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PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
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Foreword

As my term drew to a close, I was optimistic about the future of our country and grateful for the good fortune of this productive and historic time.

Never before had our nation enjoyed so much prosperity and social progress with no deep domestic crisis or overwhelming foreign threat to darken the prospect of progress. A spirit of possibility pervaded the Washington atmosphere and brought significant legislative accomplishments, which was remarkable in an election season.

The Congress passed our Lands Legacy initiative to provide long term funding to purchase precious lands from wilderness areas to urban greenspaces; increased funding for childcare and breast and cervical cancer treatment; doubled support for after-school programs, enough to serve 1.6 million children; enacted the largest increase in Head Start ever and the funds necessary to hire 35,000 new teachers; and passed the New Markets legislation, the last major bill I signed, designed to give Americans the same financial incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods and rural and Native American communities as they have to invest in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Congress also passed our plans to increase trade with Africa and our Caribbean neighbors; extended normal trade relations with China, paving the way for its entry into the World Trade Organization; enacted the historic Debt Relief Initiative, to forgive the foreign debts of the world's poorest nations, but only if they invest all the savings in education, health care, and economic development; and provided funding for Plan Colombia, to help Latin America's oldest democracy and her neighbors fight drug trafficking.

The Administration took a number of groundbreaking executive actions, including setting aside over 40 million roadless acres in our national forests, a decision characterized by the Audubon Society as the most important conservation move in forty years; establishing several more national monuments in environmentally sensitive areas; raising the standards for arsenic in water; providing $300 million to feed 9 million poor children in the poorest nations if they come to school to get the meal; concluding trade agreements with Vietnam and Jordan, with the Jordanian agreement being the first ever to include environmental and labor standards; and laying the foundation for ending North Korea's dangerous missile program.

Of course, there were disappointments. I was unsuccessful in persuading Congress to pass a meaningful Patient's Bill of Rights; prescription drug coverage under the Medicare program for senior citizens; and a Hate Crimes bill, making a federal offense of violent crimes motivated by the victim's gender, disability, or sexual orientation. I am optimistic that all these bills will eventually pass.

My greatest disappointment was our failure to make a comprehensive peace agreement in the Middle East, notwithstanding arduous talks at Camp David and afterward in the region. I believe if a peace agreement is ever reached it will have to include the essential elements in the last American proposal, which brought the parties so close to peace at Taba.

I was honored to be the first President in forty years to visit Okinawa for the G–8 Summit and to make a second trip to Africa, this time to Tanzania, to work with President Mandela on the Burundi Peace Talks, and to Nigeria to support President Obasanjo's effort to reform Africa's largest nation and to intensify the struggle against AIDS.

In September I joined more than 160 heads of government at the United Nations Millennium Summit to discuss the great challenges facing us at the dawn of the new century: the fights against poverty, infectious diseases, lack of education, global warming, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction.

We have traveled a long good road these last eight years, with 22.5 million jobs and the largest economic expansion in history; a thirty-two-year low in welfare rolls, a twenty-six-year low in crime, and a twenty-year low in poverty; a cleaner environment; and over 200,000 young citizens having given at least a year of their lives in community service through Americorps. Most importantly, we are closer to truly becoming One America, a society in which we embrace our diversity, respect our differences, and unite around our common humanity and our shared dreams and values.

Bill 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 October 12, 2000–January 20, 2001. 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 Editors of this book were Karen Howard Ashlin and Brad Brooks, assisted by Stephen J. Frattini, Christopher Gushman, Margaret A. Hemmig, Maxine Hill, 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 and by the Clinton Presidential Materials Project, National Archives and Records Administration. 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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Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency	James Lee Witt

Administration of William J. Clinton

2000–2001

Remarks on the Attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* and the Situation in the Middle East

October 12, 2000

The President. I have just been meeting with my national security team on today's tragic events in the Middle East, and I would like to make a brief statement.

First, as you know, an explosion claimed the lives of at least four sailors on one of our naval vessels, the U.S.S. *Cole,* this morning. Many were injured; a number are still missing. They were simply doing their duty. The ship was refueling in a port in Yemen while en route to the Persian Gulf. We're rushing medical assistance to the scene, and our prayers are with the families who have lost their loved ones or are still awaiting news.

If, as it now appears, this was an act of terrorism, it was a despicable and cowardly act. We will find out who was responsible and hold them accountable. If their intention was to deter us from our mission of promoting peace and security in the Middle East, they will fail utterly.

I have directed the Department of Defense, the FBI, and the State Department to send officials to Yemen to begin the investigation. Secretary Albright has spoken with President Salih of Yemen, and we expect to work closely with his government to that effect.

Our military forces and our Embassies in the region have been on heightened state of alert for some time now. I have ordered our ships in the region to pull out of port and our land forces to increase their security.

Tensions are extremely high today throughout the entire region, as all of you know. I strongly condemn the murder of Israeli soldiers in Ram Allah today. While I understand the anguish Palestinians feel over the losses they have suffered, there can be no possible justification for mob violence. I call on both sides to undertake a cease-fire immediately and immediately to condemn all acts of violence.

Finally, let me say this. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the greatest tragedies and most difficult problems of our time. But it can be solved. The progress of the last few years—progress that brought Israel to the hope of a final peace with true security and Palestinians to the hope of a sovereign state recognized by the entire world—was not made through violence. It happened because both sides sat down together, negotiated, and slowly built up the trust that violence destroys.

Now is the time to stop the bloodshed, to restore calm, to return to dialog and ultimately to the negotiating table. The alternative to the peace process is now no longer merely hypothetical. It is unfolding today before our very eyes.

Now I need to go back to work on this, and so I won't take questions right now. But the Department of Defense will offer a briefing today and will be able to answer the questions that are relevant to today's events.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House, following a meeting with the national security team. In his remarks, he referred to President Ali Salih of Yemen. The proclamations of October 12 and October 16 on the death of American servicemembers aboard the U.S.S. *Cole* is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Action To Lift Sanctions Against Serbia

October 12, 2000

Today I have directed the Department of the Treasury and the Department of State to take immediate steps to begin lifting the trade and financial sanctions imposed against Serbia in 1998, except those targeted against members of the former regime. This includes lifting the oil embargo and flight ban, which will be effective immediately.

The victory of freedom in Serbia is one of the most hopeful developments in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall. It ended a dictatorship, and it can liberate an entire region from the nagging fear that ethnic differences will again be exploited to start wars and shift borders. Therefore, we have a strong interest in supporting Yugoslavia's newly elected leaders as they work to build a truly democratic society. Our disagreement was with the Milosevic regime, not the people of Serbia who have suffered under the regime's brutal policies.

The removal of these sanctions is a first step to ending Serbia's isolation. It is within the scope of the sanctions-lifting measure announced Monday by the European Union (EU) ministers in Luxembourg, and we will move forward in coordination with the EU. We will also ensure that such measures do not allow those supporters of Milosevic to continue the systematic theft of resources that have marked the last 13 years. In that vein, we will continue to enforce a ban on travel to the United States by top members of the Milosevic regime and keep in place measures that help the new government deter a looting of the national patrimony during the current period of transition in Yugoslavia. We will also review our restrictions on Serbia's participation in international financial institutions as Serbia makes its democratic transition and meets its international obligations.

There is still much work ahead for the Yugoslav people and their new government: restoring confidence in the rule of law, rebuilding an honest economy, accounting for the past while building a better future. Thankfully, that work can now begin—without the burden of isolation—and with the friendship of the American people.

Statement on Signing the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles

October 12, 2000

I am pleased today to sign the instrument of ratification for the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles. This treaty is the first international agreement dedicated solely to raising standards for the protection of sea turtles.

All six species of sea turtle found in the Western Hemisphere are threatened or endangered, some critically so. The extensive migration patterns of these majestic creatures span thousands of miles in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Consequently, effective conservation measures depend on close international cooperation. This treaty fosters that cooperation and serves as a model for others focused on conserving the world's most endangered species.

This Convention also demonstrates that countries can work together to protect marine life, and that our trade and environment policies can be mutually supportive. I commend the Senate for giving its advice and consent to ratification of this important agreement.

Statement on Hate Crimes Legislation
October 12, 2000

Today marks 2 years since young Matthew Shepard was beaten unconscious, tied to a fence, and left to die. At the time of Matthew's death, I expressed my sympathy for the family and my outrage about the heinous nature of the crime. Since then, Matthew's death has been a call to action to many across the country committed to doing more to prevent and prosecute hate crimes. Many have worked tirelessly, along with my administration, to pass meaningful hate crimes legislation this year. Their efforts led to two strong bipartisan votes—one in the House and one in the Senate—in favor of hate crimes legislation. Unfortunately, just last week, the Republican leadership—denying the will of a bipartisan majority in both the House and the Senate—stripped hate crimes legislation from the Department of Defense Authorization bill. This action is wrong, and the will of the majority should be respected. We must not let the fear of people different from ourselves prevent this legislation from passing. Working with the bipartisan coalition that supports hate crimes legislation, I will continue to fight to make sure this important work gets done.

Statement on Senate Action on Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Legislation
October 12, 2000

I am pleased that the Senate has passed a VA/HUD bill that will open the doors of opportunity in America for those who need it most, build on our agenda for national energy security, and strengthen our commitment to the environment. With this legislation—which includes key provisions negotiated by my budget team—we take an important step toward addressing critical national priorities and opening the doors of opportunity for many more Americans.

This legislation builds upon my opportunity agenda with increased funding for economic development through empowerment zones and enterprise communities and community development financial institutions, all part of my new markets initiative, and with 79,000 new housing vouchers for low income families. This agreement also increases support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's emergency food and shelter programs which work with States and communities to help the homeless and hungry. We are also strengthening our commitment to national service with additional support for the Corporation for National and Community Service, the first increase since the inception of this critical volunteer agency in 1993.

With this legislation, we support the significant expansion of cutting-edge basic scientific research at the National Science Foundation. This includes research in nanotechnology—the manipulation of matter at the molecular and atomic level—which holds the promise of scientific breakthroughs in a wide range of fields. It also advances scientific research through support for space exploration at NASA. At especially at this time of elevated fuel prices, I am also pleased that this bill provides resources for technologies to increase fuel efficiency, an essential part of our long-term strategy to reduce dependence on oil.

This agreement also contains increased funding for enforcement of the Nation's environmental laws and for the cleanup of polluted waterways. The agreement we reached drops or fixes several objectionable riders that threatened to harm our environment. Yet, while we were able to ameliorate the impact of the remaining riders, we were not able to rid this bill entirely of objectionable provisions, in particular the rider relating to ozone.

This agreement also provides the additional $1.5 billion I requested for the Department of

Veterans Affairs, the largest increase ever requested by any administration. This funding will support efforts to improve veterans' medical care and the delivery of key services, including disability benefits.

This agreement is clear proof of the progress we can achieve when we work together to address the Nation's priorities.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism

October 12, 2000

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 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1999, and signed on behalf of the United States of America on January 10, 2000. The report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention is also transmitted for the information of the Senate.

In recent years, the United States has increasingly focused world attention on the importance of combating terrorist financing as a means of choking off the resources that fuel international terrorism. While international terrorists do not generally seek financial gain as an end, they actively solicit and raise money and other resources to attract and retain adherents and to support their presence and activities both in the United States and abroad. The present Convention is aimed at cutting off the sustenance that these groups need to operate. This Convention provides, for the first time, an obligation that States Parties criminalize such conduct and establishes an international legal framework for cooperation among States Parties directed toward prevention of such financing and ensuring the prosecution and punishment of offenders, wherever found.

Article 2 of the Convention states that any person commits an offense within the meaning of the Convention "if that person by any means, directly or indirectly, unlawfully and wilfully, provides or collects funds with the intention that they should be used or in the knowledge that they are to be used, in full or in part, in order to carry out" either of two categories of terrorist acts defined in the Convention. The first category includes any act that constitutes an offense within the scope of and as defined in one of the counterterrorism treaties listed in the Annex to the Convention. The second category encompasses any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of the act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

The Convention imposes binding legal obligations upon States Parties either to submit for prosecution or to extradite any person within their jurisdiction who commits an offense as defined in Article 2 of the Convention, attempts to commit such an act, participates as an accomplice, organizes or directs others to commit such an offense, or in any other way contributes to the commission of an offense by a group of persons acting with a common purpose. A State Party is subject to these obligations without regard to the place where the alleged act covered by Article 2 took place.

States Parties to the Convention will also be obligated to provide one another legal assistance in investigations or criminal or extradition proceedings brought in respect of the offenses set forth in Article 2.

Legislation necessary to implement the Convention will be submitted to the Congress separately.

This Convention is a critical new weapon in the campaign against the scourge of international terrorism. I hope that all countries will become Parties to this Convention at the earliest possible time. I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention, subject to the understanding, declaration and reservation that are described

in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 12, 2000.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Permanently Authorize the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

October 12, 2000

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4115, which would permanently authorize the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

One of my earliest acts as President was to dedicate the Museum, and since then almost 15 million people have visited the institution, which serves as a constant and painful reminder that racism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of hatred are ever-present dangers, and that indifference to hatred makes each of us complicit in some way. Each generation must be taught these critical lessons anew, and therefore the Museum's special emphasis on reaching America's young people is vitally important for our country's future.

The Museum has become a moral compass that must endure, especially as the Holocaust recedes in time. When the survivors are gone, our Nation will have this vital American institution to illuminate humanity's darkest potential and to inspire our eternal vigilance.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 12, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4115, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 106–292. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13.

Statement on Signing the Presidential Transition Act of 2000

October 12, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4931, the "Presidential Transition Act of 2000." This Act amends the Presidential Transition Act of 1963, which was enacted to promote the orderly transfer of power when general elections result in a change in the Presidency. Before 1963, there was no formal provision for such transfer of power, nor were there any Federal funds available to pay for the expenses of the transition. The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 authorized the use of Federal funds for transition activities and charged the General Services Administration (GSA) with providing, upon request, office space and a variety of services to the President-elect.

This Act will further improve the process by which the United States changes Presidential Administrations. It authorizes the GSA to develop and deliver orientation activities for key prospective Presidential appointees. To ensure coordination between the parties involved in this process, GSA should consult with the Office of Personnel Management and the White House Office of Presidential Personnel in the development of these programs. In addition, this Act authorizes the GSA to consult with Presidential candidates prior to the general election, so that they can develop a plan for computer and communications systems that will support the transition between the election and the inauguration.

This Act also requires the GSA, in consultation with the National Archives and Records Administration, to develop a transition directory. The directory will draw upon the existing body of information that describes the organization and interrelationships of the executive branch, as well as the authorities and functions of the various departments and agencies. It will serve

as a valuable "one-stop shopping" guide to Presidential appointees as they begin to carry out their various responsibilities. The Office of Personnel Management and the White House Office of Presidential Personnel should also be consulted in the development of this directory.

In approving this measure, I note that section 3 of the Act instructs the Office of Government Ethics to conduct a one-time study and submit to two Congressional committees "a report on improvements to the financial disclosure process for Presidential nominees," which "shall include recommendations and legislative proposals." There is good reason to believe that the financial disclosure process can be improved through streamlining and elimination of duplication without harming the positive intent of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978. The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution (U.S. Const. Art. II, Sec. 3), however, protects the President's power to decline to offer any recommendation to the Congress. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President's constitutionally protected policy making prerogatives, I will construe section 3 of this Act not to extend to the submission of proposals or recommendations that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient for the Administration to present.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 12, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4931, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 106–293. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13.

Statement Congratulating President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea on Winning the Nobel Peace Prize

October 13, 2000

I congratulate President Kim Dae-jung on his selection as the winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize. I can think of few leaders who have done so much over so many years to earn this honor. It is a fitting tribute to his courage in promoting peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula and to his lifelong dedication to the principle that peace depends on respect for human rights.

This Prize not only celebrates what President Kim has accomplished; it inspires those of us who cherish peace and freedom to help him realize his vision. Since his historic summit with Chairman Kim Chong-il, prospects for a better future on the Korean Peninsula have risen greatly. The American people will stand with the people of Korea until the sunshine of peace and freedom illuminates the entire Korean Peninsula.

Statement on Action To Support the Third Generation of Wireless Technology

October 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign an executive memorandum that will help ensure that America maintains its leadership in two of the most important technologies driving the U.S. economy—wireless telecommunications and the Internet. I am directing Federal agencies to work with the Federal Communications Commission and the private sector to identify the radio spectrum needed for the "third generation" of wireless technology. These so-called 3G systems will allow Americans to have mobile, high-speed access to the Internet and new telecommunications services anytime, anywhere.

My administration is committed to strengthening U.S. leadership in the information and communications industry. Over the last 5 years,

the information technology sector has accounted for nearly one-third of U.S. economic growth and has generated jobs that pay 85 percent more than the private sector average. The action I am taking today will help U.S. high-tech entrepreneurs compete and win in the global marketplace. It also will allow consumers to enjoy a wide range of new wireless tools and technologies, such as handheld devices that combine services like a phone, a computer, a pager, a radio, a customized newspaper, a GPS locator, and a credit card.

I am confident that Federal agencies, working with the private sector, can develop a plan for identifying the spectrum that will meet the needs of the wireless industry and is fully consistent with national security and public safety concerns. As made clear in a report released today by my Council of Economic Advisers, time is of the essence. If the United States does not move quickly to allocate this spectrum, there is a danger that the U.S. could lose market share in the industries of the 21st century. If we do this right, it will help ensure continued economic growth, the creation of new high-tech jobs, and the creation of exciting new Internet and telecommunications services.

Memorandum on Advanced Mobile Communications/Third Generation Wireless Systems

October 13, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Advanced Mobile Communications/ Third Generation Wireless Systems

The United States and the rest of the world are on the verge of a new generation of personal mobile communications, as wireless phones become portable high-speed Internet connections. The United States Government must move quickly and purposefully so that consumers, industry, and Government agencies all reap the benefits of this third generation of wireless products and services.

In less than 20 years, the U.S. wireless industry has blossomed from virtually nothing to one with 100 million subscribers, and it continues to grow at a rate of 25 to 30 percent annually. Globally, there are over 470 million wireless subscribers, a number expected to grow to approximately 1.3 billion within the next 5 years. It is an industry in which U.S. companies have developed the leading technologies for current and future systems. It is an industry whose products help people throughout the world communicate better and in more places, saving time, money, and lives.

Many saw the first generation of wireless—cell phones—as an extravagant way to make telephone calls. Yet as with all communications systems, the value of wireless communications increased as the number of users and types of use increased. Today's second generation wireless technology increased services and information offered to users and increased competition among providers. Digital "personal communications services" provide added messaging and data features, including such services as voice mail, call waiting, text messaging, and, increasingly, access to the World Wide Web. These first and second generation services increased productivity and reduced costs for thousands of businesses as well as Government agencies.

The next generation of wireless technology holds even greater promise. Neither the first nor the second generation of wireless technologies were designed for multi-media services, such as the Internet. Third generation wireless technologies will bring broadband to hand-held devices. Higher speeds and increased capability will lead to new audio, video, and other applications, which may create what many are calling "mobile-commerce" (m-commerce) that people will use in ways that are unimaginable today. Moreover, an international effort is underway to make it possible for the next generation of wireless phones to work anywhere in the world.

The Federal Government has always played a crucial role in the development of wireless services. To foster the development of cellular telephone service, the Federal Government made available radio frequency spectrum that

had previously been used by other commercial and Government services. For the second generation—digital PCS—the Federal Government allocated spectrum in bands occupied by private sector users, and ensured competition by awarding numerous licenses, while maintaining technology neutrality.

The United States has also placed a high value on promoting Internet access. Government support for the development of third generation wireless systems will help combine the wireless revolution with the Internet revolution. As part of these efforts, radio spectrum must be made available for this new use. The United States has already been active by, among other things, participating at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2000 (WRC–2000) earlier this year. WRC–2000 adopted the basic principles of the U.S. position, which was negotiated by Government and industry stakeholders: (1) governments may choose spectrum from any one or all of the bands identified for third generation mobile wireless; (2) governments have the flexibility to identify spectrum if and when they choose; and (3) no specific technology will be identified for third generation services. This result will allow deployment of the best technologies and permit the United States to move forward with rapid deployment of third generation services in a way that advances all U.S. interests.

The spectrum identified by international agreement at WRC–2000, however, is already being used in the United States by commercial telecommunications, television, national defense, law enforcement, air traffic control, and other services. Similar difficulties in making spectrum available for third generation mobile wireless systems are evident in other parts of the world. Because different regions have already selected different bands, there almost certainly will be a few preferred bands rather than a single band for third generation services.

In the United States, Federal Government agencies and the private sector must work together to determine what spectrum could be made available for third generation wireless systems.

Accordingly, I am hereby directing you, and strongly encouraging independent agencies, to be guided by the following principles in any future actions they take related to development of third generation wireless systems:

—Third generation wireless systems need radio frequency spectrum on which to operate. Executive departments and agencies and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) must cooperate with industry to identify spectrum that can be used by third generation wireless systems, whether by reallocation, sharing, or evolution of existing systems, by July 2001;

—Incumbent users of spectrum identified for reallocation or sharing must be treated equitably, taking national security and public safety into account;

—The Federal Government must remain technology-neutral, not favoring one technology or system over another, in its spectrum allocation and licensing decisions;

—The Federal Government must support policies that encourage competition in services and that provide flexibility in spectrum allocations to encourage competition; and

—The Federal Government must support industry efforts as far as practicable and based on market demand and national considerations, including national security and international treaty obligations, to harmonize spectrum allocations regionally and internationally.

I also direct the relevant agencies as follows:

1. I direct the Secretary of Commerce to work cooperatively with the FCC, as the agencies within the Federal Government with shared responsibility and jurisdiction for management of the radio frequency spectrum, to develop, by October 20, 2000, a plan to select spectrum for third generation wireless systems, and to issue, by November 15, 2000, an interim report on the current spectrum uses and potential for reallocation or sharing of the bands identified at WRC–2000 that could be used for third generation wireless systems, in order that the FCC can identify, in coordination with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, spectrum by July 2001, and auction licenses to competing applicants by September 30, 2002.

2. I also direct the Secretary of Commerce to work cooperatively with the FCC to lead a government-industry effort, through a series of regular public meetings or workshops, to work cooperatively with government and industry representatives, and others in the private sector, to develop recommendations and plans for identifying spectrum for third generation wireless systems consistent with the WRC–2000 agreements, which may be implemented by the Federal Government.

3. I direct the Secretaries of Defense, the Treasury, Transportation, and the heads of any other executive department or agency that is currently authorized to use spectrum identified at WRC–2000 for third generation wireless services, to participate and cooperate in the activities of the government-industry group.

4. I direct the Secretary of State to participate and cooperate in the activities of the government-industry group, and to coordinate and present the evolving views of the United States Government to foreign governments and international bodies.

Furthermore, I strongly encourage the FCC to participate in the government-industry outreach efforts and to initiate a rule-making proceeding to identify spectrum for third generation wireless services that will be coordinated with the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information during the formulation and decisionmaking process with the goal of completing that process by July 2001, so that such spectrum can be auctioned to competing applicants for licenses by September 30, 2002.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Memorandum on Preparing American Youth for 21st Century College and Careers

October 13, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Preparing American Youth for 21st Century College and Careers

Six years ago, I signed into law the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 to expand career and educational opportunities for our youth. A one-time Federal investment to jump-start State and local education improvement and workforce development efforts, the initiative will end next October after helping raise the academic performance of millions of students.

States and schools have used School-to-Work resources to help students achieve high academic and industry-recognized occupational standards; encourage community and business involvement in our schools; and integrate technical and academic education. Through innovative learning strategies like strengthened curricula, work-based learning, internships, and career academies, School-to-Work has made learning more relevant to the challenges students will face after high school graduation.

Research shows that School-to-Work students take more challenging classes, earn higher grades, and are more likely to graduate from high school and enroll in college. In particular, School-to-Work programs such as career academies have improved the academic achievement of students who are most likely to drop out of school. School-to-Work helps students see the relevance of their studies for their futures, motivating them to attend classes and study hard, and has created thousands of new partnerships between businesses and schools.

But the need for highly skilled and educated workers has only grown in the past few years. Information Age jobs require more skills and knowledge, much of which was unknown only a decade ago. More than four-fifths of manufacturers use computers in design or manufacturing, and nine-tenths of them report difficulties in finding qualified job candidates. The number of jobs that require a college degree is growing twice as fast as the number of other jobs. In these strong economic times, the National Association of Manufacturers describes the shortage of skilled workers as "the only dark cloud hanging over our future."

As the School-to-Work legislation nears its conclusion, the Federal Government must prepare to continue its support of State and local efforts that prepare our youth for postsecondary education and careers. To build upon the lessons of School-to-Work program and coordinate the efforts of Federal programs to prepare youth for their futures, I hereby establish the National Task Force on Preparing Youth for 21st Century College and Careers. The Task Force will examine how a coordinated Federal policy can help all youth prepare for future careers in a rapidly changing, technologically driven economy.

The Task Force shall be co-chaired by the Secretaries of Education and Labor. Other members of the Task Force shall include the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Commerce, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and other executive branch officials as determined by the co-chairs. The Department of Labor shall provide funding and administrative support for the Task Force.

The Task Force shall, to the extent permitted by law:

1. promote coordination and collaboration among Federal agencies seeking to improve the academic achievement and career preparation of America's youth;
2. continue existing efforts to involve businesses and community organizations in improving the education and training of our youth;
3. promote sustainable School-to-Work reforms in interested States and encourage the effective utilization of Federal School-to-Work funding through outreach, technical assistance, and dissemination of research findings and best practices;
4. help State and local agencies locate resources, including Federal resources, for initiatives that build on their School-to-Work efforts;
5. report to the President, through the Director of the National Economic Council and the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, no later than January 15, 2001, on:

(a) the ways in which the School-to-Work Opportunities Act has improved students' academic performance and career readiness, including community involvement, integration of academic and occupational curricula and standards, small learning communities, career development, application of academic and technical knowledge and skills in the 21st century workplace, development and utilization of industry-recognized portable credentials, and coordination of secondary and postsecondary education;

(b) the extent to which States are preparing to sustain School-to-Work reforms as Federal support under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act phases out;

(c) measures the Federal Government can undertake to promote the effectiveness of State and local School-to-Work reforms;

(d) how the Departments of Education and Labor can build on the School-to-Work program to collaborate and coordinate critical programs that prepare youth for postsecondary education and careers; and

(e) other matters related to our youth's preparation for and transition to postsecondary education and careers, as deemed appropriate by the Task Force.

6. Report to the President, through the Director of the National Economic Council and the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, no later than September 15, 2002, on:

(a) updated and revised findings from the Task Force's January 2001 report;

(b) how the efforts of Federal agencies to prepare our youth for further education and careers, in addition to those efforts of the Departments of Education and Labor, can be better coordinated, be made more effective, and incorporate the lessons learned from the School-to-Work program;

(c) the gaps, if any, between current Federal activities and the rapidly changing education and training needs of the American economy, and how those gaps could be addressed by Federal, State, or local governments or private organizations;

(d) how School-to-Work strategies can best prepare special populations for college and careers, including individuals who do not graduate from high school, ethnic minorities, economically disadvantaged students, youths involved in the juvenile justice system, and students with disabilities;

(e) what, if any, critical needs exist for new data and research related to improving the academic achievement and career preparation of our Nation's youth; and

(f) other matters related to our youth's preparation for and transition to postsecondary education and careers, as deemed appropriate by the Task Force.

The Task Force shall terminate after it issues its final report to the President in September 2002.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Telephone Remarks to a Dinner for Congressional Candidate Mike Ross
October 13, 2000

The President. Well, let me first of all thank John and Penny for hosting this. And I want to thank Marion Berry and Vic Snyder for being there for you. They can speak more eloquently than I can about how important it is for Arkansas that you be elected and how wonderful it would be if they had a genuine partner that was always working for Arkansas and not just at election time.

I have to tell you, Mike, I noticed the other day that the Republicans put in a little money for a bridge down in southeast Arkansas, and I think the voters—they ought to give you credit for it. [*Laughter*] I was trying to get them to give me the money for the bridge, and until you got to where you could beat Jay Dickey, they never thought about springing for it. So I think that ought to be called the Ross Bridge, if we ever get it built. [*Laughter*]

Let me say just one thing very seriously. This is a very different country than it was 8 years ago, and Arkansas is in a lot better shape than it was 8 years ago. The economy is better. The crime rate is down. The welfare rolls are lower. More children have health insurance. We're giving more constructive aid to our schools. And every single policy that was implemented—most importantly, going from a $290 billion deficit to a $230 billion surplus and turning this economy around—was implemented because I had the support of Democrats in the Congress.

And the Republicans basically fought our economic policy. They fought our welfare policy. They fought our crime policy. They fought our education policy. They fought our environmental policy. They fought all of our economic policies. They did give us a farm bill that Marion Berry and I told them wouldn't work, back in '95. And sure enough, we were right; it wouldn't work.

And now, basically, the people of south Arkansas have to decide whether they're going to keep this country moving in a good direction, or vote for someone who comes home every weekend but then goes back to Washington and votes against them. And I'll just use one example.

These ads that the so-called Citizens for Better Medicare are running against Mike Ross, because he's a pharmacist who believes that all of our seniors ought to be able buy prescription drugs, are scandalous. And they're typical of what the Republicans all over America are trying to do. They come home every weekend and tell the folks they love them. Then they go back to Washington and they vote for the vested interest. Then they got those interest groups to give them money to run bogus ads to confuse the voters back home. That's basically what is going on here.

And I just know that if Mike Ross gets enough financial support to be able to compete with this avalanche of special interest money that's being spent against him, the voters in south Arkansas will vote for him, because he'll work just as hard as Mr. Dickey at coming home on the weekends and keeping up with his constituents. Then he'll go back to Washington and actually vote for them, for a Medicare prescription drug program, for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for paying off the debt instead of having a tax cut so big we'll be in debt from now on—these are really, really important issues—and for helping our schools.

You know, I really believe that Mike can win this race, and I believe he will win this race, as long as the people who are rewarding his opponent for voting with them instead of the people of south Arkansas can't run enough ads to turn this election into a smokescreen. So I am profoundly grateful to all of you for helping him. He's a fine man. I have known him for nearly 20 years. He was a teenager when he started working for me. [*Laughter*] And when I'm gone from Washington, he'll be a Congressman, thanks to you. Thank you very, very much.

Mike, let me just say one other thing. I just wanted to say, on a very serious note and kind of a nonpolitical note, as you know, I badly wanted to be there tonight. I have been working for the last 8 days trying to restore calm in the Middle East, and I've been on the phone all day today and have some more work to do late tonight. And I'm terribly sorry I could not be there. But after the loss of our sailors in Yemen yesterday and the continued violence in the Middle East, I just thought I had to stay here and work. We may get a breakthrough

sometime in the next several hours. We're working hard, trying to turn this thing around. I hope you'll all say a prayer for us tonight, and I hope you'll forgive me for not being there. But just know that it has nothing to do with my profound desire to see you elected.

State Senator Ross. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, very much. We're going to win this thing. We're going to win it for you. We're going to win it for the Democratic Party.

The President. Thank you. And thank you, Vic. Thank you, Marion, and thanks, John and Penny. Goodbye, folks. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to the dinner at a private residence in Little Rock, AR. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts John and Penny Burkhalter. State Senator Mike Ross was a candidate for Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Situation in the Middle East
October 14, 2000

Good morning. As you know, we have been working for more than a week now to try to persuade the parties in the Middle East to find a way out of the recent cycle of violence, find a way back to negotiations. I'm very pleased that Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have accepted President Mubarak's invitation to attend a summit at Sharm al-Sheikh. The summit will convene this Monday, and in the meantime, we expect that both parties will do all in their power to cease hostilities and halt the violence.

Our central objectives must now be to stop the violence, to restore calm and safety, to agree on a factfinding mechanism concerning how this began and how it can be prevented from occurring again, and to find a way back to dialog and negotiations.

Now, we should be under no illusions. The good news is, the parties have agreed to meet, and the situation appears to be calmer. But the path ahead is difficult. After the terrible events of the past few days, the situation is still quite tense. But President Mubarak and I are convinced that we must make every effort to break the cycle of violence.

Now, as all of you know, I have to go to Denver. I'm running a little late. But the truth is, we're in that period of time where, I believe, leading up to the summit, the less those of us say who are going to be there, the better. And so at least for the moment, I want to let my statement stand for itself. But I assure you I will continue to do everything I can to minimize the violence and to do all the preparation necessary to maximize the chances of a successful meeting.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:38 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

The President's Radio Address
October 14, 2000

Good morning. This week an apparent terrorist attack claimed the lives of brave American sailors off the coast of Yemen, and new violence erupted between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East.

Our sailors aboard the U.S.S. *Cole* were simply doing their duty, but a dangerous duty,

standing guard for peace. Yesterday I spoke to the captain of the *Cole,* Commander Kirk Lippold. On behalf of all Americans, I expressed our deepest sympathies and commended him and his crew for the great job they're doing at this very difficult time.

To our sailors' families, let me say we hold you in our prayers. We will never know your loved ones as you did or remember them as you will, but we join you in grief. For your loss is America's loss, and we bow our heads to God in gratitude for the lives and service of your loved ones.

In their honor, I have ordered that flags be flown at halfstaff in the United States, our territories, our Embassies, military bases, and naval vessels until sunset on Monday. As we see the flag this weekend, we should think of the families and the sacrifice they have made for America.

This tragic loss should remind us all that even when America is not at war, the men and women of our military risk their lives every day in places where comforts are few and dangers are many. No one should think for a moment that the strength of our military is less important in times of peace, because the strength of our military is a major reason we are at peace. History will record our triumphs on the battlefield, but no one can ever write a full account of the wars never fought, the losses never suffered, the tears never shed because the men and women of our military were risking their lives for peace. We should never, ever forget that.

Our military power is not all people see when ships of the United States enter a foreign port. When U.S. sailors head down the brow of the ship or our troops set foot on foreign soil, our hosts see in the uniform of the United States men and women of every race, creed, and color who trace their ancestry to every region on Earth, yet are bound together by a common commitment to freedom and a common pride in being Americans.

That image of unity amidst diversity must confound the minds of the hate-filled cowards who killed our sailors. They can take innocent life, they can cause tears and anguish, but they can never heal or build harmony or bring people together. That is work only free, law-abiding people can do.

And that is why we will do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes, to find those who killed our sailors and hold them accountable, and why we will never let the enemies of freedom and peace stop America from seeking peace, fighting terrorism, and promoting freedom. For only by defending our people, our interests, and our values will we redeem the lives of our sailors and ruin the schemes of their killers.

That includes, of course, our efforts to promote peace in the Middle East. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is one of the greatest tragedies of our time and one of the very hardest problems to solve. Every step forward has been marked with pain. Each time the forces of reconciliation have reached out, the forces of destruction have lashed out. The violence we've seen there demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that the alternative to peace is unacceptable, and that no one will gain from an endless contest of inflicting and absorbing pain.

Ending the violence and getting people of the Middle East back to dialog will be hard after what has happened. But no matter how difficult that task may be, no matter how terrible the images of this week's violence, the effort must continue, with America's strong support. We must do so because we have a profound national interest in peace in the Middle East and a very special bond to the State of Israel. As in all the world's troubled places, our efforts do not guarantee success. But not to try is to guarantee failure.

So today I ask your prayers for our men and women in uniform, for the families of our fallen sailors, and for all those here and everywhere who hope and work for a world at peace.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:25 p.m. on October 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on the Job Access Initiative in Denver, Colorado
October 14, 2000

Well, come in a little closer there. Carmen, stand up here. I want you in this picture. [*Laughter*] Let me, first of all, thank Carmen Carrillo for welcoming us here today. I just had a wonderful time upstairs. I went up and talked to all the staff that were up there and met with a lot of the young people who were there who are working on trying to educate kids, give young adults the training they need, help young people avoid teen pregnancy and HIV infection. I thought they were terrific.

I just wanted to say, I wanted to come here today, in part, because of what you're doing here. And those of you who are here, trying to improve your lives represents everything I've tried to do as President. I'm very proud of you, and I love this place.

I want to thank the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater, who is, like me, from Arkansas. We've worked together for almost 20 years now. He was underage when I first enlisted his services. [*Laughter*] And it will be apparent in a moment why I asked him to come today and join us.

And I want to thank Mayor and Mrs. Webb for their leadership. And thank you, Wilma, for your service in the administration. Denver has prospered under your leadership, done well, and you've been a great partner for the Clinton-Gore administration. We've done a lot of things in Denver. We even brought the leaders of the eight big industrial nations here to a conference about 5 years ago. My friendship with you and the work that we've done with this city have meant a great deal to me, and I thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

This is the first chance I've had in a couple days to make a public statement, and I think it's appropriate, in a way, that I make a few remarks about—before I get into what I came to talk about today—about the troubles in the Middle East and the terrorist attack which resulted in the loss of many of our sailors. I'm sure you've been following it.

Some of those sailors are being brought home today, and they'll be brought home over the next several days, both the wounded and those who were killed, and we'll have a memorial service for them on Wednesday. But what I'd like to say to you—I don't know if in the local press there have been any profiles of them. But a lot of those people who were killed came out of neighborhoods like this, several Latinos, one young African-American girl only 19 years old, just completed her Navy training. Most of them were trying to do with their lives what you're trying to do with your lives, and they wanted to do it by serving their country in the United States Navy. And they were not over there on any hostile mission. They were simply patrolling and keeping the peace and stability of the region. So I hope you'll say a prayer for them and their families tonight. This is a difficult time for them.

It's also very troubling in the region. There was all the troubles you've seen between the Israelis and the Palestinians, who were so close to a peace agreement. There was a hijacking today in the Middle East. We have no idea whether it's related to any of this or not, and we may not know for a while. But I'm going to leave—I'm going to the West Coast from here, then I'm going to red-eye back to Washington and fly over there to Egypt tomorrow, in an attempt to try to help put things back together. So I hope we'll have your prayers on that, too.

But I ask today you specifically, think about those families that lost their loved ones, because most of those folks were just trying to do what you're trying to do and serve their country. They were wonderful people, very young, so their families need all the support of the all the American people.

Now, let me talk about what I think is the good news of what you're doing and what I think we should be doing to help. In 1992, when I ran for President, I went to the American people with a very simple but, I think, profoundly important vision. I said that I thought every person willing to be a responsible citizen should have an opportunity to share in the American dream and that I thought to achieve that, we had to be a stronger community; we had to understand that we were going forward together and that nobody should be left out or left behind.

Well, it turns out most Americans agreed with that, and together the country has made great strides. You all know we've had the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years. When I became President, unemployment in Colorado was 6.1 percent. It's 2.7 percent now. Unemployment among African-Americans and Hispanics is the lowest ever measured. And together we've had over 22 million new jobs, almost 600,000 right here in Colorado.

But we're also not just better off. I think we're a better nation because poverty is down, crime is down, teen pregnancy is down. Last year we even had a reduction in the number of people without health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. And homeownership, test scores, high school graduation rates, and the college-going rate, all those are up.

So to paraphrase what Al Gore used to say in 1992, when everything that should be up was down, everything that should be down was up: Now the things that should be up are up, and the things that should be down are down, and we can be grateful for that.

One of the most important things that would have been almost unthinkable 8 years ago is that the welfare rolls have been cut by more than half nationwide. Millions of parents have joined the work force. Now, how did this happen? Well, first, the strong economy helps, because more workers were needed.

Secondly, we changed the rules so that all able-bodied people who can work, have to work. But we obligated the Federal Government to enable them to succeed as parents, as well as workers, by investing more in training, more in child care and maintaining the guarantee of food and medical care for children. And it's working.

But after all that, it also became necessary to have a system. That's what you have here, in Mi Casa. It's this fabulous system. You don't just deal with one part of a person's problem. People come here, families can come here and be dealt with. And if there weren't a place like this, even with a strong economy, even with a better welfare reform law, what we've tried to do would not have been nearly as successful.

So all these innovative welfare to work partnerships between the Federal Government and States and local governments are important. And also in the private sector—we have 12,000 private companies who've joined our welfare to work partnership and committed to hire people from the welfare rolls. And they have—these 12,000 companies, themselves, some of them are as small as 40 and 50 employees; some of them have tens of thousands. But they have hired hundreds of thousands of people from the welfare rolls. Right now, I can tell you, the retention rates are better than other first hires in all those companies. And they're doing very, very well.

Denver has been a real leader here, thanks to Mayor Webb and people like Carmen. You offer education, employment, child care services in one place; train potential workers in places like Mi Casa, support employers who train new workers for themselves. So the Federal Government—where are you—[*laughter*]—I asked Carmen on the way down here, I said, "Where do you get the money to run this place?" And she said, "Well, we get some money from the Department of Labor. We get money from the welfare to work partnership."

But the point is, you've got to have some place where the people can come and get what they really need. And the places that are doing best are places that have really put things together. In Denver there's also an effort to help fathers get jobs and pay child support and stay involved with their children's lives.

So here's the point I want to make, and here's why I'm here. While the welfare rolls have dropped by more than 50 percent nationwide, which is huge, in Denver the welfare rolls have dropped 90 percent—90 percent. Now, once that happens, you've got to focus on making sure the people who get off welfare stay off and that hard-working families succeed. And that's what is happening here now.

But I came here today to talk about what more we can do to help more people get off welfare and stay off, and also to highlight the importance of places like Mi Casa and how we need it everywhere in America, because we can drive these rolls down even more if we have the kind of operations you have here in Denver. And that's where—there are some more things we need to do, too, and that's where Secretary Slater and I come in.

One of the most important things in helping Americans move from welfare to work is making sure they can get from where they live to where the job is. And this is still a huge problem

nationwide. Listen to this. Two-thirds of all the new jobs in America are being created in the suburbs, but three-quarters of the Americans who are still on public assistance live in inner cities or small rural towns. So you've got the jobs here in the suburbs, and the people in the inner cities or out here in the country somewhere. And our public transportation networks simply have not kept up with the changing patterns and the disconnect between living and working.

Now, we can help some people move where the jobs are. Under the leadership of our HUD Secretary, Andrew Cuomo, we have been able to get a bipartisan majority in Congress to go along with giving a lot of people who are eligible for public housing, housing vouchers so they can go find whatever is available, because, as all of you know, with the growth of the economy there is a real housing shortage in America, and there is a huge public housing shortage. So the housing vouchers have made a difference. I think we have an agreement with the Congress this year—I haven't signed the law yet, but I'm pretty sure we got the deal done last week to increase the number of housing vouchers next year so we can keep doing this.

But no matter how much we do that, there will still be large numbers of people who live someplace different from where the jobs are, who want to go to work, can go to work, and are capable of doing whatever it takes to be a qualified employee.

So we can't continue with a system where people have to take three or four buses to get to work or they can't get to work at all on public transport, so they've got to get a friend or a family member to give them a ride to work every day. And a lot of you are nodding your heads. You know, what do you do if the friend or family members gets sick? What do you do if their kids get sick? What do you do if your kid is sick? There are a lot of problems with this sort of ad hoc system.

And we do have a lot of people, literally, who still can't get a job because they can't get to the job. That is inconsistent with our goal of opportunity for every responsible citizen. It's inconsistent with our responsibilities as a national community to help each other go forward together. And it's inconsistent with helping people get off and stay off welfare.

So from the beginning, in our administration, the Vice President and I have worked with Congress to try to build transportation links to where the jobs are. Three years ago, we proposed something called the job access initiative, and we worked with Congress and got a lot of support for it. It basically gives grants to communities to figure out what the solution is in their community, because it's different from place to place. Last year we funded over $71 million worth of grants for 42 States, and transit authorities have used this money to add new routes, to extend the hours of existing routes, which is a big problem in some places, and also to create vanpools when there is no practical public transit option.

They have brought work to the doorsteps—already with this job access initiative, to the doorsteps of 13,500 employers, which has enabled hundreds of thousands of people to find new ways to get to work, take their kids to school, and expand their own horizons through training and education.

Last year those grants went to six Colorado communities, almost three-quarters of a million dollars to help them design and build transportation links that connect workers to jobs. Today I'm here to announce that this year, we're going to have $73 million in grants to 39 States and the District of Columbia. There will be three in Colorado, and one I hope will particularly benefit those of you who are here at Mi Casa: $700,000 to extend bus routes in Denver to help people travel to jobs at suburban business parks in the Denver tech center.

Now, upstairs, one of the women asked me upstairs—she said, "You need to do more to get women training and access to nontraditional jobs, jobs that women don't normally hold." And we talked about some of the things that we've been doing with the unions to train more women to do construction-related jobs—like you, right? [*Laughter*] Is that how you hurt your arm?

And we talked about the work we're trying to do in Silicon Valley and other places to try to train more women to go to work in high-tech industries where there is a huge gender gap in employment participation. And we talked about really nontraditional things like the massive shortage we've got in America for licensed truck drivers now—a huge, huge shortage all over America. Now, it's tough if you've got young kids, because you've got to be gone for big chunks of time, so it's not a practical alternative to some. But for some people, it is an

alternative. They've got family circumstances, or others they can do.

Our focus here today is to try to do what we can do to help communities like Denver succeed even more and also to try to get other communities to develop the models that you have that has worked so well. You simply can't go to work if you can't get to work; and now more and more people will be able to find work, get there, and either move off of welfare or stay off welfare.

Now, let me also say that we're entering the final weeks of the congressional session. We are already well past the end of the budget year, which ended on September 30th. And the Congress all wants to come home and campaign, but they have to finish their business first.

And a lot of the business I think they ought to finish relates to the needs of the people who have come through the doors at Mi Casa. Congress should raise the minimum wage, again. I have asked them to raise it by a dollar an hour over the next 2 years. That would have helped 10 million hardworking American families. I've also asked them to provide more tax relief for working people: to increase the child care tax credit and make it refundable; to help give families a long-term care tax credit, because a lot of people are caring for elderly or disabled family members, and they can't afford to go to nursing homes, or they don't want them to, but they need some help at home; to give a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition; and to help people even with very modest incomes save for their own retirement.

So there are very important things that can be done. I think the earned-income tax credit, for which most of you with children are eligible, which has lifted over 2 million people out of poverty just in the last few years alone, should be expanded again, particularly for people with three or more kids. The way the earned-income tax credit works, you max out if you have a certain number of children. But there are a lot of people that have four kids or five kids, that are trying to work, and I believe they should be able to get more relief. So that's all very important, and I hope that will pass.

Something else that I think would be really helpful is that our budget has proposals to promote responsible fatherhood and to increase child support paid directly to families. Now, if the States collect your child support, they can withhold a portion of it because of the cost of collecting it. But if the child support check is meager, you may not wind up much ahead, even if the father is paying the child support. So we propose to change that. I think there is very broad support for this, and I hope and believe it will pass before the Congress goes home.

We also have proposals that would help families save and expand access to child care and housing and health care. So I hope very much that this will pass.

And finally, let me say for the people who live where the jobs aren't, there is a very important bipartisan initiative that I've worked on with the Speaker of the House, called the new markets initiative, which would give American investors the same tax incentives to invest in the poor areas in America we now give them to invest in poor areas in Latin America, Africa, Asia, or some place else.

I think that a lot more can be done, but I hope and believe that this transportation assistance will really help.

So let me end where I began. We are moving close to a country where there really is opportunity for every responsible citizen. But we're not there yet. We are a stronger American community than we were 8 years ago, but there is still friction and sources of division within our American community. Now, we've got the most expansive, strong economy we've ever had, and I think we ought to set our sights on big goals.

Our goals should be prosperity for every family in every community still left behind. Our goals should be no child and no working family in poverty. And what I want to say to you is that we can achieve these goals and still keep the overall economy strong for the rest of America. We can pay the debt off in 12 years. That will keep interest rates down; it will keep businesses expanding. It will leave funds for people to make pay raises.

We can do this, but we have to decide to do it. And I just hope that not only in Colorado but all over America, people will see and hear about Mi Casa because of my trip here. And I hope every place where people feel good because they've reduced the welfare rolls 40 or 50 percent will understand that they can do much better when they see that Denver, thanks to people like you, got it down 90 percent. The transportation will help, but people have to make the initiative at the local level, too.

So thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the conference room at Mi Casa Resource Center for Women. In his remarks, he referred to Carmen Carrillo, executive director, Mi Casa Resource Center for Women; and Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver and his wife, Wilma.

Remarks to the Colorado Coordinated and State Senate Democratic Fund in Denver

October 14, 2000

The President. Thank you very much, Mayor. Thank you for your friendship and your leadership. We just came back from a marvelous Denver institution called Mi Casa, where children are educated, after-school programs are held, young adolescents are taught to stay off drugs and not get pregnant and not become HIV infected, and young adults are taught how to get off welfare and how to be trained, in the case of women, for nontraditional jobs.

[*A series of beeps interrupted the President's remarks.*]

The President. Are the Republicans controlling the sound system? [*Laughter*]

So I want to thank the mayor. What is it?

[*The beeps continued.*]

The President. That might work. We may be getting feedback. That's better.

I want to thank General Salazar, Senator Perlmutter, Chairman Knaus. And I want to thank Congressman Udall for his friendship, and Diana—let me just make—I told Diana DeGette before I came out here that I went to a fundraiser for the Udall caucus the other day, because there is a Udall from New Mexico and a Udall from Colorado. So they just had a joint fundraiser—saved me the trouble of having to go to two events, and I really appreciated that. [*Laughter*] And then Diana proceeded to tell me that they were—the Udalls and she were three of the four members, with Ed Pastor, of the Coyote Caucus, that is, the Democrats of the Inter-Mountain West, the scarce group that will be swollen after this election on November 7th.

[*At this point, a humming sound came over the public address system.*]

The President. Something's shorting out. Is that it? Just unplug it. If that doesn't work, God is sending us a message. [*Laughter*] See? There must be something over there that's aggravating it. Now is it off? Can you here me now?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. No problem. I also want to thank Kent Toltz for running for Congress and ask you to help him get elected. I want to thank Walter and Christie Isenberg, Merle Chambers and Hugh Grant, Tommy and Pat Short, and anybody else that helped put this together today.

And I'd like to say just one personal word about Colorado. You know, I have been coming here for more than 20 years now. We had the Governors' conference here in 1980, the year of the Reagan landslide, shortly before I became the youngest ex-Governor in American history. And I was still invited to come to Colorado to give a speech in 1981. It's just something I've never forgotten.

Some of my closest personal friends that I've made in my entire life live here. And this State has been very good to me. Al Gore and I did win Colorado in 1992, and as I told Diana—she's talking about my numbers—even though we lost the State by 20,000 votes in '96, we actually ran 60,000 votes better against the registration, because the registration moved 100,000 to the Republicans between '92 and '96. Now you can bring it back, and I want to talk to you about that today.

I also want to thank Diana for having the moment of silence for our sailors who were lost on the U.S.S. *Cole.* Let me just say very briefly, I talked to the captain of the ship and to everybody up the chain of command, and some of them are coming home today, and we'll have a memorial service on Wednesday for them. They were just good American citizens, most of them, if you saw in your local press today, very young, most of them trying to find their

way in life by serving their country. And we should all be very, very grateful to them.

And I'm leaving tomorrow afternoon to go to the Middle East, and we're going to try to find a way to get the parties to agree to end the violence and get back to the hard business of making peace.

I wanted to come here today to do this for several reasons. First, I wanted a chance to thank the people of Colorado before the election for the friendship and support and partnerships I've enjoyed here during the 8 years that Al Gore and I have served here in Washington.

Secondly, I want to help the State Senate because every U.S. Senate and House seat is important, and the legislatures will do the redistricting after the census this year, and because no matter what is done in Washington—as someone who was a Governor for 12 years, I know that if you really want a good education policy, if you really want a good health care policy, if you want a good environmental policy, you've also got to have a good State legislature and a good Governor.

Now, I want to talk to you. Diana has asked you to do something that I think is a good thing to do, but what I want to ask you is, when you go try to gather up these votes, what are you going to say to people?

Believe me—and I'm not running for anything, and most days I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] But I have more than a passing interest in this Presidential race and a certain Senate race in New York. [*Laughter*] But more than anything else, I care about what happens to my country. And I want to tell you that if the people understand what the differences are between the candidates for President and the Congress, what the differences are between the parties, and what the consequences to them are, we will win. Al Gore will be handily elected President.

All you got to do is to look at these debates to see that, when there is a studied effort, when every hard question comes along, by our opponents to muddy the issue. Blur, blur, blur—"If I can just get by November 7th, and nobody figures out"—[*laughter*]—"you know, I can slide in there." Because they know they've got their hard rightwing core, and they've all agreed to be quiet until after the election, so they can have the courts and the crime policy and lots of other things. So there's this blur, blur, blur. I'll give you a few examples here in a minute.

The point I want to make to you is, every one of you has lots of friends who will never come to an event like this—never. But they will vote. They'll show up on election day and vote because they're good, patriotic citizens, and they'll vote. They need to know—it is the right thing to do—what the differences are and the consequences. I've been saying all along, you know, the American people ought to be happy about this election, because you couldn't have a clearer choice, even though only one side wants you to know what it is. [*Laughter*]

We've got the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years. We've got—everything is going right with the economy, but we also have the welfare rolls cut in half, the crime rate at a 27-year low, teen pregnancy rates down. We now have, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time since 1987. Things are going in the right direction. So we have a chance to basically say, "What do we want the future to be for our kids, and what are the main issues?"

Now, I want to tell you what I think they are and what all the static in the background means to me, because you've got to be able to say to people in a few minutes, if you go talk to them as your Representative asked you to do, you've got to be able to tell them why. How does it affect them? First of all, you need to tell people we're going to change regardless, because America's changing. This is not a question about change. It's a question of what kind of change do you want: Do you want to build on the prosperity and keep it going, or do you want to go back to a failed economic policy?

Now, it's just as clear as day. In spite of the fact that I have not read this anywhere in any of these accounts of the debates, in the debates you have our candidate, the Vice President. He says, "Look, I'll give you a tax cut. It's not near as big as theirs. But it will help people with paying for their kids' college education, with long-term care, with child care, with retirement savings. And it's not going to be so big we won't have money left over for education, health care, the environment and getting this country out of debt over the next 12 years—debt-free for the first time since 1835." Now, that's what he said.

And you hear the other fellow. He said, "I'm going to give you a tax cut that's way bigger."

He says 1.3, but when you add the extra interest cost of not paying down the debt, it's at least 1.6 and probably higher.

Then he acknowledged in the first debate something I've not heard anybody say. But he did say—I wanted to give him a gold star because it was one of those rare moments where there was clarity. [*Laughter*] He said—he did say this, and you've got to give him credit. He said, "We're going to partially privatize Social Security. Yes, it will cost about a trillion dollars over and above the debt."

You know why that is, don't you? If we let all the young people take 2 percent of their payroll out to invest in the stock market, and you let everybody 55 or over—and that's me starting next year—have their guaranteed Social Security—and Social Security is going broke in 37 years—then, when all you young people take your money out, it will start going broke sooner, right? So you've got to fill it up again. It costs a trillion dollars over 10 years.

So when you add up the tax cut, the trillion dollars to privatize Social Security, and all their spending promises, you're back in deficit spending again. You will not pay off the debt.

Now, what does that mean? It means two things you need to know. First of all, it means that interest rates will be higher. Therefore, economic growth will be slower, and the stock market will be lower. So your investments won't be as good. The economy won't grow as much. Now, you've got a choice here, because they have said this. I don't read it anywhere. People say, well, maybe their numbers don't add up, or blah, blah, blah. Let me tell you something. There's a big difference.

Suppose Al Gore turns out to be wrong because there's a little bit of a recession, and we don't have enough money to keep all the spending commitments. We don't have to spend the money. But once you cut the taxes and once you privatize Social Security, you're already in deficit, and the money is gone, kaput, forever, gone. You're not going to see a tax increase in the middle of a recession.

So there's a big difference. You just tell people. If you want to keep the prosperity going and you like what's happening, you've got to build on this economic strategy. But if you liked it the way it was before we got here, you've got a choice. You can have it. But it's not like we haven't had a test run. [*Laughter*]

I must say, one of the things I really admire about our Republican friends is that the evidence never fazes them. [*Laughter*] It doesn't matter how many times you prove they are wrong. They know what they believe, and they know where the money is, and they go for it. But look, this is a big deal here. I just went out to this Mi Casa place. I saw all these young women. You know, they're dying to go to work. They want to be electricians and engineers. One of them is a heavy equipment mover; another one's a truck driver. One of them's going to work in computer business, you know. There have got to be jobs for these people.

It is clear as day. Now, let me tell you something else, related to this. If I have to listen one more time to them say, "Why, the Democrats believe Government knows best, and we believe you know best. That's why we're going to have smaller Government." Let me tell you something. Number one, under Al Gore's leadership, we have reduced the size of the Federal Government by 300,000. It's the smallest it's been since 1960 when Dwight Eisenhower was President of the United States.

Number two, total Government spending as a percentage of your national income is the smallest it's been since 1966. [*Applause*] Wait a minute; it gets better.

Number three, the Government will be smaller as a percentage of your income if you vote for Gore than if you vote for his opponent. Why? Because we do—I plead guilty—the Democrats will spend more money on education, and they'll spend more money to let all the seniors buy into Medicare who need drugs. So how can we spend more money on those things? We even propose to spend more money on defense, and they keep talking about how good they are on defense. And nobody said, "Show me the money" yet to them. [*Laughter*]

If that's true, how could the Government be smaller under Gore? Why? What's the third-biggest item in the Federal budget? Interest on the debt: over 12 cents of every dollar. When I became President, it was headed to 15. Over 12 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes goes to interest on the debt. So if you vote for Gore, you'll pay the debt down; you won't be spending that money on interest. You'll be able to spend more on education and health care, and still

the Government will be a smaller size as a percentage of the economy than it will be under the alternative.

Now, you need to tell people this. Because you can't get this out of the debates in the sort of, you know, the sort of slide-and-jive approach. I'm telling you, you know, it would break my heart to see us turn away from a proven economic strategy to a short-term political gain that would be bad for the United States of America. You need to tell people this.

Now, let's get to health care. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. I mean a real one, that covers everybody, and if you get hurt, you can sue. Theirs is weaker, doesn't want to cover everybody, doesn't want you to sue. Sort of a bill of suggestion is what they're for. [*Laughter*]

Now, why is that? Because the HMO's don't want it, and they're going to do what the HMO's want to do, and Al Gore will do what's best for the American people. Now, I'm not demonizing the HMO's. I actually—I feel like I can say this, because I've been a supporter of managed care. But you know, when you forget—when you organize anything and you forget why you got it organized—the purpose of managed care was to improve the quality of health care by eliminating waste. It wasn't to increase the bottom line by eliminating health care. Right? It wasn't. It was never supposed to let completely untrained people substitute their judgment for that of doctors—never.

Now, you've got a choice. If you want a real bill, you've got to vote for Gore. But if you just think, "Oh, the other fellow sounds nice," you can vote for him, but you won't get a real Patients' Bill of Rights. You need to tell people this.

The HMO says it will cost too much money. Even the Republican Congressional Budget Office says, at the most, it will cost just under $2 a month per premium. I would pay $2 a month to see that you, one of you, God forbid, walks out of this place today, after this event, and you get hit by a car, you can go to the nearest emergency room, not one where you've got to pass three hospitals to get to one covered by your plan. I would do that. I think most of you would do that. It is the right thing to do for America.

You can vote for whoever you want to. But if you want a Patients' Bill of Rights, you've got to vote for Gore.

If you want a prescription drug plan under Medicare that every senior who needs it can buy into, you have to vote for Gore. Why? Well, first of all, if we were starting Medicare again today, we would never think of establishing a program for senior citizens that didn't cover medicine, would we? But in '65, when Medicare was started, it was about doctors and hospitals. That's what health care was. Now it's about keeping people out of the hospital. And if you live to be 65, your life expectancy is 82. So it's about living longer and living better while you're alive, and that's with medicine.

Now, why in the world would the Republican nominee be against letting every senior who needs it have access to prescription drugs? Because the drug companies aren't for it, that's why. Now, I'm not demonizing the drug companies. I'm going to tell you, I'm glad we got them in America, and I'm glad they do what they do. But their solution to their problem is the wrong solution. Nobody ever talks about this. I'm going to tell you what this whole prescription drug thing is about, because it's a big issue.

Why would they not want to sell more drugs? Did you ever meet anybody in business that didn't want more customers? Did you ever meet a politician who didn't want more votes? [*Laughter*] What is this? These people are in the business of selling medicine, and they don't want to sell more medicine. Why is that? Does it make any sense to you?

Audience members. No!

The President. Here's what the real deal is. First of all, look what they say. The Republicans say Al Gore wants to force you into a Government HMO. Have you seen that dark ad? [*Laughter*] I keep waiting for the opening of the "Inner Sanctum" and the creaky door. [*Laughter*] It's a big load of bull. Medicare is not an HMO. Medicare is fee-for-service medicine. You choose your doctor. If you want to go in an HMO, you have the option to do it. It's all smokescreen, because they can't 'fess up and tell you why they're really against it. They're against it because the drug companies won't let them be for it. And they're tied to them.

Now, I like the pharmaceutical companies in America. They do great work. They provide wonderful jobs to tens of thousands of people, but they're wrong about it. What is their real problem? Their real problem is, it costs a bunch of money to develop these drugs, and they

spend a bunch of money to advertise them. And they sell the drugs all over the world, but they only get to recover their advertising and their development costs from Americans. Everybody else has price controls on drugs, in Europe, in Canada, everywhere else. Now, once they get us to pay for the development and advertising costs, then it just costs a teeny bit of money to make one more pill, so they can sell the pills and make a killing in Europe and Canada, because they've already gotten us to pay the upfront cost.

Now, what they're afraid of—they know this is not a price fixing scheme. They know this is not a Government bureaucracy. That's all a bunch of hooey. Medicare has far lower administrative costs than any HMO in the world, far lower. What they're afraid of is, if all the seniors or a lot of the seniors who needs the coverage buy it—it's totally voluntary under Medicare—then the Medicare group will have enough buying power to bargain the prices down, and Americans might get to buy drugs made in America almost as cheap as they could buy them in Canada.

Now, they do have a real problem, because they're afraid if they get their profits cut too much, they won't have enough money left to develop the drugs and to advertise what they develop. But surely the answer to their problem is not to deny senior citizens the medicine they need. What kind of country is this? That's not the way we solve problems.

They're a big, rich, powerful lobby. I mean, look, they've held up the Medicare drug program for a year. They've got a whole political party, the other party, fronting their plan. And they wrote the plan. First they weren't for anything, and then the Republicans said, "If you're not for anything, we're all going to get beat. So give us something we can be for, and then we'll confuse the voters." I'm telling you, that's what's going on.

But they're big; they're strong; they got plenty of money; they can lobby Congress. Let's solve the problems of senior citizens and lengthen their lives and improve the quality of their lives. Then we'll solve the problems of the drug companies. You don't have to demonize the drug companies, but they are dead wrong, and they've got a lock on the Republican Party. If you want Medicare prescription drugs for every senior that needs it, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

Now, just let me say sort of as an aside, you know how they—every one of these debates, the Republican nominee says, "They had 8 years, and they didn't do anything on health care," right? Well, we could have done more, but they killed half of what we tried to do. Now they want to be rewarded for their own wrongdoing. Like I said, you've got to give it to them though. They have no shame, and evidence doesn't bother them. I mean, I admire—you've got to admire that. They're sort of brassy, you know. [*Laughter*]

Look, here are the facts. When Al Gore and I took office, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year—broke. It now is alive to 2026. I'm not sure about this, but I think it's the longest life it's had since it was created in 1965, I think. I'm not positive, but I think—certainly just about the best shape it's ever been in.

Plus which, we're doing preventive screenings for breast cancer, for prostate cancer. We dramatically improved care for diabetes. The package of care we put together for diabetes, the American Diabetes Association said was the most significant step forward since the development of insulin. Plus which, we've now got the number—contrary to the factual assertion made in the debate, the number of uninsured people is going down in America because of the Children's Health Insurance Program. And they all say we never do anything in a bipartisan fashion. The Democrats got the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, which passed by a bipartisan majority in both Houses.

So, it's interesting, isn't it, what you're told about the factual misstatements made in the debate and what you're not told. I don't know why that's not an important misstatement. But anyway, that's—you just need to know that. You need to go out and tell people, "Look, if you want a Patients' Bill of Rights and you want a prescription drug program that helps every senior that needs it, you've got to vote for Gore and Lieberman. Now, if it's not all that important to you, you can vote for the other guy, but you won't get it, and don't complain when you don't." There are consequences here.

Now, let me just give you another example. Take education. They are both for accountability, and I think they both care about education. But there's a big difference here. Our program is what I would call accountability-plus. Their program is accountability, block grants,

and vouchers; test the kids every year; let the Federal money slide up and down based on who's doing well and who's not.

Well, any teacher here will tell you—we've got some teachers—that all these State tests are different. If every State gets to take their own tests, you can dumb down your test, so your kids may not know as much as another State's kids, and you can take Federal money away from them because you're not giving them the right kind of test. There are problems with that. But let's just pause it. Give them credit. The Republicans aren't wrong about everything. They are both for—so you've got both candidates for accountability. The difference is, we believe, if you're going to hold people accountable, you've got to help them succeed.

So, we're for 100,000 teachers to lower classes; they're not. We're for helping States modernize their schools and build new schools and deal with the school construction and repair crisis in our schools, and they're not. We're for after-school, summer school, and preschool programs for every child who needs it, and they're not. They say that's micromanaging the schools. What they never tell you is that under this administration and the leadership of Dick Riley as Secretary of Education, we have cut regulations on States and school districts by two-thirds below what they were in the previous Republican administration.

All we want to do—look, we only have 7 percent of the total education dollars. We want to spend what the educators and the research says will be the most effective use of the dollar. This is a huge deal. It will have real consequences to the over 50 million children in our schools. And you've got to tell people this. They have to know.

On the crime issue, you know, you're debating all that in Colorado. But they were pretty—they smoked that one out pretty good in the last debate. But basically—it wasn't all smoked out—we supported 100,000 police on the street, and then we're putting another 50,000 on the street now to prevent crime as well as to catch criminals. And we supported commonsense measures to take guns out of the hands of children and criminals, the Brady law, the assault weapons ban, and now we're trying to close the gun show loophole at the national level. And you know who's against it, and you know they said they would have an office in the White House if the other guy won.

Now, here's the deal. I talk to people. I'm from Arkansas where half the people have a hunting license. My position is not popular with everybody there. A lot of people—but I'll tell you this: Nobody has missed not a day, not an hour, not 5 minutes in the deer woods because of what Al Gore and I've tried to do these last 8 years. Nobody has missed any hunting. No law-abiding sportsman has missed one date at one contest because of what we did. But 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers didn't get handguns because we had the Brady bill and the waiting period.

Now, here's the deal. They are now finally for an insta-check at the gun shows. Here's the problem with that. You can insta-check people, about 70-some percent of the people, within a few minutes. Within 24 hours, you can check almost 90 percent of the people. But 50 percent of the people that get rejected are in that last 10 percent, which is why what you're doing out here is good and noble. But you need to talk to people about this, because it's a clear choice here.

Here again, this is a place where they have not been fuzzy. No, I want to give them credit, because if the people choose them, then that's freedom. It's democracy, and none of us can have any complaint. The Republican nominee has said, "If you vote for me, I will repeal the Federal program creating 100,000 police and funding it. The Federal Government's got no business doing that." He really means 150,000. "And I'm not for the waiting period." Now, look, gun violence is down by 35 percent. We have the lowest crime rate in 27 years. We tried it their way. We tried it our way. And you've just got to tell people, they just have to choose, and they can decide what they want.

There are differences over the minimum wage. There are differences over the hate crimes. Now that was a little muddy in the last debate. You see that?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Look, the reason they're not for a hate crimes bill and the reason the Texas hate crimes bill passed is because we believe that a hate crime—when you kill or maim or hurt a gay person because they're gay, they ought to be covered by hate crimes legislation; and they don't. That's it. That's what it's about.

And you've just got to decide. And you may have friends you talk to, say, "Well, I don't want to do that." But at least people ought

to know that. You need to know what the real deal is when people start calling these bills. "I'm for the Hatch bill or this bill or the other bill," you know. You need to know what the real deal is. That's what killed that bill in Texas. That's why James Byrd's family couldn't get help in Texas to pass the hate crimes bill.

Now, there are lots of other issues I could give you, but you get the idea here. And you've got to tell people this. If you want to keep changing in a way that keeps the prosperity going, you've got to pay the debt down and invest in education and health care, and you've got to do it in a fiscally responsible way. If you're prepared to go back and blow a hole in the deficit and get a huge tax cut and privatize Social Security and risk it and think maybe it will work better this time than it did the last time, you can do that. But you've got to understand, there are differences.

If you don't care whether you ever get the hate crimes legislation or a minimum wage increase, if you don't care what happens to a woman's right to choose, when two or more appointments are made to the Supreme Court, if you don't care about the Patients' Bill of Rights and all that, if you don't care about the school construction initiative or the teachers or the preschool and after-school programs, then maybe there aren't any consequences to your vote. If you don't care, you just vote for the one you like. And maybe we'll win; maybe they'll win. The race is as tight as a tick.

But if people understand what the choices are and what the impact is on them, we will win handily. So I implore you: Don't waste a day. Talk to somebody every day. You've got to win the State Senate; you've got to win this House seat here. We've got to carry Colorado and America to keep the progress going.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Upper Ballroom at the Oxford Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver; State Attorney General Ken Salazar; State Senator Ed Perlmutter; Timothy D. Knaus, chairman, Colorado Democratic Party; Kent Toltz, candidate for Colorado's Sixth Congressional District; Representative Mark Udall; event cohosts Walter and Christie Isenberg, Merle Chambers, Hugh Grant, and Tommy and Pat Short; Comdr. Kirk S. Lippold, Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Cole*; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Reception for Former Representative Maria Cantwell in Seattle, Washington

October 14, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I want to thank you for coming in to be with me, and to be with Maria. I want to thank you for helping her. And I want to ask you to do everything you possibly can to get every person you can possibly drag to the polls on November 7th. If our people vote and they understand the issues, we'll win. It's not very complicated.

I wanted to be here for several reasons. First of all, I'm profoundly grateful to the State of Washington. You've been very good to me and Al Gore. You gave me your electoral votes twice. And I hope you think you made a good decision, because the State's in better shape than it was 8 years ago.

But the second reason I wanted to come here is because I feel a special debt of gratitude and a special bond to Maria Cantwell. She was one of the people that was willing to put her whole political career on the line to turn this country around. And her opponent's now out there running ads against her for voting to save the American economy and mischaracterizing, again, our budget in 1993. Let me just remind you, when I took office, we had a $290 billion deficit. It was supposed to be $455 billion this year. Instead, we have a $230 billion surplus. Why? Because by one vote, Maria Cantwell's vote, we turned America around. She ought to go to the United States Senate.

And let me just—I remember when they said, you know, my economic plan would be a disaster for America; all the Republicans did. They all voted against it. It was terrible. It was going

to have a recession. You know, the world would come to an end. Time has not been kind to their predictions.

And so you've got a clear choice here. You've got a clear choice in the Senate race; you've got a clear choice in the President's race; you have a clear choice in all these congressional races. Now, we made the painful decisions before. All we have to do now is be prudent and visionary. Are we going to keep investing in education and health care and pay down this debt and give the people a tax cut we can afford, targeted to middle-class people and lower income working people who need it? Or are we going to go back and do what they did before, have a huge tax cut?

And I can tell you—I will say this: In spite of how murky the Republicans have tried to be in the way they've messed up these issues, in the first Presidential debate—something that I kept waiting to see in blaring headlines in the press I haven't seen yet—the Republican nominee actually admitted that it was going to cost $1 trillion to partially privatize Social Security. So if you spend $1.5 trillion on the tax cut and $1 trillion partially privatizing Social Security and several hundred billion dollars on their spending promises, we're right back in deficit.

Our program is, spend more than they will on education, invest more than they will in health care, but keep paying down this debt to keep interest rates down. That keeps the economy going, plus which, it's a huge tax cut. With lower interest rates, there's lower home mortgage rates, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, as well as lower business loans. Our deal works better.

Now, you need to go out—you need to go out and tell people this. Ask them to remember what it was like 8 years ago, and if they really want to ratify that decision or they want to reward somebody who had the courage to take America in a different direction. And I'm telling you, it was all on her shoulders. We carried that thing by one vote. And now he wants you to vote against her for getting Washington out of the dumps and bringing America back, so they can get in power and do to us what they did before? That's the argument they're making. You need to go tell people that, and don't fool around with it. It's clear.

So the first big deal is the economy. The second thing is education. We believe we ought to help build more schools and repairs schools. We believe we ought to put another 100,000 teachers in these schools, so the kids can have smaller classes. And they're not for that. We believe we ought to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights and have a Medicare drug benefit that benefits all seniors, and they're not for that, because their interest groups won't let them be.

And there's a clear choice here. Whether it's the minimum wage, the hate crimes bill, the employment nondiscrimination bill, the extraordinary efforts I'm proud to say our administration has made to try to support the Native American communities—in every single instance, their leadership has been in one place; we've been somewhere else.

So you've just got to decide here. And you need to talk to people who tell you, "Well, it may not make a difference." It does make a difference. It makes a huge difference. Somebody tells you one Senate seat doesn't make a difference, you tell them America would still be in the budget hole and still be in the economic hole if it hadn't been for every single House seat and every single Senate seat where we had the people voting for you. And Maria Cantwell was one of them, and she would be a brilliant United States Senator.

And so I'm just telling you, I have done everything I could do to turn our country around, to pull our people together, to move our Nation forward. But now we have to decide, what are we going to do with the prosperity? You know, people took a chance on me in 1992. I don't know how many people in Washington State walked into the polling place and said, "I wonder if I ought to vote for that guy." [*Laughter*] "You know, he's pretty young, and the President," the then-President, "said he's just the Governor of a small southern State." I was so naive, I thought that was a compliment. [*Laughter*] And I still do. But you know, it wasn't that big a chance, because, I mean, the country was in a ditch. We had to do something different, right?

So now we're in good shape, but we have to figure out, how are we going to include the people who still aren't part of this prosperity? How are we going to give all of our kids an excellent education? How are we going to provide access to health care for people who don't have it? What are we going to do with the

aging of America, when there's only two people working for every one person on Social Security? We have big challenges here. And we get to decide.

But make no mistake about it. The differences are just as stark and just as clear as they were 8 years ago. And the stakes, if anything, are higher. Maybe once every 50 years a country gets to do what we can do now, where you don't have an external threat, an internal crisis, things are going in the right direction, and you get to paint the future of your dreams for your children and your grandchildren. Once in a blue moon this happens.

And you need visionary people who understand how to be fair to everybody, how to make the economy work, but make it work for everybody. And you know, there aren't many people with the unique background and achievements that Maria has presenting themselves for public office. And there aren't many people who can stand here and tell you—and I'm telling you—that they were the deciding vote that turned this country around.

And if you like where Washington is today better than you liked it 8 years ago, there is no choice. You've got to make sure she wins this election on November 7th.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:33 p.m. in the Fifth Avenue Room at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Maria Cantwell was a candidate for the U.S. Senate in Washington.

Statement on Signing the Third Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001

October 14, 2000

Two weeks ago the fiscal 2000 budget year ended. Since then, I have had to sign two short-term continuing resolutions to keep the Government open. Yet Congress has yet to complete and send me 8 of 13 spending bills. Last night I signed another one-week extension. Let me serve notice now: If Congress fails to meet this deadline, any further extensions must be at most for a very few days. Congress needs to finish its work and send me a budget. It should be a budget that is fiscally responsible, that reflects the values of the American people, and that invests in the future, especially in the education of our children.

I sent such a budget to Congress in February. Among other things, my budget calls for tax credits to help communities build or modernize 6,000 schools, and grants and loans for emergency repairs in 5,000 schools a year for 5 years. The need is undeniable. The average American school building is now more than 40 years old. At least 60 percent of the schools in every State are in need of repair, and some schools actually pose health risks to students. I received a letter yesterday from some of the Nation's top health organizations, including the American Lung Association and the National Association of School Nurses. They point out that in many of our older school buildings, the air is polluted with lead, radon gas, and other substances harmful to our children's health.

These groups endorse my proposal to rebuild and repair our schools. A bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives is ready right now to pass school construction tax credits. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership continues to stand in the way and refuses to bring it to a vote. It's time for Congress to act. It's unfair to ask America's children to lift themselves up in school buildings that are falling down.

The majority party's education budget also fails to make other vital investments in education. It does not ensure the hiring of another 20,000 teachers to reduce class sizes. It denies after-school to over 1.6 million children who would get it under my balanced budget proposal. It shortchanges efforts to improve teacher quality. And it invests nothing to help States turn around failing schools or shut them down and reopen them under new management.

The continuing resolution I signed last night gives Congress 7 more days to act. That is enough time to pass a responsible budget that modernizes our schools, strengthens accountability, lowers class sizes, expands after-school, mentoring, and college opportunities for young

people, and helps put a qualified teacher in every classroom. It should also be a budget that puts more police on the street, that enforces civil rights, ensures equal pay, expands health care, and creates opportunities for all Americans to share in our strong economy through our new markets initiative.

At this time of unprecedented prosperity, there is no reason we can't put partisanship aside and make the investments we know will move our Nation forward, especially in the education of our children. By building stronger schools, we'll build a stronger America in the future.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 111, approved October 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–306.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces in Response to the Attack on the U.S.S. *Cole*

October 14, 2000

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

At approximately 5:15 a.m. eastern daylight time, October 12, 2000, a small boat exploded alongside the USS COLE (DDG 67) while the USS COLE was mooring to a harbor fueling island during a refueling stop in the port of Aden, Yemen. A number of American sailors were killed or wounded, and the USS COLE suffered extensive damage. Department of Defense assets were immediately identified to provide medical, security, and disaster responses.

Later in the day on October 12, 2000, approximately 45 military personnel from U.S. Naval Forces Central Command deployed to Aden to provide medical, security, and disaster response assistance. In addition, a team of approximately 50 U.S. military security personnel arrived in Aden in the early morning hours of October 13, 2000. It is also anticipated that additional similar security elements may be deployed to the area. The security personnel will enhance the ability of the United States to ensure the security of the USS COLE and the personnel responding to the incident. Although the security personnel are equipped for combat, their presence is solely for the purpose of assisting in on-site security. Finally, two U.S. Navy surface combatant vessels are operating in or near Yemeni territorial waters to provide communications and other support, as required. United States forces will redeploy as soon as the additional security support is determined to be unnecessary.

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 assist in ensuring security of U.S. military forces and other personnel overseas.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at a Reception for Governor Gary Locke in Seattle

October 14, 2000

Thank you so much. I am really glad Gary decided to have the event in this Washington.

I want to say, first of all, thanks to your wonderful attorney general. Christine, you have been a great attorney general. You have been

a leader for the whole Nation, and I could have listened to you give that cheerleading speech all night long. I think you have a limitless future, and I wish you well. And I thank you for being here and for all you've done.

I want to thank Gary and Mona Locke for being such good friends to Hillary and me and for the example they set by their leadership. I also think they've set a good family values example by having those two beautiful children since they've been in politics. I think that's a very good thing.

Mayor Schell, it's great to be back in Seattle, and I want to thank your State party chair, Paul Berendt. And I want to introduce one person I think has not been introduced tonight, maybe. And maybe before I got here, he was. But our national Democratic chair, Ed Rendell, from Philadelphia, is here. Thank you, Ed.

And I believe one of our candidates for Congress, Rick Larson, is here. If he is, let's give him a big hand. [*Applause*] And I want to say a special word of appreciation and gratitude, and I want to say a little more about her later, but I want to say a special word of appreciation to Maria Cantwell. I am grateful that she has run for the Senate, and I hope you will make sure she wins.

Now, as perhaps most of you know, after I finish my rounds in Washington tonight, I'm going to red-eye back to the other Washington and give my crew a little rest. I had intended to spend the night here and go to Portland in the morning and on down to California, but I am going to fly to the Middle East tomorrow.

Last week was an amazing week for our crowd. It was heartbreaking when we lost those sailors on the U.S.S. *Cole*. I talked to the captain of the ship and others in the chain of command and thank them on behalf of the American people and say that our prayers are with the families. And Wednesday we will have a memorial service for them on the East Coast. Those who were killed and those who are wounded are being brought home, starting today.

And we've had these terrible turn of events in the Middle East which has been heartbreaking for me. I was at the airport earlier, and a man came up to me and asked me to sign the remarks I made on September 19, 1993, when Mr. Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin signed the peace accord, committing themselves to a process that would lead to peace. I have seen so much progress in the last 7½ years, so it's been a very difficult and painful experience.

But I also want to say, last week when the number two leader in North Korea came to see me, after the President of South Korea had gone to North Korea and justifiably won the Nobel Peace Prize for doing so and for a lifetime of courageous standing up for democracy and freedom, I was thinking that when I took the oath of office in January of 1993 and I got all my security briefings starting from the time I was elected, everybody said the most dangerous place in the whole world is North Korea. "You've got to really worry about this. You know, they've got a nuclear program. It's going to be terrible. You've got to do something about it."

So first we got the nuclear program shut down, and then we began to deal with them and insist that they had to deal with the South. And then our former Defense Secretary, Bill Perry, went to see them and said, "Look, you know, you're still making all these missiles. Our relationship has got to get better or worse. It can't just stay the same." And Kim Dae-jung got elected President, and he said, "It's time we bury the hatchet and try to find ways to live in peace." And the rest is history. So what I thought would be the most dangerous problem for our children and grandchildren 8 years ago may not be now, if, God willing, we can keep it going.

And then the people of Serbia elected a new President. And I knew if the United States had not stood against ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo and kept those economic sanctions on, that the moment would not have arrived for the people to do right. And so I was very grateful last week, too. And it's a sober reminder that we have to keep plugging away at the things we believe in.

And I wanted to come out here today because I've missed 3 or 4 days of work already traveling the country in this season. And I wanted to come here, if for no other reason, to just have one more chance to say thank you to the people of Washington for being so very good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years, for giving us your electoral votes twice, and I hope you're about to make it three in a row.

And I also wanted to say why it is so important that you spend every minute you can in your very busy lives talking to other people

about this election between now and election day, because every one of you has a lot of friends who have never been to an event like this. Isn't that right? You have a lot of friends. You work with them. You worship with them. You socialize with them. They never go to things like this. But they'll vote because they love their country. And it's important that they understand what the issues are.

In an amazing way, in this election I can tell you that there is such clarity of difference, even though the other side often tries to muddy it up. And I don't blame them, because if everybody figures it out, they'll lose, and we'll win. [*Laughter*]

But I've learned—you know, I was a Governor for a dozen years before I became President. I loved it. I don't think I would have ever gotten tired of it. And I know that no matter how good the economic policy of the country is, no matter how good our educational policy is, our health care policy, our environmental policy—the way America works, the people of this State cannot fully benefit from it unless you have a good Governor and good leadership. And if you do, you can do better, even, than the rest of us are doing.

And I've really had the opportunity over the last several years to get to know Gary and Mona. I'm crazy about them, personally. I think they're wonderful people. They embody my idea of where we're going as a country.

Indeed, all Washington State does. You are today, and you are tomorrow. You are the most connected State to the global economy and one of the most wired States in America. [*Laughter*] And you are one of the most diverse States in America. And part of your diversity is, you also have a lot of people of European heritage who still live in little, rural towns and make a living on the farm.

And so you represent today and tomorrow. You're doing so well. Part of the reason you're doing so well is, you've got a great Governor, and you need to keep him.

Now, I also would say that no one in America understands any more clearly than I do how important every single Senate seat and every single House seat is. And I said something about Maria Cantwell before. I was thrilled when I met her when I became President. Here is a person who really is a New Democrat, a person who understands the economy but wants it to work for everybody, a person that believes in fiscal responsibility and is actually, unlike most politicians, actually willing to do something about it, not just talk about it.

And I want to say, one of the amazing things to me is that her opponent is still trying to attack her for voting for the '93 economic plan by picking out one little piece of it that he can make look unpopular now, without pointing out that we cut taxes for 10 times as many people as paid taxes and higher taxes, and that most of the people that paid higher taxes were in Maria's income bracket. [*Laughter*] And she voted for it anyway.

And you know, her opponent and all those Republicans, they voted against it, every last one of them. And they said if my economic plan passed, the world would come to an end; we would have a recession; people would lose their jobs; the deficit would get bigger. Time has not been kind to their predictions.

I'll say this, you've got to give it to the Republicans; they are never deterred by the facts and the evidence. [*Laughter*] They are shameless. You know, they'll just go right on just like nothing ever happened. [*Laughter*] And I say that because if she hadn't been willing to put her entire political career on the line, one vote, we wouldn't have passed that plan. And if you think Washington State is in better shape today than it was 8 years ago, then you have an obligation to tell every person you know between now and November 7th to vote for Gary Locke and for this great candidate for the United States Senate, Maria Cantwell.

In the parlance of my home region, I know I'm preaching to the saved tonight, but I want to say a few things. [*Laughter*] First of all, I want to say congratulations to the Mariners. But I hope you'll understand, since I have more than a passing interest in the Senate race in New York—[*laughter*]—why this may be the only issue in 8 years I don't side with you on. [*Laughter*]

Look, I want you to listen a minute. I want you to think about this. I want you to think about all the people who you'll see between now and the election. And if they ask you, "Why should I vote for Maria Cantwell? Why should I vote for Gary Locke? Why should I vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman," can you give them an answer?

Here is what I want you to understand. Clarity is our friend. And there are big differences with real consequences to the American people,

to every single family in Washington State. We have a different philosophy. We believe that everybody who is responsible ought to have an opportunity to be a part of the American dream. We believe we ought to all be part of the same community and that we should go forward together. We believe in Government that gives people the tools and the conditions to make the most of their own lives. We believe that you can, as Gary said and as Christine said, be pro-economic growth and pro-environment, pro-business and pro-labor. That's what we believe.

We believe that in order for people to succeed at work, you have to help them succeed in raising their kids and balancing work and family. And we think all this diversity of ours is the greatest thing in the world, that it's a more interesting country if we respect our differences and if we reaffirm our common humanity. That's what we believe, and so far, it has worked out pretty well.

What does that mean in practical terms? It means if you want to keep the prosperity going, you've got a clear choice here. Now, Gary wants to be effective, as well as reelected, and he wants Washington to keep on having a great economy. You've got a big choice here, and you heard it in these two debates. It was sort of buried in the weeds and, for reasons I'll never understand, not very well publicized.

But in the first Presidential debate, the Republican candidate admitted that he had a tax cut of about a trillion and a half bucks and that it would cost another trillion to partially privatize Social Security. And then there are hundreds of billions of dollars in spending promises. So you're already back to deficits. But if you're in a high-income group, you can get a bunch of money out of it right now.

Our leader, Al Gore, says, "Look, I'd like to tell you the same thing, but it's not responsible. So I want to pay off the debt, keep interest rates coming down, save some money to invest in education, health care, and the environment and defense, and give you a tax cut we can afford."

Now, you've got a choice. You know, we've tried it our way for 8 years, and we tried it their way for 12 years. And you ought to go out and tell people, if they want to go back to deficits and higher interest rates and a weaker economy, they've got a clear choice.

But it's not like—we can't pretend there's no choice here. We can't pretend there's no difference here. There is a record. There is evidence. There is a difference.

And let me say, a lot of the things I've heard are just flat bogus on the economy. You know, they say, "We trust you with your money. They want Government to run your lives." You know? That's their new shtick, you know? That's basically a sort of modernized, more—a kinder, gentler version of what they've been saying since 1980.

Now, here are the facts, okay? Fact number one: Under the leadership of Al Gore, we have reduced the size of the Federal Government to its lowest point since 1960, when Eisenhower was President—fact number one. Fact number two: Government spending as a percentage of our national income is the lowest it's been since 1966. Fact number three—here's the biggest one—fact number three: If Al Gore wins the Presidency, in 4 years Government spending will be a smaller percentage of national income under a Gore Presidency than under the alternative, even though we're going to spend more on education and health care.

How can that be? You need to think about it. You need to talk to people about this. How can that be? Because he's going to keep paying off the debt, and that will make interest rates lower. That will make the stock market higher, making all of you that own Microsoft happy and everything else. [*Laughter*] It will make the stock market higher. It will mean lower costs for business loans, and it will mean everybody will pay lower mortgage rates, lower credit card rates, lower college loan rates, lower car payment rates. In other words, everybody will get that tax cut in lower interest rates. And because the third-biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt—after Social Security and defense, interest on the debt is the third-biggest item in the budget—as we pay it down, even though the Democrats will spend more on education and health care and send it to Governor Locke so he can be more effective for you, Government will actually be a smaller percentage of the economy than it will if you pass this big tax cut, privatize Social Security, and run a deficit again.

You need to explain that to people. I think people like it our way, and they want to keep changing in that way.

Now, but you only get it if you vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Maria Cantwell, your candidates for Congress, and Gary Locke. You'll only get it—you know, you do have a choice. You don't have to have this good future. [*Laughter*] You know, you can vote with them and go back to the way it was. But don't let your friends pretend there's not a choice and there are no consequences.

Look at health care. Washington passed a Patients' Bill of Rights. Good for Washington. Good for Washington. But he'll be the first to tell you that because of the way Federal law works, if all the States passed a good Patients' Bill of Rights, there would still be a lot of Americans who weren't covered. So if you want every American, including every person in Washington State, covered with the protections of the Patients' Bill of Rights you have, you've got to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Maria Cantwell. Why? Why? Because we're for it, and they're not. [*Laughter*]

And now, they've got something that they say is a Patients' Bill of Rights, but 300 health care organizations are for ours and not for theirs. Why? Because the health insurers don't want our Patients' Bill of Rights, because they don't want to be sued, and they don't want to cover everybody, and they say it's going to run your health costs up. Well, if you've checked lately, your insurance premiums are going up anyway. But let me just tell you what the facts are.

I put the Patients' Bill of Rights in, by Executive order, for everybody the Federal Government pays health care on, Medicare, Medicaid, military personnel, retirees, Federal employees. Do you know how much it increased premiums? About $1 a month. A dollar a month to see a specialist when your doctor recommends it. A dollar a month to be able to keep the same doctor if you change health care providers in the middle of a pregnancy or a chemotherapy treatment. A dollar a month to go to the nearest emergency room if, God forbid, you get hit by a car when you walk out of this room tonight, instead of being carried past three or four hospitals to one your plan covers. A dollar a month to be able to file suit and get redress if you're really harmed by the failure to observe these rights.

Now, even the Congressional Budget Office says it's less than $2 a month. I'd pay $1.80 a month to make sure you got those rights, and I think most Americans would. It's a clear choice. But if you want it, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Maria. You've got to. There's no other option. You've got to do it.

You take this Medicare drug thing. The Governor and Mona, they care a lot about children having health care. The Children's Health Insurance Program was one of the major initiatives of this administration. It's part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. It led—last year, for the first time since 1987, we had a reduction in the number of people without health insurance in America.

Now, what we'd like to do, the Democrats, is give them some more funds to cover the parents of those kids in the Children's Health Insurance Program who are low-income working people. And we think Medicare ought to provide a prescription drug benefit that's voluntary to every senior that needs it.

Now, they don't feel that way. Why? Because the drug companies won't let them. Now, that's a fact. And originally the drug companies wanted to be for nothing, and the Republicans went to them and said, "You don't understand. We can't win this issue. They're going to beat our brains out. We need to muddy this up, so give us a bill we can be for."

And that's why they say, "Okay, we'll give it to people up to 150 or 175 percent of the poverty line, but everybody else gets to buy insurance." Now, I will say this about the health insurance companies. They have told us, they said, "Hey, there is no insurance policy you can write for this problem. We can't write you an insurance policy that you can afford that has decent coverage." Nevada passed the Republican plan and not a single, solitary health insurance company has offered insurance to people who need this medicine. And over half of the seniors who need affordable medicine are above 150 percent of the poverty line—over half of them.

Now, what is the deal here? [*Laughter*] Did you ever meet anybody in a business that didn't want more customers? Have you ever asked yourself, why are the drug companies against this thing? They get more customers. They sell more medicine. Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? [*Laughter*] You never hear this. I just want you to know. You've got to talk to people about this.

The reason is—and you don't have to demonize the drug companies. We're fortunate to have

these drug companies in our country. They provide wonderful jobs for tens of thousands of people. They find lifesaving drugs every day. But here is the issue. It costs a bunch of money to develop the drugs. They spend a lot of money to advertise them. And they want to sell them all over the world, but they can't recover the development or the advertising cost any place but America, because everybody else fixes prices.

Once they get us to pay the development and the advertising costs, then it just costs a pittance to make another pill or two, so they can sell them and make a killing in Canada or Europe or anywhere else, even with price controls, because you've already paid for all the advertising and development. And to be fair to them, they know that if Medicare is the buyer for millions of people, they'll have enough market power to get lower prices so that Americans will buy drugs made in America almost as cheap as they can buy them in Canada. And they're worried that their profits will go down, and they won't be able to spend enough money to develop drugs or to advertise them. Now, that's a legitimate problem. Nobody ever talks about this. You haven't heard any of this in the debate, have you? That's what the real deal is.

Now, here's my issue. Surely to goodness the answer to their problem is not continuing to deny the elderly people of America the right to have the medicine they need to stay alive and improve the quality of their lives.

Now, so let's fix the people's problem. If you live to be 65 in America today, your life expectancy is 82 years, and it's going to go up. And with the human genome project—there are young women in this audience who have yet to have their first children. Within the next 10 years, they'll start having babies with a life expectancy of 90 years. You mark it down. It's going to happen.

Now, if that's going to happen, we've got to think about what life's going to be like. The answer to the drug companies' problem is not to deprive our seniors of the ability to buy affordable prescription drugs. This is crazy. This is wrong.

So what I say is, vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Maria and our crowd and take care of the seniors. And those folks have a lot of money and influence, in case you hadn't noticed. And even though we don't let them tell us how to vote, we're not against them, and we'll figure out how to solve their problem. There's got to be a solution to their problem that does not require us to punish the seniors of America by depriving them of the medicine they need.

I could give you the same arguments on education. We're for 100,000 teachers, smaller classes, modernizing our schools, preschool and after school for every kid who needs it, and accountability and choice through charter schools, which the Democrats brought to America. We had one charter school in the whole country when I was elected. We got 1,700 now, and Al Gore wants to triple the number of them. That was our initiative.

They're for accountability, but they don't want to invest in the specific things that the educators and the research tells us works. And let me tell you, it's a big myth that you can't turn these public schools around. In the last 8 years, the dropout rate is down; the graduation rate is up. There has been a two-thirds increase in the number of our kids taking advanced placement tests, 300 percent increase in Hispanic kids taking advanced placement courses, 500 percent increase in African-American kids taking advanced placement courses, all-time-high college-going rate. You can turn these schools around.

I think our plan is better than theirs. And I think Gary Locke can do more with what the Democrats will do, plus which, we'll invest more. So if you want the education for your children that is most likely to really work, you've got to vote for Gary Locke and for Maria and for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. There is a difference. There is a difference.

Now, I could give you a lot of other examples. Just listen to this. We're for a real hate crimes bill, and they're not. If you heard the second debate, you know that. Oh, there was a little shoveling around. And I want to put it on the table. It wasn't clear from the debate what was going on. The reason the Republicans are not for our hate crimes bill and the reason that James Byrd's family in Texas was shut out of getting the hate crimes bill they wanted in Texas is that they don't want to make their rightwing mad by including gays in protection against hate crimes. Now, that's what is going on.

We had an event in Washington with the police commissioner from Wyoming who had to supervise the investigation in the Matthew Shepard case. And he said that it changed his

whole life. He met that young man's family and his friends, and he realized how badly he needed Federal hate crimes legislation so the Federal Government could come in and help him work that case and develop it. There is a difference.

We're for the employment nondiscrimination law, and they're not. We're for a minimum wage increase, and they're not. We think we ought to keep a woman's right to choose, and they don't. There's a difference.

And the environment, there's been a commitment—I will say that the other side has been clearer on the environment. The Republican nominee has said if he's elected, he will reverse my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. The Audubon Society said it was the most significant conservation move in 40 years. He says they will review all the national monuments we have established. And they will relax some of the air standards, because they're too hard on business.

Look, anybody who thinks you can't—we got cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food. We've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12. And the economy's doing reasonably well under this enormous environmental burden I have imposed, you know? But you've got to choose. You've got to choose.

We've got a different crime policy. They said that—you know, we believe that we should finish putting our 150,000 police on the street. And their party is committed to repealing that. It's not just a gun issue. They don't believe that we were right to put—we've already put over 100,000, and we're on our way to 150,000 police on the street. And we've got the lowest crime rate nationally in 26 years and the lowest murder rate in 33 years.

They don't believe in the 3-day waiting period, even though the Brady law—which led to the defeat of some of the Congressmen that we lost in Washington State in 1994, because they stirred up all the hunters and sportsmen, you know? Told them we were coming after their guns. You remember all that. They're doing it again now.

Well, let's just look at the facts here. We passed the Brady bill. Half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers couldn't get handguns because we did the background checks. And there hasn't been a single hunter, law-abiding hunter or sportsman in Washington State that's missed 5 minutes in the woods in hunting season or 5 minutes at any shooting contest because we said criminals should not have guns—not one.

So this is bogus. Now look, these are the things you need to talk to people about. It will shape the future of our children and grandchildren. And you cannot make an easy distinction anymore between national and State efforts.

We can't succeed if Gary Locke is not committed to enrolling children in the Children's Health Insurance Program. We can't succeed if the State of Washington is not committed to moving people from welfare to work and giving them the support they need to stay in the work place. We can't succeed if Washington State doesn't have a good education program. America can't succeed in Washington if you don't do it.

On the other hand, what he can do will be severely limited or enhanced by who gets elected President and who gets elected to the Senate and who gets elected to the House. So I want to say to you again, these elections are tight. They're tight because the other guys have figured out they can't really do what they did in '95 and '96 and '97 and '98, so they've got to blur the differences instead of clarify them, and they've got a bunch of money to do it.

What you have to do is clarify the differences. You know the American people nearly always get it right. We wouldn't be around here after 224 years if the American people didn't nearly always get it right, if they have enough information, they understand what it means, and they have time enough to digest it.

And I am telling you—you just think about this tomorrow when you get up—every one of you come in contact with people who are friends of yours who trust you, every day, who will never come to an event like this, never hear this kind of discussion. You need to tell them why you were here. You need to tell them what you believe they ought to do, what the differences are, what the consequences are.

And let me just close with this. You know, my party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. I'm not running for anything. [*Laughter*] I am profoundly grateful for the chance I have had to serve. And I have done everything I know to do to turn the country around, to pull us together and move us forward. But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow.

Maybe once in every 50 years a country gets a chance like we have now, where the economy's doing well, the social indicators are improving, there's a lot of national self-confidence, there's no overwhelming threat to our security abroad or crisis within. The world will never be free of problems. But once in 50 years you get in shape like this, where you can really imagine what you want the future to be like for your children and grandchildren and then go out and build it.

We ought to be elated to have this election. It should have nothing to do with personal attacks. We should posit that our opponents are good people who love their families and love their country and will do what they believe. But we have to make sure people know that what we believe and what they believe on critical things are different, and the consequences are profound.

When Al Gore says in his speeches that you ain't seen nothing yet, I know it may sound like a political slogan. But I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe the best is still out there. I believe that you have no idea where the information revolution, where the biotechnology revolution, and where the globalization of not just commerce but societies are going to lead us.

And the children in this audience can live in the most peaceful, prosperous, exciting time the world has ever known. But we have to make the right decisions. And now, for America and for Washington State, the right decisions are Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Maria Cantwell, Gary Locke, and our candidates for the Congress.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to State Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire; Gov. Locke's wife, Mona Lee Locke; Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle; Paul Berendt, chair, Washington State Democratic Party; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Rick Larson, candidate for Washington's Second Congressional District; Maria Cantwell, candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington; Comdr. Kirk S. Lippold, Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Cole*; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Special Envoy Vice Marshal Cho Myong-nok, First Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Dinner for Governor Gary Locke of Washington and Representative Jay Inslee in Seattle

October 14, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, I'm delighted to be here, and I think I should begin by thanking Jay Inslee for explaining why it is impossible for me at this moment in my life's history to root for Seattle in this baseball conference. [*Laughter*] I think it's the only issue I've ever been on the opposite side of Washington State in 8 years. And I thank you for the dispensation. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Governor Locke and Mona for their friendship to Hillary and me. And I thank him for his extraordinary leadership. I can see by your presence here and the enthusiasm of the crowd we were before just a few moments ago that he's going to be reelected, and it's very, very important. I want you to stay with him and help him and make sure. He deserves to be reelected.

Maybe it's just because I was a Governor a dozen years, and I don't think I ever would have gotten tired of it, but I know that nothing that we do in Washington, even if we make the right decisions, fully hits home in the lives of the American people in education, in health care, in the environment, in many other areas unless there is a good, strong Governor. And he is a good, strong Governor, and he is a good man, and I thank you for your support of him.

I want to thank Mayor Schell for being here, and Pam. I was laughing—you know, we're kind of enjoying being here tonight, he and I. The

last time I was here, we had a little more trouble when we were here. [*Laughter*] But I want to say to you, I still think it was important for Seattle to host that meeting. And in the future, since there is no turning back from tomorrow's world, people will look back on that meeting and what was said there in reaffirming our belief that it is possible to build a global economy with a human face, and they will say we were right, and Seattle will be credited with a difficult but profoundly important moment in the history of global relations. And so I hope you will always keep that in mind.

I want to thank Rick Larson for running for Congress. I want to thank your State party chair, and I want to thank my good buddy Ed Rendell for coming all the way from Philadelphia to be with us tonight and for his extraordinary leadership for the Democratic National Committee. I thank all your State officials for being here. And Deborah Senn, thank you especially for being here, and it's good to see you.

Oh, I'm supposed to make an important announcement. Tomorrow is the Lockes' sixth wedding anniversary. I can tell you, it's not as expensive, your 6th, as your 25th—[*laughter*]—but you still need to come up with something. [*Laughter*] We had a great week last—we had to actually schedule our 25th wedding anniversary, now that my wife's running for the Senate and I'm running around here trying to help other folks. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, too, I want to say to Jay and Trudi, I thank you for the service that you, Jay, rendered in Congress. Then, when you lost your seat, I thank you for the service you rendered to the administration. I thank you for having the courage to run again. And I thank you, Maria Cantwell, for having the courage to run again.

You know, this is a time of—a difficult time for me, personally, as you might imagine, because we lost those fine young sailors a couple of days ago on the ship in Yemen. And most of them were just good young people who wanted to make their way in life by serving their country. And they were just doing their duty. They bore no aggressive intentions toward anyone, and they were killed by someone who thought he could hurt America or break our desire to advance peace and freedom or thought somehow it's morally okay to kill people who disagree with you, no matter how defenseless they are and how unfair the fight. We started bringing those kids home today, and we're going to have a big memorial for them Wednesday.

So I'd like to begin by just asking you tonight when you go home to say a prayer for their families and those that are wounded and those that are back there still on that ship. They saved the ship, and they're pretty traumatized, too.

But it's a humbling reminder that even in times of peace, freedom is not free. You will never know—I'm not even sure I know—how many conflicts have been prevented and how many lives have been saved, how many profound troubles avoided just because people like those young men and women that were on the U.S.S. *Cole* show up for duty every day. And I'm very grateful for them.

And of course, several of you mentioned to me tonight, a couple of people here at dinner and the people I've seen earlier in Washington, about the Middle East. And I'm going to leave tomorrow afternoon and fly to Egypt and attempt to get the parties together and try to get rid of the violence and get back to the path of peace.

It was ironic. When I was out at the airport earlier today, a man whom I had known years ago came up to me with a printed copy of a September 19th, 1993—of the speech I gave with Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Arafat when we signed the Israeli-Palestinian accords, and he wanted me to sign it. I think it may have just been—it was pure coincidence. I think it was the only thing he had that I had given him that he could ask me to sign.

But I said, "Do you mind if I stop and read this?" I was standing in the airport. And so he gave it to me, and I read it again. And I thought about that beautiful late summer day and how we felt then and all the good things that have happened since then and how sad it all is now. And I was praying that somehow we might be able to recover, in the spirit of the leaders and the people, what was felt then in that happy moment.

I say that to make this point: In public life, there are issues, and there are issues. There are things that are important for votes, and then there are things that are important for life and for who we are as a people. Maria mentioned one earlier when she talked about Jay Inslee voting for the assault weapons ban and having to endure the wrath of people saying he was trying to take the guns away from the hunters and all that stuff.

The biggest problem the world has today is basically the oldest problem of human society. I know I'm here in the city of the future, this place that's most connected to the rest of the world and maybe the most wired city in the country. [*Laughter*] But you think about it. You think about what I spend my time doing: Northern Ireland; the Balkans; the work we did to try to end the North Korean nuclear program and get them to deal with each other again, which has borne such great success and gotten President Kim his much-deserved Nobel Prize—all these things. The tribal wars in Africa—Nelson Mandela asked me to fly the other day to Tanzania to try to help to secure the Burundi peace accord, because they killed a couple hundred thousand people in Burundi right before the Rwandan slaughter at the beginning of the last decade, and they're trying to get out of it and not repeat it again—and of course, the heartbreaking events of the last few days in the Middle East.

No matter how modern we get, we're still bedeviled by this old problem that we are—we don't understand people who are different than us. And it's easy when you don't fully understand people not to trust them, and then when you stop trusting them, it's easy to fear them and to misjudge them. And then it's easy for fear to turn into animosity and animosity to outright hatred, and hatred to the legitimization of violence, and then, because you have to live with the violence, you almost dehumanize the people just because they're different from you.

Now, not so very long ago, we had Hillary sponsoring an event at the White House on the role of the digital chip in the computer information technology revolution in the human genome project. And we had Vint Cerf there, and we had a guy representing the IT folks, and we had a guy named Eric Lander, who is a scientist from Harvard, talking about—who is an expert in the whole development of the human genome. And Lander was saying if it hadn't been for the digital chip, we never could have uncovered the—we could never have mapped the genome.

And so, we started asking questions. We said, "Well, what was the most surprising thing that you found?" And he said, "Well, we're more than 99.9 percent the same." And he said, what was even more interesting to him was that if you took like five different racial and ethnic groups—you know, 100 Irish-Americans, 100 African-Americans, 100 Chinese-Americans, and so forth—that the genetic differences among individuals within the group would be greater than the differences in the profile from group to group.

Now, why am I saying all this, besides the fact that I've got to get my head in the right place for tomorrow? [*Laughter*] Because all of life—I'm old enough now to know this—all of life is like a continuing struggle, first of all, to understand some fundamental things about life, and second, what you've figured out to live by. We all have to organize life, you know, in a certain way. I can't not see Gary Locke as a Chinese-American. In fact, I think it's a good thing that I see him that way. It makes it more interesting. He's different from me. His roots are different. But when you organize reality into categories, you have to know where the validity of the categories stop. And we have to understand that nobody has perfect wisdom. And it's—when we get to believing that we're absolutely sure about those who are different from us, and our certainty takes on a negative turn, we can get in a world of hurt in a very short time.

And so I say that to make this point. What happens in the Middle East ultimately depends upon what they decide to do. All I can do is try to find the words and the moral and the physical support to help the path of peace and to make sure that we stand up for the right values and reaffirm our historic ties to Israel.

But over the long run, if we want to do good things around the world, we first have to be good at home. That's why I think the most important issues, even more important than the economic issues, are the issues that strengthen the ties that bind us, even as we respect our increasing diversity.

I was telling the other crowd—I gave more of a political speech at the early two events, but you know, it's 11 p.m. on my body clock—maybe I'm just too old to do it now. [*Laughter*] But what I was trying to say at these earlier meetings, I want to reiterate today.

I don't—I never liked all this personal attack business very much, but I love a good debate, because where there are honest differences, they ought to be stated clearly and argued out. And in this election season, whether we're talking about the Presidency or the governorship or this profoundly important Senate seat or the House

seats that you have at stake here, there are these huge differences.

Basically, we Democrats believe in a unifying vision of our public life. We believe, first of all, that everybody who is a responsible citizen ought to be part of our public life. So we're for hate crimes legislation and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," and their side isn't. Basically, we believe in stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws for women. We believe in things that bring us together.

Secondly, we believe that everybody that works hard ought to have a shot at the American dream. We think the people that served this dinner tonight ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that those of us who could pay to eat here do. That's basically what we believe.

And thirdly, we don't mind fighting, but we don't think that we ought to be fighting over false choices. We think you can be pro-business and pro-labor, pro-growth and pro-environment. And we think that we've got to get this business about our racial, religious, gender, disability, sexual orientation, all these differences—we've got to figure out what they mean, respect our differences, and reaffirm the primacy of our common humanity. Now, that's what we believe.

I think—you know, the evidence is that it's worked out pretty well for America in the last 8 years. And so—and I feel a special debt to Maria Cantwell and to Jay Inslee, because they literally risked their whole political careers to do the right thing for America on turning the economy around and getting the crime rate down. They did.

I understand that Maria has now been attacked by a highly selective description of her vote for our economic plan. The truth is, almost all the tax increases in the economic plan were paid by 1.5 percent of the American people, and it was impossible to put together a package that would satisfy everybody. We also cut hundreds and hundreds of programs, and we cut taxes for 15 million Americans who were lower income working people with children.

But the main thing we had to do was to get ahold of the thing. We had to get the deficit down. When I took office, the deficit was $290 billion; interest rates were high; growth was low. Do you know what the projected deficit for this year was? When I took office, $455 billion. The debt of the country had quadrupled in the previous 12 years.

So we had to do something about it. And we didn't have a vote to spare—not one—because the other side wouldn't give us a vote—not one. So Maria's opponent was giving speeches like all the others, said, "This is the end of the world. This will end civilization as we know it if Bill Clinton's economic plan passes. It will lead to a recession. It will deepen the deficits. It will cost American jobs." Time has not been kind to their predictions. [*Laughter*] And I don't—so now, they have a $230 billion surplus, and they want you to believe it just happened. [*Laughter*]

I thought the best line in Al Gore's first debate was when his opponent said, "I think the economy's done a lot more for Clinton-Gore than Clinton-Gore did for the economy. That's what I think." And that was a good line, you know. It was a pretty good line. [*Laughter*] I mean, you know, you've got to appreciate it when they hit you a good lick. [*Laughter*] So I said—and Al Gore said, "Yes, you know, the American people deserve most of the credit. But you know something? I think they were working pretty hard before we came in, too, and the results were very different."

So here's the first thing I want to tell you. This country has a chance that comes along once every 50 years or so to build the future of our dreams for our kids and our grandchildren. In my lifetime, we've never had, at the same time, so much economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of paralyzing domestic crisis or external threat.

Do we have problems? You bet we do. Could they get out of hand? There's no such thing as a life without danger. Nothing is totally predictable, but this is the best shape we've been in, in 50 years. And those of us that are—that know better will never forgive ourselves if we don't use this opportunity and make the most of it.

So what I would like to say to you is, there are huge differences between our candidates for President, Vice President, Senate, Congress, Governor, the whole 9 yards. If the people understand clearly what the differences are and what the consequences to them and their families and communities are, we win. Which is why, if you watch these debates, you will see that only one side wants you to know what the differences are. [*Laughter*] The other side wants to blur the differences. They tried clarity in

the early Gingrich years, and it didn't work out too well for them. [*Laughter*]

But I say that with all respect, actually, because their policies haven't changed all that much. So let me just mention two or three things, because here's what I'm asking you to do. Thank you for your money for these candidates. Thank you very much. They need it. They've got to be able to answer the other guy's attacks. They've got to be able to put their positive message on it. Thank you.

But there are a lot of undecided voters that basically don't know how to make heads or tails of these ads that are run and will never come to an event like this, that are your friends. Every one of you have got a lot of friends that have never been to an event like this, never will come to an event like this, can't imagine why you paid the money to come to an event like this. [*Laughter*] Is that right? Can't imagine why you paid the money to come to an event like this, but they will show up and vote. They will be there on election day, sure as the world, because they're good citizens and they want to be patriots.

And if they ask you why you came and why they ought to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman or Maria Cantwell or Gary Locke or Jay Inslee, what are you going to say? That goes to this very point. You've got the chance to build the future of your dreams for your children.

Here's what I hope you will say, very briefly. Number one, on the economy, you want to keep the prosperity going by building on the direction of the last 8 years, or would you prefer to go back to the policy that was in place before?

Now, here's my argument. Al Gore says, "Vote for me, and I'll get us out of debt in 12 years, and we'll still have enough money to invest in education, health care, and the environment and defense. And I'll give you the tax cut I can afford, not the one that sounds the best, but the one we can afford that the most people need the most for educating their kids, for long-term care, for child care, for retirement savings. But I won't give you so much that we can't pay the debt down, because you all benefit from that. Because when we pay the debt down, it keeps interest rates lower, and that's the best tax cut we can give you. Low interest rates means lower home mortgages, lower business loans, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, and a better stock market." Now, that's our shtick.

Their guys say, "This is your money, and the Democrats think Government knows best. We're going to give you 3 times as much back, and we're going to partially privatize Social Security so you can make some more money. And, oh by the way, yes, it does cost a trillion dollars to do that."

Now, you need to know, why does it cost a trillion dollars to do it? Because Social Security—Gore's program takes Social Security to 2054. The Republican program, it goes broke right now. In 2037—the Republican program makes it go broke sooner unless they put money into it. Why? Because if you're under 45, they're going to give you 2 percent of your payroll back, but if you're 55 or over—that includes me next year, though I hate it—[*laughter*]—they guarantee what you're going to get anyway.

So if you young people take money out and I get guaranteed what I'm supposed to get anyway, where is the money going to come from to give me what I've been guaranteed? This is their program. And they admitted in the first debate—to me, that was the story of the first debate, and I looked in vain for somebody to say this was significant—finally, they admitted, the nominee of the Republican Party admitted, "Yes, we'll take a trillion dollars out of the surplus." So if you take $1.5 trillion for a tax cut and $1 trillion to privatize Social Security and hundreds of billions of dollars of spending they promise, you're back in the deficit.

Now, most of you in this room would get a better deal under them, but a lot of you wouldn't. It's not true that Al Gore's plan doesn't help 50 million people. The basic math is that 32 million people wouldn't get a break under his plan, and 27 million wouldn't get a break under the Bush plan.

But it also is true that people in upper income groups, and some others—very few—would get more under the Bush plan. Most people get more under the Gore plan. But the main thing is, everybody gets more if their interest rates are lower. One plan pays off the debt, and the other one continues the debt. Now, this is a big choice.

