the face of evidence which has been mounting during this debate, even in the Minnesota case, during this debate, gave the freshest and in some cases the most vivid documentary evidence of all from the tobacco companies themselves that they've known about the addictive qualities of nicotine for years and that they have deliberately marketed cigarettes to children for years, even though they knew it was against the law to do it, because they needed what they call "replacement smokers."

Now, the bill is simple in its outline and clear in its objectives. And in terms of the complications of it, many of those were added by the people who now are criticizing it.

So, on balance, I think the case is still so overwhelming that we ought to keep working on it, and I'm prepared—you know, I've been working on this for years. When we started, most people didn't think we'd get as far as we have, and I don't think that we intend to stop until we prevail. And sooner or later we will, because it's the right thing to do.

Q. Sir, how will you finance this child care initiative and other things that were contained in that bill without ruining the budget?

The President. We can only finance—we can finance that part of it which is within our own budget, and that part of it which was dedicated to—which would had to have been financed by the States and which was within a menu of things that we supported that the States could spend it on won't be financed unless the States get the money some other way. And I think that's unfortunate, because I think that would be a good expenditure of some of the money.

Keep in mind, most of the Federal money was designed to be spent on—directly on health care—on medical research, on smoking cessation programs, on programs designed to deal with the consequences of the health problems that are directly related to smoking in this country. And that was, of course, a part of the Senate's decision in killing it.

I think it's important to point out also that there were—that this bill is temporarily dead because of the unusual rule of the Senate that requires 60 percent, not 51 percent, of the Senate to pass on any bill other than the budget if somebody objects to it. So for all the $40 million in spending—and as reported in the paper today, all the commitment to run the same ads all over again in November to protect the Republican Members who voted with them—they still could only muster 43 votes. And two of those votes were people who wanted a better provision for the tobacco farmers and essentially supported the bill.

So, essentially, what you've got is 41 people denying the American people and denying the huge majority of the United States Senate, including a number of Republicans, the right to

pass a tobacco bill and ask the House to do the same to protect our children. That's not a long way from success. And that means that each and every one of the members of the Republican caucus who voted for that was in a way personally responsible for the death of the bill.

It's not all—it's dead today. It may not be dead tomorrow. And it's not dead over the long run because the public health need is great. I've never quit on anything this important in my life, and I don't intend to stop now. There are too many futures riding on it, and I think in the end we will prevail.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mohammad Khatami of Iran.

Remarks Following Discussions With Religious Leaders
June 18, 1998

Thank you very much, Madam Secretary, to the Members of Congress who are here, and the religious leaders, especially to Rabbi Schneier, Archbishop McCarrick, Reverend Argue. I thank all of you for your devotion to religious liberty and to the proposition that America's advocacy of freedom should, indeed must, include our advocacy of religious liberty.

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to John Shattuck, our Assistant Secretary of State, who has worked so hard to promote human rights around the world and whom, I hope, will soon be moving on to other important responsibilities for the United States. John, thank you very, very much for doing a great job. Sandy Berger and Madeleine and I rely on you a lot, and we hope you'll have another good run soon.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to Reverend Argue, Archbishop McCarrick, and Rabbi Schneier for leading a delegation to China on a mission that grew out of my meeting with President Jiang last fall. In their discussions with Chinese Government leaders and religious groups of all kinds, they were our forceful advocates for religious liberty. Their visit helped to make the Chinese people aware of the fundamental importance of this issue, not simply to the American Government but to the American people.

We have just met to discuss their trip, and I have received from them a very impressive report of their activities, replete with their specific recommendations about where we go from here. And their insights will certainly have a big influence on my activities and conversations as I prepare to embark for China.

I also want to thank all the religious leaders who have joined us here today who have been part of our advisory process. We welcome the recent release from prison of two key Chinese religious leaders, Gao Feng and Bishop Zeng Jingmu, as well as China's announcement that it intends to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with its guarantees of freedom of thought and religion. But Chinese Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists remain imprisoned for their religious activities, including in Tibet, and other believers face harassment.

Therefore, when in China, I will speak as clearly as I can about human rights and religious freedom. Our message is clear: We in the United States believe that all governments everywhere should ensure fundamental rights, including the right of people to worship when and where they choose. We believe that China should resume talks with the Dalai Lama. We believe that prisoners of conscience should be released.

I am convinced that dealing directly with the Chinese on these issues is the best way to make a difference, and making a difference is in the end what matters. I am also convinced, as I told President Jiang here both privately and in our press conference, that China will be more stable, will grow stronger, will acquire more influence in the world in direct proportion to the extent to which it recognizes liberties of all kinds and especially religious liberty.

Of course, we all know that the freedom to follow one's personal beliefs, to worship as one chooses, is at the core of what it means to

be an American. It is in the very first amendment to the Constitution. It is at the forefront of the Bill of Rights. Men and women fleeing religious persecutions helped to found our country. They still arrive every year, of every conceivable faith, from every point in the world to seek this freedom.

Our churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other houses of worship are centers of vibrant community life and vital community service. We have always been vigilant in protecting our own religious freedoms, for we know that an attack on any group imperils all. Dr. Martin Luther King once said that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." It clearly applies to the principle of religious liberty.

And we know now that if we want the kind of world for our children that we are laboring so hard to build for the 21st century*—for this one in particular—[*laughter*]—exhibit A—[*laughter*]—our struggle for liberty cannot end at our borders. There are many countries, far too many, where religious believers still suffer in darkness, where governments ban religious practices or force an officially sanctioned creed on nonbelievers; people are harassed, imprisoned, tortured, sometimes even executed for daring to live by their beliefs.

On the other hand, we know that when religious diversity is respected, it fosters a sense of community and solidarity. Religious hatred fuels violence, as we have seen too often. So we promote both religious freedom and religious tolerance. They are two sides of the same coin, each necessary for the other's success.

Secretary Albright and I, as she said so eloquently, have made promotion of religious freedom around the world a top priority. I have had extensive discussions on the subject with President Yeltsin, as all of you know, and with other world leaders. State Department officials here and overseas now give greater attention to religious persecution and other religious liberty issues then ever before. We have a high-level advisory committee on which many of you serve, and I thank you for the work you have done.

Now Secretary Albright is creating a new position, a Senior Adviser for International Religious Freedom, to make sure that religious liberty concerns get high and close attention in our foreign policy. And I am pleased to announce the appointment today of the gentleman to my right, Dr. Robert Seiple, to the job. As President of World Vision United States, he has applied skill and determination to World Vision's faith-based struggle against poverty in more than 100 countries. To this position he brings a genuinely unusual combination of deep personal faith, sweeping global perspective, the toughness and determination of a Marine Vietnam veteran, and an extraordinary proven capacity for leadership. He is here with his family, and in a moment I want to ask him to say a few words. But we thank you for your willingness to serve.

Let me just say one word about how we should continue to pursue this cause. I have been deeply touched that, as the presence of these Members of Congress shows, there is a universal determination I think in our country among all our decisionmakers to advance the cause of religious liberty. It crosses party; it crosses region; it crosses philosophy; it crosses different religious faiths. There is some difference of opinion about how we can best proceed.

My belief is that we have to be both principled and resourceful. We need to be doing what works. We need to be dedicated to achieving results. And therefore I hope that Congress will not only express its strong support and give us the tools to do the job but leave us as much flexibility as possible to advance the cause of religious freedom consistent with what can be done and how it can best be done, nation by nation. America is not strengthened in fighting for religious liberty or in fighting against religious persecution by laws that are so rigid a President's hands are tied.

As we intensify our efforts to promote religious liberty, I know we can count on the support of people of faith all over this country.

Abraham Lincoln, whose determination to defend our liberty cost him his life, once said, "The fight must go on. The cause of liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one, or even 100, defeats." Many of you in this room have been part of those defeats. But at the end of all of them there lies ultimate victory. That is what we must believe; that is the reality we must create.

Again, let me thank you all and now ask Dr. Seiple to come forward to make a few remarks.

Thank you very much.

* At this point, a baby cried.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president, Appeal of Conscience Foundation; Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop of Newark; Rev. Don Argue, former president, National Association of Evangelicals; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia.

Excerpt of Videotaped Remarks on the United States-Iran World Cup Game

June 18, 1998

The World Cup is beloved across our planet because it offers a chance for people from around the world to be judged not by the place they grew up, the color of their skin, or the way they choose to worship but by their spirit, skill, and strength.

As we cheer today's game between American and Iranian athletes, I hope it can be another step toward ending the estrangement between our nations. I am pleased that over the last year, President Khatami and I have both worked to encourage more people-to-people exchanges and to help our citizens develop a better understanding of each other's rich civilizations.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 11 a.m. in the Cabinet Room on June 18 for broadcast on Univision on June 21, and the partial transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 18. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Action To Cut Teen Drug Use

June 18, 1998

Today's PRIDE survey shows that American families can influence adolescents' attitudes and behaviors when it comes to drugs. This is a small step in the right direction. But we must all continue to warn our youth that drugs are wrong; that drugs are dangerous; and that drugs can kill you. That is why in the coming months, we will take our antidrug media campaign nationwide, fund more community antidrug coalitions, and work to enact our long-term drug strategy. These and other steps will help us to reach our ultimate goal—cutting teen drug use in half.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Compliance With the Chemical Weapons Convention

June 18, 1998

Dear _____*:*

In accordance with Condition 10(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, enclosed is the report to Congress on CWC Compliance.

The report is provided in both a classified and unclassified form.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Economic Team and an Exchange With Reporters

June 19, 1998

The President. First of all, let me say good morning, and as you can see, I am about to meet with my economic team to discuss the present state of the American economy, the developments in the world, and how we can keep our economy growing. We're going to talk about the importance of promoting stability in Asia and meeting our obligations to the IMF, the importance of preserving the surplus until we resolve the issue of saving Social Security for the 21st century, the importance of not destabilizing our economy with gimmicks like getting rid of the Tax Code before we know what will replace it, and the importance of continuing our strategy of long-term investments to grow the American economy through education and technology.

Tobacco Legislation

Let me also make a few brief remarks on another obligation that we face, that I am still determined to see through, and that is our obligation to the public health of our children and to protect them from the dangers of tobacco. We have a chance, as all the surveys show, to save about a million lives a year if we do the right thing on reducing childhood smoking. For 6 months we have worked hard and in good faith to meet all legitimate objections to the legislation and to join together the priorities of both parties.

Let me just be clear about this: Every Senator who voted to kill this bill not only voted against the provisions which will help to prevent teen smoking, which will help to put more research into cancer research, into other public health problems, and help to promote smoking cessation programs; they also voted against fixing the marriage penalty and giving a tax break for working families with incomes under $50,000; they voted against new measures to crack down on drugs; they voted against life-saving research; they also voted not to implement a program that can save a million lives a year. It was a vote against our children and for the tobacco lobby. It's as simple as that; it is not complicated.

Now, some have suggested that Congress should now just get in line and do what the tobacco lobby wants them to do. That's the new suggestion: Well, let's just do what the tobacco companies will let us do, and appear to be passing a bill that will reduce teen smoking, that everybody knows will not have very much influence, if any, on the problem.

I'm going to stick with the public health servants of this country. I'm going to stick with the people who know what it takes to do the job. And most importantly, we're going to stick with the children and their future. And I hope, therefore, that we can still stay in here and keep working, get a bill that will increase the price of cigarettes enough to deter smoking, that will have strong advertising restrictions, that will have strong access restrictions, that will invest in public health and do something honorable for the tobacco farmers.

Now, the Republican majority may want the tobacco companies to run the Congress on this issue. I don't. I think we ought to do this for the people. I think we ought to vote like parents, not politicians, and I still hope we can do that.

Q. Mr. President, did both Democrats and Republicans get a little too greedy, put too much on this bill? That's certainly been suggested.

The President. Well, let me just remind you that this bill passed the committee 19 to 1. This was almost unanimously voted out of a committee that had a Republican majority. You have people voting against this bill who voted

for it in committee, after improvements have been made to it.

And some of the Republicans said, "Well, there is too much spending on health care and other things in this bill." So we said, "Okay, we'll take the bill to relieve the marriage penalty on couples of under $50,000." Others said, "There ought to be something for drugs in here along with tobacco." So we said, "Okay, we'll agree to put some money in here to fight drugs." Others said, "Well, we ought to have some limits on lawyers' fees." So we said, "Okay, we'll have some limits on lawyers' fees."

Every major amendment—every major amendment—was sponsored by a member of the Republican majority. So they voted the bill out 19 to 1. They got their major amendments. They all got on record voting for these amendments. And then they turn around and kill the bill, which leads us to believe that they intended to kill the bill all along; they just wanted enough good votes to try to convince the voters back home that they really didn't want to kill the bill, they just had to.

Now, again, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Lung Association, these people don't have $40 million, along with the medical associations. They didn't have the $40 million to run ads to mislead the American people about this. But they will be around when the ads stop running, and I think the American people can figure it out.

So I still hope that something in the way of conscience and good sense and good judgment will strike the Congress and we'll do this.

Q. You're against a slimmed-down bill?

The President. Absolutely. I'm against anything that provides no life saving to kids and is designed to save the political life of the people who vote for it, to provide them cover, but won't save the lives of the children. I don't see why we should participate in a charade.

Now, I have not been adamant about this. Look, I just told you, we accepted a lot of amendments to this legislation, and every single one of them was a Republican amendment. We have been totally reasonable about this. But the parameters should be the principles I outlined from the beginning that everyone involved who is a public health expert knows is necessary if we want to be serious about the problem.

Now, if we don't want to be serious about the problem, I don't think we ought to be looking for cover. The politicians who don't want to do it ought to look the American people in the eye and say, "Look, the tobacco companies have got a lot of power around here. They've helped us a lot, and we can't cross them." Or they ought to say, "I just don't believe in this." They ought to just stand up and say, "I simply don't believe in this."

But I am not going to participate in a charade which provides people with some cover to pretend that they did something they didn't. That would be wrong.

Japanese Economy

Q. With regard to Japan, Mr. President, did Prime Minister Hashimoto give you any schedule for carrying out the reforms he pledged? And do you think it's important that they act before parliamentary elections in 3 weeks?

The President. I'm not in a position to know whether they can do that. What he said to me—and perhaps I should start with what I said to him. I said to him that the United States wanted to support the Japanese economic recovery and that we had a big stake in it, that our economy depended upon it, and that in a larger sense the whole Asia-Pacific region depended upon a Japanese economic recovery; but that no short-term efforts would work unless there was a serious, long-term, very comprehensive commitment to economic reform—nothing that Secretary Rubin and Mr. Summers haven't said repeatedly in other forums.

He said to me that they were prepared to issue a statement which would be clear and specific about what they intended to do in a timely fashion. He did not say whether it would be before or just after the parliamentary elections, but he said he would not delay about it.

Relations With China

Q. Mr. President, do you think that those who oppose trade with China have isolationist blinders on, as the Press Secretary said? [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm glad you put the last phrase in there so I—[*laughter*]—I never want to disagree with Mr. McCurry.

Well, I believe that, first of all, I think trade with China is important to promote stability in China and throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Secondly, I think it's the biggest country in the world, a big market, and they're growing, and the American people ought to be able to get the benefit of selling to the Chinese.

None of that should prevent us from disagreeing with them. Keep in mind, we're not asking for anything special for China here. All we're saying is, if you look at all the other countries in the world that we trade with, with whom we have serious disagreements, there is no principled, grounded distinction between China and some of the other countries that we have normal trading relationships with for saying we're not going to have them with China.

And I think that we had worked very hard and had made a lot of progress over the last few years in having a principled debate about Chinese policy that was unencumbered by the politics of the moment, and I'm afraid that has slipped up a little bit in the last few weeks. But I hope we can get back to it.

You know, there are a lot of people who disagree with me on this. But you just can't draw a distinction between China and a lot of other countries we have serious disagreements with but we don't have abnormal trade relations with. The idea that America should just stop talking to and stop dealing with any country in the world that does anything we disagree with and that that will make them more likely to do what we agree with, I think there is very little evidence to support that, and there's a whole lot of evidence against it. We tend to get more done when we work with people, when we disagree with them openly, when we push them, and when they have something to gain by working with us. Most people don't respond very well to threats and to isolation.

And once in a while it works when you've got—in certain specific cases—I mean, the trade sanctions worked in South Africa after many years because everybody supported them. And they helped us in Bosnia because everybody supported them. And they helped us in Iraq because it had the U.N. behind it. But here's a case where I think we've got far more to gain with a constructive engagement with China. It's a very great country with enormous potential, that has cooperated with us in many areas to make the world a safer place in the last few years. And we have now found a forum and a way in which we can honorably express our disagreements and believe we can make some progress on. This is the last time to be making a U-turn and going back to a policy we know won't work when we've got a policy that is working. We need patience and discipline and determination to stay with what we're doing.

General Motors Strike

Q. Mr. President, are you worried about the economic effects of the GM strike? And what is your administration strategy for possible intervention or at least a resolution?

The President. Well, I've been briefed on it, obviously, on a regular basis by Secretary Herman. And I'm sure you know that under the governing laws of the United States, the role of the Federal Government in a strike like this is limited. But I would like to encourage the parties to work it out. Our economy is doing well; our auto industry is doing well. They have some, apparently, very legitimate and substantial differences, but we've got a collective bargaining system which I support. And I think they can work it out, and I hope they'll do it in a timely fashion.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:40 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Teleconference Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the United States Conference of Mayors

June 19, 1998

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mayor Helmke, for all your wonderful introductions. I hope they didn't hurt you too much. This one won't cause you as much trouble as the last one did.

Seriously, I want to thank you for your fine leadership of the mayors this year. And Mayor Corradini, I look forward to working with you over the next year. I also want to say hello to your advisory board chair, Mayor Webb, who

joined me at the White House this week when we honored the Broncos together for winning the Super Bowl. And hello to your executive director, Tom Cochran, who does a great job for you day-in and day-out here with us.

Let me also congratulate my good friend Jerry Abramson on his award for distinguished public service. Jerry, I'll always be grateful to you for a lot of things—for your friendship, your support, and especially for your leadership for the 1994 crime bill. All across America, neighborhoods are now safer because of the community police officers you helped to put on the street. You have really made a difference. I congratulate you and thank you again.

And I have some good news about one of your alumni, the former mayor of Laredo, Saul Ramirez. Last year at this meeting I announced his nomination for Assistant Secretary at HUD. Well, I'm giving him a promotion and nominating him now to be the agency's new Deputy Secretary. Congratulations to him and to you.

This is the third time we've been able to get together just this year, and I'm only sorry that I can't join you in person. I know that I'll be well represented by members of my Cabinet, including our great HUD Secretary, Andrew Cuomo. I send greetings also to you from Mickey Ibarra, who's with me here and who runs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and works hard for you. His Deputy, Lynn Cutler, is stranded in an airport, but she'll soon be in Reno to represent the White House. And I'm proud that senior representatives from a total of 22 Federal agencies are attending your conference. You can tell from the breadth and depth from the team I've sent that my administration is more committed than ever to working with you to help our great cities thrive and reach their fullest potential.

Last week a number of you were able to join me here at the White House as I signed a transportation bill that will help cities to build and modernize roads, bridges, and transit systems for the 21st century. It encourages mass transit, protects the environment, expands opportunities to disadvantaged businesses, and moves more people from welfare to work with transportation assistance. Thank you for helping me pass this law.

In no small part because of the innovation, commitment, and hard work of America's mayors, our cities are revitalized, reenergized, and back in business. The second annual "State of the Cities" report, which Secretary Cuomo will share with you in much greater detail later, shows that unemployment, crime, poverty rates, all are down and falling in our central cities. New job growth and homeownership rates are up and climbing. Our downtowns are coming back as centers of tourism and entertainment. The state of our cities is strong, and I thank you for leading this renaissance.

America is enjoying the strongest economy in a generation, an era of sunlit prosperity and abundant opportunity, but we cannot afford to sit back and bask in the glow. Instead, we must make the most of this rare moment in our history and ensure that our economic renaissance touches every corner of every community.

As the "State of the Cities" report shows, cities still face critical opportunity gaps when it comes to jobs, to education, and to housing. If we're going to lift even more people out of poverty and bring more middle class families back to our cities, we must do everything we can to close these opportunity gaps. The way we will close our opportunity gaps is with the new vision of government.

Over the past 5½ years, we've moved beyond the false debate between those who said government could solve all our problems and those who said government was the problem. Our new vision has been of government as partner with business, community groups, and individual citizens. It's been a vision of government as catalyst to bring the spark of private enterprise to our hardest-pressed neighborhoods. Whether it's putting more police officers on the streets to fight crime or offering tax incentives to lure businesses back to abandoned downtowns or providing small business loans to inner-city residents, our goal has been to empower people with the tools to make the most of their own lives.

Secretary Cuomo's new streamlined HUD, which David Osborne has called the most exciting reinvention in a decade, epitomizes this vision. Along with the Vice President, who chairs my Community Empowerment Board, I am committed to helping HUD and other Federal agencies work even better for you. And I ask you to support our expanded community empowerment agenda, that reflects our new approach to filling the opportunity gaps in, for our cities.

First, we can fill in the jobs gap and bring more businesses and credit to our central cities

by launching a second round of empowerment zones, renewing community development financial institutions, and supporting HUD's Community Empowerment Fund. I ask you to tell Congress that America needs 50,000 new welfare-to-work housing vouchers to help hard-working people successfully move off welfare by moving closer to their jobs. And I hope you'll work with me to ensure all Americans get the child care assistance they need to be good parents and good workers.

Second, we can begin closing the education gap by helping school districts modernize and build 5,000 schools, hiring more teachers, reducing class sizes in the earliest grades, and creating education opportunity zones to help poorer school districts make the tough reforms they need to improve.

Third, we will bridge the housing gap by strengthening our efforts to fight housing discrimination, raising FHA loan limits, creating more section 8 housing vouchers, helping families with good rental histories turn rent checks into mortgage payments, and expanding the low income housing tax credit. This tax credit now has the support of a majority of Members in the House and the Senate. Let's call on Congress to pass the bill right away.

Finally, I ask for your help on another critical issue for cities: making sure that the 2000 census is as accurate as possible. As you know, census statistics help to determine how much Federal aid your communities receive for roads, WIC, Head Start, job training, and other services. Because of an undercount of inner-city residents in the last census, many of you were short-changed when it came to Federal funds. We must make sure it doesn't happen again. The scientists agree: Statistical sampling is the most accurate and most cost-effective way to get a full and fair count of our people in the year 2000. Let's work together to ensure that we use this method in the next census.

All these are tough challenges, but I know that if we work together, we can meet them. Last year in San Francisco, we set ourselves a challenge of helping 1,000 police officers buy and move into homes in the communities they serve. Well, I'm proud to announce that the Officer Next Door program has met the challenge. Later today, Secretary Cuomo will present the program's 1,000th key to Deputy Mark Burgess, a key that will unlock the door to his new home in Salt Lake City. With citizens like Deputy Burgess who are taking active stakes in our community, and with your continued leadership, I know the best is yet to come for America's cities.

Throughout our history, our cities have always been the face America shows the world. Visitors have gotten their first taste of America—our energy, ingenuity, and promise—through our great cities. They've always been the gateway to opportunity for millions of Americans, places where new immigrants have worked hard, built thriving communities, and achieved the American dream. We can, and we will, make sure that dream thrives in our cities well into the 21st century.

Thank you for all you do, and thank you for working with me.

Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN. Thank you, Mr. President. I understand that you have time for a few questions from some of the mayors. I had a few folks I know that wanted to ask you questions.

Millennium Activities

Mayor Thomas Menino of Boston, MA. Mr. President, the millennium is up in 2 years. A lot of cities are preparing for the millennium as we go forward. What is your vision? What do you think that this country should be doing with the new millennium when it comes in the year 2000?

President Clinton. Tom, first let me say that I'm very sorry about the floods in Boston. I know our FEMA people are there, and I hope they will all work out of it and dry out of it together.

Let me say to all of you, I think every mayor in America should be heavily involved in celebrating the millennium. And I hope that as a group you will be in close touch with Ellen Lovell, who is running this project for the First Lady and for me, so that we can coordinate what we're doing. I think our vision should be the one that Hillary has articulated: We should honor the past and imagine the future. That means to me that, at a minimum, every city should find someplace in the city important to your city's history and heritage and make sure that you have restored it or protected it or enhanced it for all future generations.

Second, I think every city should identify some great opportunity that you believe is there for your people in the new century, and elevate

that opportunity, highlight it, literally enshrine it as a mission of your city for the future.

And thirdly, of course, I think there should be a great celebration on New Year's Eve 1999/2000, that all the cities in the country participate in, that is tied in with a national celebration and that involves as many Americans as humanly possible.

Education Initiatives

Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL. Mr. President, where are we on achieving your education goals, whether it's smaller classrooms or school construction or after-school programs? How can we as an organization be more helpful to you?

President Clinton. Well, you can do a lot. Let me deal with each of them in turn.

The only part of the education program that is imperiled by the present setback to the tobacco bill is the funds that we wanted to give the States which would enable them to distribute them to communities to hire the teachers necessary to reduce class size to an average of 18 in the first 3 grades.

The school construction initiative, which would allow us to build or repair 5,000 schools, is still very much alive; it's in my budget; the Congress can approve it. There is some bipartisan support for it. And so I think if the mayors, particularly the Republicans and the Democrats together, could really press this, then when we get down to the appropriations in the month of July and in the month of September, we've got a good chance to get the construction money out. And that would make a huge difference, not only in repairing a lot of older schools that need to be repaired but in providing the needed classroom space, without which we can't have the smaller class sizes.

On the after-school funds, we have funds in both the Justice Department budget and in the Education Department budget; it's just going to be a question of fighting for those things and making sure that they're priorities in the Congress, just as they are priorities for you and for me.

And again, there shouldn't be any politics in this. The evidence is so overwhelming—as you know, in Chicago, where you have tens of thousands of kids eating three meals a day in the schools, that this increases learning and lowers juvenile crime—that I would think that the cities that have had good experiences with these programs could take the lead.

But again I say that if the Republican and Democratic mayors could do this together and say, this is a grassroots American issue, this has nothing to do with partisan politics, that this part of the President's budget should prevail, then I think we have a good chance to win.

So I'd say on two out of three we're in good shape. Whether the States get some more money that then can be used for aid to education to hire those extra teachers depends on whether we can get the tobacco legislation back on track. I'm still hopeful that we can. Anything you can do to encourage Congress not on this point, but on the larger point, to pass legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco and pass something comprehensive that will have credibility in the public health community, that we know will work, will make us closer to that goal as well.

Violence in Schools

Mayor Lee R. Clancey of Cedar Rapids, IA. Mr. President, I have a question that's a side issue related to education concerns. In the next couple of weeks, I'm going to be hosting a meeting with city and school officials on the issue of school violence and how we can prevent it, how we can cope with it, what we can do to address it. And I know it's an issue that concerns many of us in our cities. What is being done at the Federal level, and do you have any suggestions for us to take back to our community?

President Clinton. Well, let me first of all, Mayor, say that I applaud you for doing this, all of you, and I applaud your leadership in doing it. I think the first thing I would say is, that in the last couple of years when we've had all these horrible instances of school violence and killing in our schools, we should not lose sight of the fact that, ironically, that has occurred when we've finally seen the first drop in juvenile crime in many, many years.

So I think it's important to keep pushing the larger issue of the after-school funds and the other kinds of programs that we've seen work so well in Boston and elsewhere to drive juvenile crime down.

Then I think we have to say, no matter how low we get juvenile crime, we're going to be at risk of these violent instances in schools because there will always be a small number of children who will be profoundly disturbed,

where some incident at home or at school can set them off, and they live in a culture where the access to guns is too easy and where they're too exposed from their earliest years to repeated barrages of almost casual violence in the media that they see. So, too many children become numb to violence and, I think, take guns in their hands and pull the triggers, often without really feeling and knowing the consequences.

Now, there are, I believe, two things that we can do at the Federal level that we're working on. First, as I said when I was in Springfield, Oregon, I've asked the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to prepare a manual to train teachers, parents, and hopefully other students as well, on early warning signs of children in trouble, so that we'll be better at picking this up.

In every case where we've had a killing over the last year, there have been some indication that there was something wrong with the young person involved, that something has happened, or the young person said something or friends knew something, that did not lead to preemptive action. So I think we need to really focus on this prevention.

Secondly, we're going to be working on what can be done to get some more police officers out there in and around the schools, just as we have on the streets.

Thirdly, there is a big debate going on in Springfield, Oregon, and in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and I'm sure in all the other communities about what can be done if children are found in trouble, to try to do something before they go over the edge.

The two Senators from Oregon have introduced legislation which would require of any child who was sent home from school because he or she had a gun in school—and there were 6,100 children who had guns in schools and had the guns taken away and were sent home because of our zero tolerance for guns in schools just last year. The Senators think that—their legislation, I think, calls for some sort of mandatory 72-hour examination period, including a psychiatric exam.

Whether this is everything that should be done, exactly what should be done, or not is something we're going to debate up here. But it's not too soon for every mayor and every school leader in the country to determine what should be done if a case occurs like the case in Springfield, Oregon, where the young man who is now charged with all these killings was sent home the day before with a gun in the school.

Now, presently that's about all that happens, because most cities and most school districts don't have a system for dealing with that. I think you should make sure that your schools do have a system—and maybe not just when a person is found with a gun and sent home but when threats are made or when people say they're going to do something—maybe unspecific threats but give evidence of that. We need some sort of intervention that can get these kids analyzed and then get them quickly to some sort of comprehensive program if necessary, to try to give them the help they need and to take them out of the pressure-cooker situation for a couple of days in the hope that this can be avoided.

I believe that we can do a lot more on the prevention front. And we now know, just looking at the facts of all these cases, that there were significant early warnings in at least several of them that might have permitted, with the right kind of intervention, circumstances to develop that would have avoided the tragedies.

So that's what I would ask you to look at. Everybody should know: What does your school district do with a child that makes a threat? What does your school district do with a child that has a gun? Does the school have a system where they encourage other kids to talk to responsible adults if they hear some child making a threat? Most of these children, if they could just get 4 or 5 or 6 years down the road, would look back in horror that they ever entertained such a thought—if we can avoid it happening in the first place.

So I think we can do better. We're determined to do our part. And after you have your meeting, if the mayors and the others from whom you hear have any other ideas, for goodness' sakes, give them to us. This is something we've got to do more on.

Mayor Helmke. I want to thank you, Mr. President. I know your time is short, but we appreciate you taking the time this afternoon to talk to us and taking the time again this past year. You've worked collaboratively with us, consistently with us. We know you're concerned about the city issues and you're always willing to listen to us and we thank you for that.

In particular, I wanted to thank you for working closely with us this last year while I've been

president of the mayors group. It's been an experience, and we appreciate all of your efforts this past year. And you've outlined a number of things that we need to continue to work with in the future, and we plan to do that with you, too.

So again, thank you very much. We thank you or all of your efforts and for your staff members and Cabinet officers that are here, too. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you all, and I'll turn it over to Secretary Cuomo and the rest of our crowd. Have a great meeting.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 5:20 p.m. from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building to the meeting in Reno, NV. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN, president, Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT, president-elect, and J. Thomas Cochran, executive director, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Mayor Jerry E. Abramson of Louisville, KY; and David Osborne, president, Public Strategies Group, Inc.

Statement on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

June 19, 1998

I am very pleased that our efforts to reform the IRS took a major step forward today with a bipartisan agreement reconciling the House and Senate legislation. I have worked very hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer and more responsive to their needs. Enactment of this compromise reform will build on our initiative to give Americans a modern, customer-friendly IRS.

Our new IRS Commissioner, Charles Rossotti, has brought forceful leadership and the best management techniques from the private sector to the agency. This bipartisan compromise will give him the tools he needs to succeed, while expanding taxpayer rights. It will allow the IRS to bring in talent and expertise from the private sector, strengthen the Taxpayer Advocate's office, and expand the convenient and popular practice of filing tax returns electronically and over the phone. We are pleased that Congress incorporated the Commissioner's sweeping reorganization of the IRS along customer service lines and addressed our concerns about earlier versions of this reform by correcting provisions that would have inadvertently allowed noncompliant taxpayers to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. The Congress also made sure that the Treasury Secretary and the IRS Commissioner will serve on the board overseeing the IRS.

Under the leadership of the Vice President and Secretary Rubin, we have made great strides in our efforts to revamp customer service at the IRS. We have expanded phone and office hours, created popular new problem-solving days, and launched independent citizen advocacy panels. We cannot solve every problem at the IRS at once, but we are committed to correcting problems when they arise, and this bill will help us do that. I urge Congress to send me this compromise legislation quickly, but to make sure that it is fully and properly funded.

Statement on Signing the Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act

June 19, 1998

I was very pleased to sign today S. 1244, the Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act. This bill protects the religious and charitable contributions made by people who later declare bankruptcy.

As Americans, we value the important role religious and charitable institutions play in the daily life of this Nation. Indeed, we know that fiscal responsibility for these institutions is fundamental to their efforts to meet the spiritual, social and other concerns of our Nation. It is a great loss to all of our citizens for creditors to recoup their losses in bankruptcy cases from donations made in good faith by our citizens to their churches and charitable institutions.

As Americans we also know that giving, whether to one's church, temple, mosque, or other house of worship or to any charitable organization, fosters and enriches our sense of community. We need to encourage, not discourage, that sense of community. The Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act does just that.

NOTE: S. 1244, approved June 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–183.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Estonia-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With Documentation

June 19, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Estonia on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on April 2, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activity more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including "white-collar" crime and drug-trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; locating or identifying persons or items; serving documents; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and rendering any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 19, 1998.

Interview With CBS News, Cox Newspapers, and McClatchy Newspapers

June 19, 1998

President's Trip to China

Q. We've been talking among ourselves, so we'll just jump right into it. Just real quickly, one poll question. In a CBS/New York Times poll, some data that we put together shows that 59 percent of the American public believes you should go on this trip. But 35 percent say they—only 35 say they approve of your policy toward China. What do you hope to accomplish on this trip to pull that 35 closer to the 59 or higher?

The President. Well, I think one of the things I hope to accomplish is I hope that as a result of the trip, the American people will learn more

about China, and the Chinese people will learn more about America.

And I hope that what my policy actually is will be more broadly known among the American people. You know, I'm not surprised by the 35 percent because normally when there's anything written about China, it's one—something bad happens or some question's raised here. So if you never get any kind of constructive information, it's hard to know. But in specific terms, what I'll hope we'll do is to find a way to expand the areas of cooperation, to continue to discuss in an open way the areas of our differences. And I hope that by going there, I can strengthen the forces of positive change in the country.

So those are my objectives in going, and I think it's a very good thing. I think it's a tribute to the common sense of the American people and the good judgment that they understand, I think, that we have to be involved in China, that we have to try to have a constructive partnership with them.

Q. Mr. President, you've explained why you're going to the Great Hall, and you've said that the Chinese Government needs eventually to apologize to the people for what happened at Tiananmen Square 9 years ago. I'm wondering what will be on your heart and on your mind as you motorcade up to the Great Hall and gaze out across that square and ponder the pageantry and trauma that's taken place there over the past century?

The President. Well, obviously, I want to see Tiananmen Square, and I will think about what happened there 9 years ago. But I also will be thinking about the last turbulent century in Chinese history and the fact that that whole setting there has been the center of Chinese public life for probably 600 years now. There will be a lot to think about. I'm going to do my best to learn and absorb as much as I can and to increase my capacity to advance our interests and our values while I'm there. And I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. Mr. President, is it realistic that you could have a meeting along the lines of President Reagan—I believe 1988—a meeting in Moscow with refuseniks in admittedly a period of glasnost. But is it realistic in China? Is that a parallel situation, and are you satisfied that you'll be able to have a kind of contact with dissident and religious groups that you will like?

The President. Well, I'm going to meet with as many diverse people as I possibly can while I'm there. I'm going to try to meet with as many grassroots citizens who are active in all kinds of life as I can. And I'm going to make judgments about that based on what I think is most likely to promote our objectives, which include the advance of human rights and political civil rights, religious rights and, generally, that will promote more openness in China.

You know, I said to President Jiang when he was here, both in the press conference and in our private conversations, that I believe China can never obtain its own destiny full of greatness without becoming a more open society. Because whether you believe that human rights are universal, as the covenant says and as the U.N. embraces, or whether you believe it's just a cultural preference of some kinds of people, the reality of the world is that we now have an economy which is increasingly dominated by ideas. We basically moved from a farming economy to a manufacturing economy to an idea economy. That's what information technology is.

And it is therefore, I think, almost axiomatic that you can't have an idea-based economy that reaches its fullest success until people are free to think and feel and say and do what they please. And I have tried to argue it to President Jiang that you can have a stable society; in fact, you can have a more stable society when there are outlets for dissent, and where people have avenues within which they can express their ideas, and when you prove that you can incorporate diversity within a society.

I think, for example—I do not see the dialog with the Dalai Lama, for example, as a potential weakening of the coherence of Chinese society. I think it's the biggest opportunity to strengthen China. It's out there because the Dalai Lama's made clear he doesn't want to have an independent Tibet. He wants an autonomous Tibet—if the Chinese say they recognize—but that he recognizes that Tibet is part of China. I think that's an incredible opportunity.

Here we are on the edge of the 21st century, when we see some countries torn apart by religious and racial and ethnic differences. We've now got this great opportunity to harmonize, to reconcile something that has enormous symbolism not simply within Tibet and its sympathizers within China but all over the world.

So those are the arguments I'm going to make, and I'll keep making them. And I'm hoping that they'll be institutionalized to some extent in an ongoing human rights dialog and in NGO human rights dialog and in the areas—in the sort of cooperative law ventures that Chinese have been very interested in joining with us and legal issues relating not simply to the rule of law and commerce but rule of law dealing with the speech issues and human rights issues and labor rights issues and other things.

So I'm looking forward to having the chance to make that case.

Religious Freedom in China

Q. Mr. President, I noticed just glancing at the schedule that you're not only going to church on Sunday, but you're scheduled to make brief remarks. What will you be saying from the heart in that church about religious freedom in China?

The President. Well, I haven't prepared my remarks yet. And I suspect that of all the speeches I give while I'm there, that's the one that's most likely to be one that I will do virtually by myself and close to the time, although obviously I welcome the help of all the people who work with me on these things.

I hope to be able to say something about the importance of faith and religious liberty and the importance of religion to the character of a country, to acknowledge the role of Confucianism and Buddhism and other Eastern faiths and the history of world religions and the importance of giving everyone the chance to search out the truth for himself or herself; and the importance of recognizing that no matter how much the modern world comes to be dominated by technology, and no matter what advances occur in science, especially in the biological sciences, and no matter what we learn about other galaxies from physics, that each person's attempt to discern the truth and then to live according to it will remain life's most important journey. That's why, in the end, I think all this explosion of technology and communication will only intensify the pressure for openness in societies.

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, you've developed a knack for, in this country, speaking directly to the American people, getting beyond opinionmakers and beyond the likes of us, quite frankly. I'm wondering how important it is to you to be able to speak directly to the Chinese people on this trip, and how, specifically, you'll be able to do that, given the state control of the media there?

The President. You know, I just did a roundtable with Chinese journalists. And one of the—the television person who was there gave me a chance to at least give an opening message to the millions of Chinese that watch that station. I think it's quite important. I think making an impression on the Chinese people is very, very important.

One of the things that we have learned—I don't mean the royal "we," I mean all of us working in this White House have learned—is that even in nondemocratic societies, in the end, the people have a big say in what happens. Popular opinion counts for something, and popular feeling and sentiment counts for something. So I hope that in many ways I'll be able to reach the Chinese people while I'm on this trip.

I also hope I'll be able to have quite a bit of contact with the citizens of China on this trip in ways that are planned, as we did in the roundtables in Africa, for example, and in ways that are unplanned. I just think that's important. It's important for me and for our whole team to get a feel of life there. I've never had the opportunity to go, so I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. This is your first trip there. You've gotten a lot of advice, solicited and otherwise, on the trip. I'm thinking now about people outside the administration. Who are you listening to, and how are you preparing personally, whether it's something you're reading or otherwise, for the trip?

The President. The truth is, I haven't done as much reading on this trip as I normally do in advance because of all the incredible time-consuming nature of this work in Congress for the tobacco bill and all the financial issues in Asia and all those things we've been doing on it. But I have solicited a significant library. I don't know if I can read all the books, but I've got—Jim Mann was just in here and gave me a copy of his book. Have you seen it? "Beijing Jeep: A Study of Western Business in China."

But I'll get Barry to give you a list of the books; I've asked for six or seven books to read. I'm going to try to begin in earnest over this weekend and then on the trip to do as much

as I can, because the reading always helps me. It helps me a lot with what I see and how I do.

And we solicited, also, opinions and advice from a number of China scholars from outside the administration. But I've been with Jiang Zemin enough now that I really have quite a clear idea of what I hope we can achieve and how I want to go about doing it. I've done my best to sort of counter what I think are misconceptions about America—you know, that we had some grand design to contain China, that we didn't really want it to emerge into its rightful position of leadership and prosperity in the 21st century, that we were unmindful of the different historical experiences, that we were unmindful of our own continuing challenges in America. I've tried to knock down all those barriers to honest dialog.

And I've tried to establish enough credibility in being candid and honest over time in the things we've done together—working on the peace in the Korean Peninsula, working to contain proliferation, to working on this latest nuclear testing incident on the Indian subcontinent—to get to the point where I could be frank and open with the President and others with whom I deal. And so I'm going to do my—I'm really looking forward to this, and I'm hoping it will be effective.

Economic Sanctions

Q. Mr. President, I have a sanctions question. Do you agree with Senator Lugar that the United States has essentially become sanction-happy to its own detriment?

The President. Absolutely.

Q. And do you favor his legislation, or something like it, that would roll back in a variety of ways the sunsets—the economic analysis?

The President. Yes. Let me just say, I think sanctions can be helpful from time to time. They're most helpful, clearly, when the world community agrees. I think that the sanctions on South Africa were helpful in bringing an end to apartheid. I think the sanctions on Serbia were helpful in bringing about an agreement in Bosnia. I think the sanctions on Iraq have been helpful in preventing Saddam Hussein from rebuilding the military that could dominate its neighbors and getting back into weapons of mass destruction. So when you've got uniform sanctions, they can be helpful. Sometimes they can be effective even if the United States is doing them, if it covers a situation we can dominate economically. Sometimes they're helpful just as a gesture of disapproval.

But the way these sanctions laws are written with—they really deprive the President, any President, of the necessary flexibility in the country's foreign policy. And even if you put them on, it's hard to take them off; and the conditions for not putting them on are such that the President is put under an enormous burden of doing things that he may believe that are not in the best interest of the country.

So I just think—and it's particularly ironic that we seem to have gotten sanction-happy at a time when we are reducing our foreign assistance to the countries that agree with us, that want to build a future with us.

Now, when we refuse to contribute to the IMF and won't pay our U.N. dues, we may lose our vote in the U.N. because 20 Members of the Republican caucus in the House want us to change our policy on family planning. Now, for me, I think that's a very dangerous thing for our country. It's not in our interest because, you know, we're in danger of looking like we want to sanction everybody who disagrees with us and not help anybody who agrees with us.

