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unchecked, climate change will result in more storms and floods, more economic disruptions, more permanent flooding of coastal areas, perhaps the entire flooding of island nations, and more threats to unique habitats such as the one in which we are today.

So the last point I want to make is, I hope all of you will help us to build a national consensus to cut down our emissions of greenhouse gases and to work with others around the world to use existing technologies to help them do the same. I urge those in Congress who have opposed our efforts to drop their opposition, to recognize that we now have the technology—and we will soon have much more—to cut emissions while continuing to grow the economy.

For example, we have the technology to reduce by 85 percent the amount of energy it takes to run a refrigerator. We will soon have cars on the street that routinely get more than 60 miles a gallon and new technologies such as fuel cells and biofuels to give us the equivalent of hundreds of miles from every gallon of gasoline. Just by changing the lights in the White House, I cut the power bills $100,000 a year. [*Laughter*] And we put in a new heating system, a more fuel efficient roofing system.

If the changes we made in the White House were made in every Federal building, which I'm trying to get done, we would take the equivalent—we would reduce greenhouse gases so much it would be the equivalent of taking 1.7 million cars a year off the road. These things are out there now. They will generate jobs; they will generate economic activity. And it is profoundly important that all of us who think about these things continue to talk to our friends and neighbors until we build a vast national consensus for concerted action.

Now, I've asked Congress for over $2 billion for this, to fund local, national, and international efforts to reduce greenhouse gases, to fund clean technologies, to provide tax incentives for those who produce and those who purchase these kinds of products.

Now, before I sign the proclamation, let me just remind you that for over 100 years, beginning with the residents of Visalia, California, Americans have sought to save these giant sequoias. Earth Day brought groups of Americans together on a crusade to save the treasures of our planet.

Today let's remember, even here on the Trail of 100 Giants, the global village presses even closer upon us. We have to look within our communities and beyond our borders for allies to deal with our common environmental challenges. We're doing our part today to make sure that the monarchs will be here after we're long gone, rooted strong in the web of nature that sustains us all.

It has been a great honor for me to be here. I thank all of you who have supported these decisions. I thank you, again, Secretary Glickman. But I ask you, when you walk out of here today, remember that not every person can come to this gorgeous giant grove, but every person can benefit from our continued efforts to improve our environment and sustain our natural heritage. And we still have a very great deal to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. on the Trail of 100 Giants. In his remarks, he referred to Eagle Scout Alexander Reed-Krase, who introduced the President; Arthur L. Gaffrey, forest supervisor, Sequoia National Forest; and Marta Macias Brown, widow of former Representative George E. Brown, Jr. The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Exchange With Reporters in Sequoia National Forest
April 15, 2000

National Economy

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*]—inflation is becoming a problem again that's going to screw up the stock market as it did yesterday?

The President. Well, you know, I try never to talk about the movements of the market, but let me just say, I think the fact that oil prices

have come down will make a substantial difference. And whenever we have a strong economic boom, it puts some strain on the housing markets, but we have open markets, so new products will come in and tend to drive inflation down there.

The projected inflation rate for the year is still quite modest. And the projected growth rate for the year is still quite strong. So I think if we stay with our economic policy and the American people productivity continues to increase, as it's going to, then I still think we'll have a very good year. If you look at all the elements of inflation—the fact that oil prices are coming down and that open markets will inevitably lead to a dampening of the prices of the component parts and the housing industry—and that's why the experts say that over the year we'll have very modest inflation. And I think, you know, everybody that invests their money will tend to look at what it's likely to be like over a year.

So all I can do is try to keep the economy strong, and that's what I'll do. And I think the investment climate and markets will take care of themselves. They'll go up; they'll go down. But I think the long-term trends are quite positive.

Giant Sequoia National Monument

Q. [*Inaudible*]—who say the visit here is politically motivated and say you're trying to build an environmental legacy for yourself and the Vice President?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that when you can't win an argument, sometimes you just attack the person on the other side. [*Laughter*] The only issue here is whether we're doing the right thing. I have been doing this kind of thing for 7½ years now. I've been working on these issues. What I'm trying to do is to build a legacy for these children. And I think we did the right thing.

And Secretary Glickman worked very hard to preserve all the functions in this area that are going on, except the logging. And I believe there will be a net gain economically here, because we are protecting these trees for life, forever. That's what I believe, and I just think it's the right thing to do. I've always believed this. I did this sort of thing when I was Governor. It's not something that I woke up last year and decided it would be a nice thing to do. I believe that.

And I think—we don't have to criticize each other's motives. They can disagree with my decision, but I think I did the right thing, and I think the future will prove us out right.

Elian Gonzalez

Q. Mr. President, what did you tell Janet Reno about the Gonzalez case?

The President. Well, we just had a conversation about where it is. We reviewed where the legal case was and what her plans were. I just told her that I strongly supported her efforts and that we clearly had to uphold the rule of law.

Q. Do you want to see this brought to a swift end?

The President. Well, we have to let the court cases be decided. But I think the main thing is—I hope that all the people there who say they came to the United States because we have freedom and the rule of law will observe the rule of law. When this thing finally plays out, in the end, the law has to be obeyed. And that's basically what we talked about.

We talked a little about the details and—she was the prosecutor there for 12 years, so she knows it very well. And she's down there working hard on it, and I think she'll handle it in as sensitive but firm a way as possible. That's basically what we talked about, just what's likely to happen over the next couple of days.

But the main thing—my message is simple: She has to deal with the day-to-day details, but the thing that we've got to do is to make sure that our laws are upheld and enforced. And in the end, I'm quite confident they will be.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 9:40 a.m. on the Trail of 100 Giants. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.