People ask me all the time, now that I'm almost a has-been, they come to me and say—they say—[*laughter*]—"You know, you had such a brilliant economic team. You know, Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all those people, they're

so brilliant. What great new idea did you bring to Washington?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] "We brought arithmetic to Washington. And lo and behold, it worked as well there as it did in my first grade class." [*Laughter*]

Now, look, there's a lot of fancy—we decided to bail out Mexico. We were for the right telecommunications law, and it was pro-competition, and a lot of you were benefited from that because we did the right thing for America. But we started with arithmetic.

Now, so you've got one crowd that says, "Okay, let's stick with arithmetic, but keep changing." That's Gore, Lieberman, Maria, Jay, Gary. Then you've got the other crowd that says, "They've built up such a big surplus. Let us try it our way again and see if it works better the second time." [*Laughter*]

And I kind of admire them, you know, because evidence never fazes them. [*Laughter*] You've got to kind of admire that, you know. I mean, they know what they believe, and they just go right with it. [*Laughter*] But we're all having a good time here, but I don't think everybody in Washington State understands this difference. Do you? But this is clear. If you can come to this dinner tonight, you can sure explain to people how lower interest rates are good for them and paying off the debt's good for them and not giving away tax money before it's there is good for them.

There's something else. When you read all these skeptical press analyses saying, "Well, maybe Gore's plan's too much, just like Bush's. Maybe there are pox on both their houses." Let me tell you something. People that write that have never practiced politics. What do I mean by that?

You can say, "I would like to spend this amount of money on education over the next 10 years. But if the money doesn't come in, I won't spend it." But if you cut taxes today, it's gone. That's the difference. And if you privatize the Social Security system, you've got to spend the trillion to make the guarantees to the people that you promised are going to get their benefits. That's a breathtaking, practical difference.

So you need to tell people this. If you like where you are now compared to where you were 8 years ago and you want to keep it going in the same direction, you've got to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Maria Cantwell, Jay Inslee, and Gary Locke, period. That's the economic deal. It's clear.

Now, the same thing is true in health care. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. And they're not because the health insurers don't want it, because they don't want to ever be sued and they think it will raise the cost of health care. Well, that's a serious concern. It's a legitimate concern.

The problem is, if you're stuck in an HMO and your doctor wants you to see a specialist and you don't have a lot of time to fool around with it, you need to be able to do it. If you work for some company and your company changes providers and you're in the middle of a chemotherapy treatment or you're 6 months pregnant, you don't want to have to change your doctor before you have your baby or you finish your treatment. If you get hit in the middle of a big city by a car, you don't want to have to pass three hospitals before you find an emergency room that's covered by your plan. You want to go to the nearest emergency room.

Now, I did all this for people under Federal insurance. You know what it cost us? A buck a premium a month. Do you know what the Republicans say it would cost to do it nationally? Even them—and keep in mind, they're going with the other crowd—even they admit it's less than $2 a month.

Now, I'd spend $23 a year to know that you could go to the nearest emergency room if you get hit coming out here. And I think most Americans would. It's a big difference. We're for a Medicare prescription drug plan that covers all seniors that need it. They say that we're trying to force—have you seen these ads saying they're trying to force people into a Government HMO? That's the biggest load of hooey I ever heard in my life. [*Laughter*] Medicare is not an HMO. Medicare is a fee-for-service plan with a 1.5 percent administrative overhead, less than any HMO in the world. And if you want to go into an HMO because they give you more benefits, you can do it, but you don't have to. It's totally your choice.

Now, did you ever wonder what the real deal is on this prescription drug fight we're having in Washington? I mean, don't you think it's funny that the drug companies who—the Republicans can't be for our plan, because the drug companies won't let them. But don't you think it's funny that they won't let them? Did you ever meet any business that didn't want

more customers? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? [*Laughter*]

This is a serious issue. I just want to tell you. But it shows you what our values are. This is very important. The drug companies have a legitimate issue, but they're going about it in the wrong way. We're fortunate to have these pharmaceutical companies in our country. They develop lifesaving drugs. They lengthen life. They improve the quality of life. And parenthetically, they give employment to tens of thousands of people, and they're darn good jobs. And it's good they're here.

But it costs a lot of money to develop the drugs, and they spend a lot of money advertising it. And they want to sell the drugs worldwide, and every other country they want to sell them in has price controls, so they've got to get 100 percent of the money for their worldwide sales for developing the drugs and advertising them from Americans. Then, once they get the money from us, they can sell the drugs everywhere else under price controls and do just fine, because it's just the extra cost to make another pill or something.

Now, what they're worried about is, if we let all the seniors in the country that need medicine they can't afford buy into our plan, they're afraid that Medicare will have such market power—not price controls, market power—we can get Americans drugs made in America almost as cheap as they can buy them made in Canada—I mean, if they were in Canada, made in America. That's what they're worried about.

Now look, you never hear this in the debate. Everybody always acts like black and white, and they use slogans, and they don't explain to you. This is a legitimate problem. If their profit margins get squeezed too much, then they won't have the money to develop the drugs and advertise them that they want. It's a legitimate problem. But their answer to the problem is to leave half the seniors who can't afford medicine without the medicine? That's not America.

Look, this is a big industry. They've got lots of money. They've got a lot of influence in Washington. I say, the Democrats say, "Let's take care of the people who need the medicine. Then we'll find a way to take care of their problem." We won't run off and leave them. We're not going to let the drug companies go broke. We're glad they're here. We love what they do. But the answer to their problem, surely to goodness, is not saying to half the seniors in the country, "You can't have the medicines that you need."

Now, look, it's like we could go through this—the same thing is true on education. Both candidates for President say they're for accountability and standards, and that's true. You know, I've worked on this for over 20 years. I think our accountability system is better than theirs. We could argue that out, but I won't. Let's just posit they're both for accountability, and that's good. They say they're for accountability, block grants, and vouchers, and we're trying to micromanage education. That's what they say.

Here's my answer. We're for accountability-plus: plus at least 100,000 teachers that are well-trained to make classes smaller in the early grades, plus the funds to help districts build or modernize 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years, since you've got a massive, massive school facilities crisis in America. We're for preschool and after-school and summer school for all the kids who need it. And we think people ought to get a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition. We think, in other words, we should give people the tools they need to succeed in an accountability environment. And our major accountability is, identify failing schools, turn them around, shut them down, or put them under new management. That's what works best. I can tell you; I've been fooling with this for 20 years. That's what works best.

Now, they say we're trying to micromanage the schools. "Why not trust the States? Don't you trust Gary Locke?" they say. And I say, "Yeah, I do. But there is now indisputable research about what works. And the teachers and the educators have been telling us about this for years."

We only have 7 percent of the total school budget coming from the Federal Government. We have got to put this money where it will have the biggest impact. And when they tell you we're micromanaging the schools, that's just not true. Under this administration, we have cut regulations on States and school districts by two-thirds below what they were under the previous Republican administration. All we're doing is sending the money where it will do the most good. So if you want accountability-plus, instead of accountability-minus, you've got to be for us.

So let's go over it. So if somebody asks you tomorrow why were you here, can you give

them the economic answer? Can you give them the health care answer? Can you give them the education answer? Can you say the Democrats are for hate crimes; they're for employment non-discrimination; they're for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws for women? Gore is for the right to choose, and his opponent's not, and that could have a big impact. Can you tell them that?

The environment: This is one area where, by the way, there has been surprising clarity, just not publicity. Somehow, the people writing about it don't think it's important. I think it's real important. The Vice President has pledged to build on the environmental record of this administration. They say that if you vote for them, they will repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forest. That was on the debate last time. I can't believe nobody—apparently, people didn't think it was very important. I keep reading for something meaningful, somebody to say something about that.

The Audubon Society said that was the most important conservation move in the last 40 years, and they're going to undo it. They're going to undo it. They say they want to reexamine all the national monuments I've set aside. They said that the air pollution standards we've set are too tough; they're hurting business. I'll tell you what, if I tried to hurt business with my environmental policy, I did a poor job. [*Laughter*] I did a poor job.

But this is a huge difference. And of course, there are massive differences on crime. And it's not just on guns. Let's talk about the non-gun issues. In the crime bill of '94 that we were talking about, that did ban assault weapons—a ban, by the way, that will be reauthorized or not in the next President's term—we put 100,000 police on the street. We got more than 100,000, under budget, ahead of time, so we're now getting funding for another 50,000. And they're keeping crimes from happening. It's not just catching criminals quicker. They're keeping crimes from happening. They're doing all this community policing.

Now, their nominee has a commitment, public commitment, to abolish that program on the theory that the Federal Government has got no business working on safe streets. The first time I met Ed Rendell in Philadelphia, he took me into a neighborhood where he used some Federal money that the Democratic Congress and the previous Republican administration had given him to clean up the street.

Now, they're to the right of that. They said they're going to get rid of the COPS program. So you've got a choice here. We've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the lowest murder rate in 33 years. You can say, "I don't think this policy had anything to do with that," if you want to gamble with that and vote for them.

You heard them say in the debate—the debate made clear that our side is for the 3-day waiting period, including at gun shows, to do background checks, and their side's not.

Now, I listened to all this in '94. It broke my heart. I don't know how many House Members that the NRA beat in '94, but a bunch of them here in Washington. We took the awfullest licking here we did than any State in the country, and the NRA had a lot to do with it. I take my hat off to them. They succeeded in scaring the living daylights out of a bunch of voters. They told them all we were coming after their guns.

They did that in New Hampshire, too. I went back in New Hampshire, and I got 200 hunters together, and I said, "I want to tell you something. You beat a Congressman here 2 years ago because he voted with me for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, and if any of you missed a day or an hour in the deer woods, I want you to vote against me this time. But if you didn't, they didn't tell you the truth, and you ought to get even." And I say that again here.

Nobody, none of these Washington hunters or sportsmen have missed a minute in any hunting season or a minute in any sport shooting contest. They have been terrified and scared and misled. All we ever tried to do was to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children and take basic precautionary measures.

Now, this is a big deal. This is a big deal. So—now, look—[*applause*]. Wait a minute. Thank you. Wait a minute. I'm done. You don't have to sit down. I'm done. [*Laughter*]

When you go home tonight, you give yourself a test. [*Laughter*] How much of this can you say? And promise yourself that every friend you see between now and election that you know good and well would never come to a deal like this, you will share some of this with them. I promise you, if people understand what the differences are and what the consequences are,

our crowd will do fine, because the American people nearly always get it right.

And the last thing I want to say is this. Al Gore often says in his speeches, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." And I guess maybe it sounds like a political statement. But as you know, I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. [*Laughter*] I believe that. It takes a long time to turn a country around. And we've been working on turning this country around, pulling it together, moving it forward. But you just think of that. You think about babies being born sometime the next 10 years with the life expectancy of 90 years.

Most of you are going to live to see what's in the black holes in outer space and what's in the deepest depths of the ocean. We're just that close to cracking the chemical barriers to converting biomass into fuel in an efficient way. Right now, to make ethanol or any biofuel, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of fuel. If we get just a little more chemical progress, we'll be able to take 1 gallon of gasoline and make 8 gallons of biofuel, and when that happens, we'll all be getting 500 miles to the gallon. You can forget about worrying about that. [*Laughter*]

Look, all of this stuff is out there, which is why, by the way, these racial and ethnic and other fights and religious fights are so maddening, because it will make it possible for children in the poorest places in the world to participate in a common future. It's all out there. But we've got to make the right decision. And these elections are going to be close. We're going to be outspent. But if we have clarity, if the people know—understand what the differences are and what the consequences are, we will do fine.

So I'm putting it on you. You've been real nice to me tonight, and I shouldn't do this, but I'm putting it on you. Every day between now and the election, you will see somebody that will never come to one of these deals, and you can turn them, and you can get them to come. And I promise you, you will never have another election where it will matter more. So do what you can, and we'll have a great celebration.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the Cascade Room at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Governor Locke's wife, Mona Lee Locke; Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle and his wife, Pam; Deborah Senn, candidate for U.S. Senate in Washington; Rick Larson, candidate for Washington's Second Congressional District; Paul Berendt, chair, Washington State Democratic Party; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Representative Inslee's wife, Trudi; Maria Cantwell, candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom; Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen. Representative Inslee was a candidate for reelection in Washington's First Congressional District.

Statement on the 1999 Uniform Crime Report

October 15, 2000

The final 1999 Uniform Crime Report released today by the FBI confirms that for the 8th year in a row—and for the longest period ever recorded—crime has fallen all across the country, improving the quality of life and safety of American families. The report shows that overall crime, as well as violent and property crime, fell more than 7 percent from 1998 and 1999. Crime is down in communities of every region and size across the nation.

Crime rates rose steadily through much of the 1980's. Since Vice President Gore and I took office, our Nation has come together to reverse those trends. Our administration focused on giving communities more and better tools to improve public safety, including 100,000 more

police for our streets, stronger gun laws, and smart prevention. Combined with the dedication of police and communities across the country, these tools are making a major difference. The overall crime rate is at a 26-year low; the murder rate is at a 33-year low; and the violent crime rate is down to its lowest point in over two decades. We must do more to ensure that these downward trends continue. Today I call on Congress to reauthorize the COPS program to hire up to 50,000 more community police officers, send me a budget that funds our COPS program and other vital crime-fighting initiatives, and pass commonsense gun legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands. By working together, we can continue our Nation's unprecedented success in reducing crime and make America's streets even safer.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 13 but was embargoed for release until 6 p.m. on October 15.

Remarks at the Opening of the Plenary Session of the Middle East Summit in Sharm al-Sheikh, Egypt

October 16, 2000

Well, first of all, I would like to thank you, President Mubarak, for having us all here, for providing an opportunity for the Palestinians and the Israelis to come together and to talk and for us all to try to save the peace process.

I thank His Majesty, the King of Jordan; and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who has been working very hard out here, and we're grateful for him; and my good friend Javier Solana from the European Union—for all being here.

I think it's very important that we all be quite honest and blunt with each other, but we be sober and serious about this. We're here because we would like to achieve three objectives. We want to end the violence and restore security cooperation. We hope to achieve agreement on an objective and fair factfinding process on what happened to bring us to this sad point and how we can avoid having it ever happen again. And we want to get the peace process going.

The future of the peoples involved here, the future of the peace process, and the stability of the region are at stake. We cannot afford to fail here. In order to succeed, though once again we have a situation piled high with grievance, we have got to move beyond blame. We have got to focus on what we're going to do tomorrow and the next day and the next day. We have to have a balanced, mutual disengagement, and we have to restore the security cooperation and have the confidence-building measures necessary for people to go about their business and live in peace and begin to rebuild the bonds of trust.

The only other thing I want to ask you all is just to remember before these terrible events how far we have come since September 19, 1993, when the Palestinians and Israelis signed the agreement to find a peaceful future together and resolve their differences peacefully on the lawn of the White House.

We shouldn't give it all up for what has happened in the last few weeks. And what has happened in these last few weeks reminds us of the terrible alternative to continuing to live in peace and to continuing the peace process.

President Mubarak, I am grateful to you, again. We can, if we will look to the future and proceed in a fair and balanced way, we can do what we have to do here, and we must do that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Jolie Ville Golf Resort. In his remarks, he referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; King Abdullah II of Jordan; United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and European Union Council Secretary General Javier Solana, High Representative for the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Efforts To Bridge the Digital Divide
October 16, 2000

I am pleased by a new report released today by the Commerce Department, documenting a sharp increase in the number of Americans that have access to computers and the Internet. Although much more remains to be done to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for all Americans, I am especially pleased that many low-income, rural, and minority households are beginning to "get connected" at rates faster than the national average.

Access to these information age tools is becoming critical to full participation in America's economic, political, and social life. Americans are using the Internet to vote, look for work, acquire new skills, and communicate with their children's teachers. To ensure that we continue to make progress in bridging the digital divide, I urge Congress to fund the initiatives that I have proposed in my budget. These include my proposals to fully fund community technology centers, preparing tomorrow's teachers to use technology, assistive technology for people with disabilities, and the Commerce Department's home Internet access and technology opportunity program.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Department of Commerce report entitled "Falling Through the Net: Toward Digital Inclusion."

Statement on the Resignation of Barry R. McCaffrey as Director of National Drug Control Policy
October 16, 2000

General Barry McCaffrey, USA (Ret.), has informed me that he will step down in January as Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank and commend him for his extraordinary work in meeting one of our Nation's most pressing challenges. General McCaffrey has brought to his post the same professionalism, dedication, and leadership that have exemplified his 40 years of steadfast service to our Nation.

In accepting this post in 1996, General McCaffrey retired from the United States Army as its youngest and most decorated four-star general. He had served and commanded with honor from West Point to the Dominican Republic to Vietnam to the Persian Gulf and, finally, as Commander in Chief, Southern Command. He was twice awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our Nation's second-highest military honor.

In the nearly 5 years General McCaffrey has led our war on drugs, we have made significant progress both at home and abroad. We have dramatically increased our counter-drug spending and launched a $1 billion public-private media campaign to educate young people about the dangers of drug use. Our efforts are paying off. Adolescent drug use in the United States dropped 21 percent in the past 2 years alone, and drug-related murders are at their lowest level in a decade. And working with our international partners, we have helped to significantly reduce coca cultivation in Latin America and helped to build a level drug-free playing field for the world's Olympians.

Our Nation and my administration have benefited greatly from General McCaffrey's outstanding dedication, enterprise, and leadership. He has been a valued member of my Cabinet, and I am grateful for his sound counsel. I am confident that he will continue to serve our Nation with honor and distinction in the years ahead. The First Lady and I wish him and his wife, Jill, all the best in their new endeavors.

Statement on the Observance of World Food Day
October 16, 2000

Today, as we observe World Food Day and resolve to continue our work to combat hunger worldwide, I urge Congress to enact my budget proposal to help those here at home by ensuring that legal immigrants have access to critical nutrition and health assistance. Vice President Gore and I believe that legal immigrants should have the same economic opportunity and bear the same responsibility as other members of society. Upon signing the welfare reform law, I made a commitment to reverse unnecessary cuts in benefits to legal immigrants that had nothing to do with the law's goal of moving people from welfare to work.

In 1997 and 1998, I joined Congress in taking steps to restore eligibility for many vulnerable immigrants. Now it is time to restore benefits to other legal immigrants who are working hard and playing by the rules but are in need of assistance. This action would be an important step toward making sure this country does its part to reduce hunger. Congress must also act now to restore State options to extend Medicaid and SCHIP coverage to vulnerable legal immigrant women and children. I look forward to working with Members of Congress in these final days of the budget negotiations to increase access to nutrition assistance and health benefits for legal immigrants.

Joint Remarks With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt at the Conclusion of the Middle East Summit in Sharm al-Sheikh
October 17, 2000

President Mubarak. In the name of God Almighty; to His Excellency, Bill Clinton; His Highness, King Abdullah, son of Hussein; His Excellency, Prime Minister Barak; Mr. Chairman Arafat; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Mr. Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union: We spent the past 2 days since we started our summit in constructive discussions and extensive dialog about all the aspects of the escalating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, discussions aimed at restoring the situation back to normal, through withdrawing the occupying forces, lifting the blockade, putting an end to violent acts, taking measures aiming at restoring trust and confidence to the two Palestinian and Israeli sides, with a view to resuming the peace efforts after the situation is stabilized in the region.

Before I give the floor to His Excellency, President Bill Clinton, the President of the United States of America, in his capacity as the key sponsor of the peace process, to present his report on the outcome of our relentless efforts over the 2 days, I would like to stress a number of key points that we should take into account in the stage to come.

First, the outcome we have reached in this summit may not meet the expectations of all peoples. However, they constitute at the same time a basis on which we can build on if we have good intentions and if the real desire to achieve peace is there.

Secondly, the most important thing in the vision of all peoples in the days to come is the extent to which the two parties are committed to implement what has been agreed upon precisely and how far they are willing to push the peace process forward. Hence, the following days will witness redeployment of the Israeli forces, lift the blockade imposed on 3 million Palestinian people, reopening airports, ports, crossing points in order to pacify the Palestinian streets and bring matters back to normal.

Number three, our ultimate objective must and will be reaching a just and comprehensive peace. We do appreciate the leading role assumed by the United States of America, the key sponsor of the peace process, and the sponsorship of Mr. Bill Clinton. And we highly commend the role he assumed including his strenuous efforts he exerted during this summit, which were crowned in reaching an agreement.

It's my fervent hope that the peace process will go on as planned and that we avoid having recourse to provocative acts, confrontations. Rather, we have to establish a constructive dialog in order to settle all the unresolved problems, to arrive at a peace agreement in a context of full respect of religious sanctities and the right of peoples to live in peace and stability.

And now I give the floor to His Excellency, President Bill Clinton, the President of the United States of America.

President Clinton. First of all, I want to thank President Mubarak and his able team for making it possible for us to have this meeting that we have held in this magnificent and beautiful place. I especially want to thank President Mubarak for Egypt's consistent and pivotal partnership in the peace process and for playing a critical role in our efforts here. I also want to thank His Majesty King Abdullah for his steadfast leadership for peace, which again was in evidence.

I would like to thank the E.U. high commissioner, Javier Solana, my longtime friend, who worked with me to bring an end to violence in the Balkans and now is working in the Middle East. And especially I want to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has been here now in the region for more than a week and who has worked tirelessly to bring an end to violence and to make this meeting possible.

But of course, the greatest credit for the progress we have made today belongs to Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, who have had to overcome the difficulties of these last several days, and we all recognize that theirs was the primary decision to make.

Our meeting has not been easy because the last 2 weeks have been so hard, a tragic and terrible confrontation costing many lives and injuries, threatening everything that we have worked to achieve between Israelis and Palestinians and throughout the region over the past 7 years now. Even as we meet, the situation in the territories remains tense. Yesterday again was violent.

This is a reminder of the urgency of breaking the cycle of violence. I believe we have made real progress today. Repairing the damage will take time and great effort by all of us.

When we leave here today, we will have to work hard to consolidate what we have agreed. Let me summarize what has been agreed so there will be no misunderstanding.

Our primary objective has been to end the current violence so we can begin again to resume our efforts toward peace. The leaders have agreed on three basic objectives and steps to realize them.

First, both sides have agreed to issue public statements unequivocally calling for an end of violence. They also agreed to take immediate, concrete measures to end the current confrontation, eliminate points of friction, ensure an end to violence and incitement, maintain calm, and prevent recurrence of recent events.

To accomplish this, both sides will act immediately to return the situation to that which existed prior to the current crisis, in areas such as restoring law and order, redeployment of forces, eliminating points of friction, enhancing security cooperation, and ending the closure and opening the Gaza airport. The United States will facilitate security cooperation between the parties as needed.

Second, the United States will develop, with the Israelis and Palestinians as well as in consultation with the United Nations Secretary-General, a committee of factfinding on the events of the past several weeks and how to prevent their recurrence. The committee's report will be shared by the U.S. President with the U.N. Secretary-General and the parties prior to publication. A final report shall be submitted under the auspices of the U.S. President for publication.

Third, if we are to address the underlying roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there must be a pathway back to negotiations and a resumption of efforts to reach a permanent status agreement based on the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and subsequent understandings. Toward this end, the leaders have agreed that the United States would consult with the parties within the next 2 weeks about how to move forward.

We have made important commitments here today against the backdrop of tragedy and crisis. We should have no illusions about the difficulties ahead.

If we are going to rebuild confidence and trust, we must all do our part, avoiding recrimination and moving forward. I'm counting on each of us to do everything we possibly can in the critical period ahead.

I am sure it will be a disappointment to some of you, but one of the things that all the leaders agreed was that our statement should stand on

its own and we should begin by promoting reconciliation and avoiding conflict by forgoing questions today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: President Mubarak spoke at 1:43 p.m. at the Jolie Ville Golf Resort. In their remarks, the two Presidents referred to King Abdullah II of Jordan; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and European Union Council Secretary General Javier Solana, High Representative for the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. President Mubarak spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Death of Governor Mel Carnahan

October 17, 2000

Hillary and I were very saddened to learn of the tragic death of my friend Governor Mel Carnahan, his son Randy, and his aide Chris Sifford. Mel devoted his life to his family, his State, and our Nation. Whether in the Air Force or the State legislature, as Lieutenant Governor or Governor, he always put the highest priority on serving others.

In his last campaign, Mel Carnahan, as always, gave everything he had for what he believed in. He loved politics and public service, and his extraordinary record proved they can be noble endeavors. For many years now, I have been proud to call Mel Carnahan my partner, and prouder still to call him my friend.

Hillary and I send our deepest condolences to his wonderful wife, Jean, to Russ, Robin, Tom, and the rest of his family, to the other families whose loved ones perished, and to the people of Missouri, whom he loved so much and served so well.

Statement on Signing the Children's Health Act of 2000

October 17, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law the Children's Health Act of 2000. This bipartisan legislation builds on my administration's longstanding commitment to improve the health and well-being of our Nation's children. I am particularly pleased that this legislation provides new authority to expand research for the treatment of chronic and acute diseases affecting children, improve the safety of child care centers, and ensure safe and quality mental health treatment services. This important legislation also addresses the critical need for substance abuse and mental health services, especially for our Nation's youth, through the reauthorization of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), supporting State and community efforts to reduce youth drug use, and improving research and treatment services. In addition, the legislation will allow us to strengthen our efforts to curtail the emerging use of the drugs methamphetamine and Ecstasy, which imperil the health and safety of our nation's young people.

I want to pay special tribute to my administration's number one advocate for children, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. Hillary has called the Nation's attention to the special health needs of children through her work on children's health insurance coverage, asthma, pediatric labeling, juvenile diabetes, and so much more. She has led the administration's effort to improve access to health care for children, has fought hard for improving the quality and safety of child care, and has done more than anyone to improve the lives of millions of our Nation's children.

NOTE: H.R. 4365, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106-310.

Statement on Signing the Children's Health Act of 2000

October 17, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4365, the "Children's Health Act of 2000." This legislation authorizes expanded research and services for a wide variety of childhood and prenatal health problems, reauthorizes programs of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and addresses the problem of substance abuse and associated violence.

This Act calls on HHS to continue providing services to children whose lives have been affected by diseases such as diabetes, asthma, lead poisoning, cancer, and autism, and to expand research in these and other areas such as birth defects and brain injuries so that we can better understand their causes and develop treatments. I am pleased that H.R. 4365 authorizes a new research effort, a national long-term study of environmental influences on children's health and development, that will provide critical information about environmental, social, and economic factors that affect children's health. We hope that with increased understanding of children's diseases, we will get closer to ultimately finding cures or preventing these conditions from ever occurring. I am gratified to see that this bill's focus on children's health addresses several priority areas identified by the President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children.

I am also pleased that H.R. 4365 authorizes new funds to improve the health and safety of children in child care. Available, affordable, safe, high-quality child care is a concern for any working parent. I have committed my Administration to achieving this goal, and today we are making substantial strides forward.

As a Nation, we continue to face the challenges of curbing substance abuse, especially among our youth, preventing youth violence, and addressing the mental health needs of our citizens. For this reason, I am especially proud of the comprehensive manner in which this legislation addresses illegal drug abuse, beginning with the reauthorization of SAMHSA. The Act will improve mental health and substance abuse services for children and adolescents by authorizing grants for youth drug treatment and early intervention, suicide prevention, and programs to help children deal with violence, and will address the mental health needs of individuals in the criminal justice system. The bill also lays the groundwork for giving States even more flexibility in the use of block grant funds in exchange for greater accountability.

This bill includes a provision making clear that religious organizations may qualify for SAMHSA's substance abuse prevention and treatment grants on the same basis as other nonprofit organizations. The Department of Justice advises, however, that this provision would be unconstitutional to the extent that it were construed to permit governmental funding of organizations that do not or cannot separate their religious activities from their substance abuse treatment and prevention activities that are supported by SAMHSA aid. Accordingly, I construe the Act as forbidding the funding of such organizations and as permitting Federal, State, and local governments involved in disbursing SAMHSA funds to take into account the structure and operations of a religious organization in determining whether such an organization is constitutionally and statutorily eligible to receive funding.

The Act also builds upon our ongoing efforts to address the emerging threats posed by methamphetamine and Ecstasy use, especially among our Nation's youth. It makes medical treatments for heroin addiction more available and accessible by allowing qualified physicians to prescribe certain medications in their offices, and avoids the centralized clinic approach that many addicts find inaccessible and stigmatizing. In addition to expanding drug treatment, including innovations in medication development, the bill supports increased resources for drug programs in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. This legislation also supports our law enforcement entities as they carry out their responsibilities to make certain that those who traffic in these deadly poisons are taken off the streets and are punished in a manner commensurate with the seriousness of their offenses.

The programs contained in this bill to improve and expand research and services for our children's physical and mental health, and to

prevent substance abuse and violence, are important investments in the well-being of our Nation. For these reasons, I am pleased to sign H.R. 4365.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 17, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4365, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106–310.

Statement on Signing the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance and International Anti-Corruption Act of 2000

October 17, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1143, the "Microenterprise for Self-Reliance and International Anti-Corruption Act of 2000." The primary purpose of this legislation is to authorize continued and expanded efforts to provide assistance to the world's poorest entrepreneurs. The Act is the result of a long process of collaboration and negotiation among Members of Congress, my Administration, and the nonprofit microenterprise community represented by the Microenterprise Coalition. I congratulate all who worked on this bipartisan, public-private effort.

I am proud that my Administration has put microenterprise development and democratizing access to capital on the national and international agenda. When I was Governor of Arkansas, the First Lady and I encouraged and supported some of the first microenterprise programs in the United States. Thanks to the work of pioneering microenterprise development organizations around the world, all of us have come to appreciate the potential of microenterprise as means to empower poor people, especially women, to help themselves and their families.

Microenterprise programs help self-employed entrepreneurs obtain loans for small business enterprises to begin the process of growing out of poverty. Without microenterprise programs administered by the Agency for International Development and many nongovernmental organizations, these poor entrepreneurs abroad would not be able to borrow the small amount of money needed to get their repair shops, sewing shops, or similar businesses, off the ground. This is not a gift to these entrepreneurs, it is a loan. And experience has shown that these small loans are repaid and, in the process, these small-scale enterprises generate income and jobs for poor families.

This Act also represents a breakthrough in recognizing the value of business development services to the very poorest entrepreneurs. To many poor entrepreneurs, basic training and technical assistance in running a business can be as important as a loan.

In addition, H.R. 1143 authorizes a range of programs to promote good governance and democratization overseas. The United States has long encouraged and funded programs that foster an independent media, establish audit offices for executive agencies, and promote judicial reform. This legislation contains authority to provide assistance in furtherance of these programs to countries that would otherwise be prohibited from receiving U.S. assistance. While no direct assistance to the governments of such countries can be provided under this authority, the legislation and its history make clear that assistance to such governments through nongovernmental organizations would be permissible.

The Act also contains the "Support for Overseas Cooperative Development Act," which expresses support for the development and expansion of U.S. economic assistance programs abroad that fully utilize cooperatives and credit unions. My Administration and the Congress value and support the direct involvement of U.S. cooperative organizations in transferring their knowledge to local cooperatives in countries overseas.

Lastly, I note that H.R. 1143 includes the "International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000," which authorizes the Department of State to establish a grant program, to be called the "Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships." These scholarships will enable American undergraduate students of limited financial

means to study abroad, and better prepare them to compete in an increasingly global economy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

October 17, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 1143, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106–309.

Statement on Signing the American Competitiveness in the Twenty-First Century Act and Non-Immigrant Worker Fee Legislation

October 17, 2000

I am pleased today to sign into law S. 2045, the "American Competitiveness in the Twenty-First Century Act," and H.R. 5362, an Act to increase the fees charged to employers who petition to employ H–1B non-immigrant workers. Together, these laws increase the number of H–1B visas available to bring in highly skilled foreign temporary workers and double the fee charged to employers using the program to provide critical funding for training U.S. workers and students. The Acts recognize the importance of allowing additional skilled workers into the United States to work in the short-run, while supporting longer-term efforts to prepare American workers for the jobs of the new economy.

At the core of my economic strategy has been the belief that fiscal discipline and freeing up capital for private sector investment must be accompanied by a commitment to invest in human capital. The growing demand for workers with high-tech skills is a dramatic illustration of the need to "put people first" and increase our investments in education and training. Today, many companies are reporting that their number one constraint on growth is the inability to hire workers with the necessary skills. In today's knowledge-based economy, what you earn depends on what you learn. Jobs in the information technology sector, for example, pay 85 percent more than the private sector average.

My Administration has made clear that any increase in H–1B visas should be temporary and limited in number, that the fee charged to employers using the program should be increased significantly, and that the majority of the funds generated by the fee must go to the Department of Labor to fund training for U.S. workers seeking the necessary skills for these jobs. This legislation does those things. But the need to educate and train workers for these high-skilled jobs goes beyond what has been addressed here.

I want to challenge the high-tech companies to redouble their efforts to find long-term solutions to the rapidly growing demand for workers with technical skills. This will require doing more to improve K–12 science and math education, upgrading the skills of our existing workforce, and recruiting from underrepresented groups such as older workers, minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and residents of rural areas. Many companies have important initiatives in these areas, but we clearly need to be doing more.

This legislation contains a number of provisions that merit concern. For example, one provision allows an H–1B visa holder to work for an employer who has not yet been approved for participation in the H–1B program. In addition, there are provisions that could have the unintended consequence of allowing an H–1B visa holder who is applying for a permanent visa to remain in H–1B status well beyond the current 6-year limit. I am concerned that these provisions could weaken existing protections that ensure that the H1–B program does not undercut the wages and working conditions of U.S. workers, and could also increase the vulnerability of H–1B workers to any unscrupulous employers using the program. For example, one of the key requirements of the H–1B program is that the foreign worker is paid the same wage as U.S. workers doing the same job. This legislation, however, by allowing H–1B workers to change employers before a new employer's application has been approved, could result in an employer—knowingly or unknowingly—not paying the prevailing wage. For these reasons, I am directing the Immigration and Naturalization Service, in consultation with the Department of

State and the Department of Labor, to closely monitor the impact of these provisions to determine whether the next congress should revisit these changes made to the H–1B program.

I had hoped that the Congress would take this opportunity to address important issues of fairness affecting many immigrants already in this country. We need to meet the needs of the high-tech industry by raising the number of visas for temporary high-tech workers. But we also must ensure fairness for immigrants who have been in this country for years, working hard and paying taxes. The Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act (LIFA) will allow people who have lived here for 15 years or more—and who have established families and strong ties to their communities—to become permanent residents. It will also amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to extend the same protections currently offered to people from Cuba and Nicaragua to immigrants from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, and Liberia who fled to this country to escape serious hardship. Finally, it will allow families to stay together while their applications for permanent resident status are being processed. These fundamental fairness provisions have been embraced by humanitarian groups, business groups, and Members of the Congress from both sides of the aisle. I will continue to insist strongly on passage of the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act this year, before the Congress adjourns.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 17, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2045, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106–313, and H.R. 5362, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106–311.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Railroad Retirement Board

October 17, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Railroad Retirement Board for Fiscal Year 1999, 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,
October 17, 2000.

Remarks at the President's Cup Dinner

October 17, 2000

Thank you very much. I'm sorry to be the only person here who is not properly dressed. [*Laughter*] But as Tim said, I just got off the airplane, and I wanted to come by and welcome you to Washington and say how thrilled I am to be the honorary chair of the President's Cup this year. I'm pleased we're going back to RTJ and that my friend and golfing partner Vernon Jordan is the president of the club, so he'll let me on to walk around a little and watch you.

I want to thank Ken Venturi and Peter Thomson for serving as the captains of the teams. And I want to thank Tim Finchem who, like Vernon, has been a friend of mine for well over 20 years, for the outstanding leadership he provides the PGA.

I'm delighted to have you here, and I want to say a special word of appreciation for the work the President's Cup does, first, to raise money for worthy charities. When you finish this year, you will have raised over $6 million

in the last four Cups for worthy causes. And I'm very grateful for that, and you should be proud of it.

You know, like all ardent golfers, I sometimes go over the top in explaining to people why golf is like life or why life ought to be more like golf. But I would like to say, as you know, I just went to Sharm al-Sheikh in Egypt to try to reach an agreement to end the violence that we've seen in the Palestinian territories in Israel for the last couple of weeks. I don't know if any of you have ever been there, but it is one of the most beautiful places on Earth, and it is exploding in development because the climate is so perfect. And I sat there for a day and a half, didn't sleep, and all our meetings were conducted on the edge of one of the most beautiful golf courses I've ever seen in my life. [*Laughter*] So I thought to myself, "Why am I being punished for the fact that I can't solve this problem here?"

But what it made me think of coming back here is that we all come from countries which at one time or another had significant internal strife, where people had to overcome their differences. I was very moved, when I saw Greg at the closing ceremony of the Olympics, by the incredible way that Australia not only welcomed the Olympics but used the Olympics to show the healing process that has gone on between the aboriginal people and the other citizens of Australia.

Everybody knows now that America is becoming the great melting pot of the world. And it's well to remember that the kind of understanding that you have, the idea that people play by certain rules, and if you do, everybody is treated with equal respect, is really the way the world ought to work and the kind of idea we're trying to bring to all the troubled places in the world but most importantly to the Middle East, which ironically is the home to all three of the world's great monotheistic religions and is still one of the most bedeviled places on the planet.

I hope you have a great time over the next several days. I hope that no matter who wins or who loses, that you'll show the world one more example of how our common humanity is more important than our interesting diversity. I'll look forward to seeing you tomorrow at the opening ceremony.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. in the Main Hall at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Finchem, commissioner, PGA Tour; Vernon Jordan, president, Robert Trent Jones Golf Club; Ken Venturi, U.S. team captain, and Peter Thomson, international team captain, President's Cup tournament; and professional golfer Greg Norman.

Remarks at the Memorial Service for Crewmembers of the U.S.S. *Cole* in Norfolk, Virginia

October 18, 2000

The President. Secretary Cohen; General Reno; Secretary Danzig; General Shelton; distinguished Members of the Senate and House; Governor; Admiral Clark; Admiral Natter; Chaplain Black; Master Chief Herdt; Master Chief Hefty; the sailors of the U.S.S. *Cole;* the family members and friends; the Norfolk naval community; my fellow Americans. Today we honor our finest young people, fallen soldiers who rose to freedom's challenge. We mourn their loss, celebrate their lives, offer the love and prayers of a grateful nation to their families.

For those of us who have to speak here, we are all mindful of the limits of our poor words to lift your spirits or warm your hearts. We know that God has given us the gift of reaching our middle years. And we now have to pray for your children, your husbands, your wives, your brothers, your sisters who were taken so young. We know we will never know them as you did or remember them as you will, the first time you saw them in uniform or the last time you said goodbye.

They all had their own stories and their own dreams. We Americans have learned something

about each and every one of them over these last difficult days as their profiles, their lives, their loves, their service have been given to us. For me, I learned a little more when I met with all the families this morning.

Some follow the family tradition of Navy service; others hoped to use their service to earn a college degree. One of them had even worked for me in the White House: Richard Costelow was a technology wizard who helped to update the White House communications system for this new century.

All these very different Americans, all with their different stories, their lifelines and love ties, answered the same call of service and found themselves on the U.S.S. *Cole,* headed for the Persian Gulf, where our forces are working to keep peace and stability in a region that could explode and disrupt the entire world.

Their tragic loss reminds us that even when America is not at war, the men and women of our military still risk their lives for peace. I am quite sure history will record in great detail our triumphs in battle, but I regret that no one will ever be able to write a full account of the wars we never fought, the losses we never suffered, the tears we never shed because men and women like those who were on the U.S.S. *Cole* were standing guard for peace. We should never, ever forget that.

Today I ask all Americans just to take a moment to thank the men and women of our Armed Forces for a debt we can never repay, whose character and courage, more than even modern weapons, makes our military the strongest in the world. And in particular, I ask us to thank God today for the lives, the character, and courage of the crew of the U.S.S. *Cole,* including the wounded and especially those we lost or are missing: Hull Maintenance Technician Third Class Kenneth Eugene Clodfelter; Electronics Technician Chief Petty Officer First Class Richard Costelow; Mess Management Specialist Seaman Lakeina Monique Francis; Information Systems Technician Seaman Timothy Lee Gauna; Signalman Seaman Apprentice Cherone Louis Gunn; Seaman James Rodrick McDaniels; Engineman Second Class Mark Ian Nieto; Electronics Warfare Technician Third Class Ronald Scott Owens; Seaman Apprentice Lakiba Nicole Palmer; Engine Fireman Joshua Langdon Parlett; Fireman Apprentice Patrick Howard Roy; Electronics Warfare Technician Second Class Kevin Shawn Rux; Mess Management Specialist Third Class Ronchester Manangan Santiago; Operations Specialist Second Class Timothy Lamont Saunders; Fireman Gary Graham Swenchonis, Jr; Ensign Andrew Triplett; Seaman Apprentice Craig Bryan Wibberley.

In the names and faces of those we lost and mourn, the world sees our Nation's greatest strength: people in uniform rooted in every race, creed, and region on the face of the Earth, yet bound together by a common commitment to freedom and a common pride in being American. That same spirit is living today as the crew of the U.S.S. *Cole* pulls together in a determined struggle to keep the determined warrior afloat.

The idea of common humanity and unity amidst diversity, so purely embodied by those we mourn today, must surely confound the minds of the hate-filled terrorists who killed them. They envy our strength without understanding the values that give us strength. For, for them, it is their way or no way—their interpretation, twisted though it may be, of a beautiful religious tradition; their political views; their racial and ethnic views—their way or no way.

Such people can take innocent life. They have caused your tears and anguish, but they can never heal or build harmony or bring people together. That is work only free, law-abiding people can do, people like the sailors of the U.S.S. *Cole*.

To those who attacked them, we say: You will not find a safe harbor. We will find you, and justice will prevail. America will not stop standing guard for peace or freedom or stability in the Middle East and around the world.

But some way, someday, people must learn the lesson of the lives of those we mourn today, of how they worked together, of how they lived together, of how they reached across all the lines that divided them and embraced their common humanity and the common values of freedom and service.

Not far from here, there is a quiet place that honors those who gave their lives in service to our country. Adorning its entrance are words from a poem by Archibald MacLeish, not only a tribute to the young we lost but a summons to those of us left behind. Listen to them.

> The young no longer speak, but:
>
> They have a silence that speaks for them at night.

> They say: We were young. Remember us.
>
> They say: We have done what we could, but until it is finished, it is not done.
>
> They say: Our deaths are not ours; they are yours; they will mean what you make them.
>
> They say: Whether our lives and our deaths were for peace and a new hope, we cannot say; it is you who must say this.
>
> They say: We leave you our deaths. Give them their meaning.

The lives of the men and women we lost on the U.S.S. *Cole* meant so much to those who loved them, to all Americans, to the cause of freedom. They have given us their deaths. Let us give them their meaning: their meaning of peace and freedom, of reconciliation and love, of service, endurance, and hope. After all they have given us, we must give them their meaning.

I ask now that you join me in a moment of silence and prayer for the lost, the missing, and their grieving families.

[*At this point, those gathered observed a moment of silence.*]

The President. Amen.

Thank you, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. on Pier 12. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia; Adm. Barry C. Black, USN, Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Navy, who gave the invocation; Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James L. Herdt, USN; Master Chief Thomas B. Hefty, USN, U.S. Atlantic Fleet Master Chief. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Adm. Robert J. Natter, USN, Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; Adm. Vern Clark, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig; Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Secretary of Defense William Cohen. The related proclamations of October 12 and October 16 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Opening Ceremonies of the 2000 President's Cup in Lake Manassas, Virginia

October 18, 2000

Thank you. Thank you very much, Dan. Governor, Commissioner Finchem, Captain Venturi, Captain Thomson, and the American and international teams, ladies and gentlemen, I want to begin by saying how privileged I feel to be the honorary chairman of this tournament and to be here on this magnificent fall day at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Club, where my friend Vernon Jordan and I have spent so many happy days playing golf.

As a gesture of good will, I left my clubs home today. [*Laughter*] Actually, I offered to play on the American team, but when I had to confess I have never broken 80 on this course—even from the white tees—I was immediately rejected, showing how much the world has changed since President Johnson said, "There's one lesson you better learn if you want to be in politics: Never go out on a golf course and beat the President." [*Laughter*] I keep passing that out, even to strangers, and no one takes it seriously anymore. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to all of you, I love the President's Cup—the greatest players from around the world and here in the United States playing for sheer love of the game and competition, pride of nation, donating their winnings to their favorite charities. After this year, the four President's Cup competitions will have raised more than $6 million for 100 charities to fund schools and hospitals, to fight disease, to teach young people not only the skills but the sportsmanship of golf. That is the genius of the President's Cup, and I thank all of you who are part of that.

If I might, I'd also like to say a word in my capacity as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. I want to thank Captain Venturi and the American team members for wearing the black arm bands in honor of those who perished aboard the U.S.S. *Cole.* I spent the

morning with the families of the fallen and injured sailors and their larger Navy family in Norfolk.

Like the golfers here, they come from many different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Like you, they stood for our common humanity and those who want to build a world where we bridge our differences and celebrate our diversity. When you play in this tournament with honor and by the rules, respecting the character and ability of your opponents, you show the world, including those rooting hard for you, the way we all ought to live and work. You offer another rebuke, although gentle and gentlemanly, to those who believe our differences are more important than our common humanity.

I ask you to say a little prayer for those folks tonight. This is a tough day for them. Almost all those 17 sailors were very young, just beginning life's journey. But they were proud of what they did, and what they did and what their successors do today is very important. May God bless them and their families.

Now, as the honorary chairman, my first order of business is to declare this tournament officially open. Secondly, I have been informed—much against my better instincts—to declare this a no-mulligans zone. [*Laughter*] Now, I would like to invite the two captains up here to join me for a presentation and before the Cup.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:58 p.m. at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Club. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia; Tim Finchem, commissioner, PGA Tour; Ken Venturi, U.S. team captain, and Peter Thomson, international team captain; and Vernon Jordan, president, Robert Trent Jones Golf Club.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Reports of the Department of Transportation

October 18, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the Department of Transportation's Calendar Year 1998 reports on Activities Under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the Highway Safety Act of 1966, and the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act of 1972, as amended.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

October 18, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 19.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

October 18, 2000

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

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1 as amended by Public Law 106–113) 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. My last report, consistent with Public Law 102–1, was dated July 17, 2000. I shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 October 19.

Remarks to the Democratic Caucus
October 19, 2000

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome. I want to begin by saying that it has been a profound honor for me to work with this caucus over the last 8 years. I want to thank Tom Daschle, who has been wonderful; and Dick Gephardt, whom I knew well before I became President, but we have, I think, built a great friendship, a deeper one, in these last 8 years. And I'm so proud of him.

I want to say to all of you that I believe that in these last 2 weeks and 6 days before the election, the best politics is for us to get as much done as we can for America here in the Congress of the United States. And in the process of doing that, I think what we ought to seek to do is to bring clarity to this debate.

It looks to me like our friends on the other side in Congress have adopted their Presidential strategy. Their Presidential strategy—now their congressional strategy—is cloud the issues. Things are doing well. They will get by. Our strategy should be, clarify the issues, and we'll win big. That is clearly the difference.

I was very proud of the performance of the Vice President in that last debate. I thought he was great, trying to bring clarity. But you've got to give it to the other side. As hard as we try to bring clarity, they're real good at clouding up. I almost gagged when I heard that answer on the Patients' Bill of Rights in Texas. Could you believe that? Here's a guy who takes credit for a bill that he vetoed. And then, finally, the guys that were helping him say, "If you want to be President, you can't veto a Patients' Bill of Rights, or people will look dimly on it. So you'd better let it pass." And then he was bragging about how you have a right to sue in Texas. Did you hear that? Do you know how that got in? Without his signature. He sort of—so they're real good. They cloud. And I've been reading in the press, apparently no one thinks that was an exaggeration or something that was troubling, but it sort of bothered me.

And then there is their great argument that you've done nothing about health care in 8 years. Look, when we came in, Medicare was going broke last year. Now, we put 27 years on it—I think, the longest it's been alive in 35 years—not to mention the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, the Children's Health Insurance Program, which is what has given us a decline in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in 12 years.

Then there was the education recession argument. You know, one of the things I admire about our Republican friends is that evidence has no impact on them. [*Laughter*] And you've kind of got to respect that. They know what they believe, and they know what they're going to say, and, "Don't bother me with the facts."

What are the facts? The dropout rate's down. The high school graduation rate's up. The college-going rate's at an all-time high. Reading and math scores are up. There's been about a 50 percent increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement courses, but a 300 percent increase in Latino children taking advanced placement courses, and a 500 percent increase in African-American kids taking advanced placement courses.

Then there was that argument that—the one that tickled me the most was, "Well, the wealthiest Americans have to get tax relief, because we're giving tax relief, and what do you expect us to do? I mean, I'd just be the President. I can't make decisions about this." [*Laughter*] That was their argument, wasn't it? I mean, "Who are we to make decisions? We can't make judgments and choices. I mean, if you're for tax relief, you just sort of put it out there, and people just kind of come along and get whatever they get. But we didn't decide to give it to them. We were for tax relief, and it just happened. I mean, how could we possibly make a decision here? I mean, whoever heard of a

President and a Congress making a decision? I never heard of such a thing."

What's the point of all this? What's the point of all this? They are really good at cloudiness. And we have to be good at a clear weather forecast. And we have to be true to what we said we showed up here to do. We've got to get everything done we can before the Congress goes home, and then what's left, we need to take to the American people with clarity.

But if you just keep this in mind—you know, you've got to have a lot of sympathy with them, because the country is so much better off than it was 8 years ago. And our economic policy, our education policy, our environmental policy, our health care policy, our welfare policy, our crime policy—there are big differences between ours and theirs. And we tried it our way, and it got better. We tried it their way, and it didn't. So they have no choice but to be cloudy. We have no choice but to be clear.

But you have to understand that it's quite a smart strategy on their part, and they're very good at it. So what we have to do is be clear. For example, they say they're coming back Monday night. We're going to work all day Tuesday, and we're going to work Wednesday. And if we don't quit, I'm going to one-day CR's, one day, every day. You've got to finish.

Can you imagine a Democrat going home and running for reelection saying, "Vote for me so that next year I can finish last year's business?" [*Laughter*] Now, we wouldn't do that. And we shouldn't let anybody do that. We need to stay here until we resolve this.

We want 100,000 teachers. We want the school construction funds. We want funds to turn around or shut down failing schools and open them under new management. We want the funds to double our after-school programs. We now got more information, just last week, another study on how much good they do. We've got 800,000 kids in those programs. If our budget passes, there will be enough for 1.6 million kids.

And we want the minimum wage, and we want the hate crimes legislation, and we want the immigrant fairness legislation. We want these things. I think they're important. And the American people ought to have no doubt when we leave here, if we don't get the Patients' Bill of Rights, it's not because we didn't break our backs for it. It's because their interest groups wouldn't let them pass it.

And let me just mention one other issue I think has gotten sort of swept aside in this debate. In addition to the minimum wage, we have legislation to strengthen the law to guarantee equal pay for equal work for women, and I think we ought to be out there talking to the American people about that.

And let me just say one or two other things. We worked hard here. We lost a lot of seats in 1994 because we worked hard to turn this deficit around. And we believed that we could get rid of the deficit, increase investment in education, and strengthen the economy, in no small measure, by keeping interest rates down, which would lead to higher growth.

Now, look, one of the things I think that all of you ought to do when you go home is to say—acknowledge very frankly that their tax cut is 3 times bigger than the one we're advocating, at least. Now, virtually all people with incomes of under $100,000 a year would be better off under our proposal, but still, theirs is 3 times bigger. But there's a reason for that. We do not believe we can possibly afford to go back to the kind of economic policies we had in the 12 years before we got here. We do not believe it is good for America to get back in the deficit ditch. And whatever you think this surplus is going to be over the next decade, I promise you it's going to be less than a $1.6 trillion tax cut plus a $1 trillion partial privatization of Social Security plus the $300 billion or $400 billion they've promised us to spend.

Now, I believe a careful analysis of both proposals will show you that if the Vice President and the Democratic plan passes, you'll have interest rates lower every year, probably about a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth? Three hundred ninety billion dollars over 10 years in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, never mind the lower credit card payments, never mind the lower business loan payments, lower farm loan payments, more people, therefore, going to work, more businesses doing well, a higher stock market.

Our tax cut for all Americans is lower interest rates, because we're not going to get out of the kind of trouble that they had. I just think you need to go out here and get everything done you can. I will stay here with you. If we don't finish by Wednesday, we're going to day-

by-day continuing resolutions. We'll do everything we possibly can to pass all this education agenda, to pass as much of our health care agenda we can, and to do it in a fiscally responsible way.

But when you leave here, you just think about this. Tell people to remember the way it was 8 years ago; to think about the way it is now; to look at the changes in crime, welfare, the environment, health care, and the economy; and to ask yourself not whether we're going to keep changing but what direction will we change in? The country's changing so fast and the world is changing so fast, change will be the order of the day next year and 5 years from now and 10 years from now. The issue is not whether we're going to change; it is, which direction will we take as we change?

And you just think about—think of yourself as America's weather corps. They want cloudy, and you want clear. [*Laughter*] And if you can bring clarity to this debate, you get more done here. Then I'll stay with you every step of the way, and we'll all have a great celebration in about 3 weeks.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room at the Cannon Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Statement on Congressional Action on Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Legislation

October 19, 2000

I am pleased that Congress today passed a VA/HUD bill that will open the doors of opportunity in America for those who need it most, improve veterans' medical care, build on our agenda for national energy security, and strengthen our commitment to the environment.

This legislation builds on my opportunity agenda with increased funding for economic development through empowerment zones and enterprise communities and community development financial institutions—all part of my new markets initiative—and with 79,000 new housing vouchers for low-income families. This agreement also increases support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's emergency food and shelter programs, which work with States and communities to help the homeless and hungry. We are also strengthening our commitment to national service with additional support for the Corporation for National and Community Service, the first increase since the inception of this critical volunteer agency in 1993.

With this legislation, we also support the significant expansion of cutting-edge basic scientific research at the National Science Foundation. This includes research in nano-technology—the manipulation of matter at the molecular and atomic level—which holds the promise of scientific breakthroughs in a wide range of fields. It also advances scientific research through support for space exploration at NASA.

Especially at this time of elevated fuel prices, I am also pleased that this bill provides resources for technologies to increase fuel efficiency, an essential part of our long-term strategy to reduce dependence on oil. This bill also contains increased funding for enforcement of the Nation's environmental laws and for the cleanup of polluted waterways. In addition, it drops or fixes several objectionable riders that threatened to harm our environment. Yet, while we were able to ameliorate the impact of the remaining riders, we were not able to rid this bill entirely of objectionable provisions, in particular the rider relating to ozone.

This legislation also provides the additional $1.5 billion I requested for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest increase ever requested by any administration. This funding will support efforts to improve veterans' medical care and the delivery of key services, including disability benefits.

I also am pleased that, in response to my veto, Congress has dropped a rider on the Energy/Water bill that would have undermined key

environmental protections by preventing a return to more natural flows on the Missouri River. These forward steps are clear proof of the progress we can achieve when we work together to address the Nation's priorities.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh
October 19, 2000

Today, in their first meeting since President Clinton's historic trip to Bangladesh in March, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and President Clinton renewed and strengthened the excellent ties enjoyed by our two democracies and expressed their conviction that U.S.-Bangladeshi relations should deepen and broaden in the years ahead. The two leaders also expressed satisfaction with continuing constructive consultations between government officials of both countries.

The United States and Bangladesh are two of the world's most populous democracies. In keeping with the commitment to democracy our two nations enthusiastically endorsed in Warsaw in June 2000, Bangladesh and the United States expressed their common commitment to the free and fair conduct of elections, strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law. The President appreciated the Prime Minister's reiteration of her commitment to strengthening democracy and democratic institutions and the expression of her determination to further encourage efforts for independent election monitoring, particularly for national elections under a caretaker government.

The President expressed satisfaction and appreciation for Bangladesh's role in fostering international peace and cooperation, as well as the Prime Minister's efforts to reduce tensions in the South Asian region. The two leaders agreed it is essential for the United States and Bangladesh to coordinate positions on major issues that come before the United Nations Security Council and other international fora. Regarding the Middle East, the two leaders lauded the call, made at Sharm el-Sheikh, for an end to violence and resumed efforts toward peace. The President also praised Bangladesh's significant commitment to international peacekeeping. The Prime Minister assured the President that Bangladesh will maintain this commitment and will actively support a United Nations Scale of Assessment reform that will place that organization on a solid financial footing. The two leaders discussed their mutual interest in promoting greater cooperation in regional fora, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The President pointed to the settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts conflict and the Ganges Water Sharing Agreement as excellent examples of peacemaking and dispute resolution in the region.

The President expressed satisfaction that Bangladesh was the first country in South Asia to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and reaffirmed the American intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at its earliest possible date. Both leaders welcomed the work of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization's Preparatory Organization in establishing a seismic auxiliary station in Chittagong. They welcomed the extension of our bilateral Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy Agreement. The Prime Minister expressed Bangladesh's interest in participating in the United States' program to dispose of spent fuel.

The Prime Minister and President noted with satisfaction the significant improvement in U.S.-Bangladesh economic relations over the last several years, in which continuing development assistance has been accompanied by a rapid increase of American investment and an increase in bilateral trade. The President praised the rise of Bangladesh as a partner in development, a supporter of private/public partnerships, and a participant in the world economy. The leaders emphasized the positive effect the implementation of investor-friendly policies has on attracting foreign investment. The Prime Minister and President welcomed progress on the conclusion of negotiations on gas production and exploration in east-central Bangladesh. Given the important role that natural gas can play in Bangladesh's development, the two leaders applauded the work of Petrobangla and the United

States Geological Survey in estimating Bangladesh's gas resources. The Prime Minister stated that these resources will be used to accelerate Bangladesh's economic development and improve the lives of its people.

The Prime Minister stressed that the garment sector has been an engine of growth in Bangladesh, providing employment to nearly two million women. Considering the importance of the textile sector in the economy of Bangladesh, the Prime Minister asked the President to provide more preferential access to Bangladeshi exports to the United States.

The two leaders shared their common commitment to continuing liberalization of international trade within the context of the World Trade Organization. Noting that the efficiency of Bangladesh's port facilities is a critical factor in enhancing Bangladesh's opportunities in world trade, the two leaders welcomed progress in negotiations for building a new container port terminal and expressed the hope that an agreement could be signed at an early date.

The two leaders discussed Bangladesh's potential in the field of information technology and the President invited Bangladesh to participate as a partner country in the Internet for Economic Development (IED) Initiative. They pledged to work for the early conclusion of a tax treaty between Bangladesh and the United States. Finally, the two leaders agreed to take steps to liberalize air services.

The President voiced his strong support for actions already underway in Bangladesh to improve the lives of the working poor, especially women. The Prime Minister and President expressed their joint commitment to promote internationally recognized labor rights and improve working conditions. They noted with satisfaction the work of the International Labor Organization in Bangladesh, supported by the United States Department of Labor. They recognized the pioneering role played by Bangladesh in efforts to eliminate child labor in the garment industry. They agreed on the global need to fight child labor and trafficking in women and children and expressed confidence in new international and United States programs that will address this issue in South Asia. The President applauded the Prime Minister's commitment to conclude the process of ratification of ILO convention 182 this year. The President encouraged the Prime Minister to establish internationally-recognized labor rights in its export processing zones, and affirmed the American commitment to assist in this process.

The United States and Bangladesh agreed to cooperate closely in the fight against international crime, narcotics trafficking and terrorism. The two leaders agreed to build on law enforcement cooperation with further training and consultation, particularly in combating crimes of violence against women. They recognized the need for improvements in Bangladesh's police force and prisons and agreed to explore ways in which police professionalism and prison conditions could be improved.

The President and Prime Minister noted with satisfaction that progress has been made toward the negotiation of an extradition treaty and agreed to facilitate an early conclusion of work on it.

On the environment, the leaders welcome the establishment of a Tropical Forest Conservation Fund, the first of its kind in the world, to enable bilateral debt relief to be used to preserve unique ecosystems and protect the global environment.

They welcomed the signing of an agreement to enable Bangladesh to participate in the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) initiative.

They welcomed the Clean Energy Agreement signed by representatives of the two governments.

The two leaders expressed concern at the serious danger posed by arsenic contamination to the people of Bangladesh and noted the United States Geological Survey's work on the arsenic groundwater problem in Bangladesh, and the grants of the Trade and Development Agency and the National Science Foundation to conduct research in this area.

The two leaders encouraged cooperation between Bangladesh business people and investors and their American counterparts. The leaders remarked on the success of the newly reestablished Peace Corps program in Bangladesh and agreed to explore how this program could be expanded. The Prime Minister noted the interest of Bangladesh students in expanding opportunities for higher education in the United States. The Prime Minister and the President paid tribute to the contributions of Bangladesh immigrants to the United States in improving our commercial ties and cultural exchanges. Bangladesh traditions, heritage, and talents are

a rich contribution to American life, further enhancing the growing relationship between our two societies.

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

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia

October 19, 2000

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 significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond October 21, 2000.

The circumstances that led to the declaration on October 21, 1995, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause unparalleled violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain economic pressures on significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia by blocking their property subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and by depriving them of access to the United States market and financial system.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 19, 2000.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on a Resolution on Armenian Genocide

October 19, 2000

Dear Speaker Hastert:

I am writing to you to express my deep concern about H. Res. 596, dealing with the tragic events in eastern Anatolia under Ottoman rule in the years 1915-1923.

Every year on April 24, I have commemorated Armenian Remembrance Day, mourning the deportations and massacres of innocent Armenians during that era. And every year, I have challenged all Americans to recommit themselves to ensuring that such horrors never occur again.

However, I am deeply concerned that consideration of H. Res. 596 at this time could have far-reaching negative consequences for the United States. We have significant interests in this troubled region of the world: containing the threat posed by Saddam Hussein; working for peace and stability in the Middle East and Central Asia; stabilizing the Balkans; and developing new sources of energy. Consideration of the resolution at this sensitive time will not only negatively affect those interests, but could undermine efforts to encourage improved relations between Armenia and Turkey—the very goal the Resolution's sponsors seek to advance.

We fully understand how strongly both Turkey and Armenia feel about this issue. Ultimately, this painful matter can only be resolved by both sides examining the past together.

I urge you in the strongest terms not to bring this Resolution to the floor at this time.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in East Norwalk, Connecticut
October 19, 2000

Well, thank you, Rick, and thank you, Bruce. I'm so glad this worked out tonight. This poor man would have had a heart attack. [*Laughter*] If I were still in Egypt, it would be the end of our relationship. [*Laughter*] And thank you for opening this magnificent home to us. I only wish I could see it in the daytime with all the lights shining in all the windows.

I thank you all for coming tonight. Several of you commented on the rather unusual schedule I've had the last 5 days. And I'm still standing. [*Laughter*] I suppose I should be more careful about what I'm saying, because I probably won't remember it. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first of all, I'm really grateful for your support for Hillary, and I'm delighted that I could come tonight. She's in New York with Al Gore tonight, and you got me. I suppose I'm now the consolation prize. [*Laughter*] I'm actually having the best time of my life. This is the first time in 26 years, in an election year, I have not been on the ballot for something, somewhere. Most days, I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] I'm having a wonderful time going out across America, helping candidates for the Senate and the House, and helping Al and Connecticut's own Joe Lieberman and especially Hillary. And in a way, I feel freer to say maybe what is on my mind than I might if I were, myself, a candidate. But I just want to make a few remarks.

First of all, this is an election that we ought to be enjoying. I think we ought to be enjoying it as a people maybe a little more than we are now, because the country is in such good shape economically and socially, without any immediate crisis at home, that we're actually in a position to have an old-fashioned citizens election, where we debate where we are, where we ought to go, and what we should be doing to build the future of our dreams for our children. And the American people should feel good about that.

This election has been remarkably free of kind of intensely personal recriminations. There's been a little bit of it, and any of it is a little too much for me. But really you have two very clear choices for President and Vice President, for the Senate race in New York, and basically throughout the country. And so what I thought I'd do tonight is just make a few remarks about that.

I've done everything I know to do over the last, as you pointed out, 7 years and 9 months—I've got something like 93 days to go—[*laughter*]—everything I knew to do to turn the country around, pull the country together, and move us forward. And I feel very strongly that these elections should be viewed as hiring decisions, and you're primarily hiring people to make decisions.

Every time somebody comes to see me, say a young person saying, " I want to run for this, that, or the other office," and they ask me should they do it, I say, "Well, you've got to be able to answer three questions. One, are you prepared to lose? Can you stand it? I've done it twice. It's way overrated. [*Laughter*] But it's important. Two, are you prepared to do what it takes to win? And three, do you have a reason for running that's bigger than the fact that you'd like the job? Because people are hiring you to make decisions."

And one of the things—I get frustrated when I watch these Presidential debates—they're really not debates. They're actually joint press conferences in which maybe you get a chance to clarify your difference, but usually you don't. And what the voters need to know is, what do these people have in common, where do they differ, and what are the consequences to me, my family, and our country? That's really what you ought to be thinking about.

So I would just start by saying that the question in every election is not—in this year and in this century, certainly for the next 20 years, I think, will be not whether we're going to change but how are we going to change? There is no status quo candidate in this election, not for President and not for any other position, because the Nation and the world are changing at breathtaking speeds. A lot of you have been a part of that change, which is why you can afford to be here tonight. [*Laughter*] But it's very important to focus on that. The issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change.

I think it's quite important that we keep this economic expansion going, that we minimize any problems that come along in the future, and that we break our backs to try to expand economic opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind. You might know, but the poorest parts of America are still the Native American reservations. It may be hard to imagine in Connecticut, where the biggest casino in the world belongs to an Indian tribe. But in 1994, I brought all the Indian chiefs in the country—I invited them all, and most of them came—to the White House for the first time since the 1820's. And we had people who flew down on their own airplanes, and we had other people where they had to pass the hat on the reservation to get up enough money to afford the plane ticket.

So I think it's quite important that we think about how we can keep expanding the circle of business owners and consumers to keep this going. But several of you mentioned—at least three of you mentioned, going through the line, that you were friends with Bob Rubin. So I'll just start with that.

People ask me all the time—I go around the country—they say, "What did you really do to change the economic policy? What new idea did you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen, that whole crowd, bring to Washington?" And I always have a one-word answer: "Arithmetic." We brought arithmetic to Washington, DC. [*Laughter*] Now, that may seem laughable to you, but that's a big issue in this election.

And I don't really think the debate has been formed as I think it should be in people's minds. The question is not—it's partly who should get a tax cut. But the real issue, from my point of view, since I want to keep the economy going, is how big a one can you afford? So it is true that the Republican Party tax cut is about 3 times the size of the Democratic tax cut. And because the Democratic Party tax cut is only one-third as big as the Republicans', it has to be tilted a little more toward people at incomes $100,000 a year and down.

But why is that important? Why is arithmetic important? Because if you spend a trillion and a half-plus on a tax cut and a trillion dollars on partially privatizing Social Security and several hundred billion dollars keeping your spending cuts, you're back in deficits. And once you get back to deficits—we tried that—you get higher interest rates and lower economic growth. The real reason that successful people who want a successful economy should support our approach is that, if you keep paying down the debt, you'll keep interest rates lower.

And I had the Council of Economic Advisers do an analysis for me that said that the difference in the two economic plans could be a percent a year for a decade. That is $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, way lower business loans, which means more investment, more jobs, and a better stock market. It's arithmetic.

There is something else, I think, that's not become clear in these debates that I'd like to emphasize, because—this is something Hillary feels very strongly about. Most people don't know it, but the third biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt. There is Social Security, defense, interest on the debt. If you pay the debt down, you evaporate the third biggest item in the budget, 12 cents on the dollar. When I became President, it was almost 14 cents on the dollar, headed to over 15. But we're paying the debt down now.

So if you pay it down and 12 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes goes away, then you have more for education; you have more for health care; and eventually you have more for tax cuts; and Government is a smaller share of the economic pie under our approach than it is under theirs. This is very important. But people have to make up their minds whether they agree with this with or not. All I can tell you is, you got 8 years of a test here, and you had 12 years of a test the other way, and I think our way works better. So I think we should keep changing that way. That's a clear decision people need to have.

The same thing is true on health care, on education, on environmental policy. Let me just say that this is important to me. They say there are never any votes in the national election on it, but I think that it's very important that America have a good environmental policy, and I believe it will become more important in the years ahead as the global economy grows ever more intertwined and our resources are shared.

We have proved that you can have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time in history, set aside more land than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt, and grow the economy—big decision in this election. Because they say our clean air rules are too tight for a good economy. They say they want to repeal my order setting aside 40 million acres of roadless lands in the national forests, which the Audubon Society says is the most significant conservation move in 40 years. [*Applause*] I want you to clap for that. I want you to understand there is a decision here, and the decision you make will have consequences, and you have to decide how important it is.

We just had another test last week that proves that the 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years. A test on a polar ice cap proved that the 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years. Now, we have on-the-shelf technology today available that pays out in 2 years or less, which would enable us to grow the economy even more rapidly and reduce our contribution to global warming. Al Gore understands this. Hillary is committed to it. You've got to make a decision. If you think it's important, you can't pretend that this election doesn't have anything to do with that. It's a big, big issue.

If you drilled in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, something that we don't support, it would only be a few months' worth of oil for the American people. If, instead, you figure out how to get fuel injection engines, you get more mixed-fuel engines, or—we're very close to cracking the chemical barrier to biofuels. Let me say what that is in plain language.

If you take farmers' crops and you make ethanol, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. That's why it doesn't work out very well now. But we have chemists in the labs, funded by your tax dollars, today, that are very close to figuring out how to crack the chemical resistance just like when we turned crude oil into gasoline. Once you break the resistance, you'll be able to make with 1 gallon of gasoline, 8 gallons of biofuel. And it won't just have to be corn. It could be grass. It could be anything. Then we'll all be getting 500 miles to the gallon, in effect, and everything will be changed.

Now, there's a big difference here between the way we approach this. You have to decide. But you cannot assume that there are no consequences.

Same thing in education. I think it's very good to listen to these debates and know that both sides favor accountability. But you should know—I mean, Hillary has been working seriously on education for over 20 years now. And the thing I want to tell you, the good news is we now know something we didn't know when Hillary and I started this over 20 years ago. You can turn failing schools around. I was in a school in Harlem the other day where—listen to this—2 years ago—2 years ago, 80 percent of the children were doing math and English below grade level; by any standard, a failing school. Two years later, 74 percent of the children are doing math and English at or above grade level. We know how to do this.

So our strategy is: Identify the failing schools, have high standards, and if they don't turn around, shut them down or put them under new management. It's not complicated. But we believe that if you're going to expect high standards, you ought to help fund more teachers in the schools, you ought to help fund modern school buildings; you ought to have after-school programs and summer school programs and preschool programs for the kids who need it—big difference. It's one thing to say you're going to hold somebody accountable and another one to give them the tools to meet the accountability standard.

And the last thing I'd like to say—I'll say a little bit about foreign policy, because you asked me to and because it's why I haven't had any sleep in 5 days. [*Laughter*] But before I get into that, I want to say that there is one other thing I've tried to do. I have tried as hard as I could to get the American people to reconcile with each other across all this incredible diversity we have. This is the most racially and religiously diverse society we have ever had, and it is growing more so every day.

And I have tried to get people to say, "Hey, this is a good thing for us in a global economy.

We should be glad that we're more diverse. We should relish and be proud of our differences. But we can only do that if we understand our common humanity is more important." That's the problem in the Middle East today. It's why we still haven't finished the Irish peace process. It's why they have tribal wars in Africa. You just think about it. Everywhere people think their differences are more important than their common humanity, eventually trouble ensues and grievances get piled high. And as we've seen in the Middle East, it's easy to have 7 years of hard work chucked out the door in no time.

So that's why I've worked for a hate crimes bill and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" and why I want stronger enforcement of the equal-pay-for-women laws and why we've tried to have the most diverse administration in history. And that again is a very important issue in this election. You've just got to decide how important you think that is. I think it is real important.

If somebody would only give me one wish for America on my way out the door, I would not wish—if I only had one—for continuing prosperity. I would wish for us to find some way to be one America, across all the lines that divide us, because, hey, you're smart and so is everybody else who lives in this country; you'll figure out how to deal with all the rest. But if you can't bring diverse people together in unity, then the rest of it eventually will fall to people's blindness.

So that's what I wanted to say. I'm glad for the good things that have happened in this country. I'm grateful that we've been able to be a force for peace and freedom throughout the world. I think I was right about the trade issue, and I appreciated you mentioning that, and I wish I had persuaded more people in my party I was right, but time is on our side there.

But what you have to understand is, America's public life is always about tomorrow. That's why we're still around here after over 225 years. We are always about tomorrow. We're always a country that is becoming, always in the process of being something bigger and better and different, because we're rooted in some values that stand the test of time. That's what this election is about.

Now, the seat that my wife is running for was held by Robert Kennedy and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, people that were important to New York and important to America, people that had good minds and caring hearts. I must say, of all the crazy things people have said in this election, the only one that has really kind of steamed me is when somebody says, "Well, she wouldn't be doing this if she weren't First Lady." I can tell you that for 30 years all she ever did was work for other people, other causes, other candidates, other things she believed in. And the truth is, if she hadn't come home and married me 25 years ago, she would have done this 15 years ago herself. That's the real truth.

I have had the great honor of knowing hundreds of people in public life. One thing I'd like to say about that is that most of them—Republicans and Democrats alike, conservatives and liberals alike—were much more honest, much more hardworking, and much more likely to do what they believed is right than you would believe if all you did was read the press accounts. Most people do what they think is right. That's why I urge the Democrats in this election to just posit that from Governor Bush on down, the Republicans are good people who love their families and love their country, and we just have different views here. So people can get all of the cobwebs out of their head and think about how this election was going to affect them.

Al Gore would be a good President because he makes good decisions. I saw that again in these 2 days when we were huddling over the Middle East crisis. He makes good decisions. You hire people to make decisions.

In the Senate you need somebody who can work with other people and bring order out of chaos and set priorities, because you don't have the whole, sort of, power of the Federal Government working for you. You have to have somebody who can really think and who really cares about the right things and then can get things done.

I have personally never known anybody, ever, in all my years in public life—and I've known several Presidents; I've known scores of Cabinet members; I've known a couple of hundred people who have served in the U.S. Senate—I have never known anybody who had the same combination of mind and heart and knowledge and ability to get things done that Hillary does.

I would be giving this speech today for her if we hadn't spent the last over 25 years together. I would do that, because I'm telling you,

if the people of New York vote for her, the ones who didn't vote for her will wonder why they didn't within a year.

So I am grateful to you. I think she's going to win. We can't let her be outspent too badly in the last 2½ weeks. [*Laughter*] Thanks to you, she won't be. And I think on election night you'll be very proud that you were here tonight.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Richard Stierwalt and Bruce Orosz; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen.

Opinion-Editorial for the Belfast Telegraph: "Why the Good Friday Agreement is Working"

October 19, 2000

In his first Inaugural Address, President Abraham Lincoln called upon Americans to heed "the better angels of our nature" to dissuade them from embarking on a long and bloody civil war.

Just over two years ago, the leaders and people of Northern Ireland summoned the better angels of their nature to negotiate, sign, and approve the Good Friday Agreement in a courageous bid to end nearly 30 years of strife and agony. The Agreement reflected more than the common humanity that unites the people of Northern Ireland, no matter their faith. It reflected their self-interest—their heartfelt conviction that the sacrifices and compromises required for peace would be far easier to bear than the burden of more violence and bloodshed.

George Mitchell said at the time that, as difficult as the Agreement was to negotiate, implementing it would prove more difficult still—and he was right. Two-and-one-half years later, the Agreement is working, but it is straining under intense criticism. I know that many in the unionist community feel deeply uncomfortable with changes relating to security and have concerns that the right to express British identity is being attacked. Nationalists and republicans have voiced concerns of their own about prospects for full equality and implementation of all aspects of the Agreement.

I believe the Good Friday Agreement is fully capable of addressing these concerns. Now is the time to reaffirm its core principles.

—The principle of consent: no decision on changing the constitutional connection linking Northern Ireland with the United Kingdom will be made without support from a majority of Northern Ireland voters. This expresses respect for British sovereignty in Northern Ireland—and also for the legitimate wish of Irish people to pursue a united Ireland.

—Self-government that is democratic, inclusive, and whose participants use exclusively peaceful means to accomplish their aims. The main institutions of government, an elected Assembly and a power-sharing Executive, contain safeguards for protecting minority interests and for excluding those who use or support violence.

—Strict protection of individual human and civil rights. On October 2, Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is now consulting on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

The people of Northern Ireland support these principles. And for all of their disagreements, so do Northern Ireland's politicians.

The reason, I believe, is simple: Devolved government based on the Stormont Assembly and Executive is working. Even politicians from parties professing to be "anti-Agreement" are participating actively, delivering their constituents democratic and accountable regional government. For the first time in 30 years, Northern Ireland's politicians are producing their own budget and Programme for Government.

This means that problems in the areas of agriculture, health, the environment and education, to name a few, are now the responsibility of local ministers who must answer to local voters. Some may be uncomfortable with power-sharing, but most agree that it is better than being powerless. And foreign investors are taking note of the prospects opened up by these developments—for example, the 900-job call centre that a Denver-based company recently announced will open in north Belfast.

What's more, the Agreement has enabled government ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to work together to benefit people throughout the island, by developing co-operation in such areas as trade, food safety and EU programmes. Sessions of the North-South Ministerial Council focus on concrete results rather than constitutional debate.

Change this profound is never easy. I applaud the people of Northern Ireland for working to set aside old animosities and to accept even the most difficult elements of the Good Friday Agreement, such as prisoner releases. Yet tough challenges remain, such as adapting the police force in Northern Ireland to earn the confidence and support of all the people, and resolving the issue of paramilitary weapons.

The Agreement offers a chance for a fresh start on policing. It established an independent commission chaired by Chris Patten with a mandate to make recommendations in this highly sensitive area. Some of the Patten Report's proposed changes have distressed those who honour the many sacrifices made by police officers in Northern Ireland.

I urge everyone to reflect on Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan's statement that the police stand ready for the challenges proposed by Patten and that it is his "fervent hope that those in all our communities whom we exist to serve stand similarly ready for change." Everyone in Northern Ireland, including the police, deserve the chance to prove themselves anew under the Agreement. That said, for police reform to work, the entire community must take ownership of the process, taking not just the pain of the past, but more importantly the demands of the future, into account. The opportunity to achieve a police service that is broadly acceptable and fully accountable is too important and too close at hand to be lost to political brinkmanship.

On the question of paramilitary organisations, the Good Friday Agreement is both clear and unequivocal—in it, all parties commit themselves to the total disarmament of all such groups. The IRA's decision to allow independent inspectors to view arms dumps last June and to verify that the weapons are not moved or used represented unprecedented progress. The IRA also committed itself to resume contacts with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning and to put weapons "completely and verifiably beyond use" in the context of full implementation of the Agreement.

Republican leaders say these commitments will be met. I welcome that, and look forward to further, timely progress in this vital area. I urge loyalist paramilitaries to make similar undertakings, even as courageous political leaders work to bring an end to the dangerous feuding under way in that community. All sides must work together to renew momentum toward the goal spelled out in the Agreement: total decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons.

But perhaps harder still will be what George Mitchell called the "decommissioning of mindsets". The confidence that is the foundation of peace is all too easily eroded by distrust, defensiveness, and fear. It is almost always easier to fall back on old habits than it is to fulfil new hopes.

In making decisions that will determine Northern Ireland's future, political leaders must pause and consider whether their actions will advance the cause of durable peace and genuine reconciliation. Every political leader is subject to short-term political pressures. But in Northern Ireland, I believe it is critical for all to consider how their actions in the heat of the moment today will be felt a year, a decade, a generation from now. It is human nature to take the good for granted and to focus on our frustrations, giving in to those frustrations would be a tragic mistake, with terrible consequences.

On my last visit to Northern Ireland in 1998, I met with the families of the victims and the survivors of the Omagh bombing. That visit was a vivid reminder of the alternative to peace—and it made clear the determination of the people of Northern Ireland to overcome the sorrow and bitterness of the last 30 years and build a better future.

During the recently completed inquest into the Omagh bombing, that determination to build was still on display—as was the profound frustration that the dissidents responsible for the attack have not been brought to justice.

For a durable peace to be achieved, both of these emotions must be harnessed effectively. And there should be no mistake about it: US law enforcement will aggressively target any effort from whatever quarter to undermine the peace process through illegal activities from the United States.

The Good Friday Agreement represents the very best hope for lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Fully implementing, it will make Northern Ireland a beacon of hope for those who struggle for reconciliation and peace in every corner of the world—from the Balkans to the Middle East.

I hope to be able to visit Northern Ireland soon, and to confirm that the will of the people is being heeded.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This opinion-editorial was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20. An original was not available for verification of the content of this item.

Presidential Determination No. 2001–02—Memorandum on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

October 19, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 538(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, as contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–113), and as provided for in the Joint Resolution Making Further Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2001, and for Other Purposes (Public Law 106–306), I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100–204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register.*

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum, which was not received for publication in the *Federal Register.*

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Governor Mel Carnahan in Jefferson City, Missouri

October 20, 2000

Jean, Robin, Tom, Russ, Debra, to all the Carnahan family and the extended Carnahan family; to the Sifford family; and Governor and Mrs. Wilson; Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt and all the Members of Congress who are here and the Governors. I think I can speak for Hillary and the Vice President and Tipper when I say that we are profoundly honored to be here, and we come out of respect for the work that Mel Carnahan did for the people of Missouri, the example he set for the Nation, and the genuine friendship he showed to us.

I loved the guy. And anybody who thinks he was dull never looked him straight in the eye, because he had steel and passion and fire. And

I think he rather enjoyed being underestimated by people who disagreed with him.

I hope his fellow citizens of this "Show Me" State will be gratified by what is an absolutely stunning representation here in this crowd of his fellow Governors, United States Senators, United States Representatives from all across this great land. They came here because he in some way touched them or because he inspired them or because, like me, they were just crazy about him.

He was a leader in the very best way. Yes, he was a leader like Harry Truman: He spoke the plain truth and thought there was no greater calling than public service and really believed if you appealed to the best in people, most of the time that's exactly what you'd get.

In a time when it's fashionable for people in public life to sort of complain about the difficulties of it, he was frank to say that he liked politics and public service. Indeed, he loved it. He didn't understand why some people thought it was a sacrifice and a pain. For him, it was a calling, a calling to work with people, and I saw it personally.

I don't know how many times either the Vice President or I came to Missouri because this was the leading State in the country in moving people from welfare to work. He believed that the dignity of a job and the ability to work and support one's children was the best form of social welfare. And he thought we could do it right. And we came here at least three times—I did—to try to point the way to the rest of the country to look and see what was going on here and know we could do it all around America.

I, too, remember those awful floods where he led by example, scrambling up levies to help bear the burden of sandbagging. When his critics warned him not to raise taxes for education because he could lose his job, he decided Missouri's kids were worth the risk. And those of us who followed him loved him even more.

And when some outside interests tried to pass a concealed weapon law in Missouri, he really took his career in his hands. Mel and Robin and the entire family got a lot of people involved, even got Hillary involved, everybody they could scrounge up to help them to stand up and turn a tide that, I have to confess, I didn't think they could turn.

For the Carnahans, politics was a noble family affair. They have given so much of them, each in their own way. And they've done it with dignity, grace, and generosity of spirit. For all the young people out here wondering whether politics is or is not compatible with a good, loving family, I say, look at the Carnahans. You can deal with the rough and tumble. If there's enough love, you will endure and flourish.

Less than a week ago, our friend Mel was hard at work in what turned out to be his last campaign. I thought when we marched behind the casket today and the magnificent horse with the boot turned backwards in the stirrups, that in a way it was fitting that our friend Mel died in the saddle with his boots on, fighting for the causes he championed and the people of Missouri whom he loved so much and served so well.

We honor that. And we honor the life of his son and of Chris Sifford. We honor the fact that Randy was always ready to help and support his father. We honor the fact that Chris was an idealist who gave so much of his life to the public service that Mel did. We honor the fact that they believed in him, and in turn, he made them believe in themselves and their ability to make a difference.

I like the fact that Mel Carnahan was the only politician that I have known who was actually not ashamed to say that one of his political role models was Adlai Stevenson. It didn't matter to him that Stevenson had holes in his shoes, lost the Presidency twice, and was considered by most people to be an impractical egghead. The main thing was, Stevenson was an elegant, good man who thought politics was a noble endeavor. And he said it better than just about anybody ever has.

I will never forget coming to a rally in southwest Missouri in early 1992, when Mel was involved in a very tough primary for Governor that he wasn't necessarily favored to win, and I was running for President, polling a distant fifth in New Hampshire. Only my mother thought I could win. But Mel Carnahan came to that rally in southwest Missouri and came out for me. He had absolutely nothing to gain by it—nothing. He did it just because he thought it was right. And for 8 years, he has been my friend and my partner.

In so many ways, he was a magnificent Governor. I suspect only those who have worked with him across a wide range of issues can know just how good he was. The last thing we did here together, Jean, was talk about the Patients'

Bill of Rights and to eat a little barbecue. Mel made sure we went in the kitchen and shook hands with the people there. He never let me forget that just because I wasn't running again, I was still a public servant.

I am grateful—grateful—that I knew Mel Carnahan. I am grateful that we had the chance to work together. He left us too early, but he had a great ride. He had a wonderful wife, devoted children, people who believed in public service. Robin worked in our administration for a while, and I'm grateful for that. And I think we should remember him with this admonition of Saint Paul to the Galatians: "While we have time, let us do good."

I spoke the other day to a congregation of bishops of the Church of God in Christ, and I made the mistake of saying I was glad to be with them because, unlike me, they weren't term-limited. And the head bishop stood up and said, "Mr. President, we are all term-limited." So if he were here—and in a way, he is—he would say, "Okay, so I had a lot more I wanted to do, but I had a good ride. And it's not so bad being up there. The boys are good company, and I'm looking down on you. You know what to do. While you have time, do good."

We'll miss you, Mel. We'll try to take up the slack, but we'll not have another one like you. God bless you, and Godspeed.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:57 p.m. on the South Grounds of the State Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Governor Carnahan's widow, Jean, and their children Robin, Tom, and Russ, and Russ' wife, Debra; and Governor Carnahan's successor Roger B. Wilson, and his wife, Pat. Governor Carnahan died in a plane crash south of St. Louis on October 16 while traveling to a campaign event with his son Roger (Randy) and his senior adviser, Chris Sifford.

Statement on the General Motors Announcement on Hybrid Vehicle Fuel Economy

October 20, 2000

I congratulate General Motors on the news today that its Precept hybrid vehicle has achieved fuel economy of 80 miles per gallon. This extraordinary achievement is the result in part of a Government/industry effort, the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, begun by Vice President Gore in 1994. The goal set then, in the face of strong skepticism, was to triple average fuel economy. This car meets that test.

Today's announcement is further evidence that the investments in clean energy technologies we have made over the last 8 years are paying off. The benefits of these investments include not only improved gas mileage and a cleaner environment but also reduced dependence on foreign oil. These technologies are a cornerstone of this administration's effective and forward-looking energy and environmental policy.

Indeed, while America's gross domestic product has grown by more than 20 percent over the last 5 years, energy usage has increased by less than 8 percent. This trend of reduced energy intensity in our economy is critical to ensuring a healthy environment and strong, sustainable economic growth.

But we must do more. Unfortunately, Congress has refused to act on our package of consumer tax credits—including credits of up to $4,000 for consumers to purchase the next generation of fuel-efficient vehicles. At a time that America's business leaders are making headlines every day with new investments in clean energy technologies, it is time that Congress joins us in these important efforts to strengthen America's energy security.

Statement on Signing the Fourth Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001

October 20, 2000

Today I am signing a measure that will grant Congress still one more in a series of extensions it needs to finish its work. Unfortunately, Congress has shown little urgency toward completing its work, even though we are now 3 weeks into the new fiscal year, and some of our most essential priorities, especially in the area of education, have yet to be addressed.

As of today, Congress has failed to make a commitment to reducing class size and repairing our crumbling schools—two priorities crucial for our Nation's students. I urge Congress to approve our proposed tax credits to help local communities with new school construction. In addition, Congress should invest in accountability to turn around or shut down failing schools and open them under new management, in improving teacher quality, and in expanding after-school efforts that help children learn in a safe environment.

Congress must get to work to address these and other key priorities. The measure I am signing today ends in 5 days. Congress should complete its work by Wednesday, when this stopgap funding measure expires. If Congress fails to complete its work by then, I will only grant additional extensions one day at a time. Congress needs to stay in town and complete its business without additional delay.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 114, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–344.

Statement on Signing the Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000

October 20, 2000

Today I am very pleased to sign into law S. 2311, the "Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000," which reauthorizes and expands health care and essential support services for hundreds of thousands of Americans living with HIV and AIDS.

The broad bipartisan support in the Congress for this bill sends a clear message that together we can continue to reach out to individuals and families living with HIV and AIDS. Since its creation, the Ryan White program has provided thousands of people with HIV care and support services in their communities and access to cutting-edge therapies that would have remained beyond their reach. It has helped them stay out of the hospital and live healthier and better lives.

During my administration, funding for the Ryan White CARE Act has increased by more than 300 percent, and funding for basic AIDS research and HIV prevention has increased by over 80 percent. Our strong commitment to addressing the HIV epidemic has begun to pay dividends. The latest data show that the number of Americans diagnosed with AIDS has declined for the first time in the history of the AIDS epidemic, deaths from the disease have declined by over 40 percent, and there has been a sharp decline in new AIDS cases in infants and children.

However, we know that our battle against AIDS is far from over. As we continue to search for a cure and a vaccine to protect every American, our support for programs like the CARE Act is essential. We owe a special thanks to Senators Kennedy, Jeffords, and Frist and Representatives Waxman and Coburn, and to the many AIDS advocates and organizations, for their tireless efforts in guiding this bill to enactment.

NOTE: S. 2311, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–345.

Statement on Signing the Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000

October 20, 2000

Ten years ago, shortly after Ryan White's death, the Congress chose to build a legacy in his memory. As a young man, Ryan White changed the world, and so has the program that bears his name. Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2311, the "Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000," which reauthorizes and expands health care and essential support services to hundreds of thousands of Americans living with HIV and AIDS.

The reauthorization of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act is the cornerstone of my Administration's domestic HIV and AIDS care and treatment effort, and one of its top legislative priorities. The broad-based bipartisan support in the Congress for the reauthorization of this vital program sends a clear and strong message that together we can bring care and compassion to our fellow citizens living with HIV and AIDS. I am pleased that during my Administration, funding for the CARE Act program has increased over 300 percent. For fiscal year 2001, this landmark program will receive more than $1.7 billion.

Today, the CARE Act has become a model for health care delivery not only in the United States, but around the world. It is a shining example of the good that can come from collaboration, coordination, and concerted action. The CARE Act has brought together Republicans and Democrats, cities and States, hospitals and community-based organizations, providers, and people living with AIDS—and the results are a tribute to the power of public-private partnerships. It has created a continuum of care that is both compassionate and cost-effective—one that saves both lives and money.

When the CARE Act was originally created, we were sadly unable to do much for those who were sick, and many of the services provided were designed to help people die with dignity. Thankfully, much has changed. The CARE Act is now solidly about *living* with HIV and AIDS. Since its last reauthorization, biomedical research has brought hope and renewed optimism with the discovery of protease inhibitors and combination therapies. The CARE Act has made the promise of biomedical research a reality in the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS in every corner of this country.

Last year alone, approximately one hundred thousand people living with HIV and AIDS received access to drug therapy because of the CARE Act. This is particularly important given that half of the people served by the CARE Act have family incomes of less than $10,000 a year—and the new drug "cocktails" cost more than $12,000 annually. We know all too well that the drugs are not enough. Primary care and support services are vital to ensuring both access and adherence to these complex drug regimens. It is this comprehensive package of essential services that the CARE Act provides—and with impressive results.

The CARE Act has helped to reduce both the frequency and length of expensive inpatient hospitalizations, lowered AIDS mortality, reduced mother-to-child transmission, and enhanced both the length and quality of life for people living with AIDS. The Act has also provided a mainstay of essential health and related support services to individuals living with HIV disease and their families—crucial services in our progress against this relentless disease.

The CARE Act also serves those most in need. Nearly six out of every 10 people served by the CARE Act are poor. They are also 5 times more likely to be uninsured than those receiving care elsewhere; nearly 3 times more likely to be African Americans; and 50 percent more likely to be women. Clearly the CARE Act has followed the path paved by this epidemic—but challenges remain as HIV and AIDS move deeper into underserved communities already plagued by poverty, homelessness, and substance abuse, and as treatment demands and costs continue to rise. It is these challenges that the reauthorization of the CARE Act is designed to address.

S. 2311 will continue the tradition of locally defined care and treatment that are the mainstay of the original CARE Act. It will also improve the programs of the CARE Act in several ways my Administration recommended, including: (1) expanding access to essential care for historically underserved individuals, including racial and

ethnic minorities, women, and youth; (2) establishing a stronger link between HIV prevention, diagnosis, and treatment efforts to make sure people get the care they need once they learn they are HIV positive; (3) improving the quality of care to make sure all people with HIV get state-of-the-art treatment; and (4) reducing existing barriers within the AIDS Drug Assistance Program to ensure that more people living with HIV disease have access to lifesaving therapeutics.

I want to thank some individuals in my Administration, the Congress, and perhaps most importantly, the AIDS community for their tireless efforts and determination in guiding this bill to enactment. We all owe thanks to Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala; the Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher; Drs. Earl Fox and Joseph O'Neill of the Health Resources and Services Administration; and Sandy Thurman, Director of our White House AIDS Office. In addition, this bill clearly would not have become law without the dedication of Senators Kennedy, Jeffords, and Frist and Representatives Waxman and Coburn. Finally, I am particularly grateful for the assistance of the many and varied organizations who came together to extend this legacy of care and compassion for individuals and families living with HIV disease.

HIV and AIDS have touched communities in each and every State across this country. In big cities and rural towns, the disease continues to devastate individuals, families, and communities, leaving them impoverished, suffering, and in dire need of medical care and support. We hope that in the not-so-distant future we will have even better therapies and someday an effective vaccine. But in the meantime, we are grateful for the CARE Act, which, through its essential services, has allowed individuals to live longer and healthier lives. The programs contained in this bill are literally a lifeline for individuals with HIV disease. For this reason, I am extremely pleased to sign S. 2311.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 20, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2311, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–345.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Martin T. Meehan in Lowell, Massachusetts

October 20, 2000

Thank you for that wonderful welcome. Thank you for coming out to help Marty tonight. I told him that now that he had all this support and has raised all this money, we needed to go find him an opponent. [*Laughter*] Seems a shame to waste all this energy and support and enthusiasm, you know. [*Laughter*] It's a good thing there aren't many more votes he can cast against me. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first, how honored I am to be here. I want to say more about Marty in a moment, but I also want to thank Richie Neal for being here and for representing Massachusetts so well—he's a wonderful man—and for supporting the efforts that we made with the Irish peace process, which, in the beginning, to put it mildly, were somewhat controversial.

I want to thank Senator Kennedy. We've spent most of the day together. We flew here today. In an uncommon act of sensitivity, he flew to Missouri today for the funeral of the Governor of Missouri, who was our nominee for the United States Senate. You probably know he died tragically in a plane crash with his son and one of his closest aides. He was my neighbor and my very close friend. When I looked out today and I saw Ted and Vicki at the funeral, I thought, "What a great thing to do." I say this every chance I get. But whatever I have accomplished as President, so much of it would never have been possible if Ted Kennedy hadn't been there with me every single step of the way, and I cannot thank him enough.

You know, we have a lot of fun together. Today I taught him a new card game so I could beat him. [*Laughter*] And he was convinced I didn't play fair, just because I won and he lost. [*Laughter*] You know, he's going to get the last

laugh, though, because when he came to the Senate, I was in junior high school—[*laughter*]—and when I leave the White House, he'll still be in the Senate, thank goodness for our country's sake.

I would also like to thank someone in this audience for coming here tonight. I was particularly glad to see Niki Tsongas. Where are you? Niki, are you here? She was in the other room when I was there. I was really delighted she was here.

And I want to thank Marty's family for coming tonight at a difficult time, beginning with his wonderful mother. Mrs. Meehan, thank you for being here. Thank you. Bless you for coming tonight.

Marty and Ellen and their beautiful baby and Marty's mom and the whole Meehan clan met me outside, and I understood how he had been elected. [*Laughter*] Frankly, there are so many of them, he doesn't really need you. [*Laughter*] But I'm delighted that you're helping him anyway.

I wanted to come here—as Senator Kennedy said, I've been to a lot of different communities in Massachusetts. I've tried to, in this course of my service as President, beginning in the '92 campaign, I've tried to make the whole State, to really spend time out in the State of Massachusetts to see every part of it and to have a chance to thank the people of this State. No State has been better to Bill Clinton and Al Gore than the State of Massachusetts, and I am very grateful to you.

You heard Marty say that when I became President, unemployment here was 7.5 percent. Last month it was 2.4 percent, the lowest in 30 years, down two-thirds from 1992. So, I want to have a serious talk here, just for a minute, about this election coming up, what it means to you, your children, your grandchildren, and the future of our country. I want to ask you to take some time, a little time every day, to talk to other people about it.

I know that Vice President Gore and Joe Lieberman are well ahead in the polls in Massachusetts. But you can help them in New Hampshire. You may know some people in—if we win this time in New Hampshire, I think it may be the first time the Democrats have ever won it three times in a row. But they ought to be with us. New Hampshire is a lot better off than it was in 1992. It's a lot better off. And they've been very good to me, too.

You might have some friends in Pennsylvania, one of the battleground States, or Ohio, a lot of the other places where this election could go either way.

I had the opportunity—gosh, when was it?—yesterday—to appear before the Senate and House Democrats, and I said that we should view ourselves from here until election day as the "Weather Caucus," because if we make things clear, that is, if people understand with clarity the choice before them and the consequences of the choice, we will win. If they make things cloudy, we'll have a hard time winning. So they will be for cloudy; we'll be for clear. What does that say about who you ought to vote for right there? [*Laughter*]

So I just want to take a minute or two, because everybody here has friends who will never come to an event like this. Isn't that right? Every one of you has friends that will never come to an event like this, but they will show up on election day. You have friends in other States where the election could go either way who will never come to an event like this, but they will show up on election day.

And I just wanted to tell you, we've now heard all the debates, and the candidates are kind of going into the homestretch, and sometimes it's easy to lose the forest for the trees. And you know, I care passionately about this election, not just because of my more than passing interest in the Senate race in New York. [*Laughter*] And I might add another kind thing Ted did—he went to Buffalo with Hillary the other day and spoke to an Irish group, and he practically had her with a brogue by the time he got through. It was fabulous. [*Laughter*] And not just because I'm so devoted to Al Gore and all that he's done, and not just because Joe Lieberman has been a friend of mine for 30 years; but because when the Vice President says, "We've come a long way in the last 8 years, but you ain't seen nothin' yet," I actually believe that.

And I'm not running for anything. That's not just political rhetoric. I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around and pull this country together and move us forward, to fight off the most bitter partisan attacks in modern American history and just keep on going. And it's worked pretty well. And I think you will all agree with that.

But never—never in my lifetime have we had at the same time so much economic prosperity,

social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. It has not happened in our lifetime.

Now, when you get a situation like that, you have an obligation as a free society to build for the future, to seize the big opportunities, to deal with the big challenges, to make the most of them. And I'm telling you, the only thing that ever bothers me is when I see, well, people think that they kind of like both these candidates, and maybe there is not much difference, and maybe we should give the other guy a chance or this, that, or the other thing, and after all—and things are going along fine. Who could mess this up? [*Laughter*] You know, you hear a lot of this talk, don't you? Don't you hear this talk—people talking—and what I want to say to you is that we ought to be happy about this election, because you have two people we can posit: They're good people; they love their families; they love their country; and they will pretty well do what they say they'll do if they get elected.

But make no mistake about it, there are great differences in the candidates for President and Vice President, for the Senate and for the House, that will have profound consequences. And you've got to decide. And I'll just tell you a few of them.

First of all, I've listened to all these debates, so let me tell you what this election is not about. This election is certainly not about one of us being—one of our candidates being for big Government, the other one being for less Government.

Let me tell you what the facts are. Now, we had a hard time getting those facts into these debates, because they're so inconvenient for the other side. And I admire that about the Republicans: The evidence does not faze them. [*Laughter*] They are not bothered at all by the facts. And you've got to kind of give it to them. Ask Richie or Marty or Ted. Don't take my word for it. The evidence doesn't faze them. They just sort of show up and do it anyway. They know what they're for.

But here are the facts. Under this Democratic administration, Government spending is the lowest percentage of national income it's been since 1966. Tax burden on average, middle-income Americans is the lowest it's been in more than 20 years. Now, the size of the Government is the lowest it's been since 1960, Dwight Eisenhower's last year in the White House, the year you elected John Kennedy President of the United States. That is the size of the Federal Government. Those are facts. So when you hear our Republican friends talking about how we're for big Government, ask them, where have they been the last 8 years? And if you hear somebody who acts like they believe it, fill them in on the facts.

This election is also not about how our side can't get bipartisan action done in Washington, so we need a Republican to rescue us to give us bipartisan action. Let me just run through a little of the bipartisan action. Once we made it clear to them that we weren't going to let them shut the Government down, abolish the Department of Education, and have the biggest education and health care and environmental cuts in history, and once you made it clear to them that you wouldn't support them if they kept doing that, we got a bipartisan welfare reform bill, a bipartisan balanced budget bill that had the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest expansion of children's health care since Medicaid in 1965. We got a telecommunications bill that's created hundreds of thousands of jobs in America. We got an extension of our bill to put 100,000 police on the street; we're now working on 150,000. We got a bill to put 100,000 teachers in the schools; we're already a third of the way home there—all in a bipartisan majority.

So if somebody says to you, "I've got to vote for the other guys because they're against big Government, or they're for bipartisan solutions," you say, "Hello. Stop. Facts." Do a fact check here. It tickles me. The Republicans are seeking to be rewarded for the harsh partisan atmosphere they created. [*Laughter*] "We made a mess of this. The Democrats will work with us. Give us the White House, and we'll behave." That's their argument.

You should say, "I don't think so. That's not necessary." We get plenty of stuff done on a bipartisan basis. Ted Kennedy works every day. Marty Meehan's got this campaign finance reform bill with Chris Shays. Our problems is not bipartisanship. Our problem is that the Republican leadership in the United States Senate and in the campaign for the White House are against campaign finance reform. One hundred percent of the Democrats and a lot of the Republicans are for campaign finance reform. Isn't that right?

So that's what it's not about. Here's what it is about. One other thing it's not about. It's not about change versus the status quo. Al Gore is not the candidate of the status quo. If anybody running this year ran on the following platform, "Vote for me, and I'll do everything Bill Clinton did," I would vote against that person. Why? Because the world is changing dramatically.

So the issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change. Are we going to keep the prosperity going and build on the changes in the last 8 years that are working, or are we going to reverse course? That is the question. And that's the way you've got to frame it. It's not whether, but how, we're going to change.

Now, look, here's the deal on this economic business. Our tax cut, I admit, is only a third the size of theirs—our candidate's tax cut. But most people making under $100,000 do better under ours than theirs. Now, why is ours only a third the size of theirs? Because we learned the hard way in the 12 years before we got here that if you give it all away before it comes in, you may wind up with a lot of red ink on your hands, and you don't want to do that again.

So, we say, "Let's have a tax cut we can afford for college tuition deduction, for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, for child care, for retirement savings, for giving people incentives to invest in poor areas in America. But let's save a little money for education and health care and the environment, and let's keep paying this debt down, because this is a case where fiscal conservatism is socially progressive."

If you keep interest rates down, the average family is already saving a couple thousand dollars on home mortgages because we've kept interest rates lower by getting rid of this deficit. If their plan passes, because the tax cut is so big—$1½ trillion, and on top of that, they've got a trillion dollar plan to partially privatize Social Security—you're already in deficit once you do that, by the way—then, they're going to spend several hundred billion dollars over and above that—and I can tell you, their estimate of the surplus is too big—we're going back into deficit. That means higher interest rates.

Our tax cut for everybody is lower interest rates. If you take Gore's plan and you keep paying the debt down, interest rates will be a point lower for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this: For a decade, $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments means more jobs, more business expansion, higher incomes, a better stock market. Our tax cuts for everybody, in addition to the specifics, is lower interest rates and getting rid of the debt.

Now, I'll tell you something else. The third-biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt. Every last dollar you pay to the Federal Government, it begins with 12 cents going out for interest going out for the debt, because when they had the White House, they quadrupled the debt in 12 years. We quadrupled the debt in 12 years over the previous 200-year history of this country. And I'm getting rid of it—thanks to them and their voting for me—and we want to keep getting rid of it.

Now, so here's another interesting thing. If you have 8 years of a Gore/Lieberman administration, Government spending will be an even smaller percentage of income than it will be if you get the Republicans in. Why? Oh, yes, we'll spend more on education. We'll spend more on health care. We'll spend more on the environment. But we're going to get rid of that 12 cents on the dollar you're paying on interest on the debt. They're going to keep paying that, and you're going to have higher interest rates.

Now, look, we tried it their way for 12 years, and they want to go try it that way again. They want to say, "Look, the Democrats have got things in real good shape now, so let's go on a real tax-cutting binge and try it our way one more time and see if it works better the second time around." That's what this election is about.

Listen, this is a big deal. People have to understand this plainly. It's not like we haven't tried it. You've tried it our way for 8 years, and you tried it their way for 12 years before that. And that's all this is. You cannot make a $1½ trillion tax cut, several hundred billion dollars' worth of spending and a $1 trillion Social Security privatization plan fit into the money that's there. We're going back to deficits, high interest rates, less investment in our future, less economic growth. Ask people if they really want to take that chance.

If you want to keep the prosperity going, you better stay with Gore and Lieberman and Kennedy and Meehan and Neal and our crowd,

because that's where we're going. This is a big deal.

Now, I won't go into as much detail on the rest of this, but the same thing on every issue. On education, both sides say they're for accountability. The difference is, we believe if you're going to hold schools accountable for the performance of their children, you ought to help them succeed with preschool and after-school programs and more qualified teachers in the early grades and modernized schools.

And they say, "We don't need to do that. Let's just test the kids and see what happens and take the money away if they don't do well." We think we ought to help empower the schools to do well. We know how to turn around failing schools now. There's no excuse not to do it now. All we have to do is to develop the system, invest in it, reward it. Big difference. They're not for any of those specific things I just said.

On health care, we say we ought to have a Patients' Bill of Rights that's real, and we ought to have a Medicare prescription drug program, because if we were creating Medicare today, we would never have it without drugs.

In 1965, when Ted voted for Medicare, medical care was about doctors and hospitals. Today, anybody that lives to be 65 in America has a life expectancy of 82. The young women in this audience that are still in their childbearing years, thanks to the human genome project, will soon be bringing home from the hospital babies with a life expectancy of 90 years.

Now, that's the good news. But it means you're going to have to totally reimagine the aging process. Within a few years, 80 won't be all that old. We will think of it as, you know, sort of late middle age. [*Laughter*] But it also means we've got to keep people healthy. We've got to keep people strong, and pharmaceuticals are an important part of that. So we have the money now, if we don't squander it, to take care of the pharmaceutical needs of our senior citizens, not only to lengthen life but to improve the quality of life, to keep people out of hospitals, to minimize their institutional time in life.

This is a big deal. And we are for a Medicare program that does that. Why? Because Medicare is simply a financing mechanism that has a low administrative cost and can serve everybody. They're for serving about half the people that need it and telling everybody else they've got to get private insurance.

The insurance companies—you know, Ted and I, we've had a lot of fights with the health insurance companies. They ought to get a gold star for this. They keep telling us, "You can't write a health insurance policy for this." The health insurance policy—this is another case where the Republicans are not fazed by the evidence. The insurance companies, which are usually with them on everything, have told them, "Hey guys, you can't write an insurance policy that people can afford that's worth having."

So why don't they want to do it? What in the wide world is wrong with giving all the seniors access to the medicine they need? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? Did you ever meet a business person that didn't want more customers? Why do the drug companies not want more customers?

See, you never hear this in the debate because they don't have time to go into it, but you need to know this. This is a huge deal, the difference in the Democratic and the Republican prescription drug plan. The drug companies spend a lot of money developing the drugs and advertising them. And every country but the United States where they sell the drugs has price controls. So they've got to get 100 percent of the cost of developing the drugs and advertising them from you when you buy them. And then it's real cheap just to make another pill, so then they can sell them in Canada or Europe or wherever and make a lot of money.

Now, I am not demonizing the drug companies. I would still rather have them in America. Wouldn't you? I mean, they're great. They uncover all these medical miracles, and they provide tens of thousands of wonderful jobs. And they've got a problem, because they think if Medicare is buying for all the seniors, they'll have so much market power, they can get drugs made in America for Americans almost as cheap as Canadians can buy drugs made in America. And they're afraid it will cut them so low that they won't have the money to make new drugs and to advertise them.

Surely, the answer is not what they posit—to leave half the seniors who need the medicine behind. That's not the American way. This is a big deal now. This is a huge deal, a big difference between Gore/Lieberman, Meehan, Neal, Kennedy, our crowd, and their crowd.

My view is, let's solve the problems of America's seniors. We've got the money to do it. And the drug companies have plenty of money

and good lobbyists, and they can come down to Washington, and we'll figure out how to solve their problems. But we've got the cart before the horse if we say, "I'm sorry, here's half the seniors that need medicine. We can't give it to them because the drug companies are afraid they won't get enough money for their advertising and development costs." Let's take care of the seniors, then take care of the drug companies. That's our position. It's the right position. It is the moral position. It's the right thing for America.

Now, you can go through every other issue—crime, the environment, every single other issue—and there are significant differences. But you ought to be able to tell people now what the economic differences are, what the health care differences are, what the education differences are. You ought to be able to tell them. It will affect you, your children, your grandchildren, and the future of this country.

I can also tell you, having worked with him for 8 years and having had some experience now with the Presidency, it is fundamentally a deciding job. Oh, there's a lot of work. Harry Truman said—I felt like this in the Middle East the last couple of days—Harry Truman said that his job largely consisted of trying to talk people into doing things they should do without him having to ask them in the first place. [*Laughter*] And to some extent, that's right.

But the President also has to decide: Who are you going to put on the Supreme Court? Who are you going to make Secretary of State? Who are you going to make Secretary of Defense? Who will be Secretary of Education? Who will be Secretary of Health and Human Services? What will you send to the Congress? How will you deal with the first major foreign crisis you have? What is the future of arms control? How will we deal with terrorism and biological and chemical warfare? This is a deciding job. And that's the last point I want to make.

Al Gore makes good decisions. He is smart. He knows what he's doing. He's tough. He has good values. He makes good decisions. So I'm just asking you to take a little time every day between now and the election. This thing is tight, and it is tight partly because things are going well, and it's easy to blur the distinctions.

I'll close with the thing that's most important to me. If somebody said to me that my time on Earth was over and I got to leave America with one wish, what would my one wish for America be? Believe it or not, it wouldn't be for continued prosperity. After what I've been through with the Middle East and Northern Ireland and the Balkans, growing up in the South that was segregated, as I did, what I would wish for America is that we could be one country, united across all the various differences in this country.

This is such an interesting place to live now. America is getting more interesting every day as we grow more racially and religiously diverse. But it's really important. The only way it's interesting is if we think we respect our differences, but we think our common humanity is even more important.

And there are all kinds of issues that come up all the time where these values are at stake. I think campaign finance reform is one of them. Why? Because it basically will equalize the power of people's votes. I think stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women is one of them, because it gives equality to the dignity of work.

I think the hate crimes legislation is important for obvious reasons. And you know, the truth is—you kind of got a little of that in the last debate—the truth is, we're on one side of those issues, and they're on the other. And I think that we're on the side of one America. And in a world that's getting smaller and smaller, I think we're on the right side.

So I want to say to you, I'm very—I'm so grateful for what you've done for me, for my family and my administration. Nobody's been better to us than the people of Massachusetts. I am grateful. I am grateful for the chance I've had to serve. I am profoundly grateful that there are wonderful people like Marty Meehan who are willing to present themselves for public office and serve and do what they do. I'm grateful for that.

But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow. And the tomorrow that counts now is election day, November 7th. Now, you just remember: Clarity is our friend, if the American people clearly understand what are the differences in economic policy, in education policy, in health care policy, in the environment, in crime, and in one America.

How will it affect me, my family, my community, my children, my grandchildren? How can I build the future of my dreams for our kids? If they really are clear on that, we're going

to have an enormous celebration on election night. But a lot of this work now will be done by word of mouth, one by one.

So you just remember that every day between now and the election. Most of the people you know who will show up and vote will never, ever, ever come to an event like this. So you tell them a little bit about what you heard tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the DoubleTree Riverfront Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Niki Tsongas, widow of late Senator Paul Tsongas; Senator Ted Kennedy's wife, Victoria Reggie Kennedy; and Representative Meehan's mother, Alice, his wife, Ellen T. Murphy, and their son, Robert. Representative Meehan was a candidate for reelection in Massachusetts' Fifth Congressional District.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in Boston, Massachusetts

October 20, 2000

When we were in Lowell—first of all, I told Tom Daschle, I said, "Don't you think it's amazing Ted Kennedy knows every town I have been to in Massachusetts"—[*laughter*]—"since I ran for President in 1992?" And at Lowell, he went through every single place, every single stop I had made in 8 years. I didn't remember all the places. [*Laughter*]

I asked Tom Daschle, I said, "Do you remember every town in South Dakota I've been to?" He said, "Yes, Sioux Falls." [*Laughter*] And I make a lot of fun of Senator Kennedy, and he makes a lot of fun of me, and our families have become close. We've had some wonderful times together. But he's going to get his revenge in the end. And as I tell everybody, you know, I was in junior high school when Ted Kennedy went to the Senate. [*Laughter*] But when I leave the White House, he will still be there. Thank God for that, I must say. [*Laughter*]

I love all these folks that were here tonight. Senator Reed I see is still back there. And Senator Daschle has been a magnificent leader. I talked to Senator Kerry. I know that he had a gathering to talk about technology to the Democratic Party tonight, and I saw the Senators who were here earlier. But one of the things I'm going to miss most about being President is the time I've had to work with them and the friendships I've made with them. One of the things I look forward to most, if the good people of New York send Hillary to the Senate, is, I also get to hang around with them. [*Laughter*] I will still be the object of their occasional abuse, but I'll be able to leave it when I want to. [*Laughter*]

You know, it's really not fair for Ted to talk about Tom Daschle that way on the 22d amendment, because I can promise you that the guys that lead the Senate in the other party will be very glad to see me go. [*Laughter*]

But we've had a great time together. And I know everybody else has talked. I just want to make a couple of very brief points. One is about politics, but the other, more importantly, is about the long-term direction of the country.