Q. Should food always be off the table?

The President. Should what?

Q. Should food—foreign products always be excluded from sanctions?

The President. Well, I believe they should—I think our policy—they should be—they should always be excluded from sanctions. And then if something comes up in the future where a country seems, or a government seems so bad and they've done something so horrible that the Congress believes at that time, the President believes at that time it ought to be done, then they can do it. But I think it ought—the rule ought to be that we don't do it. And then if there's some compelling reason for an exception, it can be entertained when that exception arises. But that's why I'm supporting Senator Murray and others in their attempts to exempt food from the sanctions I imposed on India and Pakistan. I just think that on balance we're better off not doing that.

Trade With China

Q. Mr. President, clearly, China wants our backing to get into the WTO. Is there any chance that that could occur out of this summit?

The President. I don't know. I wouldn't raise hopes on that issue. I think they should be in the WTO. They're not only the most populous country in the world, but they have a large and they have a growing economy, and they've got a, you know, an economic future that makes their membership virtually essential for the WTO to do what it's suppose to do. You know, at some point, they'll be big enough and strong enough that if they're not in the WTO, it'll be almost—even though it would be hard to call it a world—a trade organization. They're not there yet, but they will be. So I would like to see them in as early as possible.

However, I think it's also important that they be in on commercially viable terms. We have obviously supported China's economic emergence. I mean, we buy far more of their products than any other country does. And we do it not only because we think it's in our interest, but because, I think, at least, it's good that the United States helps in that way, economically, China to emerge, to be able to feed all its people, to give more of its people a good life. I think that makes them more likely to be more open and more free and more constructive partners.

But I also believe that the Chinese, for all the work they've done in privatizing the economy and opening themselves to markets, still have too much access control and, from the point of view of American products and services, too much access denial.

So I'm not troubled by the fact that we buy a lot of Chinese products. And inevitably we're going to have a big increase this year because of the strength of our economy coupled with the weakness of Asian economies, but that would widen the trade deficit. But that widening trade deficit will sharpen the debate and will increase the focus on our market access.

Now, I would prefer and I want more market access, and will argue for it on my trip. I don't want any special deals for the United States. I would prefer to see China work out an accession agreement to the WTO on commercial terms that would treat us just like everybody else and have more openness for everybody and then let the Americans compete with everyone else in the Chinese market and do as well as we can. But failing that, I will do my best to get more access for our products and services.

Nuclear Detargeting Agreement

Q. What would be the symbolism of a nuclear detargeting agreement between China and the United States? And is that something you think you might realistically be looking for?

The President. Well, I think it would be a good thing if we could get it. I can't say that we have it yet, but if we could get it, I think it would be a good thing. I think there are two things about it that would be good.

First of all, it plainly would be a confidence-building measure, as you pointed out. Secondly, it would actually reduce—it would, in fact, have the benefit of reducing the chances of an accidental launch. If you detarget, yes, you can always go retarget a missile. We all know that. But it takes some more time, and 20 minutes in a world of instantaneous communications is an eternity. So the possibility of avoiding a mistake, or even backing down from a conflict, is dramatically increased with detargeting. It really makes a difference.

To go back to the confidence-building thing, the one reason I'd like to see it done is that, you know, we're going—we have to try to work our way out of the dilemma that India and Pakistan find themselves in. And it's obvious that China is a part of that. Think how much worse this would have been if China hadn't signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. What kind of pressure would the Chinese have been under to test if the Indians said, "Well, we really didn't do this because of Pakistan; we did it because of China"? But China had a principled reason not to test. They had signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

All these confidence-building measures are important because they increase the ability of China to play a constructive role in all the security issues in Asia, in particular, where we have a common interest.

Influence of Money on China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, Congresswomen Pelosi, in talking about human rights, keeps saying that there's one common denominator that explains U.S. policy toward China, and that's money, and that the Boeings and the Motorolas and the Westinghouses, through campaign contributions and other resources, have a disproportionate influence in being advocates for a warmer relationship with China. Given your concerns about campaign finance in general, is there some truth

to the role that money is playing in the China policy?

The President. Well, in view of the votes of some of the Republican Congressmen in the last couple of weeks, she may have a weaker argument there. [*Laughter*] I don't know.

I think that the members of the—that a lot of these companies tend to support Members of Congress who support more open trade with China and other places. But I don't think it's—you know, I think that in order for her argument to be right, the flipside would have to be true. That is, it would have to be true that if none of these companies contributed any money to any Republicans or Democrats, that every President would choose to isolate China and have no dealings with them, not give them most-favored-nation status, force them to make their way in the world without any kind of constructive commercial relations with the United States until they did exactly what we wanted on matters that we are concerned about in human rights and religious rights. And I just don't think that's true.

And I guess we're the best example. I'm sure that if you add it all up, that these companies have given far more money to the Republicans than they have to the Democrats. And I'm doing this because I think it's the right thing for America. I don't think those companies should be disabled from making contributions just because they happen to do business in China, nor do I believe that most—I think contributions normally tend to flow to people who are doing things that these companies agree with, but that most of them do it on conviction and then different people on different sides support different groups. I don't think that they bought this policy, and I know they haven't bought the policy of this Government. I'm doing what I think is best for the American people and what I think is going to give our kids a safer, more prosperous world to live in in the 21st century, and one I think is most likely to lead to a freer, more open China.

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, considering the economic developments in Asia this week, specifically Japan, what will you say to the Chinese to convince them to stick to their pledge and not to devalue their currency?

The President. Well, first of all, that obviously has got to be their decision to make. But I think they deserve a lot of credit for resisting the temptation to devalue. Now, there will be a price for them in devaluation—you know it's not a free decision. But I think they deserve a lot of credit for trying to be a force for stability in Asia in this financial crisis.

I will urge them to adhere to their policy as long as they can and to work with me in trying to create conditions in Asia that restore growth, starting with Japan embracing others. Because that ultimately, the ultimate guarantee against their devaluing their currency is the easing of the conditions which make them want to devalue, or at least force them to consider that option.

So I think the main thing—what I'm going to tell them is, "Look, I'm working hard with the Japanese; we've seen some progress this week; we've seen a clear, unambiguous commitment from the Japanese Government to undertake serious financial reform, and we're doing this—we're doing everything we know to do on this. And so, if you all hang in there with us, we think that there will come a time in the relatively near future when the conditions will begin to change, and you won't feel any pressure to devalue." I think that's the most important thing I could say to them, and I'm going to try to help create a different reality if I can.

President's Trip to China

Q. President Bush was in China in February of '89; he gave Li Peng a pair of cowboy boots. It turned out to be a somewhat unfortunate choice of gifts. Are you taking any presents to President Jiang Zemin on this trip?

The President. I am. As a matter of fact, I'm still—I sent out a note yesterday to explore two or three different options for gifts. But I don't want to give it away and destroy the secret. They're not cowboy boots. But if he gives me some, I won't be offended. I've got several pair and like them very much. [*Laughter*]

Q. We know President Jiang has a tendency to quote the Gettysburg Address. I think when he was with President Ramos of the Philippines they broke into "Love Me Tender." Do you expect something like that this time, as well?

The President. No, but I know all the verses to "Love Me Tender." [*Laughter*] I can hold my own if that's what the drill is. I can do that. He likes music, you know. He likes American music.

And he's a very interesting man, President Jiang. I remember when I first met him. You know, there were lots of articles at the time saying that he had been a mayor of Shanghai, and he was a very nice man but most people thought he was going to be a transitional figure, you know. And so I met him. We spent a couple of hours together, and it was not the warmest of meetings, you know, because we had all these differences between us and no personal chemistry to overcome it.

But after the meeting, I told all the people that were with me, I said, "I believe he's in this for the long haul; I expect him to emerge." And he has. I mean, I could see he had been a man that had been underestimated by outsiders, that his sort of friendly and open demeanor and his affinity for singing Western songs and quoting from Lincoln and all that, that it had led people to preach false judgments about his capacity and his toughness.

Legislative Agenda

Q. Sir, if I might switch gears and ask a non-China question along the lines of what you said today in your comments about tobacco. The last two congressional sessions have been marked at the end by a fairly remarkable coming together of the two parties on issues like welfare reform a couple of years ago, and then the balanced budget this year, but judging by the strength of your criticism today of Congress, it sounds like your instinct is that this year could be a very good year. Is that true?

The President. It could be, but I wouldn't give up on the other. I mean, I think we still might—we might still see a lot of progress at the end. We've got, you know, we've got this Patients' Bill of Rights still out there; we've got a big child care initiative still out there; a lot of the education agenda is still out there; a lot of the environmental agenda's still out there.

And this tobacco settlement is still very much alive as far as I'm concerned. This thing—because this thing has been hashed over and debated and amended and worked up and down and sideways, people pretty much know what the parameters are now. So it's not inconceivable that we could still get an agreement on this before this is over.

So I'm still hoping that progress will triumph over partisanship at the end and that we'll see at the close, as the Congress—either now, before the August recess, or when they come back in September, and they don't want to stay very long because they want to go home and campaign, and they've got all the appropriations bills and all this stuff still to do. I'm hoping that a different atmosphere will take over, and we'll see just what happened before.

You're quite right; we had a lot of success in '95. We had a lot of success in '96. We had a lot success—not '95—we had success in '96 and '97, and whether we will in '98 or not, I don't know. We could repeat '95. I mean we really could get to the point where we were almost as bad off as we were in '95, or we could wind up with a replay of '96 and '97. And it's really going to be up to the Republican majority to decide. But, you know, my door is open, and they know what I want. I have been very clear, I think, about it. And I'll remain hopeful and upbeat about it.

Q. Will you be able to meet with Senator McCain before you leave for China? Do you have plans, are you trying to put——

The President. I certainly intend to talk to him. He did a good job. He did the best he could. And he deserves the thanks of the American people for this. I'm grateful to him for what he did. And it's not over. It's not over. And it won't be over for me until I get on the helicopter and ride off into the distance in 2½ years. So I'm going to keep working on this until the end.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 20. The following journalists participated in the interview: Tom Mattesky, CBS News; Bob Deans, Cox Newspapers; and David Westphal, McClatchy Newspapers. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng of China; Jim Mann, journalist, Los Angeles Times; former President George Bush; and President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's Radio Address
June 20, 1998

Good morning. Tomorrow is Father's Day, the day we pay tribute to the irreplaceable role fathers play throughout our children's lives. There is no greater responsibility and no greater reward than raising a child. And for me, no job, not even the Presidency, has been more important.

I want to talk to you today about what we're doing to protect our fathers, our grandfathers, and all men from one of the greatest health threats they face, prostate cancer. This year nearly 200,000 people will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and 40,000 will die from it. In fact, every year, as many men die from prostate cancer as women die from breast cancer.

For far too long, too little was known about prostate cancer. Too little was said about it out of embarrassment and fear. Because of this, too little was done about it as precious research dollars were spent on other problems.

For 5 years now, we've worked hard to increase public awareness about prostate cancer and to find a cure. Since I first took office, we have increased funding for prostate cancer research at the National Institutes of Health by 100 percent. This year alone we're funding more than 450 critically important research projects on prostate cancer, ranging from prevention to detection to treatment. Last year scientists at the Human Genome Project and Johns Hopkins University located the first gene known to predispose men to prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is the first disease being studied by the Cancer Genome Anatomy Project, a very exciting new program we recently launched at the National Cancer Institute. We are closing in on this silent killer.

But as far as we've come, we know many questions about prostate cancer remain unanswered. We do not fully understand the role of environmental and dietary factors in prostate cancer. We do not fully understand why the disease progresses at such varying rates in different men. We do not yet know why prostate cancer disproportionately affects African-American men. And we do not yet know how to eliminate the risks of treatment for prostate cancer that discourage too many men from seeing their doctors.

The only way we will ever answer these questions and the only way we will ever beat prostate cancer is by continuing to invest in research. Today I am pleased to announce that the Department of Defense is awarding $60 million in grants to some of the most promising research projects in the country. These grants will fund innovative new studies to determine the causes of prostate cancer, to develop new methods of prevention and detection, and most of all, to discover groundbreaking new treatments that will save lives.

These grants are an important step in our fight against prostate cancer. But we must press on. This year, as part of the historic legislation to protect our children from tobacco, I proposed to make the largest commitment in history to funding cutting-edge cancer research, a two-thirds increase to the National Cancer Institute. My proposal would also allow people on Medicare to participate in cancer clinical trials. This is especially important for prostate cancer, which overwhelmingly affects men over 65. The more older men are able to participate in these trials, the more we will learn about the disease and the faster we'll be able to find a cure.

But 3 days ago a Republican minority in the Senate bowed to enormous pressure by the tobacco industry and voted to kill this legislation. They voted against protecting our children from tobacco, against our families, and they voted against increased cancer research and against saving lives. The American people shouldn't stand for it, and I'll keep fighting to reverse it.

This Father's Day, as we celebrate how much our fathers mean to their children, we should also renew our commitment as fathers, as parents, and as Americans to our families by insisting that Congress join together in passing comprehensive tobacco legislation to protect our children, to give us the funds for cancer research, and give us the chance to save more fathers and to strengthen our Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Handgun Control Legislation
June 21, 1998

The Justice Department's report on background checks is further proof that the Brady law is working. Since its passage, law enforcement officials have stopped hundreds of thousands of felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns every year. By keeping guns out of the hands of criminals—and putting more police in our communities—we have helped cut the crime rate to its lowest point in a generation. We must now extend the Brady law's provisions to violent juveniles and bar them from owning guns for life. I call on Congress once again to pass this needed, commonsense legislation.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m. on June 21.

Interview With Chinese Journalists
June 19, 1998

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for giving us this opportunity to have this interview with you before you fly to China. We're representing Chinese media organizations in the United States. We're following your visit to China very closely. We wish you success in your visit.

The President. Thank you.

Q. May I ask you the first question?

The President. Sure.

Q. You will be the first American President in almost 10 years to visit China. What do you expect from your visit to China? And how important it is? What kind of impact will it have on both the United States and China and even the world as a whole? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, I hope that through my trip both I and the people of the United States will learn more about China—about the rich history, about the exciting events going on today, about the incredible potential for the future of the Chinese people.

Secondly, I hope through my trip that the leaders and the people of China will learn more about the United States. And specifically, I hope that through my trip we can expand the areas of cooperation between our Governments and our people. I hope we can have an open and honest and constructive discussion about the differences we have. And I hope that the trip will give energy to the positive changes going on in China and to a better partnership between our people in the future.

China-U.S. Partnership

Q. Mr. President, you and President Jiang Zemin have agreed to work together in building a constructive strategic partnership between our two great nations for the 21st century. I remember this concept, partnership, was first raised by you during a visit to Australia a few years ago.

The President. Yes.

Q. So what was your vision then, and your vision now, for this concept?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's—let's make the big statement here. China is home to one-fourth of the world's people. It has a rapidly growing economy. It has enormous contributions to make to the world of the 21st century. And if I could just give some specific examples, I think we should be partners for stability and security in Asia. The Chinese recently led our five-party talks on the situation in South Asia as a result of the nuclear testing between—by India and Pakistan. That's just one example. The work we're doing to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula is another. The work we're doing together to try to promote stability and to restore growth to the economies of Asia is another.

I think there are important issues in the security relationship between our two countries that should be a part of this partnership. I think

the work we're doing around the world for nonproliferation and the progress that we've made working with China on nonproliferation of dangerous weapons is important. I think the work we can do to fight international crime and drug trafficking is important. China borders 15 nations and has to deal with this just as we do. I think the work that we do in energy and the environment is important. I think the work we do in science and technology is important. I think our economic partnership is very important; it's important that it grow and expand in ways that are good for the Chinese people and for the American people and help to stabilize the world.

And finally, I think that it is inevitable that in the 21st century, where the economy is based on ideas—that's basically what the computer revolution is all about; that's what information technology is all about—that we in America have to face the challenge of making sure that this economy benefits all our people, because we have various levels of education and various levels of success in dealing with that.

In China, I think you have the same challenge coming from a different direction, where the country is going through a period of significant change that I believe inevitably will lead to a more open society with more freedom of expression and more acceptance of cultural and religious diversity, because that will strengthen the country in a world where ideas dominate economic progress and political influence. The only way you can get that is to get the best from all your people. And the only way that can happen, I believe, is to observe things that we hold very dear: more freedom, more human rights, more political and civil rights.

I note with great appreciation the intention of the Chinese Government to sign the Convention on Political and Civil Rights. I think that's a great step forward.

Taiwan and the "One China" Policy

Q. Mr. President, as we all are aware, the issue of Taiwan is the most important and sensitive issue in China-U.S. relations. It is essential for a sound and a stable development of China-U.S. relations that the provisions of the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques are strictly abided by and the Taiwan issue is properly handled. The U.S. Government and yourself have made explicit the commitments that the U.S. Government pursues a "one China" policy and abides by the principles enshrined in the above-mentioned three communiques, does not support the two Chinas—or one China, one Taiwan—[*inaudible*]—of Taiwan and Taiwan's entry into the United Nations and other international organizations of sovereign states.

And Secretary of State, Madame Albright, reiterated these commitments of the U.S. Government at the press conference during her visit to China last April. So will you reaffirm these commitments during your upcoming visit to China in your discussions with President Jiang and in a public statement? How will the U.S. Government implement, in earnest, these commitments?

The President. Well, first of all, the answer to your question is that I will reaffirm those commitments. Our relationships are embodied in the three communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act passed by our Congress. And our long friendship with and economic relationships with the people of Taiwan clearly must be understood by them and by the people of China within the context of the three communiques and our support for the "one China" policy.

And all of our decisions going forward will be made within that framework, so I will clearly make that statement when I'm in China to the Chinese leaders.

Human Rights/Nonproliferation/Trade

Q. Mr. President, my question is how could the two countries work together to address the differences on such issues as human rights, nonproliferation, and China's accession to WTO and trade imbalance? Thank you.

The President. Let's take them one at a time. In the human rights area, I think one of the things that we hope we'll have is a resumption of our dialog between the two countries on human rights. I hope we will have some sort of an NGO forum on human rights. We have talked a lot with—I have talked with President Jiang and our people have talked with representatives in the Chinese Government about the prospect of having a long cooperative project on the rule of law and how it applies in commerce, how it applies to free speech and free exercise of political rights, religious rights, and things of that kind, and what relevance—how those things would work in the context of Chinese society. And I hope we will continue to work together on the rule of law and those issues.

On nonproliferation, frankly, I think it's worth pointing out that in some ways that's been the area where we've had the greatest success. China, in the last few years, has become a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention. China has accepted the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime. China has frozen—worked with us to freeze the North Korean nuclear program. China has agreed not to give assistance to the Iranian program or to support nonsafeguarded nuclear facilities, such as those in Pakistan.

So there are some things we can do together to take this even further in the area of proliferation, and I think we will on this visit. I hope we will. But that is an area where we understand each other and we have a good way of working together and where we've got a lot of progress under our belt.

On the WTO, I very much would like to see China in the WTO because of its—not just the population of the country but the size of the economy and the fact that it's growing. The WTO, like any organization, has to have certain rules and conditions of membership, and we're trying to work out the details of that.

Obviously, we in the United States would like to have some greater access to the Chinese market, to have more exports. We are by far your largest importer, and we welcome that. Our economy is strong; we've been very fortunate. And we appreciate that, and we are happy to participate in supporting China's growth by purchasing many products from China. But we seek no special favors in the Chinese market. The important thing about the World Trade Organization is that countries which enter, in effect, agree not to prefer one country over another, so the United States seeks no special favors in the Chinese market, but we would hope to get some greater access.

But I think beyond that, it's important that China become a member of the WTO, and I hope that can be done.

President's Policy on China

Q. Mr. President, some people in this country keep criticizing your China policy. So under such circumstances, how will you go ahead with China policy, and what are you going to do with the bills and the resolutions against China on Capitol Hill? Thank you.

The President. Well, I think first, of all it's important for the Chinese people to understand that in our system there are some people who criticize everything I do. [*Laughter*] If I walked out of the White House and I spread my arms and I proved I could fly—[*laughter*]—some people would claim that I had done something wrong. [*Laughter*] So it's part of democracy. So a lot of this criticism is a part of it.

One of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, said a wise thing once. He said, our enemies are our friends—he said, our critics are our friends, because they show us our faults. So it's important when people criticize you to listen to their criticism, because sometimes they're right. You know, none of us are correct in every decision we make.

So, with that background, however, I have to say in this case, I think my critics are wrong. And I believe most Americans agree with me. I believe most Americans want a constructive partnership with the Government and the people of China. I believe most Americans understand that we have differences now and 100 years from now we will have some differences, because we are different people with different cultures and different systems and different backgrounds.

And I think the important thing for the Congress is to recognize that over the long run we must choose engagement with China, not isolation from China, not estrangement from China. And then once you make that decision, then the question is, how can you expand the areas of cooperation where we can agree; how shall we manage our disagreements; and how can we learn from one another so that we can build a more peaceful, more prosperous, more open world? Even my harshest critics would have to admit that President Jiang and I have had wonderful, stimulating, and very honest discussions about our differences. It seems to me that the idea that we should have less contact with China—with the Chinese Government and with the Chinese people—is just wrong.

And I think most people agree with me. So I will continue to stick up for what I believe in, and I will do my best to defeat any legislation in the Congress that would undermine the ability of the Government of the United States to pursue the interests of the United States and the interests of the American people in developing a partnership with China and the Chinese people.

Science and Technology Cooperation

Q. My question is how do you assess the 20-year-old cooperations in science and technology between China and the United States? And what's the prospect for further cooperation in the years to come and what we'll do with the remaining U.S. sanctions against China?

The President. The remaining U.S. sanctions?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, first of all, let's talk about the 20-year cooperation in science and technology. This has actually been one of the most successful areas of our relationship. And I think most people in the United States don't know much about it. And I would be surprised if many people in China knew a lot about it.

But we have really had a remarkable record here. Our cooperation in science and technology, among other things, has led to discoveries which will help us to preserve the biodiversity of the planet, which is very important for the environment in the years ahead, as these economies grow. It has led to work in the area of seismology, which has increased the ability of both countries to predict and deal with extreme weather developments and other developments. China and the United States have both experienced earthquakes; we've both had other severe weather developments. Our cooperation has helped us to deal with that.

We've actually had a lot of progress in medical areas that help us to deal with cancer problems. And our joint work most recently discovered the important role of folic acid in dealing with a health condition called spina bifida, which is a profound problem for some children in the United States, which I think is very important.

So I think if you look to the future, when more and more scientific discoveries are being made every day, when very soon the mysteries of the human gene itself will be unlocked, when most experts predict that the 21st century's major breakthroughs will come in areas of biology, I think that this is something we should emphasize more and more, and because the potential benefits to all our people, and indeed to other people around the world, are enormous.

On the question of the sanctions—since 1989—the sanctions are in several categories. One category of sanctions has already been lifted on nuclear transfers because of the nuclear cooperation agreement signed between the United States and China. There are some others which have—which are dealt with on a case-by-case basis—for example, when you send up our commercial satellites on your rockets. And so all the others, I think, have to be dealt with in the context of specific negotiations within the framework of our law.

Visit to Shanghai

Q. Mr. President, almost a quarter century ago, in 1972, the well-known Sino-U.S. joint communique was issued in Shanghai. So, during your trip to Shanghai this time, what will be on your major agenda, and what important message are you going to bring to the people of Shanghai? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, I just want to see it—[*laughter*]—because everyone in the world now, we read constantly about the explosive growth of Shanghai, the vibrant life of the city, and how it sort of represents the future of China's economy. I want to meet there with people who are making the future of China. I'm going to meet with some young entrepreneurs. I'm going to meet with some grassroots active citizens from various walks of life. I'm going to meet with the United States and Chinese business leaders. And I'm very much looking forward to that.

But my message will be that the creation of opportunity and a better life is something that both of us want—both countries want and our peoples want. And insofar as we possibly can, we should attempt to define a common future where everyone has a chance to live up to the fullest of their capacities and to live by their imagination. And I'm very excited about going and I think it will be quite successful.

Advice to Youth

Q. Mr. President, here you have a newspaper called USA Today; in China, we have a China news daily which is China Tomorrow. So, my question is, you are one of the youngest leaders in the world; what do you have to say to the youth of China? And also, how will your visit to China this time promote exchanges of the young peoples of two countries?

The President. The first point I want to make is that the decisions we make today will affect young people more than any other group, because they have more of their lives in front of them. The young people of China and the young people of my country will live most of their lives in a new century. If medical advances

continue, some of the youngest children, the ones being born today, may well live to see the 22d century. [*Laughter*]

And I think—it therefore is very important that these young people not only educate themselves for the work they will do but also learn as much as they can about other countries—people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, people who have different faiths than they do, people who live in different systems—and that they seek to become not only responsible citizens of China but people of the world, that they seek to understand the world—never for the purpose of, if you will, escaping their own culture and background but to deepen their understanding.

I find the more I learn about other people in the world, the more I understand my own people, my own background. And in the world of the 21st century we will be given the opportunity to reconcile the differences among people by respecting those differences, but making common cause. And we will have the means to do it through technology, through travel, through open markets and economic endeavor, through respect for individuals' integrity and rights and freedom.

But we also see in other countries the hazards of the future, in the terrible ethnic and racial and religious conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo, in the Middle East, in Rwanda and Africa. And what we have to do is to find a way to move toward a greater harmony in which we can preserve the coherence of families and societies and cultures, in which we can all have honest differences, but in which we find common bonds of humanity that take the world to a higher plane. That is what the young people of the world should be thinking about. How can they do better than their parents and grandparents in moving the cause of humanity forward?

And again I say, it is not necessary for any of us to reject our heritage. China has, of all the societies, perhaps the oldest and richest culture in history. It's not necessary at all to reject that. We can become more loyal to our roots, if you will, but we have to become, all of us, people of the world as well as people of our countries and cultures.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, my question is how the Sino-U.S. relations, in the light of your coming visit to China, will affect the regional and world situation, especially in the wake of the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan and in view of the evolving Asian financial crisis?

The President. Well, the first point I would make is that it should convince everyone in China and everyone in the United States that our cooperation is more important than ever before, because no form of endeavor guarantees success. And in any system there will always be crises and problems and challenges. There is no—we're all human beings; there is no perfect problem-free way of organizing people and organizing our affairs.

Therefore, if you look at what has happened in Indonesia, if you look at the challenges faced by other nations in Asia, if you look at Japan, the second largest economy in the world, struggling now with several years of low growth or stagnation and the present crisis, a financial crisis, I would say that the number one message is we have to work together on this.

If you look at the security issues, the fact that the matter on the Korean Peninsula is still unresolved, the much larger potential for difficulty on the Indian subcontinent between India and Pakistan, and, I might say, the enormous potential for positive interaction if the misunderstandings and the difficulties between India and Pakistan can be resolved, and if China and India could reach an understanding about their security concerns over the long run, the potential for benefit to the Chinese people of having over one billion people on the Indian subcontinent working with them instead of wondering whether they're in strategic conflict with them—this is enormous.

So for the United States—obviously we have no territorial ambitions in Asia whatever, but we have a great stake in the future of Asia. I can't imagine that any of these great challenges can be resolved unless the United States and China work together.

President's Trip to China

Q. Yes, sir. I am from China—[*inaudible*]—which is the largest TV network in China. We have viewers of one billion. On behalf of them, I would like to express our warm welcome to you for your state visit to China.

The President. Thank you.

Q. Would you please take this opportunity to say a few words to them, and what kind of message you will bring for them. Thank you.

The President. Well, my message is that the American people wish the Chinese people well. We want to know more about the China of today and the China of yesterday, and we want to be a big part of the China of tomorrow; that we are a people that in our relatively short history of 220-plus years, have accomplished some things that we're very proud of. And we believe in our system of democracy and individual rights and liberties, from free speech to religious liberty. And we believe that the International Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations embraces, has something to give people everywhere.

But we also respect the culture and the heritage of the people of China, and we are prepared for a long-term, strategic, constructive partnership. We want to expand our areas of cooperation. We want more Americans to visit China. We want more Chinese people to visit America. We want more American students to study in China, and we want more Chinese students to study in America. We want to find ways to resolve the differences between us.

And most of all, we want to be part of constructing a world in the 21st century where nations are proud of their culture and their heritage and their history, but where the borders are more open to new ideas and new cooperation. And that's what I hope will come out of this trip.

You know, the United States at many times in our country's past has felt a special affinity to China. And we've had many Americans who have lived in China, doing religious work, doing charitable work, doing business work. We have been allies in war. We have done a lot of things together. And I think there is a greater feeling for the Chinese people in the hearts of Americans than perhaps many Chinese realize. And I hope that this trip will help us to continue to go forward in a new and better way.

And so I hope the Chinese people will be glad that I'm coming, and I hope we'll be able to have a constructive trip that, as I said, looks to the future, expands cooperation, and finds a very open and honest way of expressing our differences, and exchanges ideas about what could help both countries deal with the challenges we face.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you. I enjoyed this.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on June 21. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin of China.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of Military Forces for Stabilization of Areas of the Former Yugoslavia

June 19, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In my last 6-month report to the Congress I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

We continue to work in concert with others in the international community to encourage the parties to fulfill their commitments under the Dayton Peace Agreement and to build on the gains achieved over the last 2 years. It remains in the U.S. national interest to help bring peace to Bosnia, both for humanitarian reasons and to halt the dangers the fighting in Bosnia represented to security and stability in Europe generally. Through American leadership and in conjunction with our NATO allies and other countries, we have seen increasingly rapid progress

toward sustainable peace in Bosnia. We have helped foster more cooperative pro-Dayton leadership in Bosnia-Herzegovina, resulting in much improved performance by the parties in fulfilling their responsibilities to implement the Dayton Peace Agreement.

The United Nations Security Council authorized member states to establish the follow-on force in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1088 of December 12, 1996. On June 15, 1998, the Security Council extended the authorization for the SFOR for an additional period terminating June 21, 1999. The mission of SFOR is to deter resumption of hostilities and stabilize the security environment to facilitate the civilian implementation process.

The SFOR has successfully deterred the resumption of hostilities by patrolling the Zone of Separation, inspecting and monitoring heavy weapons cantonment sites, enhancing and supervising Entity Armed Forces (EAF) demining work, and, within existing authorities and capabilities, providing support to international agencies.

The primary way SFOR supports the civilian implementation effort is by contributing to a secure environment. The SFOR works closely with the International Police Task Force (IPTF), which was established on December 21, 1995, under Security Council Resolution 1035. With SFOR support, the IPTF has successfully created indigenous public security capabilities by reforming and training the local police. Both the SFOR and the IPTF, as a result, enhance public security in ways that promote civil implementation of the Peace Agreement. This collective approach works to make the implementation process progressively more self-sustaining without exceeding the SFOR's current level of intensity and involvement.

By contributing to a secure environment, the SFOR has fostered greater progress by civilian implementers, including helping to restore road, rail, and air transportation links, reforming racist and nondemocratic media, and supporting international preparations for supervision of the national elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina in September 1998. In addition, the SFOR has contributed to efforts to bring 31 persons indicted for war crimes into custody in The Hague.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia is approximately 7,800—roughly one-third of the number of U.S. troops deployed with IFOR at the peak of its strength. The U.S. forces participating in SFOR include U.S. Army forces that were stationed in Germany and the United States, as well as special operations forces, airfield operations support forces, air forces, and reserve component personnel. An amphibious force under U.S. control is normally available as a strategic reserve in the Mediterranean Sea, and a carrier battle group remains available to provide support for air operations.

All NATO nations and 20 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided troops or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. troops are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 3,000 U.S. troops are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. Since December 1997, U.S. forces have sustained no fatalities.

A U.S. Army contingent remains deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as part of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). This U.N. peacekeeping force, which includes some 350 U.S. soldiers, observes and monitors conditions along the borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania. The UNPREDEP continues to play a key role in preventing the spillover of ethnic conflict from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) into FYROM and the region. In doing so, it has helped FYROM become a bulwark against the southward spread of the conflict in the FRY. Several U.S. Army helicopters are also deployed to provide support to U.S. forces and may support UNPREDEP as required on a case-by-case basis. The Security Council voted December 4, 1997, to authorize an extension of the UNPREDEP mandate through August 31, 1998. We are currently exploring options regarding the extension of UNPREDEP's mandate in light of the growing violence and instability in Kosovo.

A small contingent of U.S. military personnel also served in Croatia in direct support of the Transitional Administrator of the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slovenia (UNTAES). These personnel were redeployed when the UNTAES mandate expired on January 15, 1998; a follow-on U.N. civilian police operation continues in the region.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and

Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22.

Presidential Determination No. 98–32—Memorandum on the Purchase of Airline Tickets to Lebanon

June 19, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Purchase of Airline Tickets to Lebanon

By virtue of the authority vested in me by 49 U.S.C. 40106(b), I hereby determine that the prohibition of transportation services to Lebanon established by Presidential Determination 85–14 of July 1, 1985, as amended by Presidential Determination 92–41 of August 17, 1992, is hereby further amended to permit U.S. air carriers to engage in foreign air transportation, solely through interline arrangements, of passengers, including U.S. and non-U.S. citizens, and their accompanying baggage, to and from Lebanon and to permit U.S. and foreign air carriers to sell in the United States air transportation services for passengers, including U.S. and non-U.S. citizens, to and from Lebanon.

All other prohibitions set forth in the above-referenced Presidential Determinations, including the prohibition on direct operations to Lebanon by U.S. air carriers, remain in effect.

Presidential Determination 95–42 is hereby revoked. You are directed to implement this determination immediately and to revoke effective immediately any regulations inconsistent herewith.

You are further directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22, but it was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Remarks Announcing a Survey of Youth Tobacco Brand Preference and an Exchange With Reporters

June 22, 1998

The President. Good morning. I'm about to leave for Vice President Gore's Family ReUnion Conference in Nashville, something that he and Mrs. Gore have done now for many years, to discuss central concerns of America's families. And since we have been here in the White House, we've often used the conference as a springboard for new initiatives to strengthen our families and move our country forward.

Today we're going to be talking about health concerns of American families. Of course, one of the biggest health concerns is youth smoking, something we've been discussing a lot around here lately. We all now know that 3,000 young people start smoking every day, and that 1,000 will die earlier because of it, even though it's illegal in every State to sell cigarettes to young people.

That is why 3 years ago, through the Food and Drug Administration, my administration began to act to end the practice of tobacco companies marketing cigarettes to children and why for the past year we've been working so hard to forge an honorable and bipartisan compromise to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco.

A majority of the Senate now stands ready to join us, but last week the Republican leadership placed partisan politics and tobacco companies above our families. Their vote was not just pro-tobacco-lobby; it was anti-family. The bipartisan bill they blocked would not only protect families from tobacco advertising aimed at children; it would protect children from drugs, give low and middle income families a tax cut by redressing the marriage penalty, and make substantial new investments in medical research, especially in cancer research.

The congressional leadership seems willing to walk away from its obligation to our children, but this issue is too important to walk away. We'll continue to move forward on every possible front to protect children.

By the end of year, the FDA's operation to enforce its ban on tobacco sales to minors will be active in nearly every State in America. And while we wait for Congress to heed the call of America's families, I'm instructing the Department of Health and Human Services to produce the first-ever annual survey on the brands of cigarettes teenagers smoke and which companies are most responsible for the problem. Parents, quite simply, have a right to know. Public health officials can also use this information to reduce youth smoking.

The tobacco companies' automatic and angry dismissal of this new survey shows their continued disregards for their children's health and parents' concerns. We have a right to know. For years and years and years, they had information that proved tobacco was addictive and that demonstrated they were marketing to children, and they didn't think we had a right to know that either. I believe this is very helpful information, and we'll do our best to get good, accurate, honest data.

Once this information becomes public, companies will then no longer be able to evade accountability, and neither will Congress. From now on, the new data will help to hold tobacco companies accountable for targeting children.

Again, I urge Congress to pass bipartisan comprehensive legislation rather than a watered-down bill written by the tobacco lobby. The leadership must put families' interests above big tobacco's interests. America's children deserve that, and I'll continue to do everything I can to ensure that they get it.

Thank you.

Q. Isn't it a lost cause, Mr. President?

The President. No.

Q. Mr. President, absent any penalties, what confidence do you have that just finger pointing at the tobacco companies will have any impact on teen smoking?

The President. I think if you have an annual survey—first of all, I think it will be easier to get penalties. But if you have an annual survey that shows a substantial differential in brand preference among young people, then it will clearly demonstrate that there is something in the nature of the advertising that has something to do with this.

I mean, we basically know that the three elements involved here are advertising and access and then the general culture, so I believe that—I think that advertising is very important. If there is no advertising—excuse me, and price, the fourth thing is price. And so if advertising can be isolated and we can see that in brand preference, I think it will help us quite a lot to forge some good policies.

But you've got to understand, I still think we can get legislation, and I'm not at all ready to give up on it. I'm going to keep fighting for it. A majority wants it. The leadership of the Republican Party in Congress does not want it—desperately doesn't want it. And the tobacco companies don't want it. But the American people do.

And all of the evidence that I've seen shows that the more people know about what's in the bill, as opposed to their $40-million characterization of it, the more their support goes up. So we need to keep fighting, and we intend to continue to do that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 a.m. outside the Oval Office at the White House, prior to his departure for Nashville, TN.

Remarks to the Family Re-Union VII Conference in Nashville, Tennessee
June 22, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, Tipper, to all the leaders of the conference, Surgeon General Satcher, Governor McWherter, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, let me say that I look forward to coming here every year so much. I always learn something, and I always see people who are full of energy and idealism and a sense of purpose, who remind me of what, at bottom, my efforts as President should be all about. So I always get a lot more out of being here than I can possibly give back, and I thank you for that.

All these issues have been very important to our family for a long time. I grew up in a family where my mother was a nurse and where she served people before Medicare and Medicaid. I never will forget one time when a fruit picker that she had put to sleep for surgery brought us four bushels of peaches. I was really disappointed when third-party reimbursement came in. [*Laughter*] I thought the previous system was far superior. [*Laughter*]

When Hillary and I met, she was taking an extra year in law school to work at the Yale University Hospital in the Child Studies Center to learn more about children and health and the law and how they interfaced. And when we went home to Arkansas, she started the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children, a long time before she ever wrote her now-famous book, "It Takes a Village."

The Vice President and Mrs. Gore have plainly been the most influential, in a profoundly positive sense, family ever to occupy their present position. Whether it was in mental health or the V-chip in television ratings or telecommunications policy or technology policy or environmental policy or reinventing Government or our relations with Russia and South Africa and a whole raft of other places, history will record both the Vice President and Mrs. Gore as an enormous force for good in America. And I am very grateful to them.

This family conference is one of their most remarkable achievements. And as they said, it predates by a year our partnership and what happened since 1993. But I will always be very grateful to them for this as well.

I'd like to begin with just a remark or two about the tobacco issue, since it's been raised and it was a big part of the movies that we saw. We know that it's the number one public health problem children face in America. We know that more people die every year from tobacco-related illnesses than from murders and fires and accidents and cancer—not cancer but AIDS—and many other conditions combined. We know that 3,000 children start to smoke every day even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to kids in every State in the country, and 1,000 die early because of it. We know all these things.

We also know that in order to reduce teen smoking, you have to do something about price; you have to do something about access; you have to do something about marketing, both direct marketing, I would argue, by the tobacco companies and their indirect marketing by placing cigarettes strategically in movies, as we saw in this very compelling set of film clips. Now, we know all that.

In what I had hoped was a remarkable and surprising example of bipartisanship in spite of enormous political pressure to the contrary, the United States Senate voted out of committee 19 to one, almost unanimously, a bill that would raise the price of cigarettes, stop advertising, restrict access, put penalties on companies that violated the requirements, and use the money for medical research—especially cancer research—for reimbursements to the States for the health costs related to smoking they had incurred, which money the States would use on health care, child care, and education. And for good measure, we accepted amendments sponsored by Republicans in the Senate to spend some of the money fighting drug usage among our children and to give a tax cut to low and moderate income working families to offset the so-called marriage penalty.

Then the bill came to a vote in the Senate. The American people are now learning that, except for the budget, a minority in the Senate can require every bill to pass with 60 votes, not 51. We had 57 votes to pass that bill, but 43 Senators followed the bidding of the Republican leadership and the tobacco companies, and

at least temporarily derailed that bill. It was a brazen act of putting politics over people and partisanship over progress.

I say this to you so that you understand the importance of gatherings like this in grassroots networks. No one doubts that this came about in part because of an unanswered $40-million advertising campaign by the tobacco companies which could not be matched by the Cancer Society, the Heart Association, the Lung Association, or most of you in this room. What you should know is, I'll bet my bottom dollar the night the news of the bill dying broke on the evening news, public opinion switched back to our side, just like it always will as long as people know the facts of what's in the bill and who's behind the opposition to it.

So I say to you this is the intersection of politics, public health, and family. And the cutting-edge issues up there right now are this bill and the Patients' Bill of Rights, about which the First Lady spoke. I don't think you should let this Congress go home, if you can stop it, without acting on these measures and taking care of our families and our future.

Let me say, on a more positive note, this time in our history—on the edge of a new century, in a new millennium, with our economy strong, many of our social problems declining, a great deal of self-confidence in the country—is a real time of decision for us. Usually free societies at good times like this take longer summer vacations, spend more time in the sun. That may be good, at least the vacation part; wear your sunscreen if you do the other. [*Laughter*] Dr. Satcher will send me a gold star. [*Laughter*] Or you can say, hey, we can do things now we couldn't do in normal times. We have confidence. We have emotional space. We have the opportunity to dream dreams about the future. We can take on the big challenges of the country. I think that's what we ought to be doing, because we know that no set of circumstances stays the same forever, and because we know that things are really changing fast, and because we need to be looking to the future.

What are these big challenges? Well, a couple related directly to the concerns of the conference: we need to make sure that Social Security and Medicare will be reformed so that they can accommodate the baby boom generation without bankrupting our children and our grandchildren, and we shouldn't be spending the surplus that finally is about to emerge after three decades of deficit spending. We shouldn't be squandering that surplus until we have saved Social Security and we know what we're going to do with Medicare.

We have to figure out how to grow the economy and do more to preserve the environment, not just to avoid making it worse. We've got to actually recover many of our essential environmental things. And that's a health care issue.

We're here at Vanderbilt—we've got the finest system of higher education in the world. We have to develop the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, but we still have double-digit unemployment in some urban neighborhoods, on some Native American reservations, and in some poor rural communities. We have to bring the spark of enterprise to every place in America to prove that what we're doing really works. These are the things that we have to do. And we have to prove that we can all get along together across all the racial and religious and other lines that divide us, because in the world today, which is supposed to be so modern and so wonderfully revolutionized by the Internet, old-fashioned racial and religious and ethnic hatred seems to be dominating a lot of the troubles in the world. If we want to do good beyond our borders, we have to be good at home.

But on that list should be health care. Why? Because we have the finest health care in the world, but we still can't figure out how to give everybody access to it in a quality, affordable way. And in some form or fashion, every family in America just about, sooner or later, runs up against that fact.