I've always felt that Al Gore would win this election, and I still do. I have never wavered in that. When he was 18 points behind a year ago, I kept telling everybody, just relax, go on. And I went around here—Alan will verify that—he had all these events, and we were waving the flag, and I believe that for two simple reasons.

One is, the issue before the American people is not whether the country will change, so it's not change versus the status quo. The country is changing. America is changing. The world's changing. The issue is, what kind of change and whether we should keep changing in the right direction or go back and try what we tried for 12 years before. It didn't work out very well for us. It may be packaged a little differently, but it's basically the same deal. And I think people will get that in the end. I think the undecided voters will come to terms with that and decide they want to keep the prosperity going, they want to—and they want to keep doing what works.

The second reason is, I think that they will decide that we have a more unifying vision of our country, our relationship to the world, and our future, and they will want to embrace it. And that will happen. That's what I think is going to happen.

But in order for that to happen, we have to clarify the differences. And in order for that not to happen, they have to blur the differences. And that really explains, more than any other kind of psychobabble I've read, the different strategies of the two candidates in the debates.

You know, I read all that stuff. Most of it's just—everybody's got to say something. [*Laughter*] But the truth is that—and it's harder for us than it is for them. It's a lot easier—it's easier to muddy things up than it is to clarify them.

But you watch this thing unfold now the last 3 weeks, and you remember what I told you. Clarity is our friend. Cloudiness is their friend, right? So we had—just go through the last debate. We wanted clarity on a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they didn't, because if there's clarity, we win. We want clarity on the difference on the Medicare drug program, and they don't, because if there's clarity, we win.

And so I think that that's something you should all keep in mind. And to whatever extent any of you can influence anybody anywhere in any State that's still up for grabs one way or the other, that's really worth doing.

And I know that this has already been said, but I just want to give just you two examples, if I might. This economic issue is very serious. People ask me all the time. I was with a bunch of people last night who identified themselves as friends of Bob Rubin, and they were telling me how great Bob Rubin was. We were up in Connecticut, had a deal for Hillary. It reminded me that people come up to me from time to time, and they say, "What did you guys do, really, in the economy?"

By the way, I thought Al Gore's best line in the first debate was, the economic line when—George Bush actually had a good line. He said, you know, "I think Clinton/Gore got more out of the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore." That's pretty cute, isn't it? I mean, I thought that was pretty good. [*Laughter*] Because he said the American people did that. Now, this is from—their crowd took credit when the Sun came up in the morning when they were in. Do you remember that? "It's morning in America. Reelect us." I mean, they did. They took credit for the Sun coming up in the morning. It was unbelievable. [*Laughter*] And then they—but everything else, once they got out, it all was an accident. [*Laughter*]

So he said that. He said it was really the hard work of the American people and we just sort of were along for the ride, and Al Gore said, "You know, the American people do deserve most of the credit for this, but they were working real hard in 1992, also." But I thought it was—see, that's clarity. That's good.

But—so people ask me all the time, "Well, what did you and Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all, what did you do? What new great idea did you bring to Washington?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] You know, I mean, here I am in the shadow of Harvard. I hate to say anything so pedestrian—[*laughter*]—and mundane, but that's basically what it was. It was arithmetic, you know.

I just—I thought 2 and 2 still made 4 even in the digital age. Now, I'm not kidding. I am not kidding. I believed that fiscal conservatism would make social progressive's progress possible. That's what I believed. It turned out to be right. I thought if we got rid of the deficit and got interest rates down, the economy would boom; we would have the money to give modest tax cuts and invest in education and technology and the environment and health care and get rid of the deficit and eventually start paying the debt down.

Now, if I had come here 8 years ago and said, "Vote for me. By the time I leave office, we'll be paying down the national debt," you would have not voted for me. You would have said, "He's a very nice young man, but he's delusional, and we can't afford to have a delusional person as President, so"—[*laughter*]—"we'll send him home." Isn't that right? Nobody would have believed me if I had come here in 1992 and said, "Vote for me, and by the time I leave office, we'll be paying down the national debt. Vote for me, and by the time I leave office, the Democratic Party, Ted Kennedy, will be the fiscal conservative, and all the so-called conservatives in the Republican Party will be the radicals."

Now, that's what you've got here. And you know—so, you need to tell people this between now and November 7th. This is about arithmetic all over again. Yes, our tax cut is just a third of the size of theirs, and most of you would

get a lot more out of theirs than ours. But here's the problem. If you do ours, then you can invest the money into education and health care and still pay the country out of debt by 2012, which means that in a global economy where money is highly fungible and something like a trillion dollars crosses national borders every day, you can keep interest rates down and grow the economy.

It also means you can get rid of the third-biggest item in the Federal budget, by the way, which nobody ever talks about. Interest on the debt is the third-biggest item in the Federal budget, 12 cents of every dollar you pay. It was about 14 cents when I took office, headed to 15 or 16. And we're paying the debt down.

But, now, this is arithmetic. So if—you know, there is a big debate about whether the projected surplus is $1.8 trillion and $2.2 trillion, and it sounds like a lot of money, and who can keep up with all of that? But it's still just simple arithmetic. Their tax cut's about $1.5 trillion, conservatively. Their Social Security privatization program is a trillion dollars. They admitted that. Their nominee admitted that in the first debate. Their spending programs are already over $300 billion, and they're lower than we are on defense and haven't said what Star Wars would cost yet. Now, you're back in deficit. This is arithmetic. And it means higher interest rates, and it means you don't free up money to invest, and it means the economy will be weaker. Everybody will get a tax cut.

In addition to the tax cut that the Vice President proposes, if interest rates are lower, and we reckon interest rates—the Council of Economic Advisers says interest rates will be about a point lower a year for a decade under the Gore plan. Do you know what that is? That's $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower student loan payments. It's also lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments, so that means every one of you in this room would benefit from it but so would all the people who served you tonight. It would be a big, huge, across-the-board tax cut that would keep the American economy strong. It is arithmetic. And every single American ought to understand if they want to keep this prosperity going in a global economy, we need to stay in harness with what works. We shouldn't be for no change, but we should be changing in the direction of what works.

The second point I want to make is, we have a different view of how we should relate to each other and the rest of the world. I think America is becoming a more and more interesting place as we become more racially and ethnically and religiously diverse. I think that—I think it's been a good thing for us that America is kind of coming to terms with the whole gay rights movement, and it's not something people have to hide anymore. That's what I believe. A lot of people don't believe that, but I do. I think it's been good for us.

I think we—so we have to define what our responsibilities to one another are. Ted Kennedy and I earlier were with Marty Meehan—Congressman Meehan in Lowell. We have different ideas about the kinds of things we ought to do to bind each other together, and I'll just give you three or four. But every one of them, there is a big difference between our Presidential nominee and our party.

Campaign finance reform, I think, is a good example. You know, one reason we'll never get campaign finance reform is—no offense to the people that are covering this, but they have to say, "A plague on both your houses," because otherwise, they won't feel that they're doing the right thing. They've got to tell everybody none of the politicians are any good.

But the truth is, 100 percent of the Democrats in the Congress will vote for the Shays-Meehan-McCain-Feingold bill—every one of them. We've got them all. And we've got a majority in both Houses. And the reason we can't get it there is because the leadership of the other party in the Congress and in the race for the President are against it. Now, that is the truth.

Now, why are we for it? I enjoy coming to these dinners. If I were running, I would still be glad to have dinner, even if we could relieve you of the burden of financing the Democratic Party, because I'd learn something. But it's part of the idea of one America. It equalizes the power of people's votes. And that's important, so we're for it, and they're not. It's different.

Hate crimes legislation. You got that in the last debate, but they didn't go all the way. I wish that the moderator had actually fleshed out what the real issue was in the hate crimes bill. You just kind of saw them dancing around it. Look, when you strip it all away, here's the deal: We're for hate crimes legislation that includes protection against gays. Matthew Shepard

got stretched on a rack and killed in Wyoming, and if there's a Federal hate crimes bill, it means the Federal Government can come in and help a severely financially strapped local law enforcement jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute the crime. In other words, there is a serious, substantive law enforcement reason.

So to answer that—James Byrd's killers are going to get executed, or something—it totally blows by the two big issues. Number one, the Republicans aren't for it because it protects gays as well as racial and religious minorities and people with disabilities, and number two, they don't recognize the legitimate Federal law enforcement issue here. So we're for this hate crimes bill, and they're not. That's a big deal. I think it's part of one America.

We're for strengthening the equal pay laws to protect the women who do equal work and ought to get equal pay, and they're not. It's a huge deal, not just to women but to men who live with women who don't get paid enough, and therefore, their family incomes are lower. It's a big deal.

Now, those are just three issues, but they have a lot to say about who we are—the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." I could give you lots of other examples.

But my idea here has always been that we should be for two things: opportunity for every responsible citizen and a community of all Americans who are willing to play by the rules. If you have that, if you can create a structure of opportunity for every responsible citizen and a community of all Americans who play by the rules, you always fix the rest of it.

If we can build one America and the conditions and tools are there for people to do pretty well, the American people will figure out what to do with all these other problems. I mean, we could have a lot of esoteric arguments about the implication of the human genome project or how we're going to protect the privacy of medical and financial records on the Internet. And I've got a lot of feelings about all that.

But I'm just telling you, the two big things we need are a system of opportunity for responsible people and a country where everybody counts, and we all do better when we help each other. That's what I believe. And when you strip it all away, that's why you ought to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and that's why these people ought to be in the majority in the U.S. Senate, and that's why we've had some success in the last 8 years. That's why we've had some success.

So I will just say to you what I say to everybody. This race is tight as Dick's hatband, as we used to say at home. [*Laughter*] And it's going to be, because they have more money than we do, and it's easier to confuse than to clarify.

That's really what's going on here. I mean, you can get all these other explanations. I'm just telling you, I've been doing this a long time, and I'm not running for anything. [*Laughter*] This thing is tight because they've got more money than we do, and it's easier to confuse than it is to clarify. So anything you can do, particularly with people who live in States like New Hampshire to the north, where we could win—and if we win, I think it would be the first time ever that a Democrat carried it three times in a row, I believe. I don't think Roosevelt carried it three times in a row. But if you know anybody in any of these States—and one of you and I were talking about Louisiana tonight, a State I still believe we can win.

But in order to do it, we have to energize and clarify. People have got to understand this is a huge deal, and that's the other point I should have made. In addition to this kind of favoring confusion, they're also dramatically advantaged if most people feel sort of comfortable and think this doesn't matter very much, because I can tell you, their rightwing is highly energized. They're looking forward to getting off course and reversing our crime policy and reversing a lot of our other policies.

One of the specific commitments they've made is to reverse my order setting aside 43 million acres of roadless land in the national forests. That's a specific commitment they've made. They're going to reverse that. The Audubon Society says it's the most significant conservation move in 40 years. So they're really energized, because they know where the goodies are, and they know what the payoff will be.

So you can't let people think that this is not a significant election. And if you can just clarify the economic choice and the choices we make in order to be one nation, including those environmental things I mentioned, I think it would make a great deal of difference. And you should not minimize your ability to have an impact on this election. Every one of you would talk to 200 people that never would come to an event like this, on their bet between now and

the election—you may talk to 300 people. And clarity is our friend. If people understand the choices and the consequences, we win. If the decision is uncertain, then it's more difficult for us.

If you want to keep the prosperity going and you want to keep us coming together instead of being divided, you've got to be for Gore/Lieberman and our crowd of Senators here. And believe me, that's why I think we've had some success the last 8 years. And I really think it's a mistake to reverse the economic policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the environmental policy, the crime policy of this country.

It's not like we don't have a test run here. We've tried it our way; we've tried it their way. Things were better our way. They're just never deterred by evidence. I admire that about them. [*Laughter*] They're driven by ideology and the money, and they know what they believe, and the evidence is irrelevant. But it's not irrelevant to the voters that will determine the outcome of this election.

But you can help. In addition to your contributions, in addition to your presence here tonight, you ought to take it on yourself to turn some votes between now and November in the States that will make a difference. I'm telling you, you can do it. And just remember: Clarity is always harder than confusion, and therefore, we carry the burden. But we've also got, by far, the better side of the argument. So when you get away the clouds, we win.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to former Treasury Secretaries Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Indianapolis, Indiana

October 21, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, when Bren was up here talking, I thought to myself, that pretty well covers it; why should I speak? [*Laughter*] Thank you for your incredible generosity and support and friendship to me and to Hillary. And thank you, Mel. I want to thank Cindy and Paul for hosting this in their beautiful home in this beautiful yard. And I think I should say that today is Mel's 74th birthday, and we ought to be among the first to wish him a happy birthday.

You know, we're going to have to redefine our definition of aging, by the way. Anybody—today, Americans who live to be 65, on average, have a life expectancy of 82. Americans who live to be 74 have a life expectancy of over 85. And the fastest growing group of people by percentage in the whole country are Americans over 80. Pretty soon, because of the human genome project, young women will come home with babies from the hospital that will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years, which means that in the context of the 21st century, Mel is just entering middle age. [*Laughter*] And we wish you a long and happy life. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank my friend and supporter and Representative Julia Carson. I'm glad to be able to come back here and also do some events for her this morning. She is unbelievable in Congress. Everybody up there loves her. And she's—I told somebody that she may be an African-American woman, but she has the political skills of an Arkansas Ozark sheriff when she's working the Congress. [*Laughter*] She sort of sidles into a room. When she leaves she's got what she wants, and nobody knows what they gave away until it's too late. [*Laughter*] It's great. Thank you, Julia Carson, for doing a great job.

And I want to thank Bart Peterson. I was so thrilled when he got elected, and I'm glad he and Amy are here today. And I want to say a personal word of appreciation to Frank and Judy O'Bannon. I have enjoyed my friendship with them. They have visited with Hillary and me at the White House. I want you to make sure that this election goes very well for the Governor, because he has done very well by Indiana. You can be really proud of him. And I'm delighted to be here with him today.

And finally, I want to thank Joe Andrew, who has been a great chair of the DNC. Joe, I have to tell you, when I woke up this morning and I looked outside on this beautiful piece of land and the trees are all turning and I realized how close we are to a golf course—[*laughter*]—I questioned your judgment in leaving Indiana and moving to Washington to deal with the sharks to be head of the DNC. But I'm real glad you did. You've done a great job, and I thank you, and the Indiana people should be very proud of Joe Andrew. Thank you.

Now, I will be brief. I enjoyed visiting with all of you inside. I just wanted to say a couple of things. This election is very important—the election—Hillary's election for the Senate, in which you have helped immensely today, because she's doing well up there, I think she's going to win, but I don't want her to be outspent three to one in the last 2½ weeks. And obviously, the people who opposed us all along are trying to give it one last shot before they give up and Hillary wins the Senate and I'm not in the White House. So we've had a pretty brisk fundraising opposition to deal with, too. So I'm very, very grateful to you for that.

But I also wanted to say that I think that as we come into the homestretch of this election, the only thing that concerns me about it is the repeated number of articles I keep reading which say that the undecided voters and the people who might decide not to vote are not quite sure whether this election makes a difference and what the differences between the candidates are for the various races they're considering.

And all I can tell you is that I think the election makes a huge difference, and I can hardly remember a time when the differences between the candidates on the issues that will affect our families, our communities, and our children's futures were any more sharp. It is absolutely clear to me that if the American people—the people in Indiana, just starting in your Governor's race here—if you understand the differences between the candidates and the consequences to families, communities, and the future, we win. If people are uncertain about the differences and the significance, then we're in trouble.

I met with my Democratic colleagues in the Senate and the House at the early part of this week, and I said, "You know, you ought to look at yourselves as sort of a weather patrol: Clear, we win; cloudy, they do well. We've got to try to make the skies clear for people. They have to understand the choices."

And I would just say just two or three things this morning. Number one, Bren talked about the condition of the economy. And people ask me all the time, "Why is the economy doing so well, and what did you do when you got in? What new idea did you bring to Washington?" And the truth is we did have some new ideas about how to make the most of technology and speed up the retraining of the American work force. We had some new ideas, but the main thing we brought to Washington was an old idea, arithmetic.

People ask me all the time, "What's your new idea?" "Arithmetic." Washington didn't practice arithmetic. They quadrupled the debt of America in the 12 years before I took office, because they pretended that you could take 2 and 2, make it add up to 6. And it never has, and it never will.

Now, in some ways, this may be the most significant difference to all of you in this race. It's a difference in the race for the Senate in New York. It is certainly a difference in the race for the Presidency and the Vice Presidency. If you look at the leadership of Frank O'Bannon here and Evan Bayh before him, one of the reasons I think the Democratic Party came back in Indiana is that they proved that you could be fiscally responsible, live within your means, run a good government, grow the economy, and also invest in education and in helping people. That's basically what we do; that's what we Democrats do.

And when I became President, the deficit was $295 billion. Do you know what it was supposed to be this year—$455 billion. Instead we've got a $230 billion surplus. When I leave office, we will have paid down over $300 billion of the national debt. When I became President, we were spending over 13 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes just paying interest on the debt. When I leave, we'll be down at or below 12 cents. We were going to be at 15 cents. And if you vote for Vice President Gore, we pay the debt off; you get rid of the third biggest item in the Federal budget.

And that's why we can pay for more health care, more education, a more modest tax cut, and still get rid of that debt. Arithmetic.

Now, the biggest difference here—and it affects every one of you, from the wealthiest person here to the people who have served this wonderful meal this morning—the biggest difference is their tax plan is 3 times bigger than ours. Actually, people who make under $100,000 a year almost all do better under ours. But theirs is 3 times bigger. So what difference does that make? If you spend—if you have—these numbers boggle the imagination, but if you think you're going to have about $2 trillion to spend, if you spend $1.5 trillion on a tax cut and then you promise people you're going to give young people some of their Social Security payroll tax back to put in the stock market, but you're going to protect old people who are already drawing their Social Security and they won't lose anything, that costs another trillion dollars. And then you promise people several hundred billion dollars worth of spending, you know if you just take out all the zeros you can add it up. If you've got two to spend and you spend three—that's the Republican proposal—you're back in deficit. And that means higher interest rates and lower growth.

The Democratic plan will keep interest rates about a percent lower over a decade, every year. And let me just tell you what that means. You hear people talking about tax cuts these last 2 weeks—one percent lower interest rates every year for a decade saves the American people $390 billion in home mortgage payments, $30 billion in car payments, $15 billion in college loan payments. That doesn't even count how much lower your credit cards will be or the fact that you will have lower cost business loans, which will mean more expansion, a stronger economy, and a better stock market.

So we have a tax cut, all right. It's concentrated on helping people get tax relief to pay for college education, long-term care, child care, retirement savings, and to give people incentives to invest in the poor areas that aren't part of our prosperity yet. It isn't as big as theirs. We freely admit it. But the reason is we want to get rid of the debt. We think it's important. And we think low interest rates and a strong economy is the best tax cut we can give all Americans.

Now, that is a clear choice. People need to understand that. And it is a huge deal. I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around, pull this country together, and move this Nation forward. And that is the single most important difference. Don't let anybody tell you there is no significant difference between these two economic plans.

And I know here in Indiana, where there are a lot of conservative people, they say, "Well, but Gore wants to spend more money than Bush." He does. But if you get rid of interest on the debt, you get rid of the third biggest item in the budget, and you quit paying interest payments on the debt. You can spend more money on education and health care and the environment and scientific research and still have a tax cut because you're not—you get rid of the third biggest item in the Federal budget.

This is real important. People have got to understand this. All the work we have done in the last 8 years can be reversed if you go back to big deficits. And I think if people understood that, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman would win. Don't you? So you need to talk to people about it. It's a big deal. It's one of the biggest issues in the New York Senate race and all over the country, because we have proven that fiscal conservatism and social progress go hand in hand.

So we've cut the welfare rolls in half, partly because we have good welfare reform but partly because we have a strong economy. And we have the number of people without health insurance going down, for the first time in a dozen years, partly because we have a program that helps insure children that the State runs and we send them the money to do it but partly because we have a strong economy. We have a lower dropout rate in high school and a higher college-going rate than ever before in history, and test scores are going up, and there's a movement of more and more kids to take advanced placement courses—a huge increase in it—partly because the education reforms are going in the right direction but partly because we have a strong economy, which rewards higher levels of skill.

So I just would say to all of you, I think this is profoundly important. And if you don't explain anything else to any of your neighbors and friends before they vote, tell them this is still about arithmetic. And the numbers have got to add up. Our numbers will, and theirs won't.

The second thing I want to say is I believe, in addition to economic policy, the central thing that we have done these last 8 years that has helped move our country forward is to have

an inclusive philosophy that everybody ought to be part of America's community, that everybody counts, everybody ought to have a chance, we all do better when we help each other, and we can't afford to let anyone be either left behind or abused and be the kind of country we want.

America is growing more diverse. It's getting more interesting, but as you see all around the world today, most of the troubles in the world come from people who can't get along with other folks who are different from them, because they think their differences are more important than their common humanity. So I have worked very hard on things I thought would even the scales in America and bring us together. And in each of these instances, our party is in one place, and their party is in another. And I'll just give you a couple of examples.

We're for raising the minimum wage, and they're not. We're for strengthening laws guaranteeing equal pay for women for equal work, and they're not. We're for a hate crimes bill that protects people against hate crimes and allows the Federal Government to come in and help local law enforcement when there have been crimes of hate against people, like we saw in the case of James Byrd or Matthew Shepard or these other highly publicized cases around the country. And it's a big problem, and you see it in your part of the country.

So I just give you these examples. If you could see what I have seen around the world in the last 8 years, you would know how important it is for us to learn to live together, across the lines that divide us. When I flew to Egypt earlier this week to try to help put an end to the violence in the Middle East, all the way over there I was just aching for these people, whom I know. And I was thinking about the former Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, who was killed because he was working for peace. And I thought how all these people have worked together for 7 years, and it can just be thrown away in a day or two because things happen that raise all their old demons again.

Four or 5 years ago, we had this horrible ethnic slaughter in Rwanda, in Africa, where the two tribal groups who had literally shared the same land that is Rwanda for 500 years, and on and off they'd had trouble, but they'd always managed it. And it wasn't like a lot of African countries where 100 years ago the lines of the nations were redrawn artificially and all these people that weren't used to living together were thrown together. These people had been living together on the same land for 500 years. And within 100 days, over 700,000 people were killed—without weapons. Basically, they did it all with machetes. Why? Because something set off this spark of fear and loathing among people who were different.

So that's the last point I want to make today. I know this is all kind of heavy for Saturday morning, but you need to think about it. If I were told—if God came down tonight and said to me, "You have to go. Your time is up, but I'll give you one wish for America," believe it or not, I would not wish to continue our economic prosperity if I only had one wish. If I had one wish, I would wish for us to all get along together as one America, to be one community, to see our differences as interesting and fascinating, but not nearly as important as our common humanity, because the American people are smart and they're innovative, and the fact that we're growing more diverse is a gold mine of potential for us in a global society. But all over the world I see it over and over and over again—whether it's in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, or the Balkans or Africa, you name it, most of the world's troubles stem from the fact that people are determined to see their differences as more important than their common humanity. And then they slip from that into distrust and hatred and dehumanization and violence. And it's a little, easy slope to fall down.

And one of the things that I think is important about being a Democrat in the 21st century is that we do believe everybody counts. We think the people who are serving us here ought to have the same chance to send our kids to college as we do—their kids to college as we do. We think everybody should have a chance. We think the role of Government is to give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And we really believe that we all do better when we help each other.

We can only secure the independence of people which our Constitution guarantees if we recognize that we live in a world where we are increasingly interdependent, and life is going to be more interesting but only if we can see our common humanity as more important than all those interesting differences.

So you just go out and tell people that. Tell people our program adds up, and theirs doesn't,

and ours will pull people together, and theirs won't. Those are two good reasons to stick with our side and to show up on election day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Cindy Simon Skjodt and Paul Skjodt and Mrs. Skjodt's parents, cohosts Bren and Melvin Simon; Mayor Bart Peterson of Indianapolis and his wife, Amy; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana and his wife, Judy; and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee.

The President's Radio Address
October 21, 2000

Good morning. By any standard, this fall is something special. Today New York hosts the first game of the first "subway series" since 1956. We're about to hold the first Presidential election of the 21st century. And this school year features the biggest class of students in our Nation's history.

Fall is also budget season in Washington, time for Congress to put everything else aside, step up to the plate, and complete its work on behalf of our students and all Americans. Instead, we're 3 weeks into the new fiscal year and still running the Government on a week-by-week basis and still fighting to get a budget that reflects the priorities of our people. Today I want to talk about what's at stake, starting with education, because in the last days of this Congress, our first priority should be the future of our children.

Al Gore and I came to Washington almost 8 years ago now with a strategy of fiscal discipline, targeted tax cuts, and investment in our people. Our determination to live within our means has brought our country out of an age of deficits into an era of surpluses. We're actually paying down the national debt, and Government spending is the smallest percentage of national income it's been since 1966. And our education strategy—higher standards, accountability, greater investment—is being embraced all across America, and it's working.

The dropout rate is down; test scores and graduation rates are up. The percentage of kids going on to college is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the largest expansion of college aid since the GI bill.

This past February I submitted a balanced budget that would sustain America's prosperity by maintaining our fiscal discipline and investing in our future. The budget strengthens Social Security and Medicare, adds a Medicare prescription drug benefit, keeps us on track to pay down the debt by 2012, and invests in education, technology, the environment, and health care.

Unfortunately, while we've been working to save money for our Nation's future, the Republican majority in Congress has been focusing on ways to spend it, loading up the spending bills with record amounts of pork-barrel spending. So again this week I'm asking Congress to bring its priorities back into line with the Nation's, and there's no better place to start than education.

We can't lift our children up in schools that are simply falling down. Congress should approve my plan to help communities build new schools and repair old ones. Every day they fail to act is another day too many children attend class in drafty trailers, crowded classrooms, and crumbling buildings. There's a bipartisan majority ready to pass tax credits for school construction. It's time for the Republican leadership to stop blocking it, schedule a vote, and let it happen.

We've also made a bipartisan commitment to hire 100,000 new teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades and proposed an initiative to improve teacher quality. We've hired about 30,000 of those teachers. But now, the Republican leadership is trying to back out of our commitment. Instead, we should follow through. I've also proposed doubling our funding for after-school programs to cover 1.6 million children.

We know after-school programs result in higher test scores, lower juvenile crime rates, and fewer drug problems. We ought to do it. And

we're still waiting for Congress to show that it supports holding our schools accountable by providing the resources to turn around failing schools or shut them down and reopen them under new management.

Congress also needs to finish the rest of its work, passing a real Patients' Bill of Rights, strong hate crimes legislation, and a raise in the minimum wage. Now, in all these cases, there is a bipartisan majority in both Houses for these bills. But the majority party's leadership again is blocking progress.

Congress should also act to ensure equal treatment for immigrants and equal pay for women. And it should pass the right kind of tax cuts for middle-class Americans, targeted tax cuts that preserve our fiscal discipline, allow us to get this country out of debt, and still give Americans tax relief to save for retirement and meet the costs of long-term care, child care, and college tuition, and tax credits that support investments in our inner cities, rural areas, Native American reservations, and other places our prosperity has not yet reached.

These priorities deserve attention now, not later. If I were a Member of Congress, I wouldn't want to go home and ask people to send me back to Washington so I could finish last year's work next year.

Yesterday I signed a fourth continuing resolution to keep the Government open until next Wednesday. But I told the leadership that if they fail to meet yet another deadline, we're going to have to take the continuing resolutions one day at a time until we get the job done. So I urge them: Come back next week, and let's finish work on the budget, so the benefits can start flowing to students and families who need them most.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:25 p.m. on October 20 at a private residence in Lowell, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Rally for Representative Julia Carson in Indianapolis
October 21, 2000

The President. Wow! I'll tell you why I came here: Because Julia Carson asked me, and I always do whatever she asks me to do—[*laughter*]—because I learned very early I could do it right away or I could just wait and let her grind on me until I finally broke down and said yes. So I just say yes right away to Julia now—[*laughter*]—and it solves a lot of my problems.

Mr. Mayor, I'm glad to be back here in your city, and I'm very proud that you are now the mayor of this great city. And I want to thank my longtime friend Jeff Smulyan for helping Julia Carson. We were friends before I ran for President. Before I knew I was going to run for President, I met him. He was just—I was just what President Bush used to refer to as the Governor of a small southern State—[*laughter*]—when we became friends. And I thank you for helping Julia.

Joe Andrew, I am so proud of you. He's got that riff down, doesn't he, old Joe does. I kind of wanted to run down here along the side and pass the plate when he was up there preaching. [*Laughter*] We knew he was preaching to the saved, and so I thought we ought to take up an offering here. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, I'm really proud of what the Democrats have done in Indiana. I'm proud of your great Governor, and I want you to make sure he gets reelected. He deserves to be reelected. And I am very, very proud of your former Governor, Senator Evan Bayh, and what a great job he has done. We have also been friends for many, many years.

So this is a great day for me, to come here to thank the people from Indiana who have sent such fine people into public office——

Audience member. We love you, Mr. President!

The President. ——and who have given us Julia Carson, who is truly one of a kind. Have you ever met anybody like Julia before in your whole life?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. I tell this joke—she's talking about what a unifying force the Democratic Party is—Julia has got it all inside her. I told somebody, she may be an African-American woman, but she reminds me of a redneck county judge when she works the room. [*Laughter*] She kind of sidles into these rooms in Washington, and all these self-important people are there in their expensive suits, using these big words. And then Julia sort of sidles out, and she's got whatever it is she came in for, and they still don't know what happened. [*Laughter*] I mean, it's amazing, you know. She's like a stealth bomber for Indiana in Washington. She's got more moves than Larry Bird and Isaiah Thomas put together. She's got moves. Man, people don't see that stuff.

So, yes, I wanted to come here. I'm sorry I couldn't come before. You know what I was doing. I was working on the peace process. [*Applause*] But now—wait a minute—I want to say a couple of things seriously. We're all having a good time, but we all agree with each other, or you wouldn't be here. And here's what I want to say to you.

First, thank you. Thank you for helping me have a chance to serve the country for the last 8 years. I'm grateful to you. Second, I have been reading as much as I could while I've been running around the world and trying to get the Congress out of town, too—I've been reading what I could about what the experts are saying about this election. And they say it's tight as a tick, and they say that there are a lot of undecided voters, and they say that there are a lot of voters who aren't sure what the differences are and what the consequences are to them, so maybe it doesn't matter for whom they vote or whether they vote.

Now, let me tell you something. I've done everything I could do for 8 years to turn this country around, pull this country together, and move the country forward—everything I could do. But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow. Always about—that's why we're still around here after 224 years, because we're always thinking about tomorrow. Now, look at where we were 8 years ago and where we are now, and ask yourselves where we're going to go. I'm telling you, this is a huge election. You cannot afford for anybody to think that there aren't any differences, and it doesn't matter whether they vote or for whom they vote.

And the interesting thing about this election to me is, from the elections for President and Vice President to the United States Senate—and you know I've got a passing interest in that Senate race up in New York; I know something about that—[*laughter*]—to the races for Governor and for Congress, all over the country you see the same things. There are big differences. The differences will have real consequences, and only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? I see it everywhere.

So you've got the other side trying to cloud the differences and blur them, and we have to clarify them. And I just want to say, look, 8 years ago the country was in the ditch economically. Eight years later we've got the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, 22 million new jobs, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment ever measured, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years.

Now, I got tickled—you know, when our Republican friends were in, they took credit for everything that happened in America. They took credit when the Sun came up. [*Laughter*] One of their campaigns was, "It's morning in America. The Sun came up in the morning. Give it to us. We did it." [*Laughter*] Now, everything that happens, happens by accident. Did you listen to these debates? I thought Al Gore's best moment in the first debate was when his opponent said, "I think Clinton/Gore got more out of the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore. The American people did this," you know. We just sort of were there. And Al Gore said, "Well, you know, the American people did do this, but they were working hard 8 years ago, too, and they weren't doing nearly as well."

So the first big question is, do you want to continue the prosperity, build on it, expand it to people and places that have been left behind, and lift up this whole country? Now, you've got to talk to people, because how could anybody not see this? Look, they're offering a tax cut that's 3 times the size of the one that we're offering. But most people making under $100,000 are better off under our proposal than theirs—tax cuts to pay for college education, long-term care, child care, retirement savings,

to get people to invest in the communities that have been left behind.

Now, but theirs is 3 times bigger. And then they want to partially privatize Social Security, which means—forget about whether you think it's a good idea or not; let's just talk about the arithmetic. There are a lot of problems with the idea, but forget about that, talk about the arithmetic. Everybody here under 40—let's say, under 45—can take 2 percent of your Social Security payroll tax, keep it, and put it in an investment account. Everybody like me, starting next year, who will be 55 or over, gets a guarantee we're going to get it, just like they always promised it. Now, where's the money going to come from if you take away the money that they're going to pay my guarantee with? They've got to take that out of the surplus, too.

So they've got a tax cut 3 times bigger than ours, a trillion dollar promise in Social Security to pay for the privatization, hundreds of billions of dollars in other promises. Look, folks, you need to tell people—they want to know why we did well in America. Because we brought arithmetic back to Washington. We made the numbers add up. These numbers don't add up.

And look, this is a big deal. If you vote for a tax cut that big and you privatize Social Security at a trillion dollars, you spend several hundred billion dollars of it, you're back in deficit. And do you know what that means? High interest rates. If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, Julia Carson and our whole crowd, do you know what it means? You'll have interest rates about one percent lower a year for a decade.

Let me tell you what that amounts to in a tax cut. Listen to this, one percent lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans—means higher profits, more folks getting hired, more pay raises, and a higher stock market. Our tax cut for all is low interest rates that keep this economy going and pay the debt off.

Now, this is very important. Did you watch the debate where their guy says, our guy is for big Government? We're for big Government? There's a real problem with that argument, besides the fact that it's not true—it's manifestly not true. What do I mean by that? The size of the Federal Government today is the smallest it's been since 1960, when Dwight Eisenhower was President and John Kennedy was running for President. The Federal Government spending as a percentage of our economy is the smallest it's been since 1966. Why is that? We're paying down the debt.

The third biggest item in the budget for your tax money is the debt. After Social Security and defense, the debt is the third highest sum in the budget. So we get rid of that, we can spend more on education, more on health care, pay for a tax cut, and still shrink the size of Government. Vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Julia Carson, get the country out of debt, keep interest rates down, keep the economy going, keep moving forward—that's the issue.

Now, that's clear. But don't all of you know a lot of people who never will come to a rally like this? You do, don't you? You know, every one of you, you know a lot of people who love their country, and they're going to vote on election day, but they'll never come to a rally like this. You need to tell them just what I told you.

The first thing is, if you like the prosperity and you want to keep it going and you don't want us to go back into deficit, you've got to vote with us. We tried it their way for 12 years. We tried it our way for 8 years. Our way works better than their way. We've got to keep going.

And now, the second thing I want to say is this. If you look at every other area of our national life, you'll find the same thing. Welfare: The rolls have been cut in half. Yes, if you're able-bodied and you can work, you've got to go to work. But we don't want you to hurt your kids, so we want more for child care, for education and training, for transportation. And it works. Our deal works. Helping people be good parents and good workers makes good sense. That's why we were for the family and medical leave law. We think it ought to be expanded. Work and family—our way works.

Crime: What was our position on crime? Not what they say. They say we're weak on enforcement, and all we want to do is take hunters' guns away. What a load of hooey. [*Laughter*] You know, that's just a bunch of bull. [*Laughter*] It might stir people up and get them some votes, but it has a real burden of being untrue.

What are the facts? What was our approach? Our approach was, put more cops on the street to prevent crime in the first place. Do more to take guns out of the hands of children and criminals. You can do that without interfering

with the hunters and the sport shooters. Give kids something to say yes to; give them an after-school program; summer school program; and then punish the people that ought to be punished. Now, that's been our—do you know what—now, look at the record. We have the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the lowest murder rate in 33 years. That is the record.

So what do they want to do? They want to stop our efforts to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. They want to—this is an explicit commitment—they want to repeal our efforts to put over 100,000 police on our streets. And they just want to go back to talking tough again.

Well, look, we tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works. And not a single Indiana hunter has missed a day in the deer woods, not a sports person has missed a single sporting event, but a half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers couldn't get a handgun because of the Brady bill. It's a safer country. We're a better country. Our way works. We tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works.

You look at education. Compared to 8 years ago, test scores are up; the dropout rate is down; the high school graduation rate is up; the college-going rate is at an all-time high. We went from 14 States to 49 States with strong academic standards that would be applied to all students in all schools. All States now have to identify schools that are failing and try to find some way to turn them around. So standards, accountability, and resources to help people meet the standards—it's working. The teachers and the principals know how to turn around failing schools now.

Now, we know how to do this. We're finally moving this thing. We've had a two-thirds increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement tests, a 300 percent increase for Latino kids, a 500 percent increase for African-American kids taking advanced placement tests to go to college. Now, we know what we're doing here.

So what is Al Gore's program? What's the Democratic program? High standards and accountability, identify schools that are failing, and within 2 years turn them around or shut them down and reopen them under new management. But help them: 100,000 more teachers; funds to build or modernize or repair schools; funds to train the teachers in the subjects that they're supposed to be teaching; and making sure that kids get a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition; and after-school and preschool programs for all the kids who need it.

Why? Not because we're against accountability and standards, but because if you're going to lay standards on somebody, they've got to have a chance to meet the standards.

Now, what is their program? Their program is, accountability and block grants to States, and if they spend the money, fine; if they don't, fine; if they don't spend it well, we'll take it away from them. So if the schools get in trouble, our answer is, spend even less on them. That's their side.

I think accountability-plus is better than accountability-minus. And we've had 8 years of experience. We're moving in the right direction. Our way works better than theirs. The American people have to choose that.

The same thing is true with every other issue. On the environment, we've got cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food; 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time in history. We have proved you can grow the economy and clean up the environment. And we set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt in permanent trust for the American people.

Al Gore says, "Vote for me, and I'll build on that." His opponent says, "Vote for me, and we'll relax some of their regulations. We'll get rid of the President's order protecting 40 million acres in national forests. We'll reduce some of these other things he's done, because you simply can't do this much and grow the economy."

Now, look, we tried it their way, didn't we? And then they came in and tried to weaken the economy again. I vetoed it every time they tried it the last 5 years. [*Applause*] And wait a minute. And you know, if I were trying to hurt the economy, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*]

So this is a serious deal. You can grow the economy and improve the environment. And believe me, in the future, the challenges will be bigger than the ones I've faced. You can't turn around on this. This is a big deal. This is a big deal. So you've got to go tell people this. You've got to say, "Look, look at where we were 8 years ago. Look at where we are today. The economy, crime, welfare, education, the environment, health care—we've got people without insurance, that number, going down for the

first time in a dozen years because of the Children's Health Insurance Program that we have proposed and gotten out there and implemented." Now, the country is going in the right direction.

Now, here's the last point I want to make. You all were clapping when Joe Andrew did his shtick. You know, we don't care whether you're old or young, whether you walked in or wheeled in, and all that. That's really who we are. And it's the only thing about us that's more important than the economic policy is that we think everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

Now, it's what I call one America But there are lots of these one America issues out there where there are real differences. You can go to your friends and neighbors and ask them with whom they agree. Our side, we're for raising the minimum wage. Their side isn't. Our side, we're for stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women, and their side isn't. Our side, we're for a Medicare prescription drug program so that every senior who needs access to affordable medicine can get it, and their side isn't. Our side, we're for hate crimes legislation that protects people on the basis of race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation from hate crimes. Nobody ought to be beat up, mauled, dragged, or killed in this country because of who they are, if they're obeying the law. And their side isn't.

Now, that's it. So here's the deal. You can't let anybody not vote or sort of stray away because they think there's no consequence here, they think there are no differences here. We've actually had quite a nice election, free of personal recrimination, where we're positive that both these candidates for President and for Vice President are good, honorable, patriotic Americans who love their families and love their country, and they're going to do what they say they're going to do.

And I can tell you this—you know, the press likes to say that these politicians are always breaking their word, but the truth is, every study shows that most Presidents pretty well do what they say they're going to do. Once in a while they break their word, and usually we're thankful they did. [*Laughter*] Why? Roosevelt said he'd balance the budget, and that was a bad idea with 25 percent unemployment. And we're thankful that he gave us the New Deal instead. Lincoln, to get elected, said he wouldn't free the slaves, and we're awful glad he broke that promise.

So once in a great while a guy gets elected President and has to break a promise, and it makes—but more often than not, Presidents do what they say they're going to do. You're going to have a very different Supreme Court, depending on which one of them gets elected. And it's not just about the right to choose, although it is about that. That will change, depending on what happens. It is also about the ability of the Congress of the United States to protect working people. There are all these—and ordinary citizens, for all kinds of things. There's a revolution here, a debate, going on on the Supreme Court, and some of them want to go back to where they were in the 1930's.

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Now, you've got to decide. But don't you let anybody tell you that there are no differences. And I just came out here to say, you know, if Indiana can elect Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon back to back, if Indianapolis can elect Bart Peterson, the first Democratic mayor in a month of Sundays, if Indiana can send me Julia Carson to drive me crazy until I say yes to whatever she's asking, if Indiana can provide us Joe Andrew, the sparkplug of our national revival of the Democratic Party, all of you, between now and election day, can find some people to talk to.

Look at all the people in this crowd here. This is a big crowd. This crowd will talk to, collectively, 30,000–50,000–100,000 people between now and election day. Look around here. There are lots of folks here. Most of the people you will talk to will never come to an event like this. But they will vote, if they think it matters. And you need to go tell them—your friends in Illinois, your friends in Michigan, your friends in Kentucky and all the States around here, all those States are big battleground States—look, if you want to keep the prosperity going, their deal won't pass the arithmetic test. It doesn't add up. You've got to stick with us. Look at where we were 8 years ago and where we are now on welfare, crime, the environment, education, health care. We're moving in the right direction. Let's keep moving in the right direction.

Look at where we are on building one America, on hate crimes, on equal pay for women, on all these other issues. Look at this. If you

want one America, if you want to move in the right direction, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you've got one choice. You've got to be for our crowd: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Frank O'Bannon, Julia Carson, the people that helped to bring America back. You can do it, Indiana.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. in Edy's Grand Hall at the Indianapolis State Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Jeff Smulyan, chairman and chief executive officer, Emmis Communications Corp.; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana; National Basketball Association Hall of Fame members Larry Bird and Isaiah Thomas; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Julia Carson was a candidate for reelection in Indiana's 10th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Johnson City, New York
October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. I'm sorry to keep you waiting, but I'm sure glad you waited. I'm delighted to see you. Thank you.

Thank you, Margaret. Thank you, Barbara. I want to thank all the people who are here. Do you want to sit down? I want to thank the people of Broome County for voting for me in 1996, the first time a Democrat has carried this county in over 30 years. Thank you very much.

I also want to tell you how very much I admire your Representative in Congress, Maurice Hinchey. What a great friend he's been to me and to you and to the people of the State of New York. He's done a wonderful job for you.

More than anything else, I want to say thank you. The people of this State have been wonderful for 8 years to me and to Al Gore. Last year—I mean, in 1996 we carried 52 of New York's 62 counties, and I was so gratified by the support that you gave us, so thank you; thank you very, very much.

I came here today in my capacity as Presidential spouse—[*laughter*]—to ask for your help for Hillary in this race for the United States Senate and to ask you, in the closing days of this election season, to go out across this community, out across this country, out across this State and talk to all of your friends and neighbors about the race for Senate, about the race for President, about what is at stake in this election.

I try to say this now at every event I can, but I'm so gratified to see you here. But most of you have tons of friends and relatives and co-workers who will vote on election day but have never come to an event like this. Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And therefore, all they may know about the election is either what they see on television or what someone says to them or what kind of discussions they enter into. So while this is a rally and we'd all like to spend all our time just shouting, on this Sunday, I think it's fair to say that—in my tradition we often say, I realize that I am here preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*]

And so what I would like to ask you to do is to think about, just for a moment, the points I'd like to make, and then make a little pledge to yourself that every day between now and election you will share these thoughts with your friends, your neighbors, your family members, your co-workers who have never come to an event like this, because you can make the difference.

First of all, I want to say a few things about my wife. In the 30 years, almost, that we have known each other, I have seen her passion, her energy, and her activism devoted to the causes of children and family, health care and education, economic opportunity for people who have been left out or left behind. In the 8 years we have been in the White House, she has been a leading force for all those causes: for the family and medical leave law, the very first bill I signed—now, 22 million Americans have taken some time off without losing their

jobs when a baby is born or a family member is sick, a profoundly important thing—for expanding our support of child care for working families, so that people can succeed at home and at work; for expanding our efforts to have more preschool and after-school opportunities and mentoring programs for our children; for doing more for early childhood development.

From the time we served before I became President, Hillary has always been passionately interested in what could be done to bring job opportunities to people who want to work and don't have them, what can be done to put businesses in areas where businesses have left.

And one of the things that I'm proudest of, to celebrate the millennium, she created a project, America's Millennium Project, to "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future." It is now the largest single historic preservation effort in the history of America, and a lot of the places that were preserved are here in New York State, from George Washington's revolutionary headquarters to Harriet Tubman's home, places that will increase tourism as well as community pride.

Of all the people I've ever known in public life, I've never known anyone who had quite the combination of brains and heart and ability to get things done and consistent caring that she does. She will be a magnificent United States Senator for the people of New York.

Now, what I want to ask you—it's also important to recognize, however, that this Senate race inevitably is playing out against the background of the national election and the great questions all Americans must decide, for they, too, will affect the people of New York. And I believe there are three great questions in this election, and I just want to tell you what they are. They affect the Senate race, but they also clearly affect the race for President and Vice President and for all the races for Congress and all the races for Senate throughout the United States.

First of all, let me say just looking at the debates, let me tell you a couple of the things that aren't at issue, that aren't questions in this election. Number one, this election is not about change versus the status quo. If someone said, "Vote for me. I'll do everything President Clinton did," I would not vote for that person. Why? Because America is changing. The world is changing. You will live in a time of very rapid change for at least another 10, maybe 20 years. The issue is not whether we're going to change. It is how we're going to change.

Are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years or go back to a failed policy we already tried in the past? That is the issue in this election. The issue is not whether the Democrats should be rejected because of the partisanship in Washington. Let me just say this—I've heard a lot of that talk. It wasn't we who decided that no Republicans would vote to bring down the deficit they created. [*Laughter*]

And when we could work with them, we did. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill. We had a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of '97. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created hundreds of thousands of good jobs and thousands and thousands of businesses. We got bipartisan agreement on 100,000 police, 100,000 teachers, and many other things. When we could make a bipartisan agreement, we did.

Last week we were trying to get a bipartisan agreement to put more money into Medicare, to help the hospitals in rural areas, to help the teaching hospitals, to help the in-home providers, to help the nursing homes to deal with some of their problems. They walked away from the bipartisan agreement and have come up with the Republicans' only solution that gives a disproportionate amount of money to the HMO's. That's not our decision. Now, I'll hang tough and eventually we'll come back, and we'll get a bipartisan agreement again. This is not about bipartisanship. The Democrats favor bipartisanship, and our record is that.

The one last thing they say this election is about that it most assuredly isn't, is whether you should be for their side because they trust the people, and we're for big Government. You might hear some of that up here. [*Laughter*] So let me just give you a little evidence.

It was this Democratic administration that has reduced the size of the Federal Government to its smallest point since 1960, when Dwight Eisenhower was President and John Kennedy came here looking for your vote. It was this administration that eliminated 16,000 pages of Federal regulations, that enabled the Small Business Administration to cut its applications for small-business people from an inch thick to one page and give people an answer in 72 hours. It was this administration that got rid of two-thirds of the regulations that the Federal

Government, under the previous Republican administration, was imposing on States and local school districts. If you're for smaller Government, our candidates are your candidates. We're for better Government and smaller Government. That's not the issue.

Here are the three great questions the American people will decide in this election. Number one: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people and places who aren't yet fully a part of it? That's the first question. Our candidates favor a tax cut we can afford, that helps more middle class families than theirs does, with deductibility for college tuition, for long-term care costs for the elderly and disabled family members, for retirement savings, for child care, things that will help—and for extra incentives for people to invest in areas that aren't yet growing in the economy.

It is admittedly only one-third the size of their tax cut. Why is that? Because we know, number one, we've got to have some money to invest in education, in health care, in the future of the country. And number two, we've got to keep paying this debt down until we make America debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Now, why is that? Because their tax cut is 3 times bigger, and they want to partially privatize Social Security. That costs another trillion dollars. And then they've got several hundred billion dollars they want to spend. When you add it all up, we're back in deficits, and we can't pay the debt off. And what does that mean? Higher interest rates, about a percent a year over a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? If you take the Al Gore/Joe Lieberman/Hillary plan, you get a percent lower interest rate.

Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loan interest rates; more businesses; more jobs; higher raises; a stronger stock market—that's a tax cut for all Americans. Get this country out of debt, and keep those interest rates down.

Now, that's a real question. Do you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? We tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way for 12 years before. Our way works better than their way. We need to keep changing in the right direction to keep the prosperity going in America.

Here is the second question: Do you want to build on the progress in our society of the last 8 years, or do you want to return to policies that we know don't work? And let me just give you a couple of examples. The welfare rolls have been cut in half. They're the lowest in 30 years. The crime rate has gone down every year. It's the lowest in 26 years. We have the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. We have—as I said earlier, Government spending as a percent of our economy is the lowest it has been in 34 years. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, 90 percent of our children immunized. We have more land set aside in public trust for all time than under any administration except that of Theodore Roosevelt, almost 100 years ago.

What is the point of this? The point of this is, we have proved you can grow the economy and improve the environment. We have the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. We have supported local school districts with our strategy of higher standards, accountability, and more investment. Test scores are up. The dropout rate is down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. There has been a huge increase in the number of our children taking advanced placement tests, and more and more failing schools are turning around.

Now, the question you have to ask yourself is, are we going to build on this progress or go back and adopt policies that have been proven not to work? In every single one of these areas there is a disagreement.

They have committed to relax our environmental commitment. They have committed to end our commitment to 100,000 teachers. They are not for our school construction program to help the schools build or repair facilities that are either outdated or grievously overcrowded. They do not approve of our crime policy, and they have committed to abolish our commitment to 100,000 police and not to go for mandatory child trigger locks and real background checks and other things that are profoundly important.

Now, it's not like we had a test here. We've tried it our way, and we tried it their way. Our way works better. You have to decide if you're going to build on the progress of the last 8 years.

So, question one, are we going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? Question two, are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years? Question three, are we going to keep trying to bring this country together, across all the lines that divide us to build one America, fair for every responsible citizen with opportunity for every responsible citizen?

Now, what are those questions? We're for hate crimes legislation. I mean real hate crimes legislation that protects all people who are singled out because of who they are, for abuse and criminal conduct. We are for legislation to strengthen the equal pay law, so that women who are doing the same kind of work get equal pay for it. We believe the immigrants that are in this country legally ought to be treated fairly and not discriminated against. If they're working, if they're paying taxes, they ought to be eligible to be treated in a fair way.

We're for an increase in the minimum wage. And we don't believe—we do not demonize any interest groups, but we think no interest group should keep us from pursuing the public interest. They say they're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, but theirs is weaker than ours because the HMO's don't want it to be stronger. They say they want to help older people get drugs, but they're not for a Medicare drug program that gives all seniors who need it access to affordable medicine, because the drug companies aren't for it.

They say they're against hate crimes, but they won't support hate crimes legislation that covers everybody, because their extreme right doesn't believe gays should get protection in hate crimes legislation, but we believe all people should be protected.

Now, you have to decide. You have to decide what you believe. But make no mistake about it, there are big differences here: in our economic approach to keep the prosperity going; in our social approaches, whether it's on education or health care or the environment or crime; and on what we think it takes to build one America. And there are so many more issues I could mention. Campaign finance reform: They say they're for it, but they're not really for it because they don't want to be for it because they raise more money than we do. [*Laughter*] You've got to decide whether you care about that.

But we've got 100 percent of the Democratic caucus and enough Republicans to pass it, for the Shays-Meehan bill in the House or the McCain-Feingold, that's called after Senator McCain and Senator Feingold in the Senate, and it hasn't passed because their leadership is not for it. I think that's a part of one America. Why? Because the more we can balance out the financing in the country, the more everybody's vote counts the same.

So this is a big deal here. You have to decide. And your friends and neighbors, with their votes, will decide—the people who will never come to a meeting like this but will vote because it is the patriotic, good thing to do, or people who may not vote because they think, well, there is no real difference here. There are differences.

Now, one of the reasons the people have had a hard time finding out differences is, the other side has been quite adroit at trying to blur them, and you can't blame them, because if people figure out the differences, our crowd will win. [*Laughter*] I told Maurice and his colleagues a couple of days ago that we Democrats should see ourselves as America's weather corps for 2 weeks, and if we can make it clear, we'll win. [*Laughter*] They want cloudy. We want clear.

So I'll say it one more time: I'm grateful for your support for Hillary. And I want you to go out and tell people that she has given a lifetime to this. One of the things that has kind of hurt my feelings is, sometimes the people that aren't for us say, "Well, she wouldn't even be doing this if she weren't the First Lady." Let me tell you something, for 30 years all she has done is help other people. She never asked anybody ever—ever—to do anything for her until she started running for the United States Senate, when Members of the New York House delegation—as Maurice will tell you—came to her and asked her to consider this race.

If she hadn't been married to me, if she hadn't spent all of her years joining honest, honorable causes all over this country and all over the world, she could have been running for office years ago on her own. Now she is, and I want you to help her.

But the main thing you need to tell—you've got to go out there and ask the people of New York to think about this. You have a candidate for the Senate who cares about and knows about

and has a proven record of achievement in the things you care most about. But secondly, these three big questions should inform the peoples' votes on every one of these races. If you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people left behind, you've got to have a budget that keeps paying this debt down and that invests in the things that we know work. Their numbers don't add up. You simply cannot have a tax cut that big and partially privatize Social Security and spend the money you promise to spend and put us back into deficits and expect anything other than what will happen, higher interest rates and an economic slow-down. We brought arithmetic back to Washington, and we ought to keep arithmetic in the classroom of Congress and the White House.

When it comes to health care, education, the environment, and crime, we've got to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years, not walk away from it. And maybe most important of all, we've got to keep doing those things that bring us together across the lines that divide us. If we are one America, if we are working together, if there is opportunity for every responsible citizen, if no one is singled out for discrimination, if we act like we're one community, there is nothing America can't do. The best is still out there. It's up to you to convince your fellow citizens of that.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Fountains Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Margaret Coffey, chair, Broome County Democratic Committee, and Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County clerk.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Alexandria Bay, New York
October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Wow! First of all, I want to thank Mike Schell and all the Democratic chairs and the candidates who are here. I want to thank the people of northern New York for voting for me and Al Gore in 1996. I must say, I was in the Lake Placid area a few weeks ago—Stuart and I played golf—and I was looking at the voting records of the counties in northern New York in the '96 election, and it just took my breath away.

But I'll tell you this—and you ought to think about this 2 weeks from now and talk to your friends about it—people say, "Well, is Hillary really interested in rural New York? Does she really know anything about it?" Let me tell you, I was Governor of a State for 12 years where half the people lived in communities of less than 5,000. And Al Gore grew up in Carthage, Tennessee, as well as Washington, DC, and Carthage, Tennessee, is about the same size as the community where we're having this meeting in Alexandria Bay today. Don't forget who cares about the people of upstate New York.

Now, someone told me when I pulled up today that the last President to visit here was Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. And all I can say is, just from looking around, the others didn't know what they were missing. I'm glad to be here.

Audience member. The fishing is good, too. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, the fishing may be good, but we've got to reel in some votes, first, then I'll come back and fish. [*Laughter*]

You know, this is an interesting time for me. It's the first time since 1974 they've had an election when I haven't been on the ballot somewhere. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate, and I'm sort of the Surrogate in Chief. [*Laughter*] And I'm glad to be here.

I want to talk to you for a moment. You know, we're all cheering, and we're happy. But I want to say something serious today, just for a moment, because in just a little more than 2 weeks we're going to have the first national election of the 21st century. And New York will pick a Senator to hold the seat held by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Robert Kennedy. And it will have, this election, a profound impact on how the people of northern New York, this entire State, and our whole country live for quite a long while.

I want to talk to you about it seriously and from the heart, because I'm so grateful to the people of New York for being so good to me for these last 8 years, because I've done everything I know to turn the country around, pull it together and move it forward. But everything is on the line here. And what I want to say to you—and I want you all to think about this—every one of you knows scores and scores of people who are your friends, your family members, your co-workers, who will vote on election day because they love their country, but who will never come to an event like this. Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Not for a Democrat, not for a Republican. They've never been to an event like this of any kind. But they're inclined to vote because they're good citizens. And yet, we see story after story after story which says that people aren't really sure what the differences are, and does it make a difference?

What I want to do is talk to you for a few moments about what I, personally, believe about my wife, first of all, and about this election. I'd like for you to know a few things.

From the moment I met Hillary nearly 30 years ago, she was consumed with public interest, to advance the cause of children and families, child care, health care, and education. From the time we began our married life together and we were working in public policy, she also became very interested in bringing economic opportunity—starting businesses, creating jobs in areas which had been left out or left behind.

So a lot of what we did together before I became President is highly relevant to the needs of all of New York but especially the people of upstate New York, where the economic prosperity has not fully reached. We have spent years working together on the things that you need someone in the United States Senate to concentrate on today. She understands what has to be done.

In the last 8 years, since we've been in Washington and in the White House, she has been certainly the most active First Lady since Eleanor Roosevelt. She started by lobbying hard for the first bill I signed, the family and medical leave law, which has allowed over 20 million Americans to take some time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick without losing their job.

And she's worked constantly on a whole breathtaking range of issues: early childhood development, more preschool and after-school programs; dealing with health care issues, allowing people to keep their health insurance when someone in their family gets sick or they change jobs; more breast cancer preventive work, mammographies for people on Medicare; more work to try to help Gulf war veterans who have undiagnosed illnesses. She's worked so hard on so many things it's hard to remember.

But one I think is interesting, worth mentioning, and that is that when we decided how we wanted to celebrate the millennium, she conceived of this idea that we should celebrate and honor the past and imagine the future. And to honor the past, she developed what's called the Millennium Treasures Program, which is now the largest single historic preservation effort in the history of the United States. And a lot of the sites which have been preserved, with $100 million of public and private money, are in New York: George Washington's first revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, the underground railroad sites.

Over and over again I've seen this. And all these things are going to help tourism in areas that are kind of not doing so well economically. They make a big difference. And it just came out of her head to do this. And it is literally the biggest historic preservation movement in the history of the country. That's the kind of thing she does. She thinks about what to do, and then she goes and does it.

And I have to tell you, in all the years I've been in public life—first of all, I have a much higher opinion of politics and public service than is conventional. I will leave the White House more idealistic, optimistic, and hopeful about America than I entered the White House 8 years ago. And I'll say this. I think, on balance, the people in public life are more honest, more committed, and work harder and try harder to do what they believe in—people in both parties—than they get credit for today.

But I'm telling you, in all the years I've been in public life, I've never known anybody that had the same combination of intelligence and compassion and constant drive and the capacity to imagine, lead, and organize that Hillary has. She will be a worthy successor to the State and to Moynihan and a good partner for Senator Schumer if you elect her 2 weeks from now.

There is something else I want to say to you, and I hope you'll listen carefully to this. This election is being played out against the national election, and it is very much a part of the national debate. And the national issues are things you have to consider here, because the decisions that will be made on the things that are being debated at the Presidential levels, on which the next Senator will have to vote, will also affect you here.

And again I want to say, the reason I'm saying this in some detail is, you get a chance to talk to other people between now and the election. And you should promise yourself that every day you're going to talk to somebody who will never come to an event like this but who will vote if they understand what's at stake and what the differences are. So I want to talk to you about that.

In my opinion—and I've listened to it all. I've read very carefully, obviously, what the Vice President and Senator Lieberman have said, but I've carefully studied what their adversaries have said, their opponents. I listened very carefully to all the debates. And what I want you to know is that I'm kind of concerned when I read in the press that people can't quite understand what the differences are, and maybe they're not clear. And so I want you to know what I think the three big questions of this election are.

First, let's start with what they aren't, because I've heard that in these debates, too. There is the argument that this is an election about change versus the status quo. I disagree with that. If somebody said, "Vote for me. I'll do just what Bill Clinton did," I wouldn't be for him. Why? Because America is changing. The world is changing. The way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world is changing. Change will speed up in the next few years. But don't be fooled. The issue is not that. The issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change. Are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years or reverse it? That is the issue.

Secondly, there was all this talk about whether the issue is, "Do you trust Government or the American people?" I heard that. You heard that. Let's just look at the facts here. Here are the facts. The Government of the United States, the civilian Government, is smaller by 300,000 than it was when I took office. It's the smallest Federal Government we've had since 1960, when John Kennedy was running for President. It's a fact.

The second fact: This Democratic administration got rid of 16,000 pages of Government regulations and changed dramatically the way a lot of these agencies work. For example, if you apply for a small business loan in upstate New York, 8 years ago you had to fill out a form that was one inch thick and wait for months to get an answer. Today, you fill out a form that's one page on either side, and you get an answer within 72 hours. There is a big difference here. That's not what this is about.

You heard them talking about—the other side talking about how the Federal Government is so burdensome on our local schools and all their paperwork. Let me just tell you something. Fact: the paperwork, regulatory burdens, the number of regulations imposed by the Federal Government on States and local school districts has been reduced by two-thirds under this Democratic administration, below what it was in the previous Republican administration. That's what it is not about.

So that's what the election is not about. It's not about that. It's about, number one, big issue, do you want to keep the longest economic expansion in history going and build on it until it reaches the people and places who have not reached their full prosperity potential? Huge issue. What are the differences? One, our side—Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary—we favor a tax cut we can afford, that focuses on what middle class people need most: long-term care tax credit, when they're taking care of a sick or disabled family member; college tuition tax deduction; child care help; help for saving for retirement. And we propose extra tax incentives to get people to invest in the places which aren't yet prospering economically.

And we propose a tax cut that we admit is only one-third as big as theirs—actually, less than one-third, just barely over a fourth as big as theirs. Why? Because we've got to have some money to invest in education, in health care and the environment, in science and technology and because we have to keep paying down the national debt until we make America debt-free for the first time since 1835.

What's their proposal? Their proposal is a tax cut that's more than 3 times as big as ours, when you add all the interest costs; a partial privatization of Social Security, which costs another trillion dollars, by their own admission;

and several hundred billion dollars of their own spending. And what's the problem with that? It doesn't add up. When you add it all up, you're back into deficits again. And if you have deficits, what does that mean? It means you have higher interest rates and lower economic growth, and upstate New York never catches up. You've got to have tight labor markets to get investment into the areas that have not participated in this recovery. Now think about that.

I had an analysis done which indicates that if the Vice President's program is enacted and the one Hillary supports, interest rates would be about a percent a year lower for a decade than if you go back to deficits under the other program. Plus which, nearly everybody in this room would be better off under our proposal anyway.

But think about this: one percent a year in lower interest rates. Do you know what that means to America? Just listen: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, a bigger stock market. Our tax cut does go to everybody because there is lower interest rates, and everybody in America will benefit from that.

That's real reason number one. You want to keep the prosperity going until it reaches up here, and you can't get it done if you go back to deficits. Their numbers don't add up.

Number two, you should be for our crowd because we want to build on the other progress of the last 8 years. And what is that other progress? Welfare rolls cut in half; lowest crime rate in 26 years; lowest poverty rate in 20 years; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food; the first reduction in the number of uninsured people without health insurance in 12 years; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of the country—we're doing better in all these areas.

And they want to reverse them. And let's just take education. We have a lower dropout rate, a higher graduation rate, higher test scores, a record college-going rate, a huge increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement classes, and systematically, for the first time ever all over the country, people are proving they can turn around failing schools and do it in no time. Now that is what is going on. It's not an education recession. It's an education revival.

Now, do we still have a lot to do? We do. The question is, how do you want to change?

They have a different crime policy. They would get rid of our commitment to 150,000 police on the street and abolish that program. They have a different education policy. They would abolish our commitment to 100,000 teachers. And they don't support putting funds in to help school construction, to help build or modernize schools where we've got too many old schools and too many over-crowded schools. They have a different environmental program. They would relax some of our environmental standards and get rid of some of the land that I have protected in perpetuity and stop doing that.

So there is a different crime program, a different education program, a different environmental program. There is a very different health program. We're for a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, but they're not, because the HMO's aren't. We're for all seniors who need it being able to buy drugs under a Medicare program. They're not, because the drug companies aren't. And you know up here you can go to Canada and get them cheaper. And we think everybody ought to have access to them. And if it's uncomfortable for the drug companies, then they can come to Washington, and we'll fix their problem. But first, we ought to fix the health care problems of the seniors of the United States.

So reason number two, you want to keep going in the right direction; you want a lower crime rate; you want higher education performance; you want more people with health insurance and seniors with access to medicine. You want to continue to make progress in all these areas. You want to build on the progress.

Now, if you look at the economy, we tried it our way for 8 years. Before that, we tried it their way for 12 years, the deficit way. Our way works better, you know? You just need to say that. If you look at crime, education, health care, and environmental policy, we tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way before. In every area, we made more progress. Our way works better. That is the issue.

The third thing I would like to say—maybe even most important of all to me—we have to continue to build one America, to build one American community where no one is discriminated against because of who they are, where

everybody has a chance who is willing to work, where everybody counts, where we recognize we should help each other by creating the conditions and giving people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And in all these areas there is a big difference. And I'll just give you a few.

We're for hate crimes legislation that protects everybody, and they're not. We believe if immigrants come here legally to this country and they work and they have to pay taxes if they work, they should be treated like everybody else; they should be treated fairly. We feel that way. We believe there ought to be stronger equal pay laws for women, because there are still too many women doing work that aren't getting equally paid. These are some of the things that define one America. And we're different.

So if someone says to you, "Does this election make a difference?" You say, "You bet it does. It makes a huge difference." If you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to every place in upstate New York that hasn't felt it yet, you better keep paying down the debt, investing in our future, to keep interest rates down, and you can't do it if you do what they want because it doesn't add up. Number two, if you want to keep making progress with better schools, more people with health insurance, a lower crime rate, and a cleaner environment, you better keep changing in this direction, because what they want to do is to reverse the policies we've had which are making a difference. And number three, if you want us all to go forward together, if you believe in hate crimes legislation, equal pay for equal work, if you think that all of us count and nobody should be left out or left behind, you better stick with the Democrats. Those are the three big issues in this election, and don't you mistake it.

And just tell people, you know, this is not rocket science. We tried it both ways. Our way works better. We did try it both ways. We've had a test run here.

Now, let me just close with this. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," when a person running for office says that, it may sound like a campaign slogan. I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe that. I believe with all my heart. I believe we can bring economic opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind. I believe we can give every child in this country excellence in education. I believe we can create a system in which there is affordable access to health care for every working family. I believe we can open the doors to college—4 years of it, like we have already for 2—for 100 percent of the people who are willing to work hard enough to go. I believe we can do this. And I know we can do this and get this country out of debt.

And I know we can do it and still continue to be involved in the world, as a leading source of peace and freedom. And I'm thinking of that today, you know, because we have a lot to celebrate. The dictator in Belgrade has finally been deposed, who caused so much trouble in Bosnia and Kosovo. We've made a lot of progress towards peace in Northern Ireland. And we have worked hard in Latin America to turn back the drug warriors that want to overtake democracy in Colombia. We've worked hard in Africa. And today, of course, we're keeping our fingers crossed that we can restore calm and end violence in the Middle East and resume the process towards peace there. And I hope you'll all pray for that.

That's the last thing I'd like to tell you. My wife has been to more countries and touched more people around the world, sticking up for the rights of children and women, talking about the need of America not only to have a strong defense but to be a strong partner in educating people and giving them a better future, and working on challenges together, than any person, clearly, since Eleanor Roosevelt, who has been in the White House as First Lady.

So I will say again, I just want you to use every day between now and the election—not only here, but if you have any friends in other States—to try to get them to understand why it's so important not only for Hillary to win, but for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to win. Keep the prosperity going. Keep the progress going. Build one America. We'll have a big celebration on election night.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. in the Hall of Stars Room at the Bonnie Castle Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Michael W. Schell, executive chair, New York State Democratic Party executive committee; Stuart Brody, chair, Essex County Democratic Party; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in Hempstead, New York
October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. You know, I have been on a tour of New York today. I've been to Binghamton and Watertown—actually, to Alex Bay—and here I am with you at Hofstra. And I hear the sound of victory everywhere I go. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank Carolyn McCarthy for representing you and representing everyone in America who wants to build a sane, safe society. She is a brave and good woman, and I am honored to serve with her. I want to thank Congressman Gary Ackerman for being with us today. He has been my friend and ally for 8 years, and he represents all of you so well. But what all of you should know is, he has quite a global reach. I took him with me on my trip to India, and all these people kept coming up to him in India saying, "Gary, who is that tall, gray-headed fellow with you?" [*Laughter*] It was amazing. India has 900 million people. Strangers were walking up to him on the street saying, "Hello, Gary. How are you?" [*Laughter*] I loved it.

I want to thank Carl McCall, who has been a great leader for New York and a great friend of ours. Thank you. And thank you, Judith Hope, for being a great chair of the State Democratic Party. Some of you may know that Judith Hope, like me, was also born in Arkansas, proving that we can be accepted in New York. [*Laughter*] That makes me feel good.

I want to thank the Nassau County chair, Tom DiNapoli, for being such a wonderful leader and for sticking with Hillary and helping us to win. And I think one of our congressional candidates, Steve Israel, is here tonight. I thank the president of Hofstra University, Dr. James Shuart, and all the people from Hofstra who have made us feel so welcome.

And now, here's what I want to say. Thank you. Look, we're all having a good time tonight, but the truth is that this is Sunday, and so if you'll forgive me a little religious reference, I'm quite well aware that in the terms, the words of my tradition, I'm here preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] And so I want to ask you, just for a moment, amidst all the good time and all the cheering we're doing, to let me say a few things seriously, because every one of you know lots and lots of people, your friends, your family members, your co-students, your co-workers, people in this State, and people in other States who will never come to an event like this, don't you? You know people who have never been to an event like this, never heard a President speak, a First Lady speak, a Member of Congress speak, but who will show up on election day if they understand what the stakes are because they're good citizens.

And what bothers me about this election is that I keep reading that there are all these sort of undecided voters who don't think there is much difference between the two candidates for President, aren't sure there is much difference between the two parties, may not show up, or may show up and make the wrong decision because they don't know. So before I introduce Hillary, I just want to say a few things that I hope you will say to somebody every single day between now and the election.

I want to begin by saying thank you. New York has been wonderful to me and to Al Gore for 8 years. In 1996 we won a great victory in New York. Even in Nassau County we won and won big, and I thank you for that. But I'm concerned, and here's why. If people know what is at stake, if they understand the differences, the nature of the choice, and the impact on you, your families, your community, and your Nation, we'll do fine. So what we want is clarity.

Now, what the other guys want—because we win if you understand—is cloudiness. And it's easier to be cloudy than clear, so you've got to be Hillary and Al and Joe's weather patrol between now and the election, to make it clear.

There are three great questions in this election, nationally and as they affect New York, and I'll come back to New York when I introduce Hillary. But there are three great questions that affect every American and, therefore, that affect the people of New York. Let me begin by some of the questions that have been raised in the debate and in the statics around the campaign that this election is not about.

This election is not about a choice between change and the status quo. America is changing too fast. Look around here. And we're going

to be rapidly changing every year for at least 10 years, probably 20, in dramatic ways we can't even perceive. The question is not whether we're going to change. It is how. What will the direction of change be? Are we going to build on the success of the last 8 years or take a U-turn and go back? That is the question. But it's not change versus the status quo.

The other thing I heard from the debates from the other side is that this election is supposed to be about whether you're for big Government making all your decisions or whether you trust the people. Let me tell you something—and the implication is, of course, that the Democrats are the big Government, and the Republicans are the people. That's just not so. And if anybody asks you that, let me just point out a couple of things.

Number one, our Democratic administration has reduced the size of the Federal civil Government to the lowest level since 1960, when John Kennedy sought the Presidency and Dwight Eisenhower was President. Don't put up with that. That's not true. Number two, we got rid of 16,000 pages of Federal regulations that were on the books when they were in. Number three, I heard them talking about all the burdens we put on the school districts. Have you heard that in all the debates now? The Federal Government just wants to burden the school district. Number three, under the leadership of our Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, States and school districts have had their paperwork burden from the Federal Government cut by two-thirds below what it was when they were in office.

So this is not about big Government versus the people. We have reduced the burden of Government. We've just increased the ability of Government to help ordinary people live better lives. That's what the real truth is.

Another thing I heard is how we needed somebody to swoop in from outside Washington to end the partisan atmosphere so we could have bipartisan solutions. [*Laughter*] In other words, they would like to be rewarded for the problem they created. [*Laughter*]

Now, let's look at the facts here. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill, a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of '97, a bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program. Yes, we initiated it, but we got the Republicans to vote for it, and we worked with them. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created thousands of businesses and hundreds of thousands of jobs, a bipartisan vote to create 100,000 teachers and 100,000 police—a bipartisan vote. The partisanship has come from the other side.

Don't you worry about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary being willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We are willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We're just not willing to be run over. And that's what the issue is.

Let me say one other thing. Now, I might get in some trouble for saying this, but I'm going to say it, anyway. I hear that on Long Island and all across the country in the Middle West, there are people taking off work to go to work for the NRA, to work against our candidates because they say we're trying to take their guns away. And they're spending a fortune doing that.

Now why in the wide world would they do that? One possibility is, it's true. But it isn't. It's a lie. I want every hunter and sportsman within the sound of my voice who missed a day of any hunting season, because of any proposal I made, to vote for the other guy. But if you didn't, they're lying to you, and you should get even. [*Laughter*]

Now, what did we do? What did we do? Let me tell you what I plead guilty to doing. We did pass the Brady law. We did that. And we asked people to undergo a background check before they got a handgun, to prove they weren't a felon, a fugitive, or a stalker. We did that. And you know, a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers didn't get handguns. Gun crime is down by 35 percent. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The murder rate is at a 33-year low. I think we were right. Who can defend the other side of that? And we banned assault weapons, and I think we were right. And God knows, as the experience of Carolyn McCarthy's life shows, we were right.

Now, listen, what is it that we really want to do? Well, we think that the background check law worked well, but there are a lot of gun show sales that it doesn't apply to, and we think it should. We think that child trigger locks should be mandatory when new handguns are sold. And we think that large-scale ammunition clips should not be able to be imported in America, because if you allowed that, then you can just rejigger the guns that are already here and turn them into assault weapons.

And most of us believe that you ought to get a license when you buy a handgun, like

you do when you buy a car, showing you're not a crook and you know how to use it safely. Now, will that cause anybody to miss a day in the deer woods? Will it cause anybody to miss a sport shooting contest? Does it confiscate weapons—constitute weapons confiscation? No. That is not what this election is about. So if you hear somebody on Long Island say that, you just tell them it's not true.

You know, it is a crying shame, as hard as we have worked to get this crime rate down, to run the risk of turning it right around and sending it up again by people who not only want to control the criminal policy in this country as it relates to this but have also promised—listen to this—promised to repeal the law we passed putting now 150,000 police on the street. They're wrong. We're right. You've got to fight. Don't take this laying down, and don't put this stuff out there. Don't do it. Don't put up with people saying things that aren't true.

Now, what is the election really about? Number one, it's about whether we're going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind. That's the first thing. How are we going to do that? How are we going to do that? We're going to do that by giving people a tax cut we can afford, not one we can't afford, a tax cut that benefits more middle class families than theirs does—even though it's much smaller; a deduction for college tuition; a credit for long-term care for the elderly and disabled; extra help for child care; extra help for lower income workers with lots of kids; help to save for retirement; and extra incentives to invest in people and places that have been left behind.

Now, why do we have a tax cut that is smaller than theirs? Because we save money to invest in education and health care and the environment and national defense and to get this country out of debt over the next 12 years so we can keep interest rates down and the economy growing.

What is their deal? What's the difference? Their tax cut is at least 3 times as big as ours. I admit it is. And a few of you might do better under it, but it's 3 times bigger. What's the problem with that? Well, that's 75 percent of the surplus. And then they've got a trillion dollar cost on their partial privatization of Social Security and then several hundred billion dollars of spending they've promised. And the problem with that is, it doesn't add up. By the time you spend all that money, you're back in deficits, which means higher interest rates and slower growth.

I had some people analyze this for me, and they say that if the Gore/Lieberman/Hillary tax cut is adopted, we'll probably have—and we stay on the path to pay the debt off—we could leave interest rates a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this, lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; and lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, more raises, a higher stock market.

Look, we tried it our way; we tried it their way. Our way is better. You want to keep the prosperity going, you've got to vote for the Democrats.

Point number two: If you want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years in the non-economic areas, you've got to vote with us. The crime rate is down. I already talked about that. We reversed the increase in the number of uninsured. The number of people with health insurance is going down for the first time in a dozen years. The environment is cleaner—cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, safer drinking water, more land set aside in permanent protection than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And the economy has gotten better.

So we've got a better crime policy, a better health policy, a better environmental policy, welfare rolls cut in half. And we have a better education policy. Listen to this. In the last 8 years, we've gone from 14 States to 49 States with standards for a core curriculum. We have seen a decline in the dropout rate, an increase in the graduation rate. College-going is at an all-time high. We have a 50 percent increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement in high school, a 300 percent increase in Latino kids doing it, a 500 percent increase in African-American kids doing it. We've already opened the doors of college completely for the first 2 years, and if we pass this college tax deduction that Senator Schumer and Hillary are pushing so hard, we'll open the doors of college for 4 years for every young person in the entire United States of America.

In every single one of these areas you've got to decide whether you're going to build on the

progress or go back to another policy. In crime, it's not just about guns. They want to repeal our commitment to putting 150,000 police on the street. In education, everybody can be for accountability. We think we've got to help the States meet it. We're for doubling the number of kids in preschool and after-school programs. They're not. We're for funds to help local school districts build or modernize schools, because they're overcrowded or broken down, and we know that the property tax can't carry the whole burden. They're not. We're for 100,000 teachers qualified, in smaller classes. They don't want to do that—huge difference.

In the environment, they say our clean air rules are too tough. They say that my order setting aside tens of millions of acres in the national forest as roadless acres is wrong. They say they ought to revisit all these areas I've protected in perpetuity. They say it's too burdensome on the economy. If I were trying to hurt the economy, I didn't do a very good job. [*Laughter*] You have to decide.

But you've got to tell people: If you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary. You don't have an option here. It's clear.

And the third thing I want to say—the third thing I want to say—and maybe most important of all—is that we have got to keep working to build one America across all the lines that divide us, across all the racial and ethnic and religious and gender and sexual orientation lines that divide us. We've got to do it.

Now, this is a big deal. And I can only tell you what it means to me. And I'll only take the issues where there is a difference. We believe a big part of building one America is equal pay for equal work. We want to strengthen the equal pay laws for women, and they're against it. We believe a big part of building one America is a strong and comprehensive hate crimes law, and they're not for it.

And I really regret that in the debate we didn't get into the details of this as much. You got a feeling that we were for it, and they weren't. But they're not for it because their conservative wing does not want to vote for a national hate crimes bill that protects gays against hate crimes. Now, that's the truth. I've been there trying to pass this for 2 years. I know what's going on. And I'm telling you, we need it.

I wish you could all hear the police commissioner from Wyoming that had to supervise the Matthew Shepard murder case. He was always against hate crimes. He had mixed feelings. He didn't know how he felt about gays. And then he saw that little boy stretched out on a rack to die. And he needed the Federal Government to come in and help him deal with the cost of dealing with that crime. And he has become perhaps our most articulate advocate for hate crimes. This is a big deal, going way beyond the number of people that will be victimized by hate crimes. It talks about what kind of people we are and whether we're committed to one America.

We have big differences on what kind of court system we ought to have and whether we will preserve a woman's right to choose or get rid of it and throw it back to the States, the way it used to be. It only takes one vote, and the next President will get to appoint at least two judges to the Supreme Court. And then there will be all these other appointments.

And everybody who studies this knows that there is the most radical reassessment since the 1930's of the ability of the National Government to protect the American people, not just the right to choose, going way beyond that into all kinds of health and safety and education and other areas, or whether the courts will start to say the Congress can't do this anymore. They even threw out a provision of the Violence Against Women Act.

Now, I'm telling you, you've got to think about this. This is a big deal. And I believe it would be a mistake to return to the constitutional theory which existed in the 1930's that said, basically, the Federal Government can't do anything if the States don't like it. Now, think about this. If somebody asks you what the difference is, somebody says, "Oh, there's not much difference," or, "I don't like this, that or the other thing that Al Gore or Joe Lieberman or Hillary said," you say, "Wait a minute. You want to keep this prosperity going? Do you like the fact that we've got a cleaner environment, that the number of people without health insurance is going down, that the number of people going to college is going up, that the schools that were failing are turning around, that the crime rate is going down? Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? And do you want to keep building one America?"

That's what I want you to do. I want you to promise yourself that every day, sometime between now and the election, every day you're going to say to somebody, "Vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary to keep the prosperity going, to build on the social progress, and to build one America."

That brings me to my appointed duty—[*laughter*]—as the spouse and Cheerleader in Chief in America. [*Laughter*] I want to make a couple of points that I hope you will share with the voters, particularly on Long Island, in the days ahead before the election.

I met Hillary almost 30 years ago, and for 30 years I have watched her devote her heart and soul to the interests of children and families, education and health care. For more than 20 years, I have watched her work on bringing economic opportunity to people and places who were left behind, something that's very important to upstate New York.

For the last 8 years, since we've been in the White House, she has been the most active First Lady, if not in history, certainly since Eleanor Roosevelt. She was an advocate for the first bill I signed as President, the family and medical leave law. Over 22 million Americans have now taken some time off, when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their job.

She held the first White House conference ever held on early childhood and brain development. She worked hard to get mammograms for women under Medicare and to do other things in the way of preventive care. She led an effort in the Federal Government to examine the problems that veterans of the Gulf war were having that might have been associated with their service in the Persian Gulf a decade ago.

She has represented our country all over the world, traveling to more countries than any other First Lady in history, talking about women's rights and children's rights, reminding people that the national security of the United States depends not just on our military strength but on our ability to help ordinary people with economic opportunity and education and health care.

She has helped me in our endless efforts to make peace in Northern Ireland. She has gone to the Balkans and in the Middle East, where we have worked so hard for the cause of peace. When Mrs. Barak asked her to come, she went again. She has been there—we've gone I don't know how many times to the Middle East or to Northern Ireland or to see our troops in the Balkans, to try to advance the cause of peace and stick up for our friends in Israel, in Bosnia, in Ireland.

And you will never know—because I don't have the words to say—how hard she has worked or how deeply she cares. But I want to tell you this, this is the first time in 26 years they're having an election and I'm not on the ballot. [*Laughter*] But I care more about this election than any one I've ever been involved in. I care about what happens in the Presidential race because everything we've worked for is on the line, and all the progress America has made is still out there.

And I care about this Senate race because of the hundreds and hundreds of people I've known in public life. And I can tell you, on balance, they're better than they get credit for being, the Republicans and the Democrats. On balance, they work harder; they're more honest; and they try harder to do what they believe in than most people know.

But I have never known anybody else in public life who had the combination of brains and heart and caring and tenacity and ability to imagine solutions and get people together to get things done than Hillary has. She would be a worthy successor to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to Robert Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Please welcome the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. in Lowenfeld Hall at Hofstra University. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Israel, candidate for New York's Second Congressional District; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; Thomas P. DiNapoli, chair, Nassau County Democratic Party; and Nava Barak, wife of Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in New York City
October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to thank Susie, who has been such a wonderful friend to Hillary and me for so many years now. And I want to thank Amy and Jeffrey and Harvey and all the others who spearheaded this event tonight. It's a beautiful testimonial to Hillary, and I'm delighted that it could be in this wonderful old theater.

I want to thank Sir Elton John for being good enough to come and be with us tonight and congratulate him on his smashing success in the last few days. This will be the second time he has performed during the Clinton administration; the first was at the state dinner for his Prime Minister, Tony Blair, where he and Stevie Wonder commemorated a truly historic night of Anglo-American partnership.

I want to say, too, very briefly, because we are all here basically to have a good time and see each other—and I hope that Hillary and I can visit with all the rest of you before you leave—because there are so many of you here who have been not only important political supporters of ours but very good friends over the last 8 years and, in some cases, from long before.

Hillary and I are delighted that her mother and Chelsea could be here tonight. This is sort of a family day we've had in New York, and I have been to Binghamton and Watertown and Alex Bay today in my capacity as Cheerleader in Chief in this election. [*Laughter*]

And I just want to tell you a couple of things very briefly. First of all, I believe on November the 7th, Hillary will be elected, and I believe Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will be elected. And I think a lot of you are asking me what you're supposed to say, and I think you should say three things about the national election.

First of all, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you only have one choice, because our team wants to give the folks a tax cut they can afford, keep investing in education and health care, and get rid of the national debt, which will get interest rates down. Their side is promising everybody the Moon: a huge tax cut, a huge privatization of Social Security, and a lot of spending, and it doesn't add up. The numbers don't add up. And if we go back into debt, we tried it their way for 12 years. You remember that? We quadrupled the national debt. That's why I got elected President.

So if we give them one more chance, they might give us a whole generation of Democratic Presidents, but it's not worth it to do to the country. And you need to tell people this. We tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way for 12 years. Our way works better. If you want to keep it going, you better vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary.

The second thing you ought to say is, "If you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary." What do I mean by that? The crime rate is at a 26-year low; the murder rate is at a 33-year low; the gun violence rate is down by 35 percent because of the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, putting 100,000 police on the street.

Now, you all know where they are on the Brady bill and the waiting period. That's why Charlton Heston has a starring role in this election. Did you hear what he said yesterday? The most important election for gun owners since the Civil War. Some guy said they ought to lynch Gore. He said he'll supply the rope. Look, this is serious. It isn't true that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman want to take anybody's guns away, but they don't want kids and criminals to have guns. That's what this is about. It's also about, they want to get rid of 100,000 police. We're trying to put 100,000 teachers in the classrooms. They want to get rid of them.

We have given the American people cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, more land set aside than in any administration except for Theodore Roosevelt. They want to weaken the air rules and relax the protections I've given to public lands. See, it's not like you don't have a clear choice here. We proved you can clean up the environment and improve the economy. They want to reverse that policy.

Same thing in health care, and Hillary will talk a little more about that. We've got a decline in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in a dozen years because of our Children's Health Insurance Program.

But all the things that we want to do to build on that, they're not for.

So if you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, if you like the fact that we're a safer country, that we're an environmentally cleaner country, that education is improving, that health care is getting better, you don't have any choice, you've got to vote for Gore/Lieberman and Hillary.

And the third thing, and the most important thing to me, is if you believe as I do that the most important mission of any society is to build a unity, an affirmation of our common humanity, beneath all the lines that divide us, all the diversity in this society that makes it an interesting place to live, you really have to vote for Gore/Lieberman and Hillary. Whether it's equal pay for women or the hate crimes bill or the employment nondiscrimination bill or preserving a woman's right to choose or just preserving a philosophy on the Supreme Court that the National Government ought to be able to protect the basic health and welfare of the American people.

The next President is going to get two appointments. *Roe* v. *Wade* is hanging by one vote. And a majority on this court has already voted to invalidate the ability of Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Act if it requires the States to do anything. That's a theory that prevailed 70 years ago in the 1930's.

Now, you've got to go out and talk to people and make sure they understand this. If you want the economy to keep growing, if you want this society to keep making progress, and if you want America to keep coming together instead of being driven apart, you only have one choice.

And this should be a very happy election. The country's in good shape, and the best stuff is still out there. Yes, we have problems. There will never be a time on Earth when people are around that we don't have problems, because we all have imperfections, so there will be problems. But we will never have another chance in our lifetime like this.

Which brings me to my appointed duty. When Hillary was approached—when Senator Moynihan said he would not seek reelection, and Hillary was approached by a number of members of the New York congressional delegation over a year ago now to think about running for the Senate seat once held not only by Senator Moynihan but by Robert Kennedy, and then a lot of other people in New York started to call her, she said, "Do you think we ought to consider doing this?"

And so first I gave—we went through the same drill that I go through when a young person comes to me and says, "I want to run for State legislature," or something. I said, "Can you stand losing? Are you prepared to win, to do what it takes to win? And do you know why you want the job, for some reason or another bigger than yourself?" And she had good answers to that. And then I said, "Well, are you prepared to give up what could be our last—what will be our last year in the White House, when we could have a good time, we could take all these trips together? We could do all these things together—memories of a lifetime." And "Get up to upstate New York and find out what's wrong with the economy. Get out to Long Island and find out why they're worried about some of their health care problems."

And we debated it, and I said, "I think you should not think about how you'll feel the day we leave the White House. You ought to think about how you'll feel a year after we're gone," because public service has been her life.

And one other point I would like to make, a lot of you who have known her a long time will identify with this. I don't get—you know, I feel nothing anymore when somebody attacks me. I'm sort of callused over. I can even stand it, normally, when somebody attacks Hillary now. But I am enraged when I hear somebody say that she wouldn't be up here running for Senator for New York if she weren't First Lady. If she hadn't spent the last 30 years of her life working for children and families and charitable causes and other candidates, mostly me, she could have been doing this 20 years ago.

And what I want to say to you is, I am very proud of the race she has run. I am proud what she has done in the White House, to advocate for children, for families, for women's health, to build the largest historic preservation movement in our country's history around the millennium celebration, to visit more countries, to work for peace in the Middle East, peace in Northern Ireland, to support our troops in the Balkans when they stood up against ethnic cleansing and took the first critical steps that were pivotal to the eventual elimination of Mr. Milosevic from the political scene over there. I am very proud of all that.

Of all the people I have known, the hundreds and hundreds of people I have known in public life, she has the best combination of brains and heart and consistent dedication and the ability to get things done of any person I have ever known, anywhere in public life. She will be a worthy successor to Senator Moynihan, Senator Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Come on up, Hillary, and give them a speech. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 p.m. at the Hudson Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Susie Tompkins Buell; Jeffrey Katzenberg, founder, Dreamworks SKG Studios; Amy Rao, president, Integrated Archive; Harvey Weinstein, president, Miramax Films; entertainers Elton John and Stevie Wonder; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Dorothy Rodham, the President's mother-in-law; Charlton Heston, president, National Rifle Association; and former 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.

Interview With Chris Bull of the Advocate

September 27, 2000

Hate Crimes Legislation

Mr. Bull. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. I thought we'd jump ahead in the questions a little bit, because I noticed this morning at the press briefing you talked about the hate crimes legislation and opposition to including sexual orientation in it.

There was the front page of the Washington Post today, a man walks into a gay bar in Virginia and starts shooting. With all the evidence about this particular aspect of hate crimes, why is there still so much opposition in Congress?

The President. First, let's talk about the good news here. There's 57 votes for it in the Senate and about 240 votes for it in the House. Virtually all the Democrats, but four or five of them, are for it. And we've got 41 Republicans on a motion to instruct the conferees to leave it in the defense bill. So there's no question that we now have a majority for it.

How would it not be included in? The leadership of the Congress and the leadership of the Republican Party is still well to the right of the country on this issue. Same thing in Texas, you know, they could have had a hate crimes bill after James Byrd was killed, if Governor Bush had just lifted a finger for it. But he was unwilling to take on the rightwing in his own party, and so it died.

And it's the same thing in Washington. If the leaders of the House and the Senate can be persuaded to instruct their conferees to follow the will of the majority, it will prevail. If it doesn't prevail, it's because the leadership of the Congress and the leadership of the Republicans is still to the right of the country on the issue.

Matthew Shepard

Mr. Bull. As you may remember, the murder of Matthew Shepard, the student in Wyoming——

The President. I remember it vividly.

Mr. Bull. ——really changed the way Americans see hate crimes against gay people. What was your initial reaction to that murder?

The President. Well, I think it was particularly horrifying and heartbreaking because he was so young and so small and the way they killed him was so graphic. But it did galvanize the country. You know, the American people are fundamentally decent. But like human beings everywhere, since the dawn of time, they're afraid of something that's profoundly different from the life they know and the experiences they've had.

Usually, the way civilization progresses is something happens that forces people to see things in a different way, in a more human way. And that's what Matthew Shepard's death did. I think the fact that his parents, who are obviously not leftwing activists, just mainstream, hardworking Americans, became advocates for the hate crimes legislation and the fact that that

police commissioner there, O'Malley, was so eloquent in saying that the experience of dealing with Matthew's death and dealing with his family and his friends had changed his life, as well as his attitudes.

I think those three people deserve an enormous amount of credit for the way the country has moved.

Mr. Bull. With the depth of the problem that you've just described, people's psychological response to difference, is hate crimes legislation really the best way to deal with the problem? Does it really get at the roots of it?

The President. Well, I think it's just one piece of it. I think it's really important to pass ENDA, and there are big majorities for ENDA in the country, too. And it hasn't passed for the same reason.

The other thing I think that's important—and ENDA would really feed into this—is that we just need people, all the American people, to have the opportunity to interact on a human level, in the workplace, in social settings, with gays and lesbians and know that they're interacting with them. Personal contact, it may sound old-fashioned and naive—it's not a substitute for laws—but it will change attitudes.

I'll never forget in the administration's early debate over gays in the military, there was a national poll published which showed that Americans, who knew a gay person and knew they knew a gay person, were 2-1 in favor of changing the policy. So if you believe that most people have goodness in them and will, other things being equal, treat their fellow human beings in a decent and fair way, then you have to overcome ignorance and fear. And it takes time, and it takes contact.

President's Background on Gay Rights

Mr. Bull. One of the things for which your administration will be remembered is, early on, you talked a lot about gay people in a way that Americans hadn't heard from that level of government, which is in terms of tolerance, inclusiveness, a place at the table, having no one to waste. How did you come across that approach to including gay people in, sort of, the rhetoric of the civil rights movement?

The President. Personal contact. In 1977, when I was attorney general, there was an attempt to make—we had just adopted a new criminal code, and the criminal code had gotten rid of all the status offenses, including homosexuality. I imagine those old laws are still on the books in some States.

And one of our legislators went home, and he lived in a very conservative district, and he was roundly abused by the religious right at the time. And that's just when they were getting up and going there, in the midseventies. So he came back and introduced a bill, essentially, to make homosexuality a crime again but turning it from a status offense into an act. And I tried to kill it then. It just struck me as wrong.

And I remember, it was the first thing that sort of, I don't know, brought me to the attention of some of the gay community in my home State. It was never a big issue. And I failed. I thought I had it done, and I failed. Literally in the last 30 minutes of the last day of the legislative session, they voted it out. And we knew we had to kill it in committee because the legislators would be afraid to vote against it back then.

I knew from the time I was a boy growing up that I knew people who were gay, even though they didn't talk about it. So I always felt that. And then when I started running for President and people who were active in the gay rights cause started to talk to me—starting with David Mixner, who had been a friend of mine for, by then, way over 20 years—I just decided that it was one thing I was going to try to make a difference in. And I started actively seeking out members of the gay community. Marty Rouse helped me a lot in New York, took me to a big meeting there I never will forget.

I know it seems sort of—it probably seems strange to everybody. I was running on a New Democratic platform. I was a Governor of a southern State, and on issues like fiscal responsibility and some foreign policy issues I was, I suppose, to the right of where most activist Democrats were. But it just struck me as a human rights issue from the beginning, and a personal issue.

Future of Gay Rights

Mr. Bull. Having set that tone in the White House, is there—how do we maintain it after you're in office? How do we make sure it doesn't go back to pitting groups against one another?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that it will never be quite the same. I think we have to give—you can't give me too much credit

and give the gay community too little, or give the American people too little credit. I mean, I don't think it will ever be fashionable for people in national life to demonize gays again.

But I think the extent to which we continue to progress will depend entirely on who's elected. Al Gore is for the hate crimes legislation and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" and has been at least as open, if not more open, than me in pursuing this cause. This is something that he really, really feels strongly about.

And I don't believe Governor Bush is a bad person, with a bad heart. I think he basically has a good heart. But I think that—you know, he passed on the hate crimes bill in Texas, and I don't think he'll be for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." And if he wins and he keeps his majority in Congress, I just don't think we'll get very far, legislatively. And there won't be nearly as many appointments, and I don't think the approach to AIDS, both at home and abroad, will be nearly as aggressive.

Legislative Agenda/Gays in the Military

Mr. Bull. With all your success in setting a different tone on the gay rights debate, the legislative and policy-related areas have been more challenging. How do you think—I mean, what needs to be done to actually make concrete legislative gains in terms of the military policy, et cetera?

The President. Well, I think two things. I think, first of all, on the concrete legislative gains, I think the most important thing is to change the composition of Congress. It doesn't have to change a lot—you know, 10 or 12 seats in the House, even if the Democrats didn't win a majority in the Senate—if we picked up three or four seats, so that it was effectively a split, I think it would change the landscape dramatically.

So I think if you had a President who was committed and some changes in the Congress, even modest changes, I think it would make a huge difference on the legislative front.

On the gays in the military issue, I think it's important to remember——

Mr. Bull. That was a case I'm sure a lot of Democrats who opposed an initiative——

The President. Oh, we got killed. I think a lot of people forget—and I don't want to be too defensive about this—but a lot of people forget that I did not accept General Powell's proposed compromise until the Senate had voted 68-32 in a resolution against my position. The House, we knew there were over 300 votes against us, so we knew they had a veto-proof majority. But we thought we might be able to sustain a veto of an attempt to ratify the old policy, until the Senate voted 68-32 against it. So that meant they had a veto-proof majority in both Houses.

So my guess is that what the next move should be is to try to get the Congress to restore to the military and the executive branch discretion to make this decision and then to try to explore—because I think there have been some changes in attitudes to the military, too—whether there is—you know, what kind of steps could be taken from there.

I don't think that the Congress would be willing to legislatively reverse it and adopt the policy that I favor. But they might be willing to give the policy back to the executive branch and to the military on the condition that the President pledge to kind of work through this thing with the military. And I do believe there has been some progress there. There's still a lot of resistance, too, as you know, but I think there has been some progress.

Mr. Bull. You were pilloried on both sides of that issue in '93.

The President. The worst of all worlds, everybody was mad at me.

Mr. Bull. Because you had your friend David Mixner—was protesting. And you said at the time that you had spilt a lot of blood on the issue. What did you mean by that?

The President. Well, just that. I mean, I cared a lot about it. I thought I was right. I didn't agree to compromise until I was beat. One of the things I learned the first 2 years is that—I don't think it was apparent to 90 percent of the people in the gay community who cared about this that we were beat. That is, I don't think that we made enough of the Senate vote, and maybe what I should have done, if I just was concerned about my own standing and clarity, is just let them pass it and veto it. Then they'd override the veto. We'd be back where we were.

But the way they implemented the changes that we announced in the first few years were just about as bad as it was before. Now, it's gotten a little better now. Bill Cohen has gotten on it and changed a lot of the training. There is no question that as a practical matter, even

though it's unsatisfying as a matter of principle, that if the policy as I announced it or implemented it, it would be better than the policy before. But for years there was a lot of resistance to that.

I think it is going to get better now if the next Secretary of Defense hews to the line that Secretary Cohen has set out.

Gay Community Leadership

Mr. Bull. The gay rights movement I think eventually came to see that it, itself, had failed to provide you a certain amount of political cover to create the conditions in America in which people supported such a change. You've experienced gay rights leaders for a long time now. How do you think it could become a more effective, mainstream political force in the long run?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't think that they failed any more than I did. Look, I fight a lot of fights I don't win. The NRA beats me more than I beat them in Congress. The insurance companies beat me on health care, and so far, they're beating us on the Patients' Bill of Rights. The drug companies, so far, are beating us on adding a Medicare drug benefit.

So it shouldn't be surprising or, I would argue, discouraging that the first time you come out of the box on some of these issues you don't win. America has always been, like all societies, a place where organized, entrenched interests initially have more power than even popular causes that are not equally well organized, particularly when the issue may not be a voting issue yet with the American people.

There are lots of issues where a majority, maybe even two-thirds, agree with me, and I still can't pass it in Congress because to the people who are against it, it's a voting issue or a contribution issue, and to people who are for it, it isn't.

Now, I think the gay community has come a long way just since I've been here, both in terms of the sophistication of it's arguments and the quality of its organization and its active participation in the political process, including contributing to campaigns of the people you agree with and believe in. So I think all that is to the good.

But I still say, I think the most important thing—I was just looking over the people that are going to be at this lunch that we're going to and what they do for a living. They have normal jobs in big companies that are important, and they're in a position to exercise influence over people with whom they work. The thing I think is important is to try to get more non-gay supporters of these issues who see it as civil rights issues and see it as a voting issue, an important political priority. And I think that it's going that way.

Same-Sex Marriage

Mr. Bull. In '96—I think I actually had the year wrong—you signed the Defense of Marriage Act. Do you think Americans—and, politically, that was a hard issue for everyone in Congress, as well as you. Do you think Americans will ever come to the point where they can find same-sex marriage acceptable?

The President. I don't know the answer to that. But again, I think that under the law, gay couples who have manifested a genuine commitment should have all the legal options that others do, whether it's how they leave their estates or cover their partners with health insurance on the job or such simple things as the right to visit hospital beds during family visiting hours, you know, the whole panoply of things.

And then I think that when people come to respect that, and people will put their own words to whatever the relationship is and it will—the main thing is that we recognize the integrity of commitments and the right citizens have to leave their property and take care of the health of people they love and all the things that people do.

Also, I think one of the things that may impact this debate in the future is the parallel debate that's going on in some places still over adoptions, because you see more and more gay couples adopting kids. Very often, they're children who wouldn't be taken by other people or who haven't been. And I think that's going to have an impact on people.

I've always felt that all those anti-adoption laws were wrong. I think that the present law is the right—the historical, almost common law standard in America, although it's in statute now and our country is—these decisions should be made based on what's best for the child. I think that responsible childrearing is the most important work of any society. And insofar as people see it being done by gay couples, I think that will add to a bill's support for fair treatment.

Mr. Bull. Have your own views on same-sex marriage, itself—not on civil union or domestic partnership legislation—changed since '96?

The President. My views were and are that people who have a relationship ought to be able to call it whatever they want. And insofar as it's sanctified by a religious ceremony, that's up to the churches involved. And I always thought that.

I think what happened in the Congress was that a lot of people who didn't want to be anti-gay didn't feel that they should be saying that as a matter of law, without regard to what various churches or religions or others thought, that the United States policy was that all unions that call themselves marriages are, as a matter of law, marriages. I don't think we're there yet.

But I think that what we ought to do is to get the legal rights straightened out and let time take it's course, and we'll see what happens.

Gay Support

Mr. Bull. Just two or three more questions. With your political troubles with the GOP and the House, polls showed that gays and lesbians, along with African-Americans, were among your staunchest supporters. They really rallied to your cause and thought it was very, by and large—you know, there are certainly gay Republicans who would disagree—felt that you were being treated unfairly, your private life being used against you.

How do you feel about that support that you got from——

The President. First of all, I was honored to have it. And secondly, I think that partly it came out of the same wellspring of experience that prompted so many African-Americans to stick with me. They've been there. The people who've been targeted, who've been publicly humiliated and abused, I think, identified with what was going on, because they knew, the whole world, if anybody had been paying attention, knew by then that the whole Whitewater thing was a fraud—it never amounted to anything, which has now been acknowledged—that the civil lawsuit against me was also totally unmeritorious, as even the judge said.

So they knew that basically the whole thing was just a vehicle to try to find some last, desperate way to undermine the result of two elections and what I was trying to do for the American people and the fact that I tried to be a President for people who had been left out, left behind, ignored, and kicked, as well as for the vast majority of the American people that just needed somebody to do the right things in Washington.

So I think that there were a lot of people that knew what it was like to take a bullet, and they saw it for what it was.

Religious Right

Mr. Bull. Gays and lesbians are often the target of really unrelenting attacks from the right-wing, especially religious conservatives like Falwell and Robertson. They've sometimes turned their focus on you, as well. Does that enhance your empathy for the plight that gays and lesbians sometimes experience?

The President. Yes, although I always——

Mr. Bull. I mean, has it surprised you, the——

The President. ——my empathy level was pretty high. Does it surprise me that they hated me as much as they did? A little bit. But I think there are two things. First of all, for all their railing against entitlements on behalf of poor people, a lot of those people have a sense of entitlement to cultural superiority and political power. And they don't think anybody that's not part of their crowd has a right to cultural legitimacy or political power. And before '92, I think most of them thought no Democrat would ever win again. They thought they had this little proven formula, you know, to sort of portray us as enemies of ordinary Americans—to use a phrase that Newt Gingrich used against me and my wife. I think that was part of it.

And I think the other thing is, I think that one of the reasons they disliked me especially is that they see me as an apostate because I'm a southern white male Protestant, and southern white male Protestants have been the backbone of their political and social power, because we tend to be more politically and socially conservative.

So I think those are the two things that prompted it. Maybe they just don't like me. You know that old joke about the guy that falls off the mountain? He said, "God, why me?" And He said, "Son, there's just something about you I don't like." [*Laughter*] So maybe that's it. I don't know. [*Laughter*]

Boy Scouts

Mr. Bull. Boy Scouts of America, the Supreme Court decision upholding the Scouts'

right to determine their own membership criteria and exclude gay Scouts. Members of Congress have asked you to resign your honorary position. Would you be willing to do that?

The President. Let me ask you a fact question, first. The Girl Scouts have a different policy, don't they?

Mr. Bull. Yes, they have no policy.

The President. Well, I can tell you that my present inclination is that I shouldn't do it, because I think the Scouts do a world of good and because I think they can be persuaded to change. I think the policy is wrong, and I've made it quite clear that I think their policy is wrong. And they certainly know where I stand on it. I believe they'll change, and I think we should keep working on them.

But I don't know that it wouldn't do more harm than good, especially now, at the end of my tenure, for me just to do what would be a symbolic act of resignation. I also really appreciate a lot of the good they've done, especially with inner-city kids and poor kids, and I don't think we should negate the good they've done or we try to change what's wrong.

I think they're afraid. And I think there are all these, sort of, preconceptions—that I think are totally wrong—that gay adults are more likely to abuse children than straight adults. And if you look at the evidence every year in cases of child abuse that have a sexual component, there's just no evidence to support that. But I think there's a fear factor there.

Mr. Bull. But aren't those kids that you're talking about, that are being helped by the Scouts, being taught that they can mistreat gay kids, gay kids are second class?

The President. If I thought they were doing that—you know, one of the things that bothered me about the military situation is I thought there was an affirmative, anti-gay bias in the military. And there still is in some places. But as I said, I'm convinced Secretary Cohen is making an aggressive effort to deal with that now. If I thought they were, that would have some impact on me. I don't—if that's going on, I don't know about it. It may, but nobody——

Mr. Bull. Just the policy of exclusion would imply——

The President.——nobody has ever given me information about that. I think it's much more a function of their buying into the presumption that, particularly, gay Scout leaders would be more likely to have some sort of improper influence on the kids, rather than being inherently anti-gay.

AIDS

Mr. Bull. Can I just throw in one question, because we haven't addressed AIDS?

The President. Sure. Yes, do that.

Mr. Bull. We probably should get that in; I'm sorry. Because of the advances of AIDS treatment and the decline in death rates, it's hard to maintain the sense of urgency about ending this disease. You've worked on it a lot during your two administrations. How can we maintain that sense of urgency to conquer it?

The President. The first thing I think we have to do is to keep in mind, keep the public in mind that there are 40,000 new cases every year, and that more than half of them affect children and young people under 25. That's a lot.

The second thing I would say is, I do believe there is overwhelming bipartisan consensus in the Congress and in the country to continue looking for a cure and to continue investing in that.

And thirdly, there is overwhelming bipartisan consensus to continue, I think, the very large funding levels that we've achieved in CARE. So I think we're in reasonably good shape on that.

The next big step that I think will keep a sense of urgency is to really internationalize the struggle, to recognize America's responsibility to deal with the global AIDS crisis and to understand that the relationship between AIDS at home and AIDS abroad is quite a close one, especially with borders being as open as they are now, a lot of immigrants coming here every year, and our responsibilities and the rest of the world and our hopes for the rest of the world—particularly in our outreach to Africa, to the Indian subcontinent, and increasingly to the states of the former Soviet Union, where the AIDS rates are growing very rapidly—our ability to do what we're trying to do in those areas will turn, in no small part, on our ability to work with them, to help them reverse the epidemic.

You're going to have African countries—I've had an unprecedented outreach to Africa, and we just passed this big trade bill with Africa, and we're trying to get debt relief for the poorest African countries that are being well run. But there are countries over there that last year had very high growth rates, that within 10 years

to 15 years will have more people in their sixties than in their thirties in those countries because of the AIDS epidemic. Their economies, their societies are very likely to become largely dysfunctional, along with their political systems, unless we can do something to turn the AIDS epidemic.

I think we can keep more edge on the fight against AIDS at home if we marry it more closely to the fight against AIDS around the world.

Mr. Bull. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. I enjoyed the visit.

Mr. Bull. I appreciate it very much.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 12:47 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Andrews Air Force Base, MD, to Dallas, TX, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 23. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Dennis and Judy Shepard, parents of murder victim Matthew Shepard; Commander David O'Malley, Laramie, WY, Police Department, who investigated Shepard's murder; gay activist and author David Mixner; and Marty Rouse, assistant to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the Establishment of a National Drunk Driving Standard

October 23, 2000

Good morning. I really believe that everything that needs to be said about this has just been said. I want to thank Millie Webb for sharing her story and for her crusading leadership. I want to thank another person who is here today, Brenda Frazier, who came to the White House in 1998 to talk about the tragic death of her 9-year-old daughter, Ashley, by a drunk driver.

And I want to thank all the members of Mothers Against Drunk Driving for the grassroots campaign that has galvanized our Nation and changed the way we think and now, thank goodness, the way policymakers behave when it comes to this issue.

I thank you, Secretary Slater. And I thank all the Members of Congress who have worked on this. We did have strong bipartisan support. It finally was able to overcome the lobbying pressure that Millie described.

But I want to say a special word of appreciation to Representative Nita Lowey from New York, who is here to my right, and to Senator Frank Lautenberg. They have worked for more than 5 years on this legislation, and we wouldn't be here today without their leadership.

And let me say a special word of good wishes to Senator Lautenberg. He is retiring after 18 years in the Senate. And he is leaving a true legacy as a champion for the children, the families, and the economy of this Nation, and we wish him well. Thank you, Frank.

I'd also like to thank the other members of the administration who are here, who worked on this legislation, including Admiral Loy, the Commander of the Coast Guard, and others from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense. And I'd like to welcome the mayor of Chicago, Richard Daley, here and congratulate him on the things that Chicago has in this transportation bill—[*laughter*]—once again showing that his influence reaches beyond the city limits of the Windy City.

Let me say to all of you that, for me, this is a very good day for the United States. This .08 standard is the biggest step to toughen drunk driving laws and reduce alcohol related crashes since a national minimum drinking age was established a generation ago. It is estimated by the experts that have studied it that it will save at least 500 lives every year. How often do we get a chance to begin a good morning and a good week by saving 500 lives a year?

I appreciate what Millie said, that we sounded the call here at the White House for a .08 standard in all 50 States over 2½ years ago. It has been an uphill battle. But the victory came because there were Members of Congress in both parties who worked with a collation of health and safety organizations to do the right thing. It came because young people, parents, and communities recognized the problem and

decided to do something about it. But mostly, let's face it, it came because people like Millie Webb and Brenda Frazier and their families decided to take their grief and make something good happen for the rest of America. No point in our kidding ourselves, the rest of us would have never defeated the lobbying interests that were against this legislation if it hadn't been for the people who were willing to honor their loved ones by standing up and being counted and fighting until this day came to pass.

We have been working for years now to increase awareness, strengthen laws, toughen enforcement. Five years ago I signed a zero-tolerance law for underage drinking and driving. [*Applause*] I'm glad you like that. You know, the surveys always tell you, if you talk about something that happened more than a year ago, it has a limited public response. [*Laughter*] And I always pointed out, it may be limited, but it's enthusiastic. [*Laughter*]

Two years ago I took executive action to make .08 the limit on Federal property, and we launched a public education campaign on drunk driving. This year the Departments of Transportation and Justice have released about $60 million to help communities combat drunk driving and underage drinking and to increase seatbelt use.

And Secretary Slater, I just want to say at this moment how much I appreciate what you have done. You know, this man and I have worked together for 18 years now. I've aged quite a lot, and he looks just about like he did 18 years ago. [*Laughter*] He was a very young man when he came to work for me, and I have seen him grow and mature. And I think you'd be hard-pressed to name another person who served as Secretary of Transportation with greater distinction and who has not only tried to get more money for roads and bridges, more money for airports, more money for rail and mass transit—and we're still working on high-speed rail—but he's also tried to humanize the face of transportation and save lives. And I am very grateful to him, as well.

Thanks to all these folks' efforts, we are making progress. Last year people killed in alcohol-related crashes dropped to an all-time low. But that low figure was a shocking 15,700 people, including more than 2,200 children. Now, I think we all know that as many people as we have driving our Nation's highways and all the countless miles that are driven, there will never be a year when no one will lose their life on the highway because of a mechanical failure or because an exhausted driver trying to reach a family emergency falls asleep or because something else happens. But if you could just take away the alcohol-related deaths, the number would drop to a breathtaking low.

Alcohol is still the single greatest factor in motor vehicle deaths and injuries. This law, .08, is simply a commonsense way to help stop that. The science has been clear for a long time. People that have that much alcohol in their blood are too impaired to drive safely. Judgment, reaction times, and other critical driving skills are severely diminished. When a driver with a .08 blood level turns the ignition, that driver is turning a car into a lethal weapon.

The law is effective. The National Transportation Safety Administration study found that Illinois, after adopting the .08 standard, reduced the number of drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes by about 14 percent. The law is reasonable. It is not, contrary to what some of the propaganda against this said, about just having a drink or two after dinner. There is more involved here. Lowering the limit will make responsible Americans take even greater care when they drink alcohol in any amounts, if they intend to drive, and it should, in any amounts.

Today's success is just one more example of what we do when we come together to meet common challenges, to help our children's future and make our communities stronger. We have to keep working together, because there are still too many drunk drivers, and there will still be too many after this law passes.

So I urge the American people to take notice of this day and, mostly, to take notice of the stories of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Talk with your friends, your co-workers, your neighbors, your family members. Make sure there is a designated driver, and teach children about the dangers of drunk driving.

This .08 measure, as I said, is part of a larger transportation bill that I signed that will also improve roads and bridges and airports and mass transit. It will also enhance the safety and performance of the transportation system itself in the new century. But I can't let this day go without saying that we're now in the fourth week of November and the work of the budget was supposed to be completed on October the 30th. I mean, we're in the fourth week of October. The work of the budget is supposed to

be completed September 30th. [*Laughter*] I'm still not over flying to Egypt and back in 3 days. I'm sorry.

But anyway, you get the point. We're 3 weeks late, and we don't have a budget. Last week I signed another continuing resolution to keep the Government open until Wednesday, but I told the leadership that if we don't make this deadline, we're going to have to go forward on a day-by-day basis because Congress expects us to get the job done.

I must say, this is the most unusual thing I've ever seen. I would have thought that Congress would want to get the job done so they could go home and run for reelection. And I say that not in a negative way. I think that's an honorable part of our system. We need to finish our business here. We need especially to get an education budget that is worthy of our children, that builds on what works, continues to hire 100,000 teachers, helps communities build or modernize schools, expands the after-school programs and college opportunities, and helps to put a qualified, certified teacher in every classroom.

This is Monday morning, and the children are at school. The parents are at work, and Congress comes back tonight to go to work. Today we have celebrated the best of the American political system. Citizens came together, told their stories, overcame obstacles, and after years of fighting, made America a safer, more humane, more decent place. This proves that our system can work. And what we need to do is to bring these values and this kind of effort to the remaining few days of Congress, so that we can together do more things that are worthy of the great people we serve and the great system we're privileged to be a part of.

Thank you very much, and good morning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Millie Webb, national president, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Prior to his remarks, the President signed H.R. 4475, the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, in the Oval Office. H.R. 4475, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 106–346.

Statement on Signing the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

October 23, 2000

I am pleased to sign into law today H.R. 4475, the "Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001." The Act provides over $58 billion in funding for the Nation's vital transportation safety and infrastructure investment needs. The transportation safety improvements contained in this legislation will save lives on our highways and other transportation systems, and the record level of infrastructure investment will help improve the conditions and performance of the Nation's transportation system in support of a strong economy.

The legislation provides critical transportation safety funding and also contains related legislative provisions. Of particular importance is a provision that will help set a national impaired driving standard at 0.08 Blood Alcohol Content and thus reduce drunk driving on our Nation's roads. As I have previously said, this is a reasonable, commonsense standard that could save 500 lives a year, while still permitting adults to drink responsibly and moderately. I wish to commend Senators Lautenberg and Shelby, Congressman Wolf, and Congresswoman Lowey for their bipartisan efforts in seeking inclusion of this provision. The legislation also includes a compromise measure that will enable the Department of Transportation to proceed with all stages of rulemaking, short of a final rule, on "hours of service" concerning the amount of time drivers of large interstate trucks and buses can spend behind the wheel. It also permits the Department to move forward with its proposal for rollover ratings on cars and light trucks while the National Academy of Sciences studies this issue. In addition, the legislation contains funding increases requested by my Administration for

motor carrier safety, pipeline safety, and the automotive defect investigation program.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 provides the funding levels required by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Coast Guard. I am particularly pleased with increased funding for modernization of our aviation system envisioned in the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century.

I am disturbed by the provision of H.R. 4475 that blocks the Department of Transportation from evaluating the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. Recent data indicate that motor vehicle fuel economy efficiency has declined. I believe that the Department should be allowed to analyze this issue, and I expect the Department to work with the National Academy of Sciences to carry out the CAFE study authorized by the bill to develop workable approaches to energy conservation. The Act provides important funding for Job Access grants that will help hard-pressed working families, including former welfare recipients, get to work. I am disappointed, however, that the bill provides $50 million less than our request for these grants, earmarks 75 percent of the program, and does not include my Administration's proposal to allow Native American tribes to apply directly for this funding.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 contains $600 million for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. When added to the $900 million already appropriated, this will complete the Federal Government's contribution to this bridge. Likewise, I am pleased that the bill includes an additional $25 million for Indian Reservation Roads.

Our transportation investment must continue to be intermodal and applied to critical needs. Excessive earmarking can undermine this goal, which is why I am disappointed with the widespread earmarking of vital highway, airport, and transit construction and research programs contained in the Act. This earmarking is without regard to criteria established to ensure that these are sound investments. Many earmarks are aimed at projects that have not advanced in the local planning process, and the funding will often lie unused for a long period of time. This deprives ready-to-go projects of needed Federal assistance. I ask the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to work with the Department of Transportation to see that essential projects that can quickly utilize Federal funding are able to move forward.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 includes additional requested resources for the Internal Revenue Service to implement the bipartisan IRS reform legislation enacted in 1998. The Act also responds to my request for additional resources for counterterrorism programs in the Department of the Treasury, thereby enhancing the Federal Government's efforts to deter and detect terrorist activity and to continue the high level of effort undertaken during Millennium celebration events.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 includes funding the Unanticipated Needs account, which can be used by the President to meet needs in furtherance of the national interest, security, or defense. I am especially pleased this account includes the funding I sought to assist the people of Puerto Rico in deciding their islands' future status, an issue that the Puerto Ricans have long asked us to clarify. Other Presidents and I have sought legislative action, and there has been some, but this is the first piece of legislation passed by both Houses of Congress that supports Puerto Rico choosing its future status. The account also provides funds to educate Puerto Ricans on the available options, relying on the Office of the President to ensure the options presented to the voters are realistic in light of the Constitution and the basic laws and policies of the United States. Once the options have been presented, the account also funds a vote by the Puerto Rican people to choose what their status should be. I am already working to clarify the options, and I am also working to ensure that the next President will continue the effort to resolve this issue.

I also note that language purporting to require congressional committee approval for a plan to spend certain funds is unconstitutional under the Supreme Court's holding in *INS* v. *Chadha*, 462 U.S. 919 (1983). In addition, section 347 purports to restrict the contents and form of the President's budgetary proposal. This provision would interfere with the President's constitutional power to recommend legislation and will accordingly be construed as advisory.

Overall, H.R. 4475 makes a positive contribution to meeting the transportation and other

needs of this country. I am pleased to sign it into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 23, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4475, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 106–346.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Maurice D. Hinchey in Kingston, New York

October 23, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, thank you for the wonderful welcome. I am delighted to be here. You may know that on the way over here today, I stopped at your local elementary school and shook hands with the principal, the teachers, and as many of the eager students as I could reach. [*Laughter*] And they made a lot of wonderful signs, and I signed them, and I'm very grateful for that. I had a great time.

I also went across the street and shook hands with the kids at the pizza place. [*Laughter*] But because I was a little late, I didn't have one. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Mayor Gallo and Assemblyman Cahill and the other local officials who are here—John Parete, the Ulster County Democratic chairman. And most of all, I want to say I'm honored to be here for Maurice Hinchey.

We came in together, but I want to make absolutely sure he's still there when I go. [*Laughter*] We have fought our fights together. He has taken the risks that I have taken to try to turn the economy around and pull the country together and move us forward.

I'm especially grateful for his leadership for the Patients' Bill of Rights, to put medical decisions back into the hands of medical professionals and their patients; for a Medicare drug program that would provide all of our seniors access to affordable prescription drugs; for our education initiatives and, especially, our school construction initiative, which would give States like New York that have either overcrowded or falling down schools the funds they need to help repair or build or modernize schools without putting all of the burden on the local property tax payers; and for his help for the environment, because one of the things I was determined to do when I became President is to prove we could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time.

You know, when things go well, the President tends to get credit, and when they don't, well, that's the way it goes. [*Laughter*] Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here." But sometimes I think the credit should be more broadly shared, first and foremost with the American people. But you need to know that on more than one occasion, the critical initiative, beginning with our economic plan in 1993, has passed by one vote in Congress. So, if it hadn't been for Maurice and people like him, so much of the good things that we have been able to do for America over the last 8 years would not have been possible, and you need to keep him right where he is.

I would also like to say a few words about this Senate race, in which I have a passing interest. [*Laughter*] And I would like to say a few words about Vice President Gore and Senator Lieberman.

But I want to begin by just making two introductory comments. First of all, my heart is filled with gratitude for the people of the United States and especially to the people of New York, who have been so wonderful to me through two elections, giving me the State's 33 electoral votes, along with Al Gore. Last time, about 59 percent of the vote in 52 of the 62 counties supported our efforts, and you will never know how grateful I am.

Secondly, as Maurice said, for all the celebrations we've had in the last few days, our 8-year long effort to stand against ethnic cleansing and genocide and abuse in the Balkans, beginning with our efforts to stop the war in Bosnia, to roll back the expulsion of the people in Kosovo, the embargo on Serbia. Now we have

a genuinely elected President there, committed to the rule of law.

We have the President of South Korea winning the Nobel Peace Prize, which he richly deserved, a lifetime of struggle for democracy, first in his own country, narrowly escaping death, partly thanks to President Jimmy Carter over 20 years ago, and now opening the way to North Korea. And the United States supported that policy and, I think, had a significant impact on its success. And now Secretary Albright is there, and we have some hope of resolving our outstanding differences with North Korea and looking forward to the day when they will truly close the last chapter in the aftermath of the Korean war.

That's all been very moving, but it is punctuated and overshadowed now by the terrible violence in the Middle East, which also occurred at the same time that we lost 17 fine young men and women in the United States Navy in the terrorist attack on our ship in Aden, Yemen. I don't want to say too much about that today except I'm working on it, and my experience has been, in these matters, that the less you say publicly, the more likely you are to get done.

The point I want to make is, when I see, around the world, how people continue to struggle with their differences—with their religious, their racial, their ethnic differences—how people continue to misunderstand each other; how after working together for 7 years for the cause of peace, with occasional difficulties but never anything like this, the thing could get off the tracks like this, it makes me so grateful that our country has been so blessed to be the most diverse it has ever been and yet to be more united and making more progress and moving forward.

And the main thing I want to say to you today is, I've never thought much about the ability of one elected official to influence another one's race, so I don't know that I can convince anybody to vote for Maurice or Hillary or the Vice President. But what I would like to say is, I'd like to just share with you from my heart what I think the issues are and what I hope you will say to your friends and neighbors, because there's no doubt that citizens influence one another's opinions.

And if you think about—Hillary said this last night, and I had never quite thought of it this way, but she said, "You know, it was very hard for us to go down to that memorial service for the sailors and their families at the U.S.S. *Cole.*" People often ask me what the most difficult days of my Presidency are, and bar none, they have been the days when I had to go greet the families of people who were killed because of their service for the United States in the Embassies in Africa, in Ron Brown's plane, Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. It is very difficult.

But what my wife said last night that I would like to echo is, you know, the rest of us are not asked to put our lives on the line, and most of the people were so young. I think the oldest one was 31, but many of them were just 19. Many of them were younger than my daughter. And the least we can do is to be grateful for the progress of this country, to be proud of it, to show up and vote, and to take the next 2 weeks to discuss with our friends and neighbors and co-workers and family members what we think this is about. And so that's the spirit in which I would like to speak to you today.

Things are going well for this country, and we have—this is the first time in my lifetime where we've had at the same time so much economic prosperity and social progress, with the absence of domestic crisis and foreign threat. And so we have before us the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And this election ought to be a feast for America. People shouldn't feel bad about the fact that nothing bad is happening. They should feel good about it. [*Laughter*] But they should understand that sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're bad.

There's not a person in this room over 30 years old that hasn't made at least one mistake in their life, not because your life was going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate. Isn't that right? Isn't that right? It's true. [*Laughter*] And all of the younger people are looking at those who are laughing and—[*laughter*]—time will take care of it. You will soon know about that. [*Laughter*]

So what I have urged my friends to do in the Democratic House and the Senate and in advancing the Vice President's cause and Hillary's cause is just to strive for clarity. I really think, you know, the American people nearly always make the right decision if they have

enough information and enough time. If they didn't, we wouldn't still be around here after 224 years.

So, from my point of view, this is what I would like you to know. First, I would like to say about my wife, that for 30 years, as long as I've known her—and I met her almost 30 years ago—her obsession has been the welfare of children and families. She took an extra year when we were in law school to study at the Yale Hospital and Child Study Center, so when she got out of law school, she would understand precisely how the law affected young children and their parents. And it has been the driving obsession of her whole life.

She has spent most of the last 30 years working on education, health care, and other children's and families' issues, and also working on the relationship between education and economic development and, specifically, how to get jobs into places that aren't growing as fast as the economy as a whole is growing.

And she went on corporate boards when we lived in Arkansas. She did a lot of work trying to figure out how to get investment into areas where it was needed, which is a big issue for upstate New York this year. And that's a subject that she's worked on for 20 years, so when she talks about it, it's not something that just sort of occurred to her when she started coming up here to see you.

The second thing I would like to say is that, for the last 8 years in the White House, she has perhaps been the most active First Lady in history, certainly had the broadest range of interests since Eleanor Roosevelt. She has worked on—the first thing she worked on was trying to help pass the first bill I signed, the family and medical leave law, which over 20 million Americans have now used to take some time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their job. It is a great piece of legislation.

And she was very active in our health care efforts, even though we knew it was controversial, and in the end we got a lot done. Medicare was supposed to go broke last year when I took office. It now has 26 more years of life, something that you should remember when people ask you what we did.

We passed the bill that says you can keep your health insurance if you change jobs or if someone in your family gets sick. That's important. And we passed the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest expansion of child health since Medicaid was enacted in 1965, which has now given us a decline in the number of uninsured people for the first time in 12 years.

She worked to find out more about the illnesses of veterans in the Gulf war and whether we should be doing more to help them, totally an issue that she just got interested in because nobody else was working on it. She didn't want those folks ignored.

She thought up the idea of celebrating the coming of the millennium by having a project that imagined the future and honored our past, and her Millennium Treasures Project is now the largest historic preservation project in the history of the United States—$100 million in private and public money together. And a lot of the places preserved have been in New York, places like George Washington's revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, parts of the Underground Railroad—things that will go to places, many of them not doing so well economically, that will make them much more attractive for tourists, build community pride, and change their future.

So I'm very proud of what she has done as First Lady. And I'm especially proud that she's been to more countries than any other person in that position, ever. She says I shouldn't say that, because there's a lot more countries now than there used to be. [*Laughter*] After the fall of the Berlin Wall, it's sort of not a fair comparison. But she's spoken out for women's rights, for the rights of children, trying to get more kids in school. She's pointed out that national security involves more than just military aid, that we have to have education and health care and environment partnerships around the world.

We have to work together to roll back the tides of AIDS and TB and malaria, which together kill one-fourth of all the people who die every year on this Earth. And she's had a special role in the tough spots. She was very, very active in bringing women together and working with them in the Northern Ireland peace process. She spent a lot of time in Israel pursuing our twin goals of the security of Israel and the long-term necessity of resolving the matter through peaceful negotiations. And she's been to see our soldiers in Kosovo and Bosnia several times. I'm very proud of what she has done.

And what I'd like to say to you is that, of all the people I've known in public life, I've

never known anybody over 30 years—and in spite of the fact that we all say harsh things about each other at election time, the truth is that most people in public life I've known are honest, work hard, and do what they think is right. Otherwise, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. But I've never met anybody that had a better combination of brainpower with a great heart and compassion who would just consistently, day-in and day-out, work for what she believed in, never get tired. She spent 30 years working for other people. As far as I know, this is the first time in 30 years she ever asked anybody to do anything for her, and she had a hard time doing it. I said, "You've got to ask people to vote for you. You've got to ask people to contribute to you." She said, "I'm used to asking them to do that for you. It's hard to ask them to do that for me."

I think it's very important, if you're going to elect a Senator to succeed Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the most accomplished people to serve in the United States Senate in the 20th century, to succeed Robert Kennedy—he held that seat—you need a good partner for Senator Schumer. And New York has got a lot of big things on the agenda, and there are a lot of things that have to be done for America.

I have never known anybody with the combination of brains, compassion, heart, and the ability to get things done that she does. She will be a great Senator if you make sure she wins.

I want to say something about the Vice President. He has been a big part of all the success that we've enjoyed in the last 8 years and the decisions we made that were good. One of the things that President Kennedy said in more eloquent words—I wish I could remember exactly what he said—but he said, the Presidency basically is a place of decision; it's important that you work hard. And I think I've met that standard. But he has worked as hard as I have. But in the end, hard work is not enough. You also have to make good decisions, and that requires a certain level of experience, a certain level of judgment, a certain instinct.

And he was right when he supported our economic program. Maurice talks about it. He had to cast the tiebreaking vote in the Senate, or it would have been defeated. And that's what turned this whole budget around, got interest rates down, got investment up, and got the economy going. He supported the efforts we made to reform the welfare system. We now have cut the welfare rolls in half, and families and children are better off, not worse off, as predicted.

He led our reinventing Government program. You know, sometimes our friends in the other party talk about how they're against big Government. But the facts are that under Al Gore's leadership, we reduced the size of the civil Government to its lowest size since 1960, when President Kennedy was running for office and Dwight Eisenhower was still President.

Under Al Gore's leadership, we have reduced 16,000 pages of Federal regulations which were on the book in the previous administration. We have reduced regulations in the Department of Education alone, regulations on States and school districts, by two-thirds. You don't have to keep that a secret if you don't want to. [*Laughter*] You can tell people that. I think it's an important part of the record.

He has—I don't know if you saw the announcement last week. General Motors announced that they had developed a car that will get 80 miles a gallon, which is the target they set in the beginning of our administration when we organized something under Al Gore's leadership called the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicle.

You're all worried about the price of home heating oil this winter. We're all worried about what happens if there is instability in the Middle East with the price of oil. But I'm telling you, the answer is, more conservation, alternative sources of energy, free up the oil that is there for the things we need, like home heating oil. Now, if we get 80 miles to the gallon—and when GM made the announcement, they said that their participation in this Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicles project made it possible.

Al Gore also led our efforts to adopt a telecommunications law, a big bipartisan law that we passed 4 or 5 years ago that's created hundreds of thousands of jobs, thousands of new businesses, and something called the E-rate, which we fought hard for, and he led the fight, which enables every school and hospital to afford to hook up to the Internet.

Now, when we started this project in 1994, trying to get all our schools hooked up, we had only—listen to this—we had about 15 percent of the schools and only 4 percent of the classrooms in the entire country were connected to

the Internet. Today, 95 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the total classrooms are connected. And part of the reason is the E-rate; people can afford to hook onto the Internet to give kids in the poorest schools in this country access to tomorrow's information and tomorrow's economy.

Now, these are big things that he did. He also led our efforts on arms control, in many, many important other areas. So you cannot cite any person, I believe, in the history of the country who, in the position of Vice President, had the impact that he had. And I think that's very significant for this election.

Now, let me just say this. It seems to me there are four things I'd like you to consider. Maurice said, "Tell your weather story." I told the Congress, our crowd in the Congress, last week that those who were on our side needed to think of themselves as America's weather corps in the next 2 weeks, because if things were clear to the American people, we would win, and if things were cloudy, we might be in trouble. So we wanted clear. We need for people to understand clearly what the issues are.

And again I say that in a positive, happy sense. I think this could be the most positive election we've had in a month of Sundays. You don't have to be mad at anybody. You can posit the fact that your opponents are honorable, good people and that they will do what they believe is right, and we'll do what we believe is right. So what we need to do is make sure the voters know exactly what the differences are and then let the voters make up their minds.

I trust the American people. And I trust the people of New York to do the right thing. But I think there are—let me just make these four arguments for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and Maurice.

Number one, we've got to keep this prosperity going. You know, just looking around upstate New York, there are places and communities that still haven't fully participated in this economic recovery. Now, we've got a special program we're trying to pass to give extra incentives to get people to invest there. But to get there you've got to keep the overall prosperity going; you've got to keep unemployment down and labor markets tight. If you want investments to flow to inner-city neighborhoods, rural towns, Indian reservations, you name it—anybody that's been left behind—the economy has got to be strong to get people to invest there. This is a huge deal—plus which, it benefits all the rest of you if the economy keeps going.

Now, I believe it is critical to do that, to adopt a policy that our side, all of our candidates, have espoused, which is, "We'll give you a tax cut, but it's considerably smaller than the other guy's, even though most middle-class people are better off under ours, because we think we've got to save some money for education and health care, and we have to get America out of debt. We've got to keep paying down the debt until America is debt-free. We can do it in 12 years and put us out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President."

Now, why should that be important to you? Why should that be important to the young people in the uniforms back there who have been serving your meal, besides the fact that it sounds good? Because we live in a global economy; a trillion dollars moves around the world every day, crossing national borders. And that means if we keep interest rates lower by paying down the debt, it means for all of you lower home mortgage payments, lower college payments, college loan payments, lower car payments, lower credit card payments. It means lower business loans—costs, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market.

So if you keep interest rates down, everybody benefits—all the working people, all the business people, all the people on Wall Street, everybody else. And that is very, very important. And we have a program that will permit the country, under the Vice President's leadership, to do that.

By contrast, the size of their tax cuts plus the cost of their Social Security privatization program plus their spending promises means they can't do that. They can't get America out of debt. The numbers won't add up. So this is a significant difference. You just have to decide whether it's important to you or not.

But let me just give you an example. If you keep interest rates one percent lower a year than they would otherwise be, the American people save $390 billion on home mortgages alone, $30 billion dollars on car payments, $15 billion on college loans. That's a $400 billion tax cut right there, in lower interest rates. But people have to understand. That's a big decision you need to make, and you can make it either way. We haven't been out of debt since 1835.

You can say we'll just go on and have higher interest rates; take the money now and leave. But people need to understand what the decision is, and then we'll trust the American people to make the right decision. I think I know what they will decide if they clearly understand it.

The second decision I think is very important is whether we're going to build on the progress that we've made in other areas over the last 8 years or reverse that. Now, let's just look at some of those areas, if I could. In welfare, I've already said, welfare rolls are half what they were. The crime rate has dropped every year. It's now at a 26-year low; murder rate at a 33-year low; gun violence down 35 percent. In health care, we finally got the number of uninsured people going down because we're insuring more children.

In the environment, compared to 8 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; the food is safer. We've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps, and we've set aside more land in perpetuity for all time than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt a hundred years ago.

Now, I don't—and in education, let me just say something about that, that I think is very important for the American people to know. The dropout rate is down. Test scores in math, science, and reading are going up. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. There's been over a 50 percent increase in the number of our kids taking advanced placement courses and, among Hispanic kids, a 300 percent increase, among African-American kids, a 500 percent increase. And perhaps most important to me, more important than anything else, we have evidence in every State in the country that schools that were once thought to be failing inevitably are turning around.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day where, 2 years ago, a grade school—listen to this—2 years ago, 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level. Today, just 2 years later—new principal, school uniform policy, high standards, accountability—74 percent of the kids' reading and math at or above grade level in 2 years—2 years.

So are we going to keep building on this or not? So in this election, we believe that our program put 100,000 police on the street, and now to add 50,000 more in high crime areas, had a lot to do with bringing the crime rate down. So does every policeman in America. They believe that's not a Federal responsibility, and they want to get rid of it. You have to decide, but it will make a difference.

In education, we believe that education is a constitutional responsibility of the States and an operational responsibility of the local districts but a national priority. And we think there's a limit to how much money local property tax payers can come up with. So we've been paying for 100,000 teachers to make sure we have certified, well-trained teachers in the early grades to lower average class size to the point where the teachers can teach, and kids aren't sent to the fourth grade without the requisite reading and math and other skills they need.

We think this is important. We're about a third of the way through that program. Al Gore will continue it and build on it. So will Hillary. So will Maurice. They believe that is not a national decision, that we shouldn't have made that, and they ought to just block-grant the money, give it to the States, and see what happens. You can decide what you think, but people should know.

In the environment, we believe we've proved you can clean up the environment and grow the economy. They believe the air pollution laws are too tough and I went too far in protecting 43 million roadless acres in the national forests, even though the Audubon Society said it was the most significant conservation move in 40 years in the United States. They don't agree with that.

You get the drift here. It's not like there are no decisions. And I can make their argument. But you have to decide, and your friends and neighbors have to decide. So A, do you want to keep the prosperity going; B, do you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, or do you want to reverse course; C, who's the best qualified to meet the new challenges?

This is going to be a very new era. We have to close the digital divide. You know, we could create a new, gaping chasm in America and throughout the world if people everywhere don't have access to computers, know how to use them, can afford to log on to the Internet, and can get this information and know what it means.

We have to make the most of this new biotech revolution, which is one of the reasons I want to get medicine covered by seniors, because within the matter of a few years, you

are going to see cures for Parkinson's, for Alzheimer's, for two or three different kinds of cancers. It's going to be amazing.

With the human genome coming out, new mothers will soon begin to come home with genetic maps of their babies, and it will rather quickly take average life expectancy from where it is now, at about 77, up to 90 years. There are young women in this room that will have babies that will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years. You mark my words.

Now, what does that mean? It means, among other things, we've got to figure out how to make sure these benefits are broadly shared, and it means that once all your medical and financial information is on somebody's computer, we've got to figure out how to protect your privacy rights, even as we make the most of this information. That's a big deal.

And I'd like to have somebody that really understands that. I mean, the other day, 425 high-tech executives including Vint Cerf, who really is one of the fathers of the Internet and sent the first E-mail ever sent, 18 years ago, to his then profoundly deaf wife, who now can hear for the first time since she was 3 because of a computer chip implanted in her ear.

They came out for Al Gore. Why? Because they know he understands the future, that he has thought about these things, that he cares about them. He understands the energy future and what kind of changes we're going to have to make, and that's very important.

So how are you going to keep the prosperity going? Are you going to build on the progress or reverse course? Who understands the future best? And last, and maybe most important, how are we going to continue to build one America? The main reason I'm a Democrat is that we believe everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; everybody has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

Now, what does that mean? I believe—that's why we are for the minimum wage. That's why we're for stronger enforcement of equal pay laws to make sure women who do equal work get equal pay. That's why we're for hate crimes legislation. That's why we're for the deductibility of college tax tuition, because we think the people who serve this meal ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college as those of us who could afford to pay for it. That's what we believe.

So sometime between now and the next 2 weeks, I hope every day you will have some chance to talk about this election. And if somebody says, "Well, why are you for Hillary for Senator? Why are you for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? What's Maurice Hinchey so great anyway about?" you need to say, "Look, there's four big things you've got to decide in this election. Number one, do you want to keep this prosperity going or not? If you do, you better pay down the debt and keep interest rates down, have a tax cut we can afford, and save some money to invest in education and our future.

"Number two, do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years or not? If you do, we better stay with the crime program, the education program, the health care program, the environmental program that have worked, that are moving this country in the right direction, not change course.

"Number three, we need people in office that think about the future and understand it.

"And number four and most important, we need people who really believe that we have to be one America across all the lines that divide us."

If people think about these issues in that way, we're going to have a great celebration November 7th.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. at the Hillside Manor Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor T.R. Gallo of Kingston; New York State Assemblyman Kevin Cahill; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; and Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Flushing, New York
October 23, 2000

Thank you very much, my long-time friend Tom Manton. You know, the story he told you was true. I was in Manhattan. They said, "We're going to the Queens Democratic Party. Congressman Manton is the chairman of the county party. If you do really well, they might endorse you." I said, "Well, what happens if they don't?" He said, "You'll lose Queens in the primary." [*Laughter*] "And we're going on the subway, and a television camera is going to follow you on the subway because they don't think anyone from Arkansas knows what a subway is." [*Laughter*]

So properly intimidated, I haul myself onto the subway. And it was fascinating, because no one in New York knew who I was, and yet, here is this camera with this bright light filming my every move. And all these people are dead-tired, and they're being elbowed around by this energetic camera person. They probably thought I was some—you know, in the precursor to "Survivor" or something—[*laughter*]—just some anonymous guy trying to make it out of Queens, on the subway, with a funny accent. It was funny.

So I was really apprehensive. We got to the meeting site, and I walked up the stairs, and the county committee clapped, and I walked down the middle of the aisle, not having a clue about what was going to happen. And this African-American guy who was taller than me leaned over and put his arm around me and said, "Bill, don't worry. I was born in Hope, Arkansas, too. Everything is going to be fine here." [*Laughter*] And I thought, "Only in New York. This is great." [*Laughter*]

So thank you, Tom Manton, for being my friend, for helping me get off to a good start as President. I wish your successor, Joe Crowley, could be here tonight, but he and Kasey had a baby girl today, and we're really happy for them, and that's why they're not here. I always say, the Democratic Party has to be pro-work and pro-family. So tonight is Joe's pro-family night. I think we can give him an excused absence.

I want to thank the other Representatives who are here: Gary Ackerman, who was with me last night; and Greg Meeks; Anthony Weiner. I thank them for their leadership in the Congress. I thank them for their support of Hillary. I thank them for what they do for New York every day.

You know, when things go well, the President gets a lot of credit. But the truth is that over and above the American people, who deserve the lion's share of credit for every good thing that happens in this country, so much of what I have done would not have been possible if it hadn't been for the support of the Democrats in Congress. And that became even more true after we were in the minority. So I want you to know that these men have my undying loyalty and gratitude, because they have been wonderful to me, along with Senator Schumer and the other Democrats in the delegation.

I want to thank Alan Hevesi for being here, and your borough president, Claire Shulman, my long-time friend. Michael Reich, thank you for the work you do for the Democratic Party. And Alisa, you are great. You're going a long way. That was a great national anthem. And I want to thank Brian McLaughlin for making me feel welcome and being so kind to Hillary over these years and this last year of hard campaigning.

I was thinking about how I was introduced to Queens, by having this guy who was born in the same State I was, welcome me. And then I was thinking about all the times I've spent in Queens since then. I went to a Greek diner not very far from here a couple of times. I had a wonderful time in—I bet a lot of you have eaten there. Today I spent an hour and a half in the Jackson Hole Diner, near LaGuardia. I broke all my caloric rules. [*Laughter*]

While I was there, the guy that owns it—who grew up a block from the diner—but his manager is Vietnamese, and his mother still lives in Saigon. While I was there, I met this African-American guy and his wonderful young son named Miles, who asked me more questions about the White House than I could answer, so finally I just gave him a book about it. [*Laughter*] And the man said something to me that meant more to me than just about anything anybody could say. When I was walking out

of the diner he said, "Mr. President, I just want you to know that the whole time you were there, I felt like it was my house, too."

I want to say to all of you, as America grows more diverse, that will be more important. Claire Shulman and I were at a school in Queens the other day that was built for 400 and has about 800 children, predominantly Asian-American and Latino, the new children coming there, Chinese-American, Indian-American. And then tonight I showed up, and I looked out at all of you. Welcome to 21st century America.

On the way out of the Jackson Hole Diner today there were two guys sitting outside drinking a beer, and I stopped and shook hands with them, and they said hello to me. And I said, "Where are you from in Ireland?" [*Laughter*] And they said they were both from the same little village in County Clare. And I said, "Did you know each other as children?" They said, "Yes, but we didn't like each other until we came to America." [*Laughter*] And I thought, "Oh, if I could just hold that thought."

There is a lady back there with a sign that says Croatian-Americans support Hillary. And I thank you for that.

And I guess I would like to just start with that. There are four things I want you to know about this election, four reasons you ought to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and our side. And I'll start with what I usually leave for last.

We are committed, all of us, led by our candidate for President—the Vice President—to build one America across all the lines that divide us and to relate to the whole rest of the world, based on our values of peace and freedom and opportunity. We know that the world we're living in, the country we're living in, and whatever communities we're living in are growing increasingly more interdependent. And I am very grateful that we've had the chance, for example, to stand against ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, to stop the war in Bosnia and stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and stand with our embargo until Mr. Milosevic finally could be dislodged by the people of Serbia in a Democratic, true uprising of popular feeling.

And I want you to know that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary supported everything we ever did there. I don't know how many times Hillary went to the Balkans, not just with me but on her own, to support our troops, to meet with women who were struggling to get the Croatians and the Muslims and the Serbs together, across the ethnic and religious lines that divided them.

There were a lot of people that came through the line where I just was shaking hands a few moments ago, had Irish accents. And these two Irish guys asked me today, said, "Well, where is your family from?" And I said, "Well, we're from the wrong side of the line. We were from Roslea, County Fermanagh. But my oldest known homestead is right on the borderline of the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland." And this guy says, "So that's why you got involved?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Well, it was a reason."

No administration had ever tried to play a constructive role in resolving the difficulties in Northern Ireland before, for fear of interrupting our special relationship with Great Britain. I finally concluded that Great Britain would be better off with a minor interruption where, over the long run, they had a long-term settlement in Northern Ireland that was consistent with the interests of the people of the United States.

And I'm very, very grateful that Tony Blair and, before him, his predecessor, John Major, came to accept that and welcome our involvement. And I'm grateful for the work we've done. We're not out of the woods yet in the Irish peace process. There is still some work to be done to get the police force right and to get the decommissioning finished. But it's a lot, lot different than it was 8 years ago, and for that I'm grateful. And again, as Tom Manton said, Hillary went there a lot on her own, not just with me, to work with women who were committed to reaching across the lines of division there and putting their children first and finding ways to grow a grassroots economy and to relate to one another.

And of course, now, we're most concerned again about the recent tragic events in the Middle East. I promised myself when I ran for President that I would always be a friend of Israel, that the only way I could ever see that Israel could be secure in the long run would be to reach a fair, just, and lasting peace with its neighbors. And I had the great good fortune in the beginning of my term to work with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, one of the greatest human beings I ever met in my life. And we have made so much progress.

And I end with Israel for a couple of reasons. First of all, because here again not only have

I spent more time on that, I suppose, than any other part of the world, but Hillary has gone there a lot on her own, without me, at the request of Mrs. Barak and others, to just try to keep pushing things forward. We've done everything we know to do.

But this is a cautionary reminder to all of us here in America. Look around the room at how quickly people who have even worked together for years can give into their fears and their misunderstandings and what turns out to be one bad day, turns out to be one bad week, turns out to be 2 bad weeks. And then all these unintended consequences flow.

The commitment of the United States to the security of Israel is as strong or stronger than it has ever been. But we shall also keep trying to stop the killing and to give them a chance to work their way back to the peace table.

And that brings me finally to something my wife said last night that, I must say, I identified with. She was talking about the memorial service we attended for the 14 young American sailors, men and women, who were killed on the United States Ship *Cole,* by terrorists in Yemen, at the port of Aden.

Those are the toughest days I ever spent as President, in 8 years, by far—much worse than any political setback or anything else—going into room after room after room, seeing the parents of people, most of whom are less than half my age, or their wives or their children, people who had died serving the United States—the *Cole,* Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, our two Embassies in Africa, on Ron Brown's plane, and in other cases. It is unbelievable.

But I never went through one of those days without being profoundly grateful for these kids who get up every day and put the uniform of our country on and serve and do the best they can to represent us stunningly well, and have prevented more wars than you, even I, will ever know, and saved us more headaches just by going out there and putting themselves on the line every day than we will ever know.

And one of the things that is so moving is, if you look at our Armed Forces today, they all look like this room. They're from every different racial and religious and ethnic group, and they work together. And just sending them somewhere around the world is a profound statement about what we Americans believe about how people should celebrate their diversity but affirm the primary importance of our common humanity.

And that means, to me, two things. Number one, as Hillary said last night, we've all got to vote. The least we can do for those kids is vote. If they can put their uniform on and risk their lives, and sometimes give their lives, the least we can do is show up and be good citizens. Number two, we have to remember the lesson of who they are and how they worked together, as we stand for peace around the world and we work for one America here at home.

So I'll get back to the main point here. This is an increasingly interdependent world. The more we believe that everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other, the better we're going to do. The more we celebrate and find excitement in the differences among us but constantly reaffirm our common humanity, the better we're going to do.

For the Democrats, that means significant differences in approach, very often, from our friends in the other party. We're for strong hate crimes legislation that protects people without regard to race, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. We're for it, and they're not. We're for that. We are for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws, because we don't think it's right for women to do the same work as men and not get equal pay for it. We believe that. We believe that we've got to go forward together. That's the first thing I want to say. And it's a big issue for the 21st century.

The second point I want to make is, you ought to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary if you want to keep this prosperity going. Just remember what it was like 8 years ago. You know, it may be hard to remember what it was like, but I do. That's how I got elected. The people of New York were very, very good to me in 1992, after making me run a gauntlet or two. [*Laughter*] That's just what you do—and I liked it, actually, once I realized what the deal was. [*Laughter*]

But we've come a long way. Now, our party has a plan: Give a tax cut that we can afford, concentrated on the main needs of middle class people to send their children to college; have long-term care for their elderly and disabled family members; have help for child care, help for retirement savings; give extra incentives to invest in poor urban neighborhoods and rural areas that have been left behind; but have a

tax cut we can afford so we've got some money left over to invest in education, health care, the environment, and pay down the debt.

Now, you heard Tom talking about how we've turned the deficit to surplus. Why should the Democratic Party be for paying down the debt? Here's why. Because every day a trillion dollars cross national borders—every single day. Interest rates are set based on how responsible you are and how much money you need. The less money the Government takes, the more money is there for you, the American people, at lower prices.

So if we keep paying down the debt, we'll keep interest rates low. Our plan, on the whole, would make interest rates about a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Just listen: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more new businesses, more new jobs and a higher stock market. That's what that means.

So number one, we're the party of one America. Number two, we're the party that will keep this prosperity going. Number three, we're the party that will build on the progress of the last 8 years in every other area. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The welfare rolls are at a 30-year low. The environment is cleaner. We've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years. So you have to ask people, "Look, all this stuff is going in the right direction. Do you want to build on it, or do you want to reverse policy?"

And finally, you ought to ask people, what about the future? Which candidates are more likely to figure out how to close the digital divide so that every kid has access to the Internet? Which party and which candidates are more likely to understand the implications of this biological revolution with the human genome? The young women in this audience today, within just a few years, when they enter their childbearing years, the young girls here, they'll be bringing home babies with a life expectancy of 90 years. That's the good news.

But all of your medical and all your financial information is going to be on somebody's computer. Who is most likely to understand how to protect your privacy and make the most of the Internet and the biological revolution? These are big questions. This is a serious time we're moving into.

Now, look, I've done everything I could do to turn this country around, pull it together, and move it forward. But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow—always. And I can tell you, you need to go out and ask people which party and which candidates will stick up for one America and give us all a chance? Which party, which candidates will keep the prosperity going? Which party, which candidates will keep the progress going in crime, in the environment, in welfare, in health care, and in education? And which party and which candidates most nearly understand the future?

If you can just remember to make those four points, it's going to be fine. And I just want to tell you, don't forget that Vice President Gore has been at the center of every major positive decision made in the last 8 years by this administration. He broke the tie on the economic plan when nobody in the other party would vote for it. It turned this country around and got the economy booming. He led our efforts to reduce the size of Government but increase its effectiveness. We've got the smallest Government since 1960, doing more good for more people.

He led our efforts to get the so-called E-rate passed about 4 years ago, which guarantees a discount to poor schools, so that every school in this country can get hooked up to the Internet. When we started this project, 14 percent of our schools were connected to the Internet in 1994. Today, 95 percent are, thanks in large measure to the efforts of Al Gore. So I'll just tell you that.

Everybody in New England and the Northeast is worried about home heating oil, the energy shortage this summer. Let me just tell you, it was a piece of good news 3 or 4 days ago; General Motors announced that they had developed a car that gets 80 miles to the gallon. Did you see it? That's what they announced. And they gave credit to a project most of you probably never heard of, called the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicles.

They said, "We were able to do this because we were involved in this partnership." We started that partnership with Detroit and the United Auto Workers in 1993, and who ran it for 7½ years? Al Gore. Listen, we need somebody like that in the White House, who will make good decisions, who understands the future, who can do what needs to be done.

Now, let me say a few words about Hillary. [*Laughter*] I mean, I am a completely unbiased source. [*Laughter*] You can bank this. I may be biased, but I know more about this than anybody else.

I met Hillary almost 30 years ago. When I met her, she had already been involved for some time in her lifetime obsession with children and families, with education, with health care, with child care, with all aspects of early childhood development. She spent an extra year when we were in law school just so she could study child development at the Yale Child Study Center and the Yale University Hospital. She stayed an extra year, so she wanted to know for sure when she got out of law school she would understand the impact of every legal and public policy decision on the children of this country.

And for 30 years, until she started running for this office, she has worked tirelessly as a citizen advocate, starting organizations, heading up others, working for other candidates. She never asked anybody to do anything for her in 30 years, except to join her in common cause, until she started running for the United States Senate from New York. And I thought it would be the hardest thing in the world for her to go out, ask you to vote for her, ask you to contribute to her campaign. And it turned out, in the beginning, it was kind of hard. She said, "I never did this for myself before." But she has worked for 30 years on things that you need someone to work on for New York in Washington.

For the last 8 years as First Lady, she has worked on a lot of things that had a direct, positive impact on the people of New York. She spoke out, as soon as we took office, for the family and medical leave law. It was the first bill I signed. Over 20 million Americans have taken advantage of family and medical leave when a baby was born or a parent was sick, to take some time off without losing their jobs. It's one of the best things we ever did in these whole 8 years.

She brought people to the White House from all over the country to help us make policy on children's health, on early childhood development and what happens to kids' brains, what kind of things we should do more of. We got 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood illnesses for the first time in history. She worked on that.

She worked on the bill that allows people to keep their health insurance when they change jobs or when somebody in their family gets sick. She was an advocate for our Children's Health Insurance Program, which has now in the last couple of years brought health insurance to 2.5 million children in lower income working families and finally—finally—after a dozen years, got the number of uninsured kids going down in America, going in the right direction.

And when we decided to celebrate the millennium, she came up with this idea that we ought to find a way to celebrate the turning of the century and the turning of the millennium by thinking about the future but honoring the past. And her Millennium Treasures Project is the largest single historic preservation movement in the history of the country. It has put $100 million, in public and private money, in it now. And a lot of the places preserved are right here in New York State, in places that need it economically, for tourism, for community pride: George Washington's revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, parts of the Underground Railroad—had a direct positive impact. It's the biggest thing of its kind in the history of the country. It came right out of her head. She thought about it.

What's the point of all this? In 30 years, I have known hundreds, thousands of people in public life. And I want to tell you, most people who do this work are better than they get credit for most days—Republicans as well as Democrats. I'll even say that 2 weeks from election. Most people I've known in public life are honest, worked hard, and did what they thought was right. But I have never known anybody in 30 years that had the strong combination Hillary does of brains and heart and determination and imagination and ability to get things done and work with all different kinds of people. She will be a worthy successor to the great Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to Robert Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer, if you will just make sure she wins on November 7th.

Ladies and gentlemen, the next Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. in the Electrical Industry Auditorium at the Union Hall. In his remarks, he referred to former Representative Thomas J. Manton, chair, and Michael H. Reich, executive secretary, Queens County Democratic Organization; Mr. Reich's daughter,

Alisa, who sang the national anthem; Representative Crowley's wife, Kasey; New York City Comptroller Alan G. Hevesi; State Assemblyman Brian McLaughlin; former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; and Nava Barak, wife of Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Westchester County Democratic Party Dinner in New Rochelle, New York

October 23, 2000

Thank you. Thanks. [*Laughter*] Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Thank you for being here in such large numbers. Thank you for making David Alpert look good tonight at the Westchester County Democratic dinner. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Dennis Mehiel, for your friendship and your support. I want to thank my great friend John Catsimatidis for helping you at this dinner, and Anthony Pagano and everyone else who had anything to do with the dinner.

I want to thank the county executive, Andy Spano, for being such a good friend to Hillary and to me and making me feel welcome here in Westchester County. Our great comptroller, Carl McCall, we welcome him tonight. And I want to thank the two people here who, next to Hillary, are most responsible for making me look good over the last 8 years, Representatives Eliot Engel and Nita Lowey. Thank you very much for all you have done, wherever they are.

Now, let me say to all of you, I want you to have most of the time to listen to Hillary and to think about this Senate race, but I want to say just a few things about how the race for the Senate in New York relates to the larger national campaign, which will also unfold 2 weeks from tomorrow. I want to begin by thanking you all from the bottom of my heart for the phenomenal support that the people of New York have given to me and Al Gore in 1992 and then in 1996. I am very grateful.

I would just say, to me there are basically three or four questions that are really important. I think they matter in the Senate race. I think they matter in the race for President and Vice President. And I hope you will share them with friends of yours who not only live in New York but live in other States, because every one of you has tons of friends or family members, coworkers, some of whom live in New York, some of whom don't even live in this State, who will never come to a dinner like this. Isn't that right?

When you come to a dinner like this, don't you have some people say, "Why do you spend your time and money doing that?" [*Laughter*] You do, don't you? Everyone one of you do, right? But all these people that sometimes make fun of you, sometimes want to know why you're doing this, virtually all of them are going to vote 2 weeks from tomorrow, or they would if they knew exactly what was at stake.

So while we're all having a good time tonight, and the temptation is just for me to hit you with a bunch of one-liners that make you want to scream with joy—[*laughter*]—the truth is, what we should be focused on is, how do we get people who don't come to dinners like this, who aren't as political as we are but who love our country very much and will definitely show up at election time, to understand this election in the way that we understand it?

I told the Democratic Congress and the Senate the other day that we ought to think of ourselves as America's weather corps, that if we can make the choices clear, our side wins. If the choices can be blurred and remain cloudy, we have a lot more trouble. So over the next 2 weeks, this is what I could say, if I could personally speak to all your family and friends: Here's why you ought to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary.

Number one, we've had the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded. And it's really important to keep this prosperity going, especially if you want to extend it to the inner-city neighborhoods in New York and the rural counties in New York that still haven't fully participated. You will never be able

to do that unless you keep the economy going, keep unemployment down, and keep it going.

Now, you have a choice. And what our side says is, "Look, we're going to have a tax cut, not near as big as theirs, not nearly as big. And we're going to focus it on paying for college tuition, paying for long-term care for elderly or disabled relatives, financing retirement, paying for child care, the basic things that families need today, and inducing people to invest in areas that are still underdeveloped."

But it's a smaller tax cut than theirs. We admit it. Why? Because we want money to invest in education and health care and the environment, what we have to invest in technology and national defense, and we've got to keep paying down the debt. The single most important economic difference in the election today is that our budget pays down the debt and gets America out of debt for the first time since 1835.

Now, why is that important? Why is that important, and why should people, even people who do quite well and would get more money in the short run under their tax cut, support our program? Because if you pay the debt down, you keep interest rates lower. If you keep interest rates lower, it's like a whole other tax cut. If we keep interest rates a percent lower a year for a decade, and that's about what the difference in the two plans will do, do you know what that's worth to you, as an American? Listen to this: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; plus lower credit card payments; plus lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market. It's a tax cut for everyone, to get America out of debt. It is the progressive, right thing to do.

We have worked so hard to turn a $290 billion deficit into a $230 billion surplus, so hard after quadrupling the national debt for 12 years, before we came in, to start paying the national debt off. This is a big deal. You need to go out and tell people, "If you want to keep the prosperity going, support Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary and get this country out of debt to keep interest rates down."

Number two: Second thing you ought to say is, if you want to build on the progress in areas other than the economy and keep our society growing stronger, you should vote for Gore/Lieberman, and Hillary. Look at where we were 8 years ago compared to now. The crime rate has dropped every year to a 26-year low. The murder rate is at a 33-year low. Gun violence down 35 percent. In the environment, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; the food is safer. We cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12. We set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And the economy got better.

We added 26 years to the life of Medicare, had the most sweeping improvements in diabetes since the development of insulin, did more to prevent breast cancer and prostate cancer, provided health insurance for children of low-income working parents, which has given us the first decline in uninsured people in 12 years. In education, we sponsored higher standards, accountability, smaller classes. We're in the process of putting 100,000 teachers in the schools. We've gone from zero to serving 800,000 children in after-school programs. We're trying to build or modernize schools. We've opened the doors to 2 years of college to everybody, and our college tax credits are now being taken advantage of by 10 million families.

What are the results of all this? A lower dropout rate, a higher graduation rate, higher test scores, the biggest college going rate in history. So the question is, are we going to keep going in the right direction? If you want to go in the right direction, since there are honest differences in this campaign, on crime policy, on environmental policy, on health care policy, on education policy—it's not like you don't have a record here. And the differences are honest and heartfelt. So Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary, they'll do what they think is right, and our opponents, they'll do what they think is right.

But we have a record here. So you have to say, if you want to build on the prosperity of the last 8 years, and you want to take on the big challenges of the future—excellence in education for everybody, closing the digital divide, opening the 4 years of college, making the most of the human genome, protecting the privacy rights of people and their medical and financial records, all these big new questions—you only have one choice. You've got to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary, if that's what you want.

The third thing and maybe the most important is, you ought to vote for them because we are really the party of one America. We believe that our diversity of all kinds is interesting and makes America more exciting, makes us much better prepared for the global society we'll be living in, but we think our common humanity is even more important. And that has very practical implications. It means we think all these young people that served your meal tonight, they ought to have the same chance to go to college and send their kids to college as people who could afford to come here and buy a ticket tonight do.

It means we're for raising the minimum wage. It means we're for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws, because there's still discrimination against women in the workplace today, and we think we ought to get rid of it. It means we're for strong hate crimes legislation and employment nondiscrimination legislation. It means that we are for a Supreme Court that will protect a woman's right to choose and the other basic fundamental rights.

Look, I have spent, as all of you know, and many of you mentioned tonight when I saw you earlier, I spent a lot of time the last 8 years trying to bring peace to the world. We've made a lot of progress in Northern Ireland. We've made a lot of progress in the Balkans, after combat in Kosovo and conflict in Bosnia. We finally had the last dictator in that part of the world gone from office now. We've worked for 8 years in Korea to try to bring an end to the conflict on the Korean Peninsula. We're closer than ever before, and the Secretary of State of the United States is in North Korea, and the President of South Korea won the Nobel Peace Prize because he went with an outstretched hand and said, "Let's put an end to the Korean war. It's been 50 years."

The world is moving in the right direction. And until 2 weeks ago, you could make the same case about the Middle East. With all the trouble that has roiled the Middle East in the last 2 weeks—I don't want to talk too much about it tonight, because I find when I'm heavily involved in something like this, the more I say about it, the less positive impact I can have, and the less I say, the more I can get done. But suffice it to say that the United States has been a friend to Israel, has believed in Israel and its right to be in the Middle East, and has thought the only way, ultimately, for real peace and security to come was through a reconciliation and a peace process that would end the violence and enable everybody to live on fair and decent terms. And I don't think all this is going to change that.

The reason I mention it to you is this. So much of the world's trouble, in this most modern of ages, where all of our kids are teaching us more than we know about computers, where the human genome—this is literally the truth—the human genome will lead to the younger women in this audience who have, let's say, 10 years of childbearing left, I think in about 10 years, women will be coming home from the hospital with kids that will have a life expectancy of about 90 years. There's going to be an enormous number of wonderful things happening, and the old world we live in is bedeviled by the oldest fear of mankind. We are still paralyzed by our fear and distrust and our vulnerability to slip into violence and hatred against people who are different from us; they're of a different race, a different ethnic group, a different faith.

And we can all clap when we look around this room. I mean, look around this room. This is America in the 21st century. And we can all clap about it; it's great. But what we need to understand is, you just look what happened to people who have been working together for 7½ years, in the last 2 weeks. And I'm telling you, the country needs a leader in the White House and a voice in the Senate that—people who believe with the core of their being that what we have in common is more fundamentally significant than all of our differences. Our differences are interesting. Our common humanity is fundamental.

So, if somebody asks you tomorrow—and I wish you wouldn't wait for them to ask—why you showed up here and why are you doing this and why are you for Hillary or Al Gore or Joe Lieberman, I hope you will say, "Well, you see, there are three reasons. One is, I'd kind of like to keep this prosperity going, and the only way to do it is to keep paying down this debt, investing in our future, and take a tax cut we can afford instead of one that looks good. Number two, I'd like to keep making progress. I like the fact that we've got a cleaner environment, a lower crime rate, better schools, more people with health insurance, and I want to build on that progress, not turn around. And number three, the most important thing of all

is, I want to keep building one America, where we grow closer together, where we believe everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other." That's what you ought to say. And you ought not to wait for somebody to ask you to say that. [*Laughter*]

I'm telling you, these races are close, and you may have more influence over the kind of people I'm talking about than I would. And you need to know just what three things to say. That's what I believe. If I were talking to any of your friends or family members alone in a room, with nobody looking and no media covering it, and they said, "Why should I vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? Why should I vote for your wife for Senate?" those are the three things I would say. And I hope you'll say them.

And let me just say one other thing. Dennis is going to come up here and introduce Hillary, but I want to say just one or two things about her candidacy. First of all, I am grateful to all of you for being so good to her, and I am immensely proud of her for having the courage to run and for running as she has for this last year and some odd months.

We met almost 30 years ago, and even then she was literally obsessed with the welfare of children and families, with education and health care and early childhood development. We worked together for a dozen years when I was Governor of my native State on education and economic development. One of the reasons the people in upstate New York ought to vote for her is that she literally devoted an enormous percentage of her time for years and years and years to just what upstate needs now, which is figuring out how to get investment and opportunity to places that aren't fully participating in the national economy.

When she became First Lady, she traveled all over the world, from the Balkans to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Africa to the Indian subcontinent, trying to promote peace and reconciliation and the interests of young girls and families that were left behind in poorer societies. She sponsored the Millennium Project, to preserve our treasures for the new millennium, which has done a lot for New York. It's the biggest historic preservation movement in history, in American history—the biggest one—$100 million in public and private money that among other things preserve George Washington's revolutionary headquarters in this State, Harriet Tubman's home, Louis Armstrong's home and archives, in places that it's good for tourism, good for community pride, and good for the history of this great State.

I can just tell you that in 30 years of working in public life—you know, it's probably not even fashionable to say this quote until the election, but I basically like most of the people I've known in politics. I find that most of the Republicans and well as most of the Democrats I've know are honest people who work hard and do what they think is right, to the best of their ability to do it. But I have never known anybody that had the combination of intelligence, compassion—compassion and commitment and ability to get things done and think of new things to do that Hillary has. She will be a worthy successor to Senator Moynihan and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 p.m. at the VIP Club. In his remarks, he referred to dinner emcee David Alpert, chairman, Westchester County Democratic Party; dinner cohosts Dennis Mehiel, John A. Catsimatidis, and Anthony Pagano; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

Remarks at a Tribute to Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina
October 24, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first of all, to all our friends from North Carolina, welcome to Washington. I'm glad you're here. The two previous speakers have been two of the closest friends I've had in politics and two of the best Governors with whom I've ever served. And so I thank them both.

I want to start by saying a word about Governor Patton and then get into the tribute to Governor Hunt and what all that means for what we're doing as Americans right now in this election season.

First of all, Paul Patton ran for Governor and won in Kentucky after Jim Hunt and I had been out working on a lot of this stuff for years and years and years, going back to the seventies. I have personally never seen anybody learn so much so fast and have such an impact as Governor Patton did in Kentucky. I've never seen anybody get up to speak so fast on things that he had not previously lived with and worked with and have an immediate impact. And along the way, he found the time to help Al Gore and me carry Kentucky in 1992 and 1996, against enormous odds, where we had absolutely no right to think we could win. And we sort of squeaked by both times. And he has done a magnificent job.

But let me just give you one example. Several years ago, when Secretary Riley, who also served with Jim and me as Governor back in the seventies, early eighties, was—we persuaded the Congress to adopt a bill saying that all the States ought to have academic standards. Then we persuaded Congress to say that States getting Federal money ought to at least have a system for identifying their failing schools.

Paul Patton said, "Well, if we're going to identify them, we might as well do something about them." And so when I was—and I have been trying to pass, with the support of Jim Hunt and Paul Patton, an accountability measure that Vice President Gore has advocated in his campaign that basically says that the recipient—it's real accountability. If Jim and Paul and I had time, if we had another 30 minutes, we could explain to you why the proposal of the Democratic nominee for accountability will work better than the proposal of the Republican nominee for accountability, based on our combined half-century of experience in this.

Anyway, Patton says we ought to have—if we've got to identify these failing schools, we ought to do something about them. So he comes up with this system. I went to western Kentucky with Governor Patton a few months ago, to try to persuade the Congress to pass our bill, saying if you get this Federal aid, you must not only identify the failing schools, you have to turn them around within 2 years or shut them down and reopen them under new management.

Now, Jim has done something very like that in the most comprehensive way in North Carolina, and I'll come back to that. So I'm in this school in western Kentucky, in this low-income area, where over half the kids are on school lunch, where 4 years ago this was one of the worst schools in Kentucky. And they go through this system, and in 3 years, this is what happened: They went from 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level to about 60 percent; they went from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; they went from zero kids in the whole school doing science at or above grade level to 63 percent—in 3 years.

And what does that show you? First of all, for those of us who have been doing this for 20 years, we know something now we didn't know in the late seventies, or we didn't know in '83 when the "Nation At Risk" report was issued. We actually know that you can identify failing schools and turn them around. And nobody, no State has done it any more systematically then he has. That school that was an abject failure is now one of the top 20 schools in the State of Kentucky.

Thank you Governor, for your leadership.

I want to start with something personal. When I was elected Governor in 1978, I got to serve with Jim Hunt, starting in '79. And he was a big deal, even then. [*Laughter*] And I was 32 and looked like I was about 25. You guys have taken care of that in the last 8 years. [*Laughter*] And you know when you come to the end of a certain period in your life, as I am coming to the end of my service as President—and this is the first election in 26 years where I haven't been on a ballot somewhere, and most days I'm okay about it—but you can look back over your life and see a handful of people who did this, that, or the other thing for you, without whom you might never have become President.

And in 1979 Jim Hunt told the Democratic Governors they should make me the vice chairman of the Democratic Governors' Association, which, in turn, would entitle me to become chairman. And I was, by 9 years, I think, the youngest Governor in the country at the time. And nobody had—it would never have happened—the only reason it happened is because everybody thought he knew what he was talking about, and so they said okay. [*Laughter*]

And it was the first significant national position of any kind I had. And in 1980 I did become chairman of the Democratic Governors' Association and got involved in a whole range of things that I had never been involved with before and might never have come in contact with. So for good or ill, depending on what you think of the Clinton Presidency—[*laughter*]—I'm not sure I'd be here if it weren't for you.

And over more than 20 years now, Jim and Carolyn have been friends to Hillary and me. We always love being with them. We follow the progress of our families and the ups and downs and changes in our lives. And I have seen now that—he is the only Governor I know that served in the seventies, the eighties, the nineties, and the 21st century. [*Laughter*]

But as a result—he was kind of like me—if you really love being Governor, you don't get tired of doing it, because it's the best job in the world in so many ways. And there's nobody in my adult lifetime in the United States who has served as a Governor who has done more for education, children's health, or the long-term economic interests of a State than Jim Hunt. He has the most sweeping, deep, consistent record of public service over the longest period of time of any Governor in the United States in my lifetime. And the people of North Carolina should be very, very proud of that. It's an astonishing record.

Along the way, he's led your State through difficult times, like those awful floods, and made sure that we here in Washington did our part to help you recover. You have not really been in politics until you have been lobbied by Jim Hunt for something. [*Laughter*] And if you don't want to say yes, it's just like going to the dentist and having him yank your teeth out without any kind of deadening on your gums. [*Laughter*] It just never ends, and his capacity to guilt-trip you kind of goes up by the day. [*Laughter*] So eventually you say yes, and then after a while, you learn to say yes the first time you're asked because there's no point in going through this. [*Laughter*]

He really did a great job for you on that. I've watched him with these preschool programs and these early childhood health initiatives and the efforts he's made to turn around his schools that were underperforming. And along the way, he's done a lot of things nationally, but one thing in particular I want to thank him for, because he introduced me to the idea of the master teacher and National Board of Professional Teaching Certification, the idea that we ought to have, eventually, in every school building in America, somebody who has proved not only that he or she knows the subject that they're teaching completely, which is a big challenge today because we've got a teacher shortage, but is also supremely gifted in the classroom and good at teaching children.

So Jim worked for years and years and years on this National Board for Professional Teaching Certification, and a few years ago he came to the White House, and we kicked it off. And we certified, within a short time, the first 500 teachers. Now we have about 5,000. By the time I leave office, we'll have almost 10,000. And thanks to his leadership, we have as part of our education budget the capacity to go to 100,000 master teachers over the next 3 or 4 years. And now we've got this huge backlog. This is a big deal. The teachers, the men and women who get national board certification, have to prove they know their subjects well, that they are extremely skilled in the classroom, that they understand how to relate to children and families.

And this is a huge professional distinction if they get it. We see that every time there's one of these master teachers, just in one school building, he or she can change the whole culture of education in the building and infect everybody else with a certain enthusiasm and sense of possibility and learning. This is something that's impossible to make a headline out of. It's impossible to make it an issue in the Presidential election. You know, it sounds like something little. It's something huge. You've all seen that new book that's out called "The Tipping Point." That's what these master teachers are. They're not only good in their classroom; they provide the tipping point of influence in school after school after school.

So long after Jim Hunt is gone from the North Carolina Governor's Mansion, this passion that he nurtured for years, when no one else was paying attention, to train, identify, certify master teachers and then get one in every school building in the country, will be revolutionizing education and improving the futures of children not just in his native State but throughout the United States.

There's nobody like you. And I love you, and I thank you for everything you've done. Thank you.

Let me just say one other thing. What's all that got to do with this election? Let me just make a couple of points here. I believe, and it's already been said, that education is sort of at the center of this Presidential election, and that's good. And then there are people that view that cynically, because they say, "Well, Presidents can get up and talk about education, but after all, what can they do? It's only 7 percent of the total money we spend on our public schools." Well, let me just say, when I got elected, it was under 6 percent and headed down. So at least we got it back to 7.

But it seems to me that we ought to say that education is a constitutional responsibility of the State, the operational responsibility of the local schools and the districts, but it still is a national priority. And what I have always believed is that we had a special obligation, number one, just to invest more, because we've got the biggest and most diverse group of schoolkids in our Nation's history and because even though the school populations are bigger in many, many States, a smaller percentage of the property owners who pay property taxes have kids in schools. I know that seems counterintuitive, but that's happening in State after State.

So the States need more resources, number one. And number two, there is now, as I said a moment ago about the failing schools, we now know something we didn't know in 1983, when the Governors were responding to the national report called "A Nation At Risk." We know things we didn't even know in 1989, when the Governors met with President Bush and articulated these national education goals for the next decade, to try to be reached by the year 2000, about how to do this.

And our philosophy has been that we should not tell the States how to do what they do, but we should fund those things that the research and the educators tell us work. For example, one of the things—I wish you had heard this in some of the discussions we've heard in this election, but one of the things that I'm quite proud of is that under Dick Riley, who was Governor of South Carolina, as I said, with Jim and me in the seventies and the eighties, the burden of regulations the Federal Government imposes on the States and the school districts has actually been reduced by about two-thirds below what it was in the previous administration. We have nearly doubled funding for education and training, even as we have gone from a $290 billion deficit to a $230 billion surplus and shrunk the size of Government to its lowest point in 40 years.

But we've tried to focus this money on what works. For example, when I became President, we were giving no support to the States for after-school programs and summer school and night programs, to turn the schools into community learning centers, nothing, even though we knew that we had all these latchkey kids and that they needed some place to go.

Well, now, we're serving 800,000 of them, and we want to go to 1.6 million of them in this budget. And it's the best money we could spend. And a lot of these schools have absolutely no capacity to afford things like this unless we do it. We started in '94. Only 14 percent of our schools and 3 percent of our classrooms were connected to the Internet. Because of the leadership of the Vice President and getting the E-rate, which allows even the poorest schools in North Carolina a 90 percent discount so they can hook on, we have gone from 14 percent of our schools to 95 percent of our schools connected to the Internet; from 3 percent of our classrooms to 65 percent of our classrooms connected to the Internet. So we're moving this thing a long way.

And our basic philosophy is, then, that we should not micromanage what the schools do but that we should target the funds, since it's only 7 percent, to the areas that the educators and the research says will have the biggest impact.

Now that's the real fundamental debate in this election. And if you listen to—both sides say they're for accountability, and they are. And as I've said, I think our accountability proposal that our candidate for President, Vice President Gore, and the others have embraced is better. And I believe Jim and Paul agree with me, but we don't have to argue that out. The point is, that's the good news. The good news is that the American people believe that there should be higher standards and accountability.

But we believe it ought to be accountability-plus—plus funds for 100,000 new teachers for smaller classes in the early grades; plus a tax credit to help to cut the costs of raising bond issues to build or modernize schools; plus funds

to help repair 5,000 schools a year. We've got $100 billion school construction and repair deficit in America today. I bet you there is—no telling how many schools in North Carolina and Kentucky, where the kids are going to schools in housetrailers or where big closets have been converted to classrooms or where old buildings are so old they can't—I've been in schools that are so decrepit they can't even be wired for the Internet.

So we have standards and accountability, plus the tools to do the job. And I think that is consistent with the stunning record of Jim Hunt. If you look at what he's done, he's gone out there and given local communities the tools they need to give children early childhood education, access to health care, and strategies to turn around schools that aren't performing. It works, and we ought to do more of it.

The only other thing I would say that's highly relevant to this is, you can't get blood out of a turnip. If you're going to spend money, you've got to have the money to spend. And that's the other big issue in this election. I don't want to get into a political debate about the structure of tax programs or even how the Social Security should be reformed. I have my own ideas, but someone else will have to make that decision. But I just want to make a basic point here that I think is fundamental to this.

People ask me all the time, "We have such a great economy, and you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and Gene Sperling, you've got all these wizards coming in. What great new idea did you bring to economic policy?" And I always give a one-word answer, "Arithmetic." I brought arithmetic to Washington. That's the great thing I got out of living way out there in the hinterlands. I still thought 2 and 2 was supposed to add up to 4. And a rosy scenario was not any good until the money came in. That old Cuba Gooding line "Show me the money" is still a pretty good line when you're making—[*laughter*].

So what does that all have to do with this election and education? If you want States to be able to progress in education, they have to have the funds to do it, which means you have to have continued prosperity, because when people are prosperous, they send tax money to the State. And if you want the Federal Government to do it, you have to continue the prosperity. And the most important thing we can do, I believe, is to continue a formula that says, find new markets for American products and services; keep investing in America's productive capacity, education, and technology and science; and keep paying down the debt down and make America debt free.

Why? Because it keeps interest rates lower. In a global economy, where a trillion dollars crosses national borders every day, the interest rates people pay for homes and college loans and car payments in North Carolina are affected by whether or not this Nation is a fiscally responsible Nation.

So whatever you think about the details of these competing tax cuts or Social Security plans, here is the bottom line: You cannot have a $1½ trillion tax cut, a $1 trillion Social Security privatization program, and several hundred billion dollars worth of promises unless you go back into deficits. The big argument for our side, for Vice President Gore and Senator Lieberman, is, we say, "Look, we're going to have a smaller tax cut. We think it's better because we try to target it to education and long-term care and child care and retirement savings, but it can't be much bigger than this because we've got to invest in education and health care and the environment and defense, and we've got to keep paying off the debt."

Now, that's the big issue. It's not—I promise you, it's more important—the arithmetic issue is more important than the details of who's got the better Social Security plan or the details of who's got the better tax plan, even though I think our side does, and I'd be happy to debate it—the arithmetic issue, the big thing here.

The other thing you need to remember is—and we've shown it for 8 years—you can say, "Well, I'm going to spend this much money over the next 10 years." But if the money doesn't come in, you don't have to spend it. But if you give it all away in a tax cut on the front end or the privatization program, on the front end, it's gone. And you're certainly not going to go get it back when the economy turns down.

So you're going to have a big Governor's race in North Carolina. The ability of the next Governor—and you know who we all hope it will be and believe it will be—but his ability to follow in Jim Hunt's footsteps will rest in no small measure on the success of the North Carolina economy, in generating jobs, generating opportunity, in generating revenues to turn around and put in education.

So that's my pitch to you. I think accountability-plus is better than accountability-minus in education. And I think arithmetic still works in economics. And I know if we just keep interest rates one percent lower a year over the next decade, which is what I believe the difference will be in paying off the debt and going back to deficit so you can't pay off the debt—let me just tell you what that is. That's $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, plus lower credit card payments, plus lower business loan costs, which means more new businesses, more employees, higher profits, and a bigger stock market. It's a tax cut for everybody. Getting this country out of debt is a tax cut for everybody.

So that's what—when you go back home in North Carolina and people talk to you about, the next 2 weeks, about how this fits into the decision you have to make in North Carolina, talk to them about arithmetic and economics and talk to them about accountability-plus and tell them that Jim Hunt deserves a worthy successor.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in the Monticello Room at the Jefferson Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Treasury Secretaries Lloyd Bentsen and Robert E. Rubin; Governor Hunt's wife, Carolyn; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and actor Cuba Gooding, Jr.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda for School Construction and Education

October 24, 2000

Well, first, let me thank Glenda Parsons. I thought that she was eloquent, insistent, comprehensive, and enlightening for anybody that hasn't heard about this issue and why it matters. And let me thank Secretary Riley for pointing out that the Federal Government helps States and localities build roads and highways and prisons, and schools are the most important network to the 21st century of all.

Let me thank you, sir, in a larger sense, for nearly 8 years of service now, during which you have reduced the paperwork burden on local school districts and States but mightily increased the level of assistance we are giving them to do the things that work. That's one reason—along with the outstanding work being done at the State level by people like Governor Patton from Kentucky, who is here with us today, and local educators—that the test scores are up, the dropout rate is down, the college-going rate is up. We're moving in the right direction, and Dick Riley deserves his fair share of credit for that, and I thank him very much.

I would like to thank the extraordinary array of Members of Congress who are here, including the Democratic leaders of the Senate and the House, Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt. I would like to thank the people from the administration who are here who have worked with us to help to develop this very important proposal, including Secretary Larry Summers and Jack Lew and Sylvia Mathews from the Office of Management and Budget.

I want to thank the people who are here from the DC City Council and the coalition to Rebuild America's Schools, teachers, administrators, architects, members of the construction trades, and many others. And I also want to thank the people who came out here all morning, building our new schoolhouse. We wanted people to have a little red schoolhouse here to emphasize what this is about. And our special guests from Brent Elementary School, let's welcome them here.

The little red schoolhouse behind me was erected as evidence of the commitment of all of us here to give our children the safest and best schools in the world. In its unfinished state, it's also a symbol of the unfinished work still before the Congress. Nearly 2 months into the new school year, the majority leadership still hasn't given a single dime for school construction and modernization, not even enough to build a one-room schoolhouse.

Week after week now, I've been signing continuing resolutions to give Congress more time to work on this year's budget. But the time

for tardy slips is over. It's time for the leadership to put progress before partisanship and address at last the needs of our schools and our children.

For nearly 8 years now, we've worked hard to turn our economy around. We've replaced record deficits with record surpluses. We now enjoy the longest economic expansion in history. Today we received even more good news about the economy. According to our Treasury Department and the Office of Management and Budget, the surplus for the 2000 fiscal year is the largest in American history, $237 billion. This is the third surplus in a row, the first time our Nation has done that in 51 years, since 1949, when Harry Truman was President.

It's worth remembering, I think, that when Vice President Gore and I took office in 1993, the deficit was $290 billion. The debt had quadrupled in 12 years. Economists predicted that this year, instead of a $237 billion surplus, we would have a $455 billion deficit. Working together, we turned that around, not by chance but by choice.

Now to the moment at hand. What are we going to do with our prosperity? What are we going to do with our surplus? It is not the Government's surplus. It is the people's surplus. How shall we apply it to our common goals and needs and challenges? I feel very strongly that we ought to first make a commitment to keep the prosperity going by paying the debt down over the next 12 years, to keep interest rates down.

Then I think we ought to take what's left and have a tax cut we can afford, that focuses on sending our kids to college, providing our kinfolks with long-term care who need it, helping working families with child care, and helping all Americans save for retirement, because savings rates are not high enough in our country today. And I think we ought to save some money to invest in education and in health care, in science and technology, in the environment and defense, in the future of America.

So, in other words, there are big opportunities and big challenges out there, but I believe we have to first stay with what got us here: Pay down the debt; strengthen the Social Security and Medicare systems for the aging of America when all people like me, the baby boom generation, become too old to work, and we don't want to be a burden on the rest of you. And we need to then seize this opportunity to take the money that's left to invest in our future, especially in education.

You've heard what has already been said, but I think it's worth reiterating. We have the largest, most diverse student body in history. They are in overcrowded classrooms, but a lot of things are going right in America. Reading and math scores are up; Hispanic and African-American students are taking advanced placement courses in record numbers—over the last 6 years, a 300 percent increase for Hispanic students, a 500 percent increase for African-American students; the college-going rate at a record high, because we have provided more college assistance increase than any time since the GI bill. So a lot of things are going well. SAT math scores are the highest since 1969, when we went to the Moon. But we have more to do. And I want to focus on this today.

And let me just say one other thing I would like to say, because I really want to thank the Vice President for this. When we started in 1994 with a goal to hook up all of our classrooms and schools to the Internet, only 14 percent of the schools and 3 percent of the classrooms in America were hooked up. Now, 95 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the classrooms are hooked up, thanks in no small measure to an idea Al Gore led our fight for, the E-rate, which gives discounts of up to 90 percent to low-income schools so that all of our schools can afford to hook on.

Now, what's all that got to do with why we're here? The average public school building in America is 42 years old. Decades of use have taken their toll: leaking roofs, broken boilers, crowded trailers. It's hard to educate kids in schools that are falling down. Some of our schools are so old, they literally cannot be wired for Internet access. I have been in schools where, when one room works—that is, if they turn on all the lights, and they're using the lab, and then somebody logs onto the net in one room, it will literally short out everybody else in the school building. You also need to know, there are buildings in New York that are still being heated with coal in coal-fired furnaces. The average school building in Philadelphia is 65 years old, and about the same in New Orleans.

So those of us that have been around the country looking at this know that you've got the problem of the old schools, and then all the places we've been—including the smallest

place I've been with a lot of trailers was the community of Jupiter, Florida, which is not very big, and they had a dozen trailers outside one school.

So this is a national challenge. They're bad for our children's education. I might also say that they can be quite bad for our children's health, especially if they have asthma or if they have other disabilities. And this is something I think that has been underestimated. You know, just the cost in education days of asthma in our children is staggering throughout the United States today. We ought not to be sending the kids into school buildings that make it worse.

Now, I have asked Congress to send me an education bill that does the following: First, give us $1.3 billion to fix up thousands of schools in desperate need of repair right now. And let's do that over 5 years. We can repair 5,000 schools a year over 5 years. It would be a big thing to do, and it would help a lot.

Second, I have asked Congress to enact the bipartisan—and I emphasize bipartisan—school construction tax proposal, to provide $25 billion in school construction and modernization bonds. Now, you just heard Glenda explain why Loudoun County couldn't bear this burden alone. Even counties where the average income of the school parents may be above average, there is a limit to how much you can do. They've got to build 23 schools in 6 years? Can you imagine how much construction that is? That's in one school district. That's just one. We estimate the deficit in school repair and school construction in America, given the condition of the buildings, the size of the population, and the projected population over the next 5 years, is somewhere between 110 and 125 billion dollars.

I don't think it's too much to ask the Federal Government, at a time of record surpluses, to provide $25 billion in school construction and modernization bonds. It will help to build or modernize 6,000 schools. In the process, it will create some good jobs. It will be especially helpful in the poorest areas of our country, like Native American communities and others with greater needs and the total inability to raise the money at the local level.

And third, Congress should follow through on our proposal to help fund 8,000 after-school and summer school programs, to help $2.5 million kids boost their test scores, stay out of trouble, and get more involved in their communities. If you think about how overcrowded these schools are, it is more important than ever that we allow them to stay open in the afternoon and to provide summer programs, so that the kids that may not get it during the daytime, when they're being crammed in, pushed around, and can't even sit down for lunch, according to Glenda, at least to have the ability to stay late or come back in the evening or come in on the weekend or be involved in the summer program that will make sure they don't fall behind. So that's also a very important part of this.

Fourth thing I'd like to urge them to do is to provide $1.75 billion to help pay for almost 50,000 teachers to reduce class sizes in the first grades, the next big step of our 100,000 teacher program to reduce class size in the early grades. We know that new qualified teachers can help children learn.

And finally, I ask Congress to support our initiatives to improve teacher training, increase accountability, and to turn around failing schools or shut them down and open them under new management. We have here—I will say again what I said at lunch: Governor Patton is exhibit A.

I have been working on this for 22 years now. I was there when, under the Reagan administration, Secretary Bell issued the "Nation At Risk" report, a brilliant report. I was there when President Bush invited all the Governors to Charlottesville, Virginia, and we had a summit and established goals for the Nation. And I helped to write that document, and it was a great and moving meeting. But I can tell you something. If somebody asked me what's changed in the years since, I'll tell you what's changed: We actually know now that failing schools can be turned around, and we know how to do it, and we didn't before. And so I want to emphasize this.

I was in a school in western Kentucky with Paul Patton that was one of the worst schools in Kentucky 4 years ago, where only 12 percent of the kids were reading at or above grade level, 5 percent of the kids were doing math at or above grade level, no kids were doing science at or above grade level. And under the system he put in place, that we want for America, in 3 years the numbers went from 12 to 57 percent in reading, from 5 to 70 percent in math, from zero to 63 percent in science. That's one place, one of the best elementary schools in his entire

State. We can do that everywhere, and we should.

I mean, I have very strong feelings about this. These kids deserve a decent place to go to school because they can all learn. I was in Harlem the other day in a school that 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids doing reading or math below grade level. Two years later, a new principal, new morale, school uniforms—something I like—high standards, in 2 years they went from 80 percent doing reading and math below grade level, to 74 percent doing reading and math at or above grade level, a total turnaround. You can do this. We can do this all over America.

But it is illusory to think that we can tell all these kids and their parents they're the most important things in the world to us, "But here, go to school in broken windows and leaky roofs, and sit in this closet somewhere, or go out into a busted trailer, and we'll get around to you when we can." And meanwhile, we've got all the money in the world to spend on roads and airports, because they've got a bigger lobby than little kids do.

Now, this is not complicated here. We have fooled around with this for 2 years, and the problem is just getting bigger. So I say, before Congress goes home, let's do this for the kids in the future.

At the end of World War II when my generation was starting schools, the National Government under President Truman, with Republican as well as Democratic support, did not hesitate to help our children find the space to go to school.

In a world where education is even more important than it was then, where the student body is even bigger, and where it is much more diverse, in a world that is much more interconnected, there can be nothing more important than actually acting like we say we believe that our kids are the most important thing in the world to us. Let's do it with the school construction proposal.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to parent Glenda Parsons of Loudoun County, VA, who introduced the President.

Statement on Signing the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000

October 24, 2000

Today I am extremely pleased to sign the "Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000," which invests over $990 million over 10 years in an important new health option for thousands of low-income, uninsured women with breast or cervical cancer. I was proud to include it in my FY 2001 budget, and I am proud to sign this bipartisan legislation into law.

Women without health insurance are 40 percent more likely to die from breast cancer than those who are insured. Not only are they less likely to be screened, but the course of treatment they elect is often affected by their ability to pay for services. This important legislation will expand the limited treatment options now available to low-income, uninsured women with breast cancer who are in the unique situation of learning about their condition through federally sponsored screening programs.

The new assistance today's action will provide for thousands of women with breast or cervical cancer continues my administration's longstanding commitment to breast and cervical cancer research, prevention, and treatment. It builds on a record of administration achievements that includes legislation to ensure the quality of mammograms and prevent drive-by mastectomies, increasing access to cancer clinical trials, and increasing funding for breast and cervical cancer research, prevention, and treatment from $283 million to over $620 million during my administration.

As important as today's achievement is, we have many health care issues that still must be

addressed. I urge the Congress to pass additional coverage expansions including a new, affordable health insurance option for parents and new health insurance options for Americans facing unique barriers to coverage, such as those aged 55 to 65, workers in small businesses, and legal immigrants. I also urge the Congress to pass legislation streamlining the enrollment of uninsured children in health insurance programs. Taking these long overdue steps will bring us closer to our larger goal—ensuring that every American has access to high quality, affordable health insurance.

NOTE: H.R. 4386, approved October 24, was assigned Public Law No. 106–354.

Remarks on Signing the Jordan-United States Trade Agreement
October 24, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Your Majesty and members of the Jordanian delegation; Senator Lugar; Senator Moynihan; Representatives Bonior and Levin; Secretary Cohen and other members of the administration.

Let me begin by saying a special word of appreciation to Dr. Mohammad Halaiqa and to our Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky for the work they did on this agreement.

The American negotiators, led by Catherine Novelli, and their Jordanian counterparts have labored hard over these last few months and around the clock this past weekend, something that seems to be the order of the day for us lately, to conclude this very important agreement.

Most of all, it is a great honor to welcome King Abdullah to the White House again. He is a voice of reason and calm in a region urgently in need of both. His leadership has been especially important over these last difficult weeks, which have brought such suffering and loss in the Middle East, and thrown into sharp relief the choices facing all people in the region.

Down one path lie the enormous challenges of building a lasting, secure peace and the concomitant enormous benefits. Down the other path lies more bloodshed, more hatred, more shattered lives and broken dreams.

Though the path of peace is steep and has become steeper these last few weeks, in the long run it is the only path that offers the peoples of the Middle East hope for a normal life as part of the modern world. That is the path Jordan has chosen consistently.

It is critically important that the United States stand with Jordan and leaders like King Abdullah, struggling to give their people prosperity, standing for peace, understanding that the two pursuits go hand in hand.

As hard as that may be, there must be an end to the violence, and the Israelis and Palestinians must find a way out of confrontation back to the path of peaceful dialog, and they must do it sooner rather than later. For in the Middle East, as we have all learned, time does not heal wounds, it simply rubs more salt in them. The issues do not change. They just get harder to resolve.

The agreement we are about to sign will establish free trade between the United States and Jordan. It is a good and important agreement, one that I hope Congress will support on a bipartisan basis. It will be good for the United States, good for Jordan, good for the long-term prospects for peace in the Middle East. It will eliminate duties and break down commercial barriers to trade between our two nations in both products and services.

Under King Abdullah's leadership, Jordan already has made impressive strides in modernizing its economy, opening its markets, promoting the well-being of its people. This agreement will help to accelerate that progress. It will also cement the bonds of friendship that already exist between Jordan and the United States.

The record is clear that open trade creates opportunities, raises prosperity, and can lift lives in every country. Nowhere is this more apparent than here in the United States, where our exports in open markets have helped to fuel the longest expansion in our history. Nowhere are the benefits of trade more critically needed than in the Middle East. By opening markets, we

can help to ease poverty that makes peace hard to achieve and harder still to sustain.

Today's agreement is remarkable in another respect as well. Even if it didn't have a thing to do with peace, we would still be here, because it is the first free trade agreement ever signed by the United States which incorporates into the body of the text labor and environmental protections, a landmark achievement for which the negotiators on both sides deserve extremely high praise.

For the United States, this follows through on our commitment to ensure that the drive toward globalization reinforces protections for our workers and for air, water, and other natural resources. The first trade agreement to have undergone an environmental review under a new U.S. policy requiring such analyses, this trade agreement is one that all Americans can be proud of.

For Jordan, it represents a farsighted commitment to worker and environmental protection that is very much in keeping with Jordan's visionary commitment to peace. In today's world, developing countries can achieve growth without making some of the mistakes developed nations made on our path to industrialization. In the information age, the byproduct of the industrial age, the idea that to grow more you had to exploit both workers and the environment, is simply no longer true.

Today, it is possible to grow an economy faster, while protecting air, water, and keeping children in school. This trade agreement embodies that big idea. Now we must turn our energies to implementing it as soon as possible. The insistent voices urging us to build a future that is healthier, more just, more prosperous, and more peaceful are not patient, nor should they be. This is a very good day.

Again, let me extend my congratulations to the negotiators, my thanks to the King of Jordan and his Government and my great hope that this will be the beginning of even stronger bonds between our people and a real trend in modern commercial agreements among good people and good nations everywhere.

Now, I'd like to invite His Majesty to come up here and make a few remarks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:52 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Halaiqa of Jordan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Remarks at a People for the American Way Reception

October 24, 2000

Thank you very much, Ralph. I want to thank you and your predecessor, Carole Shields, and the other board members of the People for the American Way. I thank Representative Sheila Jackson Lee from Houston for joining us tonight. Where are you, Sheila? She's here somewhere—right there. Thank you. And I want to thank Mary Frances Berry. You know, we go back to the Carter administration together. We've been friends for way over 20 years, and now she's the Chair of our U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. She's done a magnificent job. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I smiled when I walked in and put my arm around her. I said, "Mary Frances, that gray hair looks a lot better on you than it does on me." And we concluded that we had both earned every one of ours in the last 8 years, and we're proud to have them. So thank you, Mary Frances Berry. Thank you.

I want to thank you for hosting this event. I thank all of you for participating, because one of the great questions the American people will answer in this election is the future of the Supreme Court, the future of the Federal courts generally, and what the shape of American life will be when it comes to the individual rights of American citizens, and potentially as important, the power of the United States Congress and the Federal Government to protect the American people from all manner of things, in the face of a determined effort by what is already on occasion a majority in the Supreme Court to limit the ability of the Congress to do it.

On a daily basis, Federal judges make decisions that affect our everyday lives. Of course, they can decide at the Supreme Court level whether women continue to have the right to choose or if their fundamental rights to privacy will be eliminated; whether the Government can keep a safe environment for our children; whether we can keep guns out of schools; whether we can pass a law to protect women from violence; whether we can ban hate crimes; and whether we can expect the States to cooperate with the Federal Government and do their part if the Congress finds the national interest, or whether we will have a new form of ultraconservative judicial activism that rejects the Government's rights or authority to protect the rights of our citizens and the interests of our citizens.

For 8 years now, I have worked to ensure that our courts at all levels are filled with judges who are qualified, fair, reflect our Nation's diversity, and uphold and enforce our laws. Since 1993, I've had the honor to appoint more women and minorities to the Federal bench than any previous President, almost half of my judicial appointees. But I'm also gratified to know that they have garnered the highest percentages of top ABA ratings of any group of Presidential appointees in nearly 40 years, which shatters the myth that you can't have diversity and excellence at the same time.

In spite of the fact that study after study after study have shown how qualified these people are, and I might add, how relatively nonideological and mainstream, a number of my appointees, especially in election years, both in 1996 and this year—although in this case, some of these go back the last 3 or 4 years—have been denied a place on the bench and in many cases even denied a hearing for partisan political reasons, even though it's clear that they're qualified. There are more than 40 pending judicial nominees currently. More than half of them are women and minorities. A study not very long ago showed that the women and minorities I appointed had to wait a whole lot longer for a hearing than guys that looked like me, and that they were much more likely to be denied.

For example, even though the fourth circuit in our country, in southeastern United States, has the largest percentage of African-Americans of any Circuit in the United States, no African-American has ever served on it. And there have been plenty of qualified lawyers in the fourth circuit who happen to be African-American. Roger Gregory would be the first African-American. He's not been given a hearing.

In the fifth circuit, which has, next to the ninth circuit, the largest number of Hispanics, Enrique Moreno—graduated with great distinction from Harvard and is a native of El Paso, and the judges in west Texas said he was one of the three best lawyers in west Texas—has been deemed unqualified for the fifth circuit by the Republican Senators. And I might say, the response from the other Republican officials in Texas has been deafening silence.

The longest waiting appellate nominee is Helene White of Michigan, who has been waiting for 3 years now. They include Kathleen McCree Lewis, daughter of the civil rights lion Wade McCree. She'd be the first African-American woman to serve on the sixth circuit. The people who can't get a vote include Bonnie Campbell, former attorney general of Iowa, who led our administration's efforts to pass the Violence Against Women Act.

Time and again I have asked the Senate leadership just to give these folks a vote. But they did it once, when they rejected Ronnie White, the first African-American State supreme court justice in the history of Missouri, who was turned down for a Federal judgeship, though he was superbly qualified, on grossly political grounds. And the reaction of the public in Missouri and throughout the United States was predictable and quite honorable. And so the next strategy was that "People don't like it very much when we vote these folks down, so we'll just let them die in silence. We'll just never have hearings."

I've had, as you might imagine, a lot more success in appointing Federal trial judges, but the Republican majority has been quite sensitive to the appellate courts because they know they make a lot of policy, just like the Supreme Court. And when they had the White House the last time, they appointed a lot of very young people to those appellate courts, in the hope that by the time they got it the next time, whatever they couldn't pass through Congress and whatever the American people wouldn't put up with, they could just do it through the courts, with people who had life tenure.

Now, we're just a vote or two away from reversing *Roe* v. *Wade* in the United States Supreme Court, and I think it's inevitable that

the next President will have two appointments to the Supreme Court; could be more.

Beyond that, as I intimated in my opening remarks, there has already been a majority in this Court for restricting the ability of Congress, even a bipartisan majority in Congress, to get the States to help implement public interest legislation that protects people. The Supreme Court threw out part of the Brady bill because it required the States to help do things. It struck down part of the Violence Against Women Act, and other laws. I'm sure that people who are going to be part of this forum will talk more about this, and I don't need to go through this whole litany of cases.

But I can tell you that Justice Scalia and Justice Thomas, occasionally with three others voting with them, have a view that is quite different than the view that has prevailed in the country for the last 40 years about what Congress should be able to do to advance the cause of civil rights and the environment and public health. Now, I have no doubt this view is honestly held, and I have no personal criticism of them, but they do have a lifetime appointment and unlimited abilities, except only by the cases that come before them, to advance this view. And if they get one or two more allies and their view prevails, we'll have a philosophy of what the role of the National Government in our country's life is that will be coming out of the Supreme Court that will have as its only modern parallel what prevailed in the 1930's, until Franklin Roosevelt tried to pack the Court with the help of his majority leader from my home State, Joe T. Robinson. And the public hated it, and there was a terrible reaction, but afterward the Supreme Court began to uphold the New Deal legislation.

And so we all want to pretend that there's no politics in this, but there is certainly philosophy in this. There is philosophy in the appointments of Supreme Court Justices and appellate court justices. And therefore, the Presidency is important, but the Senate races are important as well, because they have to confirm these folks.

And I don't doubt for a moment that the main problems that the present majority in the United States Senate has with my nominees is probably not primarily race or gender; they just know they're not going to be as rightwing as they think they ought to be. And they can't credibly claim that they would be too liberal—whatever that is—but they know that if they can just keep these folks from getting a hearing, over and over and over again, and then if they get lucky and have the Senate and the White House, they'll be able to move the judiciary way to the right and reinforce and accelerate the pace of decisions restricting not only some individual rights under the judicially defined constitutional right to privacy but also the ability of the National Government to protect certain vital interests.

That's what was inherent in the Brady bill, the Violence Against Women Act, and any number of these other cases. And I said I hope the people that come behind me will actually go through in greater detail these cases, because I think a lot of Americans have a general idea that the right to choose may be at stake in this election in the appointments to the Supreme Court, but what—I think virtually no Americans, outside those who follow the day-to-day decisions of the Supreme Court, understand just how many of our other rights are at stake by virtue of the possibility of different Court appointments.

So I come here just to sort of give you good cheer and say how you're doing a good thing—[*laughter*]—and remind you of something. The American people have normally gotten it right. That's why we're all around here after 224 years. Sometimes it takes an agonizingly long period of time, but the story of the United States of America is pretty much an illustration A of Martin Luther King's eloquent statement that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice. So I urge you to see your presence here as benders. You're the people who are supposed to make sure the arc keeps bending toward justice.

Our country is a different place than it was 8 years ago. We're remarkably more diverse, as well as more prosperous. We're learning to live together and work together and accept each other in ways that we never did before. You've now got more than two-thirds of the country and heavy majorities of people in both political parties for a hate crimes bill that protects gay Americans as well as racial minorities and disabled people. It's a big deal. That's a big deal. You've got a majority in the country and a majority of people in both parties for an "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" that covers gay Americans as well as people of all races. But

the anchors of the Republican Party in the Congress are to the right of that, and they see this election as their chance.

Now, while it's true that nobody can predict with any 100 percent precision how his or her appointees will vote—thank goodness, President Eisenhower didn't really know about Earl Warren and Bill Brennan—[*laughter*]—we've got a lot better feel for it today than they did 40 years ago and a lot better idea of what the issues are going to be. And I say this with all respect: We should all assume that the people running for President and the people running for the Senate and all these other races, that they actually believe what they say, and therefore, if they are elected, we should assume that they will act on their beliefs.

As I have said repeatedly, the American people ought to view this election as a celebration: how to keep our economy going; how to extend it to people in places left behind; how to keep the environment improving and the schools improving and more people getting health insurance and the welfare rolls and the crime rates going down. All the indicators are right. The question is, how are you going to make a truly good society out of this? And what kind of individual protections do we think should be out there? And what kind of group rules should be out there in terms of the absence of discrimination and the presence of opportunity?

And because our country is in good shape today, we can have an honest, open debate. But it doesn't serve anybody to pretend that these differences aren't there when they, in fact, are there. So what I hope will come out of your gathering here is a clear and sharp understanding of the honest differences that are out there, of the kinds of decisions that will be made and the appointments that will be made to all of our Federal courts, beginning with the Supreme Court but including the courts of appeals and the district courts. And then you can do whatever you want with it with the American people and in your own communities between now and the election and thereafter.

But I have to tell you that as someone who has been a law professor, been an attorney general, related to the Federal courts as a Governor, and then appointed people as a President to all levels of the Federal judiciary, it is my honest opinion that the incredibly energetic debate that is going on now at the Supreme Court level about the role of the National Government and the range of personal-privacy-related individual rights will only intensify in the years ahead and will be swung decisively one way or the other depending on the outcome of these elections. And to pretend otherwise is to be like an ostrich with your head in the sand.

So we don't have to be hand-wringing, and we don't have to overstate the case, and we don't have to attack our adversaries. This is America. We've always had people with different views and different feelings and different convictions. But you're here because you have a certain take on what the parameters of personal liberty have to be in order for America to have a genuine community across all the lines that divide us. That's how come you're here. That's how come you belong to this organization. So you have to understand with great detail and clarity what is at stake, and then you have to be willing to share it, because, as I said, the American people will make a decision in this election which will shape the Supreme Court and the other Federal courts and the range of liberty and privacy and the range of acceptable national action for years to come.

I think it is fair to say that with the single exception of a woman's right to choose, which is fairly high on the radar screen, most people have no earthly idea that any of these other issues are even at stake in this election. And a lot of people still don't really believe a woman's right to choose is at stake in this election. But it is. So those of us who are old enough to remember what it was like before *Roe* v. *Wade,* and those of us who care about things like the Violence Against Women Act and the Brady law and the other things that we believe make America a better country and are not so burdensome to ask the States to walk along with us hand in hand and work with us, we have a big job to do in the next 2 weeks.

So again, Ralph, I thank you. Mary Frances, I thank you for your leadership and your passion and for always prodding me along. Whenever anybody else thinks I've done a great job on a civil rights issue, I get about a C-plus from her. [*Laughter*] But that's her job. That's her job.

Look—this is the last thing I'm going to say. This is a great country. Our diversity is making us greater, richer, and more interesting. But if you look around the world at all the trouble spots today, you see people have a whole lot of trouble dealing with folks who have honest

convictions that are different from theirs, especially if they're religious convictions, or if they are of different racial and ethnic origins which lead them into different cultural patterns of life. The great genius of America in the 21st century has got to be how to take the most diverse society we've ever had and the most diverse one in the world—although, interestingly enough, India is a pretty close competitor—and how to celebrate all this diversity and, at the same time, affirm our common humanity. Doing that in the context of all these cases that keep coming up to the Supreme Court requires a great deal of wisdom and understanding about what the real principles of our Constitution require and how the real world works and an imagination about how it has to work in the 21st century.

So you're here discussing something profoundly important. I just don't want you—you don't have to wring your hands about it, but you do have to get your telephone ringing when you go home.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:19 p.m. at the National Education Association, prior to a panel discussion on the future of the Supreme Court. In his remarks, he referred to Ralph G. Neas, president, and Carole Shields, former president, People for the American Way.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Donald Dunn
October 24, 2000

Well, let me first of all say I'm delighted to see all of you here, and I'm delighted to be here, myself, for several reasons. I'd like to begin by thanking Ron and Beth Dozoretz for doing this, for their incredible generosity, and their support.

I'm here because I owe this guy. [*Laughter*] You know, he started out with me as an intern; then he went to work in the White House; then he went out of the cocoon of the White House, into the administration. And then he actually—he could have stayed here in a cushy job until I left, and then sort of written it all up on his resume and gone out and made a lot of money in Washington or New York or someplace. And instead, he made the decision that I made half my lifetime ago, when I turned down all the clerkships and all the things I was offered and I went home to Arkansas.

And when I ran for Congress in 1974 in Arkansas, I ran in a district where the previous Democratic candidate for President in the previous election had received 24 percent of the vote. So I know what he is going through. [*Laughter*] And half the people thought I was a communist, because I was a Democrat. [*Laughter*] And it was in 1970, so it was acceptable to have longer hair. [*Laughter*]

But I identify with this. And it was a real rural district, and I just—I admire you so much for doing this. And nothing ever changes until someone like you steps out and takes a chance. I also want to say that sometimes things do change.

And I always tell people—this is the first election since 1974 that I haven't been on the ballot. And I think the really great campaigns of my life were the 1992 Presidential campaign; the 1982 campaign for Governor, where I got reelected after I had been defeated, and that had never happened before; and that first campaign I ran for Congress. I learned how to listen. I learned how other people viewed Government. I learned the richness and texture of the story that every person has. It made me believe completely in democracy. And I also learned that you can turn a lot of people around if you take the trouble to do it and you believe in them and you give them respect to do it.

And I'm also glad to be here because I really care a lot about Utah, and I honor the heritage of Democrats in Utah. When I became Governor in 1978, the Governor of Utah was a man named Scott Matheson, who is now deceased, but he was a great—he was a great friend of mine, and I loved him. I appointed his son United States attorney, and now he's running for Congress, also in Utah. And his wife, Norma, was and remains a friend of mine.

And I've always wanted to see the Democrats come back in the Intermountain West. And it can be done. Fifty years ago, when everyone thought Harry Truman was defeated in his race for President in 1948, one of the reasons he won is that he swept the Intermountain West, the most Republican area of America today. And the reason he won then is the same reason we lose today—so much of the Intermountain West belongs to the Federal Government. And in the beginning, when all that was happening, it was just a boon to the people who lived there, nothing but a source of income and grazable land and mines to be mined.

Then, after the whole ownership of the Federal Government had matured and the resources had to be managed—and sometimes they had to say yes, as well as no, and sometimes the Federal Government was good at it, and sometimes they weren't very good at it—so, sort of a culture of having to hate the Federal Government that owned all the land built up, so that now it's sort of culturally unacceptable to be a Democrat, because they all think we're, by definition, nuts. [*Laughter*]

That's sort of what's happened. And the only way you can break that psychology in a State like Utah or Idaho or the other smaller States, Montana, is if one person, like him, will go home and say, "Listen, this is my place, too. I love it. Here's where I stand. Here's why I want to be in public office. Here's why I want to serve you."

So I just want to tell you, I think you've got a chance to win, too. And you have changed your life. You have changed the lives of the people that have worked with you. And you have changed the district in which you have worked forever, whatever happens. But I hope all the rest of you will take a little solace at what he's done.

And let me just say one other thing. This election is unfolding against the backdrop of the national election. I have always felt, I will say again—I've been saying this for 2 years. I will say it one more time—when the votes are counted on November 7th, Al Gore will be the next President of the United States. That's what I believe, because in the end, people will have to decide whether we want to continue the economic prosperity and expand it or adopt a whole different economic theory that has already been tried once and didn't work as well as ours. They'll have to decide whether they want to continue to build on the social progress of the last 8 years. Compared to 8 years ago, the crime rate is down; the welfare rolls are cut in half; the environment is cleaner. For the first time in a dozen years, fewer people are uninsured; the schools are getting better, we have a record number of people going on to college. You have to decide if you want to build on that or take down a lot of those policies.

And finally, the thing that makes those of us who are Democrats, Democrats: Do we want to go forward together as one America? Do we really believe that everybody counts, everybody should have a chance, we all do better when we help each other? We ought to have hate crimes legislation because hate crimes are bad for a society like ours, that has to accept everybody that obeys the law and plays by the rules. We ought to have equal pay enforcement because it's bad in a society like ours, where women and men both have to work, if the women don't get paid for what they do. We ought to grow together.

So I believe that the next 2 weeks will be a fertile period for him to go back to Utah and put his message out there, because I think the American people will begin to focus on the big things. What has happened big in America in the last 8 years? He was a part of it. He was there. We changed the economic policy, the environmental policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the crime policy, and the welfare policy of the country. And compared to 8 years ago, everything is better.

The question now is not whether we will change but how. This country is changing so fast, the young women in this audience today that haven't had their children yet, within a decade they'll be bringing home babies from the hospital with a little gene card that tells them all the good things and all the bad things and what to do about the bad things. And within a decade, maybe—certainly not much longer—women will have little babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years. The world is going to change dramatically. And it's very, very important that we keep changing but in the right direction.

I was looking at Don making his talk, and I was trying to remember what I might have been like 27 years ago—half my lifetime ago, when I was your age. I'm quite sure I wasn't nearly as well-dressed. [*Laughter*] Of course, we

were all sort of cosmetically challenged in the early seventies, if you've ever—[*laughter*]—most men wore clothes that looked like they came off the seat covers of old 1950's automobiles.

I doubt if I made as much sense as you did, but I'm quite sure I was as optimistic and idealistic as you are. And what I want to say to all of you today is that I think that you'll always be proud you gave this young man a hand up when he needed it. And I hope you'll look forward for other opportunities to do the same for other young people. This is a great country, but we have to keep bringing young people into the system. We have to empower them. We have to give them a chance to serve. And we've got to keep changing in the right direction.

I think he's got a great career ahead of him. I think he's done a brave thing. And I won't be terribly surprised if lightening strikes and he wins, because he's always had a clear idea of what he was doing and he's always had a message that he could take out there that people who share his roots could hear. And I just want you to know I'm really proud of you. And I'm really grateful to all of you for helping him.

And you remember what I told you about this election. We've got 2 weeks. You get out there and tell people, whether it's the race for the House in Utah or the race for the Senate in New York or the race for the White House, there are three big questions: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people who haven't felt it, or abandon it for a theory that won't work, and it won't pay down the debt? Do you want to keep building on the social progress of the last 8 years, or reverse policies that are proving to work? And do you think we ought to go forward together as one America? Those are the three great questions we have to ask and answer. If people understand that those are the questions, I know what the answers will be, and we'll all be celebrating 2 weeks from tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:42 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Ronald I. and Beth Dozoretz; and Jim Matheson, candidate for Utah's Second Congressional District, and his mother, Norma. Donald Dunn was a candidate for Utah's Third Congressional District.

Remarks on the Budget and Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 25, 2000

The President. Good morning. I want to say just a few words about the budget and the work we still have ahead of us if we want all our children to have a first-class education.

Way back in February, I sent to Congress a budget that keeps America on the path of fiscal discipline. It would strengthen Social Security and Medicare, pay down the debt by 2012, and make key investments in education, health care, the environment, and national security. It would also modernize Medicare with a voluntary prescription drug benefit available and affordable to all seniors who need it.

That was in February. Now we've come to the end of October, nearly a month past the end of the fiscal year, and we still have not seen from Congress a completed budget. Four times they've asked me for an extension of time to finish the work. Today the latest extension runs out, and Congress is about to ask for another. But from this point forward, as I've said, I will agree only to a day-by-day extension, until Congress finishes the job.

From this point forward, Congress should work every day and every night to put progress over partisanship, to make the investments in education our schools need and our children deserve. Congress should pass a budget that reduces class size in the early grades; that contains tax credits to repair old, crumbling schools and build new, modern ones; a budget that invests in after-school programs that mean more learning, lower crime, and fewer drugs. It should ensure the hiring of new, highly trained teachers, and help States turn around failing schools or shut them down and open them under new

management. This Congress is not done, and this Congress will not be done until it accomplishes these objectives. We should also work together to pass tax cuts for middle-class Americans.

You know, in budget talks the two sides often wind up talking past each other. It takes a little extra effort to reach across the divide. So that's what I'm trying to do today. I'm sending an offer to Speaker Hastert and Senator Lott that says, let's work together in good faith to achieve common ground on tax relief.

I've identified areas of agreement so Congress can pass a bill I can sign, tax cuts that preserve fiscal discipline, help our people save for retirement or pay for long-term care, help build and repair schools, and boost investments in our new markets, the places that have been left behind in our prosperity. These are tax cuts we should all be able to agree on, tax cuts to help America's working families provide for the things that matter most.

There's also more to do in the last days of this session. Congress should be working overtime to pass a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, to raise the minimum wage, pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights, expand health coverage for the American people, and invest our Medicare resources wisely, not just or overwhelmingly in the HMO's, including those that don't need it, but in teaching hospitals, home health agencies, rural and urban hospitals, and other health care providers.

Congress should also pass a tough hate crimes bill. After all, there's a bipartisan majority for it in both Houses. It's pretty hard to explain why it hasn't come to my desk for signature. And Congress should insist on and provide for fairness for legal immigrants and equal pay for women.

These are our most pressing priorities. We can make progress on all of them. There's a huge piece of new evidence. Just in the last 24 hours, there has been a truly bipartisan and historic agreement on providing much-needed debt relief to the world's poorest countries. This initiative was supported by a broad—in fact, the broadest imaginable—coalition of religious leaders. You all remember when many of them came to the White House just a few days ago.

This enables America to do something that is good and just and manifestly in our interests. It will go a long way toward ensuring our leadership for progress and prosperity in the 21st century world. It is something that will be very important to leave to all of our successors after this next election, something America can build on for years to come.

I am profoundly grateful to the leaders in both parties in Congress for reaching agreement on this. This is something every single American should be very, very proud of. And it is fresh evidence that when we work hard to put our differences aside and find common ground, we can in fact do it. I hope the leadership of the Republican Party will join me and the Democrats to continue to do this, to continue to put progress above partisanship. And we'll get an awful lot done for the American people in the next couple of days. Then they can go home and have a good election over the differences.

Thank you very much.

Government Shutdown

Q. Mr. President, are you prepared to risk a government shutdown if you don't get what you want?

The President. I don't think it will come to that. I mean, I think this agreement yesterday—this is really big. This will be one of the signal achievements of this Congress. And it shows that, as has been the case since we've been in this unusual relationship with the Republican majority and a Democratic President, that at the end, we can still get a lot done. So I hope it won't come to that, and I don't think it will.

Go ahead.

Latino and Immigrant Fairness Legislation

Q. Mr. President—excuse me—the "Immigration and Latino Fairness Act" is something you have been pushing for. It's supposed to come up in the State, Commerce, and Justice appropriations bill. How are the negotiations going on between the White House and the Republicans, and will you veto it, the appropriation, if it doesn't contain what you want?

The President. Well, as I said, I hope we can reach agreement on it. We've made some real progress, and the Republicans have come some way toward our position on this. I don't think it's enough, and I hope we can do more.

Look, this is a very large issue. There are a lot of people in this country who came here in good faith under adverse circumstances. They've lived here, worked here, paid taxes here, established families here. And I believe we ought to go as far as we possibly can get

this Congress to go to legitimize their presence and to do the other things that are in our initiative. So I'm working, and I think that's all I should say now. We're in the process of negotiating this.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. In the Middle East, can Yasser Arafat be considered a reliable partner for peace while he is releasing Palestinian militants from jail and actually giving them decisionmaking roles? Can he be reliable?

The President. Well, as you know, part of what the parties agreed to at Sharm al-Sheikh was a certain specific set of security measures which were, by agreement of the parties, kept confidential. But I think it's quite important that, as I think it was reported in the morning press, that I had a conversation with Chairman Arafat. I talked with him and Prime Minister Barak yesterday. I talk to them several times a week now. And one of the things we need to do is to have people who are interested in violence off the streets and the people who are interested in ending the violence out there doing what they're capable of doing.

A big part of what the parties recognized at Sharm al-Sheikh was that it's impossible to maintain this uneasy status quo, where we've come so far in the peace process, but the big and most difficult issues remain. We can't expect there to be a reliable peace process unless we can reduce the violence. That's the real answer to your question. We would like to see, and I think that the Israelis would like to see, a resumption of the peace process, but both parties have got to do what they said they'd do at Sharm and get the violence down, so we can open up the possibility of peace again.

Yes.

Social Security

Q. Mr. President, the Democrats are about to launch a concerted campaign effort to discredit Governor Bush's Social Security proposals. I'm wondering if you plan to participate in that effort.

The President. Well, I haven't been asked to do that. To me, the major issue right now—I had hoped we could get agreement on Social Security reform, and I thought that Chairman Archer and I could actually make an agreement. But neither of us had enough support in our caucuses to do that. And this is one of those big issues that I think will have to be resolved in the next 4 years.

So I decided to do the next best thing, which is to make sure we could keep paying the debt down and to offer the option to put about 10 years of savings on interest that we get because we're not spending the Social Security taxes now, which we did from 1983 until a couple of years ago. We're not spending the Social Security taxes now, so they're contributing to debt reduction. That means our interest burdens are lower. And what I think should be done at a minimum is that the interest savings should be applied to Social Security. That way you could take it out to 2054 and get it out beyond the life of the baby boom generation, when, after that, the pressures on Social Security will begin to ease because there will be fewer people retired in relation to the number of people working.

Now, if they want to make other changes, as I learned and as Mr. Archer learned when we tried to argue this through, there will have to be a bipartisan coalition in Congress. And I hope there will be fresh energy when you've got a new President, a new Congress, a new amount of time to work on that.

The central problem here is, there are problems there. And I think that the Vice President and Senator Lieberman and the Democrats in Congress and the experts are perfectly capable of pointing them out. What I'm most concerned about is that we don't get anyone locked into something that would take us back to deficits. And you have to add up the cost of a tax cut and a privatization of Social Security and all the spending programs. And if you do that, and the sum of it is more than $2 trillion, you're in trouble. You're back in deficits. You've got high interest rates.

That's the thing that I've tried to get the American people to focus on. We've got to keep paying down the debt to keep the interest rates down, to keep the prosperity going. But I think on the details of the plan, that's something that should properly be left to the candidates in this election. And I think that Governor Bush can state his position, the Vice President can state his, and the Members of Congress on both sides can argue it out without too much help from me.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, do you think that Chairman Arafat can still retain sufficient influence over his people to stop the violence in the West Bank and Gaza?

The President. I think the violence can be dramatically reduced. I think that there are probably some people within the Palestinian territories, and probably some people within Israel, that are not within total control of Chairman Arafat or even the Israeli Government. But I do think Chairman Arafat can dramatically reduce the level of violence.

The problem, as I have been saying for years and years to the people in the region, is that once you actually start a peace process and people's expectations get built up and you have a commitment to peaceful resolution of these issues, violence is no longer a very good tool to achieve political objectives. It always, in the end, will be counterproductive. Why? Because if you look at the pattern, what you have to do is, you stir the people up—you get the people all stirred up so that they believe that violent reactions are legitimate—and then you can't just turn mass emotions on and off, like you can a water tap. It's just not that simple.

So I think that it's very important—I think what we did at Sharm was to put at least a speed bump on the road to the dramatic deterioration of the situation. But I don't think that we should ask ourselves whether he has 100 percent control, because the truth is, none of us know the answer to that, and nobody has 100 percent control of any situation. The real and fundamental question is, can the level of violence be substantially reduced by a sustained effort? If the parties do what they agreed to do at Sharm, the answer to that is a resounding yes.

Yes, ma'am.

Q. Mr. President, to follow up on that question and one other question, you said that you do believe he is capable of reducing the violence. So are you saying that he hasn't tried to do that? And secondly, there was a poll out today in Israel that showed that if there was an election today, Netanyahu would beat Barak 2-1. And are you concerned at all that in your attempts to be an honest broker and the way the violence has continued that you've somehow sold out Barak, that he will no longer be a leader in Israel in a few weeks, in a few months from now, and that the peace process will inevitably be over once that happens?

The President. Well, the short answer to your question is no, because he made the decisions that he made—he made very courageous decisions, and he's in a difficult position now because he's getting the worst of both worlds. I mean, he reached out to the Palestinians, and he showed enormous courage in doing so. And we did not get an agreement at Camp David, although it was, on balance, quite a positive thing.

I will say again, you can't maintain this status quo. We either have to shut the violence down and get back to the peace process, or there is going to be at least a level of anxiety, mistrust, and a worsening of relations, which I don't think would be good for anybody.

But I think that—I will say what I said the day the Camp David talks ended. Prime Minister Barak knew what he was doing. He took a big chance. He did it because after years in the Israeli military, he reached the same conclusion that Yitzhak Rabin reached, that in the end, the best guarantee of Israel's security is a sustainable peace with all of her neighbors. He knew there would be bumps along the road and that there would be points at which the process would be ragged. He made a decision that he was trying to go for the long-term security of Israel. And events in the next several days will determine whether or not we can get back on that path.

That's my reaction. I think it can be done, and I think the parties can do it, and I'm going to do my best to see what I can do to be helpful. But we've got to get the level of violence down. This peace with the Israelis and the aspirations of the Palestinians can, in the end, only be fulfilled by agreement.

We called at Sharm for a commission to look into what happened, to try to make sure it shouldn't happen again. We can do that, but the critical pillars for a good situation in the Middle East are the absence of violence and the presence of negotiations and continued progress. And those are the things that all the people should be focusing on. Those are the things that I've been working on every day for the last couple of weeks now.

Medicare Legislation

Q. On the tax package, the Republicans yesterday said they are considering including an

increase in the minimum wage, which you want, and a scaled-back school bond proposal, which you also support.

The President. A scaled-back what?

Q. A scaled-back school bond proposal. But they are also considering including the Medicare giveback, which you've threatened to veto. Would that veto still hold if the tax package includes these provisions which you support?

The President. Well, it depends what the Medicare thing looks like. The only thing that bothered me about the Medicare issue is that we were working along in a bipartisan way. We had some differences. They want to give what I think is too much money to the HMO's. They say they need to do it because the HMO's are dropping people, dropping Medicare folks from coverage in their HMO's. But if you look at the provision, the money goes to the HMO's without any guarantee of continued coverage for Medicare patients who may have serious problems.