Shirley MacLaine was in there griping about her daughter getting the shot on the movie, you know? Now, why do you suppose—nevermind the movie—why do you suppose something like that would happen in real life? Could it have something to do with the fact that not just HMO's but the Government tried to take steps to stop medical expenses from going up at 3 times the rate of inflation, but like everything else, if you overdo it and the hospitals have to cut down on service personnel, that people will be late getting their pain shots? I mean, we have to come to grips with the fact that we still are alone among all the advanced societies in the world in not figuring out how to deal with this issue.

And I personally think we also—we ought to be honest—you know, it's easy to—we could all get laughs with HMO jokes, but the truth is there was a reason for managed care, and that is that it was unsustainable for the United States, with the smallest percentage of its people with health insurance of any advanced country, to keep spending a higher and higher percentage of its income and increasing that expenditure at 3 times the rate of inflation. Pretty soon it would have consumed everything else. That was an unsustainable situation.

And a lot of good has come out of better management. I don't think anyone would deny that. The problem is, if that kind—if techniques like that are not anchored to fundamental bedrock principles, then in the end, the process overcomes the substance. And you have the kind of abuses and frustrations that have been talked about. That's why the Patients' Bill of Rights is important.

Now, the second thing I want to say is, we have to figure out how to do a better job of turning laws into reality. One of the things—the Vice President, I hope, will get his just desserts—we may have to wait for 20 years of history books to be written—but the work that we have done in reinventing Government is not sexy; it doesn't rate the headlines every day; people don't scream and yell when you mention the phrase; it doesn't sort of ring on the tip of the tongue. But we've got the smallest Government we've had in 35 years, and it's doing more and doing it better than we were doing before in our core important missions. And we've gotten rid of hundreds of programs and thousands and thousands of pages of regulation, but the Government, on balance, is performing better. And it's because of our commitment to change the way things work.

The biggest challenge we've got right now is to fulfill the promise we made to the American people when we persuaded the Congress to put in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 sufficient funds—the biggest increase in Medicare funding since 1965—to provide health insurance to at least 5 million more children. There are 10 million or more children in America without any health insurance. We had—the latest numbers indicate that 4½ million of those kids are actually eligible for Medicaid.

Now, most of you here know that when we passed this program we provided for the establishment, State-by-State, of things that are called CHIPS, child health insurance programs, to provide health insurance mostly to the children of lower and moderate income working families that don't have health insurance at work. But if you want to get the maximum number of people insured for the money that's been allocated, obviously the first thing we need to do is to sign every child up for Medicaid who's eligible for it. And again, we're talking, most of these children live in lower income working families. They've been rendered eligible by action of the Federal Government or by action of the State legislature in Tennessee and the other 49 States in our Union.

Recent studies have shown that uninsured children are more likely to be sick as newborns, less likely to be immunized, less likely to receive treatment for even recurring illnesses like ear infections or asthma, which without treatment can have lifelong adverse consequences and ultimately impose greater costs on the health care system as they undermine the quality of life.

Now, we're working with the States to do more, but I want the Federal Government to do more as well. Four months ago I asked eight Federal agencies to find new ways to help provide health care for kids. Today, at the end of this panel, I will sign an Executive memorandum which directs those agencies to implement more than 150 separate initiatives, to involve hundreds of thousands of people getting information that they can use to enroll people in schools, in child care centers and elsewhere, involve partnerships with job centers and Head Start programs.

This is what reinventing Government is all about. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that these initiatives are, quote, "representing the best of creative government and absolutely critical to achieving our common goal of providing health insurance for all eligible children." So that's what we're going to try to do coming out of this conference, to do our part.

Let me again say that those of you who are here, if you believe that families are at the center of every society, if you believe they are the bedrock of our present and the hope of our future, if you think the most important job of any parent is raising a successful child, then surely—surely—we have to deal with the health care challenges, all of which have been discussed: caring for our parents and grandparents, caring for our children. Surely we have to provide our families with tools to do that if we

expect America to be what it ought to be in the new century. We'll do our part, and I'm proud of you for doing yours.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in Langford Auditorium at Vanderbilt University during Family Re-Union VII: Families and Health. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Ned Ray McWherter of Tennessee and actress Shirley MacLaine. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Gore, Tipper Gore, and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Excerpt of Remarks During the Family Re-Union VII Conference in Nashville

June 22, 1998

Family-Centered Health Care

The President. Is there any kind of national organization of people like you, who are working for family-centered care everywhere and advocating it?

Julie Moretz. There is. There actually is—the Institute for Family-Centered Care, as matter of fact. And there are also a lot of family support programs, such as Parent To Parent, because, as anyone knows, parents need to be around other parents who have gone through similar situations. And there is a lot of support out there and I do encourage parents who have been through situations like this to get involved. And that is one way parents can get involved.

The President. Don't you believe that recovery rates are better when there's family involvement when the people are in the hospital, whether it's children or parents or siblings?

Ms. Moretz. There is no question about it. Daniel has had at least 47 doctors—that I can count—47 doctors come in and come out of his room at some given point over 7 years. And I have to recognize that we, David and I, we are the constant—and his brother and sister—we are the constant in his life, and we are the ones that can help to promote and facilitate his health care. Yes—and I have to say that his health care has been extremely wonderful. Obviously, he wouldn't be here today if it wasn't. So, thank goodness, and we are very proud of the health care that he has received.

[*The discussion continued.*]

Patients' Bill of Rights

The President. If I could just reinforce something Tony said—and I thank you for everything you said—you may hear this in the debate in the Congress when this comes up this year. There may be some who really don't want this to pass who say, "Well, look, a lot of companies are embracing these principles anyway." If a company is willing to say all the things Tony said—"If you've got to go to an emergency room, you can go; if you need a specialist, you can have it; the doctors can't be gagged, they can recommend whatever good care is; if you have a problem with your plan, you can have an appeal"—if you have all those things, if he does that, why should somebody else be able to put him at a financial disadvantage, in whether his plan can make money as compared to their plan, by simply not following the same thing?

It would be even—it's even more unfair to the good HMO's and the good managed-care operations in this country not to have this legislation, because if they go out and do the right thing, then other people who are unscrupulous can come in and try to undercut them by appearing to offer the same service at a lower cost. So he just made a terrific argument for why this bill ought to pass this year—by doing the right thing and because he's doing the right thing.

I thank you very much.

[*The discussion continued.*]

Children's Health Insurance Outreach

The President. I would just like to thank you for what you said. I hope that this order that I'm signing today will deal with that by essentially telling all the Government agencies that, whenever possible, they have to work through people like you to do the outreach—because—well, this weekend Hillary and I spent some

time with some friends of ours, and one of them commented that he'd just been to a high school graduation in northern Virginia where it was announced that the graduates, just a few hundred kids, came from 70 different national and ethnic groups. That's just one high school. We have so many communities—the Asian communities, alone, if you think—from Southeast Asia and all the different language groups, that a lot of these people are, as you pointed out, two-thirds or more are working people; many of them, their first language is not English, and if there is not some affirmative attempt to reach them through someone they know and trust, their children will not get on this program. I don't care how many flyers we put out or PSA's we do or anything else.

This is very valuable, what you've said, and I think we need to work a little harder on it. But I thank you for being here.

[*The discussion continued.*]

Violence in Schools

The President. First of all, I'd like to thank you for the work you do. And I'd also like to thank Mrs. Gore for being our administration's leading person on mental health issues. If it hadn't been for her, we wouldn't have had a strong mental health component in the child health insurance program or the mental health parity legislation. And I'm very grateful for that.

I'd like to ask a question which may be a little unfair, because I know you haven't been prepared for it exactly, but I'm sure you've thought about it. I just got back from a very moving trip out West, and you may have seen it. I visited Springfield, Oregon, where they had one of the many, many school shootings we've seen. And I've been studying the facts of all these cases, and it does appear that in each case or, in most of the cases where we've had these terrible tragedies—I might add, against a background of dropping juvenile crime overall—that there was some kind of early warning. And I wonder if you could recommend to me, because the Congress wants to do something on this, everybody is interested in this, this is—how do you think we ought to deal with children who—6,100 kids were removed from school last year for bringing a gun to school. I'd be very surprised if more than 10 percent of them got some sort of comprehensive mental health analysis as a result of it.

We have—goodness knows how many kids made threats that they had no earthly intention of doing anything about it, but in one of these school shootings there was an explicit threat made beforehand. What advice can you give us about what the role of mental health ought to be in sort of early warning systems, preventive care, and that sort of thing, and particularly—like I said, I don't want to put you on the spot on the Springfield thing, but it's very much on my mind because of what was told to me out there about the facts and because the young man did have a gun in the school the day before and was sent home.

Sheila Savannah. Well, one of the responses that we have pulled together is we have a family resource center in an elementary school and so we work with the teachers. And we've had to do a lot of training of teachers, of youth development workers, of child care workers, to really identify the early signs of mental health needs.

There are so many children with unmet needs. And so often those—their activities get interpreted as behavior problems, as discipline actions, and we don't ever stop and do a strong assessment of what are the needs of these children.

Children that carry guns are afraid. They really have very strong reasons for carrying them. And we work with a lot of children that have been suspended or expelled because they've been carrying weapons to school, and we've been real fortunate in Houston. But I know it's of growing concern because there are so many children that don't think that they'll live to see 20. And so those are kids that carry guns to protect themselves.

Or, we've spent a lot of time and a lot of prevention efforts that focus on children being okay, and so I've seen a lot of children who suppress their emotional disturbance. They see violence on the streets; they see violence in their homes; and rather than being emotionally disturbed, they're being trained to be okay. And so when children respond that way, their sensitivity becomes dull, and they can act out in those kinds of ways that really hurt humanity.

And I think one of the things that we need to do is make sure that everyone is well aware of some of the signs of mental health needs and really work to make sure that we remove the stigmatism to receiving mental health services.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:15 p.m. in Langford Auditorium at Vanderbilt University. In his remarks, he referred to discussion participants Julie Moretz, chair, Family Advisory Council, Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center; Anthony Watson, chairman and chief executive officer, New York HIP Health Plans; and Sheila Savannah, executive director, People in Partnership, a nonprofit organization working with recipients of mental health services.

Memorandum on Actions To Improve Children's Health Insurance Outreach

June 22, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Education, the Commissioner of Social Security

Subject: Federal Actions to Improve Children's Health Insurance Outreach

Last year, with bipartisan support from the Congress, I was pleased to sign into law the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). This new program will help millions of children of working families obtain affordable and much-needed health insurance. As of today, 20 States have had their CHIP plans approved and most States have applied for approval.

Yet, as recent studies show, rapidly implementing CHIP and ensuring that all eligible children are enrolled in this new program or Medicaid has never been more important. This month, a major report from the Institute of Medicine confirmed that children without health insurance are more likely to be sick, less likely to be immunized, and less likely to receive medical treatment for illnesses, such as recurrent ear infections and asthma. Without treatment, these diseases can have lifelong consequences. Another study by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research concluded that there are 4.7 million uninsured children who are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid. Several million more will become eligible for CHIP as States implement their programs.

Only an intense, sustained campaign in both the public and private sectors can address the significant challenge of uninsured children. On February 18, 1998, I requested children's health outreach proposals from eight Federal agencies on how the executive branch of the United States Government can assist in children's health insurance outreach.

In response, I received the *Report to the President: The Interagency Task Force on Children's Health Insurance Outreach,* which contains proposals on how to engage the executive branch in children's health outreach. I have reviewed this report and found these proposals sound, innovative, and worth undertaking.

Therefore, I hereby direct you to take the following actions to promote children's health insurance outreach, consistent with the missions of your agencies and the content and timelines of each potential initiative described in the *Report*.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that the:

- Health Care Financing Administration, among other proposed actions, creates an on-line clearing house for outreach information and facilitates relationships between State Medicaid and CHIP agencies and community-based and private organizations to identify, educate, and enroll uninsured children in State health insurance programs;
- Health Resources and Services Administration, among other proposed actions, trains health care providers to help identify and enroll children in health insurance through its National Health Service Corps and Area Health Education Centers, which trains students and health providers and distributes information to families that use the community clinics that it funds;
- Administration for Children and Families, among other proposed actions, distributes

promotional material and applications for Medicaid and CHIP to the families they serve through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Head Start sites, and subsidized child care sites;

- Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, among other proposed actions, supports investigator-initiated evaluations of outreach activities to better understand which outreach and enrollment strategies work best and to disseminate results to improve outreach performance;
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among other proposed actions, puts outreach referral information in its public health publications and pamphlets;
- Indian Health Service, among other proposed actions, integrates "train the trainer" techniques to educate select community members who can then provide information on health insurance to the rest of the community;
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, among other proposed actions, develops and implements an educational campaign for uninsured children with special needs.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall, among other proposed actions:

- Educate Regional and State directors of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and other Food and Nutrition Service programs on health care programs that are available to families with uninsured children and determine what information to give to these families; how to coordinate the application process to facilitate enrollment in CHIP and Medicaid; and how families applying for school lunch programs can receive information on health insurance;
- Provide information to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service regional and State program staff and grantees and encourage dissemination of information to families regarding the CHIP and Medicaid programs.

The Secretary of Education shall, among other proposed actions:

- Educate and assist families through its Partnership for Family Involvement program, which promotes family involvement in education, and includes employers, schools, education organizations, and community and religious groups.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall, among other proposed actions:

- Provide information on children's health outreach to applicants for competitive grants, and ask its directors of Public Housing Authorities and Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities to post or distribute this information.

The Secretary of Interior shall, among other proposed actions:

- Develop and distribute culturally relevant referral information to Native American families through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, especially focusing on tribal schools, colleges, and social services agencies.

The Secretary of Labor shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute Medicaid and CHIP outreach information through its Job Corps Centers, One-Stop Career Centers, welfare-to-work grant programs, and small businesses contacts.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall, among other proposed actions:

- Post children's health outreach information for families at IRS walk-in centers and provide this information to Voluntary Income Tax Assistance sites.

The Commissioner of Social Security shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute information and/or applications for children's health insurance in its SSA field office reception areas and provide to States names of families of children denied SSI so that States can send these families educational information and applications for children's health insurance programs.

I also direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to continue to work with the above mentioned agencies to assist them in fulfilling these commitments, to engage new agencies and develop other commitments, and report back to me in 1 year on agency accomplishments.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty
June 22, 1998

Dear _____*:*

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification on the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks on Signing the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters
June 23, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Carlson, for your very eloquent and enlightening statement and for the work you do every day as a farmer, both with your crops and with the bison. When Dan Glickman said you have bison, I saw a lot of people's eyebrows go up. We've come a long way since Teddy Roosevelt saved the buffalo with the national park. We went from millions of head in the West and the high plains down to only 20 known head of buffalo when Teddy Roosevelt actually established that national preserve. Now we've got enough that we know they'll be there with folks like you farming, and we appreciate that.

Thank you, Secretary Glickman, for the truly outstanding job you do as Secretary of Agriculture. I would like to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Congressmen Smith and Stenholm. And I would also like to thank Congressman Becerra, the head of the Hispanic caucus, for the work he did, and all the other Members of Congress who are here.

We are joined by a number of local officials who had great interest in this legislation, including but I'm sure not limited to L.A. County Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chicago City Treasurer Miriam Santos, Virginia State Delegate Karen Darner. I would also like to thank all the representatives of our country's farmers and ranchers who are here, the religious leaders, our immigrant and antihunger advocates.

This is a very good day for me personally for two reasons. First of all, you heard Secretary Glickman give you the official population of the town in which I was born. It's about 50 percent larger than it was when I was born there, but all my mother's people came from a little town called Bodcaw, which still has only 50 people in it. And I have on my desk upstairs a picture of my grandfather with his family in 1907. Just about all of them were farmers, and when they were forced to leave the land and come into the large city of Hope, most of them kept little plots of land out in the country for decades where they kept their hand in, and they continued to grow their crops and harvest them even when they could no longer themselves make a living on the land. And when I was a boy, it was part of the ritual of every summer that I would go out and help them work the land, when I wasn't in school, and in the fall help them to bring in everything from vegetables to watermelon. I don't know if watermelon is a fruit or vegetable; I think it's something in between.

Also, when I was Governor, I governed a State which had a lot of people who didn't have

enough to eat. And I saw this remarkable coalition of people following the moral tradition of virtually every religion which consistently admonishes us to take care of the poor and the hungry. So this is a remarkable day and something all of you can be proud of. And those of you who worked on this bill know that you can be especially proud of it because you had some very powerful opponents of what we attempted to do.

We are carrying on here a long and proud tradition of bipartisan commitment, a coalition that was first forged by Hubert Humphrey, Robert Dole, and George McGovern a generation ago. By standing together in that tradition, we have ensured that America keeps its compact with our farmers and ranchers and with people in need.

We all know that our Nation's core values in many ways have their deepest roots in rural America, in its commitment to community and mutual responsibility, to strong families and individual initiative. Direct, trusting interaction among neighbors, so hard to find in some places in our country and throughout the world, still have very strong roots in rural towns. Every American has a stake, therefore, in making sure that rural America stays strong into the 21st century, not only because they feed us but because in many ways they feed our spirit and help us to forge our character as a nation.

This bill, as has already been said, does a lot of very good things for America. First, it rights a wrong. When I signed the welfare reform bill in 1996, I said the cuts in nutritional programs were too deep and had nothing whatever to do with welfare reform. Last year we restored Medicaid and SSI benefits to 420,000 legal immigrants. Today we reinstate food stamp benefits to 250,000 legal immigrants, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and 75,000 children. In addition, the Hmong immigrants from Laos, who heroically fought for our Nation during the Vietnam war, will again receive their full food benefits, overdue—high time—and I appreciate the fact that they were included in this bill.

None of these benefit cuts had the first thing to do with welfare reform. Reinstating them is the right thing to do and will have nothing to do with the success we've enjoyed which has brought welfare rates in America down to a 29-year low now.

Beyond that, this bill extends opportunity for all Americans, especially for farmers and ranchers. Today I think it's worth noting again, as I prepare to leave for China, American agriculture is one of our most powerful export engines. Products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. As this strong growth continues in the new century, our farmers and ranchers will need to feed millions and millions of more people around the world. They will need to do their work in a more sustainable way to protect our water and fragile soil. They will need to continue improving food safety by investing in cutting-edge agricultural research, funding rural development, and bolstering crop insurance. This bill will help our farmers meet the needs of tomorrow's world.

We are channeling an additional $120 million a year over the next 5 years to vital investments in food and agriculture genome research, food safety and technology, human nutrition, and agricultural biotechnology. We're allocating $60 million a year over the next 5 years to give grants and loans to underserved rural communities where people must diversify their economy on an available, attainable scale in order to preserve the fabric of life there. These grants will ensure, I hope and believe, that more and more of our rural communities can finally share in this remarkable national economic prosperity that we are enjoying.

We are also providing our farmers with peace of mind because crop insurance will be there for them should disaster strike. In certain parts of the country, farmers are hurting now. And it is clear that, in addition, we need to strengthen the farm safety net for the future. The legislation that we sign today is a very good start, but there are some more things I believe we should do.

In addition to strengthening the safety net for farmers, we must protect our exports by passing the legislation sponsored by Senators Murray and Roberts and Representative Pomeroy to allow our farmers to continue to export wheat to Pakistan and India. It was never intended, I don't believe, to use food as a weapon in foreign policy, even in this extreme circumstance. And I strongly support that legislation and believe we have big bipartisan support for doing something about it immediately. And it's important that it be done immediately because of the necessity of getting those contracts out and making sure the shipments are there

if they're going to be there. I feel that we will be successful.

Congress must also give the IMF the resources it needs to help to stabilize the economies of Asia, in part because they are huge markets for United States farm products.

Finally, we must protect the many advances we're making in the bill I'm just about to sign. Believe it or not, the bill I'm just about to sign already has some provisions which are in jeopardy. There are some in Congress who are working to undo the progress embodied in this bill. The appropriations committees have taken steps to cut the funding next year for the research and rural development programs I just mentioned, limit our food safety efforts, and cut as many as 100,000 women and children from the WIC program at a time when our economy is doing well and we can clearly afford to continue these things. This bill is the example of how we should work together.

Let me just mention one other issue before I sign the bill, an example of how the country does well when we put progress ahead of partisanship. In the bipartisan balanced budget agreement I was proud to sign into law last year, we gave Medicare patients new choices, enabled them to enroll in private health plans, and extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade. Building on that new bipartisan law, I instructed our administration to implement a Patients' Bill of Rights for the one-third of Americans who receive Federal health care benefits.

Beginning this week, we are putting those protections into effect. From now on, for example, Medicare patients will have the right to see a specialist in a broad range of areas. Women will have a right to see women's health specialists. Medicare patients will have a right to privacy for their medical records.

This marks the most significant change in Medicare in three decades. It shows what we can do when we put progress over partisanship. That's why I also strongly support the bipartisan effort being launched today in the House of Representatives by Congressmen Dingell and Ganske to extend a Patients' Bill of Rights to all Americans.

Today we mark another milestone in this kind of bipartisan cooperation. We've come a long way from the days when Thomas Jefferson thought every American should be a farmer; even the farmers are glad that's not true. But what he said then is still true in many ways, and I quote, "The cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens, the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous; they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interest by the most lasting bonds."

Today we strengthen those bonds. And we strengthen those bonds to those whose hold on the American dream is still fragile. In so doing, we do our part to do what Mr. Jefferson wanted us to do, to always be about the business of forming a more perfect Union.

Thank you very much.

I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here while we sign the bill. Come on up.

[*At this point, Members of Congress joined the President on the stage, and the President signed the bill.*]

The President. Thank you.

Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]—VX—[*inaudible*]—despite reports by U.N. weapons inspectors that they found fragments on SCUD missiles. What do you think this says about Iraq, and what should you do?

The President. You asked me about the report about the U.N. weapons inspectors in Iraq, that there were traces of VX found in a missile head?

Well, it proves that the United—let me just say, it proves that the United States has been accurate and correct in our insistence all along that we support the U.N. inspections in Iraq. And it proves that our decision to oppose relaxing the sanctions until all the U.N. resolutions have been complied with is an accurate one.

Mr. Butler is doing his job, and we need to wait until we hear the report. There is a news report to this effect, but it just proves that—you know, our job in the world is to try to reduce the danger that our people and others in the world face from nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. And sometimes we have to do it even when our friends and neighbors don't think it is as important as we do. It is very important.

If this report is true, it will just show that our insistence over these last many years on the U.N. inspection system is the right thing to do for the safety of America and the safety of the rest of the world. And we'll stay with

the position we've always had: Let the inspections go forward, and don't lift the sanctions until the resolutions are complied with.

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. Sir, China has refused visas to three Radio Free Asia journalists. What would you plan to do about that, sir?

The President. Well, I am aware of the Chinese refusal. I think it is a highly objectionable decision. We will protest it. We hope they'll reconsider it. And it is actually rather ironic because this decision to deny the visa to the Radio Free Asia journalists is depriving China of the credit that it otherwise would have gotten for giving more visas to a more diverse group of journalists and allowing more different kinds of people in there than they've ever done before.

And the fact that they denied the visa for the Radio Free Asia people will actually undercut the credit which otherwise would have come their way because of that.

Thank you, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to farmer Robert Carlson, president, North Dakota Farmers Union, who introduced the President; and Richard Butler, executive chairman, United Nations Special Commission. S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Radio Remarks on the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I signed into law a new bill to help expand opportunity for America's farmers. The agricultural research act will put funding for crop insurance on a sure footing for the future and boost investment on agricultural research and rural development.

After Congress phased out Federal farm price supports, it became more essential for American farmers to sell grains, meats, fruits, and vegetables to markets around the world. And today, products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. Thanks to cutting-edge research, strong food safety standards, and innovations in biotechnology, our farmers enjoy advantages over their competitors around the world in many sectors. In fact, American farmers have become so productive and so advanced that agriculture should be considered another high-tech industry. By strengthening investment in research and technology, this bill will help our farmers retain that competitive edge so they can export more of what they grow and raise. But to secure the success of U.S. farmers in the global marketplace, we must do more.

That's why we're also fighting hard to tear down unfair trade barriers, to stabilize Asian markets for our products, and to make sure that sanctions do not unfairly penalize American farmers. I've asked the World Trade Organization to take an aggressive approach to reducing tariffs and subsidies on agricultural products and to deliver better scientific-based rules to govern that trade. We're also fighting to enforce our trade agreements and have won critical agricultural disputes, including the European Union's restrictions on hormone-grown beef and greater access to pork in the Philippines. We will continue to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that agreements made are agreements kept. And I will push Congress to give the IMF the resources it needs to help stabilize the economies of Asia, which are such big markets for American farm products.

Finally, we need to make sure that our sanctions policy furthers our foreign policy goals without hurting our farmers. That's why I support legislation that ensures that U.S. wheat will not be the unintended victim of an important nonproliferation law. Our policy has been and will be that food should not be used as a weapon. We'll resist any action that would lead to a de facto grain embargo.

American farmers can continue to compete and win the global marketplace. To make sure that they do, I'll continue to fight to make sure

they're given a fair chance to build a better future for themselves and their families.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded on the morning of June 23 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Statement on Signing the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1150, the "Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998." This bill is an example of the Federal Government at its best: the Congress and the Administration working together on a bipartisan basis, bringing together a broad coalition of individuals and groups to address the important needs of our citizens in a fiscally responsible manner. I want to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Representatives Smith and Stenholm, whose efforts to forge this compromise were tireless, as well as all the other Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who voted for S. 1150. Their support reflects the strong consensus in this country for the reforms and funding contained in this bill.

S. 1150 and last year's Balanced Budget Act go a long way toward fulfilling the commitment, which I made when I signed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, to reverse the unfair treatment of legal immigrants included in that legislation, which had nothing to do with welfare reform. The Food Stamp provisions of S. 1150 restore benefits to 250,000 elderly, disabled, and other needy legal immigrants, including 75,000 children who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act. The Food Stamp provisions in S. 1150 build on our success last year in restoring Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid benefits to 420,000 legal immigrants who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act. S. 1150 also restores benefits to Hmong immigrants from Laos who aided our country during the Vietnam War and extends the period during which refugees and asylees may qualify for Food Stamps while they await citizenship. We will continue to work to ensure that those who honor our laws and contribute to our society can be free from hunger.

Similarly, when I signed the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Act) that radically changed the decades-old Federal programs to balance crop supply and demand, I made a commitment to work with the Congress to strengthen the farm safety net. With the bill I am signing today, our Nation's farmers know that crop insurance will be there for them if disaster strikes, with the program fully funded for the next 5 years.

To improve farming productivity and efficiency, we must increase our investment in agricultural research. In the 1996 Farm Act deliberations, the Congress believed the agricultural research title to be so important that work on it was postponed so it could receive the time and consideration that it deserved. The research provisions in S. 1150 were worth waiting for, and I commend the Congress for its work.

The Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems in S. 1150 will channel an additional $120 million a year over the next 5 years to vital investments in food and agriculture genome research, food safety and technology, human nutrition, and agricultural biotechnology. These investments will lead to advances in new production systems for crops and livestock. This will help farmers and agricultural processors produce an abundant supply of safe food, with less impact on the environment, and meet the challenge of new, more virulent pest and disease outbreaks. In addition, the bill reforms the working arrangements between the Secretary of Agriculture and the universities that carry out important agricultural research. These changes will encourage and enable universitas to take on larger-scale challenges and enhance their integration of research, education, and extension functions while improving the accountability and management of their programs.

Rural communities cannot rely on agriculture alone to sustain their economy and quality of life. That is why, throughout my Administration, I have strongly supported increasing the investments in rural development, and pushed to find innovative solutions to unique local needs. We worked hard with the Congress in the 1996 Farm Act to create the Fund for Rural America, which provided funds for rural development and innovative agricultural research. I am pleased that S. 1150 provides $300 million for the Fund and extends it funding through FY 2003.

While signing S. 1150, I am concerned that some in the Congress are already threatening to block significant portions of its funds from being spent in FY 1999. Appropriation actions in the House and Senate would deny any funds from being used for the Fund for Rural America, and the House bill would also block any research funding in this bill from going forward next year. I strongly object to such ill-advised cuts in these vital programs. I call on the Congress to provide the needed funds for these important activities.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Statement on Signing the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998
June 23, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1900, the "U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998." This legislation is the result of the bipartisan support of the Congress, and the efforts of many people inside and outside of government who have worked to achieve its passage. It represents an important step in advancing the United States Government's efforts to bring justice to Holocaust victims, survivors, and their heirs.

The bill establishes the "Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States." The Commission will focus on two key tasks: first, it will conduct original research on the collection and disposition of Holocaust-era assets that came under the control of the United States Government after Hitler came to power in 1933 (assets including gold, gems, bank accounts, financial instruments, insurance policies, and art works); and second, it will review research already conducted by public and private entities. The Commission will prepare a final report, summarizing its findings and making recommendations to me, which will be completed by December 31, 1999.

As we finish the business of the 20th century, we must examine difficult aspects of our history in order to build a better world for our children in the next millennium. Establishing a Commission to study these issues sends a strong message, both at home and abroad, that the United States Government is determined to acknowledge and address the fate of Holocaust assets domestically.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1900, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–186.

Statement on the Nomination of Kenneth Prewitt To Be Director of the Bureau of the Census

June 23, 1998

A fair and accurate census is a fundamental part of representative democracy and good government. To ensure that we conduct a sound and successful census in the Year 2000, I am pleased to nominate Dr. Kenneth Prewitt to be the next Director of the United States Census Bureau.

The decennial census is the foundation for our most important public values. It is the means by which everyone in this country is counted. It is the basis for providing equality under the law. And it is the single most important source of information about the American people.

By using the census, the Federal Government is able to designate funding for and evaluate programs across the Federal Government, in every State and every locality. It is the instrument that Congress and the executive branch use to properly allocate the more than 180 billion dollars in Federal funds every year for many programs like Head Start, programs for older Americans, the disabled, and for transportation. Conducting an accurate census truly affects every person in this country, and the quality of Census 2000 will have ramifications for decades to come.

To ensure fair and accurate data, we support the plan developed by the experts at the Census Bureau which was based upon recommendations by the National Academy of Sciences. This plan, developed at the explicit direction of Congress and endorsed by virtually all of the experts, will enable the Census Bureau to conduct the most accurate and cost-effective census in our history. It is a plan that will correct the inaccuracies in the former census which systematically undercounted children, minorities, and rural Americans. This collaboration between Government and the Nation's scientific community will enable Census 2000 to carry out its proud mission of protecting equality before the law, one person-one vote, and sound government.

Dr. Prewitt, one of the Nation's most distinguished social scientists and experienced executives, is the ideal person to lead the Census Bureau in this effort. He currently serves as the president of the Social Science Research Council. In the past, he has been senior vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation, the director of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Corporation, chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of Chicago, and vice president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has also served on the boards of trustees of Washington University, Southern Methodist University, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, NORC, and the German American Academic Council.

Dr. Prewitt is a person of impeccable credentials and proven scientific integrity. I urge the Senate to act promptly on his nomination.

Statement on Medicare and the Patients' Bill of Rights

June 23, 1998

I am pleased to add my voice in support of today's efforts by Representatives Ganske and Dingell to file a discharge petition enabling an up-or-down vote in the House of Representatives for a Patients' Bill of Rights. Since November of last year, I have been calling on Congress to pass such legislation.

It is now 7 months later, and Congress has been unable to pass legislation, let alone hold even one committee markup on a bill. With so many Americans' health at stake, I welcome the action taken today by Representatives Ganske and Dingell, and I believe it will help ensure an open debate on this issue that will allow for all parties, including Representative Norwood, to bring patients' rights legislation to the floor for vote.

Passing patients' rights legislation would build on the actions I have already taken to extend patient protections to Americans in Federal health plans. This Friday, we will publish a Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) regulation to implement new rules for all Medicare managed-care plans. The HCFA regulation will implement the new Medicare plan choices I signed into law last year as a part of the bipartisan balanced budget agreement. It will also include many of the patient protections I directed Medicare to implement last February, when I signed an Executive memorandum ordering all Federal health plans—which serve 85 million Americans—to come into compliance with the Patients' Bill of Rights. These regulations ensure that Medicare beneficiaries in managed-care plans have a range of important patient protections, including access to the specialists they need, access to ob-gyns, access to emergency room services, and an independent appeals process to address grievances with their health plans.

Now we need the Congress to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees all Americans these important patient protections. It is my hope and expectation that the bipartisan action being taken today in Congress will spur the House and the Senate to pass a strong, enforceable, and long-overdue bill.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Legislation

June 23, 1998

I am deeply disappointed in the action taken within the House Appropriations Committee today. Returning to the partisanship of the past, House Republicans backed a bill that would take us backwards just when we should be addressing the challenges of the next century.

Last year we made critical investments in every stage of our children's lives in a bipartisan balanced budget. From Head Start expansion to new tax credits that make college more affordable, we worked together to make smart investments in our people and our future. To build on that success, this year I proposed commonsense investments to reduce class size, modernize America's schools, and make quality child care more affordable.

Working together, we can continue to move the Nation forward. But the House Republican bill takes us in the wrong direction, short-changing critical investments in our young people—from preschool and child care to antidrug and safe after-school programs. These cuts are arbitrary, and some are extreme. This bill would completely eliminate the summer jobs program, denying more than one-half million teenagers valuable work experience. It would slow progress on our efforts to improve children's literacy and computer skills. And for poor families, the Republicans would eliminate the program that they rely on to help them heat their homes during the winter. This bill is out of step with our values and the wrong vision for America's future.

Statement on Congressional Action on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

June 23, 1998

For months now, I have urged Congress to do more to help the American taxpayer. Today I am pleased that the House and Senate have finally reached a bipartisan agreement to reform the IRS and strengthen taxpayer rights. We need an IRS that reflects American values and respects American taxpayers. This bill goes a long way toward that goal, and I look forward to signing it into law.

Statement on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives Legislation on Missile Proliferation Sanctions

June 23, 1998

I have committed my administration to an unceasing effort to halt the transfer of missile technology to nations that conduct or condone terrorism and otherwise violate international norms. The stated purpose of H.R. 2709—the "Iran Missile Proliferation Act of 1998"—is to further this effort. To the contrary, if enacted, it would damage the U.S. national interest, making it harder to achieve the goals it is intended to serve. Therefore, I am vetoing this bill.

The battle against proliferation is most effective as a cooperative enterprise. It will be successful if other, like-minded governments join in enacting and enforcing the strictest possible export-control policies. As my veto message makes clear, this bill mandates the sweeping application of sanctions according to inflexible and indiscriminate criteria. It would require the imposition of sanctions based on an unworkably low standard of evidence. Sanctions could be wrongly triggered against individuals and businesses worldwide, including against companies that did not know the true end user of their products. The sanctions are also disproportionate. A minor violation would carry the same penalty as a major one. As a result, the bill would generate tensions and discourage cooperation with the very nations whose support we must enlist.

From my conversations with Members of Congress, I sense a growing awareness that the vast machinery of U.S. sanctions law has not served our interests well and is in serious need of an overhaul. Adding yet another flawed sanctions bill is not the way to start, especially since this one is redundant. Existing law provides a sufficient basis for imposing sanctions when we need them.

I am particularly concerned about the impact that the bill would have on our on-going effort to work with the Russian Government to stem the flow of technology from that country to Iran's missile program. This is a very real problem, to which this administration has accorded the highest priority over the past year and a half. As a result of my own work with President Yeltsin, reinforced by the efforts of the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and other officials, the Russian Government recently has adopted new legal and administrative measures to deal with this problem. While the hard work of implementation must continue, we have seen concrete progress, which we seek to encourage, not undercut.

This bill will make it more difficult to continue our work with the Russian Government in this area. Moreover, the imposition of unilateral American sanctions could damage our interests in working with the Russian Government in other vital areas, such as arms control, law enforcement, counternarcotics and combating transnational crime. This bill would hinder, not help, our overall national interests.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Legislation on Missile Proliferation Sanctions

June 23, 1998

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2709, the "Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act of 1998."

H.R. 2709 would require sanctions to be imposed on foreign individuals and companies if there is "credible information indicating that" they transferred certain items or provided certain types of assistance that contributed to Iran's missile program, or attempted more than once to transfer such items or provide such assistance. These sanctions would last at least 2 years and would prohibit sales of defense articles and services; exports of certain dual-use items; and United States Government assistance.

My Administration unequivocally supports the critical objectives of fighting terrorism and taking steps to halt the transfer of missile technology to nations whose foreign policy practices and nonproliferation policies violate international norms. This legislation, however, is indiscriminate, inflexible, and prejudicial to these efforts, and would in fact undermine the national security objectives of the United States. Taken together, the flaws in H.R. 2709 risk a proliferation of indiscriminate sanctioning worldwide.

Such indiscriminate sanctioning would undermine the credibility of U.S. nonproliferation policy without furthering U.S. nonproliferation objectives. Indeed, the sweeping application of sanctions likely would cause serious friction with many governments, diminishing vital international cooperation across the range of policy areas—military, political, and economic—on which U.S. security and global leadership depend.

Specifically, H.R. 2709 would require the imposition of sanctions based on an unworkably low standard of evidence: "credible information indicating that" certain transfers or attempted transfers had occurred. Such a low standard of evidence could result in the erroneous imposition of sanctions on individuals and business entities worldwide—even in certain instances when they did not know the true end user of the items. The bill would also hinder U.S. efforts to enlist the support of other countries to halt the objectionable activities by imposing an unreasonable standard for waiving the bill's sanctions. In addition, the sanctions proposed by the legislation are disproportionate. A minor violation (e.g., the transfer of a few grams of aluminum powder) would carry the same penalty as a transfer of major proliferation significance. This, too, undermines U.S. credibility and increases foreign opposition to U.S. policy.

H.R. 2709 does not specifically refer to Russia, but it will affect that country. The legislation does not allow flexibility sufficient to reflect the progress made by the Russian government in formulating policies and processes whose goal is to sever links between Russian entities and Iran's ballistic missile program. At the urging of the United States, President Yeltsin, the Prime Minister, Russian security services Chief Kovalev, and Russian Defense Minister Sergeyev have all made clear that proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction is a serious threat to Russia's security. They have called for strict control of sensitive technologies and stressed the strict penalties that will be imposed for violations of Russian law. On January 22 of this year, the Russian government issued a "catch all" executive order providing authority to stop all transfers of dual-use goods and services for missiles and weapons of mass destruction programs, and on May 15 published detailed regulations to implement that order. They have recently developed and circulated a list of end users of concern in Iran, Libya, North Korea, and Pakistan. In the course of regular and active discussion of this issue with the Russian government, the United States has raised problem cases involving cooperation between Russian entities and the Iranian missile program. We have seen progress in this area, and a number of these cases are no longer active concerns.

Precisely because Russia needs to take effective enforcement steps to control the flow of technology, the United States needs to be able to work cooperatively with the Russian government to assure further progress. H.R. 2709 would undercut the cooperation we have worked to achieve with the Russian government without helping us solve the problem of technology transfer. The legislation's unilateral nature could also hurt our increasing cooperation with Russian government agencies in other vital areas such as law enforcement, counter-narcotics, and combating transnational crime. Furthermore, Russia would interpret this law as an infringement of its sovereignty, affecting our ability to work with Russia on broader U.S. policy goals and on regional and global issues.

Finally, Title I of H.R. 2709 is not needed. Existing law, such as the missile technology control provisions of the Arms Export Control Act, provides a sufficient basis for imposing sanctions to prevent missile proliferation to Iran and elsewhere.

I also note that it is disappointing that the Congress attached Title II, the "Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1997," to this problematic and counterproductive bill. Because Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) implementation legislation has not been enacted, the United States has not yet fully carried out its obligations under the CWC. The CWC implementing legislation has strong bipartisan support, and should be passed by the Congress as a free-standing bill without further delay. I note, however, that sections 213(e)(2)(B)(iii), 213(e)(3)(B)(v), and 213(f)

of Title II could interfere with certain of my exclusive constitutional powers, and I urge the Congress to correct these constitutional deficiencies.

For the reasons stated, I am compelled to return H.R. 2709 without my approval.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Niue-United States Maritime Boundary Treaty With Documentation
June 23, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Niue on the Delimitation of Maritime Boundary. The Treaty was signed in Wellington May 13, 1997. The report of the Department of State is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The sole purpose of the Treaty is to establish a maritime boundary in the South Pacific Ocean between the United States territory of American Samoa and Niue. The 279-mile boundary runs in a general east-west direction, with the United States islands of American Samoa to the north, and Niue to the south. The boundary defines the limit within which the United States and Niue may exercise maritime jurisdiction, which includes fishery and other exclusive economic zone jurisdiction.

Niue is in free association with New Zealand. Although it is self-governing on internal matters, Niue conducts its foreign affairs in conjunction with New Zealand. Niue has declared, and does manage, its exclusive economic zone. Therefore, the United States requested, and received, confirmation from New Zealand that the Government of Niue had the requisite competence to enter into this agreement with the United States and to undertake the obligations contained therein.

I believe this Treaty to be fully in the interest of the United States. It reflects the tradition of cooperation and close ties with Niue in this region. This boundary was never disputed.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Treaty and advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 23, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Belize-United States Stolen Vehicle Treaty With Documentation
June 23, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Belize for the Return of Stolen Vehicles, with Annexes and Protocol, signed at Belmopan on October 3, 1996. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of stolen vehicle treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to eliminate the difficulties faced by owners of vehicles that have been stolen and transported across international borders. When it enters into force, it will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles that have

been stolen and taken to Belize. The Treaty establishes procedures for the recovery and return of vehicles that are registered, titled, or otherwise documented in the territory of one Party, stolen in the territory of that Party or from one of its nationals, and found in the territory of the other Party.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and Protocol, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Remarks at a Dinner for Texas Gubernatorial Candidate Garry Mauro
June 23, 1998

Thank you. Thank you, Garry, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the warm welcome, and even more, thank you for being here for Garry Mauro.

I don't know what to make of that eulogy you gave me at the end of those remarks. [*Laughter*] It reminds me, the other day I was in Cleveland—this is a true story—I was in Cleveland the other day, and I went with Congressman Lou Stokes who is retiring after a long and distinguished, wonderful career in Congress on a motorcade through his Congressional District in inner city Cleveland, and we went by all these little schools, and then finally we stopped at a grade school.

And I was there because a wonderful community program called City Year which may have a chapter in Texas, I think they do, and it has a couple thousand kids around the country, they're all part of our AmeriCorp program, our national service program; they were having their national convention in Cleveland.

But I went to this elementary school where some of our young volunteers are working with the kids in the inner city. So I gave them a little talk, you know, and then I went down the line, and I was shaking hands with all the teachers and the parents and as many children as I could possibly shake hands with. And I got to the very end of the line, and there was a little kid standing there that barely came above my knees. He was probably 6, I guess he could have been 7, but I don't think so. He looked up at me, and normally when I see kids like that they say, "I've seen you on television," and I say "Thank goodness." [*Laughter*] This kid said, "Are you the real President?" I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "And you're not dead yet?" [*Laughter*]

Then I realized that he thought Presidents were—you know, he had studied George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—he thought a part of the job description was you couldn't be living anymore. [*Laughter*] And some days I wonder whether he's right or not. [*Laughter*] But at least I died with honors from Garry's introduction.