So the thing that bothers me about it is, you have a lot of other—look, we all have acknowledged that in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, to achieve the savings we targeted we had certain specific changes in the Medicare program which, number one, produced greater savings than we estimated, or than the Congressional Budget Office estimated, and did so at a cost to the health care providers which was unacceptable; and that there were substantial difficulties for urban hospitals, for rural hospitals, for the teaching hospitals, for nursing homes, home health providers, hospice services, the whole range of things.

And I have no objection to the HMO's being given consideration in this bill. The only point I tried to make is that if you give them as much money as the Republicans do, you severely short the urban and rural hospitals, the teaching hospitals, and these other providers that I just mentioned.

So the question is, can we achieve some balance here? I hope we can. This is a very important thing. I sympathize with the Republican leadership in not wanting to let the cost of this bill balloon out of control. And I offered to work with them on that. That is something—a goal that we both share. But this should be a question that's decided strictly on the merits. This is not a political issue with me. You have all these folks; they have people they have to care for. We made a decision in '98 to sign a balanced budget bill, and they made a decision to pass it, which had specific changes in the Medicare program designed to produce an amount of savings. The savings were greater, and accordingly, the loss to the providers was greater, and the quality of health care is, therefore, strained.

So what we need to do is just take this on the merits. So I don't want to turn this into a big political fight. I just think this is one where the facts should get out, and we should do what the facts indicate is the best balanced thing to do with the money we have available for all the providers. And I simply don't think that their proposal does that or even comes close. So I hope we can reach agreement on it.

Thank you. I've got to run.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to departing for New York City. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ehud Barak and former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Gregory W. Meeks in New York City

October 25, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to be here with Greg and Simone-Marie and their beautiful daughter. Chelsea and I were glad to come by, remembering when Chelsea was that age. Didn't she do a good job of sitting through her daddy's speech? I thought it was fabulous. [*Laughter*] Right in the middle of the speech, she was

looking at him. She said, "Daddy." So your name recognition is high where it needs to be. [*Laughter*]

I am honored today by the presence of the Manhattan Borough president, Virginia Fields, and Assemblywoman Vivian Cook and Senator Malcolm Smith and our members of the council, Archie Spigner, Tom White, and Juanita Watkins. Let's give them all a big hand. [*Applause*] Thank you for being here.

I feel a great deal of gratitude today, and every day these days—I'm very grateful to the people of New York for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore, for your support in 1992 and 1996. I'm very grateful for Greg Meeks. He is an outstanding Congressman. He has supported our economic initiatives, our education initiatives. He's been a real champion for building one America, and I think he has a brilliant and limitless future in the House of Representatives.

Let me say to all of you, I know whenever I do an event like this, in the parlance of my faith, I'm always preaching to the saved, or you wouldn't be here. But I think that it's important in the last 2 weeks of this election that we reach out to other people, to tell them how important it is to vote and what is at stake here.

I have, as you know, more than a passing interest in the elections in New York this year—[*laughter*]—because Hillary is running for the Senate and because we now have a home here, and I want it to be the leader of the country. New York kind of led the way for us over the last 8 years, and I hope it will continue to do so.

And I just would like to tell you that not only as President but as a soon-to-be citizen who has spent a lifetime looking at this country, studying it, hoping for the best, I think it's important that every American understand that there are really three great questions in this election. There may be a thousand questions, but there are three that override all others for me.

And if I were sitting alone with any of you in a room and we were just having a conversation and there was no press coverage and no particular political impact and you asked me what the election was about, I would tell you exactly the same thing. I think the first question is, how do we keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places that have been left behind? We have the longest economic expansion in our history, the highest homeownership in history, 22 million jobs, the lowest African-American and Latino unemployment ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, welfare rolls cut in half.

We have done a lot of important things. The Vice President has run our empowerment zone program, and thanks to Charlie Rangel, one of them is here in New York. And we've worked hard to increase lending to people who have been traditionally shut out of access to capital.

And I'm grateful for all that. But there's a lot more we can do. We can keep the economy going, and we can extend it to people and places left behind. But in order to do it, we have to, first of all, build on the strategy that got us to this point, fiscal responsibility, investing in our people and our future, and selling more of our products and services around the world. That's how we got here, and if we want to keep making progress, we have to do that.

Now, only Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg Meeks, that team, will make America debt-free, will keep paying down the debt until we're debt-free in 2012, will keep investing more in education and science and technology, in solving the energy problem, in the environment, and all the things that we need to be investing for our future, and have a tax cut we can afford as opposed to one that might be more attractive at election time.

And this is very important, because on everything else rests our ability to continue to build our prosperity. I always say one of the things that I wish the American people knew is that if you pay down the debt and we keep doing it, we'll keep interest rates lower. One of the big reasons that the American economy turned around is, from the moment we announced our economic plan after the election in 1992, interest rates started to drop; the stock market was building; investment began to flow into America at record levels.

If you pay down the debt, as opposed to spend so much on a tax cut and privatization of Social Security and other spending that we'll be back in deficit, interest rates will be about a point lower a year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to ordinary people and to people who are in high-income groups and to people who serve this lunch today? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in home mortgages savings

over a decade; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, and a better stock market.

I think it is quite interesting that in the financial capital of America, New York City, it's one of the strongest places in the country for the Gore/Lieberman ticket, because people understand here that keeping interest rates low is more important to prosperity and to wealth creation and to keeping the expansion going than having a large tax cut in the short run.

And so I hope you'll tell people that. We've got to keep the prosperity going. And if you want to do it, you've got to keep paying the debt down and then use what's left for investment in education and the future and for an affordable tax cut. And the people who are on that program are Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg Meeks. That's the first thing.

The second thing I want to say is, this country is not just progressing economically; it's progressing in other ways as well. Just for example, the crime rate is at a 26-year low. We have a cleaner environment, cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up in our 8 years than in the previous 12 years under two administrations of the other party. We have, for the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, and New York has been one of the best States in the country in enrolling kids.

And the schools are getting better. The dropout rate is down. The reading and math scores are up. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. We have had, in the last 5 years, a 50 percent increase in children taking advanced placement classes, but a 300 percent increase in Latino kids and a 500 percent increase in African-American kids taking advanced placement classes in high school, so they can go on to college. This is a big deal.

Now, what should we do about this? I think we have to continue to invest in what works. And in every one of these areas—I won't go through it, but in every one of these areas, if you want to build on this progress, you've got to be for Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg, because there are differences between the two parties, and they would reverse the policies that we've had in education and health care, the environment and crime.

So that's the second big question. I think it's a good thing that America's a safer country. I think we ought to have more police on the street, not fewer. I think we ought to have more teachers in the classroom. I think we ought to modernize our schools. I think we ought to have universal access to preschool, after-school, and summer school programs for the kids who need it. And I think now we know we can turn around failing schools, we ought to give out this Federal money in a way that every State has to identify its failing schools and turn them around or shut them down and reopen them under new management. That's what I think ought to be done.

You could find lots of exhibits here in New York. I was in Harlem the other day, in a grade school that 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level. Enter new management, new policies, high expectations, accountability. Two years later now, same school, same neighborhood, same kids, 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level. We can do this. We can make all of our educational system work.

That's the second big question. The third big question, maybe most important of all, is whether we're going to continue to build one America and be heavily involved in a positive way in the rest of the world. What does that mean? To me, it means passing strong hate crimes legislation, being against racial profiling, passing employment nondiscrimination legislation, passing the immigrant fairness legislation that is so important that we're fighting for now in the Congress, continuing to support AmeriCorps, our national service program, preserving a woman's right to choose, and having a Supreme Court that will protect the rights of the American people, not restrict the right of Congress to advance our public interests.

Now, these are big, big issues. And if you believe that it's important to keep building one America—and there are differences between the parties from top to bottom on these issues—if you agree with us, your only choice is Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg.

So that's my pitch to you. There are three big issues in the election: Do you want to keep the prosperity going and build on it, give it to people and places left behind? Do you want

to keep the progress going in the environment, in crime, in education and health care, and build on it? Do you want America to continue to be a model for harmony, because we're living with each other in an increasingly diverse society? And I might say one other thing: Do you want us to continue to be involved in the rest of the world?

I've been working for the last 3 weeks to try to end the violence in the Middle East, stop the killing, and get the peace process going. We have worked successfully to end ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. And I think it's a good thing that we went there, and I think it's a good thing that we're there now. Even though we only have 15 percent of the troops in Kosovo and Bosnia, we're important to the preservation of liberty there.

I don't know how many ethnic groups there are in New York City that have known in the past people who tried to wipe them off the face of the Earth, just because of their religion or their ethnic background. And we have to be a force for this around the world.

Why is the United States, for example, historically so committed to the preservation of Israel? Because we learned in World War II and we learned from the Holocaust survivors and their children and people who have come here the terrible price we pay. We've learned from our own racial history. We've learned from our own history with the Native American tribes what happens when people can be denigrated, dehumanized, killed, and walked away from and ignored, just because of who they are.

So this is a big deal to me. I think building one America and standing for these values around the world is the most important thing, even more important than keeping our prosperity going, because Americans are smart and they're innovative. If they get in a tight, they'll always figure out how to solve their problems as long as we have the right value system and as long as we believe everyone counts, everyone deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other.

So if you want that kind of America, working for that kind of world, your choice is Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg. That's my pitch, and I hope you agree.

Let me just say one other thing. I know when the Vice President sometimes says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," people say, "Well, he's running for office. What do you expect?" But I'm not running for anything. For the first time in 26 years, I'm not on the ballot. And I can tell you, I believe that. It takes a long time to turn a country around. It takes a long time, after a certain order in the world goes away—in this case, the order imposed by the cold war—to kind of figure out how to make the most of the new set of arrangements. And I've done everything I could to turn our country around, to move us forward, and to pull us together and have the right approach toward the rest of the world, toward Africa and Latin America, as well as Europe and Asia, to really reach out and be involved as a force for peace and prosperity. And I believe the best stuff is still out there.

In my lifetime, our Nation has never before enjoyed at once so much economic prosperity, social progress, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat. This is the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children. But in order to do it—none of us can imagine what the end results of all these scientific discoveries are going to be; none of us can see with absolute clarity what the big new problems of the next 10 years or 20 years will be. But we know one thing: If we keep the prosperity going, if we build on the social progress, if we keep building one America, if we keep reaching out to the rest of the world, America is going to do very well, indeed—the best chance you may ever have in your lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children. And the answer is, I want you to tell everybody you know, Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Battery Park. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Meeks' wife, Simone-Marie; State Senator Malcolm A. Smith; and New York City Councilmembers Archie Spigner, Thomas White, Jr., and Juanita E. Watkins. Representative Meeks was a candidate for reelection in New York's Sixth Congressional District.

Remarks at a New York Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee Reception in New York City

October 25, 2000

The President. Thank you.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years! [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm just looking forward to being a good, law-abiding taxpayer of New York. [*Laughter*] Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for inviting me here tonight and for your truly outstanding leadership. You've had a lonely post in a State with a Republican Governor and a Republican Senate. And I have watched for years, long before I could have known we'd be in the positions we're in today, where I'm out here campaigning for a Senate spouse. [*Laughter*] And I admire so much what you have done, and I was honored to be invited to come by and be with you tonight.

I thank our Democratic Chair, Judith Hope, and all the members of the assembly who are here. I feel so grateful to New York for many reasons—for the extraordinary support that you have given to me and Al Gore from 1992 on. Knowing that there would be 33 electoral votes in the can before we had to worry about the rest has been an enormous sense of psychological support for us these past 8 years.

I thank you for the uncommon kindness and generosity that so many of you have shown to my wife in this very long campaign, about a 16-month campaign she's waged now. And I think it will be successful, in no small measure because people like you have helped her. And I'm very grateful to you for that.

I, also, as a lifelong baseball nut, I thank you for giving us the best World Series in 50 years.

I want to say just two things seriously, if I might. First of all, as I think all of you know, I was a Governor for a dozen years before I ran for President, and I think I understand the connection between the Federal and State Government about as well as anybody. I understand that no matter what we do in Washington and how well we do it, the impact that our policies have on real people depends in part on how aggressively a State does its job.

New York, for example, because you had a program to insure children previously, has been one of the most successful States in enrolling children in our Children's Health Insurance Program. And I know a lot of you have been very active in that. I'll give you—the polar opposite case is the legislature in Arizona got a bill passed through the legislature which literally prohibited the schools of Arizona from enrolling children in the program in school. So not surprisingly, they're not doing very well.

But that illustrates the point. The flip side is that no matter how well you try to do your job, if you have a lousy economy, it will be harder for you. There won't be as many taxpayers, and there will be a lot more drain on the State treasury. And if we make bad decisions in terms of how these funds are allocated, it will be tough for you.

And I tried to be very, very sensitive to that for the last 8 years. And I can give you one example of that now, that our friend Congressman Engel, who also previously served in the New York Assembly, and he's here with us tonight, is helping me on.

In 1997, when we passed the Balanced Budget Act, because the Democrats had taken all the tough decisions in '93 alone, without any help from the other party—when the Vice President cast the tie-breaking vote and began to turn this country around, something I believe he'll be rewarded for 2 weeks from yesterday—we knew we had to slow the rate of growth of health care expenditures. And we agreed to take the estimates of the Congressional Budget Office, just like your legislative budget operation here, about what changes would be necessary to achieve a certain level of savings.

Now, we thought at the time that they had overestimated what had to be done. But we all agreed to play by the same rules. We did it in good faith, and we had a remarkable moment of bipartisan harmony. Now there is 100 percent agreement that the changes that we instituted in 1997 were too draconian and that the Medicare programs are not properly funded. And there is a bipartisan agreement to put $28 billion back into Medicare. But we're having a huge fight down there about how to allocate it. And our friends in the Republican caucus basically asked the Democrats in Congress and

the representatives of the White House to leave, and they cut the money up and gave a third of the money to the HMO's, without any guarantees, I might add. The argument was that all over America, especially in a lot of small towns in rural America, HMO's were dropping their Medicare recipients. That's true. But they put the money in without any guarantee that they'll take them back and keep them once they take them back.

So it has the feeling of a political decision that won't have a good policy impact. And it has the consequence of depriving urban hospitals, teaching hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospice operations, and a few other smaller health care providers of the funds they need to serve people on Medicare.

So we're in—one of the last-minute struggles we're in as we try to finish this congressional session, already about a month late this week, is trying to get a fair share for New York of these health care funds, but not just for New York, for everybody in the country that's in the same situation you're in.

But it will have a lot to do with how well you can do your job in the coming year whether we make the right decision or not in the next 48 hours. So I come here basically as a Governor and as a President who has 8 years of experience understanding that if you do your job well, the policies I've fought for will be validated. If you don't, the impact of the policies will be severely limited. And I know that if we don't do the right things in Washington, we're making your load an awful lot heavier. So that's why I'm honored to be here.

Now let me just say three things that I promised myself I would say to every group I saw between now and the election. And they're the same things I would say if I were sitting alone in a room with any of you and you asked me why we should be supporting Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Eliot, all the Democrats. There are three great questions that the voters will resolve in this election, whether consciously or unconsciously. Whether they vote or stay home, there will be three great questions resolved.

One is, are we going to keep this prosperity going and extend it to the people who aren't a part of it yet? We say the first thing we've got to do is keep paying this debt down, because the decision we made to get rid of the deficits in '93 led to an immediate drop in interest rates, a big increase in the stock market, and people saved huge money on business loans and everything else that requires credit. And we have to keep doing that.

We set aside the money to do that and then say, with the money that's left we'll have a tax cut we can afford, that will focus on the needs of working families, to educate their children, send them to college, for child care, for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, for retirement savings, but we'll have one we can afford and still have the money we need to invest in education, health care, the environment, national security, and our future.

Now, that's very important, because our friends on the other side say that we can afford a trillion and a half dollar tax cut, a trillion dollar Social Security privatization program, and $500 billion worth of spending. There is no way you can cram $3 trillion into a $2 trillion projected surplus—which won't be that big; ask Eliot; there's no way it's going to be that big, not after this session of Congress—without going into deficit.

If you go into deficit, it means higher interest rates. The Gore-Lieberman plan will keep interest rates about a percent lower for a decade. That's worth $390 billion in lower home mortgage payments, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loans, means more businesses, more jobs, and a higher stock market. This is not rocket science. This is elementary mathematics. You need to drive this home to everybody you talk to. It's an issue in the President's race. It's an issue in the Senate race. It's an issue in the races for Congress, and it will dramatically affect what you do in the State Assembly for the next 4 years.

The second issue is, are we going to build on the progress we've made in bringing our society together or reverse policy? Now, look, in the last 8 years the welfare rolls have been cut in half; there is a 26-year low in crime; the environment is cleaner; the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; we've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps. And we've proved you can do it and grow the economy. We've got a decline in the number of people who don't have health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years—again, thanks a lot to people like you who have made sure we enroll these children in the Children's

Health Insurance Program. And the schools are getting better: The drop-out rate is lower; the college-going rate is at an all-time high; the reading and math scores are up. We know now how to turn around these failing schools.

So we have to decide, are we going to build on this prosperity, this progress? That's what Gore and Lieberman and Hillary and all the people running for Congress have advocated. They'll give you more tools to help make the schools better, to help improve the health care system and provide insurance to people who don't have it, to provide a Medicare drug program, to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. They'll continue to make the environment cleaner. They'll continue to drive the crime rate down by putting more police on the street.

In every single one of these areas they're running against people who, in good conscience I think, want to reverse all these policies. Now, it's not like you haven't had a test run here. You need to talk to people about that. We tried it our way. We tried it their way. Our way works better. [*Laughter*] It works. The evidence is in.

And the third great question is whether we're going to continue to build one America as we grow more diverse. Shelley mentioned the work that we've done in the Middle East and are doing. And that takes about half of every day I have now and most of the night. We are, as ever, committed to the security of the State of Israel and committed to the proposition that if it can be done honorably, the long-term security of Israel is best served by a just peace. It is very tough over there now, and I'm doing what I can.

Some of you mentioned the work we've done in Ireland. I thank you for that. New York also has a lot of people from the Balkans who have commented to me in the last few weeks how grateful they are that Mr. Milosevic is gone and that we ended ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo.

But the point I want to make for tonight is that in order for the United States to continue to do good around the world, we have to be good at home. We have to be an example of a genuine, tolerant, open society. And the Democrats, therefore, are for the hate crimes bill. They're for the employment nondiscrimination bill. They're for immigration fairness legislation that we're fighting like crazy for in the closing days of this legislative session. They're for continuing our national service program. They're for equal pay for women. They're for a woman's right to choose and appointments to the judiciary that will generally reflect the ability of legislative bodies, including the Congress to protect the rights and the interests of the American people. Now, that is a very important—[*inaudible*].

And this election will determine, therefore, whether we keep the prosperity going and extend it to people who aren't part of it yet, whether we keep the social progress going and build on it, and whether we continue to build one America. Those are the three great questions. And I just hope that every day you can, between now and election, you will share those three points with as many people as you can, because this is a great time. I've done as—I've worked as hard as I could to turn the country around, to move it forward, to pull it together. But when Al Gore says to you that the best is yet to come and you ain't seen nothing yet, when a person running for office says that, it may sound like a campaign statement. But I'm not running for anything for the first time in 26 years—[*laughter*]—and I believe that.

It takes a long time to turn a country around. All the best things are still out there. All the best things are still out there. That's what he and Joe Lieberman have been talking about. That's what Hillary has tried to talk about in this election. And we may never have another chance in our lifetime to have a moment like this, that we can mold for our children and our grandchildren.

So I think you should all be happy; you should be confident; you should be proud to be members of the Democratic Party. And you ought to go out there and bear down, every day between now and election, and turn as many voters as you can here and in New Jersey and in any other place in America where you know people that would be more likely to help us if they knew those simple three things. And remember, not voting is almost as bad as voting against us.

So turn them out, and we'll have a great celebration in 2 weeks.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. at the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sheldon (Shelley) Silver, speaker, New York State Assembly; Gov. George E. Pataki of New

York; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on National Disability Mentoring Day
October 25, 2000

Today, on National Disability Mentoring Day, I commend the members of my administration and the public and private organizations across the Nation that are conducting mentoring activities to help expand employment opportunities for young people with disabilities. I also applaud the young people participating in Mentoring Day and extend my special congratulations to the winners of the Disability Mentoring Day Essay Contest. Each participant has helped advance the goal of today's effort to expose young people with disabilities to a variety of career options, while acquainting employers with the contributions that this future talent pool can make.

I am pleased to report that my administration is taking specific actions to help more people with disabilities participate in the workforce. These steps include new public-private partnerships to close the digital divide for people with disabilities and a variety of grants to advance the goals of the landmark Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act I signed last year.

I am also glad to report important progress in both Federal and private sector initiatives to hire more people with disabilities. First, the Federal Government is on track to meet the goal I announced on the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act to hire 100,000 more persons with disabilities over 5 years. Second, CEO's of a dozen major companies are leading the way by pledging to support the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of individuals with disabilities.

Together, these important steps represent a powerful statement about what we can accomplish when Federal, State, and private sector partners work together toward the full inclusion of people with disabilities in our Nation's historic economic growth and prosperity. Hiring people with disabilities is not just the right thing to do. It's good for business; it's good for communities; and it's good for all Americans.

Statement on Proposed Latino and Immigrant Fairness Legislation
October 25, 2000

It is long past time that we correct several injustices and provide fairness in our immigration system by enacting the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act." This legislation is a straightforward proposal to keep families together and to make our immigration policies more equitable. This legislation would help individuals and their families who have been living for many years in the United States and have developed strong ties to their communities to adjust their immigration status. My administration has been trying to negotiate with Republicans, but unfortunately, current Republican proposals would not help most of the immigrants that would get relief under the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act," and would perpetuate the current patchwork of contradictory and unfair immigration policies. These injustices should be corrected by Congress before they adjourn this year. If these issues are not resolved, I will veto the Commerce, Justice, State appropriations.

Statement on the Irish Republican Army's Decision on Arms Inspections
October 25, 2000

I was very pleased to learn today of the IRA's announcement that it has decided to allow a repeat inspection of a number of its arms dumps. This constitutes an important and timely confidence-building measure as part of a process initiated by the IRA aimed at putting its arms completely and verifiably beyond use. I welcome the IRA's statement that it has not broken off contact with the de Chastelain Commission, and I hope discussions with the Commission will resume at the earliest possible opportunity. I urge all parties to work together and in cooperation with the British and Irish Governments to build on the genuine progress that has already been achieved in implementing the Good Friday accord, by restoring momentum toward full implementation of all its provisions within the agreed timeframe.

Statement on the Bombing of Civilians in Southern Sudan
October 25, 2000

I am deeply concerned by reports that the Government of Sudan is bombing innocent civilians in the southern part of the country. Last week Government aircraft dropped munitions on a village while an international relief agency was distributing food. International relief workers report that the Government of Sudan has bombed civilian and humanitarian locations more than 60 times during the past year.

Such egregious abuses have become commonplace in Sudan's ongoing civil war, which has already claimed over 2 million lives. If the Government of Sudan seeks to demonstrate to the international community that it is prepared to act according to international norms and the rule of law, it must allow full and immediate access for humanitarian organizations seeking to provide relief to Sudan's war-ravaged civilians.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Older Americans Act
October 25, 2000

I applaud the House of Representatives for today's overwhelming bipartisan vote to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (H.R. 782). Our Nation's older Americans have been waiting for more than 5 years for Congress to approve this critical legislation. Now that the House has acted, it is imperative that the Senate pass this important legislation before it adjourns.

The Older Americans Act is the cornerstone of our Nation's commitment to senior citizens. Seniors all across the country rely on vital OAA in-home and community-based services, including home-delivered meals, nursing home ombudsmen, and employment and transportation services that are essential to preserve their dignity and independence.

I am also pleased that the House bill includes the new National Family Caregiver Support Program, proposed by this administration to help hundreds of thousands of family members who are struggling to care for their older or disabled relatives. The Senate must do its part to pass this legislation without further delay.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Legislation

October 25, 2000

I commend the House and Senate for passing a foreign operations bill today that supports our efforts to promote peace and stability around the world, in turn helping to make our Nation more safe and secure.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation funds our landmark initiative to provide debt relief to the poorest of the world's nations. Our commitment to debt relief gives these poorest countries a critical opportunity to combine reform with funds to reduce poverty and provide basic health care and education for their people. I applaud the efforts of all those across the political spectrum who joined forces to secure this vital funding.

I also am pleased that this legislation increases funding to fight HIV/AIDS. In nations around the world, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death and is undermining decades of effort to reduce mortality, improve health, expand educational opportunities, and lift people out of poverty.

This legislation also helps strengthen our efforts to support democracy and stability in southeastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, and other key regions. It includes additional resources to combat terrorism and nuclear proliferation. It also provides increases for our Peace Corps volunteers around the world and for the Export-Import Bank, which supports the export of American products overseas.

Finally, I am pleased that this legislation commits additional critical funding for international family planning organizations and lifts the restrictions hampering their work that I have strongly opposed in the past.

Message on the Observance of Diwali, 2000

October 25, 2000

Warm greetings to Indian Americans across our country as you observe the festival of Diwali.

This ancient and joyous holiday, with origins in the Hindu faith, reflects both the unity and the rich diversity of the people and culture of India. It is truly a "festival of lights," marked by lighting candles and lamps, setting off firecrackers, and dressing in vibrant colors. During Diwali, Indians of all ages and backgrounds come together to celebrate life, the triumph of good over evil, and the hope for happiness and prosperity that we all share.

America has become home to men and women from countries across the globe, whose skills and perspective have enriched our culture, enhanced our economy, and broadened our vision of the world. Diwali presents all of us with an opportunity to reflect on the many ways the talents, history, and traditions of the Indian people have contributed to our national life and cultural heritage and to give thanks for the extraordinary diversity that is one of our nation's greatest strengths.

Hillary and I extend best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bipartisan Tax Cut Legislation
October 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

We are well beyond the time when Congress should have finished its work, with many of our most important issues still left unresolved. It is crucial that we now take all possible steps to find common ground.

In that spirit, I would like to put forward a consensus tax offer to help resolve the impasse on taxes. This offer does not contain everything that my Administration and Congressional Democrats would prefer; nor does it contain all that Congressional Republicans hope to see. Rather, it recognizes that both sides need to give a little in order to accomplish bipartisan tax legislation this year and that we should keep the overall tax cut size to an amount that ensures we continue on our path of debt reduction and fiscal discipline.

First, we can raise the minimum wage without eroding traditional worker protections, while at the same time providing reasonable and targeted tax relief for small businesses. Accordingly, in exchange for my proposed minimum wage increase, I would accept the core elements of Speaker Hastert's offer on a small business tax package, costing approximately $30 billion over 10 years, provided that the FLSA and FUTA provisions are eliminated, the welfare-to-work tax credit is extended, and modifications are made to the meals and entertainment deduction and amortization of reforestation expenses. I discuss your health care proposal later in this letter.

Second, it is essential that the Labor/HHS bill include the Rangel/Johnson proposal to build and modernize 6000 schools through $24.8 billion in school construction financing, costing $8.5 billion over 10 years. Considering the estimated need for $125 billion to meet our nation's demand for safe and modern schools, this proposal is the least we should do for our children.

Third, the offer includes pension legislation adopted by the House and Senate, costing about $50–60 billion over 10 years, provided that certain modifications that the Treasury Department has discussed with the tax-writing committees are made to ensure that employer-provided pensions for workers are not harmed, to provide meaningful protections for workers affected by cash balance conversions, and to provide progressive savings incentives for low- and moderate-income workers.

Fourth, the package includes the tax and other incentives from the bipartisan New Markets/Community Renewal legislation, at a cost of about $25 billion over 10 years, with some changes that we have previously discussed and other associated items upon which we can agree. This will be an historic commitment to expand the promise of free enterprise and entreprenuership to our nation's poor and underserved urban and rural areas.

It is also important that we provide the bipartisan credit for vaccine research and purchases, which will save lives and advance public health, costing about $1.5 billion over 10 years.

Finally, it is essential for our commitment to economic growth to include the replacement of the Foreign Sales Corporation regime, which has passed the House and Senate with broad bipartisan support, costing about $4.5 billion over 10 years.

I believe the package I have outlined above can be the basis for bipartisan consensus on a tax package.

While Congress has failed to send me a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights and a voluntary Medicare prescription drug plan for all seniors, I believe it is possible to forge a bipartisan agreement that would expand health care coverage for uninsured working Americans. The best way to do this is through the FamilyCare plan that builds on the successful Children's Health Insurance Program and expands affordable insurance to over four million parents. A deduction for the purchase of private health insurance in the individual nongroup market is an inefficient and costly way to do coverage, is far less equitable than other options that use refundable tax credits, and could lead to private employers dropping health coverage. However, in the spirit of bipartisanship and breaking gridlock, I propose that your deduction be modified to a credit with necessary consumer protections in the individual insurance markets and that the credit be coupled with the bipartisan FamilyCare proposal.

I further believe we should find a common agreement to ease the burden of long-term care

on American families. The best means to accomplish this goal is through our proposal to provide a $3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs or the families who care for them. This tax credit would provide immediate assistance to those burdened by these long-term care costs today. While I cannot support your proposal to turn this into a deduction, on grounds of both equity and effectiveness, if you are willing to support our $3,000 tax credit, I would be willing to agree to your proposal to provide an enhanced deduction for the purchase of private long-term care insurance provided there are appropriate consumer protections. This bipartisan, long-term care package has already been endorsed by the AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, and the Health Insurance Association of America.

In the spirit of compromise, I believe we can work together quickly to pass this balanced legislation that I can sign into law and that can benefit the American people.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, majority leader of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a Birthday Tribute to Hillary Clinton in New York City
October 25, 2000

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Wait, wait, wait, wait. You're off message. [*Laughter*]

Look at this guy. This is why I don't have birthdays anymore. [*Laughter*] Has Tom Cruise had a great career, or not? Let's give him a hand. Isn't he wonderful? Thank you. Bless you. [*Applause*]

Now look, before I say anything else, I just want you to know, if anybody has the remotest doubt that in about 90 days I'm going to be perfectly happy to leave the White House and come to New York and be a real, honest-to-goodness New Yorker—[*laughter*]—wait a minute—if you have any doubt about that, here's what I have to say. Forget about it. [*Laughter*] Why are you laughing? Why are they laughing?

Actor Robert De Niro. Well, I told you. I told you, if you want to make it in this town, let's work on this.

Fuggeddaboudit. [*Laughter*]

The President. Forget about it. [*Laughter*]

Mr. De Niro. Fuggeddaboudit.

The President. Forget about it!

Mr. De Niro. No, no. Fuggeddaboudit. Whatsamaddawityou? [*Laughter*] Fuggeddaboudit.

The President. You talkindame? [*Laughter*]

Mr. De Niro. Fuggeddaboudit.

The President. Hey, I know I just got here, but who was that guy, anyway? [*Laughter*] Fuggeddaboudit. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Robert De Niro. He has been a wonderful friend to me and to Hillary. And I just appeared between two guys that make more money in 8 minutes than I made in 8 years. [*Laughter*] Maybe they can get me into that apartment we talked about earlier tonight. [*Laughter*]

I have a role tonight. I'm going to play my role. I am campaigning hard out here for Spouse in Chief. And I want to tell you that I met Hillary when she was 23 and I was 24, and we were in law school. And I saw her kind of moseying around the law school, you know. And I'm embarrassed to say, for all you young people who are still students, I hate to admit this, but I was not totally absorbed by my studies at that point in my life. [*Laughter*]

And so I saw Hillary kind of floating around the law school. And she was sort of a presence there and a rather famous figure. I was a scruffy guy who was stylistically challenged. [*Laughter*] And so anyway, I had a lot of sense not to speak to her. I knew; I said, "If I talk to this woman, this is going to be nothing but trouble. I am not going to talk to her." True story.

So one night I was in the library at Yale Law School, and this guy is trying to talk me into joining the Yale Law Review. And I said,

"I don't want to be on the Law Review." He said, "But you get to clerk for the Supreme Court." I said, "I don't want to clerk for the Supreme Court." He said, "You'll make more money." I said, "I don't give a damn about that. I want to go home." So he's giving his best pitch, and I see Hillary all the way across the library, and she sees me staring at her. And she put her book down, walked across the library, and she said, "Look, if you're going to keep looking at me, and I'm going to keep looking back, at least we ought to know each other's names. I'm Hillary Rodham. What's your name?"

I couldn't remember my name. [*Laughter*] Now, that's how we met. I say that to remove any doubt that she has the requisite aggression to be a good New Yorker. [*Laughter*]

I want to tell you that, for me, this is a birthday for Hillary that is filled with gratitude. The people of New York have been so wonderful to me in two Presidential elections and all the years in between. You have, for the last 16 months, opened your hearts to her and given her a chance to make her case. And I am so grateful to you.

You know, we've had a lot of fun here, making fun of politicians, including me. And it's all been in fun. But I'd like to tell you something seriously. When I leave office, after 26 years of running for office or serving in public life, I will be more idealistic about this country than I was the day I took the oath of office as President, the day I took my first public office.

And I've known a lot of people in politics, thousands of them, Republicans and Democrats and the occasional independent. And on balance, I've found them to be good, honest, hard-working people who love our country and do what they think is right. And they're better, on balance, than they get played out in the popular press. But in all these years, I have never, ever, ever known anybody that had the combination of intelligence and heart and consistent caring and persistence and ability to organize and energize other people and get things done that Hillary has. She's the best I have ever known.

And I am quite sure that if she hadn't spent the last 30 years helping me and helping children and families' causes, starting organizations and heading others, and always doing things for other people and never asking anybody until this election to do anything for her, that she would have been doing this years ago. When we met and fell in love, I actually—I told her forthrightly that I almost hated for her to come home to Arkansas and start our life together because I thought she had immense talent, and I felt that I somehow would be depriving her of a public career. So for me, the feelings I have for all of you for lifting her up and supporting her and giving her a chance to serve this State and serve this Nation are almost inexpressible.

It's worth noting that this seat was held not only by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the great intellects and public servants of the last 50 years, but also by Senator Robert Kennedy, who inspired me and so many people of my generation to believe that we could make a better country. And I want you to know that if you just keep working for 13 more days, she is going to make you profoundly proud that you have helped her in this.

And on top of that, she looks pretty good to be 53 years old, wouldn't you say? [*Applause*] So I want you to stand up with me and offer a toast to the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Roseland Ballroom. In his remarks, he referred to actor Tom Cruise.

Statement on Admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Into the Stability Pact

October 26, 2000

I applaud today's decision by the members of the Stability Pact to welcome the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a new member. Last month the people of Yugoslavia spoke clearly in support of democratic change. The response today from the international community is just

as clear. We will stand with the new democratic government as it pursues economic and political reform, meets its international obligations, and works with neighboring countries to promote lasting stability throughout the region.

We helped launch the Stability Pact last year with a common understanding that an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe will be a reality only when the countries of southeast Europe are integrated with the rest of the continent. To achieve this goal, the governments of the region are pressing ahead with reforms; the international community is supporting the region's economic development and integration; and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia can now play its own indispensable role in that effort.

At previous Stability Pact conferences, we invited participation by the political opposition in Serbia and by the democratic government in the Republic of Montenegro, both of which had the courage to stand up to the violence and corruption of the Milosevic regime. But we always kept open a chair for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Now the dramatic changes in Belgrade allow the chair for Yugoslavia to be filled. This is a major step towards realizing our shared vision of a region committed to peace, to healing the wounds of war, and to taking its place in a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Statement on the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety

October 26, 2000

I am pleased that the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety released today by the Departments of Justice and Education shows that crime and violence in our Nation's schools continue to decline. Since 1992, rates of serious crime, including violent crime, have declined steadily in our schools, and the number of non-fatal crimes in schools is down by more than 21 percent. Between 1992 and 1997, the number of students who report carrying a weapon to school decreased by 25 percent. School homicides, which remain extremely rare, are also on the decline. This report provides encouraging data that our efforts to protect our children are having an impact.

Since Vice President Gore and I took office, we have encouraged communities to come together to ensure that our schools are safe places for learning. By making school safety a top priority, our administration has helped provide more and better trained police officers in schools, vastly increased funding for after-school programs, required zero tolerance for guns in schools, and funded more mentors and school counselors to help our kids stay on the right track.

We owe it to our children to make sure that crime in school continues to decline. We can continue our progress by supporting comprehensive, locally based efforts such as the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. Across the Nation, 77 communities have received $147 million under this innovative program to fund enhanced educational, mental health, and law enforcement services. Programs such as this one allow us to promote the healthy development of our students and to identify those children who may be having problems and get them the help they need to turn things around. By working together, we can continue our success in making America's schools safe for each and every student in our Nation.

Statement on Reaching the Nation's Highest Homeownership Rate

October 26, 2000

Today I am proud to announce that our Nation has broken a new record. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, America has reached its highest homeownership rates ever. This is tremendous new evidence that more and more American families

are realizing the dream of owning their own home. Higher homeownership rates help build stronger families, create more stable communities, and raise living standards for all Americans.

Vice President Gore and I came to office committed to a strategy to make it easier for American families to buy their own homes. By providing record levels of homeownership loan assistance, increasing the availability of affordable housing, providing incentives to save for a home purchase, and maintaining our commitment to fiscal discipline that has kept interest rates low, we have worked to ensure that every family has the opportunity to own their own home. I would like to particularly thank Vice President Gore and Secretary Cuomo for their excellent leadership in working with families, especially in low-income and empowerment communities, to help make homeownership a reality.

Statement on Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act

October 26, 2000

Older Americans all across the country have reason to cheer today. After more than 5 years of congressional inaction, the Senate voted to approve legislation to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. I look forward to signing this measure of vital importance to our Nation's older Americans.

The Older Americans Act ensures that seniors in every State have access to meals, nursing home ombudsmen, legal assistance, elder abuse prevention, employment and transportation services that are essential to their dignity and independence. Enactment of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 will strengthen and improve these services.

I am especially pleased that the final legislation includes the National Family Caregiver Support Program—a key administration priority designed to provide respite care and other supportive services to help hundreds of thousands of families who are struggling to care for their older loved ones who are ill or disabled.

I applaud the bipartisan leadership in the U.S. Senate for its outstanding efforts to approve the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000. Finally, and most important, I want to pay special tribute to the aging community for its tireless commitment to the needs of older Americans.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Counterdrug Assistance to Colombia and Neighboring Countries

October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I hereby report, in accordance with section 3202 of the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, on current U.S. policy and strategy for counterdrug assistance to Colombia and neighboring countries. The enclosed report sets forth the rationale for expanded support to Colombia and neighboring countries and highlights the comprehensive initiatives now underway in the Andean region in support of the National Drug Control Strategy.

Colombia's success in combating the threat of drugs is profoundly in the interest of the United States. A peaceful, democratic, and economically prosperous Colombia will result in a significant reduction of the supply of illicit drugs and help promote democracy and stability throughout the hemisphere. I am proud of the bipartisan effort that has made our Colombian initiative possible.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: 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 C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bipartisan Tax Cut Legislation
October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

Thank you for your letter yesterday responding to my proposed consensus tax package. As I said yesterday, I believe we all have a responsibility to make every possible effort to come together on a bipartisan agreement on tax relief and Medicare/Medicaid that will maintain fiscal discipline and serve the interests of all the American people. That is why I put forward a good faith offer yesterday that sought to reflect our differing priorities in a balanced manner. I was disappointed, however, that, without any consultation with me or Congressional Democrats, you chose to put forward a partisan legislative package that ignores our key concerns on school construction, health care, and pensions policy. If this current tax and Medicare/Medicaid package is presented to me, I will have no choice but to veto it.

While we have already reached substantial agreement in important areas, such as replacement of the Foreign Sales Corporations regime, your legislation has substantial flaws in several key areas.

As I stated yesterday, I believe it is absolutely essential that we do as much as possible to meet America's need for safe and modern schools. It is estimated that there may be as much as a $125 billion dollar financing gap in meeting the school construction and modernization needs of our children. The bipartisan Rangel-Johnson proposal to finance $25 billion in bonds to construct and modernize 6,000 schools is, quite frankly, the very least we should do, given the magnitude of this problem and its importance to America's future. Unfortunately, your proposal falls far short of the mark. We should not sacrifice thousands of modernized schools to pay for inefficient tax incentives that help only a few. For example, the arbitrage provision encourages delay in urgently needed school construction and would disproportionately help wealthy school districts.

On health care, my offer sought to lay a path to common ground by coupling both of our priorities on health and long-term care. Unfortunately, your health care proposal completely ignores our proposal to cover millions of uninsured, working Americans. Instead you put forward a series of tax cuts that, particularly when standing alone, would be inequitable, inefficient, and even potentially counterproductive health care policy. For example, while our FamilyCare proposal would expand coverage to 4 million uninsured parents at a cost of slightly over $3,000 per person, your proposal would provide additional coverage to one-seventh the people at six times the cost per person. Moreover, your proposal would give the least assistance to moderate-income families that need help the most, while even raising concerns that those with employer-based coverage today could lose their insurance.

Similarly, on long-term care, I offered to embrace your proposed deduction for long-term care insurance in exchange for inclusion of my proposal to give families, who are burdened today by long-term care needs, a $3,000 tax credit. Unfortunately, your legislation ignores the bipartisan package I suggested and instead would provide half the benefits of my proposal for financially pressed families trying to provide long-term care for elderly and sick family members. Surely we can agree on this bipartisan compromise that has already been endorsed by a broad array of members of Congress, advocates for seniors and people with disabilities, and insurers. Similarly, I am perplexed that we cannot agree to include the bipartisan credit for vaccine research and purchases that is essential to save lives and advance public health.

I also am disappointed that you have made virtually no attempt to address the concerns my Administration has expressed to you about the pension provisions of your bill. By dropping the progressive savings incentives from the Senate

Finance Committee bill, you have failed to address the lack of pension coverage for over 70 million people. Moreover, employers may have new incentives to drop pension coverage for some of the low- and moderate-income workers lucky enough to have pension plans today.

Finally, I remain deeply concerned that your Medicare and Medicaid refinement proposal continues to fail to attach accountability provisions to excessive payment increases to health maintenance organizations (HMOs) while rejecting critical investments in beneficiaries and vulnerable health care providers. Specifically, you insist on an unjustifiable spending increase for HMOs at the same time as you exclude bipartisan policies such as health insurance options for children with disabilities, legal immigrant pregnant women and children, and enrolling uninsured children in schools, as well as needed payment increases to hospitals, academic health centers, home health agencies, and other vulnerable providers. Congress should not go home without responding to the urgent health needs of our seniors, people with disabilities, and children and the health care providers who serve them.

A far better path than the current one is for Congressional Republicans, Democrats, and my Administration to come together in a bipartisan process to find common ground on both tax relief and Medicare/Medicaid refinements.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, majority leader of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Legislation

October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am writing to raise my serious concerns with the FY 2001 Commerce, Justice, and State appropriations bill that was filed this morning as part of the FY 2001 District of Columbia conference report. Although neither my Administration nor virtually any Member of Congress has had an opportunity to review this bill, it is our understanding that it fails to adequately address a number of high-priority issues that the Administration has previously brought to your attention. Therefore, I have no choice but to veto this bill.

It is our understanding that this bill fails to redress several injustices in our immigration system as called for by the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act. Those provisions would help normalize the immigration status of individuals and their families who have been living for many years in the United States, and, as such, would restore fairness and equity to our immigration laws. Current Republican proposals would not help most of the people who need relief and would perpetuate the current patchwork of contradictory and unfair immigration policies.

In addition, it is our understanding that this bill fails to provide the resources needed for the Department of Justice to let justice work its course by pursuing tobacco litigation to address the need for tobacco companies to bear responsibility for the staggering costs of tobacco-related illnesses. Congress should not block the judicial process, especially in a matter that is of supreme importance to the public health and the public interest.

This bill also fails to include hate crimes legislation that would cover crimes motivated by bias on the basis of a victim's gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Both the House and Senate have had bipartisan votes indicating their support for strong hate crimes legislation and it should become law this year.

The bill fails to address in any meaningful way the real privacy concerns about Social Security numbers raised by the Administration. Regrettably, it does not include needed protections against the inappropriate sale and display of individual citizens' social security numbers. Moreover, the bill creates loopholes that seriously undermine the goal of the legislation to protect

privacy. In addition, by not reauthorizing the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, the bill fails to support successful Federal efforts to protect critical law enforcement funding and reduce violent crime.

We also understand that a range of anti-environmental, anti-competitive, and other damaging riders have been under consideration and may have been added to this bill. I urge Congress to refrain from adding riders that would reward special interests at the expense of the public interest. I also urge Congress to drop the rider that would prevent the Federal Communications Commission from licensing new low-power FM radio stations to provide for a diversity of voices in communities around the country. And regrettably, Congress has attached a deeply flawed Commerce, Justice, and State bill to an otherwise signable District of Columbia bill.

I urge the Congress to complete its work by sending me acceptable bills. I regret that the bipartisan discussion to resolve these issues in this bill were abandoned. The recent passage of several other appropriations bills shows that when we work together and Congress puts progress over partisanship, we are able to deliver real results for the American people. It is long past time for Congress to do the same for the Commerce, Justice, and State bill and to produce a bill I can sign.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; 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.

Remarks on the Budget and the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 27, 2000

The President. Good morning—good afternoon. [*Laughter*] Don't tell anybody I didn't know what time it was. [*Laughter*]

I would like to say a few words about the budget, the progress we have made, and the work still to be done in this Congress.

The appropriations bills we pass every year do a lot more than keep our Government running. They tell us something very basic about our priorities as a nation. There's no great secret to getting things done around here. When we put progress over partisanship, we get results. When we work together, we get results.

For example, I just signed a very fine VA/HUD appropriations bill, along with the energy and water appropriations bill. It includes some impressive advances for the American people: 79,000 housing vouchers to help people move from welfare to work; more support for housing for the elderly and disabled; investment for our economic empowerment agenda that the Vice President has led, including empowerment zones and community development banks; more funds for AmeriCorps; funds for climate change research and technology in the Energy Department; funds to support our space program; the largest increase ever in the Veterans Administration and in the National Science Foundation, something that is critically important to our future; and adequate funding for FEMA to meet our national emergencies.

The energy and water bill also contains funds for climate change technology and research in solar and renewable energies. These things will have a direct, positive impact on our long-term energy future and help us to become less dependent on and less vulnerable to supply interruptions and price explosions in oil. This is very, very important.

Now, I could say the same thing about the Interior bill I signed the other day, which many of you were here for, the largest appropriation for land preservation ever in our country's history for our lands legacy initiative. And the foreign operations bills, which the Congress has passed in a completely bipartisan way, funds the debt relief initiative for the poorest countries in the world, which is one of the most significant

achievements in the international arena in years and years for the United States and, I believe, for years to come will provide a foundation upon which my successors, whoever they are, will build to help advance America's interests and build a more peaceful world.

So we can do things that really matter around here, even though we have differences. Do I agree with every little thing in these bills? No, I do not. Did I get everything I wanted in these bills? I did not. But we all worked together, and we had some remarkable successes.

Now still, here we are, almost a month past the end of the fiscal year, and there are still some very vital work to be done by Congress. And I have the feeling that the congressional majority has not yet decided whether to wrap up with more progress or score partisan points and leave town, and that would leave vital national needs unmet.

Two days ago I made a good-faith offer to the Republican leadership. I said, let's work together to meet our most pressing outstanding priorities and pass responsible tax relief for middle class families and small business. The answer I got was disappointing. Instead of meeting us on common ground, instead of working with the White House or congressional Democrats, the Republican leadership closed its doors to compromise, literally closed the doors to compromise.

They crafted their own partisan tax package and passed it last night on a party-line vote. The Republican tax package fails to meet the test of fairness to our children, our seniors, or the millions of Americans without health care coverage. If it reaches my desk in its present form, I will have no choice but to veto it.

Congress has to get back to work on this, so let me be clear about my concerns. First, the bill is unfair to children. We can't expect to lift them up if we put them in schools that are falling down. That's why I've proposed to repair old and crumbling schools and build new ones. Unfortunately, the majority's inefficient tax incentives help only a few, and ironically, most of the help would go to the schools and school districts that need it the least.

This bill is unfair to hospitals, to community providers, and to patients. It is a massive giveaway to the HMO's, tens of billions of dollars at the expense of teaching and rural hospitals, home health agencies, and other community providers who really need the help. And even though they are spending the Medicare resources, their plan allows the HMO's to take the money and then abandon the Medicare patients, which is the alleged pretext for giving them so much of this money, that they've been dropping people from their Medicare program out in—especially in the rural areas of our country over the last couple of years.

Now, we have to make improvements in the Medicare and Medicaid allocations here. At the same time, the majority is blocking bipartisan proposals to extend health care coverage for children and pregnant women who are legal immigrants or to expand coverage for children with disabilities. Just an hour ago I met here at the White House with a group of Americans with disabilities who lead various groups across our Nation. They have a vital interest in adequate funding for home- and community-based services in this Medicare-Medicaid allocation bill, a need the that Republican bill grossly shortchanges because it disproportionately gives the money to the HMO's.

The priorities of this leadership bill do not reflect the priorities and needs of the American people. The bill is unfair to seniors. The tax package the House passed last night abandons my bipartisan approach to providing significant, long-term care relief for families' long-term care costs. It also fails to address the lack of pension coverage for more than 70 million hard-working Americans.

So again, I ask Congress: Send me a tax bill that helps us build new schools and repair old ones; a bill that helps our workers, all of them, save for retirement; a bill that expands long-term health care coverage for Americans who need it; a fair tax bill.

I also want to raise the minimum wage but not with a Republican bill that stacks the deck against American workers. The leadership should not play games with the minimum wage. They should stop holding it hostage to tax breaks for special interests, stand up for working Americans, and send me a bill I can sign. We can do that and still have appropriate small-business tax relief.

There is more we should do and some more things we must do. We certainly should pass the voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit and a real Patients' Bill of Rights. And we must pass fairness for Latino immigrants. We have a hate crimes legislation we ought to pass. And

they've had a bill there that has enormous bipartisan support throughout the country to strengthen the equal pay laws for women.

Again I say, there's no secret to getting things done. We have to work together. Look at the VA/HUD bill I just signed, the energy and water bill. Look at the Interior bill. Look at the foreign operations bill. This Congress has done some good things. But whenever the Republicans shut the Democrats and the White House out and go behind closed doors and try to make an agreement among themselves for the benefit of the elements in the rightwing of their caucus, we wind up with a bill that is unacceptable to the American people.

So I'm here. I'm prepared to keep working. But as we celebrate these good days, we ought to finish the business of the public in the right way.

Thank you very much.

Need for Bipartisan Approach

Q. Mr. President, the leadership says it's you that's playing politics, trying to help the Vice President and the Democrats who are running.

The President. Well, look at the facts. The problem with that charge is, it doesn't stand up to the facts. I have signed every appropriations bill that has been the product of a bipartisan process, every single one. The only one we don't have now is the Labor/HHS bill which contains the education budget of the country, which is the most important one, but we're making real progress there. If you notice, even though it hasn't passed—and it should have passed—I didn't say a word of criticism in my remarks about it because we're continuing to work together in a bipartisan fashion.

What happened with this Commerce/State/Justice bill and the immigration issues and the other issues and this tax bill is that the Republicans basically kicked the Democrats and the White House out of the room. And they came up with a bill, and then they called us and said, "Now, we took care of this, that, or the other concern of yours. Now you guys just be cooperative and sign off on what we have decided to do. The leadership has decided this is the only bill we can get past our rightwing, and you'll just have to take it."

Well, that's not the way to go. I have never tried to play politics with this in this year. Look, I bragged on them today. Every time we do something in a bipartisan way, I try to give credit where credit is due. I have bent over backwards for 8 years here to work with both Republicans and Democrats. But I will not bend over backwards to be run over, not because of me or the Democrats in Congress but because it's not good for the American people.

Now look, we just have these two appropriations bills, and we have the tax legislation, and we have to put some money back into health care. And we can do this, but we're going to have to do it together. We can't just—we can't have our Republican friends say, "Hey, we're having a really tough time getting agreement within our caucus, so you guys have to go away, and we'll go in our caucus, and we'll try to fight it out with each other, and whatever we can live with by ourselves, the rest of you have got to take." Now, that is what happened. That is the fact.

It is true that the bills are not as awful as they once were. It is true that they took some things out. But the bills are not what they would be if they were like all the other appropriations bills, the products of a genuine bipartisan negotiation. That's all I'm asking for. That's all I've ever asked for. And like I said, in these bills that I signed today, there are hundreds, literally hundreds, of projects that the Members wanted that I did not support.

They cut back on the investment in some things that I thought were important. But when you sit down and negotiate with people, you have a good-faith obligation to try to come to agreement. We honored that, and we got the agreement. And I'm very, very pleased with these bills. But the ones that are still out there, they do more harm than good, and we need to clean them up. And we need to do it in a hurry so they can get out of town and go on about their business.

Q. Mr. President, the Senate majority leader says that the tax cut bill gives you 80 to 90 percent of what you wanted and what you were asking for and that no President should expect to get 100 percent of what he wants.

The President. I agree nobody should expect to get 100 percent, but I don't agree that it's 80 to 90 percent. I explained what I thought was the matter with it. That's just not a—I do not believe that is an accurate characterization of the tax bill. And again I say, you know, whenever I'm involved in a peace process around the world, I hear the same sort of thing. If people aren't talking to each other, they say,

"Well, why don't they like this? This is more or less what they've asked for." And it's very important that you understand what happened.

On these bills, unlike the other work we have done, they sent the Democrats and the White House out of the room, because they were having trouble agreeing among themselves. Once they made an agreement among themselves and made some changes based on objections we had raised, they said, "Well, why aren't you happy?" And again I would say, all we need—if we get a negotiation, we will have a compromise bill that will be an honorable compromise.

But you all know this is so, because you follow this. The way these bills were produced, the tax bill and the Commerce/State/Justice appropriations, was different from the way all the other bills were produced. Today we had Senator Mikulski in here, a Democrat from Maryland, Congressman Walsh, a Republican from New York in here talking about what they did together on the VA/HUD bill. That's the way we need to get this done.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Four more Palestinians died this morning in clashes with Israeli troops. Are you trying even harder now to try to arrange separate meetings with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, or do you think that violence still has to stop before there is even any point in bringing them here?

The President. I think there has to be a much lower level of violence before they could meet together and talk about the long-term prospects for peace. I worked on this for several hours yesterday, and we obviously keep up with it. And I'm very disturbed about today, because we actually had 2 or 3 good days here, where there was very little violence.

We're trying to get to the bottom of seeing what happened and see what, if anything, we can do to undermine the causes of today's violence so that it won't recur. But we've got to get the level of violence down before there can be a resumption in negotiations.

In terms of who comes here when, that is still subject to discussion. We're talking to the Israelis. We're talking to the Palestinians. We're talking with others around the world, and—look, I'm working really hard on this. I'm frustrated—I'm just as frustrated as you are, and it's heartbreaking. We've just got to try to get ahold of it, and I—but don't lose sight of the fact that we had 3 pretty good days. And I would say to the people in the region not to lose sight of the fact that we did, and tomorrow needs to be a good day, not a bad day, because of what happened today.

Budget

Q. Mr. President, are you in danger of playing into Governor Bush's hands on this budget battle? After all, Governor Bush has run largely on the premise that he can get things done—as a Washington outsider, he can come in here and break gridlock. Now, you're threatening to veto.

The President. Well, first of all, let's have a little reality therapy here. You know, I said that I would do that, and I have. I kept waiting for someone to point out—some of you to point out when they kept saying, "The partisanship is terrible in Washington, and nothing ever gets done"—well, let me just point out—since they came in, it is true that they shut the Government once down because I wouldn't agree to abolish the Department of Education and agree to the biggest Medicare cost increases on recipients in history and the biggest education and environmental cuts in history.

But when that was over, look what's happened: We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill that passed with big majorities in both Houses of both parties; we had a bipartisan balanced budget bill that passed with big majorities in both Houses in both parties, including the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest increase in children's health in 35 years. We had a bipartisan Telecommunications Act that provided the E-rate that has taken us to 95 percent of our schools now hooked up to the Internet, created thousands and thousands of businesses, hundreds of thousands of new jobs. We've had 100,000 police. We've had 100,000 teachers. We've gone from zero to serving 800,000 kids in after-school programs, all done in an entirely bipartisan way. I just went over this breathtaking litany of things that were done at the end of this negotiation process in a purely bipartisan way.

Now, the only thing I have objected to is the unipartisan, if you will, the single-party production of a tax bill and one appropriations bill. That's it. And I don't think that party should seek to—should be able to benefit from their failure at bipartisanship.

Let me just give you another example. We have a bipartisan majority in this Congress, in both Houses, for hate crimes, for a good school construction bill, for a minimum wage increase, for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for campaign finance reform. Now, it's not bipartisanship that is keeping those bills from passing. It is the leadership of the other party in the Congress blocking a bipartisan majority. I fail to see how you could argue that the voters ought to reward people for creating the problem that they are complaining about. I think that's a pretty hard sell.

Yes, sir, go ahead. This gentleman has had his hand up.

Pork Barrel Projects

Q. Thank you. Critics of spending, of Federal spending, identified the VA/HUD bill as an example of legislation that's so stuffed with pork that next year we may not have an on-budget surplus, and whoever succeeds you in office won't have enough money for their proposals. And I'm wondering, how can you sign a bill like that and say it's a fine bill, when it has so many pork-barrel projects in it?

The President. Well, the one thing about—first of all, it does have too many pork-barrel projects, for my taste, but that's what the Republicans wanted. If I wanted to get the money to help people move from welfare to work and have housing, if I wanted to get the funds to help create—continue to help create jobs in poor areas that have been left out and left behind, and the other things that are in the VA/HUD bill, they were also willing to—you know, they never agreed with me and the Vice President on global warming before, and they came in and really supported our budget for research and development and new energy technologies.

And most of these projects—I saw an article in the press today that estimated that this spending in this Congress would reduce the projected surplus by $900 billion. Let me just say, I don't—it will reduce the projected surplus, but I think it's by more like half that, and let me explain why.

Because the one thing about these so-called pork-barrel projects—and I've found in Washington and in life, a pork-barrel project is the other guy's project. It's never yours. If it's the project in your hometown, it's the greatest thing you ever saw. But they are—because they are capital projects, they are not repeating. So the assumption that this erodes almost half the surplus is based on the fact that you'd have this rate of increase every year to sustain that. And that does not have to be the case, because a lot of these projects are—you know, they got the funding, and they'll do the project, and they don't have to repeat it next year. And that's the difference in that.

So I do think that the estimated surplus will have to be reduced, but I think that the assumption that these spending projects require us now to assume that spending will increase by this amount every year for a decade, I do not agree with that. And it shouldn't, and we shouldn't.

Peru

Q. Mr. President, you've always been interested in promoting democracy in Latin America and fighting drugs. There is a problem now in Peru, in which the ex-head of intelligence went to Panama, has returned. President Fujimori supposedly is looking for him, and the situation—political situation in Peru is really very perilous. What do you think is going to happen, and what can the United States and the OAS do to help it out?

The President. Well, I don't know what's going to happen. I'm following it closely, and I don't know. I think what we have to do is to continue to support democracy and the rule of law in whatever way is appropriate. I don't know that I can say much more than that right now.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. One more on the Middle East. How can you have peace in the Middle East until you train the younger generations of both Palestinians and Israelis to stop hating each other?

The President. Well, you know, that's—I must say, that's what the Seeds of Peace program was about and a lot of these young Palestinians and young Israelis, along with other young Middle Easterners I've met, young Jordanians and young Egyptians, in the Seeds of Peace program, young people from other Arab countries.

I think, obviously, a big part of what is driving these demonstrations is a profound alienation of young people in the Palestinian community who have not seen any economic benefits from peace over the last 8 years, and who despair that it will ever actually be completed. I think finding a way to reach out to the young and

give them some more positive contact with each other across the lines that divide them is very important.

I think one of the best things I've seen in the whole region over the last 8 years is this Seeds of Peace program and what these young people have done together. And that kind of dialog is what has to replace the bullets and the rocks.

Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus

Q. Mr. President, despite your personal involvement for a Greek-Turkish rapprochement over the Aegean and Cyprus, Ankara has become more aggressive against the territorial integrity of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in the last days. May we have your comments?

The President. I don't know if I can comment on what's happened in the last few days, simply because I've been so overwhelmingly involved in the Middle East. But I can say that one of the relatively small number of real disappointments I have after 8 years of working in the foreign policy field is that I have not made more progress in helping to resolve the Cyprus issue, because I have always felt that Turkey should be integrated into Europe. I have always felt that Turkey and Greece should be natural allies because they're allies in NATO. I've seen them work together.

I think the whole world was profoundly moved by the way that the Greeks and the Turks responded to each other's human losses in the earthquakes, and basically to see entrenched and unmovable positions in Cyprus in what really ought to be a fairly straightforward problem to solve, keep them apart, and keep Turkey more at arm's length from Europe, I think it's a price not worth paying, and I think it's a very sad thing. I still hope it can be resolved.

There is actually some chance we can make a little progress before I can leave office. If we don't, it's something I will keep an interest in and would be willing to keep working for even after I'm gone from here, because it just—it makes no sense in the larger context of the future of Greece, the future of Turkey, and the future of the Cypriots, themselves, to maintain this present impasse with all the bad feelings and conflicts and estrangements that it has brought us.

Week Prior to the Election

Q. Mr. President, if this budget process drags on into next week, are you concerned that it could cut into your efforts to get out the vote and energize the base for the Democrats? It's a busy week next week.

The President. Well, the most important thing I can do is to do my job. And events around the world could also cut into that. We just have to see what's going to happen.

As I have said to you all along, I've always been happy to do what I could basically to go out and say what I believe, which is that the country is in better shape than it was when I took office, that we're moving in the right direction, and I hope we'll build on that instead of reversing it.

And this ought to be a happy election for the American people. They ought to be out there excitedly debating the differences. But I think the Vice President and Senator Lieberman have made a very good case for themselves, and I think they will continue to do that. And I will do what I can to help, in terms of explaining to people how important it is that they go vote.

But the votes will be won or lost by the candidates in the ongoing, sort of 24-hour debate that will happen between now and election day. I would like to be helpful because I believe what we've done is important, and I think the progress should be continued. I think it's very important that we not get into a budget where the numbers don't add up and we get back into deficit. I think it's very important that someone be here in this job to restrain the impulses of the rightwing of the Republican Congress if they should stay in the majority in either House.

I think that—you know, all this is important. But the first thing I've got to do is, do what the American people hired me to do, because they're going to make their decisions based on their own evaluations of the candidates and the arguments they make.

I may be the only person here who has ever been on the other side of this, because I was a Governor for a dozen years when there were Republican Presidents who would come to my State from time to time in election season. I can say my sense was, when they came, that they did help get their own voters out but that the electorate who were undecided, who were

listening, were listening more to what my opponent and I were saying than to what the President said about us. That's where I think we are here.

So my role has got to be, go out and tell the people this country is in great shape, and we're in better shape than we were 8 years ago. We're moving in the right direction. I hope we won't take a U-turn.

There are certain things I think I can speak with some credibility on, like the budget and the need to resist some of the extremist impulses in the Republican caucus. But by and large, what I want to do is just tell the American people this is a chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our kids, and you all ought to show up to vote.

We may never have another election like this where we've got this much prosperity and this much progress with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. It may not happen again in our entire lifetime. And that's the message I hope I'll get to go out and deliver, and I'll do everything I can to do it.

President's Role in 2000 Campaign

Q. [*Inaudible*]—were out there doing it now?

The President. That's not true. No, that's not true. I've seen some of these stories, and I have to tell you, since August, I told—I was talking to Bill Daley yesterday, and he was reminding me, he said, "You first told me in August that you should stay in Washington and do your job with the Congress and do your job with the country until the last week or so of the campaign, except for the work you could do at night, helping to raise funds for the Congress and the Senate and the Democratic Party." And that's pretty much what I have done.

You know, as I said, I've actually experienced this in my former life, when I was a Governor. And the stories that imply that I have disagreed with that up to now are just not accurate. I believe that I have been doing what I should be doing, the work of the country. The political work I have done, even for my wife, I have done in a way that was consistent with, first of all, getting this work done.

Now, when you get down to the last week or so, I think the American people expect everybody to get out and kind of mix it up, and they want us all to be out there. But make no mistake about it, they're going to make their judgments overwhelmingly based on what these candidates say to them.

And I think the Vice President has been doing a great job, and I feel comfortable. I just want to make sure the American people understand what the stakes are and understand how truly unique this moment in history is. You know, most voters are now younger than me, and most people—a lot of voters will vote who have never lived in anything other than a time of economic expansion, declining crime and welfare rolls, an improving economy, increasing college-going, and all these things that have been happening. And you know, they may think it's just—that's the way things are, and so they don't have to factor all that into their voting.

I've lived long enough to live through many different cycles of life in America, and so I just want to get out there and make sure everybody understands what a unique moment it is. But if I have to do it from here, as I'm doing it today, because my job requires me to stay here, I'll stay here until election day, if I have to, to do right by the American people, because my first job is to take care of them.

Q. Mr. President, your feelings are not hurt? You're not angry?

The President. I have always believed that what I should do is to do my job here. When I can go out at night and on the weekends to help the House and Senate Members raise money, I should do that, or help our party. I should go to the Democratic Convention, make the best speech I could about giving an account of the last 8 years, and then I should do whatever I could to help increase the turnout and make sure the stakes in the election were understood in the last week or 10 days or so.

That's exactly what I thought should be done. So I actually feel quite good about this. And I think—what I want to see the American people have here is great clarity in what the choice is and what the consequences are, and I think they're getting more and more clarity with every passing day. So I feel good about that.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, one on Korea. Is it your intention that if you made a personal trip to North Korea now, do you think it would result in specific steps to have them reduce their missile production and export of missile technology, and do you intend to go?

The President. Well, the answer to the last question is, I have not made a decision yet. But I was very pleased with the reception that Secretary Albright received, and I hope that the North Koreans were pleased with the reception that General Cho received here. And we're talking about those things.

If I could just take a minute, I think it's important for the American people to understand just how far this issue has come and yet what is still out there. When I became President, and I began to get—after the election, just as the new President-elect will find, I got all these briefings, and we went through all the national security stuff. The general consensus was that the most dangerous problem I was facing in late 1992 was North Korea's nuclear program and that it could lead to the development of not only nuclear weapons, which would imperil the Korean Peninsula and our then about 40,000 soldiers there—we have slightly fewer now—but that in the worst of all worlds, they might develop nuclear weapons and sell them to others, along with missiles, which would be devastating to the whole future of arms control.

And what happened? We got an agreement to end the nuclear program. The Japanese supported it. The South Koreans strongly supported it. We got other countries to kick in a little money. We've worked on it. We've continued to negotiate over missile testing and technology with them. And we refused to have an independent relationship except on arms control issues, in the absence of some improving relationship between North and South; the present President, Kim Dae-jung, gets elected in South Korea, breaks this long icy relationship, justifiably wins the Nobel Peace Prize. I was elated for him. And then they come here; we go there. So let me just remind you, we are a long, long way in the right direction, compared to where we were back in January of '93.

But we still have substantial concerns in the missile area, as you pointed out. We're working on it, and that's all I think I should say now. We're working on it, and I haven't made a decision on the trip.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; former Chief of Intelligence Vladmiro Montesinos and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru; National Defense Vice Chairman Cho Myong-nok of North Korea; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

Remarks to African-American Community Leaders
October 27, 2000

Thank you very much, Secretary Herman, and thank you for the wonderful, wonderful job you have done as Secretary of Labor. I want to thank the others who are here from the White House today, Minyon Moore, Mary Beth Cahill, Ben Johnson; Alvin Brown, the vice chair of our Community Empowerment Board that the Vice President has done such a great job leading in the last 8 years; Lorraine Miller, the executive director of the Community Empowerment Board; Jena Roscoe, the director of African-American outreach; John Johnson of the NAACP; Norman Hill of the A. Philip Randolph Institute; Wade Henderson; Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich; and of course, my great friend Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson from Texas. Thank you for being here.

Thank you all for joining me today. I wanted to talk with you a little bit about the upcoming election and the profound importance that I believe it has for all of you and for all of those about whom you care.

You know, first, let me say I feel so much gratitude as I approach the end of my service as President. If anybody had told me when we started that we would end with 22 million new jobs and the highest homeownership in history and the highest rate of business formation in history and the lowest minority unemployment in history, the lowest recorded African-American poverty rate in history, the lowest child poverty

rate in 20 years, lowest welfare rolls in 32 years—cut in half—the lowest crime rate in 26 years, a reduction in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in a dozen years, record rates of college-going—all these things that have happened—I would have been very grateful. And I am grateful.

But today what I want to say to you is that the country is in good shape. We're moving in the right direction. But we are now in a position that we were not in 8 years ago, where we have to ask ourselves not what do we do to get out of the ditch, but what do we do to build the future of our dreams for our children?

And we're in a position to choose, which is what voting ought to be about. I've done my best to try to urge the American people and all the political actors to make this a very positive election but a vigorous debate. And they're having their debate, and I don't have to contribute to that, but everybody knows how I feel. But I want to talk about what all this means.

First of all, as Alexis said, we've been driven here for 8 years by some pretty simple ideas. One is that there ought to be opportunity for every responsible citizen. And that meant that we had to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. The other is that we ought to build one America across all the lines that divide us, which meant that we had to take exceptional efforts to make sure that there was participation and empowerment. And finally, I have sought to create in our country the capacity to lead the world for peace and freedom in the post-cold-war era, recognizing that the world is growing ever more interdependent and that every part of the world is important to us.

So we've worked hard at all this. Alexis talked about the economy and the participation of African-Americans in the administration. Since I've been here, we've had—of my total appointees—12 percent of the Cabinet, 14 percent of the total appointees, and 17 percent of the Federal judicial nominees.

But we've worked hard to affect America at the grassroots level. That's what the empowerment zone program is about, that the Vice President has done such a good job of running these last 8 years. That's what the new markets initiative we're desperately trying to pass through the Congress in the closing days, to give people the same incentives to invest in underdeveloped areas in America we give people to invest in underdeveloped areas in Latin America and Africa and Asia and other parts of the world. And I feel very good about that.

But I'm grateful that we've got childhood immunizations over 90 percent for the first time in the history of our Nation. I'm also grateful for the progress in education. We had a theory that—we're only spending about 7 percent of the total education budget. It's a State constitutional responsibility, a local administrative responsibility, but a national priority. And when I came to the Presidency, I had already been seriously involved in education for about 14 years. And I wanted to put our money—first, I wanted to get the money up, because we were down below 6 percent and heading south, and so we wanted to turn that around. And even as we got rid of the deficit and turned a $290 billion deficit into a $230 billion surplus, we doubled our investment in education and training. A lot of that money has been in Secretary Herman's shop.

But when we looked at the schools, what we wanted to do was to focus on what the research and the educators say worked: to get high standards, genuine accountability, and then support for the schools and the teachers and the kids and the parents to succeed, to meet the standards. And we've worked very hard. We've expanded preschool. We've invested more in teacher training. We're putting—I believe that we have gotten an agreement for the third year of our 100,000 teacher initiative to have smaller classes in the early grades.

The Vice President worked hard to get something called the E-rate in the telecommunications bill so that all of our schools could afford to log on to the Internet. Since we started this project in 1994, the number of schools hooked to the Internet have gone from 14 to 95 percent, the number of classrooms from 3 percent to 65 percent. So we're moving in the right direction.

The number of States with really good State-based standards in core curriculums has gone from about 3 percent—excuse me, gone from 11 States or 14 States to 49 States. And we began a few years ago to say to the States that get Federal money, "Look, you've got to identify these failing schools—identify them and do something to turn them around." And we wanted to have a tougher accountability standard, but so far we haven't persuaded the Congress

to do that. But all over the country, schools are turning around.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day, that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids doing reading and math below grade level, to just 2 years later, 74 percent of the kids doing reading, math at or above grade level. I've seen it in predominantly African-American schools, predominantly Hispanic schools. I've seen it in mixed race schools. I was in a predominantly white rural school in western Kentucky a few months ago, where 3 years ago they had 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level; it's 57 percent now. They had 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level; it's 70 percent now. They had zero kids doing science at or above grade level; it's 63 percent now. So this is happening all over America, and I'm grateful for that.

I'm grateful that we passed the biggest expansion in college aids, from Pell grants to the HOPE scholarships to work-study programs to the AmeriCorps program, since the GI bill. And we've got college-going at an all-time high. A couple of years ago, for the first time in history, the African-American high school graduation rate equaled the white graduation rate for the first time in our history. And over the last 6 years, the taking of advanced placement courses by our high school students has increased over 50 percent, but it's up 300 percent for Latino kids and 500 percent for African-American kids. This is a good thing.

So I say all this to say the country is going in the right direction. But the bedrock, the thing that made so much of the rest of it possible—and I didn't talk much about the crime rate. It's gone down every year—more police, more prevention. The after-school programs have a lot to do with that. We were serving no kids with Federal money in after-school programs when I became President. Today, we're serving 800,000, and if our budget prevails in the closing days of this Congress, we'll go to 1.6 million children served in after-school programs—very important.

But let me come back to basics. When I became President, the economy was in trouble, and we were paralyzed by high interest rates and a crushing annual deficit which had quadrupled the debt in 4 years. So as we look ahead, I think we have to say our work is not done. And I would just like to mention four things that I think are important, profoundly important to the American people, without regard to race.

Number one, we've got to keep this prosperity going. And my view is, that means we ought to say—that means, first, we've got to keep paying down the debt until we get out of debt, and that will keep interest rates down. We'll figure out what it costs to do that. Then what's left, we can spend. And we'll spend some of it with a tax cut, but a good deal of it to invest in education and health care, in the environment, in our national security, and in our future.

Now, that's basically the program that our party and our nominees have laid out. Pay the debt down; keep interest rates down. Take what's left; have a tax cut we can afford; focus it on the needs of middle class people for college education, for child care, for long-term care for elderly and disabled people, for retirement savings, and for lower income working people with a bunch of kids that need more help than we're giving them. But then invest, continue to invest in these other areas. Now, one virtue of that is that if the money doesn't come in, you don't have to spend it. But if you give it all away in a tax cut on the front end, it's not there, whether it comes in or not.

But I just want to say, I believe that the progressive party in America ought to be for getting America out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President. Why? Because it gets the interest rates down. We believe it will keep interest rates about a percent lower than if you take the alternative course, which is a $1.3 trillion tax cut, which gives you a $300 billion extra interest bill—because you cut interest payments if you cut the debt—and a $1 trillion Social Security privatization program and a $500 billion spending package. If you have $2 trillion in projected surpluses—and that's really bigger than it's going to be, but let's just assume that—and you spend 1.3 on a tax cut and 300 billion on interest and 500 billion on spending—with me so far? That's 2.1—and a trillion dollars on privatizing Social Security, this is—forget about all the zeros. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. You're in deficit.

You know, life has been good to a lot of you in this room, and you've worked hard. And some of you in this room would be better off the day after with that program—people like lawyer Latham there, you know? [*Laughter*] But look, we've tried it that way, and all I can tell

you is, if you keep interest rates lower, that's better for everybody, including the well-off. And it keeps this economy going, and it makes everything else possible.

One percent lower interest rates, which is what you get if you stay out of deficit and keep paying that debt down, one percent a year over 10 years is worth the following: $390 billion in lower home mortgage payments; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments. Never mind—now, that's a $435 billion tax cut in the form of lower mortgages. Never mind the lower interest rates on credit cards and the lower business loan rate, which means easier to start a small business, more business expansion, more jobs, higher income, and a better stock market.

So, number one is, what's the best way to keep the prosperity going? Question number two, how do you build on the progress of the last 8 years with a cleaner environment, with a lower crime rate, with the welfare rolls cut in half, with the schools improving, the college-going rate going up, the number of people without health insurance going down? How do you do that?

Well, I believe you have to have some funds to invest in helping working people whose children we're now insuring get health insurance, too; helping people who leave the work force when they're 55 and don't have health insurance anymore buy into Medicare; in adding this prescription drug benefit for seniors; in funding the college tuition program Vice President Gore has recommended, tuition deduction for college. I think these are very important—and continuing to invest until all our kids who need preschool and after-school have it; continuing to invest because you're going to have 2 million teachers retire over the next 10 years, and we've got to replace them. And if we keep unemployment low and the economy high, we'll have to pay them more, do signing bonuses, do a lot of work on that. So how do you build on the progress? I think you don't just stay still, but the question is, are you going to change in the same direction you're moving in or take a different direction?

So, question number one, how do you keep the prosperity going? Question number two, how do you build on the progress? Question number three, how do you keep building one America?

We've come a long way, but we still have real challenges. We have to figure out a way to work through this racial profiling issue, to stop it without in any way giving anybody the impression that we want any criminal to get away with anything. That's not what this is about. We all want strong law enforcement; we want a safe society. We like the fact that the crime rate is going down, but we don't like people being targeted just because of who they are, rather than whether there is a reasonable suspicion that they've committed a crime.

How do you deal with the fact that we still have a lot of hate crimes in America, based not just on race but on sexual orientation, even a few every year based on disability? Do we need a hate crimes bill? I think we do.

How do you deal with the fact that even though I have named 62 African-American Federal judges—3 times as many as the previous two administrations combined—we still don't have a black judge on the fourth circuit, where there are more black Americans than any other Federal circuit in America?

How do we keep closing the digital divide? It's still out there, within our country and beyond our borders. And I could just go on and on and on. We have big challenges in our continuing effort to build one America.

How are we going to do more to guarantee equal pay for women? I don't know if you saw the news story today, but now married couples with children where both the man and the woman are in the work force are now a majority of married couples—now a majority. Fifty-nine percent of the women in America with a child one year or younger are in the work force now—59 percent. And yet, there is still a yawning pay gap, which is not only bad for women; it's bad for the men that are married to them. [*Laughter*] I mean, this is not a good deal here.

You know, I came late to this issue because my wife made more money than me until I got elected President. [*Laughter*] And now I'm going to let her try public service—I hope—and I'll see if I can make more money. [*Laughter*] I want you to laugh and have a good time, but this is serious. How are we going to build one America?

So, one, how do you keep the prosperity going? Two, how do you build on the progress we're making in every aspect of our social life? Three, how do we keep building one America?

Four, how do we create a world that is safer for our children, more just, more decent, and more prosperous?

For me, passing the trade bill for Africa and the Caribbean is an important part of that. For me, immigration fairness is important to that. For me, this debt relief initiative, which I am profoundly grateful—I must say, I've tried to emphasize to people, the parties do not fight over everything in Washington. This election ought to be about where our honest differences are. But one of the most moving things to me in this congressional session has been, we actually reached a bipartisan agreement to have America pay its fair share of relieving the debt of the poorest countries in the world that agree to give honest government and put the savings into education, health care, and development. This is a huge deal.

But we've got to keep building that kind of world. I'm proud of the role we played for peace in Northern Ireland. I'm proud of our renewed efforts in Africa. I'm proud of what we did in the Balkans, in Kosovo and Bosnia, to stop ethnic cleansing. We did the right thing. I'm glad we're still struggling to try to build peace in the Middle East through this very difficult period that's taken a lot of our minds and hearts, those of us who have been working on this for the last 8 years.

But that's another thing I want to say. The African-American community should, in my judgment, support America's increasing ties to the rest of the world in a positive way because we are an immigrant nation. Every one of us came here from somewhere else, except the Native Americans, and even their ancestors at one time probably crossed the Bering Straits when it was all land. We all got here from somewhere else.

And so, I asked you to come here today because this is an unusual election season for us. In my lifetime, we have never had an opportunity to go to the polls with so much peace, so much prosperity, with the absence of domestic crisis or looming foreign threat. So we actually are required, all of us, to kind of look inside ourselves and say, what are our dreams here; what is really at stake here; does it matter whether I and all my friends vote here?

And I wanted you to come here just to say, you know, I'm not running for anything—[*laughter*]—but I don't believe there's been an election where it was any more important to vote, because the American people, in a fundamental sense in this season, are free to chart their own future. And all the best stuff is still out there.

You know, we're going to have young women bringing babies home from the hospital within a couple years with a life expectancy of 90 years because of the human genome project. You'll get your little card, tell you what your kid's gene map is like, what your child's problems are going to be, and the following 10 things you can do to dramatically increase your child's life expectancy.

We're going to have older people—already if you live to be 65, your life expectancy is 82 years. We're going to have older people able to cure Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, roll back some kinds of cancer, even, that we can't deal with now. It's going to be astonishing. But we're also going to have all our medical and financial records on somebody's computer somewhere, and we've got to figure out how we set up a system so we get to say yes before somebody looks at them. These are big issues.

And the thing that I would like to say about the Vice President is that, after 8 years, I know he makes good decisions. I know he has good values, and I know he understands the future. He thinks about this stuff all the time. And that's very, very important. Senator Lieberman I've known for 30 years, and I feel the same way about him. But this is an election in which the American people—they don't have to really believe anything hateful about anybody that is running. Maybe some people find that boring. I think it's wonderful. [*Laughter*] You can actually say, "Look, we got all of these good people running for office who love their families, and they love their country, and they will do their very best to do the right thing. It's what they believe."

So you've just got to decide what you believe. But you cannot afford to let the opportunity of maybe more than a generation, maybe 50 years—it may be 50 years before we have another election like this. On the other hand, we could have another one just like this in 4 years, if we do the right thing now—if we do the right thing now.

I think of the first Presidential campaign I took a part in, in 1968. It was an agony; 1972, when I met Eddie Bernice Johnson, it was an agony; 1976, we were full of hope, but there were also a lot of problems in the country; 1988, the country was in the dumps again; 1984, it

was morning in America, but as my Senator, Dale Bumpers, used to say, if you let me write $200 billion worth of hot checks every year, I could show you a good time, too. [*Laughter*] And so eventually the chickens came home to roost there.

We've got a good thing going here. But shame on us if we don't thank God for our good fortune and tell everybody how important it is to make a decision. And believe me, not showing up is a decision, and it's the wrong decision. Not showing up is a decision, and it's the wrong decision.

So I just wanted you to come here today so I could tell you that I think it's important that you, and anybody you can talk to, go out into the community and say, "Look, it might be 50 years before we get a deal like this again, and here is what I think is at issue: How do you keep the prosperity going; how do you build on the progress; how do you build one America, keep on doing that; and how do we prepare for the future and do these big things?" It's really, really important.

Lastly, depending on the makeup of the Congress, it's important that somebody be here that stops some of the more extreme things that would have happened if I hadn't had the great good fortune, thanks to so many of you, to be standing here in the way of some things, as well as trying to get some things going.

So I just want to—I have learned—one of the reporters asked me earlier today if I really thought it was bad that I had had to work and hadn't been out on the campaign trail, and I said, "No, I'm not running, and I shouldn't have been out before now." And I'm actually probably the only person in the room that's been on the other end of this deal, because I remember when President Reagan came to Arkansas in 1984, and he was more popular than you can imagine down there. And we both did just fine in the elections, so—[*laughter*]—if you get my drift.

I don't seek to tell anybody how to vote, but I do seek to say, based on my experience—because everybody knows who I'm for—but based on my experience, which unfortunately is getting longer every year, I don't know when we'll ever have another time like this. I've done everything I could to turn this country around, to pull this country together, to move our country forward. But we've got this huge opportunity here, that we can literally paint a picture of the future and make it happen, if we keep the prosperity going, instead of put it at risk by going into deficit; if we build on the progress of the last 8 years, instead of reverse those policies which brought it; if we keep working to build one America; and then if we take home the big challenges of the future.

I just think, if you go out and tell people that, tell young people that, they will understand what is at issue, and they will show up. And in a free society, that's all any of us can ask: Show up. Know what the differences are; have clarity on that. Make your decision, and the rest of us will happily embrace it. I think it will be quite a good decision if we get everybody there.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:58 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alvin Brown, Senior Adviser to the Vice President for Urban Affairs; Jena Roscoe, Associate Director of Public Liaison, White House Office of African-American Outreach and Youth; John J. Johnson, director, National Programs Department, NAACP; Norman Hill, president, A. Philip Randolph Institute; Wade Henderson, executive director, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, executive director and chief operating officer, Black Leadership Forum, Inc.; Weldon H. Latham, senior partner, Holland and Knight, and general counsel, National Coalition of Minority Businesses; and former Senator Dale Bumpers.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Provide for a Plaque Commemorating Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" Speech

October 27, 2000

I am proud to sign legislation today authorizing placement of a marker commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial. Few leaders in American history have spoken with the eloquence, passion, and moral force that Dr. King did that day, uttering words that, a generation later, still echo in our hearts.

His call to action captured the spirit of an America struggling to fulfill its promise of freedom, of a democracy yet to honor all of its citizens. Even today, his words still inspire millions of people around the world who believe in the extraordinary power of nonviolent change to bring about social justice.

Let all who visit the Lincoln Memorial pause to reflect upon Dr. King's words and strive to make that dream real in their hearts and daily lives.

NOTE: H.R. 2879, approved October 27, was assigned Public Law No. 106–365.

Statement on Signing the Executive Order Establishing the Commission on Workers, Communities, and Economic Change in the New Economy

October 27, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign an Executive order creating a Commission on Workers, Communities, and Economic Change in the New Economy. I would like to thank Representative Ken Bentsen for his leadership in helping workers and communities adapt to the new economy and for working with my administration to form this Commission.

International trade, technology, globalization, and the changing nature of work present extraordinary new opportunities for Americans but can also create real disruptions for American workers and communities. Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to empower workers and communities to take advantage of the many opportunities in this new economy, but there is still more we can do. This Commission will undertake a careful examination of the effectiveness of existing Federal programs to help workers and communities adjust to economic change and will identify the best practices of employers, communities, and public-private partnerships that have responded successfully to economic dislocations. The Commission's report, due next year, will help communities, employers, and workers respond to and benefit from these changes in our economy.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Signing Fiscal Year 2001 Appropriations Legislation

October 27, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4635, the "Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001" and the "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2001."

This Act will fund vital housing, community development, environmental, disaster assistance, veterans, space, and science programs. Specifically, it provides funding for the Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban

Development (HUD), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and several other agencies.

The Act funds a number of my Administration's priorities, including the Corporation for National and Community Service. National Service gives young people the opportunity to obtain funding for a college education while addressing community challenges that range from tutoring children and serving in community policing projects to building housing for the homeless. In addition, the Act will allow students in elementary schools, high schools, and colleges to participate in service-learning programs that provide substantial academic and social benefits, including the opportunity to learn responsible citizenship.

I am pleased that the Act provides full funding of HUD's highest priority: $13 billion for the renewal of all Section 8 contracts, thereby assuring continuation of HUD rental subsidies for low-income tenants in privately owned housing. I am also pleased that the Act provides $453 million for 79,000 incremental housing assistance vouchers for low-income households. In addition, the Act adequately funds programs to help distressed communities. These programs include Community Development Block Grants, assistance to the homeless, the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, and rural and urban empowerment zones. The CDFI Fund helps to create a network of community development banks across the country, thereby spurring the flow of capital to distressed neighborhoods and their currently underserved, low-income residents. Likewise, the rural and urban empowerment zones will help to revitalize communities so that they can take advantage of the strength of the economy and help those left behind in our economic boom. Additionally, $1.1 billion is provided for homeless assistance grants, enabling localities to continue to shape and implement comprehensive, flexible, coordinated "continuum of care" approaches to solving homelessness.

I am pleased that the Act adequately funds Fair Housing programs, which will enable HUD to expand significantly its activities aimed at reducing the level of housing discrimination nationwide.

The Act provides $7.8 billion for the EPA, which will enable the agency to carry out programs to protect our environment. I am pleased that the bill adequately funds the EPA's efforts to enforce environmental laws, enabling the agency to help protect the health and quality of life of Americans. I am pleased that the Act minimizes the inclusion of anti-environmental riders. Without my Administration's efforts, these riders would have given special deals to special interests, such as preventing action at numerous sites needing cleanup of sediments contaminated with PCBs and other chemicals, delaying an EPA rule to reduce harmful emissions from diesel-fueled trucks and buses, and hampering commonsense initiatives to help businesses and consumers conserve energy and save money.

I am disappointed, however, that the final bill includes anti-environmental riders that my Administration opposed. I continue to oppose the use of the budget process to adopt these kinds of proposals without the benefit of full and open public debate through the regular legislative process. I urge Congress to refrain from sending me any additional anti-environmental riders on remaining bills. Although I am signing this legislation into law with these riders attached, I am directing the agencies to consider ways to implement them that will have the least harmful effect on the environment.

I am pleased that the Act sustains U.S. leadership across the scientific frontiers. This Act maintains the Nation's investment in discovery through innovation, which has fueled unprecedented economic growth for the past decade. The Act contains a $529 million increase for the National Science Foundation (NSF)—the largest increase ever—for a total investment of $4.4 billion that will boost university-based research and ensure balanced support for all science and engineering disciplines. Increased investments will spur new discoveries in the fields of information technology, nanotechnology, biocomplexity, and other areas of fundamental science and engineering. The Act also adequately funds the new Scholarship for Service program at NSF, a component of the Federal Cyber Services, which will provide scholarships to students pursuing academic careers in Information Assurance. One of the five education and training initiatives in the National Plan for Information Systems Protection, this program supports the Administration's efforts to

protect the Nation's critical infrastructures by increasing the number of skilled technologists working for the Federal Government. In exchange for up to 2 years of scholarship support, students will work for the Federal Government for an amount of time at least equal to the scholarship period.

This Act will also help to expand our investments in space exploration by including a $684 million increase, to $14.3 billion, for NASA. The Act fully funds the Space Launch Initiative that will improve the economics of space transportation dramatically. The additional resources will help the agency meet its human space flight needs more safely and at lower cost through the development of a new generation of space launch vehicles and enable NASA to establish a sustained presence at key research sites in our solar system.

I am pleased that this Act adequately funds FEMA to help cope with unforeseen disasters. The $1.3 billion in contingent emergency funds, along with the $297 million appropriated, ensures that the country is well-prepared to deal with unforeseen natural disasters.

I am also pleased that the Act provides my requested $22.4 billion for veterans' medical care, benefits, and the National Cemetery System. This $1.5 billion increase over last year represents the largest increase ever requested by an Administration. It will allow us to treat more veterans in the medical care system with high-quality and timely care, improve the delivery of veterans' disability and education benefits, and ensure that our Nation's veterans are honored in cemeteries that are maintained as National Shrines. The bill also takes the long-overdue steps of improving benefits for World War II Filipino veterans with service-connected disabilities who live in the United States, by providing the same disability, burial, health care, and long-term care benefits that other veterans receive.

I am also pleased today to be able to sign into law the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2001, now that the Congress has dropped an unacceptable rider that would have prevented the Army Corps of Engineers from revising its operating manual for the Missouri River, which is 40 years old and needs to be updated. This action will enable the Army Corps to move forward to achieve a reasonable balance among the competing interests of the many people who seek to use this great American river, while addressing the needs of the fish and wildlife species that depend upon it. To ensure a thorough discussion and review of the issues raised concerning revisions to the manual, the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Interior will consult fully with other Federal agencies, with State and local officials, and with interested stakeholders on the specific measures that the Army Corps may need to undertake during FY 2001. As part of this effort, the Army Corps will work with the parties to explore alternatives to, and modifications of, any proposed Federal actions on the lower Missouri River that may affect downstream landowners or barge traffic. Furthermore, the Army Corps will not make changes to its river operations under this legislation that will have significant adverse impacts on the downstream landowners or barge traffic.

I am disappointed that the final bill does not include my request for the CALFED Bay-Delta program or sufficient funds to restore endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest, and includes no funds for new construction projects for the Florida Everglades and the Challenge 21 and recreation modernization programs, or for construction of the emergency flood control outlet at Devils Lake, North Dakota. These omissions are especially striking in light of the bill's inclusion of nearly 240 unrequested Corps of Engineers projects totaling over $300 million.

I want to acknowledge the efforts the Congress has made in appropriating $20 million for the establishment of the Delta Regional Authority, a Federal-State partnership focused on promoting economic growth in the Mississippi Delta region.

Finally, I am pleased that the final bill provides $17.8 billion for the Department of Energy (DOE). This funding supports environmental restoration projects at DOE sites throughout the country and cutting-edge scientific research such as the Spallation Neutron Source. It also includes essential funds for maintaining the safety and reliability of our nuclear weapons stockpile. Although the bill does not include my full request for the Climate Change Technology Initiative, it does provide almost $70 million more than the FY 2000 enacted level. Included in this Initiative is $375 million for solar and renewable energy, more than a 20 percent increase over the FY 2000 level for this program. The bill also provides $203 million in additional funding to address the damage caused

by the Cerro Grande fire. I am concerned, however, that the bill contains limits on the term of office for the first person appointed to the position of Under Secretary for Nuclear Security at the Department of Energy and would restrict the President's ability to remove that official to cases of "inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance of office." Particularly in light of the Under Secretary's significant executive authority and responsibility in nuclear security, I understand the phrase "neglect of duty" to include, among other things, a failure to comply with the lawful directives or policies of the President.

I am proud that my Administration and the Congress were able to work together successfully on two bills to resolve our respective differences and produce an Act that effectively addresses critical needs of the American people.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

October 27, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4635, approved October 27, was assigned Public Law No. 106–377. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 28. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

The President's Radio Address
October 28, 2000

Good morning. Here in Washington, after months of partisan delay by the congressional majority, Congress still hasn't completed its work on the budget, even though the budget year ended a month ago.

Yet, when Congress has acted in a spirit of bipartisanship, we've made remarkable progress. Today I want to talk to you about the most significant step we've ever taken to secure the health and safety of women at home and around the world. It's a new law I'm signing called the "Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act."

In America today, domestic violence is the number one health risk for women between the ages of 15 and 44. Close to a third of all women murdered in this country were killed by their husbands, former husbands, or boyfriends. Every 12 seconds another woman is beaten. That's nearly 900,000 victims every year. And statistics tell us that in half the families where a spouse is beaten, the children are beaten, too.

Domestic violence is a criminal activity. It devastates its victims and affects us all. It increases health costs, keeps people from showing up to work, prevents them from performing at their best. It destroys families, relationships, and lives, and it tears at the fabric of who we are as a people.

That's why, as part of our 1994 crime bill, Al Gore and I fought hard to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act—the foundation of the bill I will be signing. That law imposed tough new penalties for actions of violence against women. It helped to train police, prosecutors, and judges to better understand domestic violence, to recognize its symptoms when they see them, and to take steps to prevent them. It gave grants to shelters that are havens for victims of domestic violence, and it set up a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week toll-free national hotline to help women get the emergency assistance and counseling they need, to find a shelter, and to report abuse to the authorities.

Most of all, the Violence Against Women Act worked. The hotline has been a tremendous help. More than half a million victims have found assistance by calling it. Police officers who once shied away from so-called family squabbles are now getting involved in saving lives. Best of all, violence against women by an intimate partner has fallen 21 percent since 1993.

The bill I'm signing will keep that progress going by keeping the Violence Against Women Act the law of the land. It provides new resources for Native American communities, restores protections for battered immigrant women, and, for the first time, extends the law to cover women abused by their boyfriends.

The new law contains another provision, too, one that will strengthen our fight against the insidious global practice of trafficking in human beings. Every year, a million or more women,

children, and men are forced or tricked into lives of utter misery—into prostitution, sweatshop work, domestic or farm labor, or debt bondage. This is slavery, plain and simple. And it's not just something that happens far from our shores. In fact, each year as many as 50,000 people are brought to the United States for this cruel purpose. We must do our part to stop those responsible for these crimes and to help their victims.

The bill I'm signing will help to do that. It establishes the first Federal law that specifically targets this problem, setting out harsh penalties for those who trade in human beings, requiring convicted traffickers to forfeit their assets and make restitution to those they have exploited. The law gives victims better access to services like shelters, counseling, and medical care. It enables victims to stay in the United States so they can receive those services and helps law enforcement agencies to prosecute the traffickers. It increases our assistance to other countries, as well, to help them detect and punish this pernicious practice, and it provides for sanctions for any countries that refuse to take steps to end trafficking in women and children. I worked hard for these provisions. They build on what we've been doing at home and abroad to address the problem.

We see in the success of this landmark legislation once again that there is no real secret to getting things done in Washington. When we put progress over partisanship, we get results. When we work together, we get results.

Now, we've shown once again we can work together by passing this landmark legislation to fight violence against women. Let's follow the rule and finish all the work the American people expect of us. It's time for Congress to set partisanship aside on the last two unfinished bills and complete a budget with smaller class sizes, modern classrooms, family tax cuts, and a higher minimum wage—one that honors our values and secures a better future for our children and our great Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:57 p.m. on October 27 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 28. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, title IV of Public Law 103–322. H.R. 3244, approved October 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–386.

Statement on Signing the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000

October 28, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3244, the "Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000" (the "Act"). This landmark legislation accomplishes a number of important objectives and Administration priorities. It strengthens and improves upon the Nation's efforts to fight violence against women. It also provides important new tools and resources to combat the worldwide scourge of trafficking in persons and provides vital assistance to victims of trafficking. And it helps American victims of terrorism abroad to collect court-awarded compensation.

This legislation builds on the "Violence Against Women Act of 1994" (VAWA), which created new Federal crimes and enhanced penalties to combat sexual assault and domestic violence, and established new grant programs for law enforcement agencies, prosecution offices, and victim services organizations to fight violence against women. It also authorized funding for education, outreach, and prevention programs, which have helped to create coordinated community responses to violence against women throughout the United States. While we can certainly take pride in what we have accomplished since 1994, we know we must do more. To that end, H.R. 3244 reauthorizes VAWA and improves on the original bill by establishing several new initiatives.

I am particularly pleased that H.R. 3244 reauthorizes VAWA's grant programs through Fiscal

Year 2005. The Act improves several current programs by setting aside 5 percent of VAWA grant funds for tribes and directing resources toward certain traditionally underserved populations, such as victims of dating violence, older women, and women with disabilities. The Act requires certain VAWA's grantees to facilitate the filing and service of protection orders without cost to the victims. The Act authorizes a civil legal assistance program for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, who desperately need help with legal matters related to their abuse. The Act authorizes appropriations through Fiscal Year 2005 for the National Domestic Violence Hotline, battered women's shelters, and rape prevention and education grants. H.R. 3244 requires national standards and protocols for conducting sexual assault forensic examinations, as well as establishes supervised visitation programs, which will help ensure that children are safe when visiting with their parents and that battered women remain safe during visitation exchanges.

The Act also will improve the ability of Federal prosecutors to prosecute interstate crimes of domestic violence, stalking, and violations of protection orders. The Act creates an interstate cyberstalking offense. The Act enhances the enforcement of protection orders across State and tribal lines by prohibiting registration as a prerequisite to enforcement of out-of-state or tribal orders and by prohibiting notification of a batterer without the victim's consent when an order is registered in a new jurisdiction. Moreover, the Act amends the Parental Kidnaping Prevention Act to expand emergency jurisdiction to cover domestic violence, thus enabling victims who flee abuse to obtain custody orders without returning to the jurisdiction where the batterer resides.

Of great importance, H.R. 3244 restores and expands VAWA's protections for battered immigrants by helping them escape abuse and by holding batterers accountable. The Act establishes a new nonimmigrant visa classification, which will offer greater protection to victims, while strengthening the ability of law enforcement agencies to detect, investigate, and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other violent crimes.

I am confident that enactment of these provisions and the other improvements to VAWA contained in H.R. 3244 will substantially enhance our efforts to end violence against women in America and provide essential services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Similarly, the Act's anti-trafficking provisions represent a major step forward in my Administration's ongoing effort to eradicate modern-day slavery. In 1998, on International Women's Day, I issued an Executive Memorandum directing my Administration to combat this insidious human rights abuse through a three-part strategy of prosecuting traffickers, protecting and assisting trafficking victims, and preventing trafficking. We worked hard with Democrats and Republicans in Congress to craft comprehensive and effective legislation that would strengthen our ability to implement this strategy. I am pleased that this bipartisan effort has resulted in this landmark anti-trafficking legislation.

Over the past several years, we have taken every opportunity to shine a bright light on this dark corner of the criminal underworld, in part by continually raising with leaders around the world the need to work together to combat this intolerable and reprehensible practice. Last spring, the United States and the Philippines co-hosted a regional conference attended by over 20 Asian and Pacific nations to develop a regional action plan to combat trafficking and protect trafficking victims. The United States proposed and recently concluded 2 years of negotiations on a United Nations protocol to combat trafficking in persons which, for the first time, will require countries everywhere to criminalize trafficking and will provide a framework for enhanced protection of and assistance to victims.

I want to thank the First Lady, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General for their leadership on this important issue. The Secretary of State, as Chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, has led my Administration's interagency development and coordination of international and domestic anti-trafficking efforts. The First Lady has worked tirelessly to bring this issue out of the shadows. She has helped to mobilize the international community to address trafficking as both a human rights issue and a global crime problem. The Attorney General created the National Worker Exploitation Task Force to work in partnership with other agencies, particularly the Department of Labor, to coordinate the investigation and prosecution of trafficking and other cases of exploitation. The Task Force is training our Nation's

Federal law enforcement officials and has established a hotline to report trafficking cases.

The Act creates new felony criminal offenses to combat trafficking with respect to slavery or peonage; sex trafficking in children; and unlawful confiscation of the victim's passport or other documents in furtherance of the trafficking scheme. It also creates a new "forced labor" felony criminal offense that will provide Federal prosecutors with the tools needed to prosecute the sophisticated forms of nonphysical coercion that traffickers use today to exploit their victims. Under H.R. 3244, any person convicted of any of these new criminal offenses would be subject to forfeiture of his or her assets and required to pay full restitution to his or her victims. These new offenses and the tougher sentences called for by this legislation will assist Federal prosecutors in ensuring that traffickers are convicted and appropriately punished for their crimes.

The Act also authorizes essential services and protections for victims of trafficking. Within the United States, H.R. 3244 establishes a Cabinet-level interagency task force to combat and monitor trafficking, provides eligibility to trafficking victims for a broad range of Federal benefits, and requires procedures to improve Federal law enforcement's identification of trafficking cases and to provide for trafficking victims' safety and assistance while in the Government's custody. The Act also authorizes the Attorney General to provide grants to develop programs to assist victims of trafficking. A cornerstone of H.R. 3244 is that it makes trafficking victims eligible for a temporary nonimmigrant visa so that they can remain in the United States to help law enforcement in the prosecution of traffickers and receive needed protection and assistance.

The Act establishes international initiatives to enhance economic opportunity for potential victims and public awareness programs on the dangers of trafficking and available protections for victims. The Act encourages other countries to take steps to implement protection and assistance for trafficking victims and to prosecute traffickers, and authorizes the President to assist countries to help them meet certain minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The President may withhold assistance from countries that are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with these minimum standards. Traffickers can themselves be sanctioned. H.R. 3244 also expands existing reporting on the nature and extent of trafficking in each foreign country, which will build upon the Department of State's current coverage of this issue.

Traffickers who prey on vulnerable women and children should have no place to hide, and victims of trafficking must be treated with dignity and afforded vital assistance and protection. I expect this legislation to be of immense benefit in rooting out this despicable practice and in helping future Administrations carry on the vital work that this Administration has begun.

The Act also contains new authorities to compensate American victims of terrorism and their families. I am pleased that the Congress and the executive branch have been able to reach agreement on legislation that reflects our shared goals: providing compensation for the victims of international terrorism and protecting the President's ability to act on behalf of the Nation on important foreign policy and national security issues.

There are certain provisions worth noting. First, those persons electing to receive 110 percent of their awarded compensatory damages with statutory interest and court-awarded sanctions relinquish all rights and claims to all amounts awarded and will be deemed to be compensated in full for their judgments. Those persons electing to receive 100 percent of their compensatory damages with statutory interest and court-awarded sanctions relinquish all rights and claims to compensatory damages and amounts awarded as judicial sanctions, and, necessarily, any related interest, costs and attorneys fees. So as not to interfere with important national interests, H.R. 3244 makes clear that persons who receive such payments are prohibited from attaching or executing against certain types of property in order to satisfy other amounts awarded.

Second, Congress has reaffirmed in this Act my statutory authority, which is the authority provided under the Trading with the Enemy Act (50 U.S.C. App. 5(b)), where appropriate and consistent with the national interest, to vest foreign assets located in the United States for the purpose, among other things, of assisting, and where appropriate, making payments to victims of terrorism.

Third, H.R. 3244 repeals the Presidential national security waiver, provided by section 117 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, which was applicable to

the requirements of subsections (a) and (b). Section 117(b), which amended the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act to permit awards of punitive damages against certain defendants in certain circumstances, as well as section 117(a), have never been operative because I executed the national security waiver on October 21, 1998. In its place, H.R. 3244 provides a national security waiver applicable to section 1610(f)(1) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, and addresses the other national security concerns covered by my earlier waiver by repealing section 117(b) of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, and modifying section 1610(f)(2) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. Upon my signing of H.R. 3244, I am exercising the discretion given to me by section 2002(f) of this Act to waive section 1610(f)(1) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act.

Fourth, H.R. 3244 makes the United States fully subrogated to the rights of the persons who receive payments under this Act, to the extent of the payments. The Congress reaffirms my authority to pursue these subrogated rights as claims or offsets against Iran in appropriate ways, including negotiations leading to any normalization process. In addition, no funds are permitted to be paid to Iran, or released to Iran, from property blocked under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act or the Foreign Military Sales Fund, until such claims have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the United States. The determination that the claims have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the United States will be subject to Presidential discretion.

This legislation is a measure of the United States Government's commitment to the victims of terrorism, to deter future acts of terrorism, and to defend the United States from its evils. It is not designed to preclude any other means to this end. The United States will continue to pursue an aggressive, comprehensive policy incorporating diplomacy, law enforcement, intelligence, and other means to protect its citizens.

In conclusion, I would like to recognize and congratulate the bipartisan sponsorship of, and support for, the "Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000." Its enactment is an achievement of which all involved may be justly proud. It will serve us well in the years ahead as we continue to do what is needed to detect and eradicate trafficking in persons, violence against women, and other reprehensible forms of criminal conduct.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 28, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3244, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, approved October 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–386.

Remarks on the Budget and Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 28, 2000

The President. Good afternoon.

Q. Got it right.

The President. I got it right. I'm making progress. [*Laughter*]

As I said yesterday, when this Congress has acted in a spirit of genuine bipartisanship, we have made profound progress. Yesterday I signed the VA/HUD bill that invests in the health of veterans, advances welfare reform with 75,000 housing vouchers, strengthens AmeriCorps, and invests in cutting-edge scientific research with the largest increase ever in the National Science Foundation. Earlier this month I signed an Interior bill that creates the largest appropriation for lands preservation in our Nation's history. I also look forward to signing the bipartisan foreign operations bill, which will fund our debt relief initiative for the poorest countries in the world.

And just a few moments ago, I signed a vitally important and bipartisan Agriculture appropriations bill. This legislation will fund our Nation's agriculture programs for the coming year and provided much need help to our farmers, our ranchers, our rural communities, who have

suffered everything from devastating droughts to low commodity prices.

It also contains the largest increase ever in development funding for rural and Native American communities that have not shared in our Nation's prosperity. It will help to create new businesses and expand current ones in small towns and rural areas. It will help rural communities attract new residents, and with funding for new health clinics and improved water systems, it will improve the quality of life all across rural America.

The bill also will help us provide humanitarian relief and development loans to countries that need help, and promote the sale of United States goods abroad. The bill modernizes our food inspection system with increased surveillance and more food inspectors.

Finally, this bill includes commonsense reforms that will let food stamp recipients own a dependable car and have decent housing. If we want people to go to work, they have to be able to get to work. They shouldn't have to choose between a car they need to get to their jobs and the nutrition and shelter they need for their children.

This is a good bill for America. It helps hard-hit farmers, ranchers, and rural communities; improves the safety of our food; and takes the next steps in welfare reform.

Of course, there are also things in the bill I don't like. It says it allows the importation of lower cost prescription drugs from other countries, but leaves the power of deciding whether or not to import these drugs to the drug companies, meaning it will do nothing for seniors and others struggling to pay high prescription drug bills.

It purports to allow the export of American products to Cuba, yet it makes it virtually impossible for family farmers to arrange the financing that enables such sales to take place. Moreover, the legislation is designed to impose new restriction on our efforts to foster people-to-people contacts and bring reform in Cuba.

It also includes objectionable trade provisions and doesn't restore food stamps for legal immigrants. And it contains fewer resources than I requested for clean water for farms and for climate change.

Nonetheless, I decided that, on balance, this bill advances the interests of the American people. That's why I signed it, and that's how progress is made, when we work together and have honorable compromise. No one gets everything he or she wants.

I still have the feeling the congressional majority has not yet decided whether they want to work with us in this way on the remaining bills, or just score points and leave town. On Medicare, we sent the majority a very detailed proposal. We said when it comes to more resources, the priority should not be HMO's but teaching hospitals, rural hospitals, home health agencies, children with disabilities, and pregnant women and children who are legal immigrants. The congressional leadership so far has virtually ignored that proposal.

The story is the same on taxes. We put forward a good-faith compromise and then offered to work to craft a bipartisan tax bill that meets the test of fairness to children, to seniors, to millions of Americans without health coverage, and to small business. The answer we got was disappointing: Instead of meeting with us, instead of working with the White House and/or congressional Democrats, the Republican leadership instead crafted their own partisan tax package and passed it on largely a party-line vote. Again, I'm asking the congressional leaders to instruct their tax negotiators to meet with ours tomorrow, so we can find common ground on tax relief for America's families.

We don't yet know how the education and health bill will work out. I hope the majority doesn't choose the path they took on the tax bill or the Commerce/State/Justice bill, for that matter. Instead, we should do what was done on the agriculture bill I signed today, on the VA/HUD bill, on the Interior bill—the bipartisan path that invariably leads us to progress.

We said very specifically what our schools need—smaller class sizes and modern classrooms, investments in accountability, turning around failing schools, and teacher quality. There's no secret about what the right course is. Our priorities are clear, and we're ready to work with them in good faith, just as we have on all other bills.

Again this morning, Congress voted for a stopgap spending bill for today and quickly left town for the weekend. That's like going to work in the morning, punching the clock, and going back home. Our budget team is working all weekend, ready to meet. We need to come together on a budget, meet on Medicare, work out a fair tax cut bill, raise the minimum wage, and pass the new markets legislation.

Tonight we turn back the clocks, and we gain an hour. We ought to put that extra hour to good use. We're here, we're ready, and we need to finish the job.

Thank you.

Continuing Resolutions and Relations With Congress

Q. Mr. President, does it bother you that your insistence on just single-day extensions of the emergency spending bill has provoked considerable anger and irritation on the Capitol? Trent Lott says it's humiliating. Arlen Specter said you're intimidating Congress—I'm sorry, Trent Lott said it was harassment. Does that bother you? Do you think this works against you?

The President. Well, I hope not. I'm not trying to harass them. I'm just trying to get them finished and get out of town. They want to go home and campaign, and they have a right to. They need to campaign, but they need to finish their jobs.

And I think it's highly—it's frustrating for Senator Lott because the real problem here is that the rightwing of the Republican caucus in the Senate so far has not permitted the Republicans to meet with the Democrats and work out a compromise on these last bills, as we have on all the others.

Now, we're working together on the Labor/HHS bill, which is the education bill and human services bill. But on the tax bill and on the appropriation for Commerce/State/Justice, they haven't permitted him to work with us. And he's in a very difficult position. I'm very sympathetic with him. I'm not trying to harass them. But if we kept passing these 4- and 5-day continuing resolutions, we'll just never get our work done. And they are coming back tomorrow night. Last week they came back on Monday night. So if we could make an agreement tomorrow night, they could be out of here by Monday, and that would give them—they could go home 8 days and take their case to the American people. That's all I'm trying to do.

Q. Mr. President, after you spoke out yesterday, the House Speaker said he believed you were being forced by House Democrats to veto the tax cut bill and to keep lawmakers in session in order to, A, prevent Republicans from getting a victory before election day, and also to force some confrontation for election-year gain. What do you say to the Speaker?

The President. Well, that's not true. I mean, look at what—I mean, I have—for 3 days in a row now, I have lavished praise on the Republicans, as well as the Democrats, where we have worked together. And in each case I've told you the things that I didn't agree with, that they wanted in the bills, that we accepted. So we're not trying to force a confrontation.

I will say again, look at the facts here. We haven't finished the education bill because we are still arguing over one issue, but I have not criticized them. We're working in good faith to try to work through this.

There are two pieces of legislation, and two only, in this entire Congress that they basically have refused to meet with us on. They said, "We heard you, and here's the best we can do. Take it or leave it." And they're in that position because of the power of the rightwing of their caucus in the Senate and the House. And I understand; it's a very difficult thing for them. I am not trying to provoke a confrontation here. But these are the only—I will say again, the facts are clear. These are the only two bills on which we have not had a bipartisan negotiation.

All we're asking for is to do these bills the way we did the others. They'll get some of what they want; we'll get some of what we want. We'll have an agreement. It will be, on balance, good for the American people. I will say that. Then they can go home and make their case about what else they want to do; the Democrats can go home and make their case about what else we would like to do.

All I'm trying to do is get the job done here, and all I'm asking for is we treat these bills the same way we treated every other one.

Q. Mr. President, is it your position that you'll sign one-day CR's until you get a Labor/HHS bill, or that you'll only sign one-day CR's until you get a Labor/HHS bill, a tax proposal, and a Medicare—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, first of all, we've got to finish the education bill. But what I would—my preference, my strong preference is to finish it all. Let me just go back to—your question is tied to the previous one. It is not true that I do not want a tax bill before the election. That is not true. I believe we should give some tax relief. I am more than willing to do it, but I cannot in good conscience do something that I think is unfair and that will aggravate some of the problems that it purports to solve.

All I'm asking for here is what I have done every single year I've been here. I just want—if you go back, ever since we've had divided government, whenever we have negotiated, we have reached agreement; we've done things that have been good for America, starting with the welfare reform bill in '96. We had the Balanced Budget Act in '97. We had the Telecommunications Act, which has been an incredible boon to our economy, and many, many other things.

And this year, because we've been fiscally prudent and we've got some funds to invest in America's future, we have made some truly astonishing steps forward for our country. All I am asking for is the same method of working out the bill, on the last two remaining bills, that we got on the other bills, and a good-faith conclusion to the work we're doing on the education bill. That's all I'm asking for.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, one question about the campaign, if I might. There are reports today that Vice President Gore has communicated to you that he would like you to steer clear of the battleground States of Pennsylvania and Michigan. Is that true? And do you think you'd be a political liability, or does he think that, if you went there?