Let me say to all of you I think you're doing a good thing here. And I think it's even more important that you're doing it because you know you have a long way to go. But I would like to tell you a story or two. In 1991 when I started running for President, only my wife and my mother thought I could win. My daughter thought I had a chance. [*Laughter*]

When I entered the New Hampshire primary I was fifth among the Democrats starting out, and the incumbent President was at a 75 percent approval rating. When I won the nomination of my party on June 2, 1992, with the victories in California, New Jersey, and Ohio, I was running third in the public opinion polls; 6 weeks later I was first in the public opinion polls—6 weeks later.

Go back a few years; I met Garry Mauro over 25 years ago when we worked in 1972 together. Two years later I ran for Congress. I ran against a Member of Congress who had 99 percent name recognition and an 85 percent approval rating in 1974. And I was zero, zero. On Labor Day I was behind 59 to 23, on Labor Day, not June the 28th, on September the whatever it was that year. And I got 48½ percent of the vote. If I had had another week to campaign, I could have won. I say that to make

this point: When people are satisfied with good conditions, and they like their incumbent officeholders personally, they tend always to say they are for them and so would you if you didn't know him or you didn't happen to be in the other party.

In order to make an election in this kind of an environment it is necessary that people believe there is a reason to think about the election and that there is a choice to be made and that the choice, if it is made, would be good for them. And I think you've got what you need here. You've got a good candidate who is a wonderful human being and an exemplary public servant with a record that anyone could be proud of. You've got the right issues—and I want to say a little more about that. And you've got, if you all do your part, an adequate support base so that people in your vast, huge State will be aware that you have a good candidate, and the right issues, and there is a reason to make a choice.

You also have, in my view, the best of all possible worlds because Garry Mauro can just get out there and run as himself and run a completely positive campaign and only talk about those areas where there is an honest disagreement.

Now, then it determines—it really turns on the same thing that really will shape the elections in November here for Congress or that will shape the attitudes. How do people respond to good times? I'm very grateful—I'll just amplify what Garry said—I am very, very grateful that today in our country we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, 16.1 million new jobs, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and the surplus we believe this year in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the country. I'm grateful for that. And I think that—[*applause*]——

I also know that the American people deserve primary credit for that. But the decisions made by our administration, more than half of which were made under withering partisan criticism from the leadership of the other party, had a lot to do with creating the framework in which it became possible for the American people to do these great things. Now, having said that, the question is: When times get good, what do you do? A lot of people say, "Well, I've been working hard for years, and I'm tired of thinking about insecurity and difficult things, and you know, I would like to take it easy, and I don't want too much to change."

Well, there are two problems with that. One is nothing ever stays the same anyway, ever, not in an individual life, not in the family's life, not in a business, not in a State's life, not in a nation's life. The second is all you have to do is pick up the paper every day to know that things are changing quite a lot around the world, and there are a lot of outcomes that aren't clear.

I'm going to China tomorrow, as all of you know, against a backdrop of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan which occurred after years and years and years in which—just since I've been President we had gotten an indefinite extension of the nonproliferation treaty, we had gotten all these countries to agree to control their missile technology, we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention, we passed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. We had 140 something countries around the world sign it. We and the Russians began to lower our nuclear arsenals dramatically and destroy nuclear weapons, and it seemed that we were on a constant and stable path. Now we have a new challenge.

I'm going to China at a time when we are appreciative of the discipline with which the Chinese have managed their economy and the fact that they haven't yet felt the need to devalue their currency. Why? Because of the economic difficulties in Indonesia, the challenges that Japan faces and any number of other Asian countries. It's a big deal because a huge percentage of our economic growth has come from foreign trade, about a third of it, no small measure, from Asia.

So I tell you this because it's well to be reminded that whether you're the President of the United States, the Governor of Texas, or the mayor of Seattle, Washington, you know when times like this come along, if you relax in an atmosphere of change, you'll spend the rest of your life, if you've got a conscience and a brain, kicking yourself in the behind because you didn't take advantage of them to do every single thing you could to meet the challenges of the day and prepare for tomorrow. That is the case that has to be made not just in Texas but in every community in this country.

And if you look at what Garry talked about—let's just take—what are these big challenges?

Some of them have to be dealt with by us here in Washington. For example, we've got to reform Social Security and Medicare so that when the baby boomers retire, we've still got a social safety net, but it doesn't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We owe that to the next generation. That has to be done in Washington.

There are things that we need to do in other areas in improving the quality and access to healthcare, in improving public education and access to college—and we've done a great deal there—in proving we can preserve the environment while we grow the economy—if you just take those three things—in extending economic opportunity to people who still don't have it even though we've got a low unemployment rate.

Now I will mention those four things. In all those areas we have a role to play. But in none of those areas can any of those endeavors be successful unless the States are doing the right thing. Yes, we want to move more people from welfare to work. The States are basically in control of that program now.

So it matters more who the Governor is now in terms of whether initiatives are taken or not than ever before, at least in my lifetime. And because I used to be a Governor and I believe in the system, I've off-loaded a lot of responsibilities to the States. But in doing that, you know, you run the risk—you get the benefit of having people closer to the grassroots issues make the decisions—you run the risk that if you've got somebody who is relaxing when they ought to be moving that the consequences won't be so good.

Now you just take the issues Garry reeled off here. I'm trying to get the Congress to approve a budget that will help to build or repair 5,000 schools, that will help 100,000 more teachers to be hired to lower class sizes in the early grades, that will connect the classrooms and the libraries of this country to the Internet, that will help to improve teacher training and accountability and train more teachers to be master teachers, nationally certified master teachers to help all the others in their schools. But none of this will amount to much unless there is a complementary commitment at the State level where the primary constitutional responsibility for public education is lodged to do those things.

And I don't think there is a person in this room that believes—I don't care how big Texas gets; I don't care how may billionaires you have—I don't think any of you believe that your State will ever reach its full potential until you can say, "We're proud of our university system, and now everybody who deserves it can afford to go" number one, and number two, "Now we're proud of our kindergarten through twelfth grade too, we've got the best system of elementary and secondary education that the world can offer." And no one believes that any State in the United States can make that claim today, no one.

So, I say to you I'm glad you've got these good times. I am grateful to have been given the chance to serve at a moment in history where my experience as a Governor enabled me to see what I thought our country needed to do. I am grateful that the consequences have been as they have been. I'm very grateful the American people have done all the things they have done. But I'm telling you we're living in a dynamic world where things are changing more rapidly than ever before, where we've got to learn to live together across the lines that divide us both at home and with others in the world, and where it all begins with whether we are treating individuals with the dignity that I think is embodied in this Patients' Bill of Rights that I've advocated at the national level, that you've advocated at the State level, and most importantly with the commitment to develop the capacity of every young person. There is nothing more important, nothing.

The last point I want to make in this regard is that there are a lot of things we can do at the national level to deal with what I predict to you will be one of the three biggest issues of the next 40 years, which is how to do better at preserving the environment as we grow the economy.

Now, you know that's going to be a big issue. There are a lot of things we can do at the national level but an enormous amount of environmental protection, an enormous amount of resource conservation, an enormous amount of figuring out what kind of flexible, sensible ways you have to adopt to grow the economy while you preserve the environment, that's done at the State level. I know, I was a Governor for a dozen years. And I dealt with all kinds of national administrations that had different philosophies on the environment.

There is not a person in the State of Texas, nowhere—this is no disrespect to the current

Governor—there is nobody in the State of Texas that has a better background than Garry Mauro for making the right decisions about how to protect the environment and grow the economy.

I want you to think about that. I want you to go home to Texas and talk about it. And I want you to forget about the public opinion polls. The only poll that matters right now is the one inside your heart, inside your mind. If you believe that your candidate is as good as I believe he is, if you believe that the issues are as important as I believe they are, if you believe he's on the right side of the issues, and most important of all, if you buy what I just said about the nature of this time, yes times are good, yes we are grateful—but it just imposes on those of us who have done well enough to show up at this fundraiser tonight a bigger responsibility to see that we use these good times to prepare for our children's future. You're going to have a fine election, and you're going to be proud of what you're doing.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 p.m. in the Mount Vernon Room at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Signing the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters

June 24, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, Sonia. And Jonathan and Jesse, welcome to the White House. Thank you, General Reno. Thank you, Senators Kohl and DeWine, for coming. And Congressman Hoyer, thank you for your hard work on this. I'd also like to thank Congressman Henry Hyde, who is not here, for his leadership on this legislation. Welcome Judge David Ross, the Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; United States Attorney Helen Fahey; child support advocates; and Leslie Sorkhe and Gerri Jensen, two other mothers who are here. I thank you all for being here.

I am very pleased to sign a vital new law that shows what we can achieve when we act in the national interest. For 5½ years now we have renewed our economy with a strategy that balances the budget while it invests and instills the future of our people and in the strength of our families. The key to expanding opportunity in this new century I want to say, though, is education.

I want to say a little more about child support in a minute, but these two young men behind me and all the children of our country deserve a world-class education. I have asked the Congress to help me in that, to help us to reduce class size by hiring 100,000 teachers and building or repairing 5,000 schools. I have asked them to help me institute high standards to connect all classrooms to the Internet, and I've asked them to make child care for working parents more affordable.

Yesterday the Republicans in the House of Representatives took a huge step in the opposite direction. Last night they began to dramatically cut education investments from Head Start to after-school to antidrug programs. This is out of step with our values and with America's shared vision of our future. In the coming months I'll have more to say about this, but you can be sure that I am going to keep fighting to advance education, to invest more in education, to lift education standards, to expand education opportunities. And if they continue to fight against all these things it will, I expect, be the major conflict of the coming months.

I still hope that I will not have to sign an education bill or veto one that short changes the future of our children. I don't intend to sign it. I hope a veto won't be necessary, but there is no excuse for this. We have a balanced budget. We're going to have a surplus. We have the money. We ought to give it to the children and their future.

This bill today is a gift to our children and the future. The quiet crisis of unpaid child support is something that our country and our families shouldn't tolerate. Our first responsibility, all of us, is to our children. And today we all know that too many parents still walk away from that obligation. That threatens the education, the

health of our children, and the future of our country.

One of the main reasons single mothers go on welfare is that fathers have failed to meet their responsibilities to the children. Even when a family manages to stay out of poverty, a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night, or simply to worry sick about their children either because they're away from them all the time or because they're with them but they don't have enough to support them.

When fathers neglect support of their children, it aggravates all the other problems a family faces. When I was Governor and then when I ran for President the first time in 1992, I made child support enforcement a big part of my concerns. I've always asked parents to take responsibility for their children. I've always pledged to do my best to force them to do so if they refused.

We have waged an unprecedented campaign to make deadbeat parents live up to their obligations. Thanks to tougher laws, more sophisticated tracking, powerful new collection tools we've increased child support collections by 68 percent in the last 5 years. Almost a million and a half more children are getting child support today.

There are two other signs of success that I would like to report. Last year our effort to find out the identity of fathers allowed us to establish paternity in 1.3 million cases, up from only 510,000 in 1992. Our new national database for identifying deadbeat parents across State lines has found more than 1 million delinquent parents in just the first 9 months of its operation. Before we created this database, deadbeat parents found it easy to avoid paying up by skipping from job to job or State to State. But with this database there is no where left to run.

With these and other successful child support initiatives, we believe that we've made a real difference for people like Sonia and her two fine sons. But we can and must do more. Current law is too soft on the most serious cases of neglect, the cases in which a parent flees across State lines or national borders and skips out on supporting children for a year or more. In 1996 I asked the Attorney General to draft legislation to crack down on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl and Congressman Hyde and Hoyer championed their cause, introduced versions of the legislation, and helped to secure an overwhelming bipartisan majority for the bill I am proud to sign into law today.

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with child support evaders in the most serious cases. From now on if you flee across State lines and refuse to pay child support you may be charged with a Federal offense, a felony offense, and may land in jail for up to 2 years. One way or the other people who don't support their children will pay what they must.

I thank all the Members of Congress and all the children's advocates who are here today, who contributed this major victory to our children. Now we can work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone; let me mention that, one more very important issue. Under bankruptcy reform bills now in the Senate and House some mothers could find themselves in competition with powerful banks and credit card companies to collect the child support they need. In that competition I think we all know who would lose, our children.

We are working with Congress now, and we will continue to do so to produce a bankruptcy reform bill that demands responsibility from both debtors and creditors and stems abuse. But any bill must make protecting child support payments a high priority. It would be ironic indeed, after all this work we have done, to increase child support collections—and here we are signing a bill today to make it more difficult to avoid the collections—if we turned around and passed a bankruptcy bill that put mothers and their children back in the pack along with other creditors. That's not the right thing to do. So I hope that we will see action on the bankruptcy bills and on the education bills that will reflect the same priority for our children that this bill does today.

And again, let me thank all the advocates and all the sponsors and let me thank Sonia and her two fine sons for being here. This is a happy day for Attorney General Reno and me, and I would like to ask you all to come around now, and I'll sign the bill.

Thank you.

You guys stand on either side here. Sonia, you come up here and I'll show you how I

sign a bill into law. See I have all these pens because there are all these people who want one. [*Laughter*] I have to find a way to use every one of these pens when I sign this. So don't start laughing at me, all right?

[*At this point, the President signed the bill.*]

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. Mr. President, hasn't this latest rebuff by China cast a really severe pall over your trip to China now? They've really turned you down——

The President. You mean the Radio Free Asia thing?

Q. ——on special appeal—visas.

The President. I think they made a mistake. And before I leave here, as a matter of fact in just a few minutes, I'm going to do an interview with Radio Free Asia correspondents to send a clear signal that we don't believe ideas need visas and that we support freedom of the press in our country.

I think in a way it will help to highlight some of the very important issues that we wanted to discuss. I hope that this trip will not only allow me to learn more about China and allow the American people to learn more about China but will help me to explain America and what we believe in and why to not only the Government but to the people of China and this is a good beginning here.

Q. Well, have they encouraged you to——

The President. I will do my best to do that. I think they made a mistake. And as I said, ironically, is the Chinese granted more visas to more journalists from more different media outlets than they ever have before. So they were actually showing a greater openness than they have, and because they reversed themselves on the Radio Free Asia visas, for reasons I don't understand, they have denied themselves that credit. So, I intend to press this issue by doing the interview in just a few minutes.

Q. Is this going to mean that it will be harder for you to reach agreements with the Chinese on detargeting nuclear missiles, on market access—is this disagreement going to make that a harder process?

The President. I don't know. I hope that we can deal with all these issues independently. I think the Chinese understand, as we do, we've got a big common stake in nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I expect to make some progress. We have a big stake in the Asian economic situation and the difficulties there. We have a big stake in our own bilateral economic relations and the impact that a lot of this will have in terms of integrating China into the global economy.

So I would think that they would not let this get in the way of what is in their self-interest, just as I won't let it get in the way of what is in the interest of the United States, but our values are an important part of our interest.

We don't live by money alone, or even by power alone, but also by our ideals and convictions, so I think it is important to point this up. But I also think it's important that you see it in it's proper framework.

The irony—as I said, this is an ironic situation because the Chinese granted more visas to more different media outlets apparently than ever before. They granted this visa and then reversed themselves. I think it was a mistake, and I'll do my best to make it clear why.

President's Visit to China

Q. Are you going to see dissidents now—I mean, as a retaliation?

The President. I'm going to see a number of people from different elements in Chinese society, and I'm going to do what I think is best to promote the cause of human rights.

Q. Is the White House taking any symbols of democracy, as has been suggested by some Republican lawmakers such as copies of the American flag or the Constitution?

The President. I'm sorry, I don't have anything to say about that.

Nuclear Detargeting Agreement

Q. What about detargeting? You didn't mention that specifically, and I had asked you about it. Do you see an agreement on that?

The President. I think it would be a good thing if we could reach an agreement on it. I think it does two things. It literally delays significantly the amount of time it takes to arm a missile and aim it, therefore, eliminating the possibility of accidental firing. And it also really increases, I think, the confidence between the countries that were moving to reduce the nuclear threat. So I hope we can do that, but I don't know yet. I don't have an announcement to make. But you know—I've made it very clear that I would like to do that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sonia Evans, who introduced the President, and her sons, Jonathan and Jesse.

Interview With Radio Free Asia
June 24, 1998

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for taking the time to do this with us. We know you have a busy schedule, and we appreciate the gesture.

Human Rights

Q. The first question: Dissidents in China recently issued many open letters hoping to meet you during your stay in China. Why you cannot meet them and what message do you want to send them now?

The President. Well first of all, I have determined to try to meet with as many different kinds of people as I can when I'm in China, but I also want to make decisions based on what I think will maximize the impact of my trip for all the objectives, which include the advancement of human and political rights. One of the things we have pushed very hard for is the adherence of the Chinese Government to the U.N. Convention on Civil and Political Rights, which President Jiang has said he will sign in the fall, in September or October which, as you know, will among other things require China to begin to admit on a regular basis international observers to talk to citizens, including political dissidents, on a regular basis to try to make sure that they are not abused in the practice of their civil and political rights and that they begin to be integrated into the mainstream of society.

I want this trip to advance that cause. And I will structure my meetings and also the meetings of all my staff people appropriately. But I am glad to see so many of these dissidents speaking out and feeling free to speak out. It's obvious that they have concluded, some of them probably at some risk to themselves, to do this. I do believe, as I told President Jiang when he was here, that free political speech and expression is plainly a precondition for any modern state. And over the long run, it is essential to the strength of a country. I mean, we live in an information age where people's ideas basically grow the economy.

So I think that this is a long-term battle that we're all involved in, and I believe we're on the right side of it. And I think in the end, the Chinese will agree.

Q. But Mr. President, the dissidents say that it is disheartening for them that you are not taking this opportunity to make a statement by attempting to meet with them or the families of the Tiananmen students who fell.

The President. Well, I will make a lot of statements. I worked very hard to get a lot of the dissidents out of prison, and I will continue to work very hard on that. And I will do whatever I think will increase my impact. And I won't do anything that I think will actually undermine my ability to get real results. But keep in mind, we also have some other very important objectives right now. Not objectives we will sacrifice for—our human rights agenda to—but objectives that we will pursue in addition to that.

We have very important nonproliferation concerns which have been given new urgency because of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. We have very important concerns about trying to stabilize the economic situation in Asia, which if it got out of hand could have an enormous destructive impact on hundreds of millions of people in China, and a number of other issues that we're working on.

So, I will do my best to pursue all of our legitimate concerns and never to minimize the human rights issues, but I have to structure the way I spend my time on this trip in a way that I think is most likely to further the interests of the United States as well as the values we have that we want to—and the things we're trying to do for Chinese people.

Tiananmen Square

Q. Mr. President, when you are being welcomed in the Great Hall of the People adjacent to Tiananmen Square, will the image of the one lonely man standing in front of a tank trying to prevent it from mowing down students in Tiananmen Square flash through your mind

even for a second and cause a twinge because you have accepted the invitation to be welcomed?

The President. Well, first of all, I've thought about that one man a lot. I think that's one of the—obviously one of the most vivid pictures of the last 20 years that anyone has seen. But I think it's important for me, if I'm going to go to China, to not expect that just because I'm the American President I should be greeted in any fashion different from any other world leader that would be greeted there.

And even I noticed that many people, including the Dalai Lama and Wang Dan and others have said, "You know, you should go. You should be received in the way that the Chinese have always received world leaders. That's been the center of their Government for hundreds of years now. And you should speak your mind about human rights, religious rights, political rights." I think that's the right thing to do. I don't think we should confuse ceremony with substance here.

I think that for me to say—when I invite someone to the United States, our welcoming ceremonies, unless there is some physical reason to move it, for example, the back lawn is covered, it's always at the back lawn of the White House unless it's bad weather or unless the whole lawn is covered with something else.

I couldn't very well invite someone to the United States and say, "Well, I would like for you to come see me on a state visit, but I won't let you come to the back lawn of the White House." And I think that it's important to distinguish here between hundreds of years of history that has occurred at that spot and within those walls, of which what happened at Tiananmen Square is definitely a part, but it's not the only thing that's ever occurred there. And I think that it would be wrong for me to expect the Chinese Government to change the way they welcome all world leaders.

On the other hand, it would be equally wrong for me to go there and take no notice of the continuing difficulties with human and political rights. So I expect to honor the ceremony, and I expect to advance what I believe in there and what America represents.

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. The Chinese Government has officially denied the visa of three of us. If the administration cannot negotiate successfully over such an issue, how do people expect that your Government come up successfully with the other complex issues as the human rights issue?

The President. Well, for one thing, visas are normally not negotiable by anybody. We don't negotiate with anyone else over who gets a visa to the United States. Our problem is that you were denied visas, we believe, for the wrong reasons.

I supported the establishment of Radio Free Asia. It exists because—in no small measure because it was a significant issue in the Presidential campaign of 1992. I talked about it repeatedly, and I've done my best to expand the operations of Radio Free Asia. The very purpose of Radio Free Asia was to beam honest, open debate into Asia so that, as you know, just as we do these interviews, you know, you ask me whatever questions you wish to ask and you press me on matters that you wish to press.

And I think they made a big mistake. It was especially troubling to me that they denied the visas and thereby denied themselves getting any credit for having given visas to people that they traditionally have not given visas to. They were quite broad.

The Chinese Government has always taken particular offense with my support of creating Radio Free Asia because they believe that we did it for the purpose of undermining the Government of China. The truth is we did it for the purpose of advancing freedom of the press and freedom of debate and freedom of speech throughout Asia. And all governments that do not recognize these things should feel that, in effect, we are opposed to them, not because of particular policies—apart from the idea that we think everybody ought to have free access to ideas. So, I think they made a mistake.

But keep in mind, I wouldn't—that's not the same thing as negotiating over nonproliferation or economic issues or anything else because every nation reserves to itself the complete and unilateral right to decide its visa policies.

Q. I have a followup question. Our feed has been heavily jammed by the Chinese Government. Are you going to raise this issue when you are meeting with the Chinese leaders?

The President. Yes. Yes, I am. You know if you look at—there are now 400,000 Chinese who have access to the Internet, but we estimate there will be 20 million in the next couple of years. If you look at what happened in Europe, in Communist Europe, and how it was basically

flooded with tapes and CD's, as well as with Radio Free Europe, there is no way—and if you look at the fact that as China's economy becomes more internationalized—there will be more and more ideas coming to China.

If you consider the fact that 2½ million Chinese traveled abroad last year, and many of them were not part of any government—if you will, censored government operation, it is a losing battle to try to keep ideas that are contrary to official dogma out of the public debate. It is, in the end, not in the interest of China.

China will be—you see I believe the Chinese Government missed a great opportunity, and I don't have the same attitude some people do. I don't think they did act in their long-term self interest; I think they missed a great opportunity; I think by giving you a visa and letting you come in and talk to people and emphasize the continuing human rights concerns, I think they would be showing strength because they would be showing the capacity to change. And I believe that that, in the end, is the ultimate test of any system of government. You have to have the capacity to change, to respond to legitimate human aspirations. You don't have to give up the society's dominant values or cultures.

There are many things within the whole history of Confucian thought and culture in China from which all societies could learn many positive things. But we know from just studying the landscape of the last 50 years in the world that oppressive government in the end will be resisted by people and in the end is inconsistent with developing a free economy. You can't say, "We're going to have a free economy, but we're going to try to keep controls on what people know, what they hear, what they can say."

And so I think—from my point—I had a slightly different reaction than you did, I know you're bitterly disappointed and angry, and I think you should be. But my view is that they would have shown strength and judgment by giving you the visa and letting you come in and talk to people who would criticize them. I don't think America is weakened because every day someone takes the floor of Congress and criticizes me; every day someone writes an editorial and criticizes me; every day there are—I just don't believe that. I think that—and of course all liberty, any freedom—let me say this—any freedom granted across the board is bound to be abused from time to time. It is in the nature of liberty that it is subject to abuse which is why the framers of the Constitution talked about how important it was for us to build responsibility internally into the character of our citizens.

But in the end, we're stronger when we debate and differ, and we're more likely to get the truth than if we control access to information. So that will be a big—yes, I will ask them to stop jamming Radio Free Asia.

Q. Thank you.

Tibet and the Dalai Lama

Q. Mr. President, another issue which has sort of been a losing issue is the issue of Tibet and the Chinese Government meeting with the Dalai Lama and negotiating greater autonomy with the Dalai Lama. The U.S. Government has in the past put pressure on the Chinese Government to do that. They have so far not done that. You have assured the people in this country and in Tibet that you are taking a message to the Chinese. What is new about this message? What in this message is going to make the Chinese listen and actually sit down at the table with the Dalai Lama?

The President. Well, I think it is—first of all, let me say at this particular moment I don't feel free to say everything I'm going to say to President Jiang because of some of the sensitive work I've been doing on this issue for the last several weeks. But again I would say my general point is, not just to President Jiang but to the other influential members of the Chinese Government: Forget about our difference over what's right and wrong; we think it's wrong to deny the Dalai Lama access to his people in Tibet; we think it's wrong for the people of Tibet to be subject to any sort of religious, cultural, or economic discrimination.

We have not advocated independence for Tibet, separation, civil war, anything disruptive. We have advocated, if you will, autonomy with integrity. It's supposed to be an autonomous region anyway. It is our understanding that that is the position that the Dalai Lama has taken. So my argument to them, the larger message will be, let's lay to the side for the moment the fact that I believe what is happening is wrong, and they don't. I do not believe it is in China's interest.

China has been very—was adroit in trying to find a balance between taking back Hong Kong without destroying what was special about

Hong Kong. Now, I know Hong Kong is an economic engine, but a country is made great by more than its economic engines. And the Tibetan Buddhism as a religious faith, as a culture and a way of life, the ability of the Tibetan people to be free of any kind of economic or other handicaps and the signal it would send to the rest of the world about China's attitude about human dignity and diversity and difference of religion, race, and opinion—the gains to China from doing this would far outweigh any marginal extra tension they might feel about the long-term future of Tibet in this context.

So my argument is going to be, you know, from the point of view of the pure self-interest of the Chinese Government: This is an easy issue; this is not a difficult issue; doing the right thing here is plainly in the interests of China. That's the argument I'm going to make.

Q. But they don't see it that way, Mr. President. This argument has been made in the past. They obviously don't——

The President. They don't see it that way because they continue to believe that the only—that it's just one step to losing part of China. I think it's important for Americans to understand that—this is something that I've learned not just in dealing with China but in dealing with all other countries. Countries are like people; they have a collective memory. And in order to deal with nations effectively when you have differences with them, it's important to understand what their worst nightmare is. Because if we're dominated by our nightmares, we make decisions that are not rational in the eyes of other people.

For example, when dealing with Russia in trying to expand NATO, we had to remember that the Russians were invaded by Hitler and by Napoleon. And that even though no one is now alive who was alive when Napoleon invaded Russia, it is something that is deeply embedded in the psyche, in the consciousness of the Russian people. So that if territorial changes are made along the border of Russia, you have to be sensitive to that and work it out.

China is—the Government of China, the leaders of China, their worst nightmare is disintegration, you know, because they have these memories of when China was weakened and vulnerable to foreign attack, vulnerable to government by warlords, vulnerable to the opium trade, vulnerable to everything because of the disintegration of the central authority. Therefore, to an outsider who knows nothing of China's history, the importance to China, which is so large and so big, of the "one China" policy vis-a-vis Taiwan, of getting back Hong Kong, of making sure that nothing could ever happen and Tibet—to promote any separatism. To us, we see only the downsides of those things. To them, a lot of the things they do which to us are unacceptable, they do, I believe, because they're too much in the grip of the historic memory of disintegration.

And one of the things I have to do is to not lose my patience or my determination, to work until I help to create for them a new and different historic reality so that they feel more confident in doing what I believe is the morally right thing to do, as well as what is in their own self-interest.

But I think it's important to recognize that—you can't assume that—none of these people would be in positions of influence in the largest country in the world if they were without intellectual ability, without sensitivity, without the capacity to be effective. So when they do things that the rest of us think are completely irrational, we have to try to understand what it is that makes them do that.

I just think they could get more goodwill in the rest of the world, for less effort, by doing the right thing on Tibet than nearly any other issue. And I think that getting them to the point where they will see it that way depends upon their having a clear understanding of what a resumed dialog with the Dalai Lama would lead to, not just in a year or 2 years but in 10 or 20 or 30 years.

And I'm not sure the United States has ever had the kind of systematic effort on this that I have been expending for the last few years and that I will continue to expend as long as I am in office with the fond hope of being successful. I intend to continue to work on this very, very hard.

It's obvious that we have no power to compel them to do this. There is no tool, no incentive, no anything because nothing is as important to the Chinese as the territorial integrity of their country—nothing—because of their history. So I have to find a way to argue my case and prevail, and I will keep doing this. I care very, very much about this, and I have been working on this hard for the last couple of years, and I will continue to do it as long as I'm President.

Q. How high is it on the agenda for this trip?

The President. Well, for me it's a big thing. It's a big thing because I think countries—I think all countries—I think the United States has done this, too. None of us are—you know, we all make our mistakes, and we all have our memories, but I think when a great country, because of an inaccurate reading of the facts of a situation or being in the grip of a historical nightmare, makes an error, the consequences can be quite severe.

For example, it took us 2 years and a few months to get the American public to the point, and our allies to the point, that we could go in and end the Bosnian war. Now, a lot of people looking from the outside in said, "Look at this terrible situation in Bosnia. Why don't they just go and do something about it? Why are they taking 2 years?"

Well, the people who say that didn't live through the experience that our military and our people did in Vietnam. Bosnia was not Vietnam for a lot of different reasons. An outsider could say to all of us, "America, why don't you understand this is not Vietnam?" But it took us a while to work through, as a people, and with our allies, why it wasn't, what it was, and what we had to do, what our clear moral responsibility was, what was in our national interest. We did the right thing. And in the lifetime of a country, 2 years is not very long to take to do that but it took—it was a lot of hard work.

And you would be amazed in the debates and the discussions, if you just go back and read things that were in the public in the beginning there were a lot of people who were afraid, "Oh, this is Vietnam all over again."

So I am—I've developed some patience in working on this. I'm impatient to get the results, but I understand what it's like to try to change the mindset of a nation, the psychology of a nation, when it has deeply embedded historical experiences that become a part of the way the leaders of a nation look at everything that happens thereafter.

Korean Peninsula

Q. So, from Tibet to the Korean Peninsula, what do you expect to accomplish from this trip over the Korean issue? Are you going to appoint a special envoy to the Korean—North Korea?

The President. Well, right now I think the—what I would like to do is two things. First of all, I want to get a reaffirmation of the partnership we have with China in the four-party talks. I want to send a clear signal to North Korea and to South Korea that we're prepared to do our part, but I also want us to clearly support the bilateral efforts that are now going on. Since President Kim Dae-jung was inaugurated in South Korea, I have been quite encouraged at the attitude he has taken toward, you know, reaching out directly to the North.

It appears to me, based on the work we did to end—the work that we did with China together to end North Korea's dangerous nuclear program, which had a lot of involvement from Japan and Russia and other countries all supported us. It appears to me that there are some of these matters that divide the North from the South that will have to be resolved directly between the two Koreas. And then there are other things that they will actually need the framework of the four-party talks to work through and the active involvement of China and the United States.

We will be talking about that. But again, this whole matter has acquired greater urgency because of the nuclear tests on the Indian subcontinent. You know, we have to keep the commitment of North Korea in place not to have a nuclear program, particularly since they have such facility in building missiles. It's a very, very big issue.

And I think this is one issue that the pace of the resolution of this depends a lot on the calculations of the people in North Korea and South Korea. We actually could move rather quickly on this, or they could drag it out the way they have been. But for the United States and China, what we have to do is to keep the lid on it, if you will, and keep it moving in the right direction. And I think we're committed to do that. I think we will be successful there.

Q. What about the special envoy? Are you considering a special envoy?

The President. Not at this time because of the level of direct involvement between the North and the South and because right now it wouldn't be consistent at this moment, at least with the nature of the four-party relationship, where it's a partnership with the United States and China working with the Koreas. If there came a time when I thought it was the right thing to do, I would obviously discuss it with

the Chinese and with the South Koreans and decide.

Goals of the Visit to China

Q. Mr. President, I know we are running out of time here so what—critics of this trip you're going to make to China in a short while have said that this is going to be more about symbolism than about substance—what exactly substantially do you hope to achieve on this trip, and are you planning to make some strong speeches on the issue of human rights and freedoms when you are in China, including at the welcoming ceremony at Tiananmen?

The President. Well it's interesting, a lot of the critics who say that then turn around when you ask them what they want me to do, what they want me to do is to make it even more symbolic and give up any substance.

So all my critics who say this is about more symbolism than substance when you ask them what they want me to do they want me to make it even more symbolic and give up the substance.

I believe we will make some progress in a number of areas. I think we'll make some progress in nonproliferation. I think we'll make some progress in dealing with the Asian financial challenges; I hope we will. It's a very big issue that could directly affect the lives of Americans. I think we'll make some progress in dealing with energy and environment issues which are very, very important. You know the pollution in China has now made respiratory problems the number one health problem of children there. And it's a huge issue.

I think we'll make some progress in our scientific cooperation, which has already yielded some significant benefits. And I hope, whether it's obvious or not at the end of the trip, that we will advance the human rights dialog. In a structural way, let me say I think it's important that we advance the rule of law cooperation that we have developed—we have begun with the Chinese. And let me explain why.

If you can get a country like China to change its legal system, even if the leading edge issue is commercial, it's in the system of law that protecting commercial rights and protecting rights of free speech and citizenship tend to merge. And one of the things that I would like to see over the long run is that I would like to see us move to the next step where China moves from reassessing its position on this or that or the other political dissident from time-to-time and releases them, to the point where we have a systematic change in the way people are treated. I think that should be our long-term goal.

Those things won't make as many headlines, but they will change more lives. So I would expect there to be some advances in this whole rule of law cooperation we've been doing. And if we show progress in all these areas, I think the trip will be very much worthwhile. What I'm trying to do is to have—I don't mean to say—I think symbols are important, actually, but I think it's important that in the end what matters is results. Are lives changed for the better? Is the direction of the country better over the long run?

This is a difficult trip because of the differences between us, but it's also an important trip because of our common interests and because so much is at stake. It seems to me that the chances of doing good for the American people and for the stability of the world far outweigh the dealing with the difficulties presented by the trip.

I've seen the Chinese work with us, for example, with great reliability—I could just mention a few things—on the non-proliferation treaty, the comprehensive test ban, the chemical weapons treaty, the observing most of the Missile Technology Control Regime's requirements, stopping cooperation with Pakistan and Iran on a lot of their nuclear programs, other programs. It's not—they've been very good allies in many of these areas.

They gave great leadership to our meeting the other day on the Permanent Five statement on the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. And I think if you look at the areas where we've made progress, they make the argument for a continued, disciplined engagement where we try to advance our interests, but we never pretend that our interests are only security issues or our issues are only economic issues where we merge our human rights and our political concerns with these other matters. And we just pursue the whole agenda, and we do the best we can. I think it will produce more results than any available alternative.

Q. A strong speech at Tiananmen? A strong speech at Peking University?

The President. There is no speech at——

Q. Oh, there is no speech at Tiananmen?

The President. At the arrival ceremony, which is—well, you know where it is, right off Tiananmen Square. There is no speech, it is just—you know, and by the way, the United States is the only country that I'm aware of where we have little remarks at the arrival ceremony.

Every country I go to, it is the same thing. I get out; you go through the ritual; and then you go in and begin your meetings. But I will say what I have to say in other forums.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We appreciate your time.

The President. I enjoyed it.

Q. And we hope you will wear this hat.

The President. I love this hat. It's quite pretty.

Q. Hey, you look good in it.

The President. Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at approximately 10:20 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was embargoed for release until 3 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin of China; and freed Chinese dissident Wang Dan. The journalists who conducted the interview were Arin Basu, Feng Xiao Ming, and Patricia Hindman. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement Announcing the Benchmarking Process in Federal Procurement

June 24, 1998

Today I am pleased to announce policies that continue my commitment to expand economic opportunity for all Americans. These new guidelines for Federal procurement are designed to remedy discrimination in a carefully targeted way. These reforms, which continue my promise to mend, not end affirmative action, expand opportunities for small disadvantaged businesses.

These new guidelines allow small disadvantaged businesses to receive a price credit of up to 10 percent in bidding for Federal contracts. The credits will be available only in industries that show the ongoing effects of discrimination. The Department of Commerce identified these industries through a process called benchmarking, which compares the actual share of Federal procurement by small disadvantaged firms to the share that would be expected in the absence of discrimination. Limiting credits to these industries satisfies constitutional requirements while targeting our efforts in areas where disparities still exist.

This program is based on authority given the administration by Congress in 1994. These credits will help level the playing field for firms that have suffered from discrimination. However, they do not ensure that any firm will win a contract. Small disadvantaged businesses must compete with all other businesses to win Federal contracts.

The steps we are taking today comply with legal requirements and preserve competition, while serving to remedy discrimination.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Hate Crimes Prevention Legislation

June 24, 1998

Dear _____:

I am writing to urge the Senate (House) to act quickly this year to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998. This crucial legislation would expand the ability of the Justice Department to prosecute hate crimes by removing needless jurisdictional requirements for existing crimes and by giving Federal prosecutors the power to prosecute hate crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

As you know, there have been a number of recent tragedies across our country that involve hate crimes. I know you were as troubled as I was by the vicious murder in Jasper, Texas, just two weeks ago. This shocking event focused America's attention on the problem of hate crimes. I hope we can join together to reaffirm that no American should be subjected to violence on account of his or her race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

Whether it is a gay American murdered as he walks home from work or a Jewish American whose synagogue is desecrated by swastikas, such acts are not only examples of bias and bigotry—they are crimes. They strike at the heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that define us as a Nation. That is why I believe now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to fight hate crimes.

There is nothing more important to the future of this country than our standing together against intolerance, prejudice, and violent bigotry. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act will lead the way in making all Americans more safe and secure. I implore you to move this vital piece of legislation through the Senate (House) without delay.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping Operations

June 24, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 1997 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping. The report is required by section 407(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236).

The report provides an account of how the United States used peacekeeping last year to promote regional stability and to advance U.S. interests. Our support for United Nations and other peacekeeping operations allowed us to protect our interests before they were directly threatened and ensured that other nations shared with us the risks and costs of maintaining stability in the post-Cold War world.

Working together, we brought greater discipline to decisionmaking in national capitals and at the United Nations regarding multilateral peace operations. Tough questions about mandate, size, cost, duration, and exit strategy for proposed missions were answered before operations were approved. Careful attention was also given to ensuring that those responsible for leading peacekeeping missions—the United Nations, NATO, or a coalition of concerned states—were capable of successfully achieving the intended objective.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts of interest to the United States.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Floyd Spence, chairman, House Committee on National Security; Robert L. Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Strom Thurmond, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; and Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

June 24, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from April 3 to the present.

Introduction

During the 60-day period covered by this report, Iraq continued to provide access to U.N. weapons inspectors as required under the terms of the February 23 Annan-Aziz MOU and UNSC Resolution 1154. Travel restrictions on Iraq imposed under UNSC Resolution 1137 of November 12, 1997 expired by their terms after UNSCOM Executive Chairman Butler reported that Iraq was complying with access requirements. In accordance with UNSC Resolution 1134, regular sanctions reviews have resumed. However, Iraq's continued failure to meet its obligations under UNSC Resolution 687 and other relevant resolutions led the Security Council to conclude on April 27 that Iraq still had not met the conditions necessary to enable the Council to lift sanctions. Ongoing UNSCOM and IAEA inspections continue to test Iraq's long-term intentions with regard to providing full access and full disclosure to U.N. weapons inspectors.

We continue to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the "oil-for-food" program and other humanitarian efforts. Resolution 1153, which was adopted by the UNSC on February 20, expands the "oil-for-food" program considerably by raising the ceiling of permitted Iraqi oil exports to $5.2 billion every 180 days and by authorizing repairs to Iraq's degraded petroleum, health, education, and sanitation infrastructure under strict U.N. supervision in accordance with a prioritized distribution plan.

During the period covered by this report, the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people were addressed through Phase Three of the original "oil-for-food" plan in accordance with UNSCRs 986 and 1143. The Iraqi government only recently produced an acceptable distribution plan to implement UNSCR 1153.

On May 1, I signed into law the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act. This legislation provides funding for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to initiate a surrogate broadcast service for the Iraqi people. It also provides funding for efforts to support the democratic Iraqi opposition in presenting a credible alternative to the present Iraqi regime and compiling information to support the indictment of Iraqi officials for war crimes. These new programs will enable us to redouble our work with the Iraqi opposition to support their efforts to build a pluralistic, peaceful Iraq that observes the international rule of law and respects basic human rights. Such an Iraq would have little trouble regaining its rightful place in the region and in the international community.

The United States will keep a significant military presence in the region to provide the full range of military options necessary to deter Iraqi aggression, to ensure that UNSC resolutions are enforced, and to deal with other contingencies that may arise.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

In view of Saddam's record of brutality and unreliability, it is prudent to retain a significant force presence in the region to deter Iraq. United States and allied forces now in the region are prepared to deal with contingencies. This gives us the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors. As we make the force adjustments mentioned below, we are strengthening a rapid redeployment capability to supplement our forces in the Gulf. Our cruise missile force will be twice the pre-crisis level. In addition, we will be able to double again our cruise missile force in days. Once these moves are completed, this capability will allow for a swift, powerful strike.

The aircraft carrier USS JOHN C. STENNIS and her accompanying battle group combatant

ships and combat aircraft remain in the region as United States force levels are being reduced. The aircraft carriers USS INDEPENDENCE and USS GEORGE WASHINGTON and their accompanying battle group combatant ships left the region, as scheduled. Once force level adjustments are completed, U.S. forces will include land and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine amphibious task force, Patriot missile battalions, a mechanized battalion task force and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of USCINCCENT operations. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed. During the crisis, U.S. forces were augmented by HMS ILLUSTRIOUS and accompanying ships from the United Kingdom.

During our successful effort to compel Iraq's compliance with relevant UNSC resolutions earlier this year, the United Kingdom and a number of other nations pledged forces. Although all of the members of this international effort sought a peaceful diplomatic resolution of the crisis, all showed their resolve to achieve our common objective by military force if that becomes necessary.

Twenty nations deployed forces to the region or readied their forces for contingency deployment. Another 12 nations offered important access, basing, overflight, and other assistance essential for the multinational effort. Still others identified force contributions that were held in reserve for deployment should the need arise. For those nations with forces deployed during the crisis, most of these governments redeployed their forces back home after the crisis in keeping with our own force adjustments. These nations have made clear their willingness to repeat this deployment should Iraq again challenge the international community.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq under Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. In response to a series of Iraqi no-fly zone violations in October and November 1997, we increased the number of aircraft participating in these operations. Since then, there have been no observed no-fly zone violations. In early April, we restored the preexisting level of aircraft deployed to Northern Watch. We have made clear to the Government of Iraq and to all other relevant parties that the United States and coalition partners will continue to enforce both no-fly zones.

The Maritime Interception Force

The Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating under the authority of UNSCR 665, vigorously enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of this multinational force, but it is frequently augmented by ships and aircraft from Australia, Canada, Belgium, The Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Today in the Gulf, ships from Canada, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom have joined with us in maritime patrols. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council support the MIF by providing logistical support and shipriders and by accepting vessels diverted for violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq.

Since my last report, the MIF has intercepted several vessels involved in illegal smuggling from Iraq. Although petroleum products comprise most of the prohibited traffic, the MIF has recently diverted vessels engaged in date smuggling as well. Ships involved in smuggling have often utilized the territorial seas of Iran to avoid MIF inspections. We have provided detailed reports of these illegal activities to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in New York.

The level of petroleum smuggling from Iraq appears to be in a state of flux. For several weeks, Iran ceased allowing gasoil smugglers to use its territorial seas to avoid the MIF inspections, causing a dramatic decrease in the level of gasoil smuggling. In recent weeks, however, we have noted ships once again using Iranian waters with the apparent aid of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces that operate in small boats near the mouth of the Shatt Al Arab waterway. It is too early to tell what the long-term policy of Iran will be in this matter, although we are hopeful that it will take the necessary steps to curb U.N. sanctions violations occurring within its territorial seas.

Our forces continue to benefit from recent actions by the United Arab Emirates that make it difficult for sanctions violators to operate in UAE territory. We will continue to work with the Emirates to find ways to thwart the significant sanctions-busting trade which has historically been bound for UAE ports. As noted in my last report, the UAE has significantly increased its level of cooperation with the MIF.

These efforts have resulted in an increase in the number of ships caught with illegal cargoes. In addition, the UAE has prohibited the use of tankers, barges, and other vessel types to transport petroleum products to UAE ports and through its waters or to store such products there. While it is still too early to determine the full effect of these measures, we are hopeful that these actions will deal a significant blow to sanctions-busting activity in the region.

Biological and Chemical Weapons

Iraqi biological and chemical weapons remain the most troubling issues for UNSCOM. This is due to the innate dual-use nature of the technology; it can easily be hidden within civilian industries, such as the pharmaceutical industry for biological agents and the pesticide industry for chemical agents. Iraq continues to resist making a full and complete declaration of its biological weapons programs, as required by UNSCR 707.

Following its March technical evaluation meetings, UNSCOM concluded that Iraq has not provided a clear statement of the current status of the programs. Iraq's declaration still contains major mistakes, inconsistencies, and gaps. It may substantially understate Iraq's production of bulk biological weapons agents. UNSCOM is still unable to verify that all of Iraq's SCUD missile warheads filled with biological agents—anthrax, botulinum toxin, and aflatoxin—have been destroyed. UNSCOM also suspects Iraq may be concealing additional, as-yet undisclosed, biological weapons research or development programs.

Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Systems

On May 14, the UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement on the most recent UNSCOM and IAEA reports about Iraq's nuclear program. The Statement notes that the IAEA's investigations over the past several years have yielded a technically coherent picture of Iraq's clandestine nuclear program, but that all outstanding unanswered technical and substantive questions must be answered before the UNSC will authorize the IAEA to move from inspections to ongoing monitoring and verification in the nuclear field. While the bulk of its resources are now devoted to monitoring, the IAEA will continue to exercise its right to investigate any aspect of Iraq's nuclear program. The IAEA, in a recent report, points out that Iraq still has not provided information requested about certain sites, that concerns remain as to the completeness, accuracy, and internal consistency of Iraq's nuclear declaration and that Iraq has failed to enact laws prohibiting certain activities.

Iraq's Concealment Mechanisms

From March 26 to April 2 UNSCOM conducted inspections of the so-called "Presidential Sites." The inspectors reported that the sites appeared to have been "sanitized" prior to their visits, and, as anticipated, they discovered no materials related to Iraq's WMD programs during these inspections. In accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions, UNSCOM and the IAEA must be allowed to continue to investigate all aspects of Iraq's prohibited programs until they can verify that all relevant components have been destroyed under international supervision, and that all remaining capabilities have been eliminated. Without such verification, Iraq could develop the ability to strike at any city in the region—and beyond the region—with devastating biological, chemical, and possibly even nuclear weapons.

Dual-Use Imports

Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq's imports of allowed dual-use items. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports specific items which can be used in both weapons of mass destruction and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of such dual-use items.

We continue to be concerned that Iraq's land borders are extremely porous. Iraq continues substantial trade with its neighbors. There is significant potential for evasion of sanctions by land routes, giving additional weight to our position that UNSCOM must have full and unconditional access to all locations, and be allowed to inspect and monitor Iraqi compliance over time.

The U.N.'s "Oil-for-Food" Program

On February 20, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1153, which raises from $2.0 billion to $5.2 billion the amount of oil Iraq is authorized to sell every 180 days. Resolution 1153 provides that the nutritional and health requirements of the Iraqi people are the top priority. My Administration's support for Resolution 1153 is fully consistent with long-standing U.S. policy.

Since 1990, at the height of the Gulf War, the United States has held that the international community's dispute is with Iraq's leadership, not its people. The Security Council proposed an "oil-for-food" program in 1991 (UNSCR 706/712), which Iraq rejected. A similar program (UNSCR 986) was eventually accepted by Iraq in 1996. We supported the expansion of the "oil-for-food" program under UNSCR 1153 because it will provide additional humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, under strict U.N. supervision, without benefiting the regime.

Since the beginning of the "oil-for-food" program, we have consistently worked with the U.N. and other U.N. member states to find ways to improve the program's effectiveness to better meet the humanitarian needs of Iraq's civilian population. Iraq, however, has frequently failed to provide the full cooperation necessary to ensure that the program functions smoothly. For example, during calendar year 1997, the Government of Iraq refused to pump oil under UNSCR 986 for more than three months, all the while blaming the U.N. and the United States for disruptions in the flow of food and medicine which it had caused. The Iraqi government, after much prodding by the U.N. Secretary General's office, finally submitted a satisfactory distribution plan to the U.N. as called for by UNSCR 1153.

Resolution 1153 calls for an independent assessment of Iraq's oil infrastructure to determine whether it can export $5.2 billion in oil in a 180-day period, as provided for in the resolution. This report, which was submitted to the UNSC on April 15, recommended that the Sanctions Committee approve up to $300 million worth of repairs to Iraq's oil infrastructure during the period covered by UNSCR 1153. The United States has expressed its intention to support those oil infrastructure repairs needed to fund the expanded humanitarian program, provided these repairs can be carried out in a manner fully consistent with the humanitarian objectives of UNSCR 1153, and that the U.N. is able to properly monitor all aspects of the repair process. We are continuing to work with members of the Security Council to resolve these concerns.

Resolution 1153 also maintains the separate program for northern Iraq, administered directly by the U.N. in consultation with the local population. This program receives 13 to 15 percent of the funds generated under the "oil-for-food" program. The United States strongly supports this provision. The separate northern program was established because of the Baghdad regime's proven disregard for the humanitarian condition of the Kurdish, Assyrian, and Turkomen minorities of northern Iraq and its readiness to apply the most brutal forms of repression against them. The well-documented series of chemical weapons attacks a decade ago by the government against civilians in the north is only one example of this brutality. In northern Iraq, where Baghdad does not exercise control, the "oil-for-food" program has been able to operate unhindered. The Kurdish factions are seeking to set aside their differences to work together so that UNSCR 1153 is implemented as efficiently as possible. As a result, the contrast between the north and the rest of the country is striking.

The U.N. must carefully monitor implementation of Resolution 1153. The Iraqi government continues to insist on the need for rapid lifting of the sanctions regime, despite its clear record of noncompliance with its obligations under relevant U.N. resolutions—a record which was unanimously acknowledged during the Security Council's 38th sanctions review on April 27. We will continue to work with the U.N. Secretariat, the Security Council, and others in the international community to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people are met while denying any political or economic benefits to the Baghdad regime.

The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be a cause for grave concern. Summary, arbitrary, and extrajudicial executions remain a primary concern. On March 10, U.N. Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoel, reported that his ongoing investigation had revealed that "there is strong evidence that hundreds of prisoners have been executed in Abu Gharaib and Radwaniyah prisons since August 1997." According to credible reports, many of those killed were serving sentences of 15–20 years for such crimes as insulting the regime or being members of an opposition political party. Families in Iraq reportedly received the bodies of the executed which bore, in some cases, clear signs of torture. In April, the U.N. Human Rights Commission issued a strong condemnatory resolution describing these and other

ongoing Iraqi human rights violations. The resolution extended the Special Rapporteur's mandate and condemned the "all-pervasive repression and oppression" perpetrated by the Government of Iraq.

In southern Iraq, the government continues to repress the Shi'a population, destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. In the north, outside the Kurdish-controlled areas, the government continues the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Kurds and Turkomans from Kirkuk and other cities. The government continues to stall and obfuscate attempts to account for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared at the hands of Iraqi authorities during or after the occupation of Kuwait. In the course of recent prisoner exchanges brokered by the ICRC, Iraq has released more than 300 Iranian prisoners of war taken during the Iran-Iraq war in exchange for 5,600 Iraqi POWs. Yet the Government of Iraq shows no sign of complying with UNSCR 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people.

Northern Iraq: PUK–KDP Relations

In northern Iraq, the cease-fire between the Kurdish parties, established in November 1997 as the result of U.S. efforts, continues to hold. Both Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have made positive, forward-looking statements on political reconciliation, and talks between the two groups are now entering their sixth round. We will continue our efforts to reach a permanent reconciliation through mediation in order to help the people of northern Iraq find the permanent, stable settlement which they deserve, and to minimize the opportunities for Baghdad and Tehran to insert themselves into the conflict and threaten Iraqi citizens in this region. Baghdad continues to pressure the two groups to enter into negotiations.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to UNSCRs 687 and 692, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued almost 1.3 million awards worth $6 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by UNSCRs 986, 1111, and 1143 have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. To the extent that money is available in the Compensation Fund, initial payments to each claimant are authorized for awards in the order in which the UNCC has approved them, in installments of $2,500. To date, 757 U.S. claimants have received an initial installment payment, and payment is still in process for approximately another 58 U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under UNSC resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks to the Community at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska

June 24, 1998

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking all of you for your service and for giving Hillary and me and our entire delegation—including Secretaries Albright, Rubin and Daley, and my Chief of Staff, Mr. Bowles, and National Security Adviser, Mr. Berger—all of

us feel so welcome—and for welcoming this very distinguished delegation of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives as we embark on this trip to China.

And thank you for our service here, and thank you for bringing all the children. I always look forward to these stops at Elmendorf. You know, I couldn't go to China without stopping at Elmendorf—literally, of course. [*Laughter*] But I don't want to anymore.

Of all the times I've been here, I've seen so many people I've had a chance to express personal thanks—I've never come here a single time and met with our service families that I haven't met at least one person, and usually more than one, whom I knew in my previous life when I was Governor of Arkansas, or whom I had met traveling around the country in their previous service at another base. So for all of that, I thank you.

I'd like to thank Colonel Gration and you, General McCloud, for your distinguished remarks here and your service. General Simpson, thank you. I thank the members of the 3d Wing, the men and women of the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Coast Guard, and the National Guard, all of whom make up the Alaska Command.

Tomorrow Hillary and I and our party will arrive in Xi'an for the first state visit to China, as Congressman Hamilton said, by an American President this decade. The American people are taking a special interest in this trip, just as they did when President Nixon first went to China a quarter century ago. I thought it would be important for me to spend a few moments speaking to you, who give so much to the security of our country every day, about why I am going.

Let's start with some basic facts. China is the world's most populous nation. It is growing by the size of our total population every 20 years. It borders more than one dozen countries in one of the most challenging regions on Earth. Its economy has grown an average of 10 percent every year for the past 20 years. It has a large military, a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, sophisticated industrial and technological capabilities. Soon, it will overtake the United States as the world's largest emitter of the greenhouse gases that are doing so much to warm our planet.

Clearly, the policies China chooses to pursue and the relationship between the United States and China will have a huge impact on your lives and the lives of your children and your grandchildren in the 21st century.

Of course, our engagement with China does not mean we embrace everything that China does; nor does it mean, parenthetically, that they agree with everything we do. We have chosen a course that is both pragmatic and principled, expanding cooperation while dealing directly with our differences, especially over human rights. This policy is the best way to advance our national interests, as results clearly show.

Just consider two areas vital to our security: promoting stability in Asia and stemming the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Better than anyone, you know how important the Asia-Pacific region is to our country's future. We've fought three wars in Asia in this century. Even in a recession, its economies still are major exports for our products. Five of our States touch the Pacific. Millions of Americans trace their roots to the Asia-Pacific region. We are an Asia-Pacific nation.

We keep about 100,000 troops in Asia, not directed against any adversary but to maintain and enhance stability in a region that is going through very profound change. Now, I ask you to ask yourselves: How can we better maintain stability in Asia, by working with China or without it?

On the Korean Peninsula, where nearly 40,000 United States soldiers patrol the cold war's last militarized fault line, China has worked with us to advance peace talks and to support our successful effort to freeze North Korea's nuclear program. When India and Pakistan bucked the tide of history and tested nuclear explosives recently, China helped to forge a common strategy, working with us, designed to move India and Pakistan away from a dangerous arms race. And China's economy today serves as a firebreak in the Asian financial crisis. That's good for Wall Street, but it's good for Main Street America, too.

You all know how important our efforts are to stop the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. China will either be part of the problem or part of the solution. In the past, China has been a major exporter of sophisticated technologies. But over the last decade, China has joined and complied with most of the major arms control regimes, including the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear

Test Ban Treaty, and it has agreed to abide by most of the provisions of the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Over the past few years, it has also pledged to stop assistance to Iran for its nuclear program, to terminate its assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities such as those in Pakistan, to sell no more antiship missiles to Iran. Each of these steps makes the world safer and makes America safer. It was in no small measure the product of our engagement.

In many other areas that matter to the American people, working with China is making a difference, too, fighting international crime and drug trafficking, protecting the environment, working on scientific research. And if we keep doing it, we can accomplish a great deal more.

When dealing with our differences, also, I believe, dealing face-to-face is the best way to advance our ideals and our values. Over time, the more we bring China into the world, the more the world will bring freedom to China. When it comes to human rights, we should deal respectfully but directly with the Chinese. That's more effective than trying to push them in a corner. I will press ahead on human rights in China with one goal in mind, and only one: making a difference.

That's what all of you here in the Alaska Command are doing for America, making a difference. The reach of this command is truly remarkable, flying missions far and wide in your F–15's, AWACS, C–130 airlifters: patrolling the skies below the Korean DMZ, facing threats in the Persian Gulf, helping democracy make a new start in Haiti, running counternarcotics operations out of Panama, training with Canadian forces in the Arctic, conducting oilspill exercises with Russia and Japan, and of course, working with the Chinese through the military-to-military exchange program you host. And I understand another group of Chinese officers will be here just next month.

Wherever your country calls, you are there. Whenever your country needs you, you deliver. So again let me say to all of you, to those of you in uniform and to your families, your country thanks you, and I thank you.

Last week, the summer solstice touched Elmendorf and you had 20 hours of daylight. Hillary said she was glad to be here in the middle of the afternoon; we could have come in the middle of the night and still had daylight at this time of year. [*Laughter*] By December you'll be all the way down to 6 hours of light a day. But in every season, day and night, thanks to you the bright light of freedom burns here. It illuminates every corner of our planet. So no matter how cold or dark it gets, never forget that your fellow Americans know you are burning freedom's flame, and we are very, very grateful.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:09 p.m. in Hangar One. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Jonathan Scott Gration, USAF, Commander, 3d Wing; Lt. Gen. David J. McCloud, USAF, Commander, Alaskan Command and 11th Air Force; and Maj. Gen. Kenneth W. Simpson, USA, Commander, U.S. Army Alaskan Command.

Interview With the Los Angeles Times, Bloomberg Business News, and Business Week

June 19, 1998

Intervention To Support the Yen

Q. I wanted to talk to you a little bit, to start with, about the different reasoning between the 1995 intervention for the dollar and the 1998 intervention for the yen. In '95 the thought was that the dollar was out of line with the economic fundamentals and therefore needed to be supported. In this particular case we have the yen, which doesn't really seem to be out of sync with the fundamentals in the Japanese economy, and yet we went in to intervene. Can you explain to me what the different reasoning is?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the yen would be out of line if you look at the fundamental productive capacity and the

strength of the Japanese economy and the prospect of genuine reform of the financial institutions and appropriate economic policy. So that when the Prime Minister had agreed to put out the statement being clearer and more specific than before about the kinds of things that the Japanese Government was prepared to do in those areas, particularly around the institutional reform, we thought it was the appropriate thing to do, especially since a continued movement in the other direction in our view would have been unnecessarily destabilizing and out of line with what we think is the reality of the Japanese economic capacity.

Q. Let me just follow up this way if I could. Obviously, what needs to happen in order for Japan to have a recovery would be that the Japanese people need to open their wallets and start spending. Is there anything that you can do to help Hashimoto inspire them to do that?

The President. I don't know. But I think that in order to get them to change their well-known habits for incredible savings, even when it's not the right thing to do, they have to first of all have confidence in the long-term security and stability of the Japanese economy.

And so I think, you know, the reform of the financial institutions, the sense that the world believes the Japanese policy is moving in the right direction I think will at least inspire a greater degree of confidence in the Japanese people to do that. Part of what has caused the recent difficulties was the movement of money out of Japan by Japanese citizens. In these other countries, it's normally what foreign investors do or don't do. And so we hope that this will contribute to that.

Now, in terms of changing the normal habits of Japanese consumers that have built up over decades and that were forged at a time when they did need an extremely high savings rate, that is something that will probably have to take place more within their border than as a result of discussion among the Japanese themselves. But first things first, you have to get the right framework before people could be asked to do that.

Devaluation of the Yuan

Q. Bringing the currency question around to China, China has been making noises that it might not be able to hold the line on devaluation. I was wondering how worried you are about that and what you might be able to do in the upcoming summit to ease their concerns or to help solve that?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's clear to everyone that they don't want to devalue, and they've been taking extraordinary actions to avoid devaluation. And I think in so doing they have helped to contain and to stabilize the situation in Asia. And they deserve credit for that. And I personally appreciate it.

I think the most important thing is to try to alter the conditions which, if they continue to worsen, would make them feel compelled to devalue. And I think, from our point of view, that they have to make the policy call. The best thing we can do is to work with them, with Japan, and with others to try to change the conditions so that they will—that the pressure to devalue will decrease, rather than increase.

U.S. China Policy

Q. Mr. President, if I could ask broadly about your China policy. How—at this point, as it's evolved, how does your policy now differ from the policy followed by the Bush administration? And how do the Republican criticisms of it—do they differ from the ways in which the Democratic Party and you in the '92 campaign criticized the Bush administration's policy?

The President. Well, first of all, I never felt that it was wrong to engage China. I never criticized any President for going to China. I always think you're better off talking whenever there's a possibility of advancing the ball, if you will.

I thought it was important after Tiananmen Square that the United States be clear, unambiguous, and firm, and to the extent I thought the signals were not as clear or unambiguous as they should have been, I tried to make that plain. Some people I think concluded from that that I thought we ought to, in effect, launch a policy of isolation and try to contain and isolate the Chinese and that that would be the best way to get change. I never believed that.

And the reason I'm going to China now is that I think there have been a lot of positive changes in the last 6 years. No, we don't have all the problems solved; we still have differences with them over human rights, over religious rights, over economic issues. In some ways we've made the most progress in the nonproliferation area.

But if you look at what's happened in the 5½ years I've been President, at the work the—you know, the Chinese agreeing to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; accepting the missile technology control guidelines; agreeing not to cooperate in nuclear matters with India and with unsafeguarded facilities, including those that are in Pakistan; they're a member of the NPT—I think we've made significant progress, even in the area of human rights. We've seen the release of Wang Dan, Wei Jingsheng, Bishop Zeng. And I hope there we will get a real resumption of our dialog. I hope this whole legal systems cooperation will continue where I think we can have a big impact in a positive way, in the way China evolves legally and the way it deals with not just commercial matters but also with matters of personal freedom. We've clearly had a lot of security cooperation on the Korean Peninsula, and China has led these five-party talks in the aftermath of the nuclear tests on the Indian subcontinent.

So I think that this trip is coming at a time when there have been substantive changes which justify the kind of measured, principled engagement strategy we've followed, and I think it's more than justified. And if you ask me how it compares with the previous policy, I would say that it may just be the passage of time, but I think there are more elements to our policy. We're about to open a DEA office in Beijing. And as I said, I hope very much that as a result of this trip we'll wind up with a genuinely invigorated human rights dialog and perhaps an NGO forum on human rights.

I don't think there's any ambiguity here about the extent to which we have tried to put all the elements of our engagement in China into our policy and pursue them all in the way we feel would be most effective.

Q. And the Republican criticisms?

The President. Well, I think some of them are consistent, some of them—some of the Members of the House, for example, in the Republican Party have had a consistent posture on China. Some of it may just be election year politics. But to whatever extent it exists, I think that I should listen to whatever the critics say and see whether or not they're right about any specific things they say.

But on the larger issue of our engagement in China, I think most Americans agree with me. And the most important thing is I'm convinced it's in the interest of the United States, and I'm going to pursue it as clearly and effectively as I can.

Trade With China

Q. One of the things that the critics always point to, however, is the trade deficit with China, particularly that our exports to China dropped below $1 billion in April. Do you have a strategy? Obviously there's going to be a yawning trade gap as things happen in Asia. Do you have a strategy to sort of combat the isolationists who say that this is bad for our country?

The President. Well, if you take the economic issues—first of all, the volume of imports into our country is the function of the strength of our economy combined with the weakness of the other Asian economies which would normally be markets for China's products. And our people have chosen to buy those products, and it has not weakened our economy. After all, we had the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years. So that is not, for me, the source of the problem. And we knew that the trade deficit would worsen this year because of the weakness in Asia.

But I am concerned about the fact, even though our exports overall, notwithstanding the April figures, our exports were up 7 percent in '97 over '98, and they're running about 17 percent—excuse me, '97 over '96; they're running about 17 percent higher in '98 over '97. I do think that the United States should have greater market access. And I think if we had greater market access, then our exports would be increasing at least proportionately to our imports.

However, my preference would be for China to take those steps that would enable it to come into the WTO, not to give America any special deals or special preference but to simply adopt a rigorous plan for opening new markets. I think Americans would do just fine in a fair and free and open market, competing with all other people who would like to sell to China. And that's what I hope we can achieve. And I hope we'll make some progress on that.

But in the meanwhile, I have to continue to press for more access for American products, and I do have a strategy on it. But we will be more vulnerable to those criticisms in this year for the simple reason that our economy is especially strong and the problems in Asia are especially acute. And the intersection of

those things mean we're taking on a lot more imports than we ordinarily would.

Asian Economic and Nuclear Crises

Q. How have the problems, the economic crisis in East Asia, the nuclear crisis in South Asia, and ongoing congressional hearings affected the agenda for the summit? Has it changed since what you would have conceived of at your meeting last year?

The President. Well, I think the first two matters have made the importance of the summit, the importance of the trip even greater because I think they illustrate in graphic terms that relate to the security and the welfare of the American people why a constructive partnership with China is important if we can achieve it.

If you just look at the economic issues—you asked the question about Chinese devaluation. The Chinese have tried to be constructive in working with us on the whole Asian economic crisis.

If you look at the Indian subcontinent, just imagine how much more tension there would have been after the India and Pakistan tests if China hadn't signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and then responded with a test of its own, since India asserted that it was really doing this because of China and not because of Pakistan. And now, you know, the Chinese headed the five-party talks we had with the Permanent Five, and they adhered to every statement we made. And I think that's important. And it's really—you can't imagine any scenario in which we can unravel the difficulties between India and Pakistan without China playing a major role. So I think that's very important.

Now, as to the congressional hearings, I think you have to—or investigations, the only one that I think has any bearing on the trip—it won't have any bearing on the trip, but it has a bearing on our relationships with China—is all the inquiries into the question of whether any elements of the Chinese Government attempted to influence the last election by channeling money into either my campaign or the campaign of various Members of Congress.

As I have always said, that is a serious issue. I have raised it with the Chinese, from the President on down. They have vigorously denied it. And I have asked them to, please to cooperate in every way with the investigation that we have to conduct into this—that is, "we" the executive branch, and "we" the United States through the Congress. And we will continue to express that view on this trip. But that will not—that doesn't in any way undermine the importance of the trip or the need for this kind of partnership against the background of the economic and security issues you mentioned.

China's Political System

Q. Mr. President, would you like to see the end of communism in China, and is that a goal of American policy?

The President. Well, of course I would like to see China adopt a more open, freer political system in which basic political and civil rights would be recognized. The Chinese have expressed their intention to sign the covenant. I think that's very important. And I believe that the Chinese people will, over time, understand and will come to embrace the notion that they can only achieve their full greatness in the world of the 21st century if they allow the widest possible latitude for personal imagination and personal freedom, and that there is a way to do that and still preserve the coherence and stability of their society.

And so I think there will be a process of evolution here as China becomes a more involved and constructive partner with the rest of the world, has a bigger say in regional affairs, and also comes to grips with the basic elements of what it takes to succeed in the modern world. I believe that. And I believe that we can further that by pushing in that direction and by actually having a dialog in which the Chinese leaders really have to imagine the future and what it's going to be like and understand what life is like. You know, they're going to have—what do they have, 400,000 people on the Internet now, they're going to 20 million before you know it. So I would like to see a China that is more open and more free, and I believe—and also that is more accommodating to difference.

I think this—if you look at the question of Tibet, I see this as a great opportunity for China, not some great problem that threatens instability. I think the symbolic importance of the Dalai Lama saying that Tibet just seeks to be genuinely autonomous region but not separate from China, and then having a President of China agree to meet with the Dalai Lama—I think the benefits to China would be sweeping, enormous, and worldwide. And I don't think it would lead to greater instability.

And that relates to, you know, you've got—China has a substantial Muslim population. China has a not insubstantial and growing Christian population. I think, you know, this—the religious leaders who went to China at my request, after President Jiang and I worked out the opportunity for them to go, came back and made their report to me and their recommendations yesterday. And we had an announcement about that here.

I think all this is going to be a big part of China's future. And I think that—I think they will—let me just say this. Any society in change has to find a way to reconcile the realities it faces, its highest hopes for the future, with its biggest nightmare. And every country with any kind of history at all has a nightmare.

When we worked out with the Russians—I'll give you something in a different context—when we worked out with the Russians how we were going to relate Russia to NATO and what the terms of NATO expansion would be, I kept telling people over and over again, "You've got to understand what their nightmare is. We were never invaded by Hitler and all that. And you could say there's nobody alive in Russia today that remembers Napoleon and not all that many remember Hitler, but that's not true. Those things, they seep into the psyche of a people. And you have to understand that."

For the Chinese—the word instability to us may mean a bad day on the stock market, you know, demonstrations out here on The Mall or the Ellipse, because we're a very long way from our Civil War and we think that such a thing is unthinkable. But to them, instability in the context of their history is something that was just around the corner, only yesterday. And it becomes a significant problem.

So what we have to do is to figure out a way to press our convictions about not only what we think is right, morally right, for the people now living in China but what we believe with all of our hearts is right for the future of China and the greatness of China in terms of openness and freedom. And we have to find a way to do it so that they can accommodate it to their psyche, which is very much seared with past instabilities.

Trade, National Security, and Human Rights

Q. Your administration, since you've been in office, has aggressively pushed U.S. exports, U.S. companies and products, in the global marketplace. Some have argued that there's a danger and an emphasis on commercialism that could cloud national security or human rights interests. What's your view on the matter and how do you deal with that, both in China and in a broader sense?

The President. Well, I think they are two different issues. I think on the human rights issue, I think it only undermines human rights if you basically just do it with a wink and a nod and it's obvious that you don't care about human rights or other issues of liberty or human decency. This is not just with China but generally.

I think on balance the evidence is that greater economic prosperity and greater economic openness leads to more open societies and to greater freedom and to a higher quality of life across the board. So I think that—I don't see them as fundamentally in conflict. I just think that as long as you recognize that there is—as long as we in the United States and the Government recognize that we have an obligation to pursue a coherent and full policy, that everything we do to open a country economically and to bring in new ideas, new information, and new people and to bring people from those countries out of their own environs, that that's a good thing, and it advances the cause of human rights and liberty over the long run—and sometimes over the very short run.

Now, on the national security issues, very often these questions require a lot of careful judgment by people who know all the facts, and even there it's not always clear what should be done because technology is becoming more universally available in so many areas. I think we have very clear rules and guidelines on nonproliferation, and we've made a lot of progress with the Chinese on nonproliferation.

On the question of the satellites—if you just want to take the satellites. The issue there, we have a system now where in every decision all the relevant agencies, including the national security agencies, are all involved; if the satellites are purely commercial, the initiative comes out of the State Department, the initial approval, but everybody else gets a say in almost a de facto veto. If there can be some interconnection between the satellite and rocket that goes up, then it initiates out of State, but everybody else gets a say. And I think the system has worked quite well for the United States and has advanced our interests without undermining our security. I've not seen any evidence of any case

where there's been a national security interest that's been compromised.

Q. What about Sikorsky helicopters? The new ones can be sold, but the parts and the services cannot. Do you see that sanction—it's a leftover, I guess, '89 sanction—do you see that being lifted anytime soon?

The President. Well, first of all, as you know, in the Tiananmen sanctions there are five categories of sanctions. The only one we've actually lifted outright is the one on nuclear cooperation in exchange for the comprehensive agreement we made with the Chinese on nuclear cooperation. And I think that's been quite a good thing.

On the satellite issues, that's a case-by-case thing, initiated in 1988 and then implemented by President Bush and by me. On the others, most of them have to be reasoned on a case-by-case basis. And we'll have to look at it, and we'll do the right kind of national security review and make the best judgment we can on it.

Q. What's the reason behind not lifting the sanctions on the Sikorsky's?

The President. Well, I can't—I don't want to talk about it now. I mean, I'll be glad to get some sort of answer to you, but I think what—all I can say is that we have to—we deal with these things on a case-by-case basis, and we do the best we can with them.

Japan

Q. Mr. President, I wanted to ask about Japan. Why aren't you visiting Japan on this trip, and can you respond to the criticism that, based on that, that in some way American policy is tilting towards China and is giving a lower priority to its allies in Asia?

The President. Well, I think—first of all, I think that would be a huge mistake to say that. I have been to Japan on more than one occasion since I've been President. I intend to go to Japan again before I leave office. I have had the Japanese Prime Ministers here. And Prime Minister Hashimoto is coming here very soon after I get back from China. We talk to each other all the time on the telephone, and we had a conversation just the other day.

It's interesting, I think sometimes we can read too much into this. I'm going to China because I think—we moved the trip up, you remember, at the recommendation of Ambassador Sasser, after the national security team looked at it and said they thought he was right because there's so much going on in Asia and because President Jiang had a good constructive trip here. And we wanted to try to build on our relationship with China.

We have made clear to the Japanese that it will in no way undermine the importance of our relationship with Japan, which, as you know, has got long security, economic, and political components to it. And I think it would be really a stretch to try to interpret the fact that I'm going to China and not to Japan at this particular time as having any significance other than the fact that I've been President nearly—well, 5½ years, now—and I think it's time to go to China. And I think it's important to devote a significant amount of time to it and for it to be a trip that stands on its own, just as President Jiang's trip here stood on its own. But it is in no way a derogation of the Japanese relationship. And we've—we certainly, as you know, spent a lot of time working on U.S-Japanese issues and Japanese economic issues in the last few weeks, and we're going to spend a lot more.

China's Financial Markets

Q. How important do you think it is for the U.S. to help China develop its own financial markets, whether it be bond markets or housing or Fannie Mae? And what are you going to do during this trip to help them do that?

The President. The answer to the first question is, I think it's quite important. I think that developing these kinds of markets and giving international capital access to them, I think, is quite important and will continue the process bringing China into the global economy in a way that I think is good. The Chinese may be a little reluctant now because they think, you know, they see what's happened in some other countries.

But as long as they've got good, stable financial policies and significant cash reserves and follow a prudent course, I think they'd be very much advantaged by having more sophisticated and various markets. I haven't decided exactly what, if anything else, I can do on that. I'm going to Shanghai. And while there, I expect to have a lot of discussions about the financial markets, how they're structured, and where we're going from here. But I don't have anything specific to say about that.

China-U.S. Business Meeting

Q. Often there are CEO delegations that accompany trips of this kind, and it doesn't appear that there will be this time. Is there a particular reason for that?

The President. Well, we are going to have a U.S.-China business meeting in Shanghai, and a lot of American CEO's are going to be there. And I have—some who have mentioned to me their interest in this trip, just in passing, I've encouraged, if they've got an interest in China, to participate in that.

But frankly, since this is the first trip an American President has made in quite a long while and since there are issues other than economic issues that also have to be front and center, I thought it was better this time just to take our delegation. There is another practical problem; it would probably be impolitic for me to admit it, but there is a practical problem here, which is that there are now so many American businesses involved in China, you'd have a hard time figuring out who to take and who to leave if we did it. [*Laughter*]

So we decided since we had this big event planned in Shanghai, we would just tell everyone to please come and try to do the trip with a smaller delegation.

Most-Favored-Nation Status for China

Q. Mr. President, is it your goal to at some point grant China permanent most-favored-nation status?

The President. I think it would be a good thing if we didn't have to have this debate every year, yes. I don't think—I think that even a lot of the people that feel for whatever reason they have to vote against it, recognize that we're better off having normal trading relations with China and that we don't need to have this debate every year. And if some future, terrible problem arose between the two of us which would call into question whether we should continue that, then there certainly would be—Congress would have the option to debate and to legislate in that area.

But I don't think this debate every year serves a particularly useful purpose. It might actually have for a few years after Tiananmen Square when there was uncertainty about what our policy was going to be and where there was no systematic way of dealing with human rights and other concerns. But I think now that there is and there will continue to be a systematic way of dealing with that, and I hope that there are other ways for Congress to be involved in China and to make their views known. I think it would be better if we didn't have to have this debate every year.

Q. Will you propose legislation or legislative action to——

The President. I would want to have consultations with Congress. We discussed this last year. I discussed this with a number of leaders in Congress last year, and the consensus was that it wasn't the right time to propose it because the Congress wasn't ready to deal with it. But let's see how the trip goes and, when I get back, see how people are feeling about it.

International Monetary Fund

Q. Another issue that's languishing on Capitol Hill is the IMF. And the Senate passed it months ago and overwhelmingly, but the House has been holding it up. Some of the social conservatives want to add abortion language. Dick Armey wants strict conditions before there would be approval. Newt Gingrich has even suggested that unless the administration is more cooperative in his mind on some of their hearings, that he would hold it up.

How important do you think it is to do this, do it quickly? And how has the economic trouble of Asia made it more important if you believe it is?

The President. I think the economic trouble in Asia has made it more important in two ways, one symbolic and one practical. Symbolically it's more important because the United States needs to be seen as doing everything possible to be a responsible player in the international economy and because we have a huge stake in what happens in Asia. A big percentage of our exports go to Asia; a significant percentage of our own economic growth has been fueled by that export market. There is a practical reason that's important, which is so many countries got in trouble at the same time, the IMF is going to need the money pretty soon. And we can't expect to lead the world when all these huge interests are at stake and then say, but I'm sorry, there are 15 or 20 members of the Republican majority in the House of Representatives who have said that if this administration won't change its family planning policy, that they're prepared to see us lose our vote in the United Nations and

have no influence over the International Monetary Fund and not do our part there.

I think this is part of a dangerous move toward kind of both unilateralism and isolationism that you can also see in some of the budget proposals for foreign assistance. Some Members of the House appear to want to sanction everybody in the world who doesn't agree with us on anything and not invest in anybody in the world who does agree with us and can be our partner in the future and can build a better 21st century for their children.

I just completely disagree with this whole approach, and I'm hoping we can find a way out of it. The Speaker's is in a little bit of a political bind because of the way his caucus works, and I feel badly about it. But he knows good and well we ought to pay our way to the IMF and the U.N.

Tobacco Legislation

Q. I just wanted to ask you a question actually about tobacco. At a press conference about a month ago, I asked you—and this was before tobacco had actually blown up—I asked you if you thought you could convene a tobacco summit of some sort to bring the companies back into the fold at the time the companies were saying they couldn't accept the McCain bill.

Have you discussed with anybody bringing up some sort of tobacco summit to try and get everybody back at the table and try and work out a compromise? And if so, when would something like that happen?

The President. Let me tell you, what we're doing now is we're exploring every conceivable alternative for how we could come up with a bill that can actually pass the Congress that would do the job of reducing teen smoking. The only thing I have ruled out, which I did earlier today in my press conference, was just taking some slimmed-down bill that would make a mockery of the process so that Congress could say it did something.

I believe that the central reason the tobacco companies pulled out was not so much the money but was the uncertainty as to whether there would be some liability cap. And there was an unusual coalition of liberals and conservatives, for an unusual set of reasons, who voted against that, which is why, after consultation with Senator Lott, I came out and clearly said that I would be prepared to accept one and I thought they ought to vote for it. And I still believe that.

And the reason is clear. Whether you're philosophically opposed to a liability cap or not as part of the settlement, under prevailing Supreme Court decisions, I think it's clear that if we want the tobacco companies to limit their advertising and marketing, in order to do that they're going to have to understand to some extent what their financial exposure is in the future.

So for me, I have no problem with that, and I think if you talked to anybody who really wants a bill, they will tell you that in the end, if we're going to get a bill, it will have to have some kind of liability cap on it. So it ought not to be too generous to tobacco companies; it ought to be something they still feel, if they continue to do the wrong thing.

But if you look at—there are three elements. All the studies show there are three elements which has led to a very high rate of teen smoking, even though it's illegal in every State to sell cigarettes to teenagers. One is the price. If the price were higher, kids wouldn't be as likely to buy them. Two is the advertising. And three is the access. So we've got to try to deal with all three of those things. Then we need the bill to deal with the public health issues. And we need something for the tobacco farmers. And everything else, as far as I'm concerned, can be subject to negotiations.

So I'm looking at—we've discussed three or four or five different ways that we can get this thing back on track. But the Senate knows what the parameters are. They could—we could send them up a bill tomorrow that would pass the Senate if they decided they were going to do it.

Q. Do you have a bill? I mean, a White House bill.

The President. No, we don't, because we thought it was better—in consultation with the Republicans, we thought it was better to let them have a committee bill. So they voted this bill out 19 to one, and some of the people who voted for the bill voted against it on the floor yesterday—the day before yesterday.

Q. So you can't see a scenario, giving them political cover, of having a White House bill?

The President. Oh, I don't mind giving them political cover. Don't misunderstand me. I don't mind—to me, this is about the kids. If there is an agreement and there are members—there

are Democrats who are worried about being attacked because they gave a liability cap or Republicans who are worried about being attacked because they voted for a bill that would increase the price of cigarettes a buck a pack or however much it is in the bill, or they want to have some differences in the particulars as it's implemented, I don't mind doing that.

I think that this administration, I think because of the stand that I have taken and the stand the Vice President has taken, I think that our credibility on this is pretty strong. People know we really believe in this, and we really believe it ought to be done. And I think everyone understands that any complicated piece of legislation has to represent a series of compromises.

So I'm more than happy to do all that, but I just—I'm not prepared to adopt a bill that I don't think will do the job and that no reputable public health authority believes will do the job. That's my only bottom line.

I don't—I'm not interested in gaining any political benefit from this except insofar as it's necessary to induce people to ultimately pass the right kind of bill. That's my only objective here. I think this is a public health opportunity of a generation for the United States, and to squander it because there was $40 million in unanswered advertising by the tobacco companies, to which there are very good answers, is a great—it would be a great pity. And I think in the end it's a misreading of the political opinions and character of the American people for the Republican majority to think that they've gotten some big victory here. I just don't agree with that, and I hope we can work it out.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. One quick last China question. Did China's help for Pakistan's nuclear program—was that a contributing factor in these tests, as the Indians claim?

The President. Well, of course that has its roots in the war that China fought with India over 35 years ago. And so China quite rationally, from its point of view, developed a security relationship with Pakistan.

But the important thing is that the Chinese have agreed now not to give assistance to nonsafeguarded nuclear facilities, which would include the ones in Pakistan. They're in the comprehensive test ban regime. And equally important, since deliverability of missiles is a big issue, deliverability of nuclear weapons is a big issue, they've agreed to abide by the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime and to work with us in improving both of our abilities to deal with those issues.

So China—India can blame China or say that this is a Chinese issue, but the truth is, we need to find a way out of this which leaves the Indians more secure, not less, leaves the Pakistanis more secure, not less, and puts the India-China relationship back on the path it was on before this last change of government and the testing occurred.

We got to start from where we are, but I think the Chinese commitment on that going forward was the important thing, and we have it, and I think they will honor it.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:44 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The following journalists participated in the interview: Jim Mann, Los Angeles Times; Dina Temple-Raston, Bloomberg Business News; and Rick Dunham, Business Week. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan; Chinese political dissidents Wang Dan and Wei Jingsheng; Chinese Roman Catholic Bishop Zeng Jingmu; and President Jiang Zemin of China. This interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 25. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Efforts To Cut Teen Drug Use

June 25, 1998

Last week's PRIDE survey showed that we are beginning to change the attitudes and behavior of our children, and that is a step in the right direction. Today's Pulse Check shows that

the work of America's parents, teachers, and public officials is far from done. America's young people need to hear a single, unambiguous message: Drugs are wrong and dangerous, and they can kill you. This survey also indicates that we must continue our efforts to toughen drug enforcement and to get hardened drug users off the street and into mandatory testing and treatment.

Statement on the Solar Energy Systems Partnership
June 25, 1998

I would like to applaud the announcement today of a new partnership to help meet the challenge of global warming by making it easier for homeowners to tap clean energy from the Sun.

Last June, I announced an initiative with the goal of placing solar energy panels on 1 million roofs around the Nation by 2010. Just a year later, the Department of Energy already has received commitments for more than half a million installations. This new partnership between the General Motors Acceptance Corporation and the Solar Energy Industries Association will make low-cost loans for solar energy systems available nationwide, helping us to meet our goal even faster.

This agreement demonstrates that through partnerships and the power of the marketplace, we can reduce greenhouse gas pollution while saving consumers money and creating new economic opportunities. I encourage other businesses to seek creative ways to meet the challenge of climate change. And I urge Congress to help speed this effort by funding my proposals for a solar energy tax credit and other tax and research incentives for energy efficiency and clean power.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on the Line Item Veto
June 25, 1998

I am deeply disappointed with today's Supreme Court decision striking down the line item veto. The decision is a defeat for all Americans—it deprives the President of a valuable tool for eliminating waste in the Federal budget and for enlivening the public debate over how to make the best use of public funds.