The President. Well, I said yesterday, generally—remember what I said yesterday? Let me just go back through this. I think, in general, these elections are always decided by the candidates and the case they make to the people. I actually, as I said, I may be the only person that's involved in this debate who has experienced this situation in reverse, when President Reagan was immensely popular and came to Arkansas in '84 to campaign. And when the votes were counted, he had 62 percent, and I think I had 63.

So what a President who is not running—there are only two things a President who is not running can do: You can tell people what you think the condition of the country is and what the stakes are, and you can try to rally the people that are already with you in the hope of getting a bigger turnout. The undecided voters will be swayed primarily by the others.

And what I have to hope is that wherever I go, that what I have to say is more important than just the fact of my being there. Because you're going to decide who you want to be the next President; Mark is going to decide; all of you are going to decide, and very few third parties can change your mind. So that's not what is at issue here. The most important actors in this drama are Al Gore and Governor Bush. They're the only actors in the drama that really have any sway here—except for Senator Lieberman and Congressman Cheney; I think they can have some impact. And the rest of us might be able to sway some undecided voters if our arguments are heard—and I have an understanding of this that's unique because I've been President the last 8 years.

I may—we haven't decided every place I'm going yet, and I may still go to Michigan. If they want me to come and the campaign thinks it will be helpful, I'll go. But what I have to do is what I think will be most helpful. The President—if your arguments are heard and people listen to them, you may sway a few undecided voters. But the fact of your going is not a votegetter, ever. That wasn't for any previous President. It wasn't for President Reagan.

But it does help if you can turn out your votes. So we're looking at all the best ways we have to try to make sure all the people who are for our side and agree with us actually show up. That's very important. The Republicans are doing the same thing. And we'll just see what happens. I'll do whatever I think is best, in consultation with the campaign. But I don't think the final travel schedule has been set yet, and I think we just have to wait and see how things unfold the next few days.

Also, as I said yesterday, I have to finish this work here. And as you know, we're watching events in the Middle East very closely. So if I can be helpful, I will. I've already done a lot the last year, and I've done a lot in the last few days. I will continue to do what I can, but the first priority for me has to be here. And the election will be determined by, I believe, the case made by the two candidates for President in the next few days. And I think the rest of us, all we can do is hope to sway a few undecided voters if they hear us, and get the folks out that are already for us.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:17 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Ronald Reagan; and Republican Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Dick Cheney.

Statement on Signing the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

October 28, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4461, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for FY 2001. I commend the Congress for presenting me an acceptable version of this bill that provides critical funding for our Nation's farmers and ranchers, improves the safety of our food supply, and provides assistance to low-income families and rural communities.

I am pleased that the Act fully funds my Food Safety Initiative at $383 million, a $57 million, or 17 percent, increase over FY 2000. These funds will improve food safety for all Americans by allowing the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to increase surveillance activities and inspections of domestic and imported food, accelerate responses to outbreaks, and perform vital research on ways to reduce pathogens in food so that we can advance a more science-based food inspection system. I also commend the Congress for dropping the objectionable language provision that would have prevented USDA from fully implementing the Egg Safety Action Plan that I announced in December 1999. This will now allow USDA and FDA to vigorously pursue the goal of cutting in half the number of salmonella illnesses from eggs.

While the Congress did not provide the full amount of my requested increase for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, thereby failing to ensure that this vital program can achieve the goal of 7.5 million participants, the program will be able to serve a monthly average of just over 7.3 million individuals. I am pleased that the Act adopts my proposal to expand the vehicle allowance for the Food Stamp program, which will assist the many working poor families for whom owning a vehicle is the one item that makes them ineligible for food stamps. In addition, the Act will provide a much-needed increase in nutrition assistance for low-income families with high housing costs, by increasing the Food Stamp program housing allowance. The two changes mean that families do not have to choose among buying food, paying their housing costs, or having a more reliable car. However, I am disappointed the bill did not restore food stamp eligibility for certain legal immigrants, as proposed in my Budget.

Loans and grants for priority rural development programs will increase under the Act to $9.9 billion this year, a $2.7 billion increase over FY 2000. These funds will help diversify the rural economy, improve the quality of life in rural communities, and bring more rural areas across the "economic divide" that separates too many parts of the country from the historic economic expansion underway. I am especially pleased that the Act includes several of my proposals to address geographic areas of rural America that have long struggled with persistent poverty, including $34 million targeted to Indian reservations for health clinics, child care centers, water systems, and job opportunities; and $10 million for the Mississippi Delta Region to create better job opportunities and strengthen local financial intermediaries. The Act will also provide over $100 million in loans and grants to help close the "digital divide" by financing local Internet service and broadband transmission in rural areas.

The Act increases USDA's conservation technical assistance to farmers and ranchers by over $50 million from the FY 2000 level. Part of these funds will be used for a one-third increase in technical assistance to producers who are improving their animal waste management systems, as part of my Clean Water Action Plan. I am disappointed, however, that the Act cuts financial assistance for these and other conservation projects through the Environmental Quality Incentives program, and provides none of the funds I requested for the Farmland Protection Program that preserves farmland and helps communities manage urban sprawl. Also, while it is certainly helpful that the Act increases the Wetlands Reserve Program by 100,000 acres, it is far short of reaching the 250,000 acres per year I proposed for this program. I am hopeful that the next Congress and the next Farm Bill will recognize that farmers were the first environmentalists and that Federal farm programs

should be structured and funded to improve the environment while boosting farm income.

I am also pleased that the Act provides vital payments to farmers and ranchers who have suffered losses from natural disasters. However, the more than $4 billion in emergency funds in this Act, combined with more than $7 billion in farm assistance for the current crop year that was enacted this summer, represents the third year in a row the Congress has had to supplement farm income through major emergency appropriations, due to the failure of the 1996 Farm Bill. I am hopeful that the reforms enacted this year to the crop insurance program will mitigate the need for future *ad hoc* crop loss legislation. I continue to believe that USDA's farm income assistance program must be overhauled to target funds to family farmers based on their actual income losses on crops they are growing now, not paid out inordinately to corporate farms based on what they grew years ago. My Administration is reviewing the emergency funding provisions in this Act, and these funds will be released as needs dictate.

I am concerned that the bill contains an ineffective provision regarding importation of FDA-approved prescription drugs that represents little more than a false promise to the American public. While I am supportive of efforts to allow American consumers to gain access to lower-cost prescription drugs, the language included in the Act contains several loopholes that effectively render the provision meaningless. Among other serious flaws, drug manufacturers can deny importers access to FDA-approved labeling that is required for reimportation, and therefore, drug companies are likely to block reimportation of their medications. In addition, because this reimport authority expires after 5 years, private and public sector interest in investing in this system will be limited. Not only does this provision fail to provide discounts, it also does not address the larger issue of the lack of prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries.

I am also concerned that language in this Act restricts Presidential ability to initiate certain new agricultural and medical trade sanctions and maintain old ones, as congressional approval of such sanctions will now be required. This could disrupt the ability of the President to conduct foreign policy, and could provide potential targets of U.S. actions with time to take countermeasures. The bill permits exports of U.S. farm and medical products to Cuba, but constrains these trade opportunities by barring the U.S. Government, and severely limiting U.S. private banks, from providing financing assistance to Cuba. In addition, the legislation purports to restrict the President's ability to authorize certain travel-related activities in Cuba. We are concerned that this provision could be read to impose overly rigid constraints on our ability to conduct foreign policy and respond to immediate humanitarian and operational concerns including, *inter alia,* protecting American lives, ensuring upkeep of American diplomatic installations, and assisting in both Federal and State prosecutions in the United States in which travel to Cuba may be required. We do not think that the Congress intended to curtail such activities by this legislation. Accordingly, my Administration will interpret this provision, to the extent possible, as not infringing upon such activities.

Also, I note that this bill will provide select U.S. industries with a subsidy above and beyond the protection level needed to counteract foreign subsidies, while providing no comparable subsidy to other U.S. industries or to U.S. consumers, who are forced to pay higher prices on industrial inputs or consumer goods as a result of the anti-dumping and countervailing duties. I call on the Congress to override this provision, or amend it to be acceptable, before they adjourn.

I am also concerned that this bill prohibits the Office of the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and the Environment from supervising, managing, or directing the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Policy disputes between the Congress and the Administration should not degenerate into personal attacks. Under Secretary Jim Lyons and his office are essential to numerous national environmental, forestry, and conservation initiatives, and have provided strong leadership in this regard throughout my Administration.

There are a number of provisions in the Act that may raise Constitutional issues. These provisions will be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the Constitution:

- Section 719 of the Act specifies that funds may not be used to provide to any non-Department of Agriculture employee questions or responses to questions resulting from the appropriations hearing process. To the extent that this provision would

interfere with my duty to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed," or impede my ability to act as the chief executive, it would violate the Constitution, and I will treat it as advisory.

- Section 730 of the Act purports to constrain my ability to make a particular type of budget recommendation to the Congress. This provision would interfere with my constitutional duty under the Recommendation Clause, and I will treat it as advisory.
- Finally, there are provisions in the Act that purport to condition my authority or that of certain officers to use funds appropriated by the Act on the approval of congressional committees. My Administration will interpret such provisions to require notification only, since any other interpretation would contradict the Supreme Court ruling in *INS* v. *Chadha*.

I urge the Congress to approve the remaining FY 2001 spending bills expeditiously, and send them to me in an acceptable form.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 28, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4461, approved October 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–387.

Remarks at a National Italian American Foundation Dinner
October 28, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you to the diehard in the back there. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here. I was told on the way in that since I came here as a Governor in 1992, I have made seven of nine possible NIAF dinners, and I am delighted to be here again for the last time as President.

I want to thank Chairman Guarini; your dinner chair, Dick Grasso. I thank the Representatives of Congress who are here, Representatives Morella and Pelosi, and my good friend Geri Ferraro, Ambassador Browner, Ambassador Tufo—Administrator Browner—Ambassador Rosapepe, and the president of NIAF, Joe Cerrell.

I also want to say, as all of you know, I have had a penchant for Italian-American Chiefs of Staff; they have been overrepresented. [*Laughter*] So far, we have staved off any affirmative action suits. [*Laughter*] When Leon Panetta was my Chief of Staff, he used to say that it was such a hard job, he thought "Panetta" was Italian for "piñata." [*Laughter*]

Now, John Podesta is here. We were doing a little research the other day—this is true; this is not an after-dinner joke—and we discovered that in Renaissance Italy, the rulers of the city-states were often quite apprehensive that they wouldn't be able to maintain authority. So they, from time to time, hired an enforcer to come in from outside the city-state, and the enforcer was called a "podesta." [*Laughter*] So he is well named. And since then, we have a disproportionate number of Italians throughout the White House. Two of them, Karen Tramontano and Loretta Ucelli, are here tonight; I thank them for their work.

I also want to congratulate Tommy Lasorda on the fabulous job he did with our baseball team at the Olympics. And congratulations to you, Mr. Berra. Your spirit was alive and well at the World Series.

I want to congratulate the honorees tonight, my good friend Muhammad Ali, and Angelo Dundee, Andrea Bocelli, John Paul DeJoria, Joseph Nacchio, Miuccia Prada, Dick Vermeil, and my friend of many, many years Millard Fuller. Thank you for honoring them, and thank you for all the work you do.

The legacy of Italian-Americans has been celebrated by this organization for 25 years now. This is an important milestone for you. I know that you have just begun. One of the things I particularly appreciate is your interest in one America, trying to reach across the cultural divide. Just a couple of nights ago we had a birthday party for Hillary up in New York. And Robert De Niro was trying to teach me how to speak New York. [*Laughter*] And I don't know if you saw it, but I was really appreciative that

he was so generous and understanding of my culturally challenged accent. [*Laughter*] So he tried to teach me how to say "fuggeddaboudit." [*Laughter*] And I finally learned, see? [*Laughter*]

At the turn of the last century, an Italian-American said, "I came to America because I heard the streets were paved with gold. When I got here, I found three things: First, the streets weren't paved with gold; second, they weren't paved at all; third, I was expected to pave them." [*Laughter*]

In the century that has elapsed, our streets aren't paved with gold yet, but our Nation has entered a golden era, thanks in no small part to the efforts of Italian-Americans, to your intellect, your industry, your good will, and above all, your contagious love of life.

I must say, I am especially grateful for all the opportunities that I have had these last 8 years to work with not only the Italian-American community but also to work with Italy. I thank the Italian Ambassador, whom I'm sure is here tonight, along with the other distinguished guests from Italy, for all you have done to help make the work of the United States and the world more successful.

And I thank the Italians who have been with us from the beginning. An Italian discovered America; another named it. We have two busts in the Blue Room at the White House on the formal State Floor—only two—one of Christopher Columbus, one of Amerigo Vespucci, brought here in the early 1820's by President James Monroe. Two Italians signed the Declaration of Independence. Thousands fought in the Civil War. Millions came ashore early in this century, fought in our wars, stood with us in the cold war, built the great American middle class, and now are leading America into the global information age.

Many Italian-Americans from the beginning excelled in athletics—no small number in boxing. I grew up watching Rocky Marciano. There was Carmen Basilio, Jake LaMotta, and so many others.

It is, therefore, altogether fitting that you would give your first One America Award to Muhammad Ali. In the ring, he captured the imagination of the world with his distinctive fighting style. Before and after the fights, he captured the imagination of the world with his distinctive speaking style. He's the first fighter ever to win the heavyweight title three times. But outside the ring and what he's done since, in my mind, are even more impressive: his work for children and feeding the hungry and dedicating his life to his faith and his fellow human beings.

I am sure I'm not alone when I say that 4 years ago when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic Torch in Atlanta, it was one of the greatest personal thrills I have ever had as an American citizen. And I thank you, sir.

And of course, he didn't do it alone. In his corner for more than four decades was tonight's other nominee, his trainer, the great Angelo Dundee. Truly, this Italian-American/African-American team symbolizes the one America you believe in. They are an inspiration for the one America we all still have to build.

I am profoundly grateful that the National Italian American Foundation has been a vital partner in our administration's efforts to do that, with your programs in schools and communities all across America. I am especially grateful for your concern for young people. The first thing I was asked tonight, when I was standing outside waiting to come in, is whether after my remarks I would walk over and speak to the young people who are just a few yards down the way. And I'll be happy to do that, because they are your future and mine and ours.

In the struggle, in the beginning, of Italian-American immigrants and in the triumphs of Italian-American immigrants, we are reminded that our diversity is our greatest strength, as long as we celebrate it and understand clearly that our common humanity is even more fundamental; that our Nation, as ever—indeed, more than ever—is a family of immigrants.

For 8 years now, it has been my great honor, along with Vice President Gore, to work to strengthen America's families, to give people the tools and create the conditions for a better life. We've tried to do that through things like the family and medical leave law, which has now given some 22 million Americans a chance to take the time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their jobs; by adding 2.5 million children to the ranks of those with health insurance; by providing after-school and mentoring programs to a million kids; by ending welfare as we knew it, but giving families the support they need to succeed as parents as well as workers. It has given us the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, half the size they were in January of '93.

We did it with the HOPE scholarships and lifetime learning tax credit, to open the doors of college to all. Ten million American families are now benefiting from it, and the college-going rate in America is by far the highest it has ever been.

We have worked hard to strengthen America's families. And, like you, we've worked hard to strengthen it by creating one America with the most diverse Cabinet and administration appointments in history, with a real commitment to empowering those who have too long been left out and left behind.

When I came here in 1992, it was a very different America. We had a troubled economy, a divided society, a paralyzed political system. I think it's worth pointing out—because I watched the news tonight on the way over, and all the news is about the continuing arguments I'm having with the Congress. I never thought I would see a bunch of politicians stay in Washington so close to election. And I know that when you see this, you must think of one of Mr. Berra's immortal lines, that we may be lost, but we're making good time. [*Laughter*]

But the truth is, this has actually been quite a productive Congress for the American people. We've set aside more land than ever before in an act of Congress for all time. We have passed an historic bill that I've not yet had the opportunity to sign, but the agreement is there to do America's part to relieve the debt for the poorest countries in the world, as long as they put the money into education and health care and development for their children and the future. We have provided an unprecedented outreach to Africa and our Caribbean neighbors. It has been a good session of Congress, and they are working on an education bill that I think all Americans, without regard to party, will be proud of.

So while we fight and argue—which is, after all, the essence of democratic representation—we're actually making a good deal of good progress. Today, the American community and the American family is stronger than it has ever been.

I know and you know that many of the social indicators have gotten better in no small measure because our economy has been so strong, because we have the lowest unemployment in 30 years and the longest expansion in history and the lowest poverty in 20 years, the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded, and the highest homeownership in history. A lot of you deserve a lot of the credit for that. I think about that every time I see Mr. Grasso ring the bell down at the Stock Exchange.

But tonight, what I want to say to you is, America's business is not done. America's business will never be done. All of you have to decide how to vote in the coming election, and I did not come here to discuss this. But I will say that I hope that whatever happens, we will make decisions consistent with keeping this economy strong, keeping it growing, because that is what will enable us to give economic opportunity to people and places left behind. That is what will enable us to bring health care and education at excellent levels to people who still don't have either at the quality they should.

We have to do the things that immigrants did when they came here. We have to forget about short-term gains in time to look for the long run. I must say, from time to time, people come up to me, and they ask me, "Well, what great, new economic idea did you bring to Washington? How did the Government makes its contribution to this boom? What new thing did you bring?" And I always have a one-word answer, "Arithmetic." We tried to bring arithmetic back to Washington. And that's how we've turned a $290 billion deficit into a $237 billion surplus. That is yours now—that is yours now. It belongs to all the American people.

And what I want to say to you is that never before in my lifetime has our Nation enjoyed at once so much economic prosperity and social progress with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. Therefore, never before in our lifetime have we had a chance like this to build the future of our dreams for our children. There are big challenges out there. How are we going to handle the aging of America? When all us baby boomers retire, there will only be two people working for every one person on Social Security. That is, unless we can get even more immigrants into the country and treat them more fairly than we treat some of our legal immigrants today, I might add, something I'm trying to correct in the closing days of this Congress.

We have the largest and most diverse school population in history. How shall we guarantee them all excellence in education? We've just been through a little bit of an energy scare. But we know that the development of new technologies on the horizon—and, in some cases,

already on the shelf—could dramatically alter our future in ways that would strengthen our economy. Will we have the will and vision to do that?

General Motors announced just last week that their efforts, through our Partnership For the Next Generation Vehicles, which the Vice President and I have been working on for 8 years, have given them a car that gets 80 miles to the gallon. I signed today the research budget for the Agriculture Department—listen to this—which involves funds where they're trying to figure out how to make ethanol and other biomass fuels from gasoline. Today, the problem with that is, it takes 7 gallons of gas to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But the chemists are on the verge of discovering how to make 8 gallons of ethanol with 1 gallon of gas, and when that happens, you will be getting the equivalent of 500 miles to the gallon.

All of this is out there. The young women in the audience who are still in their childbearing years, within 5 to 10 years, will be bringing babies home from the hospital, thanks to the human genome project, who will have a life expectancy of 90 years. We will see the cure—in the lifetime of virtually everybody in this audience, we will see cures for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. We may even see people be able to—the scientists be able to reverse Alzheimer's.

Digital chips now can be implanted deep into the ear canals of profoundly deaf people and they can hear. And they believe, the scientists do, that soon they will be able to implant them into the spinal cord of profoundly injured people, and they will be able to get up and walk. The future is incredible out there, and I am very grateful that I have had the chance to serve at this time.

But what I want to say to all of you is, this country, as always, belongs to the people. It may not always be clear, except at election time when everybody's vote counts exactly the same. But every day, in every way, the greatness of America fundamentally depends upon the people and our belief that everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other, that there should be opportunity for every responsible citizen, but in the end, we must be one community. That's what this foundation has been all about. That's what your One America Award is all about.

And I have to tell you today, if someone were to give me one wish, it would be that somehow America would find a way out of the thicket that so bedevils people everywhere. [*Inaudible*]—we're still fighting, in this most modern of age, over the most ancient of demons: the fear of those who are different from us. It is the source of anxiety in the country from which my ancestors hail, Ireland, where we've made a lot of progress on the peace process, but it's not completely finished yet.

It is the heartbreaking source of this upsurge in violence in the Middle East after over 7 years of working together—people that know each other by their first name, know their children, know their grandchildren, all of a sudden at each other's throats again, almost in the blink of an eye, both sides shaking their heads, wondering how it could have happened.

It was the source of all that awful tribal warfare in Africa and the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, which—thank God—has come to an end because the United States, with our Allies—Italy and our other Allies in NATO—stood up against it, and then the people of Serbia finally threw off the shackles of Mr. Milosevic and decided to vote for the rule of law over the rule of hatred.

Now, I say all this because I really believe that in the new century, in order for America to do good around the world, we must first be good at home. And we must say we're not going to let the lines that divide us tear us apart as long as we share a common commitment to a law-abiding, cooperative future. That's why I support the hate crimes legislation and the employment nondiscrimination legislation and the equal pay legislation for women—because I believe they symbolize those kinds of things.

But the larger point is the one I want to make. We're about to give an award to Muhammad Ali and Angelo Dundee. But all across America today, in little play yards and dusty rural roads, there are young people with their dreams. Some are of European descent; some are African-American; some are Hispanic; more and more are Asian. They're from everywhere. Just across the river here in the Alexandria school district, there are people, children, from 180 different racial and ethnic groups.

Their parents speak over 100 different languages. So when we say we're a nation of immigrants, we have to also say, but we're one Nation, determined to build one family, determined to make the decisions today with discipline to preserve the future for tomorrow, and determined to give all these kids a chance to live their dreams.

Not every child can be a Muhammad Ali, a Yogi Berra, an Andrea Bocelli. But every child can serve in the way that Millard Fuller has served, and every child can learn to respect his or her own heritage and faith and ethnic or racial background, but also those of every other American. That is the genius of America. That is the soul of the justification for this award you give.

It has been a profound honor for me to be able to come here representing the people of the United States these last 8 years. I have loved the work. I've even liked the fight. But more importantly, I have just loved seeing Americans pull together, move forward, and believe in each other again. Whatever happens, no matter what comes to this country, don't you ever let that change. As long as it doesn't, our best days will always still be ahead.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

Now, I have the honor to present Muhammad Ali and Angelo Dundee with this first-ever One America Award. And I ask Angelo and Mrs. Ali to come up here. Let's give them a big hand. [*Applause*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Frank J. Guarini, chairman, Geraldine Ferraro, board member, and Joseph R. Cerrell, president, National Italian American Foundation; Richard Grasso, chairman and chief executive, New York Stock Exchange; U.S. Ambassador to Hungary Peter F. Tufo; U.S. Ambassador to Romania James C. Rosapepe; Tommy Lasorda, manager, 2000 U.S. Olympic baseball team; former professional baseball player Yogi Berra; tenor Andrea Bocelli; John Paul DeJoria, chairman, John Paul Mitchell Systems; Joseph P. Nacchio, chairman and chief executive officer, Qwest Communications International; fashion designer Miuccia Prada; former professional football head coach Dick Vermeil; Millard Fuller, founder and president, Habitat for Humanity International; actor Robert De Niro; Italian Ambassador to the U.S. Ferdinando Salleo; former President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) Slobodan Milosevic; and Muhammad Ali's wife, Lonnie.

Remarks to the Congregation of Shiloh Baptist Church

October 29, 2000

The President. Thank you. Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. Reverend Smith, Mrs. Smith, honored guests, members of the church family. All I could think about for the first 30 minutes is how much I wished I were in the choir today. [*Laughter*]

I want to say how honored I am to be here, and to be here with so many members of the White House staff, including two ministers—some would argue we need more—Zina Pierre, who works in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Kevin Johnson, the Deputy Director of our Community Empowerment Board, under the Vice President. We also have a lot of other folks, as you know, who are here who wanted me to come here, I think, so they could be sure to show up. [*Laughter*]

I, too, want to thank Lorraine Miller, one of your members and one of my advisers, for all she did to make this possible, and all the others who have been mentioned. I want to thank this church for your outreach—to love not in word but in deed, in truth. I want to say a special word of appreciation to my friend, your delegate in Congress, Eleanor Holmes Norton, for being here.

I've known Eleanor a long time, and we have worked closely together since I was trying to become President in 1992. We have shared high moments and low moments. We shared a disappointment last week when the Supreme Court

said the people of DC shouldn't have full voting rights. I believe you should, and I always have.

But I think we can take a lot of pride, as your pastor just said, about the economic revitalization of the District of Columbia, and I am very honored that I could work with Eleanor to alleviate the extraordinary financial burdens on this city and have the National Government pay for the responsibilities that in any other circumstance would be done by a State government. And we took that off your shoulders; I think it will help.

I am proud of the DC College Access Act, which now has 3,000 of your young people going to college in other places for low in-State tuition. And I am still hoping we will succeed in passing our new markets program and some extra incentives for people to invest in the District of Columbia, to bring it all the way back.

So, I thank you, Eleanor. I thank you for the work that you've done to get Frederick Douglass' home established as a national memorial, and the preservation of the Carter G. Woodson home, which is near here, just up the street, I think.

This is a very kind of emotional day for me. I was thinking back—this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot somewhere. [*Laughter*] And so I started kind of visiting around almost 27 years ago. And when you were singing and having your service, I was both here and my mind was wandering back over those 26 years. I thought of a time once when I was in an African-American service at night in the Mississippi Delta, in 1976, early. And it began to hail, and the building I was in was a tin-roof building. And it began to hail just as a lady got up to sing "If I Can Help Somebody"—a cappella. She had perfect pitch, and she just kept on singing through the hail.

And I thought of so many other things that have happened over the years, because I have had the opportunity to be blessed in churches like this one—to come as a fellow believer and a child of God and a fellow sinner, to say, thank you. So, thank you. Thank you very much.

I don't know what ex-Presidents do exactly. I wonder if anybody will ever ask me back when I leave. He finally did—Reverend Smith did. [*Laughter*] One of my predecessors told me that he was lost for the first 4 months after he left office because when he walked in a room, nobody played a song anymore. [*Laughter*] He was never sure where he was. [*Laughter*] I am quite sure of where I am today, and I thank you.

I thank you for giving me the chance to serve these last 8 years, to give America a government that looks more like America, for working to create an economy that helps all Americans. I am very proud that we have achieved the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment ever recorded since we've been keeping these statistics, and that we have record homeownership and that we've tripled the number of small business loans to minorities. And we have the lowest crime rate in 27 years, and the African-American teen birth rate has dropped one-third since 1991—one-third.

We have 2 ½ million children with health insurance who didn't have it; over 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the whole history of the country. For the first time ever, African-American children are graduating from high school at the same rate as white students; the number of African-American children taking advanced placement tests up 500 percent over the last 6 years, 300 percent in the last 3 years alone.

And all over the country—this relates to something that's in the pastor's letter today, which I urge you to read. I'll say more about it in a minute, but all over the country one of the most hopeful things is that schools where children weren't learning are being turned into places where children are learning.

I was in a little town in western Kentucky the other day, where 3 years ago, this grade school I visited was one of the worst schools in the State: 12 percent of the children reading at or above grade level; 5 percent doing math at or above grade level; none of them doing science—not one—at or above grade level. Three years later, 57 percent doing reading at or above grade level; 70 percent doing math at or above grade level; 63 percent doing science at or above grade level. You can turn these things around.

I was in Harlem the other day, in an elementary school where 2 years ago, 80 percent of the children were reading and doing math below grade level. Two years later, 74 percent doing reading and math at or above grade level. All children can learn, and we can turn these schools around. They can be made to work.

So I'm grateful. I'm grateful that we've had the longest economic expansion in history and

that everybody has gone along for the ride. I'm grateful that we have the lowest crime rate in 27 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, and the environment is cleaner, and we've got more kids with health insurance, and the schools are getting better. I'm grateful for all that.

But in America, our public life must always be about tomorrow. It's very interesting to go back and study the founding of this country and to read very carefully the words of the Founders. Look, these guys weren't stupid. They knew God created somebody besides white male property owners. [*Laughter*] They weren't stupid. You ought to read—Thomas Jefferson just wrote one book, called "The Notes on The State of Virginia." I have a copy, original copy, going back to the late 1700's. This is before he was ever President. And he has a stunning little one-paragraph indictment of slavery.

So they weren't fools; they knew what they were doing. They were creating a system which would force people to slowly give up their hypocrisy and, as we broadened our horizons, would force us to keep going further and further toward God, toward the good, toward the common humanity that is in us all. So what did they pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to? To form a more perfect Union. Not a perfect Union; we don't get to do that on this Earth. But it would always become more perfect.

Now, that's what this election season is about. I'm now 54 years old. In my lifetime, we have never gone to the polls, ever, with so much economic prosperity, so much social progress, so little domestic crisis, so few foreign threats to our security—ever, not once. Now, I argue that that imposes on us a profound responsibility.

This is more a subject for a preacher than a political leader, but it occurs to me that everybody who is over 30 in this congregation today can remember at least once in your life when you made a huge mistake not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought you didn't have to concentrate anymore. Right? Everybody who has lived a certain length of time has made one of those mistakes.

So I grew up in the civil rights era and the Vietnam war era; I remember the energy crisis; I remember the hostages in Iran; I remember all the troubles this country has had just in my lifetime. So here we are. We went from record deficits to record surpluses. We went from quadrupling the debt to paying the debt down. We're all going forward together, and here we are: We have the first election of the 21st century. And all the evidence is, a lot of people don't think, as the pastor's letter said, they don't understand what the differences are, and maybe they shouldn't go.

And I just came here to say, and to say to you and through you to the country, in my lifetime we've never had an election like this—not one—where there was so much prosperity, so much social progress, so few domestic crises and foreign threats. And we have the chance, therefore, to think about the big challenges and build the future of our dreams for our children; to save Social Security and Medicare, so when the baby boomers retire, we don't bankrupt our kids; to give an ever more diverse group of children, all of them, an excellent education.

Now you have over half the married couples with children in America now both work, both the husband and wife work; 59 percent of the women in America with a baby under one work. We have to do more to balance work and family. I sometimes think the best law I signed the whole time I was here was the first one, the family and medical leave law, because over 20 million people—over 20 million people—have taken some time off when a baby was born or a parent was sick, without losing their job. We have to do more things like this to help people balance work and family. The best thing about the welfare reform law was that we spent more money on child care and training and transportation to help people succeed as parents, as well as in the work force.

The pastor talked about the ozone hole. The world is getting warmer. The 1990's were the warmest decade in 1,000 years. And that relates to this energy crisis we've been toying around with here lately, where we're all concerned about we need to develop a whole different long-term future.

General Motors just announced a car getting 80 miles to the gallon; we need to get it on the market, all of them. We've got researchers with Department of Agriculture grants trying to figure out how to make fuel from biomass—that's a fancy word for corn or rice hulls or even grasses. You know it as ethanol today. And the problem with ethanol is, it takes 7 gallons of gas to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But if they get their job done in the laboratory, you'll be

able to make 8 gallons of ethanol with 1 gallon of gas. And that means that, in effect, we'll all be driving around getting 500 miles to the gallon. But we've got to do it. We've got to do it.

So you've got all these challenges out there. We've made a lot of progress in building one America, but our work is not over. We still have racial profiling; we still have debates over affirmative action; we still have qualified African-American judges who can't even get a hearing before the Senate.

We have the lowest childhood poverty in 20 years, and we had the biggest drop last year since 1966, but it's still way too high. We've got poverty among people over 65 below 10 percent for the first time in the history of the entire country, but poverty among our children is still too high.

We may have 90 percent of our schools hooked up to the Internet, thanks to the E-rate that the Vice President fought so hard for, to give a discount to the poorest schools. But there's still a digital divide, and it will have a huge impact unless we close it.

On Friday I signed a bill, H.R. 2879, which authorizes, appropriately, the placement of a marker commemorating Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial. I say that—if you go back and read that speech, part of it was, "I dream that one day certain things will happen and that everything will be all right," but part of it was a dream that we would just keep on working on our more perfect Union.

Read the pastor's letter. You do not have to become too political to say that we're having an election in which there are vast differences that will have vast consequences for the way we live together as a people. And actually, I think it's something we ought to be celebrating. We don't have to say anything bad about anybody running this year. Maybe part of the story the last 8 years is that I got to take all the poison out of the electorate. [*Laughter*] I'm just glad you folks were there to administer the serum, or I wouldn't be here. [*Laughter*] But this could be a happy time. We ought to get up every day and thank God we're alive and all this good stuff is going on. We should be happy, happy about our country.

And then we need to imagine what kind of future we want and figure out the choices we have to make and which leaders are most likely to take us there. But I promise you, this is an election that is not only profoundly important—where we make a terrible mistake thinking because things are going well, it's not important—but it is one in which there are real choices.

The pastor's letter mentioned some: the choices on affirmative action and education, on appointments to the courts, on the nature of tax policy. But there are others. The pastor talked about sacrifice. You know, a lot of members of my party sacrificed their seats in Congress in 1994 because they voted in 1993 to get rid of the deficit, because when you have deficits and you have big debt, interest rates are high. The interest rates are high because the Government is borrowing money that you'd like to borrow, and there's not enough to go around, so the price of money goes up. It's not very complicated.

So now we're paying off the debt, and interest rates are lower. So one big decision you have to make is, do you want a bigger tax cut now, even if it means we don't get out of debt and interest rates stay high? Or should we first say we're going to keep getting this country out of debt; we'll take what's left, give what we need to to education and health care and our children and our future, and take what's left and have a tax cut?

Let's go back to the theme of the sermon today. I think it's better to think about the future and keep getting us out of debt and keep the interest rates down. It also, by the way, is like a tax cut. If you keep interest rates one percent lower every year for 10 years, do you know what that's worth to you? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments—by thinking about tomorrow.

But anyway, it's a choice. Some people disagree with that, and they make their case. But don't pretend there's no difference, that it won't have any impact on you. It will have a huge impact, which decision we make.

There are differences in education policy, in health care policy and environmental policy and crime policy and our foreign policy—arms control, and how we relate to Africa and the rest of the world. Just a ton of things here that you need to know—and you need to show—on election day.

The pastor mentioned Congressman John Lewis and what a great leader he was for civil rights, and how he came a long way from his little Alabama farm and a childhood when he stuttered so bad, he could hardly speak. And now he bellows his speeches in the Congress, and America listens. One of the greatest honors of my Presidency was walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with John Lewis and Hosea Williams and Coretta Scott King and Jesse Jackson on the 35th anniversary of the Selma march. And on that day, I gave a little talk which basically said, we still have bridges to cross.

Now, we're going to cross some bridges. The questions are, are we going to be walking in the right direction? Are we all going to walk across, or just a few of us? And if we all walk across, are we going to walk arm in arm, with outstretched hands instead of clenched fists?

I tell you, I look at the young children in this audience, the young girls in this audience that still have the time of giving birth to their own children ahead of them; because of this human genome project, a lot of these children will have—they'll be having babies within 5 or 10 years that have a life expectancy of 90 years. A lot of us that are moving into our later years, if we're lucky, the human genome project will give us a cure for Parkinson's, cancer, even the ability to reverse Alzheimer's before our time is done.

But as I was reminded the other day, when I met with the bishops of the Church of God in Christ, and I thought I was being kind of cute when I said to the head bishop, "You know, I wanted to come here and meet with some leaders who aren't term-limited"—I thought that was pretty funny. [*Laughter*] And the bishop looked at me and said, "Mr. President, we're all term-limited." [*Laughter*]

So I say to you, we're all just here for a little while. We've got to decide how we spend our time and what we care about. We're supposed to live with troubles, as well as good times. For whatever reason, God has blessed us all—me, most of all—to make this a good time. And now we're going to be judged on what we do with the good time.

We still have bridges to cross. We still have dreams to build for our children. The choices are stark and clear and will have great consequences. And we can say that with a happy heart today, honoring our opponents, not condemning them or criticizing them or saying anything bad about them but just going out, like America was supposed to work all the time, and making our choice.

But I am pleading with you—I have done everything I know to do to turn this country around, to pull this country together, to move us forward. I have done everything I know to do. But you remember this: The best things are still out there; it's still out there. And as long as we keep striving for that more perfect Union, tomorrow will always be out there. But in order to do it, you have to show.

So talk to your friends, talk to your neighbors, talk to your family members, talk to your coworkers, and make sure nobody takes a pass on November 7th. Learn, decide, and choose.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Wallace Charles Smith, Shiloh Baptist Church, and his wife, G. Elaine; civil rights activists Hosea Williams and Rev. Jesse Jackson; and Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Remarks to the Congregation of Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia

October 29, 2000

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. I want to thank Reverend Peterson and Mrs. Peterson and Reverend Jackson, all the staff and members of the Alfred Street Baptist Church family. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to the young choir and the choir director for the music. Thank you, sir. They were great. You made the rest

of us feel pretty young again, there singing. [*Laughter*]

I am delighted to be here with a large number of folks from the White House. You saw them all stand up. [*Laughter*] You should know, we have—we actually have two ministers in the White House: Zina Pierre, who works in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Kevin Jefferson, who is the Deputy Director of Vice President Gore's Community Empowerment Board. They're doing their job every day.

I am also very grateful for one of your members who works with us, Ms. Jena Roscoe, who made sure I got here today. Where's Jena? She's here somewhere. Where are you? Stand up there. [*Applause*]

This church, I am well aware, is not just a Sunday church. You minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the people every day of the week, from nurturing boarder babies to promoting good health, to this Habitat project that your pastor just told you how much you were giving to today. [*Laughter*] The Scripture says, "While we have time, let us do good unto all men." And a week from Tuesday, it will be time for us to vote.

I am grateful that your Representative in Congress, Jim Moran, came with me today. He is a very fine man and a great Member of Congress, and he's been a good ally of mine for these years I have served as your President, and I thank him. But for many reasons, I am especially grateful that Lynda Robb came with me today to be with you. You know, her husband, Chuck, has been your Governor, your Lieutenant Governor, your Senator. Her father, President Johnson, did more for civil rights than any President since Abraham Lincoln.

Lynda and Chuck have been friends of Hillary's and mine for almost 20 years now. We've seen our children grow up together. We served as Governor together. We have fought the battles of the last 8 years together. In the United States Senate, almost no one had more to lose than Chuck Robb by voting for my economic plan in 1993. You know, we'd been living on that deficit medicine so long, we were pretty well hooked up. [*Laughter*] We were addicted.

I used to have a Senator from Arkansas named Dale Bumpers, who just retired, who used to joke that if he could write everybody in America $200 billion worth of hot checks, he could show them a good time, too. [*Laughter*]

And I remember when I became President, Senator Robb knew he had to run for reelection the next year. And once you get in that big a hole, there's no easy way to crawl out; everybody has got to hurt a little bit. But, without blinking, he came in and voted for the economic plan, and he and—thanks to him and thanks to Vice President Gore—if we'd lost Chuck Robb, Vice President Gore never would have gotten the vote. By one vote, the narrowest of margins, it turned the economy around, got interest rates down, got things going again. And we've gone from the biggest deficits in history to the biggest surpluses.

I think you shouldn't forget that on election day, that he was there. But in so many other ways, large and small, Senator Robb always tries to do the right thing, even when it's not the popular thing. When it comes to civil rights and human rights, he's always tried to do the right thing. When it comes to the safety of our children on the streets, the Brady bill, assault weapons ban, 100,000 police, even if some big, powerful interest group is going to get mad at him, he just sort of stands up there and does the right thing.

I don't know how many times—there's been a time or two in the last 8 years I've tried to get him to vote against me. [*Laughter*] I have. I've said, "Chuck, what are you doing? You're from Virginia; you've got to run again." He'd just say, "It's the right thing."

When I normalized relations with Vietnam, Senator Robb, who probably saw more combat in Vietnam than any other combat veteran, stood by my side and said it was the right thing to do. So we've been friends a long time. And I'm highly biased, but I want you to know, there is not a braver person in the United States Congress, or a person more likely, day-in and day-out, no matter what the pressures to do wrong are, to stand up and do right for you.

Now, mostly I came here to say thank you. You know, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot somewhere. [*Laughter*] I have been coming into African-American churches for almost 27 years now, listening, learning. And today my mind is both here, concentrated on the task at hand—which is to try to persuade you to go out and talk to every friend, family member, co-worker, and stranger on the streets you see between now and November 7th and drag them to the polls—but my mind is also wandering back over this

amazing life the American people have given me and the people of my native State of Arkansas.

I've thought about all the early times in the 1970's I was in various churches. I can still remember the songs that were sung. I can still remember when I was in poor churches when they didn't have all the instruments, and men would sit in chairs around the singers and use spoons on their knees to provide the rhythm. I can still remember going to investitures of pastors in churches built for 200, where there were 300 people there and 8 choirs. And it was hot. And we couldn't tell whether the people were being seized with the spirit or just having strokes. [*Laughter*]

So I just came mostly to say thank you. I have a heart filled with gratitude that I have had the unusual opportunity to serve. I have tried to turn our country around, to move it forward, and to bring it together. I am proud that we have had an administration, from the Cabinet to our appointees—at least one of whom is a member of this church—to our judicial nominees, that looks like America.

I am grateful that we have had an economy that has not only given us the longest economic expansion in history but has benefited all Americans. We have the lowest African-American and Latino unemployment rates ever recorded. We have a 15 percent increase, after inflation, in income over the last 8 years for African-Americans; in just the last 3 years, it's almost 10 percent; 1.1 million African-Americans buying their own homes for the first time; child poverty at a 20-year low.

I am glad that this has been about more than economics. We're a more united country. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 26 years. The teen birth rate has dropped by one-third for African-American teens since 1991 alone—by one-third. For the first time in history, over 90 percent of our children have been immunized against serious childhood diseases. And for the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, because 2.5 million kids have been given health insurance under the Children's Health Insurance Program that was part of our balanced budget.

Listen to this: For the first time in history, African-American children are graduating from high school at the same rate as white children, and the number of African-American children taking advanced placement exams in the high schools is up 300 percent in just the last 3 years—it has tripled in the last 3 years; record college-going rate; and record levels of support through the HOPE scholarship, the lifetime learning tax credit, the Pell grant, and so many other things for our young people to go on to college.

Now, what I want to say to you is not, "Didn't we do great?" That's not why I came here. I came here to say thank you, and now it's your turn. I have done everything I could to turn our country around, to move it forward, to pull it together. But it is in the nature of, first of all, human beings, secondly, democracy, and thirdly, America, that there's always something to be done. And our public life always is about tomorrow.

When the framers of the Constitution wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—hey, they were smart guys. They knew that the world was about more than white male property owners. They weren't dumb. They knew what they were saying when they said all men are created equal. They knew they meant men, women, and kids. And they knew they meant blacks and whites and whoever else shows up—the Native Americans. They were not stupid.

I've got a copy of the only book Thomas Jefferson ever wrote, "The Notes on the State of Virginia." I believe it was the first printing; certainly, it was printed in the 1700's, before he became President. And there is in one of these chapters about a paragraph on slavery, but it's pretty obvious that Mr. Jefferson knew before he became President that it was a bad deal, and that it would have to fall, and that change would have to come. So we would start with a set of ideals, and then we would work on making our Union more perfect.

So that is the eternal purpose of America. And election time is your time to make a more perfect Union. It's your job. On November 7th, you count as much as I do. Your vote counts just as much—unless you stay home; then mine counts more than yours.

And there are still issues out there: racial profiling; affirmative action; diversity on the bench. I have named 62 African-American judges, 3 times the number of the previous two administrations combined, but—[*applause*]—wait a minute. That's not why I came here.

I came here for you to think about your responsibility to the future. But there has never been an African-American judge on the Federal Court of Appeals here in Virginia for the fourth circuit, which has the largest number of African-Americans in the entire United States, because I have been trying for 8 years to do it, and for 8 years I have been blocked in the United States Senate. I appointed Roger Gregory from Virginia; I appointed two people from North Carolina. I have virtually gone out with a searchlight looking for people that could get by the folks in the Senate. They were all qualified. This was not about qualifications.

And so, in the year 2000, when we still don't have an African-American jurist on the Federal Court of Appeals and we're running over with qualified people, there's still work to do in this country.

While poverty among African-American children has dropped by almost 30 percent since I took office, it's still way too high. Poverty among people over 65 is below 10 percent, for the first time in the history of our country. But the poverty rate among our children is still nearly double that. There is still a digital divide. Even though we've hooked up 95 percent of our schools to the Internet, thanks to Vice President Gore's E-rate program, which gives a discount to poor schools, you and I know there's still a digital divide, and if we don't close it, the world will not come together.

Well, there are lots of other issues, but you get the point. You know, I'm 54 now, and it looks younger every day. [*Laughter*] The pastor said it was young. And I can honestly say there has never been a time in my lifetime where we have had the longest economic expansion in history and lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, so we're moving in the right direction economically. But we also have declining crime, declining welfare rolls, declining teen pregnancy and drug abuse among young people, improving schools, improving health care coverage, and a cleaner environment. So you've got the economy getting better, the society getting stronger, with the absence of severe domestic crisis or external threat to our security.

We all know it's still a dangerous world, as the people of Virginia felt most of all when our U.S.S. *Cole* was attacked and we lost those fine young men and women sailors several days ago. But we are as free from external threat to our security and internal paralyzing crisis as we have ever been. And all these things are going well.

Now, what's the point of—why am I telling you this? Again, not to make you clap but to make you think. Everybody in this church over 30 has made at least one big mistake in your life not because things were going well at the time—poorly—but because they were going so well at the time, you thought you didn't have to concentrate anymore. Isn't that right? Is that true? Has everybody here over 30 made a mistake because things were going well in your life at least once? You didn't think you had to concentrate. At that moment, it's just going so well, everything is on automatic.

Nothing is ever on automatic, ever—ever. And the reason I am here today is, I don't know if we'll have another chance in my lifetime, or yours, to go and vote as equals, to shape the future of our country—when you have economic prosperity, social progress, the absence of internal crisis, or external threat.

We can paint the future of our dreams for kids. We can figure out how to deal with the aging of America, how to save Social Security and Medicare when the baby boomers retire, how to give all of our kids excellence in education, how to make the most of the scientific and technology revolution. The young women in this audience will be having babies within 5 or 10 years that have a life expectancy of 90 years because of the human genome project.

These young people behind me that sang for us so beautifully today, when they begin to have their children, just be a matter of a couple of years until they'll—every mother will come home from the hospital with a little gene card that will tell you everything about your baby's biological makeup. Some of it will be kind of scary, but at least you will know. And they will say, if you do these 10 things, you can dramatically increase your child's life expectancy.

We worry about the energy crisis now, but GM just announced they developed a car that gets 80 miles to the gallon. And yesterday I signed the Agriculture appropriations bill which funds research into energy—listen to this—and right now, some cars in America, but not many, run on ethanol. You know, that's basically, you make fuel from corn. And the problem with that is, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol, so the conversion is not too good. But the chemists are working on cracking the resistance to this, and when they

do, they estimate that you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol with 1 gallon of gasoline; furthermore, that you'll be able to make it—you don't have to use corn; you can use rice hulls or even grass—anything.

Now, when that happens, all of you will be driving around in cars that will have the equivalent of 500 miles to the gallon. And the world will change.

Audience member. Amen! [*Laughter*]

The President. Now, why is that important? Because the 1990's were the hottest decade in a thousand years, and we don't want these kids and their children to grow up in a world full of storms and troubles and burned-up fields and global instability and wars because we couldn't take care of our environment.

So all this big stuff is out there. This is very exciting. I just hope I can stick around long enough to watch it unfold. It's really great. The best stuff is still out there. But it all depends on the choices we make. And look, I don't have to—I shouldn't tell you who to vote for; you already know who I'm for. [*Laughter*] So this is not rocket science. But here's what I want you to know. You may not ever get another chance like this in your lifetime to vote in an election like this, ever. And those of us who are older have a solemn responsibility to tell that to the younger people who may take this for granted, who may think this kind of a ride just goes on and on and on.

You know, my first election was between Hubert Humphrey, Richard Nixon, and George Wallace. And my country was torn clean apart. This stuff does not last forever. We've got to make the most of this moment, number one.

Number two, there are—we can have a happy election. We don't have to say anything bad about anybody in this election. We don't have to badmouth—the Republicans don't have to badmouth the Democrats; the Democrats don't have to badmouth the Republicans. We can just posit, everybody is patriotic; everyone loves their family; everyone loves their country. Now, let's just see what they say and where they disagree.

But I'm telling you, there are huge differences on economic policy, on health care policy, on education policy, on crime policy, on environmental policy, on foreign policy, and how we deal with arms control and how we relate to Africa and other emerging areas of the world. And you need to know that.

One side believes that it would be better if we had a very large tax cut and we partially privatize Social Security and we spent a fair amount of money—even though to do this would get us back into deficit—because they believe that tax cuts grow the economy more than deficits hurt it.

Then one side, our side, believes that we ought to first say, "Let's stick with what works and keep paying this debt down; get the country out of debt, because if we get the country out of debt, we won't be borrowing money, and therefore, you can borrow money more cheaply." That's the biggest tax cut we can give everybody. If we keep interest rates one percent lower a year for a decade, do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this: for the American people, $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments. That's a lot of money. But more important, it keeps the economy healthy.

But anyway, that's our view. Our view is, first things first; let's go on and get out of debt here. And then whatever is left we'll invest in our education, health care, our children, and then give people a tax cut we can afford. But there are differences. And you should listen to them and listen to us and make up your mind. But don't pretend that there aren't any differences.

When I hear people say, "This is not really a very significant election," it makes me want to go head first into an empty swimming pool. [*Laughter*] I mean, this is—we really do have a good choice here; I mean, a big, clear, unambiguous, stark choice. We don't have to get upset; we don't have to get mad, but we need to be smart.

So I want to tell you, as I said, you know how I feel, but that's not what's important. What's important is how you feel, because on November 7th, you're just as important as the President. And I will say again, I have done everything I could do to turn the country around, move it forward, pull it together. I have loved doing it. It has been a joy for me. I am thrilled to see an election unfolding in a more positive environment than so many in recent years have. It is wonderful. But the only thing I'm concerned about is people believing that it doesn't much matter whether they vote, that the consequences are not great, that there

aren't any significant differences. Those things are not true.

It matters whether you vote. It's the most important election in, arguably, that you've ever had to vote in, because you've never gotten to vote at a time when you could be completely faithful to your vision, to build a future of your dreams for your children.

So I implore you, show up. Call every friend, family member, co-worker, and halfway interesting-looking stranger you see on the street—[*laughter*]—between now and November 7th. It's a great chance for these kids here in this church to avoid some of the mistakes and trouble and heartbreak all of us had to live through—to keep making America the beacon of hope in the world. What a great chance it is; what a great responsibility it is.

For me, I'm grateful—I'm grateful that I got to serve. I'm grateful that you stuck with me. I'm grateful that I got to serve with people like Jim Moran. I'm grateful that when I'm gone, I hope Chuck Robb will be left behind, because he is a rare bird. I want you to remember what I told you. I've known a lot of people in politics; I never saw anybody take more chances to stick up for little people and lost causes. I never, ever, saw anybody do it in a tougher environment. And I think that kind of courage should be rewarded. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. John O. Peterson, pastor, and Rev. Ed Jackson, associate minister, Alfred Street Baptist Church; Reverend Peterson's wife, Joyce; and Jena Roscoe, Associate Director of Public Liaison, White House Office of African-American Outreach and Youth.

Remarks on the Budget and the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 30, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. This morning I had planned on coming here this afternoon to share good news about bipartisan progress on the budget. Our team worked all weekend and late, late into the night last night, indeed, into the early morning hours, to fashion a good-faith agreement with compromises on both sides that provided for the largest increased investment ever in the education of our children. We thought we had that agreement.

But instead of honoring it, the Republican leadership came back this afternoon and ripped it apart. Why? Because some special interest lobbyists insisted on it. They've insisted on a provision that would undermine the health and safety of millions of workers.

Six hundred thousand people lose time from work each year because of repetitive stress injuries on the job, injuries that cost American businesses about $50 billion a year. Our proposal would save these businesses $9 billion a year and save 300,000 workers the pain and suffering associated with the injuries. That's the cashier at the neighborhood grocery store, the office worker who works on a keyboard 8 hours a day, the nursing home worker who cares for our seniors.

Once again the Republican leadership has let the whispers of the special interests drown out the voices of the American people. Families should not have to choose between worker safety and their children's education.

We were on the verge of passing a landmark education bill, to hire highly qualified teachers to reduce class size in the early grades, to repair and modernize crumbling schools, to expand after-school programs, invest in teacher quality, and strengthen accountability to turn around failing schools. With the largest student enrollment in history, this budget would have honored our obligation to our children by investing more in our schools and demanding more from them.

If we could get this agreement, it would be a great bipartisan achievement. It was negotiated, until the early morning hours, by those authorized by the leaders in both parties to negotiate the agreement. But the Republican leadership is on the verge of abandoning it to put special interests ahead of the children's education. That is a mistake.

But make no mistake, this is not about a lack of bipartisanship. By working long and hard, we have reached a bipartisan consensus on the education bill. We also have bipartisan agreement on campaign finance reform, hate crimes legislation, raising the minimum wage, the Patients' Bill of Rights—all being blocked by the Republican leadership.

Congress is now 30 days into the new fiscal year without a budget. As I have often said, there is a right and a wrong way to conduct budget negotiations. When we have worked together, we have unfailingly made progress. When there is a genuine spirit of cooperation and compromise, we can accomplish great things for our people.

Last week we came together with a forward-looking bill to fund our veterans and housing programs. Saturday I signed legislation to fund our agriculture programs and provide vital assistance to farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. These bills didn't have everything I wanted. They had some things I opposed. But we can't make the perfect the enemy of good progress. On balance, the bills were good for the American people. They were negotiated in good faith, and I signed them.

There is still more work to be done on education and on other priorities. We need to make headway on strengthening Medicare, providing needed resources to teaching hospitals, rural hospitals, home health agencies, and other providers, not just to HMO's.

I also believe we can have a tax bill that meets the test of fairness to children, seniors, millions of Americans without health coverage, and small business. Instead of meeting that test or even meeting with us, the Republican leadership has crafted their own partisan tax package and passed it on a largely party-line vote.

Again, we have accomplished so much in this session of Congress in a bipartisan fashion. It has been one of the most productive sessions. But the most important legislation is still out there—the education of our children, plus the opportunity to raise the minimum wage, pass the new markets legislation, and provide needed tax relief, as well as to provide fairness to our immigrants and invest in the health care of our people.

I hope we can do this. It's not too late, and we can still work together to make an agreement. But it has to be one for the people and not the special interests.

Thank you.

Q. So what's the next step, sir? The election is a week and a day away. What do you do next?

The President. I don't know. They were up 'til 2:30 in the morning, and I came in this morning, and they said we had an agreement. Senator Harkin called me, absolutely ecstatic about the agreement. We had a good-faith compromise on this rule on labor stress injuries, which would have allowed us to proceed but would have delayed enforcement until the next election, so if they win and they want to reassess the worker safety thing, they'd have the opportunity to do it, but otherwise it would go into effect. It was an honorable compromise. The Republicans and the Democrats agreed on it, and then the Republican leadership blew it up. That's all I can tell you. You know, when you look at what's been done in this bill for education, the idea that the bill would be wrecked over this is unbelievable to me.

Latino and Immigrant Fairness Legislation

Q. Mr. President, anything new on the "Latino Immigration Fairness Act"? Is there any progress, or is that completely stopped?

The President. No—well, we've made some progress, but it's not nearly what we think ought to be done, and we're continuing to work on it. I think, frankly, what happens to it depends on whether we can get agreement on the larger bill. There are lots of provisions in there, and we're working on it.

Legislative Branch Appropriations

Q. [*Inaudible*]—spending bill?

The President. I haven't decided yet. The bill itself is all right, but there's something that strikes me as a little wrong in taking care of the Congress and the White House when we haven't taken care of the American people. I just haven't decided what to do about it yet.

Published Comments on Impeachment

Q. Mr. President, why do you think Congress, congressional Republicans should apologize to the country about impeachment?

The President. Well, first of all, I have nothing to say about that except I was promised faithfully that that interview would be done—released after the election, and I believed it. And the only thing I can say is, I doubt if you've read the whole interview, or you wouldn't have

asked the question in that way. And I would just urge the American people, if they're hearing all this talk, to read exactly what was said. But I don't think it's appropriate for me to discuss any of this until I'm doing the wrap-up on my administration. Right now I think the American people should be focused on this election.

Oregon Assisted Suicide Law

Q. Mr. President, you've had some discussions today about the Oregon assisted suicide law. Would you sign a tax or spending bill that would block that Oregon law?

The President. Well, you know, I don't support assisted suicide, but the people of Oregon did. My concern, frankly, right now is whether the bill, as written, would have a chilling effect on doctors writing medication for pain relief on terminally ill patients. And I'm concerned, therefore, about the way it's worded.

You don't want to—whatever your opinions about assisted suicide and whether the people ought to have a right to vote on it in a given State, we certainly don't want to do anything that would in any way undermine the willingness of physicians to write pain relief medication for fear they'll later be prosecuted if the patient dies.

So I'm a little—I'm concerned about that. And I know Senator Wyden is filibustering the bill, and maybe we'll work that out, too, before this is over. I hope we can.

U.S.S. Cole Investigation

Q. Do you now believe that Yemen will give American investigators all the access they need to witnesses and suspects in the U.S.S. *Cole* investigation, sir?

The President. I hope so. They were just great, the Yemenis were, in the beginning of this, the first phase of this work. And I think—there have been difficulties now, I think not because they don't want to find out who did it but perhaps because they are worried about having America deploy more resources in Yemen to do the investigation than they are. I think they feel comfortable that they can do it.

But what I argued to President Salih was that we ought to have a genuine joint investigation, that we have FBI people working with folks all over the world, in all different kinds of countries. When the Embassies were blown up in Africa, in both the nations involved, Kenya and Tanzania, we worked very closely with the local law enforcement officials, and we conducted a genuine joint operation.

We had quite a long discussion about it, the President and I did, on Saturday, I believe. And I hope that we can work it out, because I do believe that they want to know who did it, and I know that we have to find out who did it. There are some promising leads out there. We need to get on it as quickly as possible, because the problem in these things is that the trail can get cold. So all I can tell you is we're working very hard, and I'm quite hopeful.

President's Travel Plans

Q. Mr. President, if you go to California, which other States do you intend to visit during the last days of the campaign?

The President. Well, I'm not sure yet. We're working on a number of different options, and I want to do whatever will be most helpful. I know I'll go back to New York once. But I don't know what else we're going to do. We're working it out, and I think, really, since I'm not involved in the day-to-day operations, don't have access to the latest polls and all that, I—except indirectly—I think that that's a call others have to make. But we'll make a decision and do the best we can.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. [*Inaudible*]—going to do?

The President. Finish the business here. That's the most important thing. We've got to finish our business here. You know, I'm just sure that we have bipartisan agreement—not only on the Education/Labor bill but in these other areas we can get it, if the pressure from the interest groups on the leadership of the majority party in Congress don't thwart it. So we've just got to keep working at it, and that's what I intend to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:52 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Ali Abdallah Salih of Yemen.

Statement on Signing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2000

October 30, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1654, the "National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2000."

I commend the bipartisan efforts of the Congress to pass a NASA authorization bill that funds my Administration's priorities, including building the International Space Station, improving Space Shuttle safety, reducing the cost of access to space through the new Space Launch Initiative, and investing in outstanding science and technology.

I am disappointed, however, that this bill falls short of enabling NASA to conduct the most balanced, efficient, and effective space program. My Administration communicated significant objections and concerns with H.R. 1654 as it progressed through the legislative process. This bill satisfactorily addresses many of the key concerns; however, it limits NASA's flexibility to pursue a promising commercial habitation module for the International Space Station. It also includes several other objectionable provisions and fails to include all but one of the fourteen legislative provisions proposed by my Administration.

I have signed this bill today because it authorizes funding for a robust space and aeronautics program for the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 1654, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–391.

Statement on Signing the Child Citizenship Act of 2000

October 30, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2883, the "Child Citizenship Act of 2000." This Act confers U.S. citizenship automatically upon certain foreign-born children, including those adopted by citizens of the United States, who do not acquire U.S. citizenship at birth. This Act eliminates the need in many instances for parents to apply to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for Certificates of Citizenship for their children who are not U.S. citizens at birth.

Under prior law, foreign-born adopted children could be subject to removal if they did not acquire U.S. citizenship after being brought to the United States—even if they had lived their lives since infancy in the United States. While this Act will not remedy past cases where adopted children were deported, it will ensure that this unfortunate possibility will be eliminated for most noncitizen adopted children under the age of 18 and for all noncitizen children adopted into U.S. households in the future. I welcome this action to support families who adopt foreign-born children by removing an unnecessary impediment to citizenship for these and other foreign-born children.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 2883, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–395.

Statement on Signing the Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act
October 30, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3767, the Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act. This Act will, among other things, make permanent a highly successful pilot program that for the past twelve years has permitted nationals of many countries to enter the United States for business and tourism without the necessity of first obtaining a U.S. visa, so long as U.S. citizens are granted similar privileges in their countries. By facilitating travel to the United States in this manner, the Visa Waiver Program is helping to generate billions of dollars in tourist and business revenues for U.S. companies. At the same time, it is fostering good will for the United States and an understanding of who we are as a people by giving to millions of citizens from participating countries an increased opportunity to visit our many natural wonders as well as the places that are vital to our national heritage.

The Visa Waiver Program is good for government, too. Because visitors from participating countries do not have to obtain visas, the Department of State is able to reallocate scarce resources from issuing routine visas in low-risk waiver countries to doing more for American citizens and combating fraud in high-risk countries. Further, the legislation contains a provision that removes a potential roadblock to continued participation in the program of many countries by recognizing, for purposes of reciprocity, common border areas composed of several states.

H.R. 3767 establishes new requirements that will strengthen the existing Visa Waiver Program. For example, it contains provisions to enhance our security by requiring that within specified time frames all foreign nationals entering the United States under the program have machine-readable passports. Those passports are less susceptible to fraud and can more readily assist the Immigration and Naturalization Service to track the entry and timely departure of foreign nationals. Further, H.R. 3767 requires the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of State, prior to admitting a new country into the Visa Waiver Program, to consider the effect of the country's admission on the law enforcement and security interests of the United States. It also will require continual monitoring of those considerations with respect to all countries in the program. Finally, H.R. 3767 provides an emergency procedure for termination of a country's participation. This occurs when the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of State, determines that because of events in that country, such as a severe breakdown of law and order or economic collapse, the continued participation of that country would pose a threat to our law enforcement or security interests.

In addition to these provisions of the Visa Waiver Program, this Act also includes immigration-related provisions that will further the Administration's objective of promoting the rapid and pro-competitive privatization of the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), a goal widely shared by INTELSAT member countries. By ensuring that the immigrant status of the current employees of this intergovernmental entity will not be adversely affected, the United States is affirming its commitment to a smooth privatization and expressing its desire to welcome a pro-competitively privatized INTELSAT as a valued U.S. corporate citizen.

In its pilot state, the Visa Waiver Program has been a great success. Now, as a result of this legislation, it not only will be a better program, but it will become a permanent part of our Nation's immigration system.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3767, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–396.

Statement on Signing the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001

October 30, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4205, the "Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001," which authorizes FY 2001 appropriations for military activities of the Department of Defense (DOD), military construction, and defense activities of the Department of Energy (DOE). While I have concerns with several provisions in this Act, I have determined that H.R. 4205 generally reflects my strong commitment to the Nation's security. It provides for critical national defense needs and priorities, maintains the readiness of our Armed Forces, supports my continued commitment to improving the quality of life for our military personnel and their families, and allows for the modernization of our weapons systems.

In particular, this Act authorizes key elements of my plan to improve military compensation, including my request for a 3.7 percent across-the-board increase in basic pay for our Armed Forces. I am also pleased that the Act authorizes my request for increases in housing allowances, which will reduce servicemembers' out-of-pocket expenses. In providing service members with a supplemental subsistence allowance, H.R. 4205 begins to address the concern the Congress and I share with regard to servicemembers. In addition, the bill provides military retirees access to prescription drugs with low out-of-pocket costs, a significant benefit. I strongly support enactment of the Administration's prescription drug benefit for all Medicare retirees through the Medicare program. As prescription drugs play an increasingly important role in health care, it is imperative that our seniors have prescription drug coverage. Finally, the Act provides comprehensive health care coverage to military retirees over the age of 65. Although I am concerned that the Congress fails to deal fully with the high, long-term cost of this new benefit, I am pleased overall with the way the Act supports individuals, who dedicated so much to the service of our country.

I am also pleased that the Act supports my request for key programs to continue modernizing our military forces and reaffirms the $60 billion in overall procurement funding I requested to meet the recommendation of the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review. I am encouraged that the Act includes funding for the Navy's LPD–17 Amphibious Ship, DD–21 (the next-generation destroyer), the F/A–18 E/F, the Air Force's F–22 tactical fighter aircraft, the Joint Strike Fighter, and support for the Army's transformation effort. These programs are critical to ensuring our Nation's military superiority into the 21st century. I am disappointed, however, that the Congress has again failed to support my proposal to authorize two additional rounds of base closure and realignment. The Department of Defense's base infrastructure is far too large for its military forces and must be reduced if the Department is to obtain adequate appropriations for readiness and modernization requirements during the next decade.

I am pleased that the bill includes a program to compensate individuals who have suffered disabling and potentially fatal illnesses as a result of their work in the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons complex. My Administration has advocated compensating these workers for their heroic sacrifices in a manner that is fair, science-based, and workable, and I commend those in the Congress and in my Administration who have worked tirelessly toward this goal. The passage of this legislation is very encouraging and, while there are constitutional concerns with this provision that I will interpret as advisory, I recognize that much work will need to be done to ensure that this program is successfully implemented so that these workers can be fully and fairly compensated for their sacrifices.

I am also pleased that the conferees included a provision transferring a majority of Naval Oil Shale Reserve No. 2 to the Ute Indian Tribe in Utah, and providing for cleanup of a former uranium mill tailings site near Moab, Utah, on the Colorado River. About 84,000 acres would be returned to the Ute Indian Tribe.

H.R. 4205 also enacts provisions of the Directives I issued regarding the Navy range on Vieques, Puerto Rico. The Directives reflect an agreement with the Government of Puerto Rico that meets local concerns and enables our military personnel to resume training at Vieques. Like the agreement, the Act, most importantly,

provides that the residents will determine through a referendum whether there will be any training at Vieques beyond that which is critical to the readiness of the Navy and the Marine Corps to conduct at Vieques. This is training with nonexplosive ordnance for no more than 90 days per year through May 1, 2003. In addition to $40 million for projects to address the residents' current concerns related to the training, if they decide to allow the Navy to extend it, the Act authorizes $50 million to provide benefits typically enjoyed by residents in the vicinity of important military installations.

The Act, additionally, requires the Navy to relinquish ownership of land not used for training. But, different from the agreement, it would have some of this land transferred to the Interior Department rather than local ownership and set a deadline for the transfer of May 1, 2001, rather than December 31, 2000. Further, if the Viequenses vote for all training to end, it requires the Navy to relinquish the land used for training, but would have most of that land transferred to Interior rather than the General Services Administration for disposal. These variations are relatively minor, but they are neither justifiable nor prudent. They are not justifiable because Interior and Puerto Rico would together manage the land not used for training that requires protection under either the Act or the agreement. Further, if the people of Vieques vote for all training to end May 1, 2003, there is no known reason why the Federal Government would want to continue to maintain most of the land used for training. The changes are not prudent because they resurrect a basic part of the issue that had largely been put to rest by the agreement—the military's credibility on Vieques community matters. We are, therefore, submitting legislation to further transfer the land at issue to Puerto Rican ownership or to GSA for disposal as is appropriate. And the Navy will transfer the land that the Act already would transfer to local ownership by December 31.

I am concerned with two provisions of H.R. 4205 relating to the Department of Energy. First, the Act would limit to 3 years the term of office for the first person appointed to the position of Under Secretary for Nuclear Security at the Department of Energy and would restrict the President's ability to remove that official to cases of "inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office." Particularly in light of the sensitive duties assigned to this officer in the area of national security, I understand the phrase "neglect of duty" to include, among other things, a failure to comply with the lawful directives or policies of the President.

Second, I am deeply disappointed that the Congress has taken upon itself to set greatly increased polygraph requirements that are unrealistic in scope, impractical in execution, and that would be strongly counterproductive in their impact on our national security. The bill also micromanages the Secretary of Energy's authority to grant temporary waivers to the polygraph requirement in a potentially damaging way, by explicitly directing him not to consider the scientific vitality of DOE laboratories. This directs the Secretary not to do his job, since maintaining the scientific vitality of DOE national laboratories is essential to our national security and is one of the Secretary's most important responsibilities. I am therefore signing the bill with the understanding that it cannot supersede the Secretary's responsibility to fulfill his national security obligations.

I am disappointed that the Congress did not fund the chemical weapon destruction facility in Shchuch'ye, Russia. It is vital to U.S. security and nonproliferation interests to work with Russia to eliminate the 5,450 tons of modern, nerve agent munitions at this site. I urge the Congress to restore funding for this critical threat reduction program next year.

My Administration has worked hard to modernize our export controls and protect our national security while strengthening the global competitiveness of our high tech companies. Through our efforts, U.S. companies have been allowed to export computers that do not pose a threat to our national security. That is why I asked the Congress to reduce the congressional review period required from 180 to 30 days before I can adjust the notification threshold for high performance computer exports. Although the bill makes an adjustment that is an improvement from the status quo (60 days, but excluding time when the Congress has adjourned sine die), this notification period is still too long. Neither U.S. national security nor the global competitiveness of U.S. companies will be well served by such delays.

The Act also would require the Department of Defense to contract only with U.S. air carriers that participate in the Civil Reserve Air Fleet program for the transportation abroad of passengers and property. This provision would limit

the ability of the executive branch, including DOD, to use the narrow authority in current law to waive Fly America restrictions on international transport of U.S. Government passengers and property in cases where the United States receives "rights or benefits of similar magnitude." It could also impair the executive branch's ability to open foreign aviation markets, thus denying economic benefits to U.S. airlines, communities and consumers. My Administration strongly opposed this provision and favors its repeal.

I am disappointed that the conferees did not include hate crimes legislation in this Act. The hate crimes legislation would have enhanced the Federal Government's ability to prosecute violent crimes motivated by race, color, religion, or national origin, and would have authorized Federal prosecution of crimes motivated by a victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability. I will continue to fight for this important legislation, and urge Congress to enact it before it adjourns.

The Act also raises other constitutional concerns. The constitutional separation of powers does not allow for a single Member of Congress to direct executive branch officers to take specified action through means other than duly enacted legislation. Thus, I will instruct the Secretaries concerned to treat congressional members' requests for the review and determination of proposals for posthumous or honorary promotions or appointments as precatory rather than mandatory. Another provision establishes a Board of Governors for the Civil Air Patrol. Insofar as this Board is an office of the Federal Government exercising significant authority, the provision for the appointment of the Board's members would raise concerns under the Appointments Clause. Accordingly, I will instruct the Secretary of the Air Force, in issuing the regulations authorized by this provision, to retain a degree of control over the Board that appropriately limits its authority. Finally, because the Constitution vests in the President the authority and responsibility to conduct the foreign and diplomatic relations of the United States, the Congress cannot purport to direct the executive branch to enter into an agreement with another country, and thus I will treat such language as advisory only.

With respect to Government Information Security Reform, the Act directs the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to delegate certain security policy and oversight authorities to the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and another agency head. The policies, programs, and procedures established by the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and other agency heads will remain subject to the approval of and oversight by the President and by offices within the Executive Office of the President in a manner consistent with existing law and policy.

Finally, I have serious concerns with several personnel provisions. One provision of this Act requires the Secretary of Defense to authorize a pilot program for the resolution of equal employment opportunity complaints of civilian employees of the Department of Defense that waives procedural requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Eliminating these procedural safeguards could leave civilian employees without important means to ensure the protection of their civil rights. Therefore, I am directing the Secretary of Defense to personally approve any pilot program, and that the Secretary approve no more than 3 pilot programs, 1 in a military department and 2 in Defense agencies. In order to assure that participation by civilian employees is truly voluntary, I am directing that the pilots provide that complaining parties may opt out of participation in the pilot at any time. Finally, I am directing that the Secretary submit an assessment of the pilots, together with the underlying data, to the EEOC within 180 days of the completion of the 3-year pilot period.

I am also troubled by a provision affecting personnel demonstration projects that could undermine the merit system principles and might result in adverse budgetary consequences. I am, therefore, directing the Department of Defense to work with the Office of Personnel Management to resolve these issues before developing any plan to implement this new authority.

Notwithstanding these concerns, I have signed this Act because it demonstrates this Nation's commitment to the readiness and well-being of our Armed Forces and provides for a modernization effort that will ensure the acquisition of weapon systems with the technologies necessary to meet the challenges of this new century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4205, approved October 30, which incorporated the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 as an appendix, was assigned Public Law No. 106–398.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Rename the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

October 30, 2000

Today, I am very pleased to sign into law H.R. 5417, which would rename the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the "McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act."

I am deeply saddened by Representative Vento's recent passing. Representative Vento was a great friend of the poor and the homeless. His leadership on the issue of homelessness will be greatly missed in Minnesota and across the Nation.

Representative Vento was a key leader in the effort to secure the original passage in 1987 of the McKinney Act, the first and still the most significant Federal program to assist homeless persons. His commitment to those left behind did not end with the passage of the homeless assistance bill. For over a decade he remained a leading voice for social justice on Capitol Hill, introducing legislation to expand and improve services to homeless people, and continually reminding his colleagues and the American people of our responsibility to our most vulnerable neighbors. Representative Vento was also a passionate advocate for affordable housing and protecting our Nation's natural resources.

Bruce Vento's passing represents a significant loss for Americans who care about ending homelessness, ensuring housing opportunity, and protecting the environment. Renaming the McKinney Act the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act will serve to regularly remind our Nation of Bruce Vento's passion for justice and the responsibility we each have for our homeless neighbors.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5417, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–400.

Statement on Signing the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000

October 30, 2000

Today, I am pleased to sign into law S. 1809, the "Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000." This legislation reauthorizes programs that support people with developmental disabilities and helps them achieve their maximum potential through increased self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration in all facets of life. The Act also adds important new authority to provide services and activities for families of individuals with developmental disabilities and the dedicated workers who assist them.

Since 1963, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act has made a crucial difference in the lives and futures of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Through this Act, Federal funds support the development and operation of State Councils, Protection and Advocacy Systems, University Centers (formerly known as university affiliated programs), and projects of national significance. This crucial investment has provided the structure to assist people with developmental disabilities to pursue meaningful and productive

lives. These programs have made community living possible for individuals across our Nation with significant disabilities. The Act has led to further Federal legislation in support of all people with disabilities. Therefore, it is only fitting that I am signing this legislation in the same year as the 25th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

When the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act was first conceived by President Kennedy, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, and Dr. Robert Cooke, the primary emphasis was on the advancement of scientific understanding, professional education, and ensuring access to, and safety of, institutional facilities. Later changes, as conceived by Dr. Elizabeth Boggs, Dr. Elsie Helsel, and others, focused on efforts of families, professionals, and State agencies to improve supports for all people with developmental disabilities. Today, the programs emphasize fundamental system change, including legal services and advocacy and capacity-building at the State and local levels. The focus is on listening to people with developmental disabilities as self-advocates, and helping people with developmental disabilities and their families obtain the information, assistive technology, and supports they need to make more informed choices about how and where to live. An important aspect of today's work is to ensure self-determination and access to supports for historically unserved and underserved populations across the Nation. To ensure continued progress in these areas, S. 1809 now includes performance-based accountability requirements.

The programs carried out through this Act improve and expand opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. My Administration is committed to working with Indian Tribes on a government-to-government basis to address issues of shared concern, and I encourage the next Administration and Congress to explore ways for this legislation to provide appropriate roles for Indian Tribes and Native Americans pursuant to this legislation.

Investments in the freedom and the future of Americans with significant, lifelong disabilities are important investments in the well-being of our Nation. For these reasons, I am pleased to sign the "Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000."

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1809, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–402.

Remarks at a Reception for African-American Religious Leaders
October 30, 2000

Thank you. Well, that was a monumental introduction. [*Laughter*] I asked Billy if he thought there was another church anywhere in America named Monumental. But it was a monumental introduction. He was reminding me—we were standing up here—that we met the first time at the civil rights museum at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. I was there looking at the exhibit where the statue of Daisy Bates faces the statue of Governor Faubus. The country has come a long way since then, thanks in no small measure to people like all of you. And I welcome you here.

I want to thank Rodney Slater—we've worked together almost 20 years—and my friend Caroll Willis. They came to work for me when I was running for Governor in 1982, and I was trying to do something that had never been done before. I had been elected; then I had been defeated; and I was trying to get elected again. And since you can't tell the voters they made a mistake, that's a pretty hard deal to sell. But we figured it out somehow.

I want to thank Ben Johnson, who runs our One America Office here; Alvin Brown, who runs the community empowerment program that Vice President Gore has led so well; Reverend Zina Pierre, who works for us here in Intergovernmental Affairs; and all the other people at the White House.

Later this week we're going to start a month-long celebration of the 200th anniversary of the

White House. George Washington is the only President who never lived here, even though he commissioned this house and had the competition for the architectural plans. We've got downstairs a copy of the drawings that Thomas Jefferson presented anonymously, and he got beat in the competition by an Irish architect named James Hoban.

In the first of November 1800, John and Abigail Adams moved in here, and there was no furniture here. And Mrs. Adams hung up the wash in this room. So the room has kind of come a long way in the last 200 years, too. [*Laughter*] I think this is a pretty good way to begin the observance of the 200th anniversary of this grand old house, by having all of you here.

I also would like to especially note the presence in the audience of the two pastors who hosted me yesterday. I was out making visits, and Reverend Wallace Charles Smith of the Shiloh Baptist Church here in Washington and Reverend John Peterson of the Alfred Street Baptist Church of Alexandria, Virginia, thank you for having me yesterday. I had a great time, and I appreciate that.

I asked you to come here for two reasons today. First and foremost, to say thank you: Thank you for giving me the chance to serve. Thank you for urging me along the way to try to get me to serve better. Thank you for watching my back and always pushing me ahead at the same time. Thank you. It's been a great 8 years, and I've got 11 weeks more, and I'm going to milk everything I can out of it for the American people—[*laughter*]—do every good thing I can possibly get done.

And the Republicans—we've actually made a bunch of agreements with them here that have been good for the American people. I thought we had one on schools last night; it's the best one that we've ever had in 8 years. And then today they decided it wasn't such a good agreement after all. They're kind of drawing back. But maybe I can—if you all pray over them tonight, maybe I can get them to come on back here and do this agreement we made last night. So I thank you for that.

The second thing, obviously, is that I wanted to say a few words about today and tomorrow. In America, our public life is always about tomorrow, and that's the thing that I appreciate so much. I look out here in this room, and I see people I've known here for over 20 years. And you still come because you don't get tired doing good. You know that that's the admonition of the Scripture, and you're still doing it. And I thank you for that. But we have to look ahead here. And I'm going to—when the Congress goes home, I'm going to go out and make a few visits around the country and try to do what I can to persuade the people that they ought to go and vote, and they need to understand what the issues are.

But just let me ask you this. If I had told you 8 years ago that, by now, we'd all come here and gather, and we'd have 22 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and the longest economic expansion in history and the lowest African-American unemployment rate ever recorded and the biggest drop in child poverty in 35 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the highest homeownership in history; that we would have the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years; that we'd have people without health insurance, the number of those folks going down for the first time in a dozen years; that the dropout rate would be down; the test scores would be up; the African-American high school graduation rate would equal the white rate for the first time in history; there would be a 500 percent increase in the number of African-American kids taking advanced placement courses, with the highest college-going rate in history; and that, oh, by the way, we'd have a decline in teen pregnancy to historic lows, a big drop in teenage drug use, and cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, safer food; more land set aside for the future of all generations than at any time since Theodore Roosevelt was President, almost 100 years ago—if I told you that 8 years ago, would you have believed these were 8 years well spent that we did together? I think it's pretty good.

Now, so here's what I want to say. It's always about tomorrow. Our Founders were smart people. I mean, they were real smart, you know? They knew that God didn't only create white male property owners. When they said we're all created equal, they didn't say only white male property owners were created equal. And they knew that they weren't exactly living up to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. And that's why they committed us to an eternal journey toward a more perfect Union, right? They were smart. They knew there would never be a perfect Union. They

never said, "We're going to make a perfect Union." They said, "We have joined together to make a more perfect Union," which meant that every succession of Americans down all the way to the end of time would always know they had something to do to measure up to these absolute ideals.

Now, 8 years ago, we had a troubled economy, a divided society, and a paralyzed political system. Today, we've got the strongest economy in history. We're making progress in all areas of the society. We are more united than we were before. We entered this new century and this new millennium in very good shape.

And now before the American people looms an election, the first election of the 21st century. And people will decide in 8 days who the new President and Vice President will be, who will be in the United States Senate, who will be in the United States Congress, and a number of other important elections. They will decide by how they vote, and they will decide by whether they vote. Because, make no mistake about it, not voting is a decision. That's a decision to let somebody who disagrees with you have their way. So I want you in the days that remain to make sure that everybody knows what the choices are and what the consequences are.

In my lifetime we have never had an election like this, ever. Not once have we ever had an election with so much prosperity, so much social progress, with the absence of a domestic crisis or a threat to our security from around the world. Are there problems at home and abroad? Of course there are. There always will be, down to the end of time. Scripture says that. But we have never, ever, ever held an election in this sort of environment before, not in the lifetime of anybody in this room.

Is that right? And sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than bad times. Anybody that's over 30 has made a decision and a mistake at some point in your life not because things were going so badly, but because they were going so well, you thought you had to—you could just stop concentrating. Isn't that right? So what does America have to do in the next 8 days? Concentrate.

This is a very important time. We may never have another time in our lifetimes like this to build the future of our dreams for our children. And I would just like to make a couple of statements about it. Number one, in order to do what we need to do, we've got to keep this prosperity going and expand it. And if you want to do that, we've got to keep paying down the debt and investing in our future.

The Vice President wants to pay down the debt and take the money that's left after you get on the schedule to pay the debt down and use that to invest in education, health care, the environment, national security, and give the people a tax cut we can afford. Why is that important? Because as long as you're paying down the debt, you'll keep interest rates lower—interest rates lower for your parishioners, for a decade, a percent a year a decade—$390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower monthly car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments—never mind the credit cards or the business loans cheaper, which means more businesses, more jobs, and a better stock market.

It's really important. People ask me all the time, "What great new idea did you and Bob Rubin bring to Washington?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] We brought—now you laugh, but this is serious. You've got to talk to folks about this. Everybody can understand this. We brought arithmetic back to Washington. How many times did they tell you the budget was going to be balanced, you know, that this money was going to appear out of thin air? How many times did we hear that? And the deficit was bigger and bigger and bigger, and the debt of this country quadrupled. Now we're paying it down.

We will have paid over $340 billion of the national debt when I leave office—paying it down. And that's why interest rates are down, and that's why the economy has worked.

And this is a message that I think African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans, and all other Americans ought to hear together. We've got to keep arithmetic here. You know, this is a job. It's not just a speech; it's a job. And one of the jobs is to be the monitor of the arithmetic. I'm just telling you, it's arithmetic.

And I know it's hard for folks—it may be even hard for you; sometimes it's hard for me—to keep up with a trillion here and a trillion there, you know? How many zeros is that? But if the surplus is supposed to be $2 trillion—and that's high; believe me, it won't be that high because of the money that's been spent in this Congress—true. And our friends in the other party, they say, "We want a tax cut that

plus interest is 1.6, and we would like to privatize Social Security, a little bit, and that's 1." Forget about the zeros, 1.6 and 1. "And we want to spend some money, too, about a half a trillion." That's 0.5. Well, if you add 1.6 and 1 and 0.5 together, you've got 3.1. And arithmetic says that's bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

That means you're back into deficit; you've got higher interest rates; you're spending all that Social Security money everybody has promised not to spend. Now, this is not rocket science; this is arithmetic. But everybody in America can understand it if they know it.

I've worked so hard. I don't know what else I can do to turn this economy around. We've worked hard on it. We've tried to stay on top of it. You know, there have been a lot of sophisticated decisions around the edges, and we've worked to expand trade and an increase in education and training and all that. But it all begins with arithmetic. You get the arithmetic wrong in a country, you have to pay the price, just like you get the arithmetic wrong on your checkbook.

So that's the first thing I hope you'll tell people. The Vice President was part of every important budget decision we made. He cast the tie-breaking vote for the economic plan in 1993. He understands the price we've all paid to make the arithmetic work and how important it is to keep the expansion going.

The second point I want to make is, there are honest differences here. I'm so pleased that this has been basically a positive campaign and people aren't bad-mouthing each other too much. I like that. Why do we have to say anything bad about our opponents? They're not our enemies, after all; they're just our opponents. This is America. So we've been able to say, "Okay, all these folks are good folks. They love their families. They love their country, and they have different ideas." But, you know, they have different ideas. [*Laughter*]

And if the crime rate is lower and the number of people without health insurance is going down and test scores are going up and the college-going rate is at an all-time high and the environment is getting cleaner and the Vice President wants to build on the ideas and the progress instead of reverse the policies, it seems to me that ought to be worth something.

So, question number one, do you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people who have been left behind? Question number two, do you want to build on the social progress? Question number three, what about one America? How are we going to go forward together?

Should we have hate crimes legislation or not? Should we have a Medicare prescription drug program that applies to all of our seniors who need it, or just some? Should we have a Patients' Bill of Rights that really gives everybody the right to be protected and let their doctors make their medical decisions? Should we have stronger enforcement of the equal-pay-for-women law, or not? Should we keep trying to improve affirmative action but not end it, or not?

What kind of people should be on the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals? And is this new trend that we've seen from the conservative majority that now is only five, of restricting, restricting, restricting the Federal Government's authority to enact legislation to protect and promote the interests of the America people—is that a good trend, or not?

And what about the role of the President as not just the doer but the stopper? Would it be a good thing if the Republican Party had the White House and the Senate and the House, with no one there to say no if they had another 1995 where they voted to abolish the Department of Education and had the biggest education and environmental cuts in history and the highest Medicare premiums, or not? Would that be a good thing? People need to think.

But if you ask me what counts, I think what counts is: One, keeping the prosperity going; two, building on the progress, not reversing it; three, keep working for one America; four, have a President who's there in case the Congress tries to go too far in one direction; and five, have somebody there that you know you can count on in a crisis.

I'll tell you, we've been through some. When we tried to turn back the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, Al Gore was there. When we worked for peace in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, Al Gore was there. When we had to decide whether to give financial aid to Mexico, when a poll said 81 percent of the American people were against it, and I had to decide in 5 minutes whether to do it or not, Al Gore was there. And I could give you countless other examples.

The Vice President has demonstrated conclusively since the convention that he is an independent person, that he will be his own President. But I can tell you what I know from 8 years. He is a good person who will be a great President.

And, you know, I'm not running for anything this year. Most days I'm okay about it. I've had so much fun working for Hillary and working for Al. I've had so much fun. I must say, I used to not understand it when Hillary used to tell me she just hated to come to my debates. Now I can't even watch one of hers in front of somebody else. I just get nervous as a cat, you know? This is very interesting to—role for me.

But I do feel that the country has been so good to me. I have been so blessed. I got to serve here, and I have learned things here that maybe you can only learn when you've been President. But I know this: I know we've got to keep this prosperity going because we haven't yet embraced everybody. And we've got a lot of work to do on that.

I know if you've got a policy that's driving down crime and driving down welfare and improving the environment without hurting the economy and giving health insurance to more people and improving education and turning around failing schools, we ought to be building on it, not walking away from it.

I know that as long as we're coming together across racial and religious and the other lines that divide us, we're going to be okay, because the American people are smart people. They'll get it figured out, whatever the problems are.

And I know that this office would be well served by someone who really knows and understands the challenges it faces, who can be a restraining influence if the elements in the other party in Congress try to go too far, and who desperately wants the best for this country in the future.

Now, these are simple little arguments, starting with arithmetic, going to sticking with what works, going to the fact that we all have got to go forward together, going to the fact that hard work and experience and a proven record of making good decisions counts for something. If you can just make those arguments and then contrast them and let people decide what they agree with on the consequences, then we should be happy, however this election comes out, because that's what America is about. But, you know, if our folks show and they know, you know what will happen. If you get show and know, you know what will happen.

This election is not fundamentally about race, although there are still racial issues to be resolved and racial outreach to be done. But if you raise the minimum wage, that helps everybody. And if you don't, it hurts everybody. If we have hate crimes legislation, I think it makes everybody stronger. I don't think that—I think the overwhelming majority of white Americans and Americans without regard to party—Republicans, Democrats, independents—favor that. It's just one of—it's the same thing with the Patients' Bill of Rights.

But there's so much to be done; all the best stuff is still out there, stuff we can do on education and health care and economic opportunity, in science and technology. But you've got to remember these simple things: You've got to make the economy go with arithmetic; you've got to build on the social progress, not reverse it; you've got to build one America; and you've got to have a strong leader who understands these issues, not afraid to take a stand, with a proven record of achievement that will deliver for you and deliver for you. Ask Billy Kyles. Billy Kyles knows Al Gore as well as anybody in this room today, except me.

So this is an unusual election. We normally have some terrible thing that we're all full of anxiety about. Now we've got to go out and whip people up about positive things. We want everybody to be happy but empowered, not threatened but free to have a vision, not looking down on anybody but trying to lift up everybody.

This is going to be an interesting exercise in civics, to see if we can handle all this prosperity and this good news and make it through. But, you know, most of the time the American people get it right, or we wouldn't be around here after 224 years. And when we have these big forks in the road, they normally make the right decision, or all of us sure wouldn't be here, either because of the color of our skins or because we were the first ones in our family to get any kind of a decent education.

This is a very great country. It moves in mysterious ways. But clarity is our friend here. You just think about that. I told the Congress the other day what I'll tell you. When you walk out of here, I want you to imagine yourself as America's weather corps for one more week,

and you're going to go out there and make it clear.

When I was a kid, we had a guy in my home State that tried to make a killing off the farmers because he said he could make it rain. He thought he could make it rain. People actually paid him to go up and get in a little airplane and drop pellets in the clouds, you know? And they're still waiting. [*Laughter*]

You don't want to make it rain. You want to make it clear. You want to make the Sun shine. You want to make all these issues bright and shiny and crystal and simple and direct. This is not complicated. The America people are fortunate they have two clear, very different choices; two good people who love their country and will do exactly what they intend. [*Laughter*] And this is good. I mean, we're laughing. This is a good thing.

This is about keeping the prosperity going, not putting it at risk; building on the progress, not reversing it; continuing to build one America with everything from the court appointments to the executive appointments to the advocacy of legislation; relating to the rest of the world, including Africa and Latin America and places that have been left behind before we came along. I saw the way you responded to that with genuine seasoned judgment and wisdom and passion.

Listen, we've got a good nominee. We've got a good leader. We've got a good story to tell. Just ask people to remember what it was like 8 years ago, what it's like now. And then ask people to imagine what they want it to be 4 and 8 years from now.

Just lift people up. Get everybody to take a deep breath. Blow the clouds away. Be America's weather corps. We'll have a great celebration in 8 days.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:13 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Samuel (Billy) Kyles, pastor, Monumental Baptist Church of Memphis, TN; Caroll Willis, director, community service division, Democratic National Committee; and former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Memorandum on a Pilot Program for Reengineering the Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Process

October 30, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Implementation of Section 1111 of H.R. 4205, the "Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001"

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4205, the "Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001." Section 1111 of this bill authorizes you to create a pilot program to resolve equal employment opportunity complaints by civilian employees of the Department of Defense that is not subject to certain procedural requirements prescribed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The EEOC is responsible for equal employment opportunity throughout the Government and it has longstanding expertise in this area. My Administration recently completed a major regulatory initiative to make the Federal equal employment opportunity process fairer and more effective. To operate any pilot program that eliminates the procedural safeguards incorporated in that initiative would leave civilian employees without important means to ensure the protection of their civil rights.

For these reasons, I am directing that the following steps be taken in the implementation of this provision:

- First, you must personally approve the creation and implementation of any pilot program created under section 1111 of H.R. 4205.
- Second, you must approve the implementation of this pilot program in no more than one military department and two Defense agencies.
- Third, in order to ensure that the participation in these pilot programs by civilian employees is truly voluntary, I direct you to

ensure that the pilot programs provide that complaining parties may opt out of participation in the pilot programs at any time.

- Fourth, I direct you to submit an assessment of the pilot programs, together with the relevant underlying data, to the EEOC within 180 days of the completion of the 3-year pilot program period.

These steps will ensure that important civil rights of civilian employees of the Department of Defense are protected while preserving congressional intent with regard to the creation of the pilot programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: H.R. 4205, approved October 30, which incorporated the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 as an appendix, was assigned Public Law No. 106–398. This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 31. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Statement on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives Legislative Branch, Treasury, and General Appropriations Legislation

October 30, 2000

I am returning herewith without my approval, H.R. 4516, the Legislative Branch and the Treasury and General Appropriations Act, 2001. This bill provides funds for the legislative branch and the White House at a time when the business of the American people remains unfinished.

The Congress' continued refusal to focus on the priorities of the American people leaves me no alternative but to veto this bill. I cannot in good conscience sign a bill that funds the operations of the Congress and the White House before funding our classrooms, fixing our schools, and protecting our workers.

With the largest student enrollment in history, we need ad budget that will allow us to repair and modernize crumbling schools, reduce class size, hire more and better trained teachers, expand after-school programs, and strengthen accountability to turn around failing schools.

I would sign this legislation in the context of a budget that puts the interests of the American people before self-interest or special interests. I urge the Congress to get its priorities in order and send me, without further delay, balanced legislation I can sign.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 2000.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 31. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks on the Veto of Legislative Branch, Treasury, and General Appropriations Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

October 31, 2000

The President. Good morning—or good afternoon. We are now a full month past the end of the fiscal year and just a week before election day. Congress still hasn't finished its work. There is still no education budget. There is still no increase in the minimum wage, still no Patients' Bill of Rights or hate crimes bill or meaningful tax relief for middle class Americans, even though all these measures have strong bipartisan support in the country and in the Congress.

Today I want to talk about an appropriations bill the Congress did pass. The Treasury/Postal bill funds these two departments, as well as the operations of Congress and the White

House. Last night, I had no choice but to veto that legislation. I cannot in good conscience sign a bill that funds the operations of Congress and the White House before funding our schools.

Simply put, we should take care of our children before we take care of ourselves. That's a fundamental American value, one that all parents strive to fulfill. I hope the congressional leadership will do the same. We can and we will fund a budget for Congress, but first let's take care of the children, investing more in our schools and demanding more from them, modernizing old schools, building new ones, reducing class size, hiring more and better trained teachers, expanding after-school programs, and turning around failing schools.

With the largest student enrollment in history, the education budget should be our first priority. Yet it seems to be the last things on the mind of the Republican leadership. Just 2 days ago, we were on the verge of making bipartisan progress with a landmark budget for children's education. We thought we had a good-faith agreement with honorable compromises on both sides. That was before the special interests weighed in with the Republican leadership. And when they did, the Republican leadership killed the education bill, a careful agreement that both Democratic and Republican congressional leaders had reached.

As I have said repeatedly, the path to progress is one we have to walk together. We have shown we can do it. Let me say again, a bipartisan coalition stands ready to pass an education budget, to raise the minimum wage, to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights, a hate crimes bill, and a tax bill that is good for children, families, seniors, and small business and millions of Americans without health coverage.

So again, I ask the Republican leadership to set aside partisanship, go back to negotiations, reach honorable compromise. The final week of the election season is a perfect time to recall the basic bargain of our democracy. It's the American people who sent us here; it's our obligation to meet their priorities. So let's roll up our sleeves, get back to work, and finish the work we were sent here to do.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, congressional Republicans assert that there was an arrangement, an understanding with the Treasury/Postal bill and the Transportation bill, that when they agreed to place more money in the IRS fund at the specific request of the White House, there was an understanding that you would then sign the Treasury/Postal bill, and there would be no questions asked about this underlying pay raise issue. A spokesman for the Speaker's office said, and I'm quoting here, sir, "He lied. Bill Clinton's word has less value than a dollar bill in the Weimar Republic." Would you care to comment, sir?

The President. Well, it's just not true. Nobody ever asked me, and I didn't do it. And I believe that was only reported one place today. It just didn't happen.

I talked to our people about it, and they said, quite to the contrary, even though we negotiated over the Treasury/Postal bill and I would gladly sign it, as I said, if they would pass the education bill, we in fact asked them not to send it down here because, among other things, it had a very low-priority tax cut in it, for them—not just for me but for them—because we thought it would be wrong for them to take care of themselves and for us to take care of ourselves here without taking care of the children of the country. So we, in fact, implored them not to send that bill down here. Mr. Podesta and the rest of my staff just told me that today. And they have assured me—I got my senior staff together—they have assured me no one on the White House staff pledged to sign that bill.

So you know, that's not so. But what is true is the headline that is in the Washington Post this morning. The Republicans and the Democrats negotiated in good faith, and both wanted this education bill. There was a big majority for this in both Houses of Congress. But the leadership of the Republican Party killed it because of the lobbyists on K Street. Now, that's what happened, and it's not right. And we ought to go back to the agreement that was made.

You know, wherever we work together and we get majorities of both Houses and both parties, we do fine. It is the leadership of the other party in Congress and its excessive sensitivity to the special interests that has kept so many of these things from passing. Why in the world could you justify not passing a hate crimes bill, for example, when a majority of both Houses is for it, you've got plain bipartisan majority? I think we all know the answer to that.

So look, we've still got time to do this, and we ought to do it. I'll do my best to do it. There is no point in getting upset and name

calling. Facts are facts. The one fact is indisputable, that we had a process set up; there was an agreement reached; the hard-working Republicans and Democrats worked until 2:30 in the morning. And they showed up with the agreement, and their leaders wrecked it. They said, "But our special interests won't like this. I'm sorry." Now, those are the facts, and they are indisputable.

So we just need to go back to work here and calm down and do what's right.

Latino and Immigrant Fairness Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the "Latino Immigration Fairness Act" consists of three major provisions. My question is, are you going to fight for all three of them? And you—your people—and I think you may have said it yourself—would veto the State/Commerce and Justice appropriation bill if it did not contain the "Latino Immigration Fairness Act"?

The President. I feel very strongly about that. As I said, the Congress is—the leadership of the Republican Party is against it because they say that—apparently they think they made a mistake with the Cuban and Nicaraguan immigrants, and they don't want to make the same mistake with the others.

I think they did the right thing with them and should do the right thing by the other immigrants. That's what I think. So we're fighting for it, and we'll see.

But I just want—I want to start these negotiations again and get back to work. I think that's the important thing. And I think—I didn't have any choice to do what I did last night. I didn't want to do it, but you know, we just can't—we cannot run the Congress in a way that says we can have an agreement, we can put our kids first, we can get the Republicans and Democrats together, and then the leadership of the Republican Congress can just say, "I'm sorry, our interest groups don't like this; they won't accept it. And so never mind what happens to the 52 million kids that are out there in our schools." We just can't do that. And that's the real story here. It's an astonishing development here, after all we've been through these last 6 years, to see this happening again. And it's very sad, and I hope we can get by it in the next 8 days—7 days.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House, prior to his departure for Louisville, KY.

Remarks at a Rally in Louisville, Kentucky
October 31, 2000

The President. Thank you very, very much. Thank you. Let me say first of all, did Eleanor give a good speech, or what? That was amazing. [*Applause*] You know, I have some passing experience at these kinds of events. [*Laughter*] And I was sitting there thinking, this girl is good; she is really good.

I want to say more about her in a moment, but I also want to tell you how honored I am to be back in Kentucky with your great Governor, Paul Patton, and his wife, Judi, who have been such good friends of mine. My longtime friend who had so much to do with much of the good things that Al Gore and I were able to accomplish in Washington, Senator Wendell Ford, we miss you. Thank you. With your great mayor, who owes some of his success to the fact that he and I were born in the same little town in Arkansas—Hope, Arkansas—thank you so much, Dave Armstrong, for doing a good job here.

I thank your State party chair, Nikki Patton, for being here and for all you Democrats who have showed up to hear a guy who is not running for anything this year. [*Laughter*] I want to thank our young president of the school's Young Democrats here, Rashi Sheth. Didn't he do a good job today? Let's give him a hand. [*Applause*]

And I want to thank Charlie Owen for chairing the Gore/Lieberman campaign. But I'm especially here, as all of you know, to support Eleanor Jordan. She represents the best in our party, the best in our country, and what we need for the future of our Congress.

You know, Kentucky has been awfully good to me. I was standing up here on the stage thinking about the first time I came to Kentucky as a Governor—listen to this—in 1979. I served with six Kentucky Governors, counting Governor Patton, who has been with me this whole time in the White House. And I love this State, and you have been so good to me. You've been so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore. You've voted for us twice, given us a chance to serve America.

And you know, the temptation in a rally like this where it's hot and we're all committed—[*laughter*]—is just sort of give one of these hallelujah speeches and go on and get out of here, you know, because we all know that we're for Eleanor, and we're for Al and Joe, and we know why we're here.

But let's face it. All over America and here in Kentucky, these races are close. And I believe they're close because times are good, and people are relaxed, and everybody running seems like a nice person, and they all sound good.

We've taken a lot of the poison out of America's life. And I'm proud of that, and I'm glad that we're not having all that poison. But nonetheless, it is quite important that we acknowledge that not just Democrats but Republicans are good people who love their country and will do what they think is right. And we ought to be in a good humor in this election year, because we're a better country and a stronger country and a healthier country than we were 8 years ago.

But that does not mean that just because things are going so well and we're all being nice that there are no differences, that there are no consequences, and that we don't have to show up on election day.

So what I would like to ask you to do is just indulge me one more time for a few minutes and let me make the arguments that I hope you will go out across this district and across this great State and to your friends beyond the borders of Kentucky and share with them between now and election day why they ought to vote, what the stakes are, and what the consequences are. Because I believe, in profound ways, that this election is every bit as important as the one which sent Al Gore and me to the White House 8 years ago.

Why do I say that? Because we've done everything we could do to turn the country around and move it forward, to pull it together. But all the best things are still out there. We have a chance for the first time in my lifetime to conduct a national referendum on our dreams.

Eleanor talked—had that wonderful quote from Benjamin Mays about dreams. We have never in my lifetime had this much prosperity, this much social progress, the absence of domestic crisis and foreign threat to our security. We can use this election to dream our dreams and decide how to get there. But in order to do it, we have to be quite clear not on saying our opponents are bad folks, but saying we have honest differences, and here are the consequences to those decisions, so then the people can go and vote, and all of us can accept the result happily as democracy working.

But those of us who have strong convictions about who should be President, who should be Vice President, who should be Senator or Congressman, we can't let the next 7 days go by without doing everything we can to make sure that all of our fellow citizens understand how important it is that they go to the polls and how important it is that they understand the real and honest differences.

Now, look at 8 years ago, when you gave Al Gore and me a chance to go to Washington. We had an economy in terrible trouble, a society profoundly divided, a political system that was paralyzed. And we asked you to give us a chance to go up there and give the Government back to you; to provide opportunity for every responsible citizen; to create a society in which we were more of a community, in which we didn't run our national politics trying to divide one group against another, but saying that we all have to go forward together; in which we reached out to this amazing new world we're living in and had America as a friend and a supporter of peace and freedom and prosperity everywhere, and where it would help us here at home. And I think you'd all agree it's worked pretty well.

In 1993, when I took the oath of office, unemployment in Kentucky was 6.3 percent; today, it's 3.8 percent. As Eleanor said, we have, nationally, over 22 million new jobs, over 300,000 here in Kentucky; the lowest poverty rate in 20 years; child poverty reduced by a third; the lowest unemployment in 30 years; the lowest African-American unemployment ever recorded; the lowest female unemployment in 40 years; the longest economic expansion in history; and

the highest homeownership ever. That is the difference in now and 8 years ago.

Question number one: Should we keep this prosperity going and extend it to people in places that are left behind? What is the Gore/Lieberman/Jordan proposal? Keep paying down the debt; keep interest rates low; keep the economy going. Take what's left, invest it in education and health care, and give the people a tax cut we can afford.

Now, Eleanor's opponent and the others, they say, "We've got a surplus. We'll give three-quarters in a tax cut and spend a lot of money and privatize Social Security, and well, so what if we go into deficit a little bit?" I'll tell you what, so what. If we keep paying this debt down, interest rates will be a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower business loans, more jobs, more growth, a stronger economy. It's a clear choice. If you want to keep the prosperity going, vote for Eleanor Jordan for Congress.

This is about more than money and more than economics. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 26 years. Teen pregnancy and drug abuse are down. There are fewer people without health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program that was in the balanced budget law that we fought so hard for.

Our schools are getting better. The dropout rate is down. Math and reading scores are up all over the country—with Kentucky leading the way, I might add. Failing schools are turning around. Thank you, Governor Patton. We have opened the doors of the first 2 years of college to everybody with the HOPE scholarships and the biggest increase in college aid since the GI bill, and the college-going rate is at an all-time high.

And while we've had record economic growth, the environment has steadily gotten better. The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; 43 million more Americans breathing air that meets Federal standards—43 million. The drinking water is safer; the food is safer. We've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic dumps as the previous administration did in 12 years, and we've set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, nearly 100 years ago. Now, that's the record.

So, the second big question: Should we build on this record of progress with—on the environmental record with a long-term energy strategy that gets us out of the fix we've been worried about the last few months with new sources of energy and more conservation?

Should we build on the health care strategy by giving health insurance to the children's parents that we've insured? If we've insured the children, shouldn't their parents be able to have insurance? Shouldn't we have a Patients' Bill of Rights? Shouldn't we have a Medicare drug program that all our seniors can afford?

Shouldn't we open the doors of 4 years of college education? Shouldn't every State have to do what Kentucky does, which is to turn around their failing schools or put them under new management so that all of our kids can learn? Shouldn't we provide more teachers for our classrooms and modern schools?

In other words, should we build on this progress, or should we say, "Well, who cares if we've gotten results? We're going to change the crime policy; we're going to weaken the environmental laws; we're going to abandon the education strategy; and we're going to abandon the health care strategy." This is a clear choice. I think we should build on the progress. That's why you need Eleanor Jordan and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

Then there's a different, larger question which is harder to put into words, but I think it's important, which is, are we going to become a stronger community? Are we going to keep growing together? We have put an end to the idea that there ought to be class divisions or economic divisions or gender divisions or any other kind of divisions in America. My whole theory is, if somebody shows up and says, "I'm willing to work hard, and I'm willing to obey the law," that's good enough for me. I don't have to know anything else. You're part of America.

So every day we get a chance to advance the goal of one America. That's why we ought to raise the minimum wage. That's why we ought to pass the bill to enforce the equal pay laws for women more strongly. That's why we ought to pass the hate crimes legislation—I think it's important—and end racial profiling.

Now, let me tell you what this election is not about. It is not about whether the Democrats are for big Government. They all talk about that big Government thing—let me just tell you that—you heard it all in the debates and all that. Here's the record. Under Al Gore's leadership for the reinventing Government program, we have reduced the size of the bureaucracy by 300,000. It's the smallest it's been since 1960. That's the fact. We have reduced—yes, we're for this ergonomics rule, and I'll say more about that in a minute. But we've gotten rid of 16,000 pages of unnecessary Government regulations. We have reduced by two-thirds the number of regulations the States and the school districts have to deal with under the Federal Aid to Education Act alone.

So when you hear people talking about, this is big Government versus little Government, man, they're talking about something that didn't happen. In fact, Government will be smaller under our proposal than under theirs. Why? Because the third-biggest item in the Federal budget is what? Interest on the debt. There's Social Security, defense, interest on the debt. We spend more on interest on the debt than we spend on Medicare or education or the environment.

If we get rid of the debt, which is what the Democrats want to do—that's the Gore/Lieberman program—you won't be spending that 12 cents on the dollar. That leaves a lot of money for education, health care, tax relief, and smaller Government.

The second thing this thing is not about—this election is not about whether we're not bipartisan, and they are; and they want to bring everybody together, and we don't. Look, we have—you know, I'm pretty easy to get along with. I'm an easy-going guy. [*Laughter*] After the people elected a Republican majority in Congress, look what we did. We adopted a bipartisan welfare reform law. We adopted a bipartisan balanced budget. We adopted a bipartisan telecommunications law that created thousands of businesses, hundreds of thousands of jobs, and had the Vice President's E-rate program, which has allowed us to connect 95 percent of the schools, even the poorest ones, to the Internet. We've done a lot of stuff in a bipartisan way.

We just had a bipartisan bill for the biggest amount of funds ever to buy lands, to protect them forever, in the history of the country. We do a lot of things in a bipartisan way. But being bipartisan, to me, means getting together and making an honorable compromise. It doesn't mean being run over by partisan, polarizing policies.

Now, last night, after we made a lot of progress in this session, last night I had to veto the bill that funds the Congress and the White House. And I'll tell you why. I did not want to sign a bill that funded the White House and the Congress when they won't send me a bill that funds our schools, our children, our education, and our future.

I want you to play close attention to this because this is what this election is about, especially right here in Louisville. A couple of days ago, at 1 o'clock in the morning, the Democrats and the Republicans reached an agreement on an education and a labor budget. It was an historic agreement. It would have provided the biggest increase ever for more teachers, smaller classes, modernized schools, hooking up the rest of our schools to the Internet, double the funds for after-school programs so that all of our latchkey kids can be in school learning and doing something constructive, put more funds in to help other States follow Kentucky's lead to identify failing schools and turn them around or put them under new management. It's a fabulous bill.

And the Republicans wanted some things, and we went along with them—also had a huge increase in college aid. Now, they had some things in there we didn't like, and when the House passed this bill, Eleanor's opponent put on a proposal to block a worker safety rule that I want to put in, that would protect workers from stress-related management. Now, they say this is going to cost business a lot of money. But the truth is that 600,000 people lose time from work every year because of repetitive stress injuries on the job, and that costs business about $50 billion a year.

Who are these people? The worker who types on a keyboard 8 hours a day, the cashier who scans your food in a neighborhood grocery store. Today there are some workers with us who suffer from repetitive stress injury, after years of service as keyboard operators at Bell Atlantic. They're here today. Raise your hands. Thank you for being here. There's also a cashier who suffers from carpal tunnel syndrome after years at the register. Now, there are 600,000 people like this. They're your fellow citizens.

Our proposal, which Eleanor supports, would save these businesses $9 billion a year. It wouldn't cost them money; it would save them money because with better work rules, they wouldn't be injured, and they'd be there working every day. And it would also save workers the pain and suffering associated with 300,000 injuries every single year. This is not about money alone. It's about a mother who can no longer pick up her child, a father who can't toss a baseball with his son anymore. So we're fighting for this worker safety rule.

Now, here's what happened. They come in and say, "You can't have your education money unless you agree to killing this worker safety rule." So we said, "This is ridiculous." We're having an election. The Democrats are for this; the Republicans are against it. We offered an honorable compromise. We said, if they would give us some more money for education, I would put in the rule, but we would delay its impact. So if they can convince the American people this is a terrible thing, they would then have a few months after the beginning of the year to try to undo the rule—which they can do, but then they have to show evidence that they're right. They can't just do it kind of when nobody is looking.

I said, "If you're going to undo this, do it in the daylight where everybody can see what's going on here, and let's hear the argument." But look, I'll be out of there by January 20th, and the Republicans will be elated—[*laughter*]—and we're having an election. So, "Okay, I'll put it in, but I know you can undo it, so I'll just delay the impact of it for a few months, and if you want to undo it, you can, but do it in the ordinary course of business."

And the Republicans said okay. So they said, "You do this for us; we'll give you your school money." We shook hands on it at 1 o'clock in the morning. Everybody was as happy as a clam. The next day, the Republicans go to the Republican caucus, and Mr. DeLay, their leader, who says—says "No, no, no, we can't do this. Our lobbyists are hysterical. Never mind the 52 million school kids and what they get out of this. Our lobbyists don't like this, and we will not do it. We want it exactly like Eleanor's opponent put it in. And if we can't get what Eleanor's opponent wants, then the 52 million school kids can't get their help."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, this is the way it works in Washington—not the way it works out here. And I'm not blaming all the Republicans. The people that negotiated that with us deserve the thanks of their country. They did it in good faith. And I'm telling you, we've got—look, we've got a bipartisan agreement on the minimum wage, but it's not law yet. We got a bipartisan agreement on the Patients' Bill of Rights. We could get a bipartisan majority for a Medicare prescription drug program. I could go on and on and on. But the leadership won't let it happen.

The leadership is sticking with Eleanor's opponent and says that the 52 million schoolchildren of this country, including every one of them here in Louisville, including everyone standing on this stage with me today, if they need this help, that's too bad. You do it our way, or no dice—after we made an agreement with them.

So you have to know that's the way it works there. So when you vote for Eleanor Jordan, if just six more congressional districts do what you did, then we won't have to worry about Mr. DeLay anymore running the United States Congress. And look, I want to say again, this is not about bipartisanship. I won't be there, but the Democrats will work with the Republicans. We're not right about everything; they're not wrong about everything. A lot of Americans vote with them, too. We've got to work together. But you've got to understand that the leadership in Congress is way to the right of the Republicans in the country that would ever work with the Democrats and the Independents to get things done.

And if they get a call from one of those big lobbyists that says, "I'm sorry. You can't do this," they say, "I'm sorry. We can't do this." And they said, "We've got to have it just like Eleanor's opponent wanted it, or no dice for the school kids of America." Now, that's what they said.

So you remember that. And you go out—I wouldn't keep that a secret from the voters in this congressional district for the next week if I were you. I believe you ought to go out there and tell them. If you want to protect the worker safety and health, and if you want to promote the education of our children, you better send Eleanor Jordan to Congress and make sure we have different leaders in the United States Congress in the next 2 years.

Look, when Vice President Gore says in these speeches, "You ain't seen nothing yet," I expect maybe some Americans hear that and they think, "Well, that sounds political, you know; he wants to be President." But I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe that. I believe if you vote to keep the prosperity going and expand it to people who aren't part of it, instead of voting to reverse economic course and go back to the bad old days of deficits, I believe if you vote to build on this evidence of progress in every area of our society, instead of reverse the policies that have helped us achieve it, you will be free to think about the big things. I think we can save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation, and add that prescription drug benefit, and not bankrupt the baby boomers' children and grandchildren.