By permitting the President to cancel discretionary spending, new entitlement authority, and certain types of tax provisions that benefit special interests at the expense of the public interest, the line item veto would enable Presidents to ensure that the Federal Government is spending public resources as wisely as possible. For 5½ years, I have worked hard to renew our economy by putting America's fiscal house in order. In 1993 the budget deficit was projected to be $290 billion; today, we have balanced the budget, and it is running a surplus. Continued fiscal responsibility is as vital now as the day I took office. I am determined to do everything in my power to continue to cut wasteful spending, maintain fiscal discipline, and create opportunity through continued economic growth.

Remarks at the Arrival Ceremony in Xi'an, China
June 25, 1998

Mayor Feng, Governor Cheng, Secretary Li, *nim men hao.* Thank you for the key to your city and for this magnificent welcome.

Here in this ancient capital, China seems very young to me tonight, blessed with both a proud history and the promise of tomorrow. I am delighted to begin my journey in Xi'an, once the capital of China, still the heartland of the Chinese people. I was raised in the heartland of my country. I know that the character of a nation is determined by the hard-working people who live here.

Over 1,000 years ago, during the Tang Dynasty, which I have seen recreated tonight, Xi'an was perhaps the most open and culturally advanced city in the entire world. From this place, trade routes extended through Asia to Europe and Africa. And to this place, great thinkers came, spreading philosophy and new ideas that have contributed to the greatness of China.

Tomorrow I look forward to seeing the Terra Cotta Warriors, the Old City walls, the Muslim quarter. I look forward to learning more about China's great contributions to the store of human knowledge, from medicine and printing to mathematics and astronomy, discoveries on which so much of the whole world's progress is based.

And I want to see more of the new nation you are building on a scale even the emperors could not have foreseen. The China that gave us printing now boasts fax machines, computers, and cell phones. Xi'an is home to filmmakers, Internet explorers, businesspeople of every description. Here in this city, famous for calligraphy, a new chapter in China's story is being written.

We Americans admire your accomplishments, your economy, your hard work, creativity and vision, your efforts against hunger and poverty, your work with us on peace and stability in Korea and South Asia. A new day is dawning for the Chinese people, for China's greatness lies, as always, with its people.

Our own history has convinced Americans that the greatness of any country is measured in its people, in their shared reverence for family and community, for work and learning, and in their individual thoughts, beliefs, and creativity.

Respect for the worth, the dignity, the potential, and the freedom of every citizen is a vital source of America's strength and success. In this global information age, where both economic growth and individual opportunity are based on ideas, a commitment to providing all human beings the opportunity to develop their full potential is vital to the strength and success of the new China, as well.

As I travel across China, I hope to learn as much as I can about the Chinese people, your history, and your dreams for the future. And I hope to help the Chinese people understand more of America's history, the lessons the American people have drawn from it, and the dreams we hold for the 21st century.

I believe both Chinese and Americans aspire to many of the same things, to provide for our families, to teach our children, to build our communities, to protect our Earth, to shape our own futures, and pass brighter possibilities on to our children.

There may be those here and back in America who wonder whether closer ties and deeper friendship between America and China are good. Clearly, the answer is yes. We have a powerful ability to help each other grow. We can learn much from each other. And as two great nations, we have a special responsibility to the future of the world. The steps we take over the next week can lead to far greater strides for our people in the years ahead.

Here in this city of your magnificent history, we must always remember that we, too, are ancestors. Someday our children and their children will ask if we did all we could to build just societies and a more peaceful world. Let our monument be their judgment that we did that. Let our progress include all people, with all their differences, moving toward a common destiny.

Let us give new meaning to the words written in the ancient "Book of Rites," what you call the "Li Shi": "When the great way is followed, all under heaven will be equal."

Xie xie. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 p.m. at the South Gate of the Old City. In his remarks, he

referred to Mayor Feng Xuchu of Xi'an; and Governor Cheng Andong and Party Secretary Li Jianguo of Shaanxi Province.

Memorandum on Refugee Admissions Consultations
June 25, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 1999 Refugee Admissions Consultations

In accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning refugee admissions as follows:

1. The authorization of 78,000 refugee admissions during FY 1999, which would be allocated by specific region as follows: 12,000 for Africa; 9,000 for East Asia (including Amerasians); 3,000 for Latin America and the Caribbean; 4,000 for the Near East and South Asia; 48,000 for Europe; and 2,000 for the Unallocated Reserve. The recommended level of funded admissions is equal to the level assumed in the FY 1999 budget request.

2. The authorization of an additional 10,000 refugee admission numbers to be made available for the adjustment to permanent resident status of persons who have been granted asylum in the United States.

3. The designation, pursuant to section 101(a)(42)(B) of the INA, of persons in Cuba, Vietnam, and the former Soviet Union, who if they otherwise qualify for admission as refugees, may be considered refugees under the INA even though they are still within their country of nationality or habitual residence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 26.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Science and Engineering Indicators
June 25, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by 42 U.S.C. 1863(j)(1), I am pleased to submit to the Congress a report of the National Science Board entitled *Science and Engineering Indicators—1998.* This report represents the thirteenth in a series examining key aspects of the status of American science and engineering in a global environment.

Investments in science and engineering research and education have enjoyed bipartisan support. They are critical to America's ability to maintain world leadership and fulfill our potential as a Nation as we begin the transition into the 21st century.

This report provides a broad base of quantitative information about U.S. science, engineering, and technology in an international context. I commend *Science and Engineering Indicators—1998* to the attention of the Congress and those in the scientific and technology communities. It will assist us in better understanding the new developments and trends in what is rapidly becoming a global knowledge-based economy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 25, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 26.

Exchange With Reporters in the Village of Xiahe, China
June 26, 1998

Q. Good morning, sir.

Human Rights

Q. Mr. President, the Chinese arrested a couple of dissidents, one apparently for intending to do an interview with an American journalist. I wonder, does such action make it more difficult for you to make the case to the American people that your policy of engagement is improving the lot of the Chinese people, is improving the human rights situation?

The President. No. I found the reports disturbing, and I've asked Ambassador Sasser to raise it with the Chinese authorities. And if true, they represent not China at its best and not China looking forward but looking backward.

One of the reasons that I came here was to discuss both privately and publicly issues of personal freedom. So I think it's very important for me to do that. But I think it makes the case—it makes it all the more important that we continue to work with the Chinese and to engage them.

Taiwan

Q. There have been some suggestions that you're going to sort of accept the Chinese insistence that during the press conference, that you're going to sort of declare the United States decision not supporting Taiwan independence, not supporting Taiwan's bid for the United Nations, and not supporting one China/one Taiwan but two Chinas. Is it going to happen?

The President. Well, first of all, you should come to the press conference to see what happens. But our position with regard to Taiwan is embodied in the three communiques and in the Taiwan Relations Act and in the facts of our relationship over the years. So I think it's obvious that there will be no change in our position one way or the other on this trip.

Susan McDougal's Release From Prison

Q. Mr. President, on a domestic matter, Mr. President, are you happy with the Susan McDougal—Mr. President, are you happy for Susan McDougal? Do you feel——

The President. Well, I'm concerned about her health, and I hope that she gets better now. I think it's a—I hope that the judge's decision puts her in a position where she can get over her pain and her difficulty.

Supreme Court Decision on the Line Item Veto

Q. Sir, the line item veto, sir, was struck down. What do you think about that?

The President. I'm disappointed. I think that having it has made it much easier to control spending, and I think that—and control special interest tax breaks. And so I hope very much that the Congress will not use this decision to move away from the path of fiscal discipline that we have followed the last 5 years that has gotten us to our present state of economic prosperity. I think it would be a mistake.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:35 a.m. in the village. In his remarks, the President referred to Susan McDougal, Whitewater investigation figure, and U.S. District Judge George Howard, Jr.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Xiahe Area Residents
June 26, 1998

The President. Let me begin by thanking all of you for spending a little time with my wife and me today, and by thanking everyone in Xiahe for making us feel so welcome.

I'm sorry that I had to take a little time to answer some questions from our news media, but as you know, there's 12 hours time difference, and so, they're running out of time to file their stories, and thank you for your patience.

In America, there is a lot of respect for and interest in Chinese history and culture but also in the remarkable transformation which has occurred here over the last 25 years. For example,

many Americans are very interested in the fact that over half a million Chinese villages now have local elections, including this one.

They are interested in knowing more about the changes which have led to rising incomes and giving more people the ability to own their own homes and to make decisions about jobs. And they're interested in how small entrepreneurs start their own businesses and how villages like this have their own investments.

So we really have no set program today. I would like to just hear from each of you about what you are doing and how you personally have seen things change in China in the last few years.

Who would like to go first? Doctor, perhaps—the student?

Participant. Maybe it would be interesting in hearing about some of the changes that have taken place at the school.

The President. Yes, very much.

Participant. I think that education in China has achieved great progress during the past few years. And the economy and development of China has benefited education. I've been educated from elementary school through high school. It's very rich; there's been a lot of change. The life at university is very rich now, and we're learning a great deal now. It is very helpful for our future development.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Participant. My name is Yang; I'm from the Xiahe village. I work in the local village clinic, and this is the lowest level clinic in China. We work according to the regulations from the Government, and we try to—one of our jobs is to prevent the common diseases in the countryside and report our work to the higher level Government. Another responsibility of the lower level clinic is to treat common diseases in the countryside. That's all for now.

Hillary Clinton. Doctor, have you noticed improvements in the health of the people here in the countryside during your time as a doctor?

Participant. There has been great improvement in the health quality in the countryside people, especially now we have more money and they do less physical work.

Participant. My name is Yao Linua, and I am the manager of the Terra Cotta Warrior. I own a little factory. I am the manager there, and I also manage old people's home. I am just a country woman, but ever since the reform, I now rent a factory and an old people home, and basically, the factory also supports the old people home.

Now the Chinese have become rich, but we shouldn't forget about old people. In the 20th century we have in China more older people. We really should do more for them, and that's my goal in my life. That's what I want to do.

Mrs. Clinton. May I ask, how did you start your factory? Where did you get the funds to start the factory and get the equipment and materials that you needed?

Participant. I used my own money and got some loan from Government. And actually, several of us work together, so I also collect some funds from my partners.

The President. The older people who stay in your home, how do they get the funds to pay to be in the home?

Participant. We get our funds—some of them get money from the Government, and the factory would pay for their expenses for their living in the old people home.

The President. And what is the average age of the people in the home?

Participant. Sixty-five years old is the average age. The oldest one is 89 years old.

The President. This is going to be a big issue in the future for every country. In our country, the fastest growing group of Americans are people over 85. There are still not many of them, but they're growing very fast. And every society will have to figure out an honorable way to take care of such people. So I appreciate the work you're doing.

Participant. My name is Yang Dongyi, and I am from Xiahe village. I grew up in this village. First I was a farmer, and now I rent a little company. Ever since the liberation in 1949, there are three big changes I experienced myself in this village. The first change I experienced was the life in the village after the liberation was better than before. Our life since 1982, the reform began, our life has improved compared to before the liberation. In 1992, our life experienced another improvement. Before 1989, the average income in the village was about—a little bit more than 100 yuan, and then in 1982, the average income in the village was more than 1,000 yuan. And now the average income in the village is over 3,000 yuan.

Before 1982, my whole family would only get about 100 yuan income per year. Now I and my wife and one daughter, the three of us,

we have more than 30,000 yuan income per year. I want to tell the President that the changes in my village and the change in my own family is also the change in the country.

My personal change, compared to some people in China, is still relatively small, and this place and Xi'an, compared to the coastal cities in China, is still a little backwards. But of course, compared to the U.S., this village is a lot more—even more backward, but we would be willing to work very hard.

The President. Let me say, first of all, that it's very impressive how much economic progress has been made in such a short time.

I wonder, what specific change do you think has been most important in helping you and your family to earn so much more money through your hard work?

Participant. The most important thing is we have a good policy in our country now. In the past, no matter what your abilities are, you are told to do what you are supposed to do. But after the reform, everyone can have the space to show their own talent and to work very hard.

The reason now the production improved so much is everybody can do what they're good at. Some people begin to do business; some people stay in the farmland; and some people begin to have their own company. They're all doing what they're good at. They are also paying more attention to learning the new technology, so their ability to work has greatly improved.

Another thing is they also learn from the foreign countries now. They borrow and they learn the advanced technology from the foreign country and use on their own production. And that's the main reason where they are now today.

The President. Thank you.

Participant. I am a primary school teacher. I feel that the whole society now respects a teacher a lot more. All the children who are school age now go to enroll in the primary school, and they have 9 years of Government-sponsored education. The issues associated with young kids have attracted a lot of attention from all aspects of the society. That's it.

The President. What percentage of the teachers are women and what percentage are men?

Participant. In primary school, female teachers are more. They're about 70 percent. I feel that it might be females are more suitable for this job.

The President. And after the children complete 9 years of school, how is it determined who goes on to more school? Like this young woman here is a university student; how is it determined who gets to go beyond the first 9 years?

Participant. In China, for the college entrance—there is a college entrance exam, so everybody has to pass the exam to go to the college. And others who didn't pass, then they might go to technical school to learn some special technique for their use.

Participant. My name is Xie Liming. I have benefited the most ever since—my kind of people benefit the most ever since the reform. I served in the Air Force for 15 years and worked another 8 years in the Government. In 1992, I opened a small restaurant with 80 seats. Now I have expanded my restaurant to 500 seats.

My restaurant is among the best in Xi'an and very influential. I really wish to invite both of you to go to my restaurant and enjoy my food. If you don't have the chance this time, you are still welcome after you finish your duty as President to come back. [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you.

Participant. And I also want to ask what is your favorite Chinese dish? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, now I understand how you fill a restaurant with 500 seats every night. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Clinton. I would wonder whether any of you might have any questions for us, because one of the reasons that my husband made this trip is so that the Chinese people and the American people can learn more about each other and about our lives.

Participant. I want to ask the President why do you want to hold this roundtable discussion with ordinary Chinese people?

The President. For two reasons. First of all, I think it's important that people who are in positions like mine, in the United States and in China, in every country, understand how people live at what we call the grassroots level, and understand how the policies we make affect the lives that people live, because that's actually the purpose of leadership, to try to make a positive difference in the lives of ordinary citizens.

And secondly, because the American people are very interested in learning more about Chinese people as the result of my trip. So, when we do this, there will be pictures and reports of this meeting in America so people just like you in America will have a feeling for what

it's like to own a restaurant or teach a school or be a businessperson or be a student or a doctor or run a home for older people. They will feel these things in a different way because of this event we're doing here.

Participant. I believe a President who is looking to the facts of people's life must be a President who is supported by his people.

The President. Thank you.

Mrs. Clinton. Could I ask the student, what are you studying at the university?

Participant. I am now taking the basic college courses, but I want to major in electronics.

The President. And what do you want to do when you finish your degree?

Participant. I want to further my study after graduating from college, and then I want to have my own fields of interest in working.

The President. Do you believe that in China today young women have the same opportunities that young men do to do whatever they want with their lives?

Participant. I believe the answer is yes, even though they might have different choices, but the final answer is yes.

The President. We have to stop in a moment, but I'd like to ask the doctor one more question. What do you believe the biggest challenge is for improving the health care of the Chinese people now at the village level? What is the largest remaining challenge that would—any change that could be made that would improve health much more?

Participant. First of all, from my past experience, I believe the biggest challenge is to improve the environmental situation. Prevention is also very important.

The President. This is a very important point which has been made—important for China and important for the United States. When a country grows economically, you use more energy and you have more activity, and it leads to strains on the environment, especially air pollution, which can really affect people's health. So one of China's big challenges, and a continuing challenge for America, is to grow the economy but to clean up the environment at the same time. And we can do both, but we have to work at it, and we should work at it together.

Participant. I want to make one comment. All the businesspeople in Xi'an really want to improve the trade between the U.S. and China, and they would like to see that China become America's first biggest business partner. And I would, for myself, want to make more U.S. dollars. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I'll work on that, and I will also work on accepting your invitation to come to your restaurant when I'm not in office anymore. This is very nice, you know. Most people in my position wonder if anyone will want us to eat with them when we're not in office anymore. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all very much. Thank you. [*Applause*] Good luck to you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in a courtyard in the village.

Remarks to the People of Xiahe
June 26, 1998

Nin men hao, Xiahe.

Thank you, Yunlong, for your welcome. I thank all of the students for the greeting and for the wonderful music, and I thank all the rest of you for making all of us in the American delegation feel so welcome here.

My wife and I are delighted to be joined by our daughter, my mother-in-law, and Secretary Albright, Secretary Daley, Ambassador and Mrs. Sasser, and six Members of the United States Congress, Senator Rockefeller, Senator Baucus, Senator Akaka, and Representatives Dingell and Hamilton and Markey, along with a number of people who work with me in the White House. We are all very honored to be here. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I understand that soon, like nearly half a million other villages across China, you will be voting to choose your local leaders. I know what it is like to run for office. I have won elections, and I have also lost, too. I like winning better than losing, but whenever there is an election and the people decide, everyone wins.

I have come to China to strengthen the ties between our two nations. Over the past 25 years, your country has launched a remarkable period of change, and today, most Chinese, including the members of this village, enjoy a higher standard of living than at any time in China's history.

Here, by using better farming techniques, you have freed up time and money for other projects, like your brick factory, your construction crews, your handicrafts. Your village has sponsored language classes in English and Japanese to help you in dealing with foreign tourists. Today, your village committee owns a dozen businesses, with 300 hard-working people now able to provide for their families. Many of you have opened your own businesses, and in only 15 years, average income here has grown 17 times. I congratulate you.

I also appreciate the fact that you have invested money back into your community in better schools, in better roads, in installing cable television to bring the world into your homes. Your achievements are a window for all the world to see what local democracy has brought to China and what a brighter future you are building for the children here with us today.

We Americans respect your devotion to family, to education, to work, your respect for the land and for your heritage. And we hope you will reap the fruits of your labor for many years to come.

Thank you again for making us all feel so welcome here in Xiahe. Thank you. *Xie xie.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the village. In his remarks, he referred to Yang Yunlong, chief, Xiahe Village Committee; Dorothy Rodham, his mother-in-law; and Mary Sasser, wife of U.S. Ambassador James M. Sasser.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision in *Bragdon* v. *Abbott*

June 26, 1998

I am pleased with today's Supreme Court decision in *Bragdon* v. *Abbott.* This decision reinforces the protections offered by the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act for Americans living with HIV and AIDS. The ADA was enacted with strong bipartisan support to protect Americans with disabilities from discrimination. My administration argued successfully in this case that people with HIV are disabled whether or not they have developed the symptoms of AIDS.

I am firmly committed to protecting all Americans, including those living with HIV and AIDS, from discrimination, and ensuring that each of us can benefit from all America has to offer. Today's decision will help in fulfilling that commitment.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Lithuania-United States Tax Convention With Documentation

June 26, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on January 15, 1998. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and OECD nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets

forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 26, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 27.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Estonia-United States Tax Convention With Documentation

June 26, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on January 15, 1998. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and OECD nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 26, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 27.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Latvia-United States Tax Convention With Documentation

June 26, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the United States of America and the Republic of Latvia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on January 15, 1998. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and OECD nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

June 26, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 27.

The President's Radio Address
June 27, 1998

Good morning. I'm speaking to you today from Beijing. In just 2 days, I've seen some of the rich history and remarkable changes that are taking place in China, home to nearly one quarter of the world's population.

China is the oldest civilization on Earth. In Xi'an, on Friday, I saw the old and the new China, from magnificent Terra Cotta Warriors sculpted by artisans 2000 years before America was founded to the beginnings of democracy in a nearby village where residents soon will hold elections.

I've been touched by the warm reception given to me, my family, and the Members of Congress traveling with us. Tens of thousands of Chinese families have lined the streets to greet us. For all these people, China is changing. I see cell phones, beepers, new office buildings.

China is no longer the same country it was when President Nixon first came here 26 years ago. Never before have so many Chinese had the opportunity to start businesses; lift their families out of poverty; choose where to live, work, and travel; and enjoy the fruits of their labors. But there's also resistance to change, the legacy of a history that has not always been kind to the Chinese people and has left a deeply rooted fear of instability.

Today in Beijing I am meeting with China's leaders to talk about the future of our two countries and a relationship between us that is essential to a peaceful, stable, and prosperous world in the next century. We talked about the United States and China's mutual interests: promoting peace in Korea, where 40,000 U.S. soldiers still risk their lives to patrol the cold war's last frontier; preventing a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan; restoring economic stability in Asia; stopping the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them; combating international crime and drug trafficking; preserving the environment; and opening trade.

We also spoke frankly about our differences, especially concerning human rights. Over the past year, we have seen some progress in this area, though still far from enough. Some of China's famous political prisoners have been released, but others still languish in prison. The Government is loosening its control over many aspects of daily life, yet people still are not completely free to meet, to publish, to speak, to worship according to the dictates of their own hearts.

Throughout this trip, I will raise human rights and try to explain how freedom has been at the heart of America's success and prosperity. I will also argue that in this global information age, when economic success is built on ideas, personal freedom is necessary to the innovation and creativity that are essential to the greatness of any modern nation.

In dealing with China, we must stay true to a course that is both principled and pragmatic. We must continue to expand our areas of cooperation, even as we deal directly with our differences.

China is important to our future, with the largest population on Earth, a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, an economy increasingly connected to our own. Without China, it will be difficult to face the challenges, successfully, that affect all of us. With China, we can build a safer, more prosperous future for our children, a world of unlimited possibility in the new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m., Beijing time, on June 26 at the Diaoyutai residence in Beijing, China, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.d.t., on June 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Beijing
June 27, 1998

President Jiang. First of all, I'd like to welcome you, Mr. President, on the state visit to China. And I'm looking forward to an indepth exchange of views with you on a series of major issues.

Last fall I paid a state visit to your country at your invitation, and we made an important decision—that is, China and the United States would work together to establish a 21st century oriented, constructive, strategic partnership. Today your visit is another major event in China-U.S. relations.

The exchange of visits between the heads of state of China and the United States represents the common desire of our two peoples and also marks a new stage of growth for the bilateral relations. Facts have demonstrated that improvement in growth of China-U.S. relations are the inevitable development of the history and are irresistible for any force on Earth. I'm prepared to work together with you, Mr. President, to make your visit a complete success.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mr. President. As you know, this is my first trip to China, the first by an American President in 9 years. It comes only 8 months after your visit to the United States, which was very successful. I believe that these two visits demonstrate our commitment and our progress in building the constructive, strategic partnership we talked about last October.

I know that I speak for the vast majority of the American people when I say that this effort to improve and strengthen our relationship is very welcome. I have been impressed by the progress we have made and by the open and honest relationship we have developed in discussing all matters, and for that, I thank you very much.

I very much hope this trip will not only help us to expand our areas of cooperation and move toward reconciling our differences but also will help to increase the understanding of the American people about China and the Chinese people about America, because long after we are gone from the scene our people will have to carry on this partnership and this friendship.

NOTE: President Jiang spoke at 9:23 a.m. in the Great Hall of the People. He spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Jiang Zemin of China in Beijing
June 27, 1998

President Jiang. Ladies and gentlemen, just now I've held official talks with President Clinton. The two sides have held an extensive and indepth exchange of views on China-U.S. relations and the major international and regional issues. The talks were positive, constructive, and productive.

The successful exchange of visits between the two heads of state of China and the United States marks a new stage of growth for China-U.S. relations. This not only serves the common interests of China and the United States, but also will be of important significance to promoting peace, stability, and the prosperity in Asia-Pacific and the world at large.

Peace and the development are the main themes of contemporary times. In the new historical conditions, the common interests between China and the United States are increasing, not decreasing. The foundation for cooperation between the two countries is reinforcing, not weakening.

Both sides believe that China and the United States, as the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, should continue to work together to promote peace and security in the

world and Asia-Pacific in particular, to ease and eliminate all kinds of tensions and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to strengthen the efforts in protecting environment, combating international crime, drug trafficking, and international terrorism. Our two sides have agreed to further step up cooperation and the dialog between the two countries on major international issues.

China-U.S. relations are improving and growing. The cooperation between the two sides in many areas has made important progress. President Clinton and I have decided that China and the United States will not target the strategic nuclear weapons under their respective control at each other. This demonstrates to the entire world that China and the United States are partners, not adversaries.

I hereby wish to reiterate that since the very first day when China came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

President Clinton and I have reached a broad range of agreements and consensus on further increasing exchanges in cooperation between China and the United States in all areas in our bilateral relations. We have agreed to take positive steps to promote the growth of the mutually beneficial economic cooperation and trade between China and the United States and to expand the exchanges and the cooperation between the two countries in the energy, environment, scientific, educational, cultural, health, legal, and the military fields, and also to enhance the people-to-people exchanges and friendship.

We have also agreed to enhance the consultations and the cooperation between China and the United States on the issues of disarmament, arms control, and nonproliferation. And we have issued joint statements on the BWC protocol, on the question of the antipersonnel landmines, and on the question of South Asia.

The Taiwan question is the most important and the most sensitive issue at the core of China-U.S. relations. We hope that the U.S. side will adhere to the principles set forth in three China-U.S. joint communiques and the joint China-U.S. statement, as well as the relevant commitments it has made in the interest of a smooth growth of China-U.S. relations.

The improvement and the growth of China-U.S. relations have not come by easily. It is the result of the concerted efforts of the Governments and people of our two countries. So we should all the more treasure this good result.

As China and the United States have different social systems, ideologies, values, and culture traditions, we have some difference of views on certain issues. However, they should not become the obstacles in the way of the growth of China-U.S. relations. The world is a colorful one. The development parts of the countries in the world should be chosen by the people of the countries concerned.

China and the United States should view and handle the bilateral relations from a long-term and strategic perspective. We should promote the growth of China-U.S. relations in the spirit of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit, seeking common ground while putting aside differences and developing cooperation. I believe that through the concerted efforts of both sides, we will make constant progress in the direction of building a constructive, strategic partnership between China and the United States oriented towards the 21st century.

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. President. And I also thank the Chinese people for their warm welcome to me, to my family, and to our delegation.

Over the past 5 years, President Jiang and I have met seven times. Mr. President, your leadership is helping us to transform our nations' relationship for the future. Clearly, a stable, open, prosperous China, shouldering its responsibilities for a safer world, is good for America. Nothing makes that point better than today's agreement not to target our nuclear missiles at each other. We also agreed to do more to shore up stability in Asia, on the Korean Peninsula, and the Indian subcontinent.

I reaffirmed our longstanding "one China" policy to President Jiang and urged the pursuit of cross-strait discussions recently resumed as the best path to a peaceful resolution. In a similar vein, I urged President Jiang to assume a dialog with the Dalai Lama in return for the recognition that Tibet is a part of China and in recognition of the unique cultural and religious heritage of that region.

I welcome the progress we made today in nonproliferation, including China's decision to actively study joining the Missile Technology Control Regime, our joint commitment not to provide assistance to ballistic missile programs in South Asia, and President Jiang's statement

last week that China will not sell missiles to Iran.

We also welcome the steps China recently has taken to tighten nuclear export controls, to strengthen controls on the export of chemicals that can be turned into weapons, and to work jointly with us to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.

As the President said, we are also working together against international crime, drug trafficking, alien smuggling, stepping up our scientific cooperation, which already has produced remarkable breakthroughs in areas including the fight against birth defects like spina bifida. We're helping to eradicate polio and working to predict and to mitigate national disasters. And perhaps most important over the long run, we are committed to working together on clean energy to preserve our natural environment, a matter of urgent concern to both our nations. I am also very pleased by our cooperation on rule of law programs, from training lawyers and judges to providing legal assistance to the poor.

President Jiang and I agree on the importance of China's entry into the World Trade Organization. I regret we did not make more progress on this front, and we must recommit ourselves to achieving that goal on strong terms. We agree that we need to work together to avoid another round of destabilizing currency devaluations in the region and to restore economic growth.

As you can see, we are working together in many areas of cooperation. We have developed a relationship of openness and candor. When we differ, as we do from time to time, we speak openly and honestly in an effort to understand our differences and, if possible, to work toward a common approach to resolving them.

It is well known that the principal area of our difference in recent years has been over human rights questions. America recognizes and applauds China's economic and social transformation which has expanded the rights of its citizens by lifting hundreds of millions from poverty, providing them greater access to information, giving them village elections, greater freedom to travel and to choose their own jobs, and better education for their children.

As I said again to President Jiang, we Americans also firmly believe that individual rights, including the freedom of speech, association, and religion, are very important, not only to those who exercise them but also to nations whose success in the 21st century depends upon widespread individual knowledge, creativity, free exchange, and enterprise.

Therefore, we welcome China's decision to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the recent release of several prominent political dissidents, the recent visit China graciously accorded American religious leaders, and the resumption of a human rights dialog between China and the United States.

Earlier this morning, during my official welcome, I could hear and see the many echoes of China's past and the call of its promising future, for Tiananmen Square is an historical place. There, 100 years ago, China's quest for constitutional government was born. There, in 1919, young people rallied against foreign occupation and launched a powerful movement for China's political and cultural renewal. There, in 1976, public mourning for Zhou Enlai led to the Cultural Revolution's end and the beginning of your remarkable transformation. And there, 9 years ago, Chinese citizens of all ages raised their voices for democracy.

For all of our agreements, we still disagree about the meaning of what happened then. I believe and the American people believe that the use of force and the tragic loss of life was wrong. I believe and the American people believe that freedom of speech, association, and religion are, as recognized by U.N. Charter, the right of people everywhere and should be protected by their governments.

It was to advance these rights that our Founding Fathers in our Declaration of Independence pledged our lives, our fortunes, our sacred honor. Fifty years ago, the U.N. recognized these rights as the basic freedoms of people everywhere.

The question for us now is, how shall we deal with such disagreements and still succeed in the important work of deepening our friendship and our sense of mutual respect?

First, we Americans must acknowledge the painful moments in our own history when fundamental human rights were denied. We must say that we know, still, we have to continue our work to advance the dignity and freedom and equality of our own people. And second, we must understand and respect the enormous challenges China has faced in trying to move forward against great odds, with a clear memory of the setbacks suffered in past periods of instability.

Finally, it is important that whatever our disagreements over past action, China and the United States must go forward on the right side of history for the future sake of the world. The forces of history have brought us to a new age of human possibility, but our dreams can only be recognized by nations whose citizens are both responsible and free.

Mr. President, that is the future America seeks to build with China, in partnership and honest friendship.

Tomorrow, Hillary and I will visit the Great Wall. The wall's builders knew they were building a permanent monument, even if they were unable to see it finished in their lifetimes. Likewise, we know we are building a friendship that will serve our descendants well, even if we, ourselves, will not see its full development across the next century and into the new millennium. Our friendship may never be perfect; no friendship is. But I hope it will last forever.

President Jiang. Now President Clinton and I are prepared to answer your questions, and now I'd like to give the first question to President Clinton.

President Clinton. Which—Chinese journalists, one of you? In the back there, yes? Yes, ma'am, go ahead.

Asian Financial Situation

Q. Thank you. I'm a correspondent with Phoenix TV of Hong Kong. In the recent Asian financial crisis, the Chinese Government has pledged to maintain the value of RMB Asian currency and, thus, making positive contribution to stabilizing the situation in Asia. And this has attracted positive reaction from the international community and from the U.S. Government. However, yesterday, the exchange rate between Japanese yen and the U.S. dollar dropped again to a low of 143 yen against one dollar, and which was closed at 141 yen against one dollar. So, what specific common measures are the Chinese and the U.S. Government prepared to take to stabilize the financial situation in Asia and the world?

The President. Well, first of all, let me agree with you. I think that China has shown great statesmanship and strength in making a strong contribution to the stability not only of the Chinese people and their economy but the entire region, by maintaining the value of its currency.

The United States, as you know, has worked hard to try to support the stability of the Japanese yen and to help growth resume in Japan. I think that what we have agreed to do is to continue to do whatever we can to promote stability and to support policies within Japan that will restore confidence in the economy, get investment going again, and get growth going.

The key here, I believe, is for the plans to reform the financial institutions in Japan and take other steps that will get growth going and get investments going in Japan to be made. I think that, ultimately, President Jiang and I would give anything to be able to just wave a wand and have all of this go away. We are not the only actors in this drama, and a lot of this must be done by the Japanese Government and the Japanese people. We can be supportive, but they have to make the right decisions.

Human Rights

Q. My question to President Jiang and also to President Clinton is, we know that there were four dissidents in Xi'an who were arrested earlier, and three were released, and one of them is still under detainment. And I would like to know if you talked about the issue. And what about the rest 2,000 dissidents who are being reported still under imprisonment right now in China? Can both of you elaborate on that? Thank you.

President Jiang. In our talks just now, President Clinton raised this issue. We adopt an attitude of extending very warm welcome to the visit to China by President Clinton.

As for the matter you raised, I think you're referring to the incident in Xi'an, and I think in China there is no question that there is no restriction whatsoever on the coverage and interview by the reporters and the correspondents within the scope of law. But as for some activities that have been detrimental or have prejudiced the security, then the local authorities should take measures to deal with them, and it is also understandable.

As for the question you raised, actually, I do not have very detailed information in this regard. But as for the latter part of your question concerning 2,000 dissidents, I think in China we have our laws. And in China's constitution, it is clearly stipulated that the Chinese citizens have the freedom of speech, but any law-breaking activities must be dealt with according to law. I think this is true in any country of rule

of law. And I think China's judicial departments will deal with the matter according to law.

I want to add that I believe that the vast majority of the correspondents and the reporters are willing to promote the friendship between China and the United States through President Clinton's visit to China this time. However, before President Clinton's visit, I read some reports from some media and newspapers saying—alleging China had been involved in so-called political contributions in the United States. I really think it very absurd and ridiculous, and I think they are sheer fabrications. China can never do such a thing, and China never interferes in other countries' internal affairs.

Actually, at the talks this morning, President Clinton also asked me of this question. And I told him that after hearing of such an allegation, we conducted very earnest investigation into the matter. And the results of the investigation shows that there was never such a thing.

Recently, in my meetings with many foreign visitors and visiting leaders of other countries, I often said to them that as countries in the world have different social systems and values, it is something that should be allowed that they may have different understandings about one fact. And this actually, itself, is a representation and the manifestation of democracy.

However, what is important is that the fact itself should not be distorted.

I'm sorry I've taken up too much of the time, and I now invite President Clinton to say a few words.

President Clinton. Well, we did discuss the questions you raised. And of course, I made my views known about the recent detentions yesterday. On the larger question you raised, I actually made a couple of specific and practical suggestions about how we might take our dialog farther there.

There are some people who are incarcerated now for offenses no longer on the books in China, reflecting real progress in present Chinese practice, and the Chinese, in my view—we should acknowledge that. But the question then arises, is there some way that these people might be released? Is there some procedure through which we could move? There are some people imprisoned for nonviolent activities in June of '89; is there something that could be done there?

There are some other practical things we discussed, which I think it would be premature to ask the Chinese Government to make a statement on now because we just have had these discussions. But I want to say to all of you that the atmosphere—whatever your position on these issues is, and particularly if you agree with me, I think you should at least appreciate the fact that we now have an atmosphere in which it is possible for us to be open and honest and in great detail about this and that there are legitimate and honest differences in the way we look at this. But I believe that we are making progress, and I believe that we will make more.

I remember the things that I specified in my statement about that. You can see that neither one of us are shy about being strong about how we believe about this. And I think that we have them in the public debate now, we have them in the private discussions, and we just have to keep pushing forward in trying to work through it.

Nuclear Detargeting Agreement

Q. President Jiang spoke of China's position against the first use of nuclear weapons, and the policy of the United States does not agree with. Was this discussed in the context of negotiations on the detargeting agreement? And where are any U.S. concessions in order to obtain the detargeting agreement?

President Clinton. Well, the short answer to your question, and the accurate one, is no, but I don't want it to be a misleading answer. That is, you well understand that our position on that issue is a product of decades of experience in a former time. We have not changed our position, nor are we prepared to do so, on that.

But this was a mutual decision we made because we both felt that, number one, if we detargeted, we would completely eliminate the prospect ever of any kind of accidental launch, and number two, we would take one more step in showing mutual confidence and trust in one another, and number three, it would be a helpful signal as a counterweight to the recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. And so we agreed that it was in both our interests to do this on its own terms.

President Jiang. I would like to make a brief explanation. As I stated just now, President Clinton and I decided that China and the United States would not target the strategic nuclear weapons under their respective control at each other. Full stop—that's a full stop. And then this demonstrates to the entire world that China

and the United States are partners, not adversaries. Full stop again. [*Laughter*] And then I said, I hereby reiterate that since the very first day that China came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances. Full stop. That's my view. That's our view.

Human Rights

Q. I'm a correspondent with Xinhua news agency. My question is to President Jiang. At his opening statement, President Clinton expressed appreciation of the achievements made by the Chinese Government in respecting human rights. At the same time, he also said that China and the United States also had difference of views over this matter. So my question is, what is the position of the Chinese Government on the human rights issue?

President Jiang. China and the United States have differences of views and also have common ground on the human rights issue. More than 2,000 years ago, a great thinker of China's Han Dynasty, Dong Zhongshu, once said, "Of all the living things nurtured between heaven and the Earth, the most valuable is human beings." So the Chinese nation always respects and maintains the dignity and rights of the people. Today the Chinese Government solemnly commits itself to the promotion and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The United States is the most developed country in the world, with a per capita GDP approaching 30,000 U.S. dollars, while China is a developing country with a population of 1.2 billion, with a per capita GDP of less than 700 U.S. dollars. As the two countries differ in social system, ideology, historical tradition, and cultural background, the two countries have different means and ways in realizing human rights and fundamental freedoms. So it's nothing strange that we may have some difference of views over some issues.

China stresses that the top priority should be given to the right to subsistence and the right to development. Meanwhile, efforts should be made to strengthen democracy and the legal system building, and to protect the economic, social, cultural, civil, and the political rights of the people.

I listened very carefully to what President Clinton said just now, and I noticed that he made mention of the political disturbances happened in Tiananmen in 1989, and he also told the history of Tiananmen and told of the things that happened in Tiananmen.

With regard to the political disturbances in 1989, the Chinese people have long drawn a historical conclusion. During my visit to the United States last year and also on many international occasions, I have stated our position that with regard to the political disturbances in 1989, had the Chinese Government not taken the resolute measures, then we could not have enjoyed the stability that we are enjoying today.

China is a socialist country in which its people are masters of the nation. The Chinese people can elect their own representatives to the people's congresses through direct or indirect means, and they can fully express their views and exercise their political rights. In the two decades since the reform and opening up program was started, the National People's Congress of China has adopted more than 320 laws and acts, thus, constantly strengthening the legal protection of the democracy, fundamental freedoms, and the various rights enjoyed by the Chinese people. Over the past two decades, another 200 million people in China were lifted out of poverty.

No country's human rights situation is perfect. Since the founding of new China, the fundamental changes and the tremendous achievements that have been achieved, that have been scored in the human rights conditions in China are for all to see.

I'd like to know whether President Clinton will have anything more to add.

President Clinton. I would like to add a comment. First of all, I think this debate and discussion today has been a healthy thing and a good thing. Secondly, I think to understand the priority that each country attaches to its own interpretation of this issue of human rights, you have to understand something of our history.

The Chinese who are here understand better than I the price paid over time at various moments in history for disruption and upheaval in China, so there is an understandable desire to have stability in the country. Every country wants stability.

Our country was founded by people who felt they were abused by royal powers, by people in power, and they wanted to protect their personal liberties by putting limits on government. And they understood—they understood clearly,

that any system—because human beings are imperfect, any system can be abused.

So the question for all societies going forward into the 21st century is, which is the better gamble? If you have a lot of personal freedom, some people may abuse it. But if you are so afraid of personal freedom because of the abuse that you limit people's freedom too much, then you pay, I believe, an even greater price in a world where the whole economy is based on ideas and information and exchange and debate and children everywhere dreaming dreams and feeling they can live their dreams out.

So I am trying to have a dialog here that will enable both of us to move forward so that the Chinese people will get the best possible result. I believe stability in the 21st century will require high levels of freedom.

President Jiang. I'm sorry, I have to take up an additional 5 minutes. [*Laughter*] So I'd like to say a few words on Dalai Lama. President Clinton is also interested in this question, in Dalai Lama. Actually, since the Dalai Lama left in 1959, earth-shaking changes have taken place in Tibet.

First, the system of theocracy has forever become bygones, though it is unfortunate that the disappearance of this theocracy was much later than the demise of theocracy in Europe, that's before the Renaissance. And the more than 1 million serfs under the rule of the Dalai Lama were liberated. In 1990 when I was in Tibet, I went to visit the liberated serfs. And now the system of national autonomy is in practice in Tibet, and the people there, they have their Tibetan autonomous region government.

Since I came to work in the central government, I have urged the rest 29 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions to assist Tibet in its development, even including those provinces that are not very developed, such as Qinghai Province. So all together, nearly 8 billion RMB-yuan financial resources were raised, and already 62 projects have been completed in Tibet.

As for the freedom of religious belief, there is fierce stipulations in our constitution for the protection of religious belief, and this also includes in Tibet. And we have also spent a lot of money in renovating the lamaseries and temples in Tibet. And we have spent 100 million RMB-yuan and one ton of gold in renovating the Potala Palace.

Just now President Clinton also mentioned the Tibetan issue and the dialog with the Dalai Lama. Actually, as long as the Dalai Lama can publicly make a statement and a commitment that Tibet is an inalienable part of China and he must also recognize Taiwan as a province of China, then the door to dialog and negotiation is open. Actually, we are having several channels of communications with the Dalai Lama. So I hope the Dalai Lama will make positive response in this regard.

Finally, I want to emphasize that according to China's constitution, the freedom of religious belief in Tibet and also throughout China is protected. But as the President of the People's Republic of China and as a Communist member, a member of the Communist Party, I myself am an atheist. But this will by no means affect my respect for the religious freedom in Tibet.

But still, I have a question. That is, during my visit to the United States last year and also during my previous visits to other European countries, I found that although the education in science and technology have developed to a very high level and people are now enjoying modern civilization, but still quite a number of them have a belief in Lamaism. So this is a question that I'm still studying and still looking into. I want to find out the reason why.

I think President Clinton is a strong defender of the American interests, and I am a strong defender of the Chinese interests. But despite that, we still can have very friendly exchanges of views and discussions. And I think that is democracy. And I want to stress that, actually, there are a lot of areas in which we can learn from each other.

If you agree, we will finish this. [*Laughter*]

President Clinton. I agree, but I have—you have to let me say one thing about the Dalai Lama, since you brought it up. [*Laughter*]

First, I agree that Tibet is a part of China, an autonomous region of China. And I can understand why the acknowledgement of that would be a precondition of dialog with the Dalai Lama. But I also believe that there are many, many Tibetans who still revere the Dalai Lama and view him as their spiritual leader. President Jiang pointed out that he has a few followers of Tibetan Buddhism even in the United States and Europe. But most of his followers have not given up their own religious faith. He has followers who are Christians—supporters, excuse

me, not followers, supporters—who are Christians, who are Jews, who are Muslims, who believe in the unity of God, and who believe he is a holy man.

But for us, the question is not fundamentally religious; it is political. That is, we believe that other people should have the right to fully practice their religious beliefs and that if he, in good faith, presents himself on those terms, it is a legitimate thing for China to engage him in dialog.

And let me say something that will perhaps be unpopular with everyone. I have spent time with the Dalai Lama. I believe him to be an honest man, and I believe if he had a conversation with President Jiang, they would like each other very much. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's 161st news conference began at 12:05 p.m. in the Western Hall of the Great Hall of the People. President Jiang spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement on Anti-Personnel Landmines
June 27, 1998

The United States and China reaffirm their commitment to ending the humanitarian crisis caused by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines (APL). They both maintain that efforts to eliminate the APL threat to civilians should be pursued consistent with national security requirements.

The United States and China recognize the importance of the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Conventional Weapons in addressing humanitarian concerns resulting from the indiscriminate use of landmines. They agree to work toward the early ratification of the Amended Protocol and urge others to ratify it as well.

The United States and China agree to actively pursue at the Conference on Disarmament the commencement of negotiations on an anti-personnel landmines transfer/export ban by supporting the prompt establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee.

The United States and China commit to accelerate global humanitarian demining operations with the objective of eliminating the threat of anti-personnel landmines to civilians as soon as possible. The United States and China reaffirm their commitments to furnish demining assistance, which could include mine awareness, training in mine clearance, and technology for detection and clearance, through appropriate channels to affected countries with the objective of promoting their indigenous capacity for humanitarian demining.

NOTE: The joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary, but it was not issued as a White House press release.

Joint Statement on the Biological Weapons Convention
June 27, 1998

Recognizing the threat posed by biological and toxin weapons, the United States and China reaffirm their strong support for the complete global elimination of biological weapons. As States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, the two sides stress the importance of the Convention to international peace and security, fully support the purposes and objectives of the Convention, and favor comprehensively strengthening the effectiveness and universality of the Convention.

The United States and China each reaffirm that they are determined to strictly abide by the provisions of the Convention, to earnestly and comprehensively fulfill the obligations each has undertaken, shall not develop, produce or

stockpile biological weapons under any circumstances and shall oppose the proliferation of biological weapons and their technology and equipment.

Both the United States and China support efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of the Convention, including the establishment of a practical and effective compliance mechanism. In this connection, the two sides positively appraise the work of the Ad Hoc Group set up for this purpose on negotiating a protocol to the Convention. The two sides believe the protocol must include efficient, practical and cost effective measures to deter proliferation or violation of the Convention and improve transparency. Appropriate measures should be formulated and implemented in a manner that takes into account protection of sensitive commercial information and legitimate security needs, and in light of relevant national laws and regulations. The two sides express their desire to cooperate in the negotiations and work together to further accelerate an early conclusion of the negotiations on the protocol.

The United States and China agree that they shall strive to enhance bilateral cooperation and exchanges in the field of bio-technology and vigorously engage in and promote the peaceful use of biological technology.

NOTE: The joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary, but it was not issued as a White House press release.

Joint Statement on South Asia
June 27, 1998

Introduction

Recent nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, and the resulting increase in tension between them, are a source of deep and lasting concern to both of us. Our shared interests in a peaceful and stable South Asia and in a strong global nonproliferation regime have been put at risk by these tests, which we have joined in condemning. We have agreed to continue to work closely together, within the P–5, the Security Council and with others, to prevent an accelerating nuclear and missile arms race in South Asia, strengthen international nonproliferation efforts, and promote reconciliation and the peaceful resolution of differences between India and Pakistan.

Preventing a Nuclear and Missile Race in South Asia

The P–5 Joint Communique of June 4, which was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1172, sets out clear and comprehensive objectives and a plan for action to address the threat of South Asian nuclear and missile arms race. We pledge our full support for the steps outlined in the Joint Communique, and again call on India and Pakistan to stop all further nuclear tests and adhere immediately and unconditionally to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), to refrain from weaponization or deployment of nuclear weapons and from the testing or deployment of missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, and to enter into firm commitments not to weaponize or deploy nuclear weapons or missiles capable of delivering them.

Strengthening Global Nonproliferation Cooperation

The United States and China remain firmly committed to strong and effective international cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as its cornerstone. We will continue to bolster global nuclear nonproliferation efforts, and reiterate that our goal is adherence of all countries, including India and Pakistan, to the NPT as it stands, without any modification. States that do not adhere to the Treaty cannot expect to be accorded the same benefits and international standing as are accorded to NPT parties. Notwithstanding their recent nuclear tests, India and Pakistan do not have the status of nuclear weapons states in accordance with the NPT.

We reaffirm our determination to fulfill our commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the NPT. To this end, both countries have signed the Comprehensive Test

Ban Treaty and do not intend to resume nuclear testing.

We call for the prompt initiation and conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, on the basis of the 1995 agreed mandate, for a multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We urge India and Pakistan to participate, in a positive spirit, in such negotiations with other states in the Conference on Disarmament with a view to reaching early agreement.

We both actively support the Strengthened Safeguards System now being implemented by the IAEA, and will promptly take steps to implement it in our countries.

Reducing Tensions and Encouraging the Peaceful Resolution of Differences Between India and Pakistan

We are committed to assist where possible India and Pakistan to resolve peacefully the difficult and long-standing differences between them, including the issue of Kashmir. We welcome the resumption of dialogue between the two countries and encourage them to continue such dialogue, and we stand ready to assist in the implementation of confidence-building measures between them, and encourage the consideration of additional measures of this type.

Responsibilities of the United States and China

The United States and China have long sought friendly relations with both India and Pakistan. We reaffirm this goal and our hope that we can jointly and individually contribute to the achievement of a peaceful, prosperous, and secure South Asia. As P–5 members, and as states with important relationships with the countries of the region, we recognize our responsibility to contribute actively to the maintenance of peace, stability and security in the region, and to do all we can to address the root causes of tension.

We reaffirm that our respective policies are to prevent the export of equipment, materials or technology that could in any way assist programs in India or Pakistan for nuclear weapons or for ballistic missiles capable of delivering such weapons, and that to this end, we will strengthen our national export control systems.

Next Steps

Close coordination between the United States and China is essential to building strong international support behind the goals to which we are committed in response to nuclear testing by India and Pakistan. We will stay closely in touch on this issue, and will work with other members of the P–5 and the Security Council, with other Asian and Pacific countries, and with the broader international community to forestall further instability in South Asia, achieve a peaceful and mutually acceptable resolution of differences between India and Pakistan, and strengthen the global nonproliferation regime.

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

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Jiang Zemin of China in Beijing

June 27, 1998

President Jiang, Madame Wang, members of the Chinese Government, fellow guests; I am honored to be here representing the people of the United States in the Great Hall of the People, which reflects the impressive progress of the Chinese people in the 20th century.

We Americans first saw it on our televisions 26 years ago when President Nixon became the first American leader to visit China. Those were the very first live pictures of China ever seen in my country. Across the United States, Americans were filled with great hope as relations resumed between our two great nations.

That visit changed history. It reminded us of the warmth each nation felt for the other, long before the cold war. It recalled our alliance in World War II and our long history of commercial relations dating back to the infancy of the United States. We were trading together before our Constitution was written. Even the tea that

our Founding Fathers threw into the Boston Harbor in 1773 to protest British taxes was from China.

For most of our history we have looked upon China as a distant friend across the sea. As the Bamboo Curtain opened, Americans and Chinese learned about each other all over again. Starting with pandas and ping-pong players, we have built a broad and friendly relationship.

Today China and the United States cooperate across a wide range of enterprises, in business, in the arts, in the academic world, and in the personal friendship that unites Chinese and Americans. More than 1 million Americans trace their roots to China. Every day, Chinese-Americans build a better America, as entrepreneurs and architects, artists and public servants. And we form lifelong bonds with the thousands of Chinese students who study with us every year, teaching us their culture as they learn from ours.

Americans are proud that many of China's leaders spent time in the United States. Dr. Sun Yat-sen visited six times between 1896 and 1911, and he was in Denver when he learned he would become China's new leader. The great teacher Hu Shih was a student in New York when he pioneered a new system of expressing vernacular Chinese, an idea that changed China forever. I look forward to seeing Beijing University during its centennial year, a monument to Hu Shih and so many other friends of America.

As two great nations, the world looks to us to set a good example. In the last few months, we have seen how much we can and must do together, in our strong response to the crisis in India and Pakistan, our efforts for lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, our cooperation to stem the flow of dangerous weapons around the world. In so many different ways, we are upholding the teachings of Mencius, who said, "A good citizen in one community will befriend the other citizens of the community; a good citizen of the world will befriend the other citizens of the world."

Mr. President, the American people admire the great strides China has taken. Your people are leading lives inconceivable just a generation ago. Your phenomenal growth over 20 years has opened new worlds of possibility, for jobs, for more schools, for greater mobility, for instant access to the outside world. We Americans appreciate the mutual respect of our relationship, a relationship based on cooperation, candor, and recognition of each nation's values and traditions.

An ancient Chinese proverb tells us, "Be not afraid of growing slowly; be only afraid of standing still." Let us commit to keep moving forward together, turning small steps into giant strides for our people, our nations, and the world.

I ask you now to please join me in a toast to the President and the First Lady of the People's Republic of China and to the friendship joining our two peoples and the future we will build together. *Gan bei.*

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:30 p.m. in the Banquet Hall of the Great Hall of the People. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China and his wife, Wang Yeping.

Remarks at Chongwenmen Church in Beijing

June 28, 1998

Thank you, Reverend Wu, Reverend Siu, Reverend Yin. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for making me and my family and our party of Americans feel so welcome in your church today. We are a long way from home, but we felt very much at home with you here in this church.

We celebrate with you the growth of the practice of our faith in China, and we rejoice to hear Reverend Siu cite the numbers of churches and other places of worship where people are practicing their faith today.

The sermon today was on the unity of the church and our unity with God in the church. I would like to add only one point: I believe our faith calls upon us to seek unity with people across the world of different races and backgrounds and creeds. In the Book of Acts, the 26th verse, it is said that God has made from one blood every nation to dwell on the surface

of the Earth. I believe that is true. Therefore, I believe that Chinese and Americans are brothers and sisters as children of God. We come here in that spirit today, grateful for your welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:31 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Wu Wei and Rev. Siu Zeshing, principal ministers, and Rev. Yin Hongtao, minister trainee, Chongwenmen Church. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters at the Great Wall in Mutianyu, China
June 28, 1998

Visit to the Great Wall

Q. What are your impressions of the wall, Mr. President?

The President. Quite unbelievable. It's amazing to imagine that it was done so long ago. They've even had bricks here for 400 and some odd years.

Q. Do you see any analogies, sir, to the way China is now and the way it was then?

The President. No. [*Laughter*] I said yesterday that I felt—I believe this wall now is a symbol that China shows to the rest of the world, not a wall to keep people out. It sort of unifies the country for over 7,000 kilometers.

Visit to Chongwenmen Church

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us what the woman in the church wanted to talk to you about today?

The President. She just kept saying how happy she was I was in the church and how she wished I could come to the little village where she was from. She was very emotional. But as nearly as I can tell, there was nothing specific that she was saying. She kept thanking me for being there and saying that she was glad I was there, and she wished I could come to her village, her home village.

Visit to the Great Wall

Q. What do you think, Mrs. Clinton? What are your impressions?

Mrs. Clinton. Magnificent.

The President. You know, the part—the steep incline you see up there, we were told, is the steepest part of the wall. So if we had a couple of hours, we could walk 10 kilometers, and we'd hit the biggest incline, and we'd all be in very good shape when we finished. Or we'd be finished. [*Laughter*]

Q. Was it a good workout anyway?

The President. It was a good workout. It was great.

Nice cap, Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio].

Q. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:45 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Students at Beijing University in Beijing, China
June 29, 1998

The President. Thank you. Thank you, President Chen, Chairman Ren, Vice President Chi, Vice Minister Wei. We are delighted to be here today with a very large American delegation, including the First Lady and our daughter, who is a student at Stanford, one of the schools with which Beijing University has a relationship. We have six Members of the United States Congress; the Secretary of State; Secretary of Commerce; the Secretary of Agriculture; the Chairman of our Council of Economic Advisers; Senator Sasser, our Ambassador; the National Security Adviser; and my Chief of Staff, among others. I say that to illustrate the importance

that the United States places on our relationship with China.

I would like to begin by congratulating all of you, the students, the faculty, the administrators, on celebrating the centennial year of your university. *Gongxi,* "Beida."

As I'm sure all of you know, this campus was once home to Yenching University, which was founded by American missionaries. Many of its wonderful buildings were designed by an American architect. Thousands of American students and professors have come here to study and teach. We feel a special kinship with you.

I am, however, grateful that this day is different in one important respect from another important occasion 79 years ago. In June of 1919, the first president of Yenching University, John Leighton Stuart, was set to deliver the very first commencement address on these very grounds. At the appointed hour, he appeared, but no students appeared. They were all out leading the May 4th Movement for China's political and cultural renewal. When I read this, I hoped that when I walked into the auditorium today, someone would be sitting here. And I thank you for being here, very much.

Over the last 100 years, this university has grown to more than 20,000 students. Your graduates are spread throughout China and around the world. You have built the largest university library in all of Asia. Last year 20 percent of your graduates went abroad to study, including half of your math and science majors. And in this anniversary year, more than a million people in China, Asia, and beyond have logged on to your website. At the dawn of a new century, this university is leading China into the future.

I come here today to talk to you, the next generation of China's leaders, about the critical importance to your future of building a strong partnership between China and the United States.

The American people deeply admire China for its thousands of years of contributions to culture and religion, to philosophy and the arts, to science and technology. We remember well our strong partnership in World War II. Now we see China at a moment in history when your glorious past is matched by your present sweeping transformation and the even greater promise of your future.

Just three decades ago, China was virtually shut off from the world. Now, China is a member of more than 1,000 international organizations, enterprises that affect everything from air travel to agricultural development. You have opened your nation to trade and investment on a large scale. Today, 40,000 young Chinese study in the United States, with hundreds of thousands more learning in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

Your social and economic transformation has been even more remarkable, moving from a closed command economic system to a thriving, increasingly market based and driven economy, generating two decades of unprecedented growth, giving people greater freedom to travel within and outside China, to vote in village elections, to own a home, choose a job, attend a better school. As a result, you have lifted literally hundreds of millions of people from poverty. Per capita income has more than doubled in the last decade. Most Chinese people are leading lives they could not have imagined just 20 years ago.

Of course, these changes have also brought disruptions in settled patterns of life and work and have imposed enormous strains on your environment. Once every urban Chinese was guaranteed employment in a state enterprise. Now you must compete in a job market. Once a Chinese worker had only to meet the demands of a central planner in Beijing. Now the global economy means all must match the quality and creativity of the rest of the world. For those who lack the right training and skills and support, this new world can be daunting.

In the short term, good, hardworking people—some, at least—will find themselves unemployed. And as all of you can see, there have been enormous environmental and economic and health care costs to the development pattern and the energy use pattern of the last 20 years, from air pollution to deforestation to acid rain and water shortage.

In the face of these challenges, new systems of training and social security will have to be devised, and new environmental policies and technologies will have to be introduced with the goal of growing your economy while improving the environment. Everything I know about the intelligence, the ingenuity, the enterprise of the Chinese people and everything I have heard these last few days in my discussions with President Jiang, Prime Minister Zhu, and others give me confidence that you will succeed.

As you build a new China, America wants to build a new relationship with you. We want

China to be successful, secure, and open, working with us for a more peaceful and prosperous world. I know there are those in China and the United States who question whether closer relations between our countries is a good thing. But everything all of us know about the way the world is changing and the challenges your generation will face tell us that our two nations will be far better off working together than apart.

The late Deng Xiaoping counseled us to seek truth from facts. At the dawn of the new century, the facts are clear. The distance between our two nations, indeed between any nations, is shrinking. Where once an American clipper ship took months to cross from China to the United States, today, technology has made us all virtual neighbors. From laptops to lasers, from microchips to megabytes, an information revolution is lighting the landscape of human knowledge, bringing us all closer together. Ideas, information, and money cross the planet at the stroke of a computer key, bringing with them extraordinary opportunities to create wealth, to prevent and conquer disease, to foster greater understanding among peoples of different histories and different cultures.

But we also know that this greater openness and faster change mean that problems which start beyond one nation's borders can quickly move inside them: the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the threats of organized crime and drug trafficking, of environmental degradation and severe economic dislocation. No nation can isolate itself from these problems, and no nation can solve them alone. We, especially the younger generations of China and the United States, must make common cause of our common challenges, so that we can together shape a new century of brilliant possibilities.

In the 21st century—your century—China and the United States will face the challenge of security in Asia. On the Korean Peninsula, where once we were adversaries, today, we are working together for a permanent peace and a future freer of nuclear weapons.

On the Indian subcontinent, just as most of the rest of the world is moving away from nuclear danger, India and Pakistan risk sparking a new arms race. We are now pursuing a common strategy to move India and Pakistan away from further testing and toward a dialog to resolve their differences.

In the 21st century, your generation must face the challenge of stopping the spread of deadlier nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. In the wrong hands or the wrong places, these weapons can threaten the peace of nations large and small. Increasingly, China and the United States agree on the importance of stopping proliferation. That is why we are beginning to act in concert to control the world's most dangerous weapons.

In the 21st century, your generation will have to reverse the international tide of crime and drugs. Around the world, organized crime robs people of billions of dollars every year and undermines trust in government. America knows all about the devastation and despair that drugs can bring to schools and neighborhoods. With borders on more than a dozen countries, China has become a crossroad for smugglers of all kinds.

Last year, President Jiang and I asked senior Chinese and American law enforcement officials to step up our cooperation against these predators, to stop money from being laundered, to stop aliens from being cruelly smuggled, to stop currencies from being undermined by counterfeiting. Just this month, our Drug Enforcement Agency opened an office in Beijing, and soon Chinese counternarcotics experts will be working out of Washington.

In the 21st century, your generation must make it your mission to ensure that today's progress does not come at tomorrow's expense. China's remarkable growth in the last two decades has come with a toxic cost, pollutants that foul the water you drink and the air you breathe. The cost is not only environmental; it is also serious in terms of the health consequences of your people and in terms of the drag on economic growth.

Environmental problems are also increasingly global as well as national. For example, in the near future, if present energy use patterns persist, China will overtake the United States as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, the gases which are the principal cause of global warming. If the nations of the world do not reduce the gases which are causing global warming, sometime in the next century there is a serious risk of dramatic changes in climate which will change the way we live and the way we work, which could literally bury some island nations under mountains of water and undermine the economic and social fabric of nations.

We must work together. We Americans know from our own experience that it is possible to grow an economy while improving the environment. We must do that together for ourselves and for the world. Building on the work that our Vice President, Al Gore, has done previously with the Chinese Government, President Jiang and I are working together on ways to bring American clean energy technology to help improve air quality and grow the Chinese economy at the same time.

But I will say this again—this is not on my remarks—your generation must do more about this. This is a huge challenge for you, for the American people, and for the future of the world. And it must be addressed at the university level, because political leaders will never be willing to adopt environmental measures if they believe it will lead to large-scale unemployment or more poverty. The evidence is clear; that does not have to happen. You will actually have more rapid economic growth and better paying jobs, leading to higher levels of education and technology if we do this in the proper way. But you and the university, communities in China, the United States, and throughout the world will have to lead the way.

In the 21st century, your generation must also meet the challenge of an international financial system that has no respect for national borders. When stock markets fall in Hong Kong or Jakarta, the effects are no longer local; they are global. The vibrant growth of your own economy is tied closely, therefore, to the restoration of stability and growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

China has steadfastly shouldered its responsibilities to the region and the world in this latest financial crisis, helping to prevent another cycle of dangerous devaluations. We must continue to work together to counter this threat to the global financial system and to the growth and prosperity which should be embracing all of this region.

In the 21st century, your generation will have a remarkable opportunity to bring together the talents of our scientists, doctors, engineers into a shared quest for progress. Already the breakthroughs we have achieved in our areas of joint cooperation—in challenges from dealing with spina bifida to dealing with extreme weather conditions and earthquakes—have proved what we can do together to change the lives of millions of people in China and the United States and around the world. Expanding our cooperation in science and technology can be one of our greatest gifts to the future.

In each of these vital areas that I have mentioned, we can clearly accomplish so much more by walking together rather than standing apart. That is why we should work to see that the productive relationship we now enjoy blossoms into a fuller partnership in the new century.

If that is to happen, it is very important that we understand each other better, that we understand both our common interest and our shared aspirations and our honest differences. I believe the kind of open, direct exchange that President Jiang and I had on Saturday at our press conference, which I know many of you watched on television, can both clarify and narrow our differences, and more important, by allowing people to understand and debate and discuss these things, can give a greater sense of confidence to our people that we can make a better future.

From the windows of the White House, where I live in Washington, DC, the monument to our first President, George Washington, dominates the skyline. It is a very tall obelisk. But very near this large monument there is a small stone which contains these words: "The United States neither established titles of nobility and royalty, nor created a hereditary system. State affairs are put to the vote of public opinion. This created a new political situation, unprecedented from ancient times to the present. How wonderful it is." Those words were not written by an American. They were written by Xu Jiyu, Governor of Fujian Province, inscribed as a gift from the Government of China to our Nation in 1853.

I am very grateful for that gift from China. It goes to the heart of who we are as a people, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the freedom to debate, to dissent, to associate, to worship without interference from the state. These are the ideals that were at the core of our founding over 220 years ago. These are the ideas that led us across our continent and onto the world stage. These are the ideals that Americans cherish today.

As I said in my press conference with President Jiang, we have an ongoing quest ourselves to live up to those ideals. The people who framed our Constitution understood that we would never achieve perfection. They said that the mission of America would always be "to form a more perfect Union," in other words,

that we would never be perfect, but we had to keep trying to do better.

The darkest moments in our history have come when we abandoned the effort to do better, when we denied freedom to our people because of their race or their religion, because they were new immigrants, or because they held unpopular opinions. The best moments in our history have come when we protected the freedom of people who held unpopular opinions or extended rights enjoyed by the many to the few who had previously been denied them, making, therefore, the promises of our Declaration of Independence and Constitution more than faded words on old parchment.

Today, we do not seek to impose our vision on others. But we are convinced that certain rights are universal, not American rights or European rights or rights for developed nations but the birthrights of people everywhere, now enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights: the right to be treated with dignity, the right to express one's opinions, to choose one's own leaders, to associate freely with others, and to worship or not, freely, however one chooses.

In the last letter of his life, the author of our Declaration of Independence and our third President, Thomas Jefferson, said then that "all eyes are opening to the rights of man." I believe that in this time, at long last, 172 years after Jefferson wrote those words, all eyes are opening to the rights of men and women everywhere.

Over the past two decades, a rising tide of freedom has lifted the lives of millions around the world, sweeping away failed dictatorial systems in the former Soviet Union, throughout Central Europe, ending a vicious cycle of military coups and civil wars in Latin America, giving more people in Africa the chance to make the most of their hard-won independence. And from the Philippines to South Korea, from Thailand to Mongolia, freedom has reached Asia's shores, powering a surge of growth and productivity.

Economic security also can be an essential element of freedom. It is recognized in the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. In China, you have made extraordinary strides in nurturing that liberty and spreading freedom from want, to be a source of strength to your people. Incomes are up; poverty is down. People do have more choices of jobs and the ability to travel, the ability to make a better life. But true freedom includes more than economic freedom. In America, we believe it is a concept which is indivisible.

Over the past 4 days, I have seen freedom in many manifestations in China. I have seen the fresh shoots of democracy growing in the villages of your heartland. I have visited a village that chose its own leaders in free elections. I have also seen the cell phones, the video players, the fax machines carrying ideas, information, and images from all over the world. I've heard people speak their minds, and I have joined people in prayer in the faith of my own choosing. In all these ways, I felt a steady breeze of freedom.

The question is, where do we go from here? How do we work together to be on the right side of history together? More than 50 years ago, Hu Shih, one of your great political thinkers and a teacher at this university, said these words: "Now some people say to me you must sacrifice your individual freedom so that the nation may be free. But I reply, the struggle for individual freedom is the struggle for the nation's freedom. The struggle for your own character is the struggle for the nation's character." We Americans believe Hu Shih was right. We believe and our experience demonstrates that freedom strengthens stability and helps nations to change.

One of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, once said, "Our critics are our friends, for they show us our faults." Now, if that is true, there are many days in the United States when the President has more friends than anyone else in America. [*Laughter*] But it is so.

In the world we live in, this global information age, constant improvement and change is necessary to economic opportunity and to national strength. Therefore, the freest possible flow of information, ideas, and opinions and a greater respect for divergent political and religious convictions will actually breed strength and stability going forward.

It is, therefore, profoundly in your interest, and the world's, that young Chinese minds be free to reach the fullness of their potential. That is the message of our time and the mandate of the new century and the new millennium.

I hope China will more fully embrace this mandate. For all the grandeur of your history, I believe your greatest days are still ahead. Against great odds in the 20th century, China

has not only survived, it is moving forward dramatically.

Other ancient cultures failed because they failed to change. China has constantly proven the capacity to change and grow. Now, you must reimagine China again for a new century, and your generation must be at the heart of China's regeneration.

The new century is upon us. All our sights are turned toward the future. Now, your country has known more millennia than the United States has known centuries. Today, however, China is as young as any nation on Earth. This new century can be the dawn of a new China, proud of your ancient greatness, proud of what you are doing, prouder still of the tomorrows to come. It can be a time when the world again looks to China for the vigor of its culture, the freshness of its thinking, the elevation of human dignity that is apparent in its works. It can be a time when the oldest of nations helps to make a new world.

The United States wants to work with you to make that time a reality.

Thank you very much.

Expanding U.S. Understanding of China

Q. Mr. President, I'm very honored to be the first one to raise question. Just as you mentioned in your address, Chinese and American people should join hands and move forward together. And what is most important in this process is for us to have more exchanges.

In our view, since China is opening up in reform, we have had better understanding of the culture, history, and literature of America, and we have also learned a lot about you from the biography. And we have also learned about a lot of American Presidents. And we have also seen the movie *Titanic.* But it seems that the American people's understanding of the Chinese people is not as much as the other way around. Maybe they are only seeing China through several movies, describing the Cultural Revolution or the rural life.

So my question is, as the first President of the United States visiting China in 10 years, what do you plan to do to enhance the real understanding and the respect between our two peoples?

Thank you.

The President. First of all, I think that's a very good point. And one of the reasons that I came here was to try to—because, as you can see, a few people come with me from the news media—I hope that my trip would help to show a full and balanced picture of modern China to the United States, and that by coming here, it would encourage others to come here and others to participate in the life of China.

I see a young man out in the audience who introduced himself to me yesterday as the first American ever to be a law student in China. So I hope we will have many more Americans coming here to study, many more Americans coming here to be tourists, many more Americans coming here to do business. The First Lady this morning and the Secretary of State had a meeting on a legal project. We are doing a lot of projects together with the Chinese to help promote the rule of law. That should bring a lot more people here.

I think there is no easy answer to your question. It's something we have to work at. We just need more people involved and more kinds of contacts. And I think the more we can do that, the better.

Is there another question?

Taiwan, Japan, and Asian Security

Q. Mr. President, as a Chinese, I'm very interested in the reunification of my motherland. Since 1972, progress has been made on the question of Taiwan question, but we have seen that the Americans have repeatedly are selling advanced weapons to Taiwan. And to our great indignation, we have seen that the United States and Japan have renewed the U.S.-Japan security treaty, and according to some Japanese officials, this treaty even includes Taiwan Province of China. So I have to ask, if China were to send its naval facility to Hawaii, and if China were to sign a security treaty with other countries against one part of the United States, will the United States agree to such an act? Will the American people agree to such an act?

The President. First of all, the United States policy is not an obstacle to the peaceful reunification of China and Taiwan. Our policy is embodied in the three communiques and in the Taiwan Relations Act. Our country recognized China and embraced a "one China" policy almost 20 years ago. And I reaffirmed our "one China" policy to President Jiang in our meetings.

Now, when the United States and China reached agreement that we would have a "one China" policy, we also reached agreement that

the reunification would occur by peaceful means, and we have encouraged the cross-strait dialog to achieve that. Our policy is that any weapon sales, therefore, to Taiwan must be for defensive purposes only, and that the country must not believe—China must not believe that we are in any way trying to undermine our own "one China" policy. It is our policy. But we do believe it should occur—any reunification should occur peacefully.

Now, on Japan, if you read the security agreement we signed with Japan, I think it will be clear from its terms that the agreement is not directed against any country but rather in support of stability in Asia. We have forces in South Korea that are designed to deter a resumption of the Korean war across the dividing line between the two Koreas. Our forces in Japan are largely designed to help us promote stability anywhere in the Asia-Pacific region on short notice. But I believe that it is not fair to say that either Japan or the United States have a security relationship that is designed to contain China. Indeed, what both countries want is a security partnership with China for the 21st century.

For example, you mentioned NATO, we have expanded NATO in Europe, but we also have made a treaty, an agreement between NATO and Russia, to prove that we are not against Russia anymore. And the most important thing NATO has done in the last 5 years is to work side by side with Russia to end the war in Bosnia. And I predict to you that what you see us doing with China now, working together to try to limit the tension from the Indian and the Pakistani nuclear tests, you will see more and more and more of that in the future. And I think you will see a lot of security cooperation in that area. And we can't see the agreements of today through the mirror of yesterday's conflicts.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, I'm from class '97. I've very glad to have this opportunity to ask you a question. With a friendly smile you have set foot on the soil of China, and you have come to the campus of "Beida," so we are very excited and honored by your presence, for the Chinese people really aspire for the friendship between China and the United States on the basis of equality. As I know that—before your departure from the States, you said that the reason for you to visit China is because China is too important, and engagement is better than containment. I'd like to ask you whether this sentence is kind of a commitment you made for your visit, or do you have any other hidden sayings behind this smile? Do you have any other design to contain China? [*Laughter*]

The President. If I did, I wouldn't mask it behind a smile. [*Laughter*] But I don't. That is, my words mean exactly what they say. We have to make a decision, all of us do, but especially the people who live in large nations with great influence must decide how to define their greatness.

When the Soviet Union went away, Russia had to decide how to define its greatness. Would they attempt to develop the human capacity of the Russian people and work in partnership with their neighbors for a greater future, or would they remember the bad things that happened to them in the past 200 years and think the only way they could be great would be to dominate their neighbors militarily? They chose a forward course. The world is a better place.

The same thing is true with China. You will decide, both in terms of your policies within your country and beyond, what does it mean that China will be a great power in the 21st century? Does it mean that you will have enormous economic success? Does it mean you will have enormous cultural influence? Does it mean that you will be able to play a large role in solving the problems of the world? Or does it mean you will be able to dominate your neighbors in some form or fashion, whether they like it or not? This is the decision that every great country has to make.

You ask me, do I really want to contain China? The answer is no. The American people have always had a very warm feeling toward China that has been interrupted from time to time when we have had problems. But if you go back through the history of our country, there's always been a feeling on the part of our people that we ought to be close to the Chinese people. And I believe that it would be far better for the people of the United States to have a partnership on equal, respectful terms with China in the 21st century than to have to spend enormous amounts of time and money trying to contain China because we disagree with what's going on beyond our borders. So I do not want that. I want a partnership. I'm not hiding another design behind a smile; it's

what I really believe. I believe it, not because—[*applause*]—because I think it's good for the American people, and it's my job to do what's good for them. What's good for them is to have a good relationship with you.

Education/Aspirations for Young People

Q. Mr. President, well, I'm from the medical science and from class '98. I'm going to graduate this year, and I'm going to work in Bank of China. Just now, Mr. President, you mentioned the responsibilities of the young generation of the two countries for international security, environment, and the financial stability. I think they are really important. And I think the most important thing is for the young people to be well educated. And I know, Mr. President, you love your daughter very much, and she is now studying at Stanford. So, my question is—several years ago you proposed the concept of knowledge economy, so, my first question is, what do you think the education of higher learning, what kind of role can this play in the future knowledge economy?

And the second question is, what expectations do you have, Mr. President, for the younger generation of our two countries?

The President. Let me answer the knowledge economy question first. And let me answer by telling you what I have tried to do in the United States. I have tried to create a situation in America in which the doors of universities and colleges are open to every young person who has sufficient academic achievement to get in, that there are no financial burdens of any kind. And we have not completely achieved it, but we have made a great deal of progress.

Now, why would I do that? Because I believe that the more advanced an economy becomes, the more important it is to have a higher and higher and higher percentage of people with a university education. Let me just tell you how important it is in the United States. We count our people—every 10 years we do a census and we count the numbers of the American people, and we get all kinds of information on them. In the 1990 census, younger Americans who had a college degree were overwhelmingly likely to get good jobs and have their incomes grow. Younger Americans who had 2 years or more of university were likely to get good jobs and have their incomes grow. Younger Americans who didn't go to university at all were likely to get jobs where their incomes declined and were much more likely to be unemployed.

And the more advanced China's economy becomes, the more that will be true of China, the more you will need very large numbers of people getting university education and technical education. So I think it is very, very important.

Now, let me say one expectation I have for the younger generation of Americans and Chinese that has nothing to do with economics. One of the biggest threats to your future is a world which is dominated not by modern problems but by ancient hatreds. Look around the world and see how much trouble is being caused by people who dislike each other because of their racial or their religious or their ethnic differences, whether it's in Bosnia or the conflict between the Indians and the Pakistanis or in the Middle East or the tribal conflicts in Africa. You look all over the world, you see these kind of problems.

Young people, I think, are naturally more open to others who are different, more interested in people who are different. And I hope young people in China and young people in America who have a good education will be a strong voice in the world against giving in to this sort of hating people or looking down on them simply because they're different.

Thank you.

U.S. Domestic Human Rights Issues

Q. Mr. President, with regard to the question of democracy, human rights, and freedom, actually this is an issue of great interest to both the Chinese and American peoples. But to be honest, our two countries have some differences over these issues. In your address just now you made a very proud review and retrospection of the history of the America's democracy in human rights. And you have also made some suggestions for China. Of course, for the sincere suggestions, we welcome. But I think I recall one saying, that is we should have both criticism and self-criticism.

So now I'd like to ask you a question. Do you think that in the United States today, there are also some problems in the area of democracy, freedom, and human rights, and what your Government has done in improving the situation?

The President. I do, and first of all, let me say, I never raise this question overseas in any country, not just China, without acknowledging

first that our country has had terrible problems in this area—keep in mind, slavery was legal in America for many years—and that we are still not perfect. I always say that because I don't think it's right for any person to claim that he or she lives in a perfect country. We're all struggling toward ideals to live a better life. So I agree with the general point you made.

Now, I will give you two examples. We still have some instances of discrimination in America, in housing or employment or other areas, based on race. And we have a system set up to deal with it, but we have not totally eliminated it. And in the last year, I have been engaging the American people in a conversation on this subject, and we have tried to identify the things that Government should do, the things that the American people should do either through the local government or through other organizations, and the attitudes that should change the minds and hearts of the American people. So that's one example.

Now, let me give you another example. We have—when I ran for President in 1992, I was in a hotel in New York City, and an American immigrant from Greece came up to me, and he said, "My son is 10 years old, and he studies the election in school, and he says I should vote for you." But he said, "If I vote for you, I want you to make my son free, because my son is not really free." So I asked this man, "What do you mean?" And he said, "Well, the crime is so high in my neighborhood, there are so many guns and gangs, that my son does not feel that he—I can't let him walk to school by himself or go across the street to play in the park. So if I vote for you, I want you to make my son free."

I think that's important, because, you see, in America, we tend to view freedom as the freedom from Government abuse or from Government control. That is our heritage. Our Founders came here to escape the monarchy in England. But sometimes freedom requires affirmative steps by Government to give everyone an equal opportunity to have an education and make a decent living and to preserve a lawful environment. So I work very hard to try to bring the crime rate down in America, and it's now lower than it has been at any time in 25 years, which means that more of our children are free. But the crime rate is still too high; there is still too much violence.

So we Americans need to be sensitive not only to preserve the freedoms that we hold dear but also to create an environment in which people can build a truly good and free life.

That's a good question.

Freedom

Q. Mr. President, you are warmly welcome to "Beida." You mentioned a sentence by Mr. Xu Jiyu, but our former President once said that when the great moral is in practice, the morals, they will not contradict each other. And I don't think the individual freedom and the collective freedom will contradict each other. But in China the prosperous development of the nation is actually the free choice of our people, and it's also the result of their efforts. So I think that freedom, real freedom, should mean for the people to freely choose the way of life they like and also to develop. And I also think that only those who can really respect the freedom of others can really say that they understand what freedom means.

I don't know whether you agree with me or not.

The President. First of all, if you believe in freedom, you have to respect the freedom of others to make another choice. And even societies that have rather radical views of individual freedom recognize limits on that freedom when it interferes with preserving other people's rights.

For example, there's one of our famous court cases which says we have freedom of speech, but no one should be free to shout the word "fire" in a crowded movie theater where there is no fire and cause people to stampede over each other. There's another famous court decision that says my freedom ends where the other person's nose begins, meaning that you don't have the freedom to hit someone else.

So I agree with that. People have the freedom to choose, and you have to respect other people's freedom, and they have the right to make decisions that are different from yours. And there will never be a time when our systems and our cultures and our choices will be completely identical. That's one of the things that makes life interesting.

U.S. Economic Expansion/Protest Demonstrations

Q. Mr. President, I have two questions. The first question is, the U.S. economy has been

growing for more than 18 months, so I'd like to ask, apart from your personal contribution to the United States, what other factors do you think important for the success of the U.S. economy? Maybe they can serve as good reference for China.

The second question is, when President Jiang Zemin visited the Harvard University last year, there were a lot of students outside the hall staging demonstrations. So I'd like you, President—if you are in Beijing University and if there were a lot of students outside protesting and demonstrating, what feeling would you have?

The President. Well, first of all, on the United States economy, I believe that the principal role of Government policy since I've been President was to, first of all, get our big Government deficit—we had a huge annual deficit in spending—we got that under control. We're about to have the first balanced budget in 30 years. That drove interest rates down and freed up a lot of money to be invested in creating jobs in the private sector. Then the second thing we did was to expand trade a lot, so we began to sell a lot more around the world than we had before. And the third thing we did was to attempt to invest more in our people, in research, development, technology, and education.

Now, in addition to that, however, a lot of the credit here goes to the American people themselves. We have a very sophisticated business community; they were investing money in new technologies and in new markets and in training people. We have an environment where it's quite easy for people to start a business, and perhaps this is the area that might be most helpful to China.

I know that my wife has done a lot of work around the world in villages, trying to get credit to villagers so they could borrow money to start their own businesses, to try to take advantage of some skill they have. And we have seen this system work even in the poorest places in Africa and Latin America, where opportunity takes off.

So we have tried to make it easy in America for people to start a business, to expand a business, and to do business. And then we have also tried very, very hard to get new opportunities into areas where there were none before. And all these things together—but especially, I give most of the credit to the people of my country. After all, a person in my position, we're supposed to have correct policies so that we create a framework within which the American people then create the future. And I think that is basically what has happened.

Now, you asked me an interesting question. Actually, I have been demonstrated against quite a lot in the United States. I told President Jiang when he was there, I was glad they demonstrated against him, so I didn't feel so lonely. [*Laughter*]

I'll give you a serious answer. If there were a lot of people demonstrating against me outside, suppose they were demonstrating over the question that the first gentleman asked me. Suppose they said, "Oh, President Clinton is trying to interfere with the peaceful reunification of China and Taiwan, and he shouldn't be selling them any weapons whatever." Well, I would try to find out what they were demonstrating against, and then I would ask my host if they minded if I would go over and talk to them, or if they would mind if one or two people from the group of demonstrators could be brought to see me, and they could say what is on their minds, and I could answer.

Remember what I said before about what Benjamin Franklin said, "Our critics are our friends, for they show us our faults." You have asked me some very good questions today that have an element of criticism in them. They have been very helpful to me. They have helped me to understand how what I say is perceived by others, not just in China but around the world. They have helped me to focus on what I can do to be a more effective President for my people and for the things we believe in.

And so I feel very good that we have had this interchange. And from my point of view, the questions were far more important than my speech. I never learn anything when I'm talking; I only learn things when I'm listening.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Bangong Lou auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Chen Jia-er, president, Ren Yan-shen, university council chairman, and Chi Hui-sheng, vice president, Beijing University; and President Jiang Zemin, Premier Zhu Rongji, and Vice Minister of Education Wei Yu of China. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the Beijing University Library
June 29, 1998

Thank you very much. Well, first, let me thank all of you for coming out to see us on such a nice, warm day. [*Laughter*] I thank President Chen, Vice President Ren, Professor Chi, Senator Akaka and the Members of Congress who are here, and all the members of the university community who have made my wife and our daughter and our whole delegation feel so very welcome today. Thank you very much.

Now, when Senator Akaka said that some people thought of "Beida" as the Harvard of China—[*laughter*]—all of us Americans who did not go to Harvard were thinking, perhaps Harvard was the "Beida" of the United States.

You know, political leaders of my generation talk a lot about the future and the 21st century, but it is you, the students who are here, who will live in it and who must build it. A child born today will not even remember the 20th century. Indeed, a child born today may think of people like me as relics of an ancient dynasty. [*Laughter*] Americans——

Audience member. Hillary!

The President. ——including that one—[*laughter*]—want to work with China to help build this future, a future of security and prosperity, a future in which we clean up the world's environment instead of destroy it, a future in which we advance education and dignity and freedom for all people.

As a small token of our respect and in honor of your centennial, we are donating over 500 reference books to the library of "Beida." [*Applause*] Thank you. *Xie xie.* [*Laughter*] Through the U.S. Information Agency, we have selected some of the best volumes in our history and literature, along with encyclopedias and dictionaries on every subject related to the United States. And my wife and I have added, personally, two books which we wrote: her book, "It Takes A Village," and mine, "Between Hope and History." And I'd like to present them to the President at this moment.

Now, if you're trying to decide which one to read first, I should tell you that in America her book sold a lot more copies than mine did. [*Laughter*]

We are proud of our historic relationship with this university. I hope these books will help to further our friendship for another generation. I hope, too, that more and more Americans will come to China to study and more and more young Chinese will go to America to study.

Every day I must be preoccupied with the world's problems, but I believe a lot of the world's problems would be quickly solved if the world's young people were permitted to live together and learn together and serve together. You can set the standard, and I hope you will.

Next week our young country will celebrate its 222d birthday. It is a time of year when we Americans stop to reflect on the many blessings we enjoy, on the ideals of our Founders to provide life, liberty, and the opportunity to pursue happiness to all people. It is a time when we measure our progress and try to honestly assess our continuing problems, when we take pride in our history but also resolve to keep working on it. For history is not just something to be studied at university. History is always unfolding. Here it is unfolding. And I believe a large part of the next chapter in America's history will be its partnership with the new China.

China, too, is always rebuilding itself. Of course, your foundations are deeper than ours; our entire history could fit into one of your longer dynasties. [*Laughter*] But from different starting points we are working toward a common destiny of peace and prosperity and, I hope, of lifting the level of freedom and dignity not only for all our own people but for others throughout the world.