I believe we can give the largest and most diverse group of school kids in American history ever the finest education. There need be no more failing schools. We now know something we didn't know 20 years ago, when I started working on this. We know how to turn these schools around. I believe that we can provide health insurance to working families in this country and to people who retire at 55 and can't get Medicare yet. And I believe we can have this Medicare drug program. I believe we can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835 and keep this thing going. We can do this.

We can solve these long-term energy and environmental problems. We can do more to balance work and family. We can have a tax cut that helps people with child care and retirement and paying for their kids' college education. We can continue to build one America. We can do these big, big things. But we have to make the right decisions on the basic questions: Are we going to build on the prosperity or reverse course? Are we going to build on the progress or take down the policies that achieved it? Are we going to continue to grow as one America, or are we going to have the policies of division, no matter how soothing the rhetoric is? These are the big challenges before America.

You look at Eleanor Jordan. I want to tell you something: She'd be the second former welfare recipient in the United States Congress. America—we say we're a country that believes in giving everybody a chance. She got one, and she took it. She's got her family members here, including her sister who worked in our administration. This is a family that proves that America's promise can be alive and real. And her great burden, for which they called her those bad political names, is that she simply believes everybody ought to have the same chance that God gave her in life, that America gave her.

Folks, I will say again, I know I could stand up here and give you all those whoop-di-doo lines, but you need to think about this. This is a close race. And it's a close race nationally. And every one of you has friends that may or may not vote. Every one of you has lots of friends who have never been to an event like this. Am I right? Never been to hear a President talk or a Governor talk, or somebody running for Congress. But they love their country; they consider themselves patriots. If they have a good reason, they'll go vote, or they're going to vote, but they may not know what the differences are yet.

So you've got 7 days, 7 good days that every day you can find somebody to say, "You know why you ought to vote for Eleanor Jordan and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? Because we want to keep the prosperity going. We don't want to reverse it, because we want to build on the progress of the last 8 years; we don't want to abandon it. Because we want to go forward together. Because all the best stuff is still out there." But you've got to make the big decisions right. You go tell them those three things; she'll be celebrating next week.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the gymnasium at the duPont Manual High School. In his remarks, he referred to State Representative Eleanor Jordan, who introduced the President; and former Senator Wendell H. Ford. Ms. Jordan was a candidate for Kentucky's Third Congressional District.

Remarks to African-American Religious and Community Leaders in New York City

October 31, 2000

Thank you. I knew I was going to have a good time here when I walked in the backdoor and they were singing "Oh, Happy Day." [*Laughter*] So they finished before I got here, and I had to have another song, and you were magnificent. Thank you very much. I'm proud of you all for changing your lives and for being hooked on something good. Thank you. I'm proud of you all. Bless you. Bless you.

Thank you, Bishop Gaylord, for making us feel welcome. Thank you, Bishop White, for praying over us—[*laughter*]—making us feel holier. Thank you, Reverend Williams, for getting us here to remind us of what we're supposed to do as citizens in this life. I would also like to say a special word of thanks to Reverend Herb Daughtry, whose daughter works for Alexis Herman, the Secretary of Labor. I know he was here before me, but I thank him. Yes, sir.

I thank your borough president, Virginia Fields, for being here and for supporting Hillary and Al. And I know Senator Schumer was here earlier, and our public advocate, Mark Green, is in the back. And we've been friends, Mark and I have, for 20 years, and he shook his hand out—I came in before—he said, "Reverend Green to you." [*Laughter*] So, you know, after all these years you've been working—he's got to get in the mood, you know, that's good. He's coming right along.

I cannot say enough about my admiration for Carl McCall, the job he's done for you and the—Hillary and I like him and his wonderful wife, Joyce, so much, and we're proud of him, and I'm very grateful for the support he's given to Hillary. I said—I want to express my support, too, for Senator Schumer. I know he was here earlier. And let me say one thing about Charlie Rangel. If we win six more seats, he'll be the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. He's been very good to me. Harlem has been very good to me.

I can't speak in this pulpit in Harlem without also noting that one of the most important people in my becoming President was my first Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, who grew up in Harlem. I miss him every day, and I want to—[*applause*]—he'd be glad to know I'm finishing up my career as President in a church in Harlem. [*Laughter*] Mayor Dinkins, I'm glad to see you. You'll always be mayor to me, and I love you. Thank you. Glad to see you.

Now, I love to come, especially, to the Church of God in Christ. Bishop White talked about the presiding bishop, Bishop Owens. His predecessor, Bishop Ford from Chicago, was a great friend of mine, and he has been a magnificent friend of mine. He brought the bishops to their annual meeting in Washington just so I could say thanks and goodbye to them.

We were all having a good time. We're all old friends. So I got up and thought I was being funny. I said to Bishop Owens in front of all of the bishops, I said, "'You know, I wanted to come here because I wanted to see a group of leaders who aren't term-limited." [*Laughter*] And you know, I thought that was pretty cute. And Bishop Owens looked at me and said, "Mr. President, we are all term-limited." [*Laughter*] And so we are. But while we're here, we're supposed to do the best we can. Is that right?

Now, we all know why we're here, and we can shout amen and have a great time, and we're all preaching to the saved; we're talking to one another. But I want to talk to you about the people that aren't in this church tonight, the people who have never come to an event like this and never heard a President speak or even a mayor or a comptroller or a Senator or anybody. But they could vote. And they need to vote, and they need to know why they're voting. And that's really why you're here, because of all the people who aren't here. Isn't that right? There wouldn't be a need in us having a meeting if everybody who is not here planned to show up, understood what the stakes were, what the choice was, and what the consequences were. Is that right?

So what you have to think about tonight is, what is it you intend to do between now and Tuesday, and on Tuesday, to get as many people there as possible and to make sure when they get to the polls, they know why they're there, what the stakes are, and what the consequences

are. And from my point of view, which is one most of all just filled with gratitude for the people of the United States, to the people of New York, and to the people of Harlem for the support you have given to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years, I'm not running for anything; my party has got a new leader; my home has a new candidate. [*Laughter*] And I like that. I like getting out here and speaking for other people. That's what I did when I was a kid, you know, and now I'm getting to learn it all over again, and I like it. But I want to tell you tonight in public what I would tell you if I were sitting alone in a room with any of you, and you asked me, what's this election about, anyway?

I think there are three great questions that I want you to tell everybody you can reach—everybody in Harlem, everybody in New York State. If you've got any friends across the river in New Jersey or anyplace else, I want you to reach them between now and Tuesday, because this is a razor-thin election. I believe because people are not quite sure—"What's it about, anyway? And is it a big deal, or can we relax because things are going so well?"

One thing I can say in a church is that anybody that's lived more than 30 years has made at least one big mistake in his or her life not when things were so bad but when things were so good, you thought, "Well, this is all right; I don't have to concentrate anymore." Isn't that right? If you live long enough, you make a big mistake when things are going well, not when things are going bad. When things are going bad and your whole survival is at stake, it kind of concentrates your mind; you make better decisions. If things are going good, you think, ah, what's the difference?

Now, this is a happy election, I think, for America because the country is in good shape, and I like it that these candidates aren't really badmouthing each other. I like it that we can just say, let's assume we're dealing with good people here who love their families and love their country and will do their best to do a good job based on what they believe.

And once you say that, then you've got to figure out, what is it they believe? What are they going to do if they get these jobs, and how will it affect me, my family, my community, and my country? That's all that matters. And I'm hopeful that the work we've done in the last 8 years has taken some of the poison out of America's political life so we could actually have an election about what it's really supposed to be about, which is, how is this going to affect you?

After all, the race for President, the race for Vice President, the race for United States Senator, those are hiring decisions. You're hiring people to do a job for you. John Kennedy once said that the Presidency was preeminently a place of decisionmaking. You're hiring people to make decisions, because they can't be made by all 280-some-odd million of us. So we hire somebody to make these decisions. What decisions will they make—will they be good or bad; will they move us forward or back; will they bring us together or divide us—that's what this is about.

And the same thing is true in the Senate. And I can tell you, after 8 years, one of the things I have learned is, every single one of these Senate seats is profoundly important. So, you know how biased I am in this election. I mean, the most important person in the world to me is running for Senator, and my partner for 8 years is running for President, and so I'm biased.

But what I want to do is tell you the three questions I think you ought ask to answer to anybody. And you don't have to say anything bad about their opponent. And you sure don't have to get down and do what some of them have been doing around here lately—those kinds of phone calls and stuff I read about in the paper. You don't have to do any of that. Just say—look, say these three things.

Number one, look where we were 8 years ago, and look where we are today. We have the longest economic expansion in history, nearly 22 million new jobs; African-American unemployment the lowest ever recorded, nearly half, almost cut in half what it was 8 years ago; and record numbers of new businesses, record numbers of new minority businesses, record numbers of new homeowners, record numbers of new minority homeowners. The female unemployment rate is the lowest in 40 years; poverty rate at a 20-year low; the child poverty rate has dropped about a third. This is amazing—seniors living in poverty below 10 percent for the first time in the entire history of America—ever.

So, question number one, do you want to build on this prosperity and keep it going and extend it to people who aren't part of it yet,

or do you want to abandon the path we're on and go back to a different economic policy that let us down before? It's a big question.

Now, Hillary and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, they say, "Hey, let's keep paying down the debt." Remember, we had the biggest deficits in history; we quadrupled the debt when I became President. Interest rates were high, and the economy was weak. So we got rid of the deficits; we're now paying down the debt that had accumulated in those years before, and if you pay the debt off, you will have lower interest rates.

So they say—our side says, "Look, let's figure out what we've got to do to pay the debt down over the next 12 years, and take the rest of it and spend on our kids and our seniors, in health care and education and the environment, and spend what we have to spend on the national security, and give the rest of it to people in a tax cut for child care, for long-term care, for college education, for retirement savings. But first, keep the economy going."

Now, if you want to do that, instead of have a tax cut 3 times as big and a trillion dollar program to privatize Social Security and spend another several hundred billion dollars and put the country back in debt, which will give you higher interest rates, you have to vote for Hillary and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. You've got to talk to people. It's a simple thing. You want to keep the prosperity going, keep the debt coming down, invest in our kids and our future, and have a tax cut we can afford—you just have one set of choices here. This is a big question. And there's an honest difference here about what the best economic policy is.

People ask me all the time, you know, "What did you do to help turn the economy around? What was the Federal Government's role? What great new idea did you bring back?" I always tell them, "I brought this great idea all the way from Arkansas: arithmetic." [*Laughter*] "A big new idea. We made the numbers add up." And see, if you have—if you're supposed to have a $2 trillion surplus—it won't be that big now, by the way, but it's supposed to be 2—forget about the trillion; forget all those zeros. The surplus is supposed to be 2, and the tax cut and the interest costs with it are 1.6, and it costs you 1 to privatize Social Security—never mind whether you think it's a good idea or not, it costs $1 trillion—and you spend another $½ trillion, or .5, on something else; well, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. That's more than 2. And that means deficits, and that means higher interest rates.

Now, if you keep interest rates one percent lower, let me tell you what it means for America. One percent lower a year—that's about what I think it will be under the Gore/Lieberman plan that Hillary will vote for in the Senate—that's worth $390 billion in lower home mortgages to the American people. That's a pretty big tax cut. Thirty billion dollars in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments.

So, question number one, do you want to build on the prosperity and keep it going and give it to people that have been left behind with things like the empowerment zone program that Charlie Rangel and Al Gore put here in Harlem to do more of that sort of thing, or do you want as much of this money as you can get right now, even if it puts us back in deficit?

Now, that's a decision the American people have to make. But we've tried it our way for 8 years, and we tried it the other way for 12 years, and I think you will admit that based on the evidence, our way works better. So that's the first thing I want to say.

Now, question number two, remember where we were 8 years ago on the society? We had an economy in trouble and a society that was divided. Now, compared to 8 years ago, crime has dropped in every year; it's at a 26-year low. It's going in the right direction. Teen pregnancy and drug abuse among young people are down; the number of people without health insurance is down; 2½ million more kids have health insurance. The environmental quality of the country is up—cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, safer food, 3 times as many of these toxic waste dumps cleaned up in our 8 years as in the previous 12—and we've protected more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt of New York almost 100 years ago. Now, that's the fact.

So question number two is, do you want to build on this until America is the safest country in the world, until we have provided Medicare prescription drugs for the seniors who need it, all of them, until we have a Patients' Bill of Rights that protects people and their health care, until we solve the energy problems that bother you every winter when home heating oil comes around—you worry about it going to

be too expensive—with long-term energy solutions to develop conservation and new sources of energy, the stuff that Al Gore knows a lot about? Do you want to do that?

And look at our schools compared to 8 years ago. The dropout rate is down; the African-American high school graduation rate is equal to the white rate for the first time in history. The test scores in math and science are up. We've had a 300 percent increase in the number of African-American kids taking advanced placement tests for college in the last 3 years alone—a 300 percent increase.

We see schools turning around that were failing. I was in a school in Harlem the other day, where 2 years ago, 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level; today, 74 percent of the kids doing reading or math at or above grade level—in just 2 years. We're turning these schools around.

Now, do you want to build on that with the program that Hillary and the Vice President and Joe Lieberman have advocated—100,000 teachers in the classroom; hook them all up to the Internet; double the number of people in after-school programs so you won't have these latchkey kids, and they will be able to stay in school and work their computers and do stuff like that after school; give people a tax deduction for the costs of college tuition; and require these failing schools to turn around or put them under new management so all the kids get good education? There is a clear choice here.

So the second thing you need to say to people is, "Look, it's not just about the economy. Crime is down; the schools are better; we're providing more health insurance; the environment is cleaner. And are we going to build on these changes, or are we going to support policies and candidates that will reverse our crime policy, reverse our environmental policy, take down our education policy, and don't support our health care initiatives?"

It's a choice. It's not like there's no choice; there's a huge choice. And again, you don't have to say anything bad about our opponents, but they are different. There's a difference here. They have a different view here. [*Laughter*] And if we were having a debate, I could go over there and stand there and argue their position; I could come back here and argue ours, but I think ours is better.

It's not like you don't have any evidence here. Just look at the way it was 8 years ago, and look at the way it is now. And the third thing may be the most important thing of all. So number one, we're going to keep the prosperity going; number two, we're going to build on the social progress; number three, we're going to keep building one America. We're going to keep going forward together.

Our side is for increasing the minimum wage, strengthening the equal pay laws for women in the workplace, strengthening the civil rights laws, passing hate crimes legislation, passing employment nondiscrimination legislation, and having appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court that will stand up for civil rights and human rights and individual rights.

Now—so that's where this election is, in a nutshell. If 100 percent of the people understand, number one, this is a real important election; number two, it's about three things. Do you want to keep the prosperity going or change those policies? Do you want to build on the social progress or take down the policies that have contributed to them? Do you want to build one America and keep moving forward together? Those are the three things at stake in this election that people need to understand.

And in the Presidency, I would just say one other thing. I think we're doing well in these congressional races, but you look at what I've had to do the last 6 years. The American people should think about it before they run the risk of leaving Congress and the White House in the hands of the other party, because I've stopped a lot of bad things from happening, as well. And that's another good argument for—of course, if they decide to give the Congress and the White House to the Democrats, that would be quite wonderful from my point of view, and that's a possibility. But if it doesn't happen, that's another thing people ought to factor in.

So I say to you, in my lifetime, we've never had an election like this. And I'm 54 years old. We have never had an election where we had so much economic prosperity, so much social progress, the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our existence. It never happened in our lifetime. It may not happen again in our lifetime. It may not happen again for 50 or 60 years or more. Therefore, you need to go out and tell young folks who may think it's always been this way—you know, somebody 18 years old, they were 10 when I got elected President. But they're old enough to vote now.

They weren't paying attention, maybe, before they were 10. Right? You have memory, and you have to impart that. This is a precious opportunity.

One of the greatest honors I've had as President was walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the voting rights march with Congressman John Lewis and Hosea Williams and others. We did it a few months ago. And Mrs. King was there; Reverend Jackson was there; lots of folks who were there then. But John Lewis got beat up bad that day. You need to go tell the young people that people died so they could have this right to vote. When I grew up in the South, black people still had to buy poll taxes, and other people bought them for them and handed out like raffle tickets on election day and gathered people up. And then other places, they couldn't vote at all. And people died for the right to vote—unfettered, unencumbered, unthreatened.

And now, lo and behold, we've had an administration where 14 percent of our appointments have been African-American, 17 percent of my judges, where we've all been part of this. But it worked for other people, too. You didn't gain anything that Latinos and Asians and white folks didn't gain. We all went forward together. That's the only way we can do it. Black Americans never asked to go ahead of the line; they just wanted to get in the line and go on. Right? Is that right? [*Applause*]

I wanted everybody to have a home in America. I wanted us to be one family. But I'm telling you, you just go out there. You hear what I'm telling you. You don't have to remember all these statistics and all these details. Just say, if you want to keep the prosperity going and take it to the people and places left behind, we've got to keep paying this debt down and invest in our kids and our future and take a tax cut we can afford. We can't afford to go back into deficits and high interest rates and get off the track.

If you want to keep the crime rate coming down, the number of uninsured people coming down, give all of our seniors a Medicare drug benefit, keep helping the schools to turn around so that all our kids can have a good education—you don't want to reverse the policies we're on—we need to build on them, not reverse them—and if you want to keep building one America, there is one party that favors all these things: the hate crimes legislation, the employment nondiscrimination legislation, stronger civil rights enforcement, stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women, a minimum wage, and a Supreme Court that will protect civil rights and the ability of the National Government to protect civil rights and human rights.

Now, the last thing I'd like to tell you is, I'm very grateful not only for the way New York has treated me these last 8 years but for the way you have taken my wife in and accepted her and supported her and lifted her up.

I've been doing this a long time. I was, I think, 6, 7, 8 years old the first time I started handing out cards for my uncle when he ran for State legislature. And my aunt hated politics so much, she made him quit after one term. [*Laughter*] So they sort of—they got the political virus over to me then. And I didn't quit. I liked it more. So I've been doing this a long time, and I've liked most of the people I've known in public life, the Republicans and the Democrats. I find that on balance, they're more honest and hard-working and try to do what they think is right—they are better than they get credit for being. I've never known anybody that cared more, knew more, and worked harder and had a better ability to blend heart and mind and passion and commitment than Hillary—never. She will make you very proud.

And don't forget, they're big shoes to fill. Senator Moynihan was a giant in the Senate. Robert Kennedy changed the life of a whole generation of young Americans, including me. She will be a worthy successor, if you help her get there. And don't let all this last-minute mudslinging deter you.

But the main thing I'm here to say is, you all got your minds made up, and you're all going to show up. So we're having this whole event for people that aren't here tonight. So when you leave here, you promise yourself—and you promise yourself, this is a big deal. The way you live is going to be affected by the decisions that are made. If you want to keep the economy going, if you want to keep the society going forward, if you want to keep us pulling together, make sure that everybody you can find is there a week from today for Hillary, for Al Gore, for Joe Lieberman, for Charlie Rangel. We'll do the right thing. I am proud to be here for them.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. at Kelly Temple Church of God in Christ in Harlem. In his remarks, he referred to Bishop James Gaylord, Kelly Temple; Bishop Frank O. White, Church of God in Christ Little Zion; Rev. Reginald Williams, Charity Baptist Church; Rev. Herb Daughtry, founder, National Black United Front; C. Virginia Fields, president, Manhattan Borough; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; former Mayor David Dinkins of New York City; and Bishop Chandler D. Owens, presiding bishop, Church of God in Christ, Inc.; civil rights activists Hosea Williams and Rev. Jesse Jackson; and Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in New York City
October 31, 2000

Thank you. Well, first let me say, I understand that Hillary has already spoken, so I really don't have to say much. [*Laughter*] But I want to say first, I'm late because the radar went out in Louisville, Kentucky, today, and so it took us a while to get off. Even Air Force One needs radar because there are incoming planes. So we found some innovative way to get here, and I'm glad we made it.

Niall, thank you; and thank you, John. And I thank all of you for being here. A lot of interesting people in this crowd tonight—my friend Frank McCourt, thank you for being here; and thank you, Tom Cahill. Thank you, Gabriel Byrne, for being here. It's nice not to have to go to the movies to see you. [*Laughter*] And I thank all the rest of you for being here.

I want to tell you how grateful I am that somehow, some way, when I first started running for President, the Irish in New York found me. It happened in other places, too. My friend Neal Hartigan, former attorney general of Illinois, is here from Cook County, Chicago. But Bruce Morrison, who Hillary and I had known since we were in law school, and a couple of other people, somehow they hooked us all up, and we started this odyssey. And people thought I was nuts when I said, if I got elected President, I would try to help in the Irish peace process. And they said—and then I got elected, and then all these people who had helped me in other contexts and were steeped in the foreign policy lore of America said, "You can't do that." I said, "But I told them I would." [*Laughter*] "I gave my word; I've got to do this." And they said, "But it will be terrible." I said, "It won't be terrible." I said, "I love Great Britain; I went to college there." I said, "We'll be shoulder to shoulder with Britain on a thousand other things," but I said, "Within 6 months, they'll be glad we did this." And sure enough, they now are.

So I can't thank those of you enough who started out with me, who gave me the chance to do this. It's been one of the greatest things about being President, to know that the United States, the home of the largest Irish diaspora in the world, had played some positive role in bringing that long conflict to an end. Now, we're not out of the woods yet, but Mr. Trimble dodged a bullet this week, and we still have work to do. And all of you know what it is as well as I do. But I just want you to know, for all of you who have helped me to do this, I thank you.

And the second thing I want to thank you for is when 800 of you showed up on the White House lawn during a rather difficult time for me—[*laughter*]—and said that the Irish-American community still thought that I should serve as President of the United States, which I will never forget. I'll never forget that.

But most important of all to me, I want to thank you for what you're doing for Hillary. Because when we started this—and this is, by the way, a big issue in the national election, too, Presidential election—when we started this, and Hillary—you know she went to Northern Ireland once without me, in addition to the two times we went together. And she was working with all these women in this Vital Voices group, and she said, "If we can just get all these women together, they'd figure out a way to get over this problem." And I think she made an independent and significant contribution to the

Irish peace process, for which I am very, very grateful.

And now all over the world she's had these groups of women sort of upsetting apple carts, in Africa and Latin America. [*Laughter*] It turns out there are troublesome women everywhere—[*laughter*]—who don't like it when troglodyte males keep wars going on when it makes no sense anymore, and conflicts—I mean, it's quite interesting. And I think it's been wonderful.

The only other thing I would say is that I think it's quite important that you have come here and contributed, but I think it would also be quite important if every day for the last week of this election you tell people why you came and why you support her, because people need reasons.

I think that—I'm terrifically happy that the country is in such good shape and that we can have an election when there is prosperity, when there is social progress, when there is the absence of domestic crisis and foreign threat. I'm happy about that. I'm glad that there is so much less personal venom in the atmosphere in this election than there has been in times past. It never made any sense, and it certainly doesn't now. Maybe we've just drawn out a full quota over the last 8 years; there's none left. [*Laughter*] But I'm glad for that. But that should not obscure the fact that there are serious, significant differences between the candidates for the Senate, the candidates for President and Vice President, that will have consequences for how we all live and work and relate to each other and the rest of the world.

So the only other thing I'd like to say is that the real problem with events like this is, in the parlance of my faith, we're always preaching to the saved. And every one of you have friends who will never come to an event like this. Isn't that right? You've all got friends—most of your friends are not as political as you. They'll never come to an event like this. They'll never come to an event like this. They'll never hear the President give a speech directly, and they'll never do all these things that you do. And I just want to ask you in the last week to go out and tell them why you came tonight, why it matters that they vote, why it matters that they vote for Hillary and the Vice President and Senator Lieberman, and what the stakes are, what the consequences are. Because I can tell you, they're huge.

You know, we're either going to build on this prosperity or reverse our economic policy. We're either going to keep the social progress going or take down the education, health care, crime, and environmental policies over the last 8 years. We're either going to keep coming together across all the lines that divide us, or walk away from things like the hate crimes legislation or the employment nondiscrimination legislation, the things that—the Supreme Court appointments that will promote civil rights and human rights and bringing us together.

So these things are big deals, I think, and I just hope that, in addition to coming here tonight, you will go out and talk to everybody you can—just people you come across that will never come to something like this.

The last thing I want to say is, I'm highly prejudiced about this Senate race. [*Laughter*] It's not fashionable to admit prejudice in America today. I've tried to make it highly unfashionable to be prejudiced in America. But I am completely prejudiced.

However, having said that, this is the first time in 26 years I have not been on a ballot somewhere. I have had a lot of experience with politics and politicians; most of them are better than they got credit for being. And I've enjoyed knowing most of those I've known. But of all the people I've known, she has the best combination of brains, compassion, determination, and ability to get people together and get things done. She will be a fabulous Senator. And you need to tell people that for the next few days.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 p.m. in the lobby of the Fitzpatrick Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Niall O'Dowd, publisher, the Irish Voice; John Fitzpatrick, owner, Fitzpatrick Hotel; authors Frank McCourt and Tom Cahill; actor Gabriel Byrne; and Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan
October 31, 2000

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 Sudan emergency is to continue in effect beyond November 3, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The crisis between the United States and Sudan that led to the declaration on November 3, 1997, of a national emergency has not been resolved. The Government of Sudan has continued its activities hostile to United States interests. Such Sudanese actions and policies pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy 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 on the Government of Sudan.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 31, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 1. The notice of October 31 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the White House
November 1, 2000

Thank you very much, and good afternoon. I know I speak for all of us in thanking David McCullough for that wonderful review of President Adams' life and Presidency. We could all listen to him all day and never stop learning.

I thank Bob Stanton for his distinguished work at the Park Service. I'd like to thank Representatives Delahunt and Markey for coming here, for representing the State of Massachusetts, home of the Adams family. I thank all the descendants of the Adams family who are here with us today, and I know that they share in the pride all Americans feel for the contributions of John Adams and his son, John Quincy Adams, and so many other members of their family, to the richness of our Nation's history.

Mayor Williams, thank you for joining us here today. I'd like to thank the members of the White House Historical Association Board, including Bob Breeden and Hugh Sidey and Neil Horstman, who helped make this month of celebrations possible. I'd like to thank the people here at the White House who played their role—Melanne Verveer, the First Lady's Chief of Staff, who has worked so hard on the historic preservation work we've been honored to do these last 8 years; and especially our Chief Usher, Gary Walters, and through him all the members of the White House staff, who for 200 years now have been the unsung heroes of making this place work every day, making it a place available to the American people, and still a home for the President and his family.

I'd also like to thank the United States Marine Band. For more than 200 years, they have set a standard of musical excellence that has enriched this house and our entire Nation. They have been the President's own, and for me, it has been a special honor and treat. They have stirred the spirits of more people than President Adams could ever have imagined when he signed the bill creating the Marine Band. And today their music is in honor of his memory. So let's give them a big hand. Thank you very much for being here. [*Applause*]

As David McCullough just said, the Capital City President Adams helped to shape was a very different place than the Washington we know today. Our Nation was new and still carving out the symbols that would define it forever. History tells us that even as the city's planners debated the final design of this house, masons laid its stone foundations more than 4 feet thick. Like our Nation's Founders, these men were building a monument to freedom, and they wanted it to last.

In 1814, when the British troops captured Washington, they entered the President's House, as it was then known, to find supper still on the table. The First Lady, Dolly Madison, had prepared it for her husband, but had to leave it behind when she fled. Well, the British were uncouth enough to eat the supper before they set fire to the house. [*Laughter*] When the smoke finally cleared, it was just a charred shell, but the stone walls stood strong, and so did our Nation.

For two centuries now, Americans have looked to the White House as a symbol of leadership in times of crisis, of reassurance in times of uncertainty, of continuity in times of change, of celebration in times of joy. These walls carry the story of America. It was here at the White House that President Jefferson first unrolled maps of a bountiful continent to plan the Lewis and Clark expedition; here that President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves, some of whose ancestors had quarried the very stone from which the White House was built; here that President Roosevelt held the Fireside Chats, willing his nation through the Depression, then marshaling our Allies through the war.

Over the course of 2 centuries, the White House has also been home to 40 Presidents and their families, including mine. Hillary, Chelsea, and I love this house. We have loved living here. It is still a thrill every time I drive up in a car or land on the back lawn in the helicopter, just to look at this magnificent place and to feel the honor of sharing its history for these 8 years. We are profoundly grateful to the American people for letting it be our home for these years.

One of the best things about it, like any home, is welcoming others to share in its beauty and history, not just heads of state or great artists or famous scholars but the people this house really belongs to, the American people. The White House is the only executive residence in the entire world that is regularly open, free of charge, to the public. And every year nearly a million and a half people walk through its halls, marveling at the history and taking away perhaps a little better sense of who we are as a nation.

Hillary has taken a special interest in supporting this living museum, showcasing the full diversity of our Nation's art, culture, and history. I thank her, especially, for establishing the Sculpture Garden over here to my left in the Jackie Kennedy Garden. And from the day we moved in, she has also devoted herself to preserving the White House and has personally overseen the restoration of several of its public rooms, rooms on the Residence floor, on the second floor, and on the third floor.

Working with the White House Historical Association, she's also helped to raise a lasting endowment, something that is profoundly important because it will enable us to better preserve the White House and its collections for all generations to come.

In renewing this beloved monument to our Nation's history and freedom, we also renew our commitment to the dream of our Founders that our democracy, built upon bedrocks of liberty and justice, will grow ever stronger and remain forever young.

So as the White House enters its third century, let us remember President John Adams, being grateful to him for his many contributions to our Republic and his determination to define us as one nation. And let us share his prayer that in this house the best of blessings will be bestowed, and that leaders here will find the wisdom and the guidance to do well by our Nation, to do well by all of our people, and to be a responsible leader in the larger world.

That's what John Adams tried to do; that's what America has tried to do for 200 years now. We are still in the business of forming that more perfect Union of our Founders' dreams. I hope and believe he would be pleased.

Now, let the celebration begin.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. on the Blue Room Balcony at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Presidential historian and author David McCullough; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

Statement on the Crash of Singapore Airlines Flight SQ–006 in Taiwan

November 1, 2000

I want to express my deepest condolences to the families who lost loved ones in the crash of Singapore Airlines Flight SQ–006 in Taiwan yesterday. It is too early to know the cause of the accident, but the United States is helping Taiwan authorities find the answers. A team from the National Transportation Safety Board is on its way to Taiwan now to assist with the investigation. We are also doing all we can to assist the victims and their families, both through the American Institute in Taiwan and the American Red Cross in Los Angeles.

Statement on the Israeli-Palestinian Announcement To Further Implement the Sharm al-Sheikh Agreement

November 1, 2000

I welcome this development and am hopeful that it will lead to implementation of the steps agreed to by both parties at Sharm al-Sheikh.

Statement on Signing the Technology Transfer Commercialization Act of 2000

November 1, 2000

Today I signed into law H.R. 209, the "Technology Transfer Commercialization Act of 2000."

In 1986, the Congress passed the Federal Technology Transfer Act (FTTA). That Act built upon the basic premise of the earlier Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act and the Bayh-Dole Act, namely, that Federal laboratories create technologies that businesses may desire to develop commercially as a source of competitive advantage. The FTTA established new partnering policies for Government laboratories in the earliest stages of research through mechanisms such as the Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA). Since that time, American taxpayers have seen how Government-owned innovations can be brought into the marketplace to create consumer products, thereby improving our quality of life and enhancing our international competitiveness.

The Act will help ensure that the benefits of Federal research translate into new products and opportunities for the American public. It simplifies the process of licensing Government-owned inventions to the private sector by allowing the licensing of preexisting inventions that arise under CRADAs so that the private sector partner has access to the relevant technology. The Act also authorizes Federal agencies to acquire rights in related privately owned inventions, so as to create a more effective portfolio for licensing.

The Act will remove procedural obstacles to technology transfer and directs agencies to consider the increasingly international environment of innovation. It recognizes that, in many cases, the necessary period for notice by a Federal agency of its intent to grant exclusive licenses can be shortened using both traditional and electronic means for providing the notice. In making decisions about appropriate notice periods, Federal agencies must continue to balance the need for promptness against the fundamental statutory purpose of ensuring that these inventions are used in a way that benefits the public. I expect that individual agencies will use their discretion responsibly in setting the period for comment on proposed exclusive licenses and

will bear in mind that the 15-day period provided in this Act is a minimum requirement that may not be appropriate in all situations.

I fully support the effort, under the policy leadership of the Department of Commerce, to improve the transfer of valuable technology from Federal laboratories to the private sector.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

November 1, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 209, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–404.

Statement on Signing the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2000

November 1, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4850, the "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2000." The Act directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in benefits for service-disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and children, effective December 1, 2000. It provides for higher payments of disability compensation to veterans who suffer from service-connected disabilities and for higher payments of dependency and indemnity compensation for the surviving spouses and children of servicemembers and veterans whose deaths were service-connected. Consistent with the proposal in my Fiscal Year 2001 Budget, the COLA in these benefits is equal to the one that will be provided under current law to Social Security beneficiaries and veterans pension recipients: 3.5 percent. This Act ensures that the value of these well-deserved benefits will keep pace with inflation.

This group of American citizens deserves our Nation's gratitude, particularly those who have suffered disability or have made the supreme sacrifice while serving their country and protecting our freedom. This Act expresses our appreciation for and continued commitment to these brave men and women.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 1, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4850, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–413.

Statement on Signing the Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act

November 1, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 5164, the "Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act." The TREAD Act represents an important first step toward strengthening our Nation's motor vehicle safety laws, and its vigorous and quick implementation will help save lives and prevent injuries.

Most important, the Act responds directly to some of the key shortcomings in identifying the recent Firestone tire problem. Some of the deaths and injuries associated with these tires might have been prevented if automobile manufacturers and their suppliers had been required to provide the Government with more timely information about potential safety defects. The Act addresses this by: (1) specifically requiring manufacturers, within 5 days, to report to the Secretary of Transportation any relevant safety recalls or other safety campaigns in foreign

countries; and (2) granting the Secretary of Transportation new authority to develop an early warning system that requires automobile manufacturers and their suppliers to submit information and analysis concerning possible safety defects in vehicles and equipment.

With this new authority, however, comes the important responsibility to notify the public, as quickly as possible, of any relevant investigative efforts and other safety-related information submitted to the Secretary by the manufacturers or their suppliers. Thus, today I am also directing the Secretary of Transportation to implement the information disclosure requirements of the Act in a manner that assures maximum public availability of information.

Finally, among many other important measures, the Act also includes proposals put forth by my Administration to provide for longer recall periods, to increase civil penalties for violations of the motor vehicle safety laws, and to authorize more funds for investigations into defective cars and their parts. I strongly support all of these provisions.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 1, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5164, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–414.

Statement on Signing an Extension of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000

November 1, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 5234, which extends the applicability of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000 to certain former spouses of deceased Hmong veterans. This bill will make these widows eligible for the eased naturalization requirements provided by the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000, which I signed into law in May of this year. Many of these widows and their families sacrificed a great deal as their spouses fought in support of the U.S. military during the conflict in Southeast Asia. Many have had to struggle to make a new life in this country, and to raise their families, and despite language and cultural barriers, they have made significant contributions to our Nation. This legislation will help ensure that they become full-fledged citizens in our society.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 1, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5234, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–415.

Statement on Signing the Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000

November 1, 2000

Today I have signed into law S. 1402, the "Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000." S. 1402 expresses the Nation's continued gratitude to our veterans by reauthorizing and making improvements to a wide range of veterans' benefits and programs.

I am pleased that the Congress has included in S. 1402 significant benefit increases and other enhancements to the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program, which is commonly known as the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). This program helps the men and women who have bravely served their country in the Armed Forces to adjust to civilian life. In addition, it is a major tool that the Armed Forces use to recruit highly qualified servicemembers. This

Act increases the basic MGIB benefit for a 3-year period of service to $650 monthly and the rate for a 2-year period of service to $528 monthly. These rates represent the single largest benefit increase in MGIB's 15-year history and are similar to the levels of increase the Vice President and I proposed earlier this year.

This legislation also includes increases for education allowances for the survivors and dependents of veterans, resulting in a $588 monthly benefit for a full-time student. Further, this Act will protect these survivors' and dependents' benefits against inflation by providing annual cost-of-living adjustments like those adjustments that already apply to veterans' education benefits.

Beyond the significant enhancements to education assistance, this legislation makes several important changes to disability compensation benefits. Among them are provisions that will extend monthly disability allowances, vocational training, and health care to women Vietnam veterans' children who are born with certain medical conditions. These women veterans made huge sacrifices to protect our freedom, and it is only just that their children with resulting medical conditions be compensated. Similar benefits are currently afforded to such children who were born with spina bifida, but this Act will expand benefits beyond that one condition.

This legislation also enhances benefits for Filipino veterans of World War II who currently receive disability compensation and burial benefits at a rate equal to one-half the rate that U.S. veterans receive. It reinforces the long-overdue step taken by the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, that authorizes the payment of these benefits at the full rate to Filipino veterans who have become U.S. citizens or are permanent residents and reside in the United States. In addition, this Act extends to these veterans the eligibility for burial in national cemeteries.

These benefits are just a few examples of the effects that this comprehensive bill will have on improving benefits and services for our veterans. On behalf of a grateful Nation, I am pleased to sign S. 1402. We are indebted to our veterans for the contributions that they have made to protect our security and well-being.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

November 1, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1402, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–419.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Amend the Inspector General Act of 1978

November 1, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1707. This bill provides that the Inspector General of the Tennessee Valley Authority is to be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Current law provides for the appointment of the Inspector General by the Authority's Board of Directors. Under this legislation, the appointment of the Authority's Inspector General would be made consistent with the appointment of inspectors general at other large agencies. This is an appropriate change.

This bill also authorizes the establishment within the Department of the Treasury of a forensic laboratory to provide services to the Federal Government's Offices of Inspectors General. In implementing this legislation, my Administration will take care both to avoid duplication with other, ongoing forensic activities, and to ensure effective and efficient coordination and cooperation with existing Federal forensic laboratories, such as those operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secret Service, and the Postal Service.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 1, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1707, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–422.

Statement on Signing the National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2000

November 1, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2412, the "National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2000." The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent agency charged with determining the probable cause of transportation accidents and promoting transportation safety. This Act will enhance transportation safety by authorizing appropriations for the NTSB to investigate accidents, conduct safety studies, evaluate the effectiveness of other transportation accident prevention programs, and coordinate Federal assistance for families of victims of catastrophic transportation accidents.

The Act will further advance transportation safety by prohibiting the disclosure of information from cockpit video recorders, or information from recorders installed on other modes of transportation. It also provides the NTSB with additional tools to carry out its mission, including strengthening the Board's financial management and authorizing the NTSB to enter into agreements with foreign governments to provide technical assistance and accident investigative services. It is my understanding that, prior to entering into agreements with foreign governments, the NTSB will consult with me to avoid any interference with my sole constitutional authority to conduct diplomatic negotiations; and that this provision in no way derogates from the Case-Zablocki Act (Title 1, Section 112b U.S.C.), which requires prior consultation with the Secretary of State.

The Act also includes a provision which authorizes the NTSB to establish an overtime pay schedule which is distinct from the rest of the Government. I am disappointed that the Congress has chosen not to address overtime reform in a comprehensive manner, as proposed by my Administration, to reform overtime pay for all employees who work long hours in response to emergency situations. We hope to continue to work with the Congress to provide a fair and equitable overtime pay structure for all such Federal employees. In the meantime, the NTSB should develop plans to implement the overtime pay provision in consultation with the Office of Personnel Management, and the NTSB should absorb the costs of implementing this provision within its appropriated levels.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 1, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2412, approved November 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106–424.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Certification of Major Illicit Drug Producing and Transit Countries

November 1, 2000

Dear _____*:*

In accordance with the provisions of section 490(h) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (the "Foreign Assistance Act"), I have determined that the following are major illicit drug producing or major drug-transit countries: Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam. This year I have removed Hong Kong

and Taiwan from the list of major illicit drug producing or major drug-transit countries (the "Majors List").

The Majors List, as required by section 490(h) of the Foreign Assistance Act, applies to "countries." The term "countries" is interpreted broadly to include certain entities that exercise autonomy over actions or omissions that would lead to a decision to place them on the list and subsequently to determine eligibility or certification. Therefore, in the past, the Majors List has included certain entities that are not sovereign states.

I wish to make clear that a country's presence on the list of major drug-transit countries is not necessarily an adverse reflection on its counterdrug efforts or on the level of its cooperation with the United States. Among the reasons that major drug-transit countries are placed on the list is the combination of geographical, commercial, and economic factors that allow drugs to transit through a country, in many cases despite the most assiduous enforcement measures.

I also wish to note my concern over the rising imports of foreign-origin, illegal synthetic drugs into the United States, especially MDMA ("Ecstasy") from Europe. We are still collecting information on this problem, and it is a trend that bears watching closely in future years.

Changes to the List

Removal of Hong Kong. Hong Kong has been considered a major drug-transit country since 1987, when the first Majors List was prepared. Its proximity to the Golden Triangle opium cultivation countries of Thailand, Laos, and Burma, along with its highly developed air and sea transport infrastructure, made it a logical transit point for trafficking organizations moving Southeast Asian heroin to the United States and other countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Over the past few years, however, Hong Kong's role as a transit point for U.S.-bound drugs has declined markedly, due to several factors. Stringent enforcement measures and extradition agreements with various countries, including the United States, and the risk of having narcotics shipments seized, have become effective deterrents to shipping drugs through Hong Kong. At the same time, drug flows from China through Hong Kong have diminished significantly. As China continues to develop its coastal cargo-handling facilities and expands port operations in the south, there is less incentive for drug traffickers to re-export and transship cargo through Hong Kong.

Seizure rates in both the United States and Hong Kong suggest that trafficking organizations are no longer using Hong Kong as a transit point for U.S.-destined heroin. Since 1996, there have been no significant seizures in the United States of heroin linked with Hong Kong. Similarly, the Hong Kong authorities report that in the past two years they have made no large seizures locally of heroin destined for the United States. Consequently, I am removing Hong Kong from the Majors List and downgrading it to a country of concern. If in the future there is evidence of drug flows through Hong Kong that significantly affect the United States, Hong Kong will again be placed on the Majors List.

Removal of Taiwan. In the early 1990s, Taiwan became a transit point for Asian drug trafficking organizations moving heroin to the Western Hemisphere. The largest U.S. heroin seizure on record is the nearly half-ton of heroin that U.S. authorities discovered in Hayward, California in 1991. The drugs, which originated in China, had transited Taiwan en route to the United States. Given Taiwan's role in that transshipment and evidence of Taiwan-related drug flows to the United States at that time, I added Taiwan to the Majors List in 1995.

Taiwan's role as transit point for drugs destined for the United States, however, has changed radically in the past few years. More stringent law enforcement procedures, together with improved customs inspection and surveillance methods, have all but cut off serious flows of heroin from Taiwan to the United States. At the same time, the opening of major container ports in southern China has diminished Taiwan's importance for the drug trade.

Since Taiwan was designated a major drug-transit country, there have been no seizures in the United States of heroin that transited Taiwan, nor have Taiwan authorities identified any important drug shipments destined for the United States. Therefore, I am removing Taiwan from the Majors List and downgrading it to a country of concern. If in the future we detect any drug flows through Taiwan that significantly affect the United States, Taiwan will again be placed on the Majors List.

Countries/Entities and Regions of Concern

In addition to Hong Kong and Taiwan, the following are countries or regions of concern:

Belize. Belize was removed from the list of major drug-transit countries in 1999 because there was clear evidence that the drug trade was not currently using it as a transit point for drugs moving to the United States. If, at a future date, there is reliable information that U.S.-bound drugs are again moving through Belize in significant quantities, it will again be placed on the Majors List.

Central America. Central America's position as a land bridge between South America and Mexico, together with its thousands of miles of coastline, several container-handling ports, the Pan-American Highway, and limited law enforcement capability make the entire region a natural conduit and transshipment area for illicit drugs bound for Mexico and the United States. Currently, only Guatemala and Panama have been designated major drug-transit countries, since there is clear evidence that drug trafficking organizations use their territory to move significant quantities of illegal drugs to the United States. The same is not yet true of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, or Nicaragua.

Although there is no question that varying quantities of drugs do flow through these countries en route to the United States, the bulk of the traffic has shifted away from land routes. Stringent law enforcement and interdiction measures on land have forced trafficking organizations to move drugs along sea routes. In the event that there is evidence that drugs transiting these countries are having a significant effect on the United States, they will be added to the Majors List.

Iran. While Iran was once a traditional opium-producing country, the Government of Iran appears to have been successful in eradicating significant illicit opium poppy cultivation. The latest U.S. survey of the country revealed no detectable poppy cultivation in the traditional growing areas. Although one cannot rule out some cultivation in remote parts of the country, it is unlikely that it would be sufficient to meet the threshold definition of a major illicit drug producing country under section 481(e)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

Important quantities of opiates reportedly continue to transit Iran en route to Europe, but I have no evidence that these drugs significantly affect the United States, a requirement for designation as a major drug-transit country under section 481(e)(5) of the Foreign Assistance Act. Moreover, Iran has taken extensive measures to thwart the use of its territory by drug traffickers, seizing well above 200 metric tons of drugs annually in recent years.

Malaysia. Malaysia was removed from the Majors List two years ago because there was no evidence that drugs transiting the country were reaching the United States in significant quantities. That situation has not changed since that time.

Eastern Caribbean. The Leeward and Windward Islands, together with Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, constitute a broad geographical area through which U.S.-bound drugs pass en route from Latin America. In the right circumstances, any country in the region could become a major drug-transit country. There is no evidence at this time, however, that any of these Eastern Caribbean nations is a major drug-transit country under the definition in section 481(e)(5) of the Foreign Assistance Act. The information available, however, indicates that drugs moving through the area are overwhelmingly destined for Europe. We are, therefore, keeping the region under observation. Relevant countries will be added to the Majors List, should conditions warrant.

Turkey and Other Balkan Route Countries. I am concerned by the large volume of Southwest Asian heroin that moves through Turkey and neighboring countries to Western Europe along the Balkan Route. There is no clear evidence, however, that this heroin significantly affects the United States, as required for a country to be designated a major drug-transit country. In the event that it is determined that heroin transiting Turkey, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or other European countries on the Balkan Route significantly affects the United States, the relevant countries will be added to the Majors List.

Syria and Lebanon. I removed Syria and Lebanon from the list of major illicit drug producers two years ago after we determined that there was no significant opium poppy cultivation in

Lebanon's Biqa Valley. Recent surveys have confirmed that there has been no detectable replanting of opium poppy, and we have no evidence that drugs transiting these countries significantly affect the United States. We continue, however, to keep the area under observation.

North Korea. We have been unable to confirm reports that significant quantities of opium poppy may be under cultivation in North Korea or that heroin originating in the country may be entering the international drug trade. We continue, however, to monitor the situation. If there is evidence that there is indeed poppy cultivation of 1,000 hectares or more in North Korea or that North Korea is a transit point for drugs significantly affecting the United States, it will be added to the Majors List.

Cuba. Cuba's geographical position, straddling one of the principal Caribbean trafficking routes to the United States, makes it a logical candidate for consideration for the Majors List. While there have been some reports that trafficking syndicates use Cuban land territory for moving drugs, we have yet to receive any confirmation that this traffic carries significant quantities of cocaine or heroin to the United States. Moreover, in 2000, much of the suspect air traffic that previously crossed Cuban airspace has now shifted away to Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic).

I will continue to keep Cuba under careful observation for any changes in current transit patterns. If there is evidence of significant quantities of drugs transiting Cuba to the United States, Cuba will be added Cuba to the Majors List.

Central Asia. Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are traditional opium poppy growing areas of the former Soviet Union. However, we have not found evidence of significant opium poppy cultivation. If ongoing analysis reveals cultivation of 1,000 hectares or more of poppy, the relevant countries will be added to the Majors List.

Major Cannabis Producers. While Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, the Philippines, and South Africa are important cannabis producers, I have not included them on this list since in all cases the illicit cannabis is either consumed locally or exported to countries other than the United States. I have determined that such illicit cannabis production does not significantly affect the United States.

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; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Gay and Lesbian Leadership Council Dinner

November 1, 2000

Thank you very much. I will be quite brief because I want to just sit around and have a conversation. But I want to begin by thanking all of you, especially Andy for taking on this role with the Democratic Party. And thank you, Terry, for tonight and for so much else. And I want to thank all of you who have helped us along the way, particularly those of you who have been part of our administration in some way or another. I'm very grateful to you.

I thought it was quite interesting, you made that reference to George Washington's speech to the Jewish community—I've read it several times—because it was actually quite a keen insight for a person to have in the 18th century, that tolerance implies that a superior group is abiding a group that's not equal. And I never thought much of that. I always tell people we ought to celebrate our diversity and affirm the primary importance of our common humanity, and that's the way I look at this.

I want to thank you, too, for the last 8 years. It's been an honor to serve. I'm thrilled that it worked out as well as it did. [*Laughter*] I

believed 8 years ago, and I believe more strongly today, that we need a unifying politics and a unifying policy, which is different from soothing words; it has to do with the decisions we make. And for example, I thought that you should be part of America's community.

But I thought it in other ways, too. I thought that we could have an economic policy that was pro-business and pro-labor. And, sure enough, this is the first time in three decades we not only have the longest economic expansion in history, but we've got incomes going up at all levels. Average incomes have increased by 15 percent since 1992, after inflation—real increase.

I thought it would be possible to grow the economy and improve the environment, and sure enough, it turned out to be true. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, safer food, more land set aside than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, and 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up in our 8 years as in the previous 12, under the other party.

So it seemed to me that you could be for—in education—more investment and for higher standards at the same time. And we've got test scores going up and the college-going rate at an all-time high.

I could go through this on and on and on, but I think the point I want to make is, we sometimes think that we have to divide things up, and what we really have to do is fuse them, unite them, and move forward together. And it's worked. Everyone knows the economy is stronger, but I think it's worth pointing out, also, we have—for the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, not up. The schools are clearly getting better, and the college-going rate is at an all-time high. The environment is cleaner. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The welfare rolls are at a 32-year low. Teen pregnancy and teen drug abuse are down. The country is moving in the right direction.

And so I think the question we have to ask ourselves—or the three questions—that I hope that you'll help us in the next 6 days to ask and get answered properly are: Do you want to build on the prosperity, or adopt policies that will not allow us to pay the debt down and continue to invest in our future but instead will take us back to deficits; do you want to build on the social progress, or adopt policies which plainly will undermine the direction in which we're going; and the third thing and maybe the most important is, how do we take all this effort toward one America a step further?

That's really what the hate crimes bill, the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," and the equal-pay-for-women legislation is about. Are we going to continue to try to build the bridges of unity and the bonds of common interdependent community as we go forward? And I think if people—the election really is about three things.

The court appointments are a part of that one America. And it's about far more than just preserving a woman's right to choose. It's also about whether the courts will or will not continue to restrict the ability of the National Government to protect civil rights and human rights and the basic public interest. Most Americans don't know that just in the last year or so, a slim majority of the courts already invalidated a provision of the Violence Against Women Act, a provision of the Brady law, a provision of an anti-age-discrimination law. So there are big issues here.

But when you boil them all down, are we better off than we were 8 years ago, economically? And, if so, do you want to build on the economic policy or reverse it? Are we going in the right direction and coming together as a society? If so, do you want to build on the progress of the 8 years or take down the policies—the environmental, the crime, the education, the health care policies? And should we continue to try to become one America? That's what hate crimes and ENDA and the equal pay for women and all those initiatives and the court appointments are all about.

If people understand that this is an honorable election, which I think should be conducted in almost a festive atmosphere because the country is in so much better shape than it was 8 years ago, and nobody has to badmouth anybody anymore—you don't have to go around—you know, a lot of the venom has gone out of the American political scene. Somebody said that's because I'd absorbed a lot of it. [*Laughter*] But anyway—and so you all supplied the serum, and so I survived. It's all right. [*Laughter*] But that's good. We ought to be festive. We ought to be upbeat. We ought to be happy. But we

shouldn't be blinded to the fact that we're actually having a very important old-fashioned debate here. And in some ways, we are reenacting the kind of debate we've had from the beginning of this country.

Today we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the White House. John Adams rolled into the White House 200 years ago today at about noon. And so—and David McCullough, the great historian and biographer of Harry Truman, gave this beautiful sort of summary of what the White House was like 200 years ago, what Washington looked like, what the politics were, and the truly astonishing contributions of John Adams to our country's history. He had a great eye for talent. He nominated George Washington to be head of the Continental Army. And when he became President, he nominated John Marshall to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. And that's one reason we still have one country, instead of a bunch of loosely floating atoms out there.

So we celebrated that. And in that whole 200-year history, I do not believe there has ever been a time when we've been able to have an election where we have so much prosperity, we have so much social progress, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our existence. Are there problems out there at home? Yes. Are there real problems out there, potential and real, around the world? Of course. But this is a very good time.

And we get to imagine the future we want to have for our children and our grandchildren, and then make a decision to build it. And the only concern I've ever had—I know I sound like a broken record because I've been saying this for a year and a half—the only concern I have ever had is that 100 percent of the people understand, first, what a unique moment this is—younger voters, a lot of them don't even remember what it was like 8 years ago and take all this for granted, which is something that shouldn't happen—and secondly, that they understand what the real differences are between the candidates for President and Senate and House, and what the consequences are, and they just make a choice, and everybody should be happy about it.

But I think that the closeness of the race indicates, among other things, some uncertainty in the electorate about exactly what is at stake and what the differences are, which means all of us have an opportunity in the last 6 days to try to help bring some clarity to that.

The last point I want to make is on the issue of inclusion. It's been an honor for Hillary and me to have done what we have done, but I think it is a matter of indisputable historical fact that the Vice President supported everything I did for this community and made it clear, was unambiguous, would stand up and never once, ever, took a pass when time came to do that. So I hope that, for whatever it's worth, 100 percent of your community will know that on election day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:29 p.m. in the Colonial Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to dinner chair Terry Watanabe; and Andrew Tobias, treasurer, Democratic National Committee.

Interview With April Ryan of American Urban Radio
November 1, 2000

Ms. Ryan. We're in the Oval Office, sitting with President William Jefferson Clinton on this historic occasion. We're sitting at the desk that John Kennedy, Jr., used to run through or crawl through as a child.

Mr. President, thank you so much for this time, for this post-election interview.

The President. I'm glad to do it, April. Thank you.

African-American Voter Turnout

Ms. Ryan. There is a get-out-to-vote effort, a major effort right now. African-Americans, in particular, are said not to be as energized about going to the polls, particularly for your second in charge. Why is it so important that African-Americans go to the polls this time, especially since they came out in big numbers for you, and there's such a difference right now?

The President. I think, first of all, it's important because the election is terribly close. You know, President Carter won by one percent. President Kennedy won by less than one-half of one percent. This promises to be that kind of election, so every vote will count.

Secondly, it's important because the differences between the two candidates for President and the two parties are so great. If you think about where we were 8 years ago, we had an economy in trouble; we had a society that was divided; we had a political system that was paralyzed and generally thought not to be very favorable to African-Americans and other minorities in our country.

Now, 8 years later, we've got the strongest economy we've ever had; we've got a lower crime rate, a cleaner environment, and the number of people without health insurance is going down; the number of people doing well in school and going on to college is going up. Things are moving in the right direction. And the American people are being given a chance to keep building on that progress, or to embrace a completely different approach that would reverse it.

So I think if you care about health care, education, a strong economy, if you care about civil rights, human rights, and all these appointments to the Supreme Court and the other courts that are going to come up, there's more than enough reason to vote in this election.

And Al Gore has a lifetime record of support for civil rights and for policies—economic, education, health care, environmental policies—that help ordinary citizens. So I think it's a clear choice. And I think that, frankly, his role in this administration in the last 8 years and the ideas he's put before the American people should command the support of the African-American community and, I believe, the majority of the American people.

President's Support for Al Gore

Ms. Ryan. But many African-Americans I've talked to often wondered, why have you not stood next to him on many occasions prior to the week before, and not only that, why had you not gone to the churches and things like that before this last week? And many are concerned that they don't see you standing by him as much, physically, to promote him, and they're really wondering if your support is there for Al Gore.

The President. My support is there. I have done over 150 events this year to help him and the Democratic Party and to help our candidates for Senate and the House—literally over 150 events. I think, frankly, it would have been inappropriate for me to be out there campaigning with him. I think it would have hurt him with some people, because as he said in his convention speech, he has to run for President as his own man. He has to be elected on his own.

And I've done what I could to be supportive. I continue to do a lot of events, and I'm going out to California in a day or so. I'm going to go home the last weekend to Arkansas, which is a small State, but these small States could determine the outcome of the election. I'm going to make another stop in New York trying to help my wife and also help the congressional candidates and help him, and I may do another stop or so. I'm doing everything I can. And as you pointed out, I went out in the churches last weekend.

But when a President campaigns, it's very important not to do it too soon, and it's very important to do it in a way that you're being supportive of the people that are running. So it's kind of a delicate thing.

I remember when President Reagan used to come to Arkansas to campaign against me, and he was wildly popular in Arkansas. It never affected my standing with the people, even though we got some of the same votes. So if I want to have an impact on this election, I have to concentrate on talking to the people who will listen to the reasons I have for voting for the Vice President and our other candidates and also do it in a way that makes it clear to the American people that I am first doing my job here in Washington.

So I've tried to do it as best I could in coordination with the Gore campaign. But the people in this country should have no doubt about my strong support for him and my belief that he will be a very good President.

Ms. Ryan. Well, there are several issues that have come into play, too, with Vice President Gore, one, the veracity, embellishment. And some people are even wondering, especially Christians—you know, the pro-choice stance, as well as the issue of—he is saying that gay couples can stay together. And this is something the administration, for 8 years you've dealt with, and no one really jumped up at that before,

and now everyone is becoming unglued, particularly Christians.

The President. Let's talk about that. First of all, I want to talk about this veracity business. I think it's a total bum rap. Let's go back to what gave rise to it in the debate. They jumped on him after the first debate because he talked about taking a trip to Texas with the Director of our Emergency Management Agency, and it turned out the guy wasn't on the trip with him.

Now, he went, and the Regional Director of the Agency was on the trip, and he had taken 17 other trips with this Director. He went to almost as many emergencies as I did these last 8 years. And I can tell you, I don't remember who was on what flight. So that wasn't an exaggeration. He took the trip; he went down there. And he just didn't remember that the guy wasn't on that flight. He was on 17 other flights. I think that is crazy. He never said he invented the Internet—another bum rap. He never—and all these other things they say, you know, basically, I think are wrong.

I will say this. The other day, 425 high-tech executives endorsed him, including a man named Vint Cerf. He sent the first E-mail ever sent, Mr. Cerf did. And he really was one of the fathers of the Internet. And he gave Al Gore the credit he deserved for supporting legislation in the Congress that turned the Internet from a private province of Defense Department physicists into the broad commercial network it is today. So I think the exaggeration thing is wrong.

Now, let's talk about the pro-choice issue. I still believe that *Roe* v. *Wade* was properly decided. And we have worked to try to reduce teen pregnancy and, therefore, to reduce the number of abortions. Teen pregnancy is at a 30-year or 40-year low in America, and the number of abortions has gone down every year I've been in office. But I do not believe the answer is to go back and criminalize a woman's decision to have an abortion. I think we should keep the pro-choice position, and I don't think that's immoral. I think it's consistent with reducing the number of abortions by reducing teen pregnancy.

Al Gore and I helped to start a national campaign against teen pregnancy, which had, I think, a very significant, positive impact on this issue. And I don't think there's anything wrong with his ethics or his morals on this issue.

In terms of the gay issue, what has he said? He has said that he believed that gay people who live together in a committed relationship ought to have access to the same sorts of legal protections that other couples have. What are they? One of you gets sick, the other one ought to be able to visit in the hospital during family visiting hours. I know this sounds like a little thing, but this is a big deal to people. One dies, the other ought to be able to leave property under the laws of the State. If one of them has health insurance on the job, they ought to be able to purchase health insurance for their partners. I personally believe—and he believes there should be no discrimination on the job, and we should pass hate crimes legislation that covers sexual orientation as well as race.

Now, I personally don't think there is anything wrong with that. I think we've got to build a society where, if you obey the law and you work hard and you pay your taxes and you do like everybody else is supposed to do in America, you ought to be treated fairly. So I agree with the Vice President's position on that. And I don't think it's anti-family.

So all I can tell you is I support him on that. He's got a great civil rights record. He's got a great record on the economy. He's got a great record on the environment. And he ran the program for me that reduced the size of Government and increased the amount of money we had left to invest in health care and other things. I just think that he has earned the right to be strongly considered for President, based on his lifetime of service and the difference between him and his opponent.

And let me just say this. You talked about the abortion and gay rights issues. Those issues may well be decided by the judges that the next President will support, but certainly civil rights issues will be decided by the judges that the next President will appoint. We already have a five-vote majority on this court for some very disturbing decisions designed to restrict the ability of the National Government to protect the rights of the American people.

And I really believe that if the Republicans win the White House, it will be more than *Roe* v. *Wade* that's changed. I think you'll have a Supreme Court that will drastically restrict the ability of the Federal Government to advance civil rights and human rights and to protect the public interest. You can already see it from the decisions that they made involving the Violence

Against Women Act, striking down part of that, striking down part of the Brady bill that's kept handguns out of the hands of half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers, striking down a bill that Congress passed to prevent age discrimination.

So I think there's a lot of evidence out there that this election makes a difference. I agree with the positions the Vice President has taken.

Republican Policies

Ms. Ryan. You're a strong Democrat, and you have some Republican leanings. But many are questioning if George W. Bush gets in here, a lot of things will change, especially how you dealt with the issue of race. Bob Dole—I'm working on a private project and I talked to Bob Dole, and he said something tremendous about you. He said you have changed the way the President will have to deal with race issues. And that was tremendous for me to hear Bob Dole say that about you. Does it scare you, listening to some of the things that George W. Bush says, and seeing the polls today—George W. Bush, 47 percent; Al Gore, 41 percent—seeing that everything you've worked for, you and Al Gore worked for, would drastically change?

The President. Yes. I actually believe that Governor Bush would be, if he were President, would be pretty good on immigration, because he's from Texas, and in Texas the Republicans and the Democrats have a relationship with the Mexican-American community that I think would translate into pretty good policies. And I think he would be perfectly nice to everyone. His rhetoric would be unifying. But I think his policies would be divisive. He wouldn't say he supported affirmative action, even as we changed it, in the debate.

Ms. Ryan. Affirmative access.

The President. Yes, that's a code word for being against action, I think. He wouldn't say that he would support hate crimes legislation, and he did refuse to see James Byrd's family. They don't support stronger enforcement of equal-pay-for-women laws. There just are lots of examples here where they have good rhetoric, but I think their policies are, in fact, divisive.

One of the things I've tried to do is to say that we can unite the American people. In these last 8 years, rich people have gotten richer, but poor and middle class people have had income gains for the first time in 20 or 30 years. We've tried to go forward together. And that's what I think Al Gore will work for and why I think it's important that he be elected.

And by the way—we're talking 6 days before the election—the real polls are basically dead-even. I keep up with them every day and this is a dead-even race. So it really—how it comes out is really going to be determined more on who votes. And a lot of these polls assume a lower turnout among African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans and other first-generation immigrants.

African-American Voter Turnout

Ms. Ryan. Two years ago the big difference came when African-American minorities went to the polls.

The President. Absolutely. Look what happened to Georgia. Let me just give you two or three examples. In Georgia we elected a Democratic Governor, who was behind in the polls, and two African-American State office holders. Why? Georgia is 25 percent black; the African-American vote was 28 percent of the vote.

In South Carolina, our side won a governorship and Senator Hollings was reelected, when most people thought we would lose both. Why? Because the first time in history, African-American turnout equaled white turnout.

In Mississippi, the Democrats won a Governor's race that the polls said they were six points behind in on Friday night before the election. Why? Because for the first time, African-Americans turned out in equal percentages as whites.

So if African-Americans say, "I want my vote to count as much as anybody else's," and they show up in the same or greater percentages of their registration as whites do, we'll win this race. It's as simple as that. African-Americans and Hispanics vote in the same percentages as white voters vote, we have enough support in the black community to win the race.

NAACP Commercial

Ms. Ryan. You said something a second ago about James Byrd. James Byrd's daughter is in an NAACP commercial. What were your thoughts about that?

The President. Well, I haven't seen the commercial. That's not quite true; I actually saw it in passing, but I didn't hear it. I think she was very hurt, properly so, about the way she

and her family were treated after her father was dragged to death. The Governor didn't want to have to deal with her.

But what was really going on in Texas—and people don't want to say it, but we need to be plain about it in the debate—Governor Bush did not want to embrace the hate crimes bill that two-thirds of the people in Texas supported, because it extended hate crimes protection to gays, as well as to racial minorities. And he was going into a Presidential primary, and he thought he had the support of the religious right and all the ultraconservative wings of the party. He was their first choice. And he didn't want to make them mad, so he didn't want to see James Byrd's family, and he didn't want to lift a finger to pass that bill.

As I said, even though Texas, which is a conservative Republican State—in Texas, two-thirds of the citizens thought there should be hate crimes legislation and it should protect gays. Most people in America, no matter how conservative they are, do not believe that anybody should be singled out for abuse of any kind.

And so I think he made a terrible mistake, and I think she was very, very hurt by it. And I think that's what that ad is about. Now, I can't comment on the content. I haven't seen the substance of the ad or whatever. But she was hurt, and she was letting the American people know. And I think it's a relevant piece of information for the American people to know.

Relations With Congress/2000 Election

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, thank you so much for your time, and I have one last question to ask. Today in the news, it seems that Congress is going to adjourn a couple days before the election. What is going to happen to your budget, finishing the unfinished work?

The President. Oh, they'll come back after the election if they do that. I wish they'd stay and finish. But I think what's happened is now—every place we could make an agreement, we did. We worked with them. On the three areas that are still outstanding, they basically—the Republicans—kicked the White House and the Democratic Congress representatives out of the room and made an agreement among themselves, that is, on one of the bills dealing with immigration and other things, and on the tax bill, on those two.

On the education and labor bill, we actually made an agreement with the Republicans, and then the Republican leadership shattered the agreement because they said it didn't suit their special interests on a worker safety provision.

So what I think they're going to do is call a halt to this—that's the rumor, anyway—and then come back after the election, and we'll go back to work. But it's really sad because we could have easily finished our work here. All they had to do was to honor the agreement that we made on education. We had gotten a very good education bill that really helped the children of this country. And we had gotten a proper compromise on the worker safety issue, but they didn't want us to be able to do anything to protect worker safety.

So I'm sorry about it. But this is a clear example of the kind of choice people make. That's the last point I want to make about this election. People need to think about it when they decide, "Am I going to go vote; is it worth my vote; what am I going to do with my Presidential race?" Most Americans, including members of the African-American community, have no way of knowing how many things I stopped from happening here with the veto pen, with the threat of a veto. You know, in addition to the things we got done, we stopped a lot of things from being done these last 6 years with the Republicans in the majority. And if you have a Republican in the White House and if the Republicans were to maintain their majority, however slim, in the House and the Senate, there would be nobody here to stop them.

I think Americans need to think long and hard about that before they vote in this Presidential race. Somebody needs to be here to restrain excess in conduct by the people that are in control of the Congress, because they're to the right of—the people who control the Congress are to the right of many Republicans in the Congress, and to the right of the Republicans in America, never mind the independents and Democrats. So that's another good argument for Al Gore for President.

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, thank you so much. And we hope to do another interview with you, an exit interview, before you leave office. [*Laughter*]

The President. You know, it's my job, I should probably be doing a lot of exit interviews.

Thank you, April.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks,

the President referred to Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and Renee Mullins, daughter of murder victim James Byrd, Jr. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview on the Tom Joyner Morning Show
November 2, 2000

Q. Four more years! Four more years! [*Laughter*]

Morning Show Commercials

The President. What I want to know is, where did you make that ad where you walk in the White House and the house comes down?

Q. This is an ad that runs in Washington for our radio station.

The President. Do your listeners know that you actually tore the White House down? Do they know that? [*Laughter*] Have you concealed that from them? [*Laughter*]

Q. You watched that, huh?

The President. I do.

Q. We have a commercial that runs in the Washington area where—anyway. [*Laughter*]

The President. He walks into a mockup of the White House and it comes down. [*Laughter*]

Q. I'm glad you watched that. I'm glad to know that you listen to the show.

The President. I keep up with you.

Q. Thank you, sir. And we keep up with you, too, and sincerely, it would be nice if we could get 4 more years from you. It's been a good 8 years for us.

2000 Election

The President. But you can get the next best thing. I'll tell you, we've got to win this election, and I feel very strongly that we're going to win it if our folks vote. All these polls that show it close and show Governor Bush a point or two ahead, all those polls are premised on an assumption that African-American and Hispanic voters and first-generation immigrants will not vote in the same percentages that the Republican base will vote. That's what they're premised on.

I remember in Mississippi last year, where the African-American vote equaled the white vote, for the first time ever, a Democratic candidate for Governor was elected by 6,300 votes. And he was six points behind in the polls. So that's what—the power here is with the young people and with the folks that have done well in these last 8 years.

One of the things that I want to point out that I'm proudest of is that we fought for policies and Al Gore fought for policies that would guarantee that when this economy came back, for the first time in 30 years, it wouldn't just be the wealthiest Americans who would do well. They would do well, but everybody else would do well, too. Average income has gone up by over $5,000 in this country, and African-American unemployment is at the lowest point in history. And I think that alone is a good argument to stick with this economic policy, especially when the alternative is going back to deficits and underinvesting in education.

Q. And Mr. President, history has shown that with the votes that have—or with the election such as 1960 and even '68, how just one vote in maybe a ward or two would have made a difference and turned history around then, too.

The President. Oh, absolutely. John Kennedy won by four-tenths of one percent. Hubert Humphrey lost by a percent. Jimmy Carter won by a percent, one vote out of 100. And this race could well be that close. And I can tell you there are at least five States today that are within one percent. There are another five States that are within 2 percent. That's how close this election is.

Ralph Nader/Youth Vote

Q. And the Republicans are buying spots for Ralph Nader in some of these States.

The President. They are buying spots for Nader? What does that tell you?

Q. Yeah.

The President. You know, one of the things that bothers me is that I think young people

have the biggest stake in this election and may feel alienated from it because so much of the debate has been about Social Security and Medicare drug programs for seniors. But I'd like to make a couple of points about that for young people.

First of all, I'm the oldest of the baby boomers. I'm 54 years old. And one of the reasons that the young people should care about this debate is all the people my age are very worried that when we retire—that is, people between the ages of 36 and 54, that's the baby boom—when we retire we don't want to impose a burden on our children and on our grandchildren. So that's a big issue. So when Al Gore says, "I'll put 20 years on the life of Social Security," and his opponent says, "I'll take a trillion dollars out of the Social Security Trust Fund," that's a big difference there. And it's important.

But also, our administration has a good environmental record. That's going to be more important for the future. Al Gore knows more about technology, how to maximize the benefits of the Internet, how to close the digital divide, how to create new economic opportunities in underserved areas, areas that still haven't fully felt the prosperity, which is a big issue. He's worked on that for 8 years now through our empowerment zones, and we've got a plan to get billions and billions of dollars in investment in new businesses and new jobs in the areas that still have unemployment that is too high or income that's too low. So I think the young people have the biggest stake of all in this election.

Supreme Court/Republican Congress

Q. And also, when you think about the Supreme Court, sir, and what——

Q. Huge issue.

Q. ——you've done with the Supreme Court and the ability to carry on into the next——

The President. Yes. I only got two appointments, I regret to say, but they have upheld civil rights, and they've upheld a woman's right to choose, and they've upheld the right of the National Government to protect the interest of the American people. But there are—we're one vote away from reversing *Roe* v. *Wade,* and we are dangerously close to something that could be even more severe. We're dangerously close to a permanent majority on this Court that will restrict the ability of the United States Government, both the President and the Congress, to protect the American people in fundamental ways.

This Court had five votes to invalidate a provision of the Brady bill, which is the background check law on handguns, because it required the States to help. They invalidated a section of the violence against women law because it required the States to help. They invalidated a provision of a law against age discrimination. I mean, so I cannot—the American people have probably no idea how important that is.

And one other thing I'd like to say: We've got a chance to win the House and the Senate. But if we don't, there needs to be somebody here in the White House to restrain this Republican Congress. Let's not forget all the things they've tried to do that I stopped. They tried to shut down the Department of Education. They had the biggest education cuts in history, the biggest environmental cuts in history. They've tried to pass all kinds of restrictions on our ability to protect the health and safety of people in the workplace. So that's another big point.

Q. They turned your hair from black to white.

The President. They turned my hair from black to white. I earned every one of these gray hairs. [*Laughter*]

First Lady's Senate Campaign

Q. And wouldn't it be nice to have two Democratic Senators from the great State of New York?

The President. Oh, that would be really nice. You know, I'm really proud of Hillary, and I knew that she was doing well when her opponent made 500,000 phone calls accusing her of being tied to terrorists. That was really sinking to the bottom of the barrel. [*Laughter*] And I think she's got that turned around.

She's up there trying to run on the issues. I mean, I think that if people care about education, if they care about child care, if they think about balancing work and family, if they want younger people, as well as older people, to have access to health insurance, people like Hillary and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, those are the kind of people we need to be promoting, because this country is in great shape. But we need to build on what we've got, not reverse it.

President's Future Plans

Q. That's right, sir. And sir, I'm going to say it now because I probably won't get a chance to say it before you leave office. We're going to really miss you.

Q. Thank you so much, sir.

The President. Well, I hope you'll—you know, call me now and then. We'll still talk on the radio. [*Laughter*] You may be the only guy who wants to talk to me when I'm not President anymore. [*Laughter*]

Q. I know, because now the Republicans don't even want you to practice law. They've tried to hold that up on you, too.

The President. I know. Well, they tell me that after the—for 3 or 4 months I'll be lost when I leave office because when I walk in a room, nobody will play a song anymore. [*Laughter*]

Q. We'll play a song for you.

Q. We'll play some old school—yeah.

The President. ——one of your songs for "Hail To The Chief"—how's that?

Q. There you go.

Q. Because we know what you like. [*Laughter*]

The President. You've got a deal.

Q. All right, President Clinton.

2000 Election

The President. Again, I just want to say—I hope everybody listens—you've got to show up Tuesday. You've got to be there. I mean, this election is every bit as important as the one that elected me in 1992. We've turned the country around. The last thing we need to do is go in reverse.

Q. All right.

The President. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, sir.

The President. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The interview began at 9:30 a.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Departure for Los Angeles, California
November 2, 2000

Situation in the Middle East

Good morning. Thank you very much. Let me begin with a word about developments in the Middle East. Last night the parties announced that they had reached an understanding on how to end the violence based on the agreement we reached at Sharm al-Sheikh.

I hope the parties can move forward to put an end to this violence that has caused so much pain on both sides. We know it won't be easy. This morning we were reminded once again in Jerusalem that there are those who seek to destroy the peace through acts of terror. This cannot be permitted to prevail. It is now time for those who believe in peace to stand together to stop this violence and to work against the terrorists.

106th Congress

I wanted all of you to be here today because you've worked so hard on our priorities here at home. The Republican leadership of the 106th Congress has proven itself unable to finish its work before facing the voters. Congressional Republicans are leaving behind a legacy of unfinished business on health care, education, economic progress, and social justice. Regrettably, this is a Congress that may well be remembered for broken promises, lost opportunities, and misplaced priorities.

In contrast, our administration, with congressional Democrats, put forward an achievable agenda for America and its families, a real Patients' Bill of Rights, expanding health coverage to millions of uninsured Americans, a raise in the minimum wage, tax cuts for education and retirement, improving our public schools, protecting our environment, strengthening Medicare with a voluntary prescription drug coverage for all seniors, and a balanced budget that pays off the debt by 2012.

We had a simple strategy to accomplish these goals: heeding the wisdom of the American people; reaching out to win bipartisan majorities

in Congress; and calling for a vote. That's putting progress over partisanship. The results should have been a strong record of legislative achievement. But time and again, rather than listening to the voices of the American people and responding to the bipartisan calls within the Congress, the Republican leadership has bowed to the demands of special interests.

On every single issue, we have worked in good faith to craft compromises that were good for the American people. And when Democrats and Republicans have worked together, we have actually made real progress. We won new investments for our inner cities, rural communities, and Native American communities, and 79,000 new housing vouchers for families climbing their way out of poverty. We increased our investment in a clean environment and doubled our funds for land conservation. We enacted the largest one-year increase ever requested for Veterans Affairs and the largest increase in the history of the National Science Foundation. And we met our historic commitment to debt relief for developing countries.

Just last Sunday we reached bipartisan agreement on an education budget that would have been a tremendous achievement for our children. But under orders from their special interest, the Republican leadership canceled the compromise we had reached with the Republican congressional negotiators. So unless we keep fighting, there will be no funds for school construction, no more progress toward cutting class size by hiring 100,000 new qualified teachers, no new investment in teacher quality, no new funding to strengthen accountability, turn around failing schools, double the number of children served in after-school programs. That is wrong. So we must keep working to make it right.

We built a bipartisan coalition to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid by expanding coverage for children with disabilities, Americans moving from welfare to work, and pregnant women and children who are legal immigrants. But the Republican leadership rejected these proposals in favor of a massive give-away to HMO's—tens of billions of dollars without taking adequate care of these vulnerable populations or adequately compensating the teaching in rural hospitals, home health agencies, and other providers who serve our people. Before this year is out, we must resolve this matter, finally and fairly.

The leadership says they didn't have time to complete the budget. But they wasted no time in blocking fair treatment for Latino immigrants, in blocking commonsense gun safety legislation, in trying to stop new worker safety rules, in filing the spending bills—filling the spending bills they did pass with political election-year pork.

One thing should be clear: The lack of progress in this Congress was not a failure of bipartisanship. On raising the minimum wage, a real Patients' Bill of Rights, hate crimes legislation, campaign finance reform, school construction, the new markets legislation for the areas still not touched by our prosperity—on every single one of these issues, we had bipartisan majorities, Republicans and Democrats, ready to pass them. But the Republican leadership and their special interest allies, unfortunately, still had the power to kill them.

It is unfortunate that their leadership failed to deliver on so much that was within our grasp. But the fight is not over. The American people expect us to finish the job they sent us here to do, and when the Republican leadership comes back after the election, I hope we are ready to work together—and they are ready to work together—to meet that challenge. I am ready. We've done a lot of good, but there's too much left undone, too much that a majority of both parties support.

So thanks for your efforts. Let's go out and let the American people have their say, and we'll come back and go to work after the election.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks at a California Democratic Party and Coordinated Campaign Reception in Los Angeles
November 2, 2000

That's the shortest speech by a politician on record. [*Laughter*] Thank you, and thank you, Governor. I'm looking forward to this little meeting today, but I want to thank you for the work you're doing for the Coordinated Campaign. I'm delighted to be here. We've got five congressional seats here we've got to try to win. And we've got to reelect Senator Feinstein and carry California for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. So we know what we have to do.

And I can tell you, I've been around the country now—I've done like 160 events, maybe more, this year. I just got back from Louisville. And if people understand what the issues are and what the differences are and what the consequences are, we'll win. This is not complicated. So I hope I can help you in the next 2 days.

The only other thing I would say is, all the surveys show that basically this election could turn on whether our voters want to go vote as much as their voters do. And what motivates them is knowing what's at stake. So I'll do what I can to help you do that, and then when I leave, I know you'll bring them to victory.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in the atrium at the Regency Club. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in Los Angeles
November 2, 2000

The President. Thank you. Whoa! Are you ready to win this election? I want to thank all of you for coming out, for your enthusiasm and your support. I want to thank my good friend Kenny Edmonds. He writes a good song, and he makes a good introduction, I think. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Governor Gray Davis, for your leadership and your friendship. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante. Thank you, Art Torres. Thank you, Representative Hilda Solis. And to the other officials who are here, Genethia Hayes, Assemblyman Herb Wesson, Senator Kevin Murray, Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas, and Art Pulaski of the Federation of Labor. And I'd also like to thank your speaker, Bob Hertzberg, and the folks that performed and sang before me here. Thank you, Holly Robinson Peete; thank you, Wyclef Jean. And my good friend Camryn Manheim, not on stage but interpreting me. Isn't she great?

Now, look, I've got to say a few things—can you hear me?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And you have to indulge me, because I know that I'm sort of preaching to the saved here today. And the temptation, therefore, is just to say things that make us all shout and have a good time.

But look, this is a close election, and there are, in addition to the Presidency, races for United States Senate—Senator Dianne Feinstein, and we have five—count 'em—five House seats that the Democrats could win in the State of California alone, on our way to recovering the majority.

So I want you all just to let me talk just a few minutes—not too loud—and tell you what I hope you will say to everybody who is not here, because every one of you have a lot of friends who have never been to anything like this. Is that right? They never came to hear the President give a speech or the Governor or one of these political deals. But they all vote, or they could vote if they knew why they were voting. Is that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. So here is what I want to tell you. Number one, thank you, thank you, thank you for the support that California, Los Angeles, and Watts have given to me and Al Gore these last 8 years.

You know, one of the things that I worry about in this election is that there are a lot of young people of voting age who can't even remember what it was like back in 1992. The economy was in trouble; the society was divided; there were riots in Los Angeles. The political system in Washington was pure tone-deaf to you across the country in California.

And Al Gore and I came here and said, "Give us a chance to put the American people first, to create opportunity for all responsible citizens, to create a community that all of you will be a full part of." And you gave us a chance, and we changed America.

Now, we have another election and another time to decide. And what I want to say to you is, this election is just as important as the one in which you and California sent me to the White House 8 years ago.

Now, I learned a question I was supposed to ask at election time from one of my predecessors, President Reagan. He said this is the question we're supposed to ask, so I'm going to ask, and you answer: Are we better off today than we were 8 years ago?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And let me say what's really important to me. Yes, I'm grateful that we've had the longest economic expansion in history. I'm grateful that we got the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years. But what I'm really grateful for is, in this economic expansion, the middle class and the working poor, along with the rich folks, benefited. We all went forward together. I'm grateful for the fact that we've got the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment rate ever recorded, a 30 percent drop in child poverty, the highest homeownership in history, 15 percent increase in average income. I'm grateful for that.

So here's the second question: Do we want to keep this prosperity going?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You've got a choice. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats will keep the prosperity going by continuing to pay down the debt; give us a tax cut we can afford, to send our kids to college, to take care of our folks if they get sick and we have to take care of them at home, for child care, for retirement savings; and they will invest in education, in health care, in the environment, and building our communities.

Now, the other guys, they say—listen to this—they say, "We've got a $2 trillion surplus, and it doesn't belong to the Government. It belongs to you." Well, of course it does. So they say, "Here's what we're going to do with that $2 trillion surplus. We're going to spend $1.6 trillion on a tax cut. We're going to spend $1 trillion privatizing Social Security, and we're going to spend $½ trillion on other things."

Now, here's the problem. All you kids in grade school listen to this: 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. That's bigger than 2. And what does that mean? What does that mean to you? Yes, it means flunking math, but it also means bigger deficits, after we got rid of them, more inflation, higher interest rates.

If you go with Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats, they will keep interest rates about a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to ordinary people? Listen to this—10 years—listen: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower student loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more stores at the mall here, more jobs, and a higher stock market.

With Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats, the rich folks keep getting richer, but so does the middle class and so do the lower income working people. We're all going forward together.

So if somebody asks you, "Well, why should I go vote, and why should I be for the Democrats," say, "Because we've got the longest, strongest, fairest economy we ever had, and because I want to keep it going."

Now, I got another question. It's not just about economics. There's something else you need to know. Compared to 8 years ago, the crime rate has gone down every year to a 26-year low; the welfare rolls have been cut in half. The environment is cleaner: cleaner air, cleaner water, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up as in the previous 12 years; more land set aside than any time since Teddy Roosevelt was President 100 years ago. And the economy kept getting better. The health care system—Medicare was supposed to go broke last year. Now we put 27 years on it. For the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down because 2.5 million kids have gotten health insurance under our Children's Health Insurance Program.

Now, in addition to that, the high school dropout rate is going down. The math, reading, and science scores are going up. College-going is at an all-time high. The number of African-American and Latino kids taking advanced placement tests—courses—has gone up 300 percent in 3 years. Now, in every case, we did things that helped that happen.

So, question three: Do you like this progress, and do you want to build on it?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, you have a choice. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats, they'll keep working until we get health care for all our kids; until we have Medicare prescription drugs for all the seniors who need it, not just a few; until we have a real Patients' Bill of Rights, so that doctors, not insurance company officials, decide what your health care needs are. They'll keep working for a new, cleaner energy policy so we can keep growing the economy and breathe the air. They'll work for funds to build or repair schools. I don't know how many kids in California, but a whole lot, are going to school in housetrailers or old broken-down schools, and we're trying to help. It's very important.

Now, you also have another choice. Our friends in the other party, what's their program? They say if they win—listen to this, this is what they say, not me. They will abolish our program putting 100,000 police on the street—we only have the lowest crime rate in 26 years. They will abolish our commitment to putting 100,000 teachers in the classrooms to lower class size in the early grades. They will roll back our environmental standards for clean air and get rid of a lot of this land protection that I have enacted. And they will not support a real Patients' Bill of Rights or Medicare prescription drugs for every senior who needs it. So you have a choice here.

But if you want to keep building on the progress, your choice is Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats.

Now, I've got another question for you. One of the things that I have tried to do is to make people in Watts feel like they had just as big a say in the White House as the friends I have in Beverly Hills. I wanted you to feel that the White House was your house, that the Government was your Government. And I have worked for an America that helped everybody.

A lady over there just held a sign up that said, "Thank you for the Family and Medical Leave Act," which over 22 million Americans have used to take some time off when a baby is born or a parent is sick without losing their job. It's one of the best things we ever did.

And we've worked for the minimum wage and family tax relief and the AmeriCorps program that has given 150,000 of our young people a chance to serve in their communities, including L.A., and rebuild them and earn some money for college. We've tried to give you one America.

Now, the last question I have is, do we want to keep building one America and not be divided again? Yes, we do. You've got a choice. Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats are for strong hate crimes legislation. They're for employment nondiscrimination legislation. They're for stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women because there's still too much discrimination there. They're for fairness to all legal immigrants in this country in the distribution of benefits. And they're for a Supreme Court and other Federal judges who will protect a woman's right to choose and civil rights and human rights in this country.

Now, in every case, their Republican opponents have a different view on every one of those issues I just mentioned. They talk a lot about bipartisanship. But we've got a bipartisan majority in the Congress right now for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for a raise in the minimum wage, for the hate crimes legislation, for money for school construction, for campaign finance reform. But their leaders say no.

Now, I'm telling you, I believe that the Democrats have a great chance to win both the House and the Senate. But I want you to think about something in this Presidential race. You know all the struggles I've been in these last 6 years, trying to stick up for you. One reason you need Al Gore in the White House is that somebody needs to be there, if this crowd stays in, to stop their more extremist actions, and he will.

Now, I want to say something about the Vice President. And all I can do is kind of echo what Governor Davis said. He has the experience for this job. This is something that should be important to the young people in this audience. He understands the future, how it will

be shaped by the Internet, by the global economy, by the revolution in science and technology. He has accomplished more for the American people as Vice President than any person who ever held that job before.

But most important, President Kennedy once said that the Presidency is preeminently a place of decisionmaking. You hired me for 8 years to make decisions that the President is supposed to make. Al Gore is a good man who makes good decisions, and with your help he will be a great President of the United States.

So here's what I want you to do. You've got a few days now. Every day, when you see somebody you know wasn't here today, you tell them you want them to vote. You tell them you want to vote for Al Gore, for Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats. Why?

Question number one, you want them to vote because you want to keep this prosperity going. Number two, you want them to vote because you want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years. Number three, you want their vote because you want to keep building one America; you kind of like it, thinking that the White House is your house, too.

This is a close election. Every vote counts. There is a clear choice. I cannot thank you enough for how good you've been to me. But let me tell you something: If you want to build on the prosperity, if you want to build on the progress, if you want to keep building one America, you've got a clear choice and a clear responsibility, your only choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:20 p.m. in the parking lot at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza Mall. In his remarks, he referred to musician Kenneth (Babyface) Edmonds; Art Torres, chair, California State Democratic Party; State Senators Hilda Solis and Kevin Murray; Genethia Hayes, member, Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education; State Assemblyman Herb Wesson; Los Angeles City Council member Mark Ridley-Thomas; Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer, California Labor Federation, AFL–CIO; Robert M. Hertzberg, speaker, California State Assembly; actresses Holly Robinson Peete and Camryn Manheim; and musician Wyclef Jean. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Gerrie Schipske in Los Angeles

November 2, 2000

Thank you. You all sit down. Well, this is a pretty rowdy crowd. [*Laughter*] Nice sign. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank—first of all—thank all of you for coming, but I especially want to thank Jeremy and Marc Nathanson; and my friend of more than 30 years now David Mixner, who still has no gray hair practically. [*Laughter*] And thank you, Antonio Villaraigosa, for being here and for your friendship to me.

And I want to thank Gerrie Schipske for having the guts to run and run again and be in here. I enjoyed visiting with Gerrie and Flo and the kids back there. You know, I was listening to her—she tells a pretty good joke—[*laughter*]—sort of an essential criteria if you want to be in Congress. [*Laughter*] Better to tell one than be one, I always say. [*Laughter*] You know, my mother was a nurse anesthetist. I never met anybody associated with health care who didn't have a sense of humor. And you need it in that line of work.

But she was kind of hung up about me being on page one of the Advocate; did you notice that? [*Laughter*] She was on page 56. I've just got to tell you, if we do our job, by less than a week from now you'll be on page one of the Advocate, and I'll be lucky to be on page 56. [*Laughter*]

I think there ought to be more people associated with health care in the Congress. Lois Capps, who represents the district a little north of here, was a public school nurse and a magnificent woman. And we have one or two other

people in the Congress who did a stint in nursing or health care. One of the Republican physicians in the Congress, Greg Ganske from Iowa, was one of the people that gave us the bipartisan majority we needed for a real Patients' Bill of Rights.

When you think about the role that health care plays in our national life and all the complex issues that have to be faced, and how much money there is behind a lot of the organized positions taken by the other party in Congress—I know a lot of you are here because you support Gerrie on the human rights issues and all of that, but I'm telling you, we need more people who understand health care from the human point of view.

I can't tell you—you know, I could give you, if we had all night to talk, I could give you 50 examples that I have personally experienced in the last 8 years. So one of the reasons that I'm here for her, apart from the fact that I like her and I support her and I agree with her, is that we really do need more people who've actually done things with their lives that could actually be valuable to people when they have to make laws. And so that's good.

Now, I want to be brief here, because I realize that I'm preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] But let me tell you, I've been doing this a long time. Now, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot running for something. I was 27 years old when I started, and I lost the race for the House of Representatives—thank goodness—I wouldn't have made it here, I guess, if I hadn't. [*laughter*]. And I've loved all these elections.

I believe in the American political system. You know, I don't know how many years David Mixner and I had to wait until we actually got to vote for somebody for President that actually won. [*Laughter*] That's not true. I voted for Jimmy Carter, and you did, too. But it was a pretty long time there, you know. And I was beginning to think I would be on Social Security before I ever had a winning election, when I was a kid. [*Laughter*]

But I believe in the American political system, and I think, over time, the American people are an embodiment of Martin Luther King's eloquent statement that the arc of history is long but it bends toward justice. That's a very eloquent statement. And we have to not grow weary. We have to just keep on working at it.

But most people are good people. And free people generally tend to do the right thing if they have enough information and enough time to digest it and enough experience against which to test it. And I say that because—I do want to be just a little serious with you tonight. These elections are tight. I've been fooling with this a long time now. President Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey by a little over a percent. President Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon by four-tenths of one percent, 100,000 votes, in the whole country—less than a vote a precinct. President Carter defeated President Ford by about a percent.

So close races for President are not without precedence. But now they're manifesting themselves in these races for Congress. Now, it's quite interesting because on all of the major issues of the day except one or two, the people agree with the direction we've been taking the last 8 years.

Now, what does that lead you to say? What conclusion can you draw from that? In so many strange places—for example, when I was trying to help James Byrd's children pass the hate crimes legislation in Texas, which as you know is no heart of flaming liberalism, a survey came out in Austin the day I was there that showed that in Texas, two-thirds of the people, without regard to party, agreed that Texas ought to have hate crimes legislation that included protection for gays—in Texas.

On the other hand, a massive amount of voting is always cultural. You look around here, people tend to kind of—they hang with their crowd, and they kind of vote and kind of go in one direction, and then they find it hard to turn around and go the other way. And it takes a while for a different issue approach to register. That's part of it.

Part of it is, a lot of young people can't even remember when the economy wasn't this good. You know, they have no recollection of this, so they kind of take it for granted. And indeed, the nominee of the other party, I can't figure out—sometimes he says nothing good has happened in the last 8 years, and then, once in a while reality will dawn, and he'll say, "Well whatever good happened, it was an accident. They didn't have anything to do with it"—[*laughter*]—which is an interesting thing, because when they were in, they took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. [*Laughter*] They even ran a campaign on the Sun coming

up in the morning. Do you remember that? "It's morning in America." Do you remember that? [*Laughter*] But I do believe—we're all having a good time here, but seriously, I think that one of the problems in good times is it's easy to forget that they weren't always good, and it's difficult sometimes to make the connection between what some people in public life have done and the good consequences that have occurred.

And so everybody feels kind of like, well, this guy sounds good, and that woman sounds good, and the other one sounds good, and you know, what am I to do here? So you look around, and all these races are tight as a tick. In the Presidential race, when I last checked, which was this morning, there were roughly a dozen States within two points one way or the other—just unprecedented.

And all over the country, you have races like Gerrie's for Congress, and so what is important is that you be able to make a case to people in these closing days that includes some of the specifics you know we win on, but is part of the general approach.

And so, I just want to share this with you, because I want her to win. And there are four other House seats we can win here. And the Vice President and Senator Lieberman are ahead now in the polls in California, but they have to win here.

The whole basis of the Clinton/Gore political success was never having to worry about what we called the western wall of the United States, anchored with California. We won Washington, Oregon, and Hawaii. And then we never had to worry about New York and north; we won everything that way. And we always had Illinois, which was my wife's home and a place where I had spent a lot of time. And we always—and we had Arkansas, so what we had to do was, we went out from New York to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and out from Illinois to Michigan and Ohio, and then we just went down the Mississippi River. And that's more than enough to win, and the rest was gravy, because it's an electoral strategy.

Now, with all this closeness, the same thing is true, as you heard Gerrie say, she wants to be one of the Members that gives us the majority in the House. We can do that. But we have to win a lot of these California seats. There are five seats in California we have a bona fide chance of winning.

So what I'm here to ask you to do—I thank you for giving her money. If you can give her some more, you ought to, because she's being outspent. If you haven't reached your legal limit or you can give her some more, I hope you will do that. But there's something else you could do. You could actually take it upon yourselves to be as active as you possibly can until the polls close Tuesday night, because every one of you has lots of friends who have never been to an event like this. Is that right? Don't you? I mean, most of your friends don't come to deals like this, do they? They've never been to an event like this where the President speaks or where the Governor speaks or people talk about this.

Even Marc, who has been living on this political stuff and has done more than anybody west of the Mississippi River to try to make Dick Gephardt Speaker, even Marc, most of his friends never come to events like this.

A lot of your friends wonder what in the world you're doing spending your money on this. Isn't that right? [*Laughter*] They say, why did you spend all that money? I mean, you could have been home watching a basketball game, right?

So we're laughing, but let me just tell you seriously. I would like to tell you what I wish you would tell everyone you can see, call, scream at, or touch between now and Tuesday. And if we were alone in a room, you and I, and you asked me, "Why are you really for Al Gore? Why are you really for Gerrie Schipske? What have you really learned in 8 years," this is what I would tell you if you were alone and I had about 5 minutes to talk to you. And I think this is something everybody can remember.

Number one, I learned a lot watching President Reagan, and he taught me what the test was for whether a party in office should be returned: Are you better off today than you were 8 years ago? And I noticed all these folks running this year are comparing themselves to President Reagan, so I think we should say that was one thing he was right about. And we all agree, and that's a test. So why are we having this debate and election?

More seriously, the important thing about this economic recovery—and Governor Davis and I were talking about it—and I agree, by the way, with what Jeremy said about him. There are very few people in this entire country that work

harder and get more done than Gray Davis. If anybody—you ought to really be proud. And I sort of think charisma is as charisma does, you know? [*Laughter*] I've always found Governor Davis to be highly interesting, especially because he never sees me that he doesn't ask me to do something else for California. [*Laughter*] So I'm honored by that.

But now, think of—let me just say this. Here's the thing that makes this recovery interesting. Yes, it's the longest economic expansion in history. Yes, there are 22 million new jobs. But this is the first recovery in 30 years where everybody went along for the ride. We have a record number of millionaires. We have a record number of billionaires, and that's good. But we've also had a 15 percent increase, real increase, after inflation, in median income—over $5,000 a year. Median income got over $40,000 a year in America for the first time in our entire history. We have the highest homeownership in history, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded. So we're all going along for the ride.

Now, that is very, very important in a free society. Everybody that works ought to be rewarded for it. And we believe in policies like the minimum wage, like the family leave law, like the earned-income tax credit for people with a bunch of kids and a modest income that gives them a little extra tax break, that will allow us all to go along for the ride.

But in a larger sense, getting rid of the deficit has helped us all to go along for the ride. Why? Because that's the best tax cut of all, having lower interest rates. That helps everybody with a home mortgage, everybody with a car payment, everybody with a college loan payment, everybody with a credit card payment. It helps every small-business person that ever has to get a loan to start or expand a business. And every American with credit has saved thousands of dollars, most of them thousands of dollars a year, because we got rid of the deficit.

The fundamental fact of the global economy is that conservative fiscal policy is progressive social policy, because it helps ordinary people and brings money to the Government to invest in education and other things.

Now, why does that matter in this election? This is a huge deal. It is estimated that we have a projected surplus of about $2 trillion. That sounds like a bunch of money, and people's eyes glaze over. I promise you it won't be that much, barring some unforeseen development, because the Congress has spent a lot of money and because of the curious way that it's calculated. But let's just assume it's going to be $2 trillion.

Now, what do the Democrats say? What do Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and our Democratic candidates say? They say, "Okay, first, let's stay on this path to pay the debt off in 12 years to keep interest rates down. Then let's give people a tax cut we can afford for child care, long-term care, sending kids to college, and retirement savings. And let's take the rest and invest it in health care, education, the environment, and the other critical needs of the country. But first, keep the economy strong."

What do they say, the other guys? They say, "Hey, this is your money. What's the Government doing keeping your money?" Which, of course, it is your money. And they say, "We're going to give you a tax cut 3 times as big as they are," and some of you in this room who can afford to be at this event tonight, would actually do better under theirs in the short run, and some of you wouldn't, depending on your income group. So they say, "Our tax cut is 3 times bigger than theirs because it's your money."

But forget about all the zeros, okay? The surplus is 2, okay, the projected surplus. Their tax cut, plus the interest cost associated with it, is 1.6. But then they want to privatize Social Security, and they have now admitted that if we give young people 2 percent of their payroll, it will take a trillion dollars out of the Social Security Trust Fund. So you've got to spend $1 trillion to replace that, unless you want Social Security to go broke earlier. So that's 1.6 and 1. And then they want to spend a little money too, which is good. They want to be compassionate, and they are interested in spending money too, so they want to spend about $500 billion. Now, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

Now you're all laughing, but look, I've spent 8 years working on this. People ask me all the time, "What brilliant new idea did you bring to Washington to get the economy going?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] I brought arithmetic to Washington—not calculus, not trigonometry, arithmetic.

You're laughing, but I'm dead serious. I'm going to be gone out here—you know, if I'm

fortunate, I'll be one of those guys that will make out like a bandit under this Republican tax cut. But look, 3.1 is bigger than 2. What does that mean? It means you go back to deficits, which means higher interest rates, higher inflation, slower growth.

Under the Gore/Lieberman plan, interest rates will be about a percent lower a year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Same thing as a tax cut, lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, plus the credit card payments, plus the business loans, equals more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market.

So you've got to decide. Do you want to all keep on going together, so we'll make more millionaires and more billionaires, but average people will do better too? If you do, you only have one choice. You've got to vote for Gore and Lieberman, and you've got to vote for Gerrie, because that's the right decision.

Now look, I still—I honestly don't believe a lot of people have thought this through. And you say, "Well, how can Al Gore afford to spend all that money?" Because if you get rid of the deficit—the debt, if you pay the debt down, your interest payments on the debt go down. The third biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt. We take 12 cents out of every dollar you pay to the Federal Government and spend that just on the debt. So if you quit spending so much on interest, you can spend a lot more on education and health care and, yes, even on a tax cut, because you're getting rid of that 12 cents.

Now look, I don't think most people have clearly focused on this, do you? So you need to go tell people that if they want to keep the prosperity going, if they like where—if they compare where we were 8 years ago in California and America, with where we are today, we've got to do this. And they only have one choice: Gore, Lieberman, and Gerrie.

Now the second thing I want to say is, this country is about more than economic progress. We've had a lot of social progress: crime at a 26-year low; welfare at a 32-year low, rolls cut in half. The air is cleaner, 43 million people breathing cleaner air. The water is cleaner. We set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, and we cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps as the Republicans did in the 12 previous years.

We have added 26 years to the life of Medicare, which was supposed to go broke last year when I took office. For the first time in 12 years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, not up, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, which the Governor has strongly supported and administers.

And in the schools, in spite of all the problems, reading, math, and science scores are up; the drop-out rate is down; the graduation rate is up. There is, for the first time in our history, almost no difference between the African-American and the white high school graduation rate. College-going is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest expansion in college aid since the GI bill. So all this stuff is going in the right direction.

Now, what's that got to do with anything? Because you've got to make a choice. Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years or reverse it? I'll just give you a couple of examples.

Our crime policy is opposed by the other party—not just gun safety measures. They don't want to close the gun show loophole in the Brady law. They actually want to get rid of the 100,000 police program. Our education policy is opposed. They want to get rid of the 100,000 teacher program. Our environmental policy is opposed. They want to weaken the clean air standards and get rid of my order setting aside 40 million acres, roadless acres in the national forest, something the Audubon Society said was the most significant conservation move in the last 40 years.

So, our side, we want to build on—we want to have a safer society, a cleaner environment, stronger education programs. And in health care, Gerrie's area of expertise, she can tell you better than me the differences—perhaps most stark of all. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. They're not. We're for a Medicare prescription drug program that covers all of our seniors, and they aren't. And that's just the beginning. We could provide health insurance to all our kids. We can now actually afford to help working families who have no health insurance, buy insurance for the parents of the kids in this program. And we're for that, and they're not.

So again, if you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, you only have one

choice: You've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Gerrie.

And the third thing that I would like to say, which maybe is the most important of all to me, is, I've worked real hard to build one America. A lot of you have referenced my work with the gay and lesbian community. I met earlier today with a representative of one of the Native American tribes who told me that I had done more to try to reach out to them than anybody had in a long time, maybe ever.

I think it's real important for America to be a place that is constantly evolving in respect for people, mutual understanding, and real interdependent cooperation where we don't just tolerate one another. I don't really like the word "tolerance" in this context because that implies that one dominant group is putting up with somebody else that's not as good as they are, but at least they're not kicking them around. That's not what this is about. I don't like "tolerance" in that way, you know? That's not what this is about.

This is about, you know, actually appreciating the differences among us and affirming the common humanity that we share as being even more important than the differences. And this is a big deal now, you know. We've become wildly diverse, racially, ethnically, religiously. I mean, we're going to get more that way. And it's a godsend in a global society if we figure out how to be one America, which means you've got to respect and enjoy the diversity because it makes America more interesting. But you also have to do the rest. You've got to affirm our common humanity.

So, for me, that has meant things like the family leave law and having an administration that represents all kinds of Americans and having people like the people in this room feel like they have a friend in the White House, and it's their White House too, not somebody else's White House; that every American can feel comfortable walking in there and knowing that you may not agree with everything I do, but at least I'm thinking about it, from your point of view as well as mine.

Now, this is important. And there are a lot of these issues out there. And you have a choice to make. I'll just give you a few examples.

Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Gerrie and our whole crowd, we're for the hate crimes bill; we're for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act"; we're for strengthening the equal pay laws for women, which is still a big problem; we're for a Supreme Court that upholds not only a woman's right to choose but also civil rights, human rights, and the capacity of the National Government to protect the American people.

I'm telling you, there's already a majority on the Supreme Court that has struck down provisions of the Brady bill, of the Violence Against Women Act, of an age discrimination act, because they want to restrict the power of the Federal Government to protect the people and to enlist the States in doing that.

Now, most people don't, I think, really understand this. But on every one of those issues I just mentioned, hate crimes, ENDA, equal pay, the Supreme Court—and I could mention a bunch of others, but just those—the two parties are different. So if you agree with us, you just have one choice: You've got to be for Al and Joe and Gerrie.

So you don't have to remember all the specifics I've given you. But I'm telling you, you could do a world of good for her, for the other four House seats we're trying to win, if everybody you saw in the next week, you said, "You've got to vote, and you've got to vote for our crowd. You want to know why? Because if you want to keep the prosperity going, you better keep paying down the debt and investing in our future, and you only have one choice if you want to do that. If you want to keep the social progress going and crime is down, the environment is better, the schools are better, the health care system is making improvements, you've got to build on that, not reverse it, and the other guys are against all the things we're for. And if you want to keep building one America, you actually have to work at it. There are things you have to do, and we have a program to do it, and the other side honestly disagrees with us."

You don't have to say a bad word about anybody. All you have to say is, if you want to keep the prosperity going—or, as I said at the convention here, if you want to live like a Republican, you've got to vote like a Democrat. [*Laughter*] If you want to keep the prosperity going, build on the progress of the last 8 years, and keep building one America, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Gerrie Schipske.

Now, this is a big deal. I promise you, you can have an impact on this election. All of these

elections are razor thin. And people, I'm absolutely sure, based on the support that the people of California have given me and the Vice President in the last 8 years and what I feel out there and what I know, that if everyone understood what the differences were, what the stakes are, what the consequences are to families and communities and States in our Nation, that we would prevail.

I'm honored to be here today. I'm honored to be here for Gerrie and for the Vice President and Senator Lieberman. I can tell you that, you know, John Kennedy said once that the Presidency was preeminently a place of decision-making. Half the time over the last 8 years, I've felt like it was a place to see if you could work 19 hours instead of 18 a day. But in the end, you have to make right decisions. And a lot of times, Presidents have gotten in trouble for working too hard, because then they weren't clear enough to make good decisions. On the other hand, hard work is an important part of the job.

And I just want to say about Al Gore—I know I don't have to say this to you, but it's something else you can tell people that I said—experience matters. It matters what you know. It matters how hard you work. It matters whether you have done a lot of this before. And he has had a more positive impact for the American people than anybody who ever served as Vice President before. He makes very good decisions, and he will be a very, very good President.

So please, just every day—don't let those election returns come in Tuesday night and you be sick about the outcome of some election that, you know, 400 or 500 votes made the difference. You've got to look around this room. The people in this room could change 5,000 to 10,000 votes between now and Tuesday. Look in this room—5,000 to 10,000 votes. John Kennedy was elected in the whole country by 100,000 votes.

Now, I'm telling you, every day between now and the election, say, "I want to keep the prosperity going, not risk it. I want to build on the social progress, not reverse it. And we've got to keep building one America. We've got to go forward together, because if we do, the best is still out there. And the choice is clear: Al and Joe and Gerrie."

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:37 p.m. in the Regency Room at the Regency Club. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Jeremy Bernard and Marc Nathanson; gay activist and author David Mixner; Antonio R. Villaraigosa, speaker emeritus, California State Assembly; Flo Pickett, Ms. Schipske's life partner; Gov. Gray Davis of California; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Ms. Schipske was a candidate for California's 38th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Calvin M. Dooley in Beverly Hills, California

November 2, 2000

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'm honored to be here tonight. What Cal Dooley told you is true. He represents a totally different district, lots of big farms. Some of the farms in Cal's district are almost as large as Haim's and Cheryl's backyard. [*Laughter*] Yes, Cal said he'll bring in a tractor next time he comes to see you here. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all of you for being here, and thank Governor Davis and Sharon. They've been with me all day today. We had a meeting with people who are working on the Coordinated Campaign, and then we went to an event for Gerrie Schipske. But before that, we went to a great rally in Watts today, and we had a really good time trying to stir the voters up.

And I'm honored to be here tonight with Cal and Lou Dooley. And I thank the other Members of Congress who are here, Representatives Waxman, Berman, and Becerra, my friends and partners; and Hilda Solis, who will soon be with us in Congress; and Jim Costa, whom I've known for many years.

I was supposed to do this before, and I had to go to the Middle East; we had to put this off. And I wanted to come back to answer Governor Davis' call, trying to make sure that we did as much as we could, not only to make sure that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman would get California's 54 electoral votes and not have to come back in the eleventh hour, but also to help the Members of Congress who are running here.

We have a bona fide chance in five districts now held by Republicans. And we have a real contest in Cal Dooley's district, because it's a rural, agricultural district, and a lot of American voting is cultural. And a lot of the folks in Cal's district like him, but they're sort of not acculturated to voting for Democrats yet. [*Laughter*] You know, they still give Republicans the rhetorical credit—even though they quadrupled the debt and we got rid of the deficit. You know, there is a disconnect there. But it's a real challenge for him, and he has a formidable opponent who's got a lot of money.

You know, this is the first time in 26 years I've not been on the ballot. I'm not running for anything, for the first time since 1974. And it gives me a certain amount of freedom to say what I think, although I'm trying not to be so free that I imperil either my wife or the Vice President in the election—[*laughter*]—about saying what I think.

But I want you to know, I really wanted to be here tonight. I'm crazy about Cal Dooley and about his wife. And I feel so grateful that we have people like him who can represent the Democratic Party to rural America, to people who are culturally far more conservative than most of the people in Los Angeles, but who have the same real long-term values and interests that the rest of us do.

And I have always believed that to succeed over the long run, the Democratic Party would have to prove that we could be fiscally responsible and compassionate, that we could be pro-business and pro-labor, that we could be pro-economic growth and pro-environmental preservation.

We have to be a unifying force in the country. And Cal Dooley is all that. We've worked together for years on the Democratic Leadership Council. There is a reason the farm workers endorsed him: Because he cares about every poor kid in his district and believes every single one of them—every boy and girl—ought to have a chance to live their dreams. And there is a reason that the chairman of Commerce endorsed him: Because he's been an integral part of the new economy that we've worked so hard to build.

People ask me all the time what we did to turn the economy around. We had just three simple ideas: One, get rid of the deficit—it's killing us on interest rates, and it's hurting the private economy; two, sell more American products and services around the world; and three, invest more in the capacity of the American people.

And the one area—it's no secret to anybody that I have not yet succeeded in convincing a vast majority of my party in Congress I was right in was on the second area, the trade area. But Cal Dooley was with me because he could see the farmers that he represented needing those markets, and he could see the positive side of that. I will always be grateful to him for that, because I am convinced that we've done a lot in the last 8 years to build a modern economy.

But I just want to make—I want to close with three quick points, because I know it's late, and a lot of you don't live in this district, but you may live in districts where some of these other people are running, where we've got a chance to win. And it's amazing how close all these races are. And in the Presidential race, there are probably a dozen States that are within two points.

Now, if you look at where we were 8 years ago and where we are today, with the economy, with the declining crime rate and improving environment, improving schools, improving health care, it is not rational that——

[*At this point, an audience member had a medical problem.*]

The President. Here, do you want to take him off? That's okay. I gave a speech once, and my father-in-law had a heart attack during it. [*Laughter*] He was rushed to the hospital and had a quadruple heart bypass, and when he woke up, I told him it wasn't that good a speech. [*Laughter*]

But let me just say this. If you live in any of these places, I can't tell you how close these races are. And I just want you to go out and tell people that there are differences between the parties; they have grave consequences for

our future. And if you want to keep the prosperity going and the social progress going, you'd better vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Cal Dooley, or whoever else is your Representative in Congress, and Dianne Feinstein.

Because, believe me, the great achievement of the last 8 years is that we have shown again we can all go forward together. We have more millionaires and more billionaires than we ever had before, but we also had, the first time in history, average income has topped $40,000 with 15 percent increase in earnings. So we can do this.

Thank you for your money. If you can give Cal Dooley any more money, you ought to give him some more money. [*Laughter*] But I'm telling you, this man is very, very important to the national Democratic Party. He helps us reach out to people who normally aren't for us. He forces all of our Members to think. He brings people together in unique and powerful ways, and he needs to be here. He is a very, very special person, and I'm grateful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Haim and Cheryl Saban; Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon; Gerrie Schipske and Hilda Solis, candidates for California's 38th and 31st Congressional Districts, respectively; Representative Dooley's wife, Linda (Lou); California State Senator Jim Costa; and Rich Rodriguez, Republican candidate for California's 20th Congressional District. Representative Dooley was a candidate for reelection in California's 20th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Friends of Jane Harman Reception in Beverly Hills
November 2, 2000

Well, thank you very much. I have had a wonderful time tonight. And after Alex Winnick gave his speech, I thought, there's nothing for the rest of us to say. [*Laughter*] He made the case for Jane. Thank you very much, Alex. And I thank you, Gary, and thank you, Karen, for having us here. I would like to hear the whole history of this building. I wish these walls could talk. This might be one of the tamer events it would speak of. [*Laughter*] Gary Winnick has been a friend of mine for some time now, and I'm quite thrilled by the success that Global Crossing has had. And it's interesting to me and I think it's fitting that they're now housed in this historic site.

I'd like to thank Governor Davis and Sharon for being such good friends to Hillary and me. I think Gray has been a great leader for California. And I thank him very, very much for all the support he's given to me over the years and all the work we've done together. And you might be interested to know, even though I have just 11 weeks left, even today in the car he was grinding on me to do one last thing—[*laughter*]—for California before I left office. And eventually I'll say yes just to be relieved of the pain of having Gray work on me. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Jane and Sidney for being great friends. I've been in their home in Washington. I've been in Sidney's plant in southern California. We had a great, great day there. And I have worked with Jane very closely. I was trying to think what, if anything, I could say to add to what has already been said this evening. Alex really did do a very good job of making the case. But I want you to know a couple of things.

First of all, when I met Jane Harman, I thought she represented the sort of person that I was trying to bring into the Democratic Party to get to run for office. And I thought the district she represented was the sort of district I thought the Democrats had to be able to campaign in and carry if we were going to become the majority party in America, mostly because of the ideas we shared.