China is a very old country, but thanks to you, to your idealism, to your spirit, and to your future, it will remain forever young.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:19 p.m. on the Library Lawn. In his remarks, he referred to Chen Jia-er, president, Ren Yan-shen, university council chairman, and Chi Hui-sheng, vice president, Beijing University.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Shaping China for the 21st Century in Shanghai, China

June 30, 1998

The President. Let me begin by thanking all of you for agreeing to participate in this roundtable discussion. I want to say that the purpose of this discussion is to help me and my wife and the American people, through us, understand the changes that are going on in modern China, the challenges that are out there, and what all of you are doing in your various lives to deal with these changes.

For us, this is a very exciting opportunity to come here, to see what is going on, and also to try to come to grips with the areas where China and the United States can cooperate, the areas where we still have differences, and how we might not only manage those differences but even work together there to try to come to some common agreement.

Everyone understands that there is a new China emerging in the world that is more prosperous, more open, and more dynamic. I have been to a small village near Xi'an where people now elect their local officials. I have already had the opportunity to meet with some small-business people and others who are agents of change in the modern China. But this is really the first opportunity I have had to meet with such a diverse group of Chinese citizens who are active in so many different areas.

So I hope that you will help us to understand what is going on and to speak with us frankly and openly, and understand that what we want is to build the right sort of partnership and friendship with the Chinese people over the long run into the 21st century.

If I could begin, I think I would like to ask Professor Zhu, how has China changed in the last couple of years, and what is the role of the legal profession in this change?

[*Zhu Lanye, vice dean of the International Department, East China University of Politics and Law, stated that in the school she graduated from, the student population had doubled to 4,000 students, with over 400 graduate students, and that the number of law schools in China had increased from 2 to 14, reflecting China's need for more lawyers due to a major increase in civil cases.*]

The President. Mr. Wang has been a consumer advocate, and we have read about you in the American press. I wonder if you could follow up on what Professor Zhu said in terms of the work you do. Do you believe that the quality of products, consumer products is getting better?—first question. And tell us what the relationship is between what you do and the legal profession. Can people have adequate access to legal remedies if they are sold inferior products?

[*Consumer advocate, author, and newspaper columnist Wang Hai stated that China had promulgated consumer protection laws in 1984, but prior to that had placed emphasis on the collective interest as opposed to consumer interests. Mr. Wang said his company consulted with consumers and companies whose rights had been violated. He indicated that he was viewed as immoral and asked if consumer advocates in the United States were also viewed this way.*]

The President. No. Interestingly enough, many of our governments in what you would call the province level, our State governments and some of our larger city governments, actually have their own consumer advocates, people who are employees of the government whose job it is to work to find out things that are being done, in effect, that work a fraud, that are unfair or illegal to consumers when they buy homes, when they buy cars, when they buy other products. So, in our country, people who find those kinds of problems very often are themselves employees of the government and generally are quite highly regarded.

Now, of course, if they find a very big company doing something that's going to be very expensive to fix, they're sometimes criticized by the company. But by and large, consumer advocates enjoy a very favorable position in American society. It has not always been so, but I would say that for the last 20 to 25 years they do.

I would like to ask our novelist, Ms. Wang, to talk a little bit about how the atmosphere for writers, for artists, movie makers, other creative people has changed in China in the last few years. How would you describe those changes?

[*Novelist Wang Xiaoying stated that great changes had taken place in China in her area of interest. She indicated that she had signed contracts with three publishing houses and said her problem was not whether she could publish but whether she could produce enough good novels. Ms. Wang then asked the President if literature had an impact on his life.*]

The President. Oh, yes, very much, and I think not only for enjoyment but also for enlightenment. We have many books of literature, all kinds of prose and poetry published in America every year and heavily taught in our schools and, at least in our case, widely discussed in our home with our daughter. She is now reading books in the university that, if we haven't read them, she wants to know why, and she expects us to try to understand those things.

So I would say that for millions and millions of Americans, literature is a very important force in their lives. And every week in our newspapers, there is a publication of the best-selling books and the books that are in hardcover, the books that are in paperback. So it's quite a large part of American life, I think.

I would like to ask Madame Xie if you could tell us a little bit about, from your perspective, how China has been changing, and in particular, whether there is any difference in university life and the emphasis that the young people are placing on different areas of study.

[*Xie Xide, former president of Fudan University, stated that the Chinese policy of reform had brought great benefits. She indicated that Fudan University sent 1,400 teachers to study abroad or to serve as visiting scholars and that 80 percent came back to play important roles at the university. She added that increasingly the best students went into law, business administration, or economics.*]

The President. If I could just follow up on that and perhaps anyone, professors, who would like to comment on this—when I was talking with President Jiang he said, "I am trained as an engineer, and Premier Zhu Rongji is trained as an engineer." They were both mayor of Shanghai. The present mayor of Shanghai, we were walking down and he said, "I am an engineer." And he said, "We were all trained in an era when we had to build China. We had to build things. We had to know how to do things that people did with their hands. And now that we have a more complex society, and people's rights have to be protected, for example, in what they buy, and we have to work out the complex relationships between people in a market economy, we need more lawyers." I think China only has like 115,000 lawyers, something like that. And, so, I wonder if maybe the changes are not a necessary evolution of the change in society.

Participant. Well, there are a lot of students who are very interested in law subjects. Well, in China we do not have sufficient lawyers, and in your country you have plenty. And so many American friends told me that "we can export some of them to you." [*Laughter*]

The President. I tell President Jiang we have too many lawyers and too few engineers. So maybe instead of changing all the courses in the universities, we should just trade each other. We'll give you lawyers; you could give us engineers. [*Laughter*]

[*A participant noted that while many students applied to study law, only a quarter of the applicants qualified and were accepted. Hillary Clinton then introduced Wu Qidi, president of Tongji University, who stated that the current focus in higher education was economic development but that her university was moving to more diverse academic pursuits, gearing the students toward participating in the global economy. She stated that as more Chinese teachers worked and studied abroad, they became more aware of the need for change in the university educational system. She then said that China needed science and technology to support sustainable economic development and asked if the President thought that greater openness in the future between the two countries would go beyond exchanges of faculty and students.*]

The President. Yes, I do, and I believe it is very important. We are trying to do two things in the United States. One is to make sure more of our young people, wherever they live, even if they live in very poor communities, are exposed at an early age to science and technology. We are trying to connect all of our schools to the Internet by the year 2000, because our goal is to take the very remote schools, the schools in the poorest urban neighborhood, and make sure they can have a connection and access to information that anybody anywhere in the world has. I think that is important.

Then we also want to have more cooperation internationally. Perhaps the most successful part of the U.S.-China partnership in the last few years has been our cooperation in science and technology, although because there has been no great conflict, it's very often not in the news. But Chinese and American scientists, for example, discovered that children born with spina bifida, which is a very painful childhood birth problem, largely come from mothers that didn't have enough folic acid. So it changed the whole way the world viewed this terrible problem. Chinese and American scientists have learned more about how to predict earthquakes and other natural disasters. So I think we have to do more of that.

And then the third area is the one you mentioned of technology transfer. We are now implementing our peaceful uses of nuclear energy agreement. I personally believe that in the energy area it's the most important thing.

I asked President Jiang if we could have a major focus of our science and technology partnership in the future be on the relationship of energy use to the environment, because America is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, warming the climate. China will soon be larger than America. So we have this huge challenge, how to allow China to continue to grow—how can Shanghai build more beautiful buildings like this and have people have good places to live and all of that—and still not destroy the environment of the world.

The scientists know that this can be done. Most political leaders and business leaders don't believe it. Most political and business leaders think this is a problem my grandchildren will deal with: "I have to create wealth now; I have to create opportunity." Scientists know we can grow the economy and improve the environment. So I think this will be the biggest challenge for us.

Now, in terms of the technology transfer, one last thing. We are working very hard to deal with the so-called national security implications of technology transfer. Sometimes they are quite real. So we are working through that. But I think in the energy and environment area we will have no problems. And there will be more of this.

I think I would like to, if I might, just go on to Professor Zuo, because I know you've done a lot of work on migrant research. And one of the most interesting things to us here is how China is managing the growth of its large cities. And in America we have a similar phenomenon, mostly because of immigration coming from beyond our borders. But we still allow about a million people a year, just under a million people a year, to come legally to the United States from other countries. And most of them come to large cities. And so some of our cities are growing, as Shanghai is growing. And perhaps you could tell us about the challenges that that presents and what you are doing in your research.

[*Zuo Xuejin, vice president of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, stated that since the mid-eighties, the population flow within China had been tremendous, with people from rural areas seeking greater opportunities in urban areas. He said that while this migration had caused concern to urban Chinese because they feared limited job opportunities for themselves, the migration had been controlled and services increased for migrants. He then discussed his experiences in the United States and the influence of American culture in China, giving specific examples which ranged from fast-food restaurants to jeans and movies, and concluded that there was much to be shared by China and the United States.*]

The President. If I could just make two brief points. First of all, as to the last point you made about films and travel, even though we have more and more access to each other, to our information and to our ideas over the Internet—and some day I suppose people will—every time someone like Ms. Wang writes a new book, someone will be in a matter of days able to pull it up on the Internet and read it all over the world in their own language. I still think that it's actually important to have these people-to-people exchanges and to have more American students, for example, coming to China and more Chinese going to America. I think that's very important.

I feel the same way about the movies. I actually have seen some Chinese movies I thought were extraordinarily powerful movies. And I think we should have more of that and we should be—we should encourage our artists to come here. And of course, there's so many Chinese-American artists that would give anything to perform in China and would feel very honored about that. So I hope that we will be

open and that the governments will encourage more of that.

The only other point I wanted to make is just—about your research and how you deal with these millions of people that are coming here to find work. This is a global issue. There are many cities that have nowhere near the opportunities that Shanghai does in other parts of the world, that are still growing by leaps and bounds all the time, because even though there are huge numbers of poor people in these cities, there is still a chance that the city life will be better than it is in the rural areas in other countries.

So if you look at the whole world—if you look at Africa, if you look at the Middle East and Central Asia, if you look at all these places, you have cities growing by leaps and bounds in countries that have been poor. And as I said, in our country, it's a place where we try to manage all the new immigrant populations, and we have all the same challenges you do, plus, often, language differences. So I would just say that this is an area where, again, we may be able to cooperate and where we need to help, even beyond our borders, deal with these vast migration flows. They will be one of the central, defining trends, in my view, of the next 30 to 40 years. And so I thank you for that.

Yes, Professor.

[*Noting that the President would be young when he left office, a participant asked if he planned to return to his law practice and, if so, remain in Washington or move back to Arkansas.*]

The President. I was hoping you would offer me a position here. [*Laughter*]

Participant. No, you don't speak Chinese. [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm not too old to learn. [*Laughter*] Actually, I am the third youngest President ever, and I think the second youngest to be elected. President Theodore Roosevelt and President John Kennedy were both a little younger than me when they took office. So I'll be about 54 when I leave office, and I don't intend to retire. But I haven't decided what to do yet or where to do it—except I will always have a home in my home State, in Arkansas, and I intend to build a library there to house my Presidential papers and to tell the story of the time in which I served as President. But beyond that, I have not made any final plans. So maybe I will apply for a visiting professorship. [*Laughter*]

Participant. We welcome you to our university as a visiting professor. You are more than welcome. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Clinton. I know that we want to hear from all the panelists, and I'd like to hear from the young man, Mr. Zeng, who has been so successful in the——

The President. He's not here, is he?

Mrs. Clinton. He's not here? There he is, back there.

The President. You may talk if you like.

Mrs. Clinton. Yes, about the Internet, because you were talking about the Internet and the explosion of the Internet. And what I'm interested in is, are there any restrictions on access to the Internet in China?

The President. Please come up here and use Ms. Wang's microphone.

Edward Zeng. Right now it's just purely in the application form, you can get it right away.

Mrs. Clinton. Right away. So there's no restrictions, universally available to anyone who has the funds to have access to it.

Mr. Zeng. Yes, and also the growing rate is very fast. We are talking about more than 1 million right now.

Mrs. Clinton. More than 1 million——

Mr. Zeng. Internet users.

Mrs. Clinton. Internet users. In the entire country?

Mr. Zeng. Yes.

Mrs. Clinton. And so what is the rate of increase, do you think, in terms of projection?

Mr. Zeng. By the year 2000, maybe around 5 million. So we're talking about 30 percent growth rate.

[*Mrs. Clinton asked how the information explosion was affecting the vast majority of the people of China. Edward Zeng, chief executive officer of Unicom-Sparkice Information Network, answered that there were ongoing efforts to provide a virtual office for small and medium-sized business and that he operated a cyber cafe that was experiencing a 30 percent monthly growth rate.*]

The President. Let me ask you one question about your Internet figures. This library has an Internet room upstairs. I just visited it. Is it really possible to know how many Internet users there are? I mean, how do you know?

[*Mr. Zeng explained that each user had to submit an application and that each had an IP address which would allow an accurate count of users. He then asked if there was an opportunity for exchange between Chinese and American small and medium businesses.*]

Mrs. Clinton. That's something that we'll look into and see if we can get you some information about that.

The President. There is probably more growth among new companies this area than any other area in the American economy. It's exploding. So it may be that someone is following this conversation right now, and you'll get a call within 30 minutes, for all I know. [*Laughter*] But we will see what we can do.

[*Mrs. Clinton asked Bishop Jin Luxian of the Shanghai Catholic diocese how he would describe the recent changes in China. Bishop Jin responded that he was responsible for 78 churches with 160,000 followers and that he had priests from all over the world. He stated that some of the initiatives underway were training abroad for students, a large religious publishing house, translations of Christian texts, and computer training for students. He said that there were no restrictions on religious beliefs in China, and that he had sought a dialog with the Chinese Government rather than a contentious relationship.*]

The President. Thank you, sir.

I would like to ask Mr. Wu now to talk a little bit. I know that you're a professor of American studies, and perhaps you have some observations about how the relations between our two countries have changed in the last few years and what advice you could give us going forward here.

[*Wu Xinbo, a professor at the Center for American Studies of Fudan University, stated that many Chinese worried that the United States was trying to contain a growing China. He cited the areas of disagreement between the two countries, including Taiwan, but said there had been a major shift in the U.S. China policy since 1996. He said he believed that economic cooperation would grow in the future and cited President Clinton's open exchange on human rights with President Jiang at the recent news conference as a sign of a maturing relationship.*]

The President. Well, first let me thank you for what you said. I do believe that my coming here and the work we've done in the last 2 years, President Jiang's trip to the United States, has helped to resolve some of the misunderstandings. I had a chance to reiterate our Taiwan policy, which is that we don't support independence for Taiwan, or two Chinas, or one Taiwan/one China. And we don't believe that Taiwan should be a member in any organization for which statehood is a requirement. So I think we have consistent policy.

Our only policy has been that we think it has to be done peacefully. That is what our law says, and we have encouraged the cross-strait dialog. And I think eventually it will bear fruit if everyone is patient and works hard.

I also agree that the human rights dialog I had with President Jiang was a good thing. I hope it will lead to more open discussion here. And I would be encouraged if that happened.

Let me, if I could, I'd like to ask you a more personal question. I read in your—I got a little biography of all of you before I came here, and I would like to ask—I noticed that you were born in a small rural community, like me. All my mother's people came from a community, actually, that never had more than 150 people, although I was born in the largest city in my little area, which had at the time 6,000 people.

One of the struggles we work at all the time in the States is trying to make sure that our children, no matter where they're born—if they're born in some remote rural area or some very poor area in the inner city—that they still have a chance, if they have ability, as you obviously did, to live the future of their imaginations and their dreams.

Do you believe that you have a system now in China which would give every boy and girl growing up in a small rural village like you the chance that you had to become what you have become?

[*Mr. Wu stated that his experience was very typical, noting that despite his poor circumstances he was able to get an education and that the Government had made a great effort to popularize 9 years of compulsory education.*]

The President. Dr. Wu and Madame Xie and anyone else, what percentage of the students in your university come from poorer families where the parents of the students had no education to speak of?

[*A participant said that about 15 percent of the students had poor family backgrounds, noting that many foundations' mission was to help poor children return to school. The participant stated that while many students in remote areas found it difficult to participate in national exams, they received equal treatment when they reached the university. The participant also noted that while girls in the past had not received much family support, they were currently half of the university population. Another participant added that girls pursued law degrees more than math and science degrees and that they were under-represented at the graduate student levels. The participant noted that financing for education was the major problem and that local governments often opted instead for investment in areas which would show economic returns to the community.*]

The President. I think what will happen in China—I believe this will happen because of the technological revolution—I think in your economic growth you will almost leap over a whole generation of economic experiences that older European countries and perhaps the United States experienced, where you will essentially be creating an industrialized and a post-industrial society at the same time. And therefore, more quickly, you will have to educate more people at higher levels than we did.

Because what happened in the 20th century in America is, first, everyone had about—you know, first, education was the province of the elite. And then everyone got about 4 years of education, and then 6, and then we went finally to high school education. And then when I became President, about half of our young people are going on to university. Now people are actually coming back to university in huge numbers. The average age of our university student is going higher because we have more people not only coming right out of our high schools but also coming back from society, because everyone recognizes now that we have to universalize very high levels of education because of the way the society works.

So I think that this will happen in China more quickly just because of this moment in history, and I think it will be a very good thing.

I wanted to—I know we're about to run out of time, but I wanted to ask a couple of more questions. Go ahead, Professor Xie, do you want to make a point? Because my question is unrelated to this, so go ahead.

Participant. [*Inaudible*]—continue this discussion, but we know you have a very busy schedule. And we're very glad to be here to discuss our life here with you and we thank you for listening.

The President. Thank you. I want to ask two quick questions, one of Ms. Wang.

[*A participant asked Mrs. Clinton what impact the media attention had on her personal life. Mrs. Clinton said that people read meaning into everything she did as First Lady, even when no meaning was intended. She related the situation to a larger set of expectations and stereotypes imposed by society and faced by all women, regardless of geography or culture.*]

Participant. Thank you very much.

The President. Go ahead, Mr. Wang.

[*Mr. Wang stated that in China there were potential conflicts of interest within the consumer protection process, in that store managers could also hold positions and exert influence in consumer rights groups, and asked about the situation in the United States.*]

The President. Well, in the United States a consumer in the position that you just mentioned—let's say someone bought something in a department store and it was defective; I would say there might be four things that could happen. And I don't want to complicate the answer, but I have to give you a complete answer.

First of all, in America we have pretty clear laws on this, and so the best companies would just take the merchandise back and give the person his money back or give the person a new product, because they wouldn't want to get a reputation of being unfair to consumers or a reputation of selling bad products. So the first thing the person would do is to take it back, because of the laws.

Now, secondly, the person might go to the consumer advocate in the government. That's the one I talked to you about. Suppose this happened in New York City. Well, New York City has a Consumer Affairs Bureau. Now, maybe some times it's more active for the consumers than others, depending on whether the mayor believes in this cause or not.

So if there's no opportunity there, then the person would have either an independent consumer group—there are some—or you could go into court and pursue your remedy there.

So I don't think there's a problem of having the consumer groups themselves too tied to the manufacturers. And if there's a pattern or practice of selling bad products, then it's almost certain that there would be a remedy found in our courts.

[*Mr. Wang stated that in China, even when a case went to court and an award was made, getting the court decision enforced was difficult. He asked if that was possible in the United States.*]

Mrs. Clinton. It is. And sometimes even after people get a judgment, they have to continue to work very hard through the legal system to enforce their judgment. So it's a continuing problem.

The President. You mentioned—you said, well, sometimes if there's a good store with a good brand name, that you won't have these problems, but if people are selling off-brands or off the street, or whatever, they might. You have real problems in America sometimes in enforcing these orders if it's difficult to find the company that sold the product or difficult to find their bank account.

[*Mrs. Clinton asked if there were any additional points the participants would like to make to present to the American people a broader, more accurate perception of China. A participant stated that her 5-year-old's childhood would be much better than her own, but that changes in China would take time to evolve. She said that the United States should be more understanding of the evolution of human rights and democracy in China and stressed that understanding could be enhanced by publication of Chinese literature in the United States. Bishop Jin then said that the Shanghai Catholic diocese had set up primary schools in the provinces to address the education needs of poor children and was interested in projects at the university level as well.*]

The President. Thank you very much. If I could close, I would just like to make a couple of points. First of all, thank you all very much for being here. For me and for Hillary and I think for the Members of Congress and the Secretary of State and the members of our delegation, this has been an enriching experience. And I have a much, I think, better feel for what is going on in modern China.

Secondly, if I might just close with a few words about our perspective on this whole issue of the relationship between social progress and individual rights or human rights.

I think there are basically three different categories of issues here, and I'd leave these thoughts with you. When it comes to just creating more opportunity for people to have a better life and refraining from oppressing people in horrible ways, I think it's obvious that China since the end of the Cultural Revolution has made enormous progress, almost unprecedented for any society in human history.

And then there's the second category of problems, which is just the basic legal problems or personal problems that people find in a complex society, whether it's consumer protection problems or—Hillary yesterday was talking to some people who were involved in legal work in Beijing, and there was a woman who got a divorce from a husband who had been abusing her. But their apartment house came to him because of his work, so where does she live now with their child? Those kinds of problems. I agree with what Madame Xie said. We have to—these rule-of-law issues, we need to just keep working through these and work together on them.

But in the third area I think there is still some considerable difference, and that is, to what extent does a different political opinion or a different religious conviction enrich a society and make it stronger, and to what extent does it promote instability and weaken the enormous work that has to be done?

And I think that we just have to kind of be honest here. China has had many challenges. It's a much bigger country than the United States. It's coming very far very fast. And I think there is a tendency among the Chinese, in government and perhaps in the society, to see these kinds of political or religious dissents as—at least to be very supersensitive to the prospect of instability, because China has suffered in the past from instability.

In the United States, because of our history, there is always a tendency to believe that anybody's political opinion and religious expression deserves great protection and great respect and, no matter how different it is from ours, that allowing the widest possible room for expression

of political and religious feelings makes a country stronger, a society stronger over the long run. That has been our experience.

So I think we have to understand our two perspectives and honestly confront these things as they present difficulties in our relationship and look at them as opportunities to try to build a common future, because I do think that, as I said in Beijing in the press conference I had with President Jiang and at the university, the forces of history are driving us toward a common future. We have to build a common future. And so it's important that we be able to discuss these things in an open way.

I think all of you did a terrific job today expressing your point of view and also giving my fellow Americans and I a window on modern China. And we thank you very much.

Mrs. Clinton. Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:41 a.m. at the Shanghai Library. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China and Mayor Xu Kuangdi of Shanghai. The Chinese participants spoke in Chinese, and their remarks were translated by interpreters, except for Edward Zeng, who spoke in English.

Remarks in a Call-In Program on Shanghai Radio 990
June 30, 1998

President Clinton. First of all, I want to thank the mayor for welcoming me to Shanghai, and say I very much enjoyed my first morning here. We did go to the library, my wife and I did, and we met with a number of citizens from in and around Shanghai who are involved in one way or another in China's remarkable transformation. And they helped us a lot to understand what is going on in China.

I also want to say a word of appreciation to President Jiang for the very good meeting we had in Beijing and for making it possible for me to reach out to the people of China through televising our press conference together. And then, of course, I went to Beijing University yesterday, "Beida," and spoke with the students there and answered questions. And that was also televised.

And then to be here in Shanghai, one of the very most exciting places in the entire world, to have the chance to begin my visit here with this radio program is very exciting. So I don't want to take any more time. I just want to hear from the questioners and have a conversation, so that when it's over, perhaps both the American people and the people of China will understand each other better.

Program Host Zuo Anlong. Mr. President, you already can see our TV screen—right in front of you there are so many people waiting in line to talk to you. We're really happy about this. How about we just start right here, okay?

President Clinton. Let's do it.

Asian Financial Crisis

[*The first caller asked about the Asian financial crisis and increasing cooperation between China and the United States.*]

President Clinton. First of all, Mr. Fong, that is a very good question, and it has occupied a major amount of my time since last year, when we saw the difficulties developing in Indonesia, in the Philippines, in Thailand, in Korea, and of course, in Japan.

I would like to begin by saying I believe that China has done a very good job in holding its currency stable, in trying to be a force of stability during the Southeast Asian crisis. Secondly, we are working together, the U.S. and China, and we are working through the IMF to try to help all these countries stabilize their economies and then restore growth.

But I think the last point I'd like to make is that we cannot see growth restored in Asia unless it is restored in Japan. Now, in Japan the people are about to have an election for the upper house of the Diet, so this is not an easy time for them. But the Government is going to disclose in the next couple of days what it intends to do in the area of financial reform.

If it is a good proposal and the confidence of the investors of the world is raised, then I believe you will see the situation begin to

turn around, and the pressure will be eased in China, and we can see some economic growth come back to Japan and these other countries. It is very important to the United States and very important to China. We're working hard on it.

[*Mr. Zuo noted that China was working hard not to devalue its currency, and then asked Mayor Xu Kuangdi of Shanghai about trade between the U.S. and Shanghai. Mayor Xu noted that trade with the U.S. was up 30 percent in the first 5 months of the year, with imports and exports fairly balanced because Shanghai imported a lot of U.S. high-tech products, and he said he hoped that would continue. The next caller, an employee of the Shanghai Library which the President had toured, asked about increasing exchanges between American libraries and the Shanghai Library.*]

China-U.S. Library Cooperation

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think that we need to make sure that all of our major libraries are connected through the Internet, so that we can ship information back and forth over the Internet that is not available in the libraries themselves. For example, if you had total Internet connection with the New York Public Library, which is our largest public library, then there would be things that you have they don't have, but you could send them over the Internet. There would be things that they have that you don't have that could be shared.

So what I will do, since you have asked this question, is, when I get home, I will ask the people who are in charge of our major libraries, the Library of Congress, which is the biggest library in Washington, DC—it's our national library—and the New York Public Library, and perhaps one or two others, to get in touch with the Shanghai Library and see whether we can establish a deeper partnership.

I was very impressed that the Shanghai Library has 300,000 members who actually pay the annual membership fee, 10 yuan. And I think that—we have many people using our libraries, too. I would also like to figure out, if I might, how these big libraries in America and China can better serve the small libraries in the rural areas, where people are so hungry for information and they don't have as much as we do, those of us who live in the bigger areas. So I will work on this.

[*Mr. Zuo agreed on the importance of library outreach to rural areas.*]

President Clinton. But as you know, you now have the computers with the Internet hookups, and if you have printers there, then people all over China can order articles out of the Shanghai Library and just print them out on the computer. So that all you have to have now is a hookup with a printer in the small libraries, in the smallest villages, and anything in the Shanghai Library can be sent to them. Of course, it's more expensive if it's a book. But if it's just an article, it's easy to print out, takes just a couple of minutes.

[*Mayor Xu discussed the challenge of getting computer technology out to the countryside, noting that a lot of people there still had no electricity. He also pointed out that Shanghai Library memberships funded only 5 percent of the library budget and that the government made up a lot of the rest, but that he was willing to do so because investment in education was important. Another caller then noted that both the President and Mayor Xu had a history of involvement with education issues and asked them to discuss the future of China-U.S. educational exchanges.*]

Educational Opportunity

President Clinton. Well, first of all, let me say that we are working very hard in America to make sure that more of our own people go on to university and also acquire the skills necessary to operate in the computer age. So, I have worked very hard to open the doors of universities to more people, to make sure that the cost of the education is not a bar to people going.

Now, in addition to that, we want to promote more exchanges of students. I want more American students to go to other places in the world, including China, to study, to learn the language, to learn the culture, to understand the nation. And I very much want to bring even more students from around the world to the United States to study. So perhaps there's something we can do coming out of this trip, the mayor and I, to have more exchanges with people from the Shanghai area, because I believe it's very important. And I think it will only grow more important as we move into this new century.

[*Mayor Xu agreed, noting that education in Shanghai was more universal than elsewhere in*

China. He said 60 percent of high school graduates in Shanghai got into colleges, and he wanted to utilize radio, television, and adult education to make up the 40 percent gap. The mayor then discussed approaches to education, noting that the Chinese stressed more discipline, which was good for order but could discourage open interaction, whereas American classrooms allowed for more freedom, which in the opinion of Chinese educators created chaos. The mayor said both approaches had value, and the two countries should learn from each other.]

President Clinton. Well, actually, here's a case where I think we would greatly benefit from working together, because there is no perfect system. If you just start with the issue of discipline, we know that without a certain amount of discipline and order in the classroom, it's impossible for learning to occur. We also know if there is too much order, where everything is structured, the child may close up and not be open to information and to learning. So we have tried all kinds of things.

In our country, for example, now many of our schools are going back to an older practice of requiring the students to wear uniforms every day, as is the case in many other countries, on the theory that it makes people more disciplined. It also gives a spirit of equality. This is sweeping our country, really, and doing very well. On the other hand, we want enough freedom in the classroom so that the children have the confidence they need to participate in the class discussion.

Now, on the second matter, which I think is very important, does education emphasize drilling information into the head of the student, or should it emphasize sort of creative or critical thinking? I think the answer is, clearly, both. How can you be a creative thinker if you don't know something in the first place? First, you must know what you need to know. You must have the information.

On the other hand, if you look at how fast things are changing—in this information age, the volume of facts in the world is doubling every 5 years. That's a stunning thing. The volume of information is doubling every 5 years. Therefore, it's very important not only what you know today but what you are capable of learning and whether you can apply what you know to solving new problems.

So I think what we need is a careful balance between making sure our students have the bedrock information without which you can't make those decisions, but also learn to be creative in the way you think to deal with the exploding information of the world.

[*Mayor Xu agreed on the need for a new consensus on concepts of education. He cited an example of Chinese parents, accustomed to the methods of Chinese education, who were dissatisfied with visiting American high school teachers because the teachers did not give enough tests.*]

President Clinton. But, to be fair, we need more exchanges, too, because what sometimes happens in America is, if you don't have pretty high standards for measuring whether everybody knows what they should know, then the very best students may do better under our system and they go on and win the Nobel Prizes or they create the new companies, but we leave too many behind because we don't make sure they know.

So I think there's something we have to learn from each other, and we really should work on this. Because every advanced society—the Japanese could join with us in this; the Russians could join with us in this. We all have the same interests here in finding the right balance in our educational systems.

[*Mr. Zuo asked if investment in education could be justified despite the long payback period.*]

President Clinton. Well, it is a long payback period but it has the highest payback of any investment. If you invest in a child's education—maybe they're 5 years old when they start, and maybe they're in their early twenties when they get out of university—that's a long time. And you have to hire all these teachers along the way and pay for all the laboratory facilities and all that. But there's nothing more important. And then the young person gets out into a world in which ideas create wealth and gives back to society many times over.

So people shouldn't look at it just as one person investing in another. It ought to be China investing in its future, the United States investing in its future, together investing in a peaceful, stable, prosperous world.

Education, ideas, information—they give us the capacity to lift people out of poverty and to lift people out of the ignorance that make

them fight and kill each other and to give us an understanding about how to solve the environmental problems of the world, which are great. This is worth investing in. It's more important than everything else. Yes, it takes a long time to pay out in the life of one child, but the payouts for a country are almost immediate.

[*Mr. Zuo agreed and suggested that in China-U.S. relations there must be investment for the future. Another caller then asked the President which sports he liked to play when he was in college, how he maintained his energy at work, and which soccer team he thought would win the World Cup.*]

Mr. Zuo. Oh yes, so many questions. You threw a lot of questions at him all at once.

Sports

President Clinton. Well, when I was in college, I liked to play basketball, which is very popular in America, and I liked to jog. I have jogged—I am a runner, you know, and I did that for most of the last almost 30 years. Then about a year and half ago, I hurt my leg, and I couldn't run for several months. And I began to work on the Stairmaster—you know, it's the machine—you find them in a lot of these gyms—you walk up and down stairs. And I do that quite a lot now because it's quicker than running. And I play golf. I like golf very much. It's my favorite sport. Even though it doesn't burn a lot of calories, it makes my mind calm, so I like it.

Now, on the World Cup, it's hard for me to predict. I will say this, the World Cup is now becoming important to Americans in the way it's important to other countries, because soccer came rather late to America because we had football and basketball. Now, more and more of our children are playing soccer. And I think the World Cup is a great way of bringing people together. You know, the United States has been estranged from Iran for a long time, but we had this great soccer game and they beat us fair and square—it was heartbreaking for Americans, but they won a great, fascinating soccer match, and they eliminated us from the World Cup.

I'm not an expert in soccer, but I think the Brazilians are always hard to beat. I've watched them play a lot, and they're very good.

Iran-U.S. Relations

[*Mr. Zuo asked about "soccer diplomacy" in the context of the Iran-U.S. World Cup competition.*]

President Clinton. I think it could be possible. The Iranians like wrestling very much, and we have exchanged wrestling team visits. And they treated our American wrestlers with great respect and friendship, which meant a great deal to me. And then we were honored to receive their wrestlers.

So I think—the new President of Iran seems to be committed to not only lifting the economic and social conditions of his people but also having a more regular relationship with the rest of the world, in accordance with international law and basically just conditions of good partnership. So I'm hoping that more will come out of this.

But I think Americans were riveted by the soccer game. And they were impressed, because we were supposed to win the game and we had lots of chances and our players played very well. They played very well; they had lots of chances; they could have scored eight times or something. But the Iranians had two fast breaks, and they played with such passion. And they had those two chances, and they capitalized on both of them. And we respect that. It was very good.

Automobiles and the Environment

[*The next caller asked Mayor Xu if Shanghai's encouragement of private cars would make traffic conditions worse and contribute to environmental pollution. Mayor Xu responded that the city government had not encouraged private car ownership but had simply relaxed regulations related to it because Shanghai's growth had caused many to require transportation into the city from outlying areas. He acknowledged the need to focus on public transportation systems, develop a better understanding of roadway management, use unleaded gasoline, and require emissions filters.*]

Mr. Zuo. Even though Mr. President is here, look at this—some of the people here are still interested in asking questions of the mayor about their city, because they're interested and they're excited.

President Clinton. Well, they should be. I mean, that's a very basic thing.

I would like to comment on one thing the questioner asked, because I was impressed that he is concerned that if everyone has a private car, the air pollution will grow worse. Let me say, this is a big problem everywhere in the world. But I once told President Jiang, I said, my biggest concern is that China will get rich in exactly the same way America got rich. But you have 4 times as many people, so no one will be able to breathe because the air pollution will be bad.

Now, one of the things that you need to know is that when a car, an automobile, burns gasoline, about 80 percent of the heat value of the gasoline is lost in the inefficiency of the engine. But they are now developing new engines, called fuel injection engines, where the fuel goes directly into the engine and it is about 4 times more efficient. So I hope that within a matter of just a few years, in the U.S., in China, and throughout the world, all these engines will be much, much less polluting. And that will be very good for the health of the people of China and for the health of world environment.

Mayor Xu. Correct. That's a good thing. We right now are in the process of thinking about natural gas, LNG, that is, using it for cars, for taxis——

President Clinton. Very good.

Mayor Xu. ——for buses. And at the same time, even for personal motorcycles, we're thinking of making them electric instead of gasoline.

[*Mr. Zuo suggested that China's automobile policy should suit conditions in China.*]

President Clinton. Absolutely. I think, for one thing, you should be much more disciplined than we were about making sure you have good, high-quality mass transit, because in the cities where we have good mass transit, people use it. So if you have good mass transit, then I think people should be free to have cars, and it's a nice thing to have, but they won't have to drive them so much and you won't have the pollution problems.

Then I think the city, as the mayor said, can set a good example. You can have electric vehicles; you can have natural gas vehicles. And then, as I said, within a few years, I believe all of us will be driving cars that, even if they use gasoline, will be much, much more efficient. Otherwise, if we don't do these things, the air pollution will be terrible, and it will create public health problems that will cost far more than the benefits of the automobile. You don't want that. And you can avoid it. You can avoid the mistakes we made with technology and good planning.

Educational and Scientific Cooperation

[*The next caller said that while studying in America for a 10-month period, he had noticed American teachers' confusion about the Chinese dialects of Mandarin and Cantonese. He asked about encouraging better understanding, cooperation, and interaction between the two nations.*]

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I perfectly agree with you. I think that this is a very important point. That's why I came to China. That's why I am very pleased that the press conference I had with President Jiang was televised, and why I did a question-and-answer session at Beijing University yesterday, and why I'm doing this today. I think that we need more of this.

And as I said to an earlier caller, when I go home I intend to see what I can do about sending more Americans to China and trying to make it possible for more Chinese to come to America. Because the more we do these things, the more we will be able to work through our differences and build a common future. And, besides that, it will make life more interesting and more fun.

[*The next caller asked about China-U.S. cooperation in science and technology.*]

President Clinton. We have had for many years a U.S.-China science and technology forum—[*inaudible*]—some research that has helped us to predict extreme weather events. And it has helped us to predict the coming of earthquakes.

We have also had scientific research which has helped us to uncover the cause of a condition in newborn babies, called spina bifida, that is caused in part by the mother's having not enough folic acid. And that has helped us to have more healthy children. My wife yesterday—2 days ago talked to a mother whose first child was born with this condition, and the second child was born perfectly normal because of the research done by our people together.

So we have made a commitment, President Jiang and I, to identify other areas where we will do more work. And if you or anyone listening to this program, if you have any ideas, you

ought to send them to this station or the mayor; they will send them on to me—because I think we should do more science research together.

Response to President's Visit

[*A questioner asked if the President would be able to convince people who opposed his visit that he had done the right thing.*]

President Clinton. I believe that what the American people have seen already—that our media has reported back on my meeting with President Jiang, and the press conference, yesterday, the meeting with the students; today, the meeting with the citizens before I came over here, and this—it clearly shows that whatever differences we have in our systems and the differences of opinion we have about what human rights policy ought to be, what the scope of freedom of religion ought to be, any of these differences, that we still have a lot in common, and by working on the things we have in common we may also come to an understanding about how to manage our differences. And I believe that the forces of history will bring about more convergence in our societies going forward.

The mayor and I were talking earlier about the education systems and how, in the end, we need to educate young people with the same kinds of skills. And I believe, as I have said repeatedly, that high levels of personal freedom are quite important to the success of a society in the information age because you need people who feel free to explore, to state their views, to explore their own convictions, and then live out their own dreams, and that this will add to the stability of a society by enriching it. That's what I believe.

And we've been able to have these conversations here. And the Government and the people of China have been very open. Also, yesterday the students were very open in asking me some rather probing, difficult questions. And all of this, I think, is good. So I think the American people will see when I go home that this was a good thing that I came here. And it's a good thing that we have a working relationship.

China and the World Trade Organization

[*The next caller asked about U.S. influence with regard to China and the World Trade Organization.*]

President Clinton. Yes. First of all, obviously I think it is important for China to be a member of the World Trade Organization because China is a major economic power that will grow only larger over time. Secondly, it should be obvious that we in the United States want to support China's economic growth. After all, we are by far the largest purchaser of Chinese exports. No other country comes close to the percentage of exports that we purchase in the United States. So we support your growth.

But we believe that when China becomes a member of the WTO, it must do so on commercially reasonable terms; that is, you must allow access to your markets, not only of American products but of others as well, and there should be some open investment opportunities. And all of this should be done, however, in recognition of the fact that China is still an emerging economy, so you are entitled to have certain longer timetables and certain procedural help in this regard.

So what we're trying to do in America is to say, okay, China should be in the World Trade Organization, but it has to be a commercially realistic set of understandings when you have memberships, and yet we owe you the right to a reasonable period of transition as you change your economy. And I think we'll get there. I think we'll reach an agreement before long.

[*Mayor Xu said he hoped for such an agreement. Mr. Zuo then expressed his regret that time was running short. He noted that the program was the first such format the President had participated in outside the U.S. and asked him for his impressions.*]

Closing Comments

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I have enjoyed it very much. I want to thank all the people who called in with their questions and tell you that I'm sorry we didn't get to answer more questions. But it's always the way. People everywhere want to engage their leaders in dialog. And so I thank you for your questions. They were very good ones. And if I didn't get to answer your question, I'm sorry. But this has been a historic occasion. And perhaps now when I travel to other countries, I will ask them if they will do the same thing. This was a very good idea.

[*Mr. Zuo thanked the President, and Mayor Xu then commented that he had learned a lot from the President. Mr. Zuo closed the program by thanking the participants and the audience.*]

President Clinton. Goodbye. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:14 p.m. from the studios of Shanghai Radio, on Zuo Anlong's radio program entitled "Citizens and Society in the 1990's." The program's topic was "Moving U.S.-Sino Relations Forward into the 21st Century."

Statement on the Identification of Vietnam War Unknown Soldier
June 30, 1998

DNA testing positively identified the remains of the Vietnam War unknown disinterred from the Tomb of the Unknowns in May as those of the Air Force 1st Lt. Michael J. Blassie. The Defense Department has notified the Blassie family and the other families involved in resolving this difficult case. I am pleased that one more family has finally learned the fate of a loved one, and I remain committed to seeking a full accounting of the missing in action from that conflict.

Remarks at a Reception Hosted by Mayor Xu Kuangdi of Shanghai
June 30, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor, Madame Xu; to Museum Director Ma; ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honor for my wife and members of our family, six Members of the United States Congress, and many members of our Cabinet and other American citizens to be here in Shanghai tonight.

This museum is a fitting symbol of what I have seen in China these last few days, the magnificence of your ancient past and your brilliant future.

I have seen a nation rising in its influence in the world, with China's leadership for stability in the Asian economic crisis and China's leadership for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in working with us to help to deal with the difficulties caused by the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan.

I have seen the Chinese people rising, millions of them, out of poverty; millions more finding interesting work of their own choice, pursuing more educational opportunities, having more say in their local affairs. I saw a great example of that when the mayor and I did a talk radio show this morning here in Shanghai. And I was especially impressed when one of the callers called in and said, "I don't want to talk to the President; I want to talk to the mayor about traffic problems in Shanghai." [*Laughter*]

Shanghai is truly the place where East meets West. Over the last 150 to 200 years, the West has not always been the best of partners in Shanghai, but now we have a good partnership. I am especially pleased that a United States firm, RTKL, will design the new Scienceland Museum here. I hope that is a symbol of the kinds of positive, good things we will do together in the future.

I also want to say a special word of appreciation to your mayor. Mr. Mayor, I heard—this may not be a true story, but don't tell me if it's not—[*laughter*]—I heard that years ago when your predecessor, Zhu Rongji, invited you to head Shanghai's Central Planning Commission, you told him you hated the whole idea of central planning. And Zhu replied, "Then you're exactly the man I want for the job." [*Laughter*]

Now we see you unleashing this city's great potential, cutting redtape, fighting corruption, protecting the environment, spurring an artistic revival. You are making Shanghai a place the

world looks to for commerce, culture, and people of different walks of life thriving together.

Mr. Mayor, in 1996 when I asked the American people to give me another term as President of the United States, the theme of my campaign was "Building a Bridge to the 21st Century." In Shanghai, you are building that bridge to the 21st century, and we want to build it with you.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:40 p.m. at the Shanghai Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Xu Kuangdi of Shanghai and his wife, Xu Luoping; Ma Chengyan, director, Shanghai Museum; and Premier Zhu Rongji of China.

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