You know, we believed that you have to be fiscally conservative in order to be socially progressive in a world where all the capital markets are global; and if you have an irresponsible policy and you run big deficits, your interest rates are going to be high, your economy is going

to be weak, and nothing the Government can do can change that. We believe that you have to be able to have an economic policy that helps business and labor. We believe that you have to be able to improve the environment and grow the economy. And she has always had kind of a unifying view of politics which I thought made a lot of sense.

The second thing that impressed me is that she was such a good advocate for the people in her district, particularly the aerospace industry. And it's easy now to forget just how tough things were in January of '93. And I can tell you I wasn't President very long before Jane Harman made sure I knew just about as much as she did about all that and I had my to-do list from her. [*Laughter*]

So she has, I think, proven that she is a good Member of Congress, indeed, a truly outstanding one. But she also stood up there and cast that vote. She came very close to losing her election in 1994. Why? Because nobody is for deficits; nobody is for debt; but nobody wanted to do anything about it because by the time we got around to doing something about it in 1993, the problem was so great that there was no painless solution.

And if there's anything that a politician hates, it's to inflict pain and then to have to stand for reelection before the pain can be proved to be good. [*Laughter*] And that's basically what happened to us in '94. The economy was getting better, but no one knew it yet. And we also lost a dozen Members over the assault weapons ban in the Brady bill because the streets were getting safer, but no one felt it yet. The NRA took about 12 of our crowd out because they voted for the assault weapons ban and the Brady bill. But Jane hung in there, and we kept working together until she left the House. I was surprised and thrilled that she decided to run again.

All of you know that she is in a tight race. There are a couple of reasons why. One is, the Republicans have more money than we do, and they do not want to lose the majority in Congress, so they are throwing a double ton of money into every one of these races where we have a chance to win. And in California, we have a chance to win five seats. And they have, they believe, a chance to win one—and I hope they're wrong about it—Congressman Dooley's seat. I kind of think they are, because he's such an extraordinary man. But anyway, they have a lot of money, and they're putting it in.

Since they can't win on the issues that are really before the Congress—they can't win the fight on the Patients' Bill of Rights or whether Medicare should have a prescription drug program or whether we should have hate crimes legislation or campaign finance reform or you name it—there has to be some bomb-throwing. And if you look at all of their campaigns all over the country, that's basically what they're doing, and so, you just have your tailored bomb. So Jane now has her tailored bomb.

So I want to tell you something. I know exactly what they've been saying. She worked very hard for you when she was in the Congress. She worked me harder than 90 percent of the people in the Congress—me, personally—to do things for her district. She's one of the smartest people I dealt with, and she had a good philosophy. I think she ought to go back to Congress, and I want you to help her go back to Congress.

Now, I'm going to ask you to do something else. The hour is late, and I know you're all tired, but this is an interesting election. The Presidential race is just tight as can be. There's 10 or 12 States within 2 points, one way or the other. And the election will either be decided by the movement of people from undecided to one or the other candidates, or by the fact that one candidate's supporters want to vote more than the other candidate's supporters.

And there are all these House races and Senate races that are tight as can be. A lot of it favors us. I think the chances are quite high that we can win the House back. We even have an outside chance to win the Senate back. So all over the country—why is it, why are people converging and being split right down the middle in all these races? Part of it may be there's so much money involved that the stuff is so confusing that people just kind of fall off one way or the other. I think part of it is that a lot of people don't remember what it was like 8 years ago, particularly younger voters. And we tend to take it for granted that all this stuff just happened. It was just an accident.

And so this is an interesting debate they're having about how big the tax cut should be and what shape it should be; an interesting debate they're having about whether Social Security should be privatized and, if so, how much and in what way; an interesting debate they're

having over the crime policy, the education policy, or whatever.

I just want to make a couple of points very crisply. But they're very important to me, and if you and I were alone and there were no press in the room and you asked me about this race, I would tell you this exactly if we were alone.

The first thing is, if you really want to maximize the chance of keeping this prosperity going, you ought to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Jane Harman. Why? Why is that? Well, people ask me all the time, "What great new idea did you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all those guys bring to Washington to turn the economy around?" And my answer is always a simple, one-word answer, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] We brought arithmetic back to Washington.

And we said we're going to get rid of all this deficit; we either had to raise money or cut spending or do a little of both. And since it was impossible and wrong to raise as many taxes as it would take to get rid of the deficit and impossible and wrong to cut spending as much as it would take to get rid of the deficit, we did a little of both, and we got rid of it. And now we're running a surplus. We've gone from the biggest deficit to the biggest surplus. But we did it by arithmetic—no phony rosy scenarios, no pretending money was there when it wasn't, no pretending we were cutting spending when we weren't. We just practiced arithmetic.

Now, what's that got to do with this race? The Republicans offer a tax cut that is more attractive to most of you who can afford a ticket to come here tonight, in the short run. It's 3 times as big as the Democrats' tax cut. And then they offer a partial privatization of Social Security that's quite attractive to young people who think they'll make a killing in the stock market and therefore, if they get 2 percent of their payroll, they can make more out of it than if they just get Social Security the way the older folks have always gotten Social Security. And then they got a few spending promises of their own.

Here's the problem. The surplus is projected to be $2 billion. And believe me, that's very optimistic. Their tax cut and the associated interest cost is $1.6 trillion. It costs a trillion dollars to partially privatize Social Security, and they promise to spend another half a trillion. Now, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

Now look, I want you to laugh about it, but look, I'm telling you. You want to know what we did for the country? We brought arithmetic back to Washington. Jane Harman nearly lost her seat in 1994 because she voted to restore arithmetic to the Federal budget. And everybody is for that in general and against it in particular, because nobody wants their taxes raised, nobody wants their program cut.

So we did it. But we went through all of this agony, and we got this thing turned around. Now, we can afford a tax cut, but it can't be that big. And if somebody wants—you can argue the policy of privatizing Social Security. You think it's a good idea or bad idea, but you can't pretend you don't have to pay for it. And that's what the Vice President says when he talks about the money being promised to two different groups. If you take your payroll out, that's $1 trillion over 10 years. They still need the money to pay for the people they promised the benefits to. That's why it takes another trillion out of the surplus.

So believe me, this is important. My Council of Economic Advisers believes that interest rates will be about a percent lower under Gore's plan and under anything the Democrats would vote for because we promised to pay the debt down. And you ask yourself: Well, then, how can you promise to spend more than they did? Answer: If you pay the debt down, interest on the debt goes down; it's now the third-biggest item in the Federal budget; and as you shrink it, it leaves you money to spend on education, health care, or tax cuts—for that matter, anything you want.

But my point is, this is a big deal to you. The good thing about this economic expansion is that it has more billionaires, more millionaires, but the average median income increased 15 percent in real dollar terms, and the median income is over $40,000 for the first time in history, so ordinary Americans also benefit. It's the first time in 30 years we've had an economic expansion that benefited everybody from lower middle income workers to the wealthiest Americans, everybody together. Now, that's important.

If you abandon arithmetic in this election, you will have higher interest rates, more inflation, slower growth, and more uneven prosperity. Some of you will do just fine, but even within the same income group, some won't.

Now, this is a huge deal. I'm telling you, if you're interested in economics, this is the most important issue in Jane Harman's race for Congress and in the race for President.

The second point I want to make is, it's not just a matter of keeping the prosperity going. It's a matter of what kind of country we are and whether you want to keep building on the social progress of the last 8 years. Compared to 8 years ago—not just the economy—the crime rate is down to a 26-year low; 43 million more people are breathing clean air; the water is safer; 3 times as many toxic waste dumps have been cleaned up as under the previous 12 years. We set aside more land in permanent protection than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt a hundred years ago.

There's more. The number of people without health insurance is going down for the first time in 12 years. And listen to this, in spite of all the press you hear, nationwide, on the national tests of our students in school, reading scores, math scores, science scores are up; the dropout rate is down; the college-going rate is at an all-time high; the African-American high school graduation rate is virtually identical to the white graduation rate for the first time in the history of the country; in the last 5 years there's been a 300 percent increase in the number of African-American and Latino kids taking advanced placement classes to go on to college. Now that's the facts.

In every single case, I believe there is a policy we have pursued that she voted for that contributed to—did not totally cause but contributed to those good results. And in every single case, there is a difference between the two parties. And I will just give you a few examples.

One of the reasons the crime rate went down is, we put 100,000 police—now more, about 120,000—on the street in community policing, and they stopped a lot of crime from being committed in the first place. The other party is committed to abolishing that program. They say it's not the proper province of the Federal Government to help local communities hire police. You've got a choice here. The only problem for their position is, we do have evidence here. We've got crime at a 26-year low.

Number two, we're trying to put 100,000 police on the—I mean, 100,000 well-trained teachers in the schools for smaller classes. They promise to abolish that. They say the Federal Government has got no business doing that or helping schools deal with their construction needs. You've got all these kids going to school in housetrailers and old broken-down schools, and we can help them, the school districts, to modernize. They say we shouldn't do it. So you've got a choice there.

You heard Jane—or Alex Winnick talked about the Patients' Bill of Rights: We're for it, and they're not. This whole idea that I have been obsessed by for years about building one America—hate crimes: We are for it; they're not. Employment nondiscrimination: We are for it; they're not. Stronger enforcement of equal pay laws: We're for it; they're not. I could go on and on. But you get the picture here. There are real differences.

So I think what you need to do, if you live in Jane's district or you have friends who live there, if you live in another district in one of these other contested races, you need to tell people, "Look, there are huge differences here. There are real clear choices. These choices will have real consequences to you, your family, your community, and your country." And you just have to say, "You know, do you want to build on the prosperity or reverse the policy? Do you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years or reverse the direction?" These are simple questions. I think the answer should be yes. If the answers are yes, you have to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Jane Harman. This is not rocket science.

And it's not like we don't have any evidence here. We tried it our way for 8 years, and we tried it the other way. Our way works better. You can look at the evidence in the lives of the American people.

Just one last thing I would like to say is a plug for the Vice President. He understands the future. He is by far more experienced. He makes real good decisions. And John Kennedy said the Presidency is preeminently a job of decisionmaking. And he would be a good President. And God forbid, if we shouldn't win the Congress, somebody's there to be there to put on the brake. [*Laughter*] And you've seen that for 6 years, too. Some of the best things I've done as President involved things that I stopped from happening, as well as things that we made happen.

But you ought to send Jane back to Congress. She's earned it. And if you want to keep the prosperity going and you want to keep the progress going, you ought to reward somebody

who literally was willing to risk her career at the very beginning to turn California and America around. It worked, and it will work again if you'll put her back.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 p.m. at Global Crossing Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Gary and Karen Winnick and their son Alex; Gov. Gray Davis of California and his wife, Sharon; Ms. Harman's husband, Sidney Harman; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen. Ms. Harman was a candidate for California's 36th Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Steve Harvey of KKBT–FM Radio, Los Angeles, California
November 3, 2000

The President. Hey, Steve.

Mr. Harvey. President Clinton.

The President. How are you? We got cut off. I'm glad to hear your voice.

Mr. Harvey. How are you doing? It's okay. How are you doing, brother?

The President. Great.

Mr. Harvey. Great. Glad you could call, man. Sorry we missed each other. You were in Los Angeles. I was supposed to meet you at an event. Sorry we missed each other.

The President. Are you in New York?

Mr. Harvey. No, I'm in Los Angeles right now. Hello?

The President. Yes, I can hear you fine.

Mr. Harvey. Oh, yes. No, I'm in L.A. right now. We were supposed to meet at an event a few weeks ago, and we got—we missed our signal, so we didn't hook up. But——

The President. Well, I'm sorry I missed you.

Mr. Harvey. That's okay. We got in today. My publicist told me that you're a big fan of mine. I just want to hear you say that out loud. [*Laughter*]

The President. I am a big fan of yours, and I hear all the clapping in the background, so I want to please everybody for you.

Affirmative Action

Mr. Harvey. Thank you very much, Mr. President. That's all I needed to hear. [*Laughter*] You just pretty much made my whole career. [*Laughter*]

President Clinton, we are fans of yours here, on "The Beat." I cannot speak for the entire radio station, but I know I am. I have always been a fan of yours and your work and your community development towards the African-American community. I have one question for you. I want to ask you, point blank, what can African-Americans and the Latino community expect from the Democratic Party in regards to education and affirmative action?

The President. Well, I think first of all, you can expect them to build on the progress of the last 8 years. Remember—let's start with affirmative action—remember, there was a lot of pressure to eliminate affirmative action, both from the Republican Party and from some court decisions, which required us to change it. And we took the position that we should mend it, not end it, and that's the position that Vice President Gore has steadily defended. I noticed in his third debate that he was the only candidate who would say that he was for affirmative action. And I can tell you, we had long, long discussions about this. He believes strongly in it. And I believe virtually every one of our candidates for the Senate and the House does. I know that my wife, who is running for the Senate in New York, strongly feels that way, and I believe all the others do, as well. So I think you can feel very good about that.

Education

Mr. Harvey. Now, also in terms of education for the same communities.

The President. On the education issue, I think the choices are quite clear here. The Vice President and all the Democratic candidates, first of all, think that America ought to know our schools are getting better and our students are doing better. Reading scores, math scores, science scores are all up. In the last 7 years, there has been a 500 percent increase in African-American students taking advanced placement courses, a 300 percent increase in Latino students taking advanced placement courses.

The college-going rate is at an all-time high because we have pushed through the Congress the biggest increase in student aid, from Pell grants to work-study grants to the Hope scholarship tax credit, in 50 years.

So what does Al Gore want to do? What do the rest of our Democrats want to do? They want to finish the job of putting 100,000 qualified teachers in our schools. They want to provide funds to poor school districts especially, and growing school districts, to build new school buildings and to overhaul others. They want to finish the work of connecting all the schools in the country to the Internet and all the classrooms. When Al Gore took on this project for our administration in 1994, only 3 percent of the classrooms were connected. Today, 65 percent of the classrooms are, and 90 percent of the poorest schools have at least one Internet connection. So we want to do that.

He wants to provide universal preschool and more after-school programs for the kids who need it, and he wants tax deductibility for college tuition. Plus which, we have a Hispanic Education Action Plan that is designed to deal with the fact that the dropout rate among Latino students is still too high, and he has promised to build on that.

So we've got a very, very good education program. It's been our top domestic priority, and I think you can really depend on the Vice President to deliver. That's why both the major teachers' organizations have endorsed him, and a lot of other educators around the country, because they believe that we have a program based on the research and what the educators are saying.

And one final thing. He has got a good accountability program that we ought to identify failing schools, turn them around, or open them under new management. And all over America, you see these schools that were in trouble just a couple of years ago that are turning around. I was in a school in Harlem the other day where 2 years ago, 80 percent of the children were doing math and reading below grade level, and today, three-quarters of the kids are doing math and reading above or at grade level. That's after only 2 years. So we've got a program that's working out there at the grassroots. We need to bring it to all of America, and you can trust Al Gore to do that. He cares a lot about it. And you can trust the Democratic Party. It's our issue. We care about it.

2000 Election

Mr. Harvey. Absolutely. Now, President, you were at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza on yesterday. Three thousand supporters came out. We thank you for stopping by, lending your support to the campaign. We thank you for all of the work you have done over the past 8 years. And we do applaud you in both of these directions, especially in terms of education and affirmative action. We appreciate you so much. We know you're busy; we know you're on a tight schedule. And hey, man, we just want to say thank you for calling.

The President. Well, thank you, Steve. Let me say, I wanted to go back to Watts, a place I've been visiting for many years now, to thank the people of Watts, of L.A., and of California for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years, and for proving that we could turn America around economically, educationally, environmentally, that we could provide more health insurance. And you know there's a lot of laboratories of success there.

But I also wanted to emphasize that in California and throughout this country, there are races for the Congress, for the Senate and the House, which are also terribly important. They are just as close as the Presidential race. And if we can win a majority in the House and in the Senate, we'll be in a position to really pull this country together and move forward to build on the progress of the last 8 years, to keep the prosperity going. That's really why the young people of this country ought to get out and vote, because we have come so far in the last 8 years, but all the best things are still out there. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that's not just politics. We can turn the country around, and now we can make big, big strides in the economy, in education, in health care, the environment, and pulling this country together. But we've got to have the right leadership. And these House and Senate races are also very, very, very important.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Harvey. Yes. Quickly, Mr. President, after it's all over, when the election is done and Gore is President and you finally, after 8 very successful years, step down, what do you see yourself doing, man? What do you think?

The President. Well, first of all, I've got to be an ordinary citizen again, and I've got to go out and make a living, so I'll do that. But what I want to do is find a way to be a useful citizen, in a way that does not in any manner interfere with the next President. Jimmy Carter has been a very great ex-President; he's done a lot of good. I think that I'm young enough that I could still do a lot of good, and I feel that I owe that to the American people and the people I've worked with all around the world—in Africa and Latin America and other places. But I want to take a couple months off to rest, consider what my options are, and then try to spend the rest of my life giving back in the public interest, because I have been very blessed. I've gotten to live my dreams. I've had a great life. And I just want to be helpful in any way that I can, and I'll try to find some good things to do.

Mr. Harvey. Well, I'll tell you, President, after it's all over, my TV show ends on December 21st, and I've been working pretty much hard like a President myself. [*Laughter*] I say me and you, man, get a fishing boat and go on out there in the middle of the lake and do some bass fishing. I know you're from Arkansas; I'm from West Virginia. You know something about some fishing, I'm sure.

The President. I do. I can still do that. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Harvey. We ought to hook up and go fishing.

The President. It sounds like a good idea to me.

Mr. Harvey. Steve and Bill on the boat. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right.

Mr. Harvey. Hey, thanks for calling, President. Thank you so much.

The President. Well, you just tell everybody to go vote so we'll feel good when we go fishing, instead of worrying about things. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Harvey. Well, you better believe that's what it's all about. We are pushing hard to get out and vote on this coming election, and we're going to do our very best to put Vice President Gore in office, because we can't take the other side. We just can't take it. We just can't take it. I will see to that.

Thank you for calling, President Clinton.

The President. Bless you, Steve. Thank you.

Mr. Harvey. Thank you. Absolutely. You all, one more time, the President of the United States, Bill Clinton.

The President. Thank you. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. by telephone from Air Force One at Oakland International Airport in Oakland, CA. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in Oakland, California

November 3, 2000

The President. Thank you. Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. We've got people all the way back here, two or three blocks, people all the way down there, two blocks, even people who are separated from the rest of us, way back in the back. Hello back there.

I first came to Oakland in 1971. I liked it then, but it is amazing the progress that has been made, and I want to thank all of you for making this a magnificent city. I also want to thank my good friend Governor Gray Davis, who has done a wonderful job leading this State and been a great partner to me and such a strong supporter of Vice President Gore.

Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante. Thank you, Attorney General Lockyer. Thank you, Senator Barbara Boxer, for what you do in Washington. And Congressman George Miller, thank you for the work you've done, especially for the environment. Thank you, Secretary Norm Mineta, former California Congressman, the first Asian-American ever to serve in the President's Cabinet, and a great, great friend of mine. Thank you, Mayor Jerry Brown, my friend of now over 20 years. He's made

me think about my next career. Maybe somebody will let me be a mayor somewhere; I like this. I like this.

I must say, too, I want to thank one person who is not here, Barbara's predecessor, Ron Dellums, a great friend of mine. Look at this building here. If I had known retired public officials could get buildings like this, I might have retired years ago. Look at that. [*Laughter*] It's a beautiful, beautiful building and a fitting tribute to Ron, who did such a good job for you and for our country.

I want to thank the Speaker, Bob Hertzberg, who is here; and the State Board of Equalization member, John Chung; your California State party chair, Art Torres; and all the other officials who are here.

But let me say a special word of thanks to Barbara Lee. What a job she has done in the Congress! We've worked together on so many projects affecting Oakland, from the harbor to housing to education to health care to base closure and renewal. And boy, she's done a good job. And I really am impressed with the fact that she has also shown an interest in dealing with the AIDS crisis, not only here but in Africa and throughout the world. The United States needs to be a leader in dealing with that, and so I thank her for that.

I also want to say, more than anything else, a simple thank you to the people of Oakland and northern California and this entire State. You have been so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years. I couldn't have become President without you. I couldn't have succeeded without you. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

You know, one of the things that concerns me about this election is, especially for younger voters, I'm afraid a lot of people will go to the polls or maybe even not go because they now can't remember what it was like 8 years ago. The unemployment rate in California was 9.7 percent. Today, it's about half that. It's a different country than it was 8 years ago. The society was divided. There were riots in L.A. The crime rate was going up. The environment was deteriorating. The number of people without health insurance was going up. People were giving up on our schools. And the political system in Washington seemed tone-deaf to you and to ordinary Americans all across this country, from all walks of life.

Well, we've worked hard to change that. Today we got some more good economic news. For the second month in a row, the Nation's unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, the lowest in 50 years—30 years. Wages and incomes continue to rise across the board. I want to say more about that in a minute, but listen to this. The most important thing about our recovery is that for the first time in 30 years, everybody's been part of it—everybody. Yes, the rich got richer, but so did the middle class, so did working families. The poverty rate is the lowest in 20 years. Child poverty dropped 30 percent. We're moving forward together. Listen to this. Eight years ago, the Hispanic unemployment rate was 11.8 percent. This morning, we learned that it dropped last month to 5 percent, the lowest on record. African-American unemployment is half what it was 8 years ago, also the lowest on record.

But America is always about tomorrow—always. And in just a few days, we're going to have another election and another choice. And it is so important for the success of the direction of this country and our candidate that we do well here and that everybody who can vote, does vote.

What I would like to say to you all today—I know I could just give you one applause line after another, and we could have a great time. But I believe that this election is every bit as important as the one in 1992. And I know that every one of you who is here today has a lot of friends, some of whom live here in Oakland; some live in Barbara's congressional district; others may live in the districts that we're fighting hard to win. We have a chance to win five in California, if we work hard at it.

And so you've got a lot of friends who will never come to an event like this, don't you? Most of you have tons of friends who have never been to hear a President speak or a Governor or maybe even never been to a city council meeting; they don't do this. But they love our country, and they care about your community. And if they believe it matters, they will show up and vote. And if they understand the choice and the consequences, they will vote for our side.

So what I want you to do is just let me take a couple of minutes to tell you what I would tell you if each of us were alone in a room together and you said to me, "What's this election about, anyway?" Now, listen to this.

You heard what Gray Davis said. Are you better off than you were 8 years ago? That's the first question. But the most important question is this: Do you want to keep this prosperity going?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Do you want to extend it to the people, to the neighborhoods, to the places that have still been left behind?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Then you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats. Why? Because they want to build on what is working. They want to keep paying down the debt. They want to invest in education and health care and the environment. They want to give families a tax cut we can afford, for child care, for long-term care for the elderly and disabled, for college tuition, and for retirement.

Now, why is that important? Why in the world would a President come to Oakland, with the reputation of being a liberal Democratic city, and say we ought to pay the debt down? I'll tell you why. Because in the modern world, where money can run all across the globe in the click of a mouse—a trillion dollars crosses national borders every day—to have conservative budget policies makes it possible to have liberal progressive social policies. Why? Because the best thing we can do for you is guarantee that you've got a job and to have low interest rates for car loans, for college loans, for home loans, for credit card loans, for business loans.

Now, here's the issue. Look, this is simple math. Al Gore has come before you and said, "Look, I'd like to give you a bigger tax cut, but this is all we can afford. But it will take care of college tuition, long-term care, child care, and retirement savings. I can't do more because we've got to have some money to invest in education, health care, the environment, and the national security of the country, and because we've got to keep paying the debt down."

Now, the surplus is supposed to be $2 trillion. I doubt if it will be that much, but let's just give our Republican friends that. And forget about the zero. Let's just say 2. That's the surplus, okay? Now, they want to spend over three-quarters of that on a tax cut and the interest costs. It's $1.6 trillion—that's their tax cut. And most of you would actually get more under Al Gore's tax cut than theirs. And when I get out of office, I get more under theirs, but it's not right. [*Laughter*]

So 1.6. Now, listen—arithmetic, okay? So we start with 2. Then, they want to give 1.6 for the tax cut. Then, they want to privatize Social Security. And that's real expensive. It costs $1 trillion. Why is that? Because if all you young people take your payroll out of Social Security and put it in the stock market, and all of us who are older retire, they've still got to pay us our benefits. You can't just make this money up. I mean, you've got to come up. So, 1.6 and 1. And then they have promised some spending, about $500 billion. So you add it up: 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 equals 3.1. That's the problem with their economics: $3.1 trillion is bigger than $2 trillion.

Now, what does that mean in Oakland? I mean, look at all these buildings here. Somebody had to borrow the money to build these buildings. Somebody's got to make the mortgage payment on these buildings. Somebody's got to make enough profit to pay the payroll for the people working in Starbucks and McDonald's and all these other stores up and down here. If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, interest rates will be lower for you on your home mortgage, on your car payment, on your college loan payment, on your credit card payment, for the business loans. It means more jobs, higher incomes, a better stock market. We'll all keep doing better together.

You don't have any choice. If you want to build on the prosperity, you've got to vote for Gore and Lieberman and the Democrats.

Now, question number two. We're not just a better-off country; we're a better country. The crime rate is down. Drug abuse among young people is down. The number of people without health insurance in this country is down for the first time in 12 years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. The environment is cleaner—much cleaner: 43 million more Americans breathing clean air; cleaner water, safer drinking water, safer food; 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up as in the previous 12 years under the 2 Republican administrations, and more land set aside in perpetuity than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt, almost 100 years ago. It's a cleaner environment.

And the schools are better. You know, I hear people talking about an education recession. Here are the facts. In America, in the last 7 years, for our children across all races: Math scores are up; science scores are up; reading scores are up; the dropout rate is down; the

college-going rate is at an all-time high. Thanks to Al Gore and the E-rate program—6 years ago, there were only 3 percent of our classrooms hooked up to the Internet; today, 65 percent are. Ninety percent of the poorest schools in America have at least one Internet connection today. We're moving in the right direction.

Now, here's the issue. You want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Then you just have one choice: Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats. Why? Because they want to build on health care progress, a Patients' Bill of Rights, Medicare drugs for all of our seniors, health care for all America's children, more neighborhood police force, cleaner energy future, funds to help you with school construction, 100,000 teachers, universal preschool and after-school for all the kids who need it, and a way of identifying failing schools and giving them the money to turn every single school in America around that's not teaching our children as they should be—every single one. That's why Bob Chase, the president of the National Education Association, is here with us today.

So if you want to build on that, you only have one choice. Why? Because the Republicans, from top to bottom, have committed to repeal the 100,000 police program. I had two chiefs meet me at the airport today to tell me how much they have benefited from this program. They are going to get rid of it.

They promised to repeal the program to put 100,000 teachers in our classes. They are against Federal funds for school construction to build or repair schools. They are against the real Patients' Bill of Rights, against Medicare drug programs to serve all of our seniors, against higher environmental standards. They promise to reverse a lot of what we have done in the environment.

So you've got to go out and tell people, if you really want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, you just have one choice.

Audience members. Al Gore!

The President. And let me tell you the last thing that matters, and to me, it's the most important of all. We've got to keep coming together as one national community, as one America. Look around this crowd today. We're growing more and more diverse in every way, and it's good for America. In a global society, it positions us well to do well with all other nations and regions of the world. It also makes life more interesting, don't you think? [*Applause*] We're all different. We can appreciate and celebrate our differences, as long as we affirm our common humanity.

How have we done that? Well, we supported affirmative action, hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, raising the minimum wage, equal pay for women, civil rights, and a court that supports civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose. That's what we have done.

Now, on all these issues bringing us together, our friends in the Republican Party have a different view. They disagree with us on every issue I just mentioned. So if you want to keep building one America, you only have one choice.

Audience members. Al Gore!

The President. So I want you to go out the next 4 days, call people you know, if you have friends or relatives in these battleground States. Call people you know who live in all these congressional districts. Talk to everybody you know in Oakland and say, "Look, there are three things you need to think about. Do you want to keep this prosperity going or do you want to risk reversing it? Do you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years or do you want to take it down? Do you want to keep building one America or go back to the politics of division?"

Look, just look at what happened in the last week of Congress, where the Republican leadership walked away with no education bill, no hate crimes legislation. They took down the education bill because one lobby group didn't want us to put into effect a worker safety rule. And they took the whole thing down.

Now, when people talk about bipartisanship, let me just tell you something. Al Gore and I have worked for bipartisanship. We have a bipartisan majority today for a minimum wage increase, for campaign finance reform, for an education bill that every American can be proud of, for the hate crimes legislation. We can't pass it, not because we don't have bipartisanship but because the Republican congressional leadership is too far to the right and too tied to special interests.

And that's another reason to vote for Al Gore. I think we're going to win the House and the Senate. But if we don't, someone needs to be doing what I've done for the last 6 years, which

is to stop extremism in Washington, DC, and you certainly only have one choice: Al Gore.

You know, I got a good laugh in Los Angeles at the Democratic Convention when I reminded people what Harry Truman said, which is that if you want to live like a Republican, you've got to vote Democratic. [*Laughter*] But you just think about—go out and talk to the young people who have the largest stake in the future. Remember where we were 8 years ago. Think where we are today. If you want to build on the prosperity, if you want to build on the progress, if you want to keep building one America, there's only one choice.

Audience members. Al Gore!

The President. He's been the most effective Vice President in our history. He is a good man. He makes good decisions. He will be a great President. And he needs your help in the President's race and in all these races for Congress and the Senate. You can do this.

Look at this crowd. There are thousands and thousands of people here. You could contact easily over 100,000 people in the next 4 days if every one of you just took 10 people, 15 people, everybody you see. Go out and tell them we want to keep the prosperity going, keep the progress going, keep building on America.

Thank you, Oakland. God bless you. Bring it home.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. at the City Center. In his remarks, he referred to State Attorney General Bill Lockyer of California; Mayor Jerry Brown of Oakland; and Speaker Robert M. Hertzberg, California State Assembly.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in San Francisco, California

November 3, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Are you ready to win this election?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I want to thank the mayor for bringing us all together today and for being my friend for all these years. I want to thank the some 2,000 people who are outside the hall today, still listening to us. I'll be out there to see you in a minute. I want to thank California's great Governor, Gray Davis, who's been with me every step of the way and has been great for Al Gore, right from the start, never wavered.

I want to thank Representative Barbara Lee from Oakland, who just had a rally for us over there. And my good friend Congressman Tom Lantos, who went to New York to campaign for my wife for the Senate, I'll never forget that. And most of all, I want to thank Nancy Pelosi, who has worked so hard to bring the Democrats back. She is a leader in the Congress, a leader in the country, and she'll be in the majority after Tuesday night.

I want to thank Walter Shorenstein for having the guts to stand up here and say he didn't need the tax cut, and he wanted you to have it. I love him; thank you. And I want to thank a man who has been a hero of mine for more than 40 years, Willie Mays. He's been so wonderful to me all these years I've been President. Thank you, Willie. Thank you.

And I want to thank this great choir behind me from Glide. I love these folks. And I want you to sing again for me after I speak, okay? Will you do that?

Now look, I would like to just sort of give a speech here and have one applause line after another and you could cheer. But we all know that we're all converted or we wouldn't be here. [*Laughter*] So I want to ask you to, just for a minute—give me about 5 minutes, because I want to ask you to do something else. Every one of you has lots of friends who have never come to an event like this, don't you? Never came to a rally where the President spoke, maybe the Governor, maybe not even where Willie spoke, although I think he has spoken to every living person within 150 miles. [*Laughter*]

But these folks you know that don't follow this as closely as you do, they will vote, or they might vote if they know it matters, and they would certainly vote with us if they knew what the choice was and what the consequences are.

And many of you have friends who live outside San Francisco, live in one of these congressional districts where we're trying to win a

Democratic seat. Or maybe you have friends beyond the State of California, who live in battleground States where one or 2 or 3 or 10 votes could make a difference.

Now, you look at this vast crowd today. If every one of you decided that every day between now and the election you were going to tell 10 people why you are for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, why you want the Democrats to win, what the stakes are in the election, you might have a decisive impact on whether we win the House and on how well we do in some of these other areas of California and in other States.

So I just want to tell you what I believe this election is about, what I think the signal differences are, and what the choice is for America. I want to begin by thanking the people of San Francisco and California for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years. I can't thank you enough. It has been an honor to serve.

But let's start with this. There are a lot of younger people who can vote now, and I'm the only President they've ever known. [*Laughter*] And there are a lot of people who literally don't remember what it was like 8 years ago when the unemployment rate in California was nearly 10 percent; the society was divided; crime was going up; there were riots in L.A.; the environment was deteriorating; the schools were troubled; the number of people without health insurance going up every year—we had all these problems. And the political system in Washington was pretty unresponsive. And I came here and asked you to give us a chance to put the American people first again.

Now, President Reagan used to say the test for whether somebody got reelected was, or whether a party was continued in office, was whether you were better off than you were 8 years ago. Now, all of a sudden, they have forgotten that test, another party. They think there ought to be some other test, you know. Or they think if we're better off, the Democrats had nothing to do with it.

One of Al Gore's finest moments in the first debate was when his opponent said, "I think Clinton/Gore got a lot more out of the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore. The American people have been working hard. They brought this economy back." And Al Gore said, "Yes, the American people have been working hard, but they were working hard in 1992 when it was in the dumps, and it's different now."

So I want to say, the first big question: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and give it to the people who aren't a part of it yet? [*Applause*] If you do, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats. But you've got to be able to tell somebody in a couple of minutes, why. So let me explain that, in a couple of minutes.

Here's the Gore/Lieberman Democratic program: Keep paying down the debt. Why? It keeps interest rates low; it keeps the economy going. Take what's left and invest it in education, health care, and the environment and a tax cut we can afford for average Americans for child care, long-term care, college tuition, and retirement savings. That's the Gore plan.

What's the alternative? A tax cut that's 3 times as big. Although most of you would do better under the Gore plan, after I get out of office I might do better under theirs. [*Laughter*] And to privatize Social Security and promise to spend money on their own.

Here's the problem. This is arithmetic. People ask me all the time, "Mr. President, what great new idea did you bring to economic policy?" And I say, "Arithmetic." Arithmetic. [*Laughter*] You've got to make the numbers add up. Now look, everybody can remember this. The projected surplus is $2 trillion. We'll forget about the zeros—2. They want to spend over three-quarters of it on a tax cut that benefits mostly upper income people. It costs 1.6 trillion, with interest. Then they want to privatize Social Security, and that costs a trillion dollars. Why? Because if the young folks here take your money out of Social Security and put it in the stock market, but people like me get promised we're going to get our money, the money has got to come from somewhere. It costs a trillion dollars. Then they want to spend some money. They want to spend about half a trillion dollars, that's .5. Here's the problem: The surplus is 2, right; 1.6 for the tax cut plus 1 to privatize Social Security plus .5 to spend is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

This is not rocket science, folks. [*Laughter*] If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the Democrats, interest rates will be about a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that means? Lower car loans, lower college loans, lower home mortgages,

lower credit cards, lower business loans, more businesses, more jobs, higher stock market.

Now look, this is a big deal. This is the first economic recovery in 30 years where we're all going along for the ride. It's a Democratic recovery, big "D" and small "d." We're all going along: average income up 15 percent, average income over $40,000 for the first time, poverty among seniors below 10 percent for the first time, poverty at a 20-year low, a 30 percent drop in child poverty, half the people moving from welfare to work. This is a different America, because we did it to benefit everybody and because the numbers add up.

So you can remember that. If you want to keep the recovery going, you've got to vote for Gore. Why? Because 3.1 is bigger than 2; it doesn't add up. [*Laughter*]

Number two, it's not just a better off country; it's a better country. What do I mean by that? Crime at a 26-year low; the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, safer drinking water; more toxic waste dumps cleaned up, 3 times as many as they did; and more land set aside forever than in any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago.

But most important of all, there is the revival of American education. That's why Bob Chase, the president of the National Education Association, is here for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman today. Thank you, Bob, for being here with us.

Now look, here are the facts. Reading, math, and science scores are up. The dropout rate is down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest expansion of college aid since the GI bill. Thanks to Barbara Boxer, we are now serving 800,000 kids in after-school programs around America. We're putting 100,000 teachers in the classroom. We're moving in the right direction. We have 1,700 charter schools in America. We have a program to turn around failing schools or put them under new management. We're moving in the right direction.

So here's the issue. If education and health care and the environment and crime are moving in the right direction, do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years and even do better?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, if you do—if you do—there's only one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats. Why? If somebody asks you, you have to be able to say why. Why? Because the other party has promised—promised—to do the following things: to abolish our program to put 100,000 and more police on the street, to abolish our program to put 100,000 teachers in the classroom for smaller classes in the early grades, to oppose our program to promote school construction, to build new schools and repair old ones.

They're against our program for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for Medicare drugs for all our seniors, to expand coverage to all the children of the country and the parents of children in the Children's Health Program. And they are against the tighter clean air standards we have adopted. They want to repeal my order setting aside 40 million roadless acres in the national forests.

Now, those are commitments, right? So here's your choice. If everything is going in the right direction and one ticket wants to build on it and the other ticket wants to reverse what was done, it's not much of a choice. But you've got to be able to say that. You've got to be able to say, crime is down; the schools are better; the environment is cleaner; we're making progress in health care; and everything that we have done, they want to undo. Instead, vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman; they will build on it and do even better. That is the second choice.

So here's the third choice. Here's the third big question, and for me, the most important of all. Yes, I want to keep building on the prosperity. Yes, I want to keep building on the progress. But most of all, I want us to keep building together as one America, across all the lines that divide us.

This country has become more and more diverse. California, our first State in which Americans of European heritage are no longer in the majority—there is no majority here. We're all just here, folks.

We've tried for the last 8 years to make you feel at home, to make you feel that you had friends in the White House, people that cared about you. Whatever your racial or religious background, whether you were a man or a woman, whether you were young or old, whether you were straight or gay, we wanted you to feel like you had a friend in the White House.

Now, what did that mean in practical terms? We fought for family leave, the minimum wage; we fought to mend but not end affirmative action; we fought for fairness for immigrants; we're fighting for hate crimes legislation, for employment nondiscrimination legislation, for equal pay for women enforcement. We are fighting for court appointments so that we'll have a Supreme Court that will defend civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose. That is an issue.

In every one of those areas, the people who are running on the other side have an honest disagreement with the Democrats. The leadership does not agree with the hate crimes legislation or the employment nondiscrimination legislation or strengthening the equal pay laws. And they certainly don't commit themselves to a Supreme Court and Federal courts that will preserve civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose.

Now, they disagree honestly. But for people to say there are no differences in these elections—you should be happy. The country is in great shape and you have choices. But it's important to understand what the choices are. You don't have to say a bad word about any of their candidates from the President on down. You can just say, look, we have a different view of what's good for America.

But I'm telling you, the reason this election is so close is that I think people feel a certain comfort level with how well things are going. And you know, this one sounds good, and that one sounds good, and today I like this one, today I like the other one.

But this is an exercise in citizenship. And I'm telling you, I've been doing this a long time now. This is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot at election time. [*Laughter*] And I'm perfectly happy out here campaigning for the Democrats for Congress and for Hillary for Senator and for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. I'm grateful.

But what you have to do—I'm telling you, you can do this for people. You can walk up to people you know; you can walk up to people you don't know. But I'm telling you, you cannot let this election unfold unless everybody you know votes and votes as a knowledgeable citizen. If you want to build on the prosperity, if you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, if you want to keep going forward as one America where we keep coming together, across all the lines that divide us, those are the three big questions.

And if you want to do that, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. in the Esplanade Ballroom at the Moscone Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco; Walter H. Shorenstein, founder and president, Shorenstein Company, LP; and former professional baseball player Willie Mays.

Exchange With Reporters in San Francisco
November 3, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, do you have any message for Nader supporters in California or elsewhere? Do you have any message for Nader supporters about what they should do?

The President. I think they ought to vote for Al Gore, for several reasons. One is, our administration, as I just said, has the best environmental record in history. And we could have done even more if the Congress hadn't been so opposed to it. But every year, we also, for 6 years, had to beat back any number of anti-environmental provisions in the law that we keep getting out and getting out. So Al Gore has been at the forefront of that.

I think now that the economy is better and the Congress is likely to be, under any circumstances, less dominated by the Republican right in the next Congress, Al Gore will be able to do even better. It would be a great mistake to not support somebody who has got a lifetime commitment—and we've got a record that's good—in favor of another option, of a party that's really promised to undo a lot of what

we've done. I don't think it's a complicated issue here.

Q. Do you think they're throwing their votes away if they do that?

The President. They'll have to decide that. I just know that—there are one of two people are going to be elected, and they have records and plans. And I think on the records and plans, if you care about the environment, Gore wins hands down.

Thanks. Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:12 p.m. in the Moscone Convention Center following a voter rally. A reporter referred to Green Party Presidential candidate Ralph Nader. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in San Jose, California
November 3, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Are you ready to win this election?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Let me say first, to all of you, how very glad I am to be back in San Jose. I want to thank Mayor Gonzales and all the people here who have always made me feel so welcome. I've had some of my happiest days as a candidate and as a President in this part of the wonderful State of California. Of course, my daughter has lived near here for the last 3 years.

I was reminding Governor Davis that in 1992 we had 10,000 people at San Jose State, and it was the most exuberant rally in the entire campaign. It was an amazing thing. I'll never forget it.

I'm delighted to be on the stage with all these folks today: our State Democratic chair, Art Torres; your wonderful Representative in Congress, Zoe Lofgren. I am so proud of her. I love being with her. Secretary Norm Mineta, my great friend, what a credit he has been to San Jose and all of California. You should be so proud of him.

And it means especially a lot to me that Willie Mays came here with me today. He's been here with me so many times, and I'm very grateful. You know, one of the great things about—we just had the World Series, so I want to say this—one of the great things about being President is that if you have a particular interest, you can pretty much get anybody who is involved in it to come and talk to you. [*Laughter*]

I love music, and I love sports. And I became a friend of Hank Aaron who, as all of you know, owns the all-time home run record. So there was a celebration of the 25th anniversary of Hank Aaron breaking Babe Ruth's record in Atlanta. And Hank invited me to go down, and I did. There were 12 Hall of Fame baseball players there. And so I said to Hank Aaron, "Who is the greatest player you ever played with?" He said, "It's not even close. Willie Mays is the greatest baseball player who ever played."

I want to say, are there any students from San Jose State here? [*Applause*] I want all of you to know that when I landed in my helicopter today, I had the enormous honor to meet your young football player Neil Parry—who was injured and lost his foot—and his family. They're in good spirits. They've got their heads up. He told me he was going to play football next year, and he wanted me to come watch him, and I told him I'd have some more time, and I'd be honored to come back and see him.

I want to thank Gray Davis for being a truly astonishing Governor. He has gotten so much done in so little time. You should be very, very, very proud of him. He has also been a true friend to me and a loyal supporter of Vice President Gore, and we're going to celebrate here Tuesday night, in no small measure because Gray Davis never blinked when things looked bad, and now they look good all over America. Thank you, Gray Davis.

And I'll just tell you, I am so proud of Mike Honda. We had a talk the last—this is the second time I've been in his district to campaign for him, and we were talking about what it was like to be young and Japanese in America

when we made the terrible mistake of interning Japanese-Americans during the war.

One of those internment camps was in my home State. And I'll never forget when I went back to Hawaii to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. I met a veteran who told me that he was interned in a camp in Arkansas. And he said, "I may be the only person who came out ahead, because I met my wife across the river in Mississippi. They were the only family that I knew who were Japanese-Americans where I could get what I thought was good food." [*Laughter*]

So our country has come a long way in the last 50 years, and Mike Honda is the embodiment of both that past and the bright future ahead of us, and I thank you for helping him.

Look up here on this stage. Is this America or what? [*Applause*] You have a Latino party chair; an African-American baseball legend; a Japanese-American Secretary of Commerce; the daughter of a truck driver, as she just said, in Congress—they probably make more than people in Congress do now—Zoe Lofgren; a Japanese-American candidate for Congress; and two representatives of the gray-haired white guys' caucus. [*Laughter*] Is this America, or what?

Look, I want to just take a few minutes—you know, we're so exuberant; we're all feeling good. And I could just give you a few applause lines, and we could scream for 5 minutes. But I want you to give me a chance to speak with you seriously, just for a couple of minutes, for the following reasons.

The Presidential race is close, even though the Vice President has a good lead in California. A lot of these Congress races are close. There are five House seats we could pick up here in California, if we won every close one presently held by a Republican; and one where we have a truly outstanding Congressman, Cal Dooley, who is in a tough race himself for reelection—one of the most outstanding people in the entire United States Congress.

And what I want to say to all of you is that every one of you has friends in this congressional district where Mike will be running, a little south of here where Lois Capps is running for reelection—one of the most wonderful people I've ever known—and in other places where we have battles here in California. Most of you have friends in other States where the outcome of the election is not yet clear. There are 12 or 15 States where this election is still within 2 to 3 points.

And what I would like to ask you to do is to leave here not only energized and determined to vote but to leave here committed to talking to as many people as you can between now and Tuesday—in this congressional district, throughout the State of California, and if you have friends or family in other States. Because if you look at how many thousand people there are here, you could easily touch 100,000 voters between now and election day. And those 100,000 voters might make the difference.

In 1960, when President Kennedy, who inspired my generation—I was barely alive then—[*laughter*]—when President Kennedy inspired my generation, he was elected by four-tenths of one percent of the vote—100,000 votes in the entire country. Now, all of you, with no effort, could touch 100,000 voters—with no effort. That's less than 10 a day for every person here. You could do it, easily.

And here's what I think you ought to say to them. Number one: Remember what it was like 8 years ago, when the economy was in trouble; the society was divided; there were riots in Los Angeles; the crime rate was going up; the welfare rolls were going up; the number of people without health insurance was going up; people were giving up on the schools. The society was divided, and the political system in Washington seemed absolutely tone-deaf to it.

And you gave Al Gore and me a chance to go to Washington to put the American people first, to create opportunity for every responsible citizen in a community of all Americans. And it worked.

So what I want to say to you is, what's the problem? Why are the races even close? Because things have been good for a long time. And sometimes when they're good for a long time, people forget what they were like before, and they think there are no consequences to the decision before them. Well, first one candidate sounds pretty good, then the other one sounds pretty good. This sounds like a good idea, but on the other hand, that sounds like a good idea.

Look, there are just three big questions in this race, and I want to tell you what they are and what the choice is. Everybody knows we've had the longest economic expansion in history, but what not everybody knows is, it's the first

one in 30 years where we all got to go along for the ride. Now, what do I mean by that?

In the last 8 years, Hispanic unemployment has been cut by more than half, African-American unemployment in half, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment in history; poverty is at a 20-year low; child poverty is down 30 percent, poverty among seniors below 10 percent for the first time in our history; average income up 15 percent—over $5,000—over the last 8 years after inflation. We're all going along for the ride.

So the first question is, do you want to keep this prosperity going?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, if you do, there's a choice. Now, if someone asks you to explain it, how would you say it? This is the answer: With Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Honda, you will get to keep the prosperity going. Why? Because, number one, they'll keep paying the debt down, which means interest rates will stay down, and the economy will stay strong.

That's very important. Paying the debt down gives you lower interest rates. What does that mean to all of you? Lower home mortgages, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments, means more businesses, more jobs, a higher stock market. The rich get richer, but so do the rest of you. This is very important.

Then, with the money that's left, we will invest in education, health care, and the environment, and give the American people a tax cut we can afford for child care, for long-term care, for college tuition tax deductions, and for retirement. That's the Democratic plan.

Now, so what's the choice? Look at the Republican plan. They have a tax cut that's 3 times as big. It costs $1.6 trillion. And keep in mind now, the surplus is estimated to be $2 trillion. I'll be surprised if it's that much, but that's the estimate today, $2 trillion. So you can forget about the zeros and just remember 2. So they've got this big tax cut, 1.6 trillion. Most of you would be better off under the Gore/Lieberman plan. And some of the rest of us—you know, if I get out and get lucky, I would be better off under their plan in the short run. But it's not right, and here's why. It's so big—$1.6 trillion. Then, they want to partially privatize Social Security. Now, that costs another trillion dollars. Why? Because if all of you who are young take your payroll tax out and put it in the stock market, they've still got to pay all of us that are 55 or over 100 percent of the benefits they promised. You can't spend the money twice, so you have to put another trillion in. Okay, so that's 1.6 plus 1. Then, they want to spend about a half a trillion dollars, .5. But the surplus is only 2. Now, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. It's all you have to remember.

So what does that mean? That means that even though they spend less money than Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Honda will, they'll be—on education, on health care, and on the environment—we'll still be back in deficits. It means higher interest rates. It means you will pay more for home mortgages, more for college loans, more for car payments, more for credit cards, more for business loans. It means higher interest rates, more inflation, and a slower economy. This is not complicated.

But you need to be able to explain to people. I get the feeling people think, well, this one sounds good; that one sounds good. This is a huge choice. We tried it our way for 8 years. Then we tried it the deficit way before for 12 years. Our way works better. Go tell the American people, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you've got to do this.

Now, here's the second point. It's not just about prosperity. We're not just better off; this country is better than it was 8 years ago. What do I mean by that? Listen. The crime rate has gone down every year, to a 26-year low. The welfare rolls have been cut in half, to a 32-year low. Teen pregnancy is down; teen drug abuse is down. The number of people without health insurance is down for the first time in 12 years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. The environment is up—the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner. We've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12 and set aside more land permanently than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, 100 years ago.

Now, finally—finally—the schools are getting better; education is getting better. On all the—the national test scores show reading scores are up; math scores are up; science scores are up. The dropout rate is down; the college-going rate is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the

biggest expansion of college aid under our administration in 50 years. So we're moving in the right direction.

So here's the second question: Do you want to keep the progress of the last 8 years going? Now, just like on the economy, you have a choice. If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Honda, in health care, you get a Patients' Bill of Rights; you get a Medicare drug benefit for all the seniors who need it; you get more health care coverage for children and lower income working families that can't afford it. You get a commitment to a clean environment, including a clean energy conservation future. You get more police on the street. You get 100,000 more teachers in the classroom and funds to build or modernize schools all across America where they're in trouble. And you get a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition.

Now, the other party, from top to bottom, has committed to do the following: To abolish the 100,000 police program and oppose our commonsense gun safety measures; to abolish the 100,000 teacher program before we finish that. They're against the real Patients' Bill of Rights and against the Medicare drug program that all our seniors can buy into. And they don't agree with our clean energy conservation future. They think we can drill our way out of the hole we're in.

Now, it's not like there's not a choice. But if you want to build on the prosperity and the progress of the last 8 years, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Honda.

Now, here's question number three. Now, here is the third big question. And in some ways, it's the most important of all, although it's not as high on the political radar screen. It is whether we're going to continue to build one America, where every law-abiding citizen feels a part, an equal part, and feels that the Government in Washington—especially in the White House, but also in the Congress—is on their side, and even when I don't agree with you, I have a listening ear.

I have tried to make you feel that the White House was your house these last 8 years. Without regard to your race, your religion, your gender, whether you were straight or gay, whether you were Native American or European-American, whatever, I tried to make the American people feel that they had someone in the White House who was looking out for them.

Now, what do we do? The family leave law; mending but not ending affirmative action; fighting for fairness for immigrants and for civil rights; fighting for AmeriCorps, which is active here in San Jose and all across America.

Now, there's a choice here. If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Honda, in the area of one America you get people who want to pass hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, equal pay for women legislation, and a Supreme Court that will defend civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose.

In every area—in every area—our friends in the other party are against the strong hate crimes bill, against the employment nondiscrimination bill, against the bill to strengthen equal pay for women, and they have made it clear that the Supreme Court they want is a very different one.

So it's not like there is no choice. But you see, that's what's so frustrating, because if everyone knew what the choice was and understood the consequences, we'd win. That's why I asked you, when I started, to listen and not just cheer, and to spend every moment you can in the next 4 days talking to your friends who would never come to a rally like this, but will vote or would vote if they knew what was at stake, not only here but throughout the State and throughout the Nation. It is worth your time.

So now you know, you can call people and say, "Look, there are three big questions here. Do you want to keep the prosperity going; do you want to keep the progress going; do you want to keep building one America?"

If you look at California, you see a picture of tomorrow's America. And believe me, if you think about the scientific and technological changes and the demographic changes here, these kids that are here in this audience today are going to live in the most exciting, prosperous, interesting time in the history of the world. More than anything else, this election is for them. And I'm glad there are so many young people here today, because this is your election and your future and your century.

So will you do this for the next 4 days? Will you go out and call your friends and talk to your friends? [*Applause*] And just tell them, if you want to keep the prosperity going, if you want to keep the progress going, if you want to keep building one America, there is only one

choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Honda.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m. in the Parkside Ballroom at the San Jose Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Ron Gonzales of San Jose; Gov. Gray Davis of California; former professional baseball players Willie Mays and Hank Aaron; and Mike Honda, candidate for California's 15th Congressional District.

Statement on the Unemployment Rate
November 3, 2000

Today we received more good economic news for the American people. Our Nation's unemployment rate has held steady at 3.9 percent—the lowest in more than 30 years, and half of what it was in 1992.

The drop in Hispanic unemployment over the last 8 years has been just as spectacular. Hispanic unemployment is at an all-time low of 5 percent, down from 11.8 percent in 1992. African-American unemployment remains at record lows. Wages and incomes for all Americans continue to rise across the board. More than 22 million new jobs have been created since Vice President Gore and I came to office.

For nearly 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have worked to maintain a course of fiscal discipline that has helped lead to the longest economic expansion in American history and put America on course to pay down the debt by 2012. This commitment has had tangible results. More Americans are working hard, creating opportunity, and reaching their dreams than ever before. Let's stay on this course of fiscal discipline and ensure that our children and their children enjoy even greater economic prosperity.

Statement on Pipeline Safety
November 3, 2000

Today my administration is taking significant steps to ensure the safety of Americans living and working near the more than 2 million miles of oil and gas pipeline that crisscross our country. These pipelines are vital to our economy and our daily lives. But when they fail, they can damage the environment, contaminate our drinking water, threaten the safety of our communities, and put human lives at risk. Recent tragedies in Bellingham, Washington, and near Carlsbad, New Mexico, have underscored the need to improve pipeline safety nationwide.

Despite efforts in both the House and the Senate, there has been no final action this year on legislation to improve pipeline safety. Consequently, we are taking two actions today to strengthen protections for communities across the country. First, the Department of Transportation is issuing strong new requirements for large hazardous liquid pipeline operators to regularly inspect and promptly repair pipelines in populated and environmentally sensitive areas and to take systematic steps to detect and prevent leaks. Second, I am directing the Secretary of Transportation to take additional steps leading to stronger pipeline safety standards, improved enforcement, enhanced Federal-State partnerships, increased public access to information, and more innovative technology. Together, these actions will help ensure that our pipeline system is sound, our communities are safe, and our environment is protected.

Memorandum on Pipeline Safety
November 3, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Pipeline Safety

Over 2 million miles of oil and gas pipeline crisscross our country. These pipelines help transport the products that fuel our cars and heat our homes. While the safety record of our Nation's pipeline system is strong, accidents still occur. That is why we need to continue our efforts to improve pipeline safety nationwide.

Preventing pipeline failures is imperative to protecting our communities and our natural resources. These failures can damage the environment, contaminate our drinking water, threaten the safety of our communities, and put human lives at risk. The tragic accidents that recently occurred near Carlsbad, New Mexico, and in Bellingham, Washington, profoundly underscore the need for stronger pipeline safety measures. We simply cannot allow these fatal tragedies to be repeated.

To improve pipeline safety, the Department of Transportation (DOT or Department) has worked diligently to curb third-party damage, one of the leading causes of pipeline failures today. As a result, incidents caused by third-party damage have been reduced by 30 percent. In addition, to help prevent spills, DOT has sponsored research to develop new inspection technologies that find dents and other excavation damage. The Department has also increased pipeline protections by requiring improved corrosion control, and is working on the first comprehensive National Pipeline Mapping System. This important new mapping tool will provide States, communities, and the public with the information they need to better protect themselves, their families, and their environment.

Although my Administration has made progress in addressing important pipeline safety and environmental concerns, we also recognized the need for a more focused statutory direction in this area. In an effort to improve our Federal pipeline safety program, my Administration proposed comprehensive pipeline safety legislation in April of this year. The "Pipeline Safety and Community Protection Act of 2000" was developed to address five basic principles: (1) improve pipeline safety standards, (2) strengthen enforcement of pipeline safety laws and regulations, (3) enhance Federal-State partnerships, (4) provide the public with better information and opportunities to participate, and (5) support research and development of innovative pipeline safety technologies. Despite significant efforts, the Congress has not passed comprehensive pipeline safety legislation this year. My Administration continues to support efforts by the Congress to strengthen our Federal pipeline safety law to address the five key principles outlined above. In the interim, however, we are prepared to take action to fulfill these principles to the greatest extent possible using existing authorities.

As an example, I am pleased that today, the Administrator of the Research and Special Programs Administration is signing a new regulation that will greatly enhance pipeline safety measures in areas sensitive to damage from hazardous liquid pipeline accidents. This regulation will provide additional safeguards for populated areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and commercially navigable waterways. Under the new integrity management programs required by this regulation, hazardous liquid pipeline operators that operate 500 or more miles of pipeline will conduct an initial testing of their pipelines within 7 years and periodically, in most instances, every 5 years using internal inspection, pressure testing, or other equivalent testing technology. They will also be required to carry out prompt repairs, and use prevention and mitigation measures as necessary to reduce potential impacts to safety and the environment.

But even more can be done. To help ensure that American in the 21st century has the safest pipeline system possible, I am directing you to take the following actions to strengthen the Federal pipeline safety program and improve pipeline safety nationwide. These actions are based on the five principles set forth above, and are to be carried out in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Energy, the Attorney General, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Director of

the Office of Management and Budget, as appropriate.

(1) *Improve pipeline safety standards.* To fulfill requirements of Federal pipeline safety law, and in response to recommendations by the National Transportation Safety Board and the Department's Inspector General, I direct DOT to:

(a) issue a final rulemaking within 30 days to define environmentally sensitive areas in which hazardous liquid pipeline operators must develop and follow integrity management plans.

(b) develop and begin implementing no later than January 15, 2001, a comprehensive plan for further improving hazardous liquid and natural gas pipeline safety standards. This should address the need for additional regulations implementing integrity management programs for all hazardous liquid pipeline operators and natural gas transmission pipeline operators. The plan should also include a schedule for the prompt proposal of regulations for adequate corrosion control of hazardous liquid and natural gas pipelines, including cathodic protection. Appropriate new standards should be developed through notice and comment rulemaking, in accordance with all applicable Executive Orders, and in consultation with other Federal departments and agencies, States, tribes, industry, labor, pipeline safety advocates, environmental organizations, and the public; and

(c) ensure that integrity management programs and operator qualification programs are thoroughly reviewed by the Department. These reviews should examine whether operators are using internal inspection, leak detection, and emergency flow restricting devices, where necessary, as a part of their integrity management programs. If, after reviewing an integrity management program, you determine that a program is inadequate for ensuring the safe operation of a pipeline facility, you should use existing authorities to require that the operator revise the program accordingly, including requiring the use of internal inspection devices where appropriate. If, after reviewing an operator qualification program, you determine that a program is inadequate for ensuring the safe operation of a pipeline facility, you should use existing authorities to require the operator to revise the program accordingly, including requiring the use of examination or testing methods beyond the observation of on-the-job performance.

(2) *Strengthen enforcement of pipeline safety laws and regulations.* To improve the enforcement of pipeline safety laws and regulations, and in accordance with the recommendations of the General Accounting Office, I direct you promptly to assess the efficacy and current use of all enforcement tools available to the Office of Pipeline Safety. Based on the findings of this assessment, and in coordination with the Attorney General, you should begin developing a policy designed to ensure strong, consistent, and effective enforcement of pipeline safety standards and compliance, including deterring noncompliance, with pipeline safety regulations.

(3) *Enhance Federal-State partnerships.* Building on existing experience and considering input already received from State regulators, I direct you to issue guidelines, within 60 days, outlining opportunities and responsibilities for States to participate in the oversight of interstate pipelines. Under these guidelines, States should be allowed to participate in new construction and incident investigation, as well as additional oversight of interstate pipeline transportation that will add to overall pipeline safety and address local concerns. In addition, under these agreements, States should be allowed to participate in the review of integrity management, operator qualification, and damage prevention programs.

(4) *Provide the public with better information and opportunities to participate.* To improve public right-to-know and opportunities for public involvement while promoting safety, I direct you to initiate activities, including development of a comprehensive plan, that expand public participation in pipeline decisions and provide increased access to gas and hazardous liquid pipeline data and information. The comprehensive plan should include a schedule for developing any necessary rulemakings or guidance, and should provide for:

(a) improved public access to safety-related condition reports, pipeline incident reports, integrity management programs, and operator qualification programs, including access through the internet, annual reports, and other methods as appropriate;

(b) collection of more complete and detailed information on the causes of accidents, thereby facilitating better trends analysis and helping to prevent future accidents. Specifically, you should improve accident reporting forms as soon as possible for both hazardous liquid and natural gas pipelines by expanding causal categories and clarifying instructions so that data submissions are more consistent and accurate; and

(c) assistance to communities to help them more effectively address their pipeline safety concerns, including the potential availability of a limited number of technical assistance grants, subject to the availability of appropriations.

(5) *Supporting research and development of innovative pipeline safety technologies.* In coordination with the Secretary of Energy, I direct you promptly to initiate a process to seek advice and consultation from other Federal and State agencies, academia and research institutions, industry, pipeline safety advocates, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders on the development and implementation of a cooperative program of research and development. Based on this consultation, you should develop and begin implementing a cooperative program to establish research priorities, coordinate and leverage research funding, and maximize efforts for ensuring pipeline integrity. This program should address the need to:

(a) expand internal inspection device capabilities to identify and measure defects and anomalies, including automated internal pipeline inspection sensor systems;

(b) inspect pipelines that cannot accommodate internal inspection devices, including structural integrity measurement;

(c) develop and improve technologies to identify, monitor, and prevent outside force damage, including satellite surveillance;

(d) improve corrosion control and prevention methods;

(e) expand leak detection; and

(f) ensure public safety and environmental protection in other related ways.

The Department of Transportation shall implement this memorandum consistent with its appropriations and to the extent permitted by law.

This memorandum is not intended to create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, or instrumentalities, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The President's Radio Address
November 4, 2000

Good morning. In just 3 days now, the American people will perform the most profound act of our democracy. They'll step into the voting booths all across America and, with the power guaranteed them by the Constitution, decide the future direction of our great Nation. It's an awesome responsibility, especially at this remarkable moment in history, when our ability to build the future of our dreams for our children has never been greater.

Look at what we've already accomplished together. Eight years ago, interest rates were high, and 10 million of our people were out of work. Deficits and debt were skyrocketing; so were the welfare rolls, crime, teen pregnancy, and income inequality.

But the American people made a choice to follow a new path, guided by old values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, in a community of all Americans. And today, we're a Nation transformed, with the longest economic expansion in our history, more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, wages rising at all income levels, the highest homeownership in history. Just yesterday we learned that unemployment remains at 3.9 percent, and Hispanic unemployment has dropped to 5 percent, the lowest level on record. African-American unemployment has also been cut in half over the last 8 years to its lowest level ever recorded.

This turnaround is about more than economics. We've also got the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 26 years. Teen pregnancy and drug abuse are down. Student test scores are up. There are fewer people without health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years.

Now, how do we keep this remarkable progress going? That's the question America must decide on Tuesday, because the best is still out there waiting for us.

Let me give you just one example. We all know that medical decisions should be made by doctors and nurses, not accountants, and that health plans too often do deny vital care and do delay appeals for months on end. There is now a bipartisan majority in Congress ready to pass a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights to deal with problems like these. But the Republican leaders in Congress, under pressure from the HMO lobby, won't bring it up for a vote. That's not how democracy should work.

As President, there are steps I can take to move us forward, and today I am taking an important one. I'm directing the Labor Department to issue final rules within 2 weeks requiring private health plans covering 130 million Americans to provide a fair and unbiased process for patients to appeal when coverage has been denied or delayed.

Under this new rule, for the very first time, health plans would be required to make coverage decisions quickly and to provide consumers with reliable information on their rights and benefits. This new rule is an important step toward providing Americans the health care protections they need and deserve. But the only way to give every American in every health plan the right to see a specialist, to go to the nearest emergency room—not the cheapest—and to hold a health care plan accountable when it causes harm, the only way to do those things is to pass a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. The American people can make sure that will happen by voting on Tuesday.

Now, you know my choice. But what's important is your choice. A lot is at stake. Your vote will decide whether we're going to use the budget surplus to make America debt-free and keep interest rates low and the economy growing, or go back to an age of deficits. Your vote will decide whether we strengthen Social Security and Medicare and add affordable prescription drug benefits to Medicare.

Your vote will decide whether we invest in education and new classrooms and smaller class sizes, in improving teacher quality and turning around failing schools. Your vote will decide whether we bring prosperity to people and places left behind in our recovery. Your vote will decide whether we stand up to hate crimes and racial profiling, provide equal pay for equal work, and protect a woman's right to choose.

Franklin Roosevelt once said, the ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President or Senators or Congressmen or Government officials but the voters of this country. From Lexington and Concord to the beaches of Normandy to the streets of Selma, brave Americans fought and died for the rights we enjoy today. Now, with 8 years of great progress behind us, we know we have the power to build the future of our dreams for our children.

Let's start on Tuesday by going to the polls and exercising our fundamental American freedom.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:35 p.m. on November 3 in the Green Room at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 4. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 3 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Providing Patient Protections Through Final Regulations on Internal Appeals and Information Disclosure

November 4, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Labor

Subject: Providing Patient Protections Through Final Regulations on Internal Appeals and Information Disclosure

In 1997, I appointed you and Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna E. Shalala, to co-chair the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry (the "Quality Commission"). Through the extraordinary efforts of you and Secretary Shalala in bringing together a broad and diverse group of commission members, the Quality Commission identified numerous shortcomings related to consumer protections in the Nation's frequently evolving health-care delivery system.

Among numerous problems within the health-care delivery system, the Quality Commission specifically cited that tens of millions of Americans with private health insurance do not have access to a fair and timely appeals process. More specifically, under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), 130 million Americans with employer-sponsored health plans lack the protection of a meaningful internal appeals process when plans deny benefits for health care. Health plans making benefit decisions often do not have the medical expertise to make such decisions and appeals of these decisions can take as long as 300 days. As a consequence, countless Americans have been harmed by inappropriate delays and denials of benefits.

The Quality Commission recommended that the benefit appeals and information shortcomings, which hurt American patients and their families, be addressed through a Consumer Bill of Rights. Such improvements were an important element of a broader array of patient protections including a right to see a specialist, a right to receive emergency care, and a right to continue ongoing medical treatment without disruption. Since the release of the Quality Commission's findings, my Administration has been working with a bipartisan group of Members of Congress who are committed to enacting these and other critical protections, such as holding health plans accountable when they take actions that injure patients.

As we have worked to pass a bipartisan, enforceable Patients Bill of Rights, you have held public hearings that confirmed the need for a wide range of protections, with a particular focus on those protections my Administration can extend by executive action: a fair and timely process for internal appeals and meaningful information disclosure to consumers. With my concurrence, you have not implemented these protections because of our mutual belief that it would be far better to establish them in the context of broader protections that would be included should the Patients Bill of Rights be passed by the Congress. Unfortunately, it now appears clear that this Congress will not pass a meaningful and enforceable Patients Bill of Rights this session. With this in mind, I hereby direct as follows:

You shall in the next 2 weeks promulgate final regulations protecting millions of individuals with employer-based health coverage. The regulations shall establish a fair and unbiased process for reviewing medical benefits claims, require timely coverage and appeal decisions, and direct plans to provide meaningful information to patients advising them of their rights to the appeals process.

This memorandum is not intended to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, or instrumentalities, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Bronx County Democratic Committee Rally in New York City

November 4, 2000

The President. Thank you. Wow! Are you ready to win this election?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I want to begin with a set of thank-you's. I thank the Bronx for being so good to me and Al Gore and Hillary and Tipper these last 8 years. I thank Fernando Ferrer, who started with me in late 1991, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [*Laughter*] I thank Roberto Ramirez for his strong leadership here and his friendship. I thank your Congressman, José Serrano, who has been with me for 8 years in Washington, DC.

I want to thank your State comptroller, Carl McCall, for his great leadership and great—[*inaudible*]. I thank the members of the senate, the members of the assembly, the members of the council that are here. I understand Congressman Joe Crowley from Queens is here to sing the national anthem and to make sure I'm not the only Irishman here today. I thank you. [*Laughter*]

Now look, I'm tempted just to give you one applause line after another. This is the best chanting crowd I've heard in a long time. [*Laughter*] But Roberto said, you know, you've just got 4 days, and those 4 days will determine 4 years, maybe 8 years, maybe the next 20 years of our Nation's life. So I want to ask you to indulge me just a couple of minutes while I talk about where we're going. Because for all of you here—and it's a great crowd—the truth is, you've all got a lot of friends who have never been to an event like this. Is that right? [*Applause*] There's our State party chair, Judith Hope. Thank you, Judith, for being here. Thank you.

But you've got a lot of friends who have never been to hear the President speak, right? Never been to a Democratic meeting in the Bronx, never heard Hillary or Vice President Gore or anybody, but they'll vote. Or they might vote if they know clearly what the choice is and what the consequence is for their families and their community and their country.

So I just want to say a few things to you from the heart. You have been very good to me. And America is better off than it was 8 years ago. But what I believe is that this election is every bit as important as the election we had in 1992. And it is very important to realize that we're not just voting for people; we're also voting for a set of ideas about how our country should work.

You know, Fernando Ferrer said this—I want to say it again—I always wanted you to feel, even whether you agreed or disagreed with me, that you had somebody in the White House who was on your side, somebody who understood what your lives were like, and your hopes and your dreams, and was pulling for you and trying to help you make your lives better.

Now, 8 years ago Al Gore and I promised that if you would give us a chance to serve, we would put people first. We tried to create opportunity for every responsible citizen in a community in which every American had a part. This year the American people have to decide to put our country and our children first, at a time of unprecedented prosperity. And the truth is, sometimes it's harder to make a good, clear decision when times are good than when they're tough.

I mean, I know New Yorkers took a chance on me in '92. I know that. I remember when the incumbent President kept referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State. [*Laughter*] Remember when he said that? And I was so naive at the time, I thought it was a compliment. [*Laughter*] The truth is, I still do. [*Laughter*]

But hey, give me a break. It wasn't that much of a chance. The country was in the ditch. We had to change, right? But now things are going well.

So there are three big questions that have to be asked and answered. And what I'm going to ask you to do is to take every spare minute you've got between now and the time the polls close to talk to all the people you know who are not here today and have never come to one of these things but could show up, because that could make the difference.

I just got back from California. I'm going back to Arkansas tomorrow. All over the country, I've never seen an election like this. There are 12 or 13 States where the election is within 2 points one way or the other. There are congressional races and Senate races that are just unbelievably tight. And I am convinced it's because in these good times people are not absolutely clear about what the consequences are.

So here are the three things I want you to say to your neighbors. Number one, if you remember where we were 8 years ago and you look at where we are today, do you want to keep the prosperity going and give it to people who haven't felt it yet?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Now, if you do, there's a choice. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary say, "Okay, you want to keep the prosperity going? First, we've got to keep paying down the debt to keep interest rates low." That's the biggest tax cut we can give anybody. It means lower mortgage rates, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments; lower business loans costs, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes and a better stock market.

And then take what's left, once you figure out what you've got to do to pay the debt down, and spend it on education and health care and the environment and a tax cut we can afford for our family, for child care, long-term care, college education, and retirement. Now, that's their deal.

The Republicans' sounds good. They say——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Hey, wait. Wait. It sounds good. What's their line? Their line is, "Hey, this is your money"—which, of course, it is—"so we'll just give it all to you now. We'll have a tax cut that's 3 times bigger than the Democrats'. We'll privatize Social Security and let young people take the money and run. And we'll spend some money, too."

Now, here are the problems with that. People ask me all the time, "How did you turn the economy around? What great new idea did you bring to Washington?" Do you know what my answer is? "Arithmetic. We brought arithmetic to Washington." [*Laughter*]

Now, look. You know, I heard—Governor Bush said there was an education recession; there's really an education renaissance. And I'm telling you, everybody in the Bronx can figure this out. Here's the deal: The surplus is supposed to be $2 trillion, right? Forget about all those zeros; that's hard. But it's 2—the surplus, right? [*Laughter*] Okay. Now, their tax cut and the interest associated with it cost $1.6 trillion—1.6. When they privatize Social Security, that costs a trillion dollars. Why? Because if all you young folks take your payroll, everybody like me that's 55 or over that's been guaranteed we will get what we've got coming—and as Al Gore keeps pointing out, you can't spend the same money twice—so if you take a trillion out, we've got to put a trillion in, right? So that's 1.6 plus 1. And then they promise to spend a half a trillion dollars; that's .5. Now, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*] That's the whole deal.

Now look, we tried it their way before. Remember? And we ran 12 years of deficits, and we quadrupled the national debt. And when I took office, interest rates were high; inflation was bad; the economy was in the tank. We could go back there just by saying——

Audience members. No!

The President. But you've got to tell people, you can't have it all now. We've got to think about our country and our children and our obligations to our seniors and our obligation to keep this economy going. So tell people that 3.1 is bigger than 2. If you want to keep this prosperity going, you've got one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary.

Now, the second issue. The country is not just stronger economically; it's stronger. The crime rate is down to a 26-year low. The environment is cleaner. We've cleaned up more toxic waste sites in 8 years than they did in 12—3 times as many. The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; more land preserved forever than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt 100 years ago.

The health care system is getting better. We added 26 years to the life of Medicare. It was supposed to go broke last year. The number of people without health insurance is going down for the first time in a dozen years. The schools are getting better: math scores, reading scores, science scores up; the dropout rate down; the college-going rate at an all-time high, in no small measure because we passed the biggest expansion of college aid in 50 years.

Now, here's the deal. Do you want to keep building on that progress and doing better?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. There is a difference; there is a choice. Look at Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary. What do they say? They say, keep putting police on the streets; keep taking commonsense measures that keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. They say, keep cleaning up the environment, and give us a clean energy future and one that's more secure, so you don't have to worry about what home heating oil is going to cost every winter because we'll have more sources of energy and we'll use it better.

They say, keep insuring children until all our kids are insured, and then get their working-class parents health insurance, too. Pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. Pass Medicare prescription drugs for every senior who needs it.

They say, give the States and the school districts money to rebuild crumbling schools and build new ones; put 100,000 qualified teachers in the early grades so these kids will have little classes; have universal preschool and after-school for the kids who need it; and give our families a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition so everybody can afford to go to college. Now, that's what they say.

Now, you've got a choice. What do the Republicans say? This is what they've committed to do. They've committed to abolish the 100,000 police program, break down the 100,000 teacher program. They've committed to relax the clean air standards and to reverse a lot of the land I've protected. They are against the Patients' Bill of Rights. They are against the Medicare prescription drugs for all of our seniors. And their answer to education is block grants and vouchers.

Now, it's not like you don't have a choice. But if you look where we were 8 years and you look where we are now, and you want to build on that progress, you just have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary.

Here's the third big thing. There are just three big questions in this race. The third big thing is, don't you want to keep building one America, one community where we're all going forward together? That's a big issue. This economy is the first recovery in 30 years where everybody got to go along for the ride: African-American unemployment cut in half; Hispanic unemployment cut by more than half; the lowest minority unemployment in the history of the country that we have ever registered; average income up $5,000; child poverty down 30 percent; poverty at a 20-year low; welfare rolls cut in half. We're all going along for the ride.

Now, if you adopt their economic program, we'll keep growing together. And it's more than economics. We didn't end affirmative action, as the Republicans wanted to do; we amended it. We fought for fairness and decency for our immigrants. We fought for an end to prejudice and for civil rights.

Now, you've got a choice. Look at Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary. They're for hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, stronger enforcement of equal pay for women, fairness for immigrants, and a Supreme Court that will protect civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose.

Now, in every area, in every area from top to bottom, the Republicans have the opposite position. So it's not like there is a choice. You've got to go out and just tell people, "Look, you don't think you're going to go vote? You don't think it makes any difference? If you want to keep the prosperity going, if you want to build on the progress for the last 8 years, if you want to keep building one America so we all go along for the ride, you've got one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary."

Now, let me just say one thing else. Let me say something personally. I know both these people better than about everybody who is going to vote in America. [*Laughter*] And I know something about the Presidency and something about the Congress and something about the Senate. And I would like to say a couple of personal words.

John Kennedy said the Presidency was preeminently a place of decisionmaking. Al Gore has done more good for the American people as Vice President than anybody in history. He has more experience. He has more ability to make those decisions. He is the hardest working person I have ever known. He has the capacity to keep learning and the curiosity to do it.

He understands the world, which is why, if you talk to the Albanian-Americans in New York City, of whom there is quite a good number in New York, they were probably astonished when his opponent said we shouldn't be in Kosovo. We had to stand up against ethnic cleansing and slaughter there; it was the right thing to do.

And he understands the future. I put him in charge of connecting all our schools to the Internet. When we started, only 3 percent of

the classrooms in the country were connected; now 65 percent are. Ninety percent of the poorest schools in America are connected to the Internet.

He is a good man who will make good decisions, who will be a great President. And I can tell you that based on my personal knowledge. If you want somebody you can bank on in a crisis and bank on to make the most of these good times, you need to tell people that. I know this.

And I'll tell you something about Hillary. She knows more—she knows more about children and family, about education and health care, about how to bring economic opportunity to distressed areas than anybody I can imagine who could be running for President. She has worked on this stuff, some of these issues for 20 years, some of these issues for 30 years. She has been part of all the efforts we've made for peace, from Northern Ireland to the Balkans to the Middle East.

She has been part of our outreach to Africa, to Latin America, to South Asia, to places that America used to ignore. But we know that we have Americans from those places, and we know we should be their partners for the future.

And I told her when she decided to do this that New York was a pretty tough sell. [*Laughter*] I said, "You know, just remember the primary I went through in New York in '92." I said, "They'll put you through your paces there." And so you have. [*Laughter*]

And she has been subject to a campaign that has amazed even me, and I've been through a lot—[*laughter*]—for its emphasis on trying to build a wellspring of resentment and division among our State. But hey, you know, that's part of the deal. And she has met every test. She has worked her heart out for 16 months. She has come to every community; she's been there for you.

So here is what I want to tell you. Yes, we're right on the issues. Yes, if you want to keep the prosperity going, build on the social progress, and bring everybody along together, you've got to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary. But they're also, by far and away, the best qualified people to keep serving you. So go out and talk to your neighbors and win this election on Tuesday.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:12 p.m. in the Main Dining Room at the Marina Del Ray restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Fernando Ferrer, president, Bronx Borough; New York State Assemblyman Roberto Ramirez; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in New York City
November 4, 2000

The President. Thank you. Are you ready to win this election?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Are you ready to make Charles Rangel the first African-American chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the most powerful committee in the United States Congress?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I want to say a thank you to everyone here. I thank you, Carl McCall, for your great leadership of New York and for your friendship to me and your support of Hillary. Your future is limitless, and you have done a great job for the people of this State. Thank you.

I want to thank Representatives Jerry Nadler and Carolyn Maloney. They and Charlie have been with me all the way. I want to thank your borough president, Virginia Fields, for being here. Assemblyman Denny Farrell, thank you. All the others behind me, Dennis Rivera, Randi Weingarten, Guillermo Linares, Adam Clayton Powell, Lee Saunders, thank you all for being here. And give a big hand to Luther Vandross for showing up and being with us.

You know, when Charlie was saying that I was your President, I leaned over to Luther and I said, "You know, Luther, in another life, if I'd have been a little better musician, I'd have been playing jazz at the Cotton Club instead of running for President." [*Laughter*]

More than anything else today, I wanted to come by to have this chance to thank you, to thank the people of Harlem and New York City for being so good to me and to Al Gore these last 8 years. And thank you, thank you for your support for my wife. It means more to me than you will ever know. Thanks for hanging in there.

Now look, the temptation is for us to just shout here for 4 or 5 minutes because we're all on the same side, and I'm preaching to the saved. But the truth is that everybody in this great crowd tonight has friends who have never come to hear a President speak or come to any political rally. Is that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. But all those people could vote if they understand what's at stake and if they understand what it means for themselves, their families, this great city, and our Nation. So I want you to just give me a couple of minutes to tell you what I hope you will tell everybody you can find between now and when the polls close. Because this race would not be close for President, it wouldn't be close for Senator, it wouldn't be close anywhere in America, I believe, if people could remember where we were 8 years ago and compare it to where we are today, and then if people understood where we're going and what the differences are.

There are three big questions in this election. Question number one, do you want to keep this prosperity going and give it to people who haven't been part of it yet?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, if you do, there is a big choice: Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and Charlie Rangel. Here's what they say. They say we've got to keep paying down the debt to keep interest rates low because that means lower home mortgages, lower car loans, lower credit card loans, lower college loans, lower business loans. It means more jobs, higher income, more jobs for working people, and more in the stock market. Everybody wins that way. That's how we made this economy recover.

Then they say, let's take what's left and invest it in our kids in health care and education and the environment and a tax cut we can afford for child care, for long-term care, for college education, for retirement. That's what they say.

Now, on the other side, our Republican friends say, "Hey, this is your money, and we're going to give it to you. We're going to give it all to you right now." And here's what they say. They say, "We're going to give you a huge tax cut"—even though almost everybody in this crowd would be better off under ours—"and then, we're going to privatize Social Security and let the young people have their payroll tax back, and then we're going to spend some money."

Now look, here's the problem. You all clapped for me when I said the economy was better. But people ask me all the time, "What great new idea did you bring to Washington to turn the economy around?" You know what I answer? "Arithmetic. We brought arithmetic back to Washington." [*Laughter*]

Now, we made the numbers add up. You all can remember this. Everybody remember this: Vice President Gore's opponent says we're in an education recession. He's wrong about that; our schools are getting better. I'll say more about that. I can tell you, everybody can understand this.

The surplus is supposed to be $2 trillion. Forget about all the zeros. That's a lot of money. Two. Okay? They want to give three-quarters of it in a tax cut, $1.6 trillion—1.6. Then they want to give you, if you're young, your payroll tax back, 2 percent of it. But they've got to promise people that are older, like me, that we can still get our Social Security. And as the Vice President keeps pointing out, you can't spend the same dollar on two different people. So that costs another trillion dollars—1. Then they want to spend a little money, too. They want to spend a half a trillion dollars; that's .5. Now, you add it up: 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

Now look, if you like this economy and you want to keep growing jobs and you want to keep your incomes going up and you want to keep the interest rates down so you can afford to make a car payment, afford to make a college loan payment, afford credit cards, afford home mortgages, you can't have 3.1 being bigger than 2. This is not rocket science.

And therefore, there is only one choice, and the choice is Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel.

Now, the second big question. This country is not just better off; it's better. Crime is at a 26-year low. The environment is cleaner—cleaner air, cleaner water, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up on our watch as the previous 12 years. And we set aside more land

forever than anybody since Teddy Roosevelt, 100 years ago.

Now, in addition to that, we've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years. And I was talking about the schools. Here are the facts. The reading scores, the math scores, the science scores are up. For the first time in the history of the country, the African-American high school graduation rate is almost equal to the white graduation rate, virtually the same.

We've got record numbers of people going on to college. We've had a 300 percent increase in the number of Latino and African-American kids taking advanced placement tests just in the last 3 years alone. And all these schools that everybody said couldn't be turned around, turns out they can be.

I was in a school in Harlem just about a month ago that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids doing reading and math below grade level. Two years later—in just 2 years—74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level. Don't tell me that our kids can't learn or we can't turn our schools around.

So here is the second question: In addition to building on the prosperity, do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years and do even better?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. If you do, you have a choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel.

What's our program? Put more police on the street and do more to take guns away from criminals and kids in law-abiding ways; cleaner air, safer energy, do more to develop other kinds of energy so people of New York don't have to worry sick every winter about whether they'll have enough home heating oil or whether they can afford to pay for it. Insure all of our kids; pass the Patients' Bill of Rights; pass Medicare drug benefits for all of our seniors; put a hundred thousand teachers in the schools; give New York and the other cities of our country funds to build or repair and modernize schools so these kids have a decent place to go to school; and give every family a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition; have preschool and after-school programs for all the kids who need it—now, that's our program.

Now, look at what the Republican program is. Here's what they say on every issue. They want to get rid of the commitment to 100,000 police; they want to get rid of the commitment to 100,000 teachers. They don't support what we're trying to do to give you school construction funds. They want to relax the clean air standards and reverse a lot of the environmental protections I have put in. They're against the Patients' Bill of Rights; they're against Medicare drugs for all the seniors who need them; and they're not for a type of tax deduction for the cost of college tuition.

So if you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, you just have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel.

Now, there's one other big choice, and to me, it's the most important of all. Charlie Rangel talked about the affinity that I've had with New York City and the people who live in Harlem. You couldn't have guessed it, I guess, when I started. I remember when my predecessor used to defer to me in a kind of a sneering tone as just the Governor of a small southern State. [*Laughter*] And you know, I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [*Laughter*] And I still do. I still do.

But I'll tell you what I thought. I thought to myself, this country works pretty well when everybody counts, everybody has a chance, and we all work together. And we get in a lot of trouble when we start trying to divide ourselves one against the other—old or young, black, white, or Hispanic, straight or gay, people with disabilities and people without, rich or poor. You know, when we start dividing up the country, we don't do nearly as well as when we work together.

So we've worked hard on bringing people together. When they said I had to end affirmative action, I said, "I don't think so—let's don't end it; let's just fix it and go on." When the other party wanted to be really harsh with illegal immigrants—or with legal immigrants, I said, "I don't think so." This is a country of immigrants. Heck, we're all immigrants from somewhere, except the Native Americans. We all came from somewhere.

And the most important thing I didn't tell you before about this economic recovery is, it's the first one in 30 years that included everybody. We have the lowest African-American and Latino unemployment rate ever recorded, a 20-year low in poverty, the welfare rolls cut in half, child poverty down by 30 percent, average

income up by $5,000 after inflation. We take everybody along for the ride. That's why we're Democrats.

So here's the third big question: Do you want to keep building one American community so we all go forward together?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. There's a choice. Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel, here's what they want. Listen to this. They're for hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, equal pay for women legislation, fairness for immigrants, an increase in the minimum wage, and a United States Supreme Court that protects civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose.

Now, on every one of these issues, our friends in the other party disagree with us. It is a choice. So I want you to take every opportunity between now and Tuesday to go out across this great country and say, "If you want to keep the prosperity going, if you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, if you want to keep building one America, you just have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel."

Now—welcome, Senator Schumer. We're glad to see you. Let's give Chuck Schumer a big hand. [*Applause*]

Now listen, I want to close on a very personal note. I probably know Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary better than just about any other voter in America. The President has to make decisions for all America. You need to feel that the President is pulling for you, is working for you. And even when he may do something you disagree with, you need to feel that at least he was thinking about you, too.

And John Kennedy—listen—John Kennedy once said that the Presidency was a place of decisionmaking. You're hiring somebody Tuesday to make decisions.

And here's what I want you to know about Al Gore. He's done more good for the American people as Vice President than anybody that ever held that position, including the empowerment zone in Harlem that he and Charlie Rangel have worked on. He works harder than anybody else I know. He keeps learning. He never gets too old or too proud to learn. He's curious about the world. He understands the future. So what I'm trying to tell you is, he's a good man. He'll make good decisions. He'll be a great President of the United States.

What I want you to know about Joe Lieberman is, he's been a friend of mine for 30 years. He understands the ideas behind what we've done in the last 8 years as well as anybody in the United States Congress. And he will be a superb Vice President.

And what I want you to know about Hillary is, I love her. What I want you to know about Hillary is that I've known her for 30 years. When it comes to children and families, health care and education, bringing economic opportunity to people and places left behind, she's worked on all those issues at least 20 years, and most of them for 30 years. She never once in all those years ever asked anybody to do anything for her. She just worked to be a good citizen and a good public servant.

After we came to the White House, she worked on children's health and women's health and education. She worked on all the things I tried to do to make peace in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East. She went to Africa, to Latin America, to south Asia, to east Asia, to build bridges to people around the world who have kinfolks in this country, but the United States never paid them much attention before. And she put them on our map.

You couldn't have anybody who is better qualified to represent New York State at the dawn of the new millennium. And you will never have anybody who will work harder, care more, or get more done.

So I'll say this—I know I'm biased, but I believe what I said to you. There's no question who would be the better President. There's no question who would be the better Senator. And I want you to go out here for 4 days and just do it one more time and tell people, "Here's what this election is about: If you want to keep the prosperity going, if you want to keep the progress going, if you want to keep building one America, you just have one choice—Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Charlie Rangel."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:38 p.m. at the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building in Harlem. In his remarks, he referred to H. Carl McCall, New York State comptroller; C. Virginia

Fields, president, Manhattan Borough; State Assembly member Herman D. (Denny) Farrell; Dennis Rivera, cochair, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition; Randi Weingarten, president, United Federation of Teachers; Guillermo Linares, New York City councilmember, Manhattan Borough; Adam Clayton Powell III, vice president, technology and programs, Freedom Forum; Lee Saunders, special assistant for the president, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL–CIO; and musician Luther Vandross. Representative Rangel was a candidate for reelection in New York's 15th Congressional District.

Message on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives Intelligence Authorization Legislation for Fiscal Year 2001

November 4, 2000

To the House of Representatives:

Today, I am disapproving H.R. 4392, the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001," because of one badly flawed provision that would have made a felony of unauthorized disclosures of classified information. Although well intentioned, that provision is overbroad and may unnecessarily chill legitimate activities that are at the heart of a democracy.

I agree that unauthorized disclosures can be extraordinarily harmful to United States national security interests and that far too many such disclosures occur. I have been particularly concerned about their potential effects on the sometimes irreplaceable intelligence sources and methods on which we rely to acquire accurate and timely information I need in order to make the most appropriate decisions on matters of national security. Unauthorized disclosures damage our intelligence relationships abroad, compromise intelligence gathering, jeopardize lives, and increase the threat of terrorism. As Justice Stewart stated in the Pentagon Papers case, "it is elementary that the successful conduct of international diplomacy and the maintenance of an effective national defense require both confidentiality and secrecy. Other nations can hardly deal with this Nation in an atmosphere of mutual trust unless they can be assured that their confidences will be kept . . . and the development of considered and intelligent international policies would be impossible if those charged with their formulation could not communicate with each other freely." Those who disclose classified information inappropriately thus commit a gross breach of the public trust and may recklessly put our national security at risk. To the extent that existing sanctions have proven insufficient to address and deter unauthorized disclosures, they should be strengthened. What is in dispute is not the gravity of the problem, but the best way to respond to it.

In addressing this issue, we must never forget that the free flow of information is essential to a democratic society. Justice Stewart also wrote in the Pentagon Papers case that "the only effective restraint upon executive policy in the areas of national defense and international affairs may lie in an enlightened citizenry—in an informed and critical public opinion which alone can here protect the values of democratic government."

Justice Brandeis reminded us that "those who won our independence believed . . . that public discussion is a political duty; and that this should be a fundamental principle of the American government." His words caution that we must always tread carefully when considering measures that may limit public discussion—even when those measures are intended to achieve laudable, indeed necessary, goals.

As President, therefore, it is my obligation to protect not only our Government's vital information from improper disclosure, but also to protect the rights of citizens to receive the information necessary for democracy to work. Furthering these two goals requires a careful balancing, which must be assessed in light of our system of classifying information over a range of categories. This legislation does not achieve the proper balance. For example, there is a serious risk that this legislation would tend to have a chilling effect on those who engage in legitimate activities. A desire to avoid the risk that their good faith choice of words—their exercise of judgment—could become the subject of a

criminal referral for prosecution might discourage Government officials from engaging even in appropriate public discussion, press briefings, or other legitimate official activities. Similarly, the legislation may unduly restrain the ability of former Government officials to teach, write, or engage in any activity aimed at building public understanding of complex issues.

Incurring such risks is unnecessary and inappropriate in a society built on freedom of expression and the consent of the governed and is particularly inadvisable in a context in which the range of classified materials is so extensive. In such circumstances, this criminal provision would, in my view, create an undue chilling effect.

The problem is compounded because this provision was passed without benefit of public hearings—a particular concern given that it is the public that this law seeks ultimately to protect. The Administration shares the process burden since its deliberations lacked the thoroughness this provision warranted, which in turn led to a failure to apprise the Congress of the concerns I am expressing today.

I deeply appreciate the sincere efforts of Members of Congress to address the problem of unauthorized disclosures and I fully share their commitment. When the Congress returns, I encourage it to send me this bill with this provision deleted and I encourage the Congress as soon as possible to pursue a more narrowly drawn provision tested in public hearings so that those they represent can also be heard on this important issue.

Since the adjournment of the Congress has prevented my return of H.R. 4392 within the meaning of Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution, my withholding of approval from the bill precludes its becoming law. The Pocket Veto Case, 279 U.S. 655 (1929). In addition to withholding my signature and thereby invoking my constitutional power to "pocket veto" bills during an adjournment of the Congress, to avoid litigation, I am also sending H.R. 4392 to the House of Representatives with my objections, to leave no possible doubt that I have vetoed the measure.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

November 4, 2000.

Remarks at a Get Out the Vote Rally in New York City
November 4, 2000

The President. Thank you. Are you ready to win this election?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you for coming out. Thank you for your warm welcome. I want to thank the president and Mrs. Steinberg and Provost Gale Stevens for welcoming me here to LIU, along with your student body president, who is also there. I want to thank my good friend Carl McCall for making these stops with me today and for all the support he has given to Hillary and the superb job he has done for the people of New York.

And I want to thank Judith Hope for taking over the Democratic Party when we were not in very good shape and working her heart out and for showing such leadership.

And my Brooklyn buddies over here—in early 1992, when only my mother thought I could be elected President—[*laughter*]—Clarence Norman and Major Owens were there for me, and I will never, ever, ever forget it. Thank you, and God bless you.

You know, this has been a great day for me to go around and campaign for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and for Hillary, to go to the Bronx, which has also been very good to me, to go down to Harlem with Charlie Rangel, who will be the next chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee if we win this election. But I am honored to finish in Brooklyn because, as you heard Major and Clarence say, New York City has been wonderful to me and to Al Gore these last 8 years. Shoot, we've even gotten a pretty good vote out on Staten Island. Queens has been great; the Bronx has been great; Manhattan has been fabulous; but Brooklyn always

came in first and gave us the biggest vote, and I thank you for that.

But I also am glad to be here at LIU and to have so many—soccer, softball, volleyball—I'm glad to be here because, fundamentally, this is a race about the future. It's a race about 21st century America, and the young people in this audience have more at stake than anyone else.

So I know you're all committed or you wouldn't be here. And it's easy for me to just sort of give you one applause line after another. But I want to ask you as a personal favor to just let me talk to you for a few minutes in a conversation. Why? Because the election is still a few days away, and because there are thousands upon thousands of people in New York and many of you have friends in other States who haven't even decided whether to vote yet, much less for whom to vote. All that talk about the base, that's a fancy way of saying if the people that are for our side actually show up and vote, we will win. If a higher percentage of the people that are for their side show up and vote, then we could lose, even if most people are really for us.

And so what I want to ask you to do when you leave here tonight is to take some time tomorrow and the next day and all the way through election day to tell people why they ought to vote, especially the young people—what the stakes are, what the choice is, and what the consequences are. I don't have any doubt in the world that if people really understand what this election is about and what the honest differences are, that we will prevail.

So here's what I'd like for you to say. First of all, remember what it was like 8 years ago. It's hard for a lot of younger voters to remember this. The economy was in the dumps; the society was divided; the political system was completely unresponsive. Al Gore and I came to the American people and we asked you to give us a chance to put the American people first, to provide opportunity for every responsible citizen in a community of all the American people—and I mean all, never mind your race, your ethnic background, whether you're an immigrant or native-born; never mind whether you're old or young, rich or poor, straight or gay, disabled or physically unchallenged. If you work hard and you obey the law, you're part of our America and part of our American family, and we want you to go forward with us.

Congressman Greg Meeks—give him a big hand there; come on up—from Queens. [*Applause*] You were just with Hillary? Good for you. [*Laughter*]

Now look, so 8 years ago we did that. We came in, you gave us a chance. And it's a different country now. It's a totally different country. We have the longest economic expansion in history, 22 million new jobs. So here's the first question, do you want to keep building on this prosperity and extend it to the people who haven't felt it yet? Do you want to keep it going?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. That's the first question you ought to ask every voter. Somebody tells you, "Oh, it doesn't make any difference whether I vote or not." Think about where we were 8 years ago, and look at where we are now economically. And if you want to build on it and extend this prosperity to the people that have been left behind, then you've got a choice: Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary, Major, and Greg.

You know what our position is? How do you keep it going? First, keep paying the debt down to keep interest rates down. Why is that important to you? Because if you keep interest rates down, it means that you pay lower home mortgage payments, lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments. It means more jobs, higher income, a bigger stock market, a growing economy. They quadrupled the debt, and we're paying it down.

Then we say, let's take the money that's left and invest it in the education and health care of our people and our environment, in building our community, and in a tax cut we can afford—for child care, long-term care, college tuition costs, retirement.

Now, they say that we're not giving you a big enough tax cut, and they're promising you the Moon right up front. They offer a tax cut 3 times as big as ours—although most of you would actually get more money under ours—and then they say, in addition to that, "For all you young people, we're going to privatize Social Security; we're going to let you take 2 percent of your payroll tax and invest it in the stock market, and you'll make more money." And then they say to people my age and older, "But don't worry; we're going to give you all your benefits. They're going to take the money

out, and we're still going to pay you your benefit." And then they say, "Here's some money we'd like to spend."

Now, look, here's the first big difference—this is a huge deal for you, especially you young people. Difference number one: People ask me all the time, "What great new idea did you bring to economic policymaking in Washington to help turn this economy around?" And I always have a one-word answer, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] Not algebra, not trigonometry, not calculus, arithmetic. Anybody in elementary school can do this math.

Now, follow this: They project—the Government does, the Republicans do—a surplus of about $2 trillion over the next decade. And that's a lot of money, but forget the zeros, just say 2. Now, they acknowledge that their tax cut plus the interest cost associated with it is three-quarters of that—1.6. And then they want to privatize Social Security. And as the Vice President keeps pointing out, you can't give the same trillion dollars twice. So if you young folks take your trillion out, it's not going to be there to pay my Social Security check, right? So that money has got to come from somewhere. That costs a trillion dollars—1. And then they want to spend a little money, too, a half a trillion dollars—that's .5. Now, there's a $2 trillion surplus. They propose to spend 1.6 plus 1 plus .5, or 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [*Laughter*]

That's it. This is not rocket science. That's it. If you do that, you're back in debt; you've got higher interest rates. You pay more for college loans, home mortgages, car payments, credit card payments. Businesses pay more to borrow money. Therefore, they hire fewer people, and the stock market doesn't grow as much, and nobody makes as much money, and the economy doesn't grow like it would. This is a huge difference.

So we say—our leaders, Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Greg, and Major, they say, "Look, we'd like to give you more, but it's not fair; you can't do it all at once. You just can't take the money and run. We've got to keep this economy going." So question number one, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you just have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Major, and Greg.

Okay. Second question. This is not just a country that's better off; this is a better country—crime at a 26-year low; the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years; 2.5 million more kids with health insurance; the environment getting cleaner—we've tripled the number of toxic waste sites we've cleaned up over what they did in 12 years; we have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water; and we set aside more land for internal protection than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt almost 100 ago.

The schools are getting better. On the national test scores, the math scores are up; the reading scores are up; the science scores are up. The dropout rate is down; African-American high school graduation rate was almost exactly equal to white high school graduation rate last year for the first time in history. The college-going rate is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest increase in college aid in 50 years under this administration.

Now, second question, do you want to build on this progress and not reverse it? Don't you want to do better? Wouldn't you like it if our streets were safer, our environment was cleaner, we had more people with health insurance, and we had even more educational opportunities and more of our schools worked well? If you do, you've got a choice. Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and our Democrats in the House, do you know what they want? They want, number one, on crime, to keep putting more police on the street, keep taking steps to get guns out of the hands of criminals and kids.

Number two, they want a clean energy future, so that you don't have to worry sick in New York every winter about whether you'll have enough home heating oil or whether, if you've got it, you can afford it.

Number three, they want to continue to insure more kids, until all kids are insured, then their working parents are insured. We pass a Patients' Bill of Rights and a Medicare prescription drug program for all the seniors in this country who need that.

Number four, they want to keep working on the schools. You heard Major talking about that. If we win a majority in the House, he'll be the head of the Education Subcommittee, and I won't have to worry about education anymore. What do we want to do with schools? Universal preschool and after-school for all the kids who need it; smaller classes in the early grades, with 100,000 new teachers; school construction funds to build schools and repair schools, so kids are

not going to substandard schools and they have the facilities they need to get a good education; funds to help turn around failing schools and a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition—that's our program.

Now, you've got a choice. You have a choice. What does the other side want? Here's what they promise to do. On crime, they promise to repeal our program to put 100,000 police on the street. It works—never mind that, they're still going to repeal it. They say the Federal Government shouldn't be doing it, even if our streets are safer.

In education, they promise to repeal our commitment to putting 100,000 teachers in the classroom. They don't support what we want to do on school construction or universal preschool or after-school or tax deductibility for college tuition. On the environment, they think the only answer is to drill more oil. They don't believe in what we're trying to do with alternative energy and energy conservation. And in health care, they do not support the Patients' Bill of Rights or the Medicare drug program for all of our seniors or the plans we have to expand coverage to children and their parents. You couldn't have a bigger choice.

Now, you can either build on the progress of the last 8 years or reverse a lot of it. But if you want to build on it, you've only got one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Major, and Greg.

Here's the third question. We're going to do this at the end one more time, because I want you to do this to people. You look at this crowd. The people in this room could reach another 100,000 voters between now and election day with no sweat. Most of the people you know have never come to a rally like this. Isn't that right? Most of you have friends who have never come to a rally like this.

This is Saturday night. Most of the kids here probably have friends who wonder what you're doing at a rally like this on Saturday night. Is that right? [*Laughter*] Okay, so this is your job. When you leave here, you've got to be able to do this.

The third point is, maybe the most important of all, is that in the last 8 years, we have not only made economic and social progress; we have grown together as one America. The thing that's most important about this economic expansion is that it helped everybody. We have the lowest Latino and African-American unemployment ever recorded; average incomes are up over $5,000 after inflation; senior poverty is down below 10 percent for the first time ever; child poverty down 30 percent; overall poverty at a 20-year low; welfare rolls at a 32-year low, cut in half.

We're going forward together. It wasn't just that rich people made more money, middle class people and lower income working people did, too. And we need to keep going forward together.

And it wasn't just about money. When the Republicans urged us to end affirmative action, we said, don't end it, mend it, and we kept it. We continue to enforce the civil rights laws and involve people in the work of the Government, all kinds of people, and to try to break down barriers of discrimination. Now, if you want to keep building one America, you've got a huge choice here. And I'll just give you a few of the issues.

Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and our crowd, here's what they're for—just listen to this: hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, legislation to guarantee equal pay for women in the work force, legislation to guarantee fair treatment for legal immigrants, no matter where they're from, and Supreme Court and Federal court appointments that will protect civil rights, human rights, and a woman's right to choose.

Now, in every one of these issues—in every single one of these issues—the leaders of the other party have a different position—every one of them. No on hate crimes, no on employment nondiscrimination, no on the equal pay law for women, no on the court appointments to protect a woman's right to choose—every one of them a different position.

So if somebody tells you that, why should they vote, there's no real difference, you have to say, "Oh, no. If you want to keep the prosperity going and build on it, if you want to keep the social progress going and build on it, if you want to keep building one America, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Major, and Greg."

Now, let me ask you this: Don't you believe if you told everybody you knew of voting age just what I told you and what the three big issues were in the election, that the overwhelming majority of them would vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary? Don't

you believe that? [*Applause*] So I want you to think about this.

A lot of you have friends in neighboring States that are close in the Presidential election. A lot of you have friends here in New York who are trying to decide whether they should vote. A lot of you have friends who say, "Oh, I just saw a couple of TV ads; it's all just a mess to me; I don't know what the deal is here." You've got to tell them what the deal is. This is a big thing. And young people have the biggest stake of all in this election.

Even when it comes to preserving Social Security, you've got a big stake. Why? Because when people my age retire, the baby boomers, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The reason we want to preserve Social Security is not just for us; it's so our retirement does not bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandkids. Even that is a young person's issue.

Now I just want to say something real personal in closing. I believe I know Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary better than virtually any other voter in the country. [*Laughter*] As a matter of fact, I'm quite confident that I'm the person who knows the three of them put together the best of anybody who will vote. And I've had some passing experience with the White House in the last 8 years. [*Laughter*]

So I want to tell you a couple things that are personal about this. John Kennedy said the Presidency is a place of decisionmaking. Vice President Gore has more experience than his opponent. Vice President Gore, whether it was in hooking up our schools to the Internet or trying to develop new high-mileage vehicles or reducing the size of the Federal Government and putting more services on computer or helping to bring economic opportunities to poor areas or helping us to stand up for freedom around the world, he has done more good in the position of Vice President than anybody that ever held the job. Second, he has more knowledge. Third, he works harder than just about anybody I've ever known, and it matters how hard you work. Fourth, he's a good student; he keeps on learning, and it's a job that is constantly a learning experience. Even today I learned something new about my job—even today. And finally, he makes good decisions.

So what I want you to think about in your mind is, you know what the three big issues are. You also have a candidate who's a good man, who makes good decisions, who will be a great President. And I want you to tell that to people you know.

This whole set of ideas I just went over with you grew out of a political movement I was part of, that Joe Lieberman was a part of. He understands the basis, the intellectual basis, of the policies that we implemented that I just discussed, as well or better than anybody else in the entire United States Congress. He's a perfect partner for Al Gore.

Let me say one other thing. I think we're going to win the House. I think we've got a good chance to win the Senate. But you remember what Major Owens said, too, when you talk to people. If for some reason we didn't, there needs to be somebody there to stop the extremism of the Republican leaders in Congress, and Al Gore will do that.

Now, let me tell you something about Hillary. I've known her for 30 years, next spring. We just celebrated our silver wedding anniversary. I know you want to discount what I say, but I'm telling you this also as somebody who has known hundreds, maybe even thousands of people in public life, elected officials. Maybe tens of thousands, I don't know; I've known a bunch of people in politics. [*Laughter*]

There is nobody I know who knows more about children and family, health care and education and bringing economic opportunity to distressed places—knows more about all five of those subjects—than her. She's worked on some of those issues for 20 years. She's worked on some of those issues for 30 years.

And all those 30 years, she never asked anybody to do anything for her, never. She was always working on someone else's commission, starting some new organization, volunteering for some new civic endeavor to create some new effort, or lobbying for some bill or campaigning for me or some other politician. It wasn't until some of the people in the New York House delegation asked her to start looking at running for the Senate and traveling around the State. And she had never before asked anybody to do anything for her. But all this time, she's been working on these things.

And I can tell you something based on my knowledge of all the people I've known in public life. There is nobody that has a better combination of brains and heart and determination and knowledge and the ability to get things done,

even with people who don't agree with her. You will be so proud of her.

So are you going to do what I asked you to do? [*Applause*] Are you going to go tell people what's at stake? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to keep the prosperity going? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to keep building one America? [*Applause*] And what's the answer? Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Major, and Greg.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:53 p.m. in the gymnasium at Long Island University in Brooklyn. In his remarks, he referred to David J. Steinberg, president, Gale Stevens Haynes, provost, and Simone Knight, student body president, Long Island University; Mr. Steinberg's wife, Joan; H. Carl McCall, New York State comptroller; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; and New York State Assembly member Clarence Norman, Jr., 43d District, Kings County chair. Representative Major R. Owens was a candidate for reelection in New York's 11th Congressional District, and Gregory W. Meeks was a candidate for reelection in New York's Sixth Congressional District.

Remarks at an Arkansas Civic Leaders Luncheon in Little Rock, Arkansas
November 5, 2000

Thank you very much. I'm really glad to see you. [*Laughter*] I bring you greetings from Hillary and our all-grown-up daughter, who are otherwise occupied in New York today. And she's doing very well, and I'm proud of her. I think she's going to win on Tuesday.

I want to talk today about today and tomorrow. Nostalgia will have to wait. I do want to thank people that are up here on this stage for their friendship. I thank Mark Pryor for taking on this campaign and for getting involved in public life in our State, carrying on his great family tradition while his daddy becomes an ivy league egghead. [*Laughter*] You notice, I was the only one who was dumb enough to do that before I ran for office; David waited until afterward.

I want to thank Vic Snyder, who has been a great friend and supporter of mine in Congress and a great Representative for this district. It's been my honor to vote for him every time he's been on the ballot.

I want to thank James Lee Witt and Rodney Slater. They have represented our State so well in the Cabinet. They have represented our country. They have done superb jobs, and I'm very proud of them.

We have a few other Arkansans in the crowd. I can't see everybody because the lights are real bright. But I saw Ken Smith and Jim Bob Baker out there. They've also done very well by our administration and there may be others. But I'm really—and Janis Kearney, I think, is here, who—she keeps up with what I do every day, and some day when I want to write my memoirs, I'll be able to read what Janis said I did. And so when you read the book, it may be what she said instead of me, because I can't remember anything anymore. [*Laughter*]

But I want to thank all the people who are here. I want to thank Carroll Willis who has been down here working and who has been at the Democratic Party all these years and has done such a great job. And I want to thank my buddy Dale Bumpers. I finally got over being mad at him for leaving the Senate. [*Laughter*] You know, Dale and Dave and I couldn't quite calibrate our respective schedules and biological clocks so we could go out together. But I sort of envision a remake of the "Three Amigos" movie, where we just get on horses and ride out of Washington and thank hallelujah we survived it all.

Look, I want to talk about this election a little bit. Arkansas is close. Polls say we're a couple points behind. The people in this room could carry this State for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, if you want to bad enough. And I just want to say a few things. I appreciate what's been said, but our public life is always about tomorrow. And yet, yesterday is an indicator of tomorrow.

As near as I can see, the case that the other guys are making is, "Well, the economy is better; crime is down; welfare is down; the environment is better; education is improving; more people than ever are going on to college; we've got a decline in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in 12 years. So what we need to do is bag all those policies and do something entirely different. And among other things, now that we've got this surplus, I'm going to give it all back to you right now, and then some." Now, as nearly as I can see, that's the campaign. And I don't think people understand that. Because, as Vic would say, they run these ads on prescription drugs, and I'll say more about that and the Patients' Bill of Rights and all that. Why is that? Because they know that they've got a lot at stake in this election.

They know there are big differences, and they know that the voters understand what the differences are and what the consequences are, that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will be elected and the Democrats will win the House and the Senate. Therefore, there has to be a lot of muddying of the water. And it's a lot easier to muddy things up than it is to clarify them.

Plus which, I think a lot of people kind of have forgotten what it was like 8 years ago. And sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than it is in bad times. There are younger voters that will be voting in this Presidential election that don't even remember what it was like 8 years ago; even if they tried to think about it, they would have no memory of it.

So here's what I would like you to say to people for the next 3 days. The people in this room can carry this State for Al Gore if you want to bad enough. And this State could literally determine the outcome of the election. There are about 15 to 20 States that are literally within 3 points one way or the other. And no one knows what's going to happen, but what will happen is, the people that want it bad enough will win. That's what's going to happen.

Now, you know they want it bad enough because they don't like what we've done on issues where the majority of the people agree with us, and you know that they'll show up because they have been out a long time. So you've just got to decide whether you think this is worth fighting for; because if you do, we'll win.

Here is what I would like you to say to people. First of all, the Republicans believe that former President Reagan is the source of all wisdom. He said you should decide whether to continue the party in office based on whether you're better off today than you were 8 years ago. So, by the Reagan test, Al Gore wins.

But the real issue is, do you want to continue this prosperity and extend it to people and places that have been left behind? Now look, I want—I've never heard this as clearly explained as I think it needs to be. And the previous speakers talked about it a little bit, but I want you to think about it.

People ask me all the time, they come up to me, and every time I go someplace in the country, they say, "Oh, Mr. President, you've had such a nice, good 8 years, and you've had such a good economy; what great, new idea that you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen bring to economic policy in Washington?" And I always answer with one word, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] You know, and I'd normally tell them I was from Arkansas and I had to be Governor 12 years, and I always found arithmetic was good—I didn't need algebra, calculus, trigonometry—arithmetic. We made the numbers add up.

And what getting rid of the deficit did was to drive interest rates down, make it cheaper for people to borrow in the private sector. It ballooned the stock market, increased investment in business. It created over 22 million new jobs. And we did it in a way—this is the most important thing to me—it was good for everybody. Poverty went down; average income went above $40,000 for the first time in the history of the country. We all went forward together. But it starts with arithmetic.

Now, you can argue that Governor Bush and Al Gore have different tax plans and which one is better. Most people in Arkansas would be better off under the Gore plan in the short run, because it's more tilted toward middle class working people. But forget about that. Let's just look at the cost. And you can certainly argue about the Social Security plan, about whether it's good or bad to privatize Social Security. Let's forget about that for just a minute.

The projected surplus is $2 trillion. That sounds like a lot of money—just say 2. I don't think it will be that big, by the way, because this Congress put a lot of pork-barrel spending in to get themselves reelected, which I don't

think they'll be successful in doing, and I certainly hope not. But give the Republicans their number, 2. Now, the Republican tax cut costs 1.3, but because you're not paying down the debt as much, it has extra interest costs. That's another 300 billion, so it's really 1.6. Now, they have admitted that their privatization of Social Security plan costs a trillion dollars. And as the Vice President said, you can't spend the same money twice; you can't give the same money to young people to put in the stock market and then give it to those of us who are over 50, when our Social Security checks are due. So that's another trillion that has to come out of the surplus. So that's 1.6 and 1. And then they promise to spend some money, about half a trillion dollars—that's .5. Here's the big issue in this election, economically: 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1, and 3.1 is bigger than 2.

Now, I'm telling you, this is not rocket science. You get by all the romance and all the rhetoric, somebody up there has got to have arithmetic. We brought arithmetic back to Washington. The Republicans forgot about arithmetic for 12 years. They quadrupled the debt, and they want to go right back to the same economic policy they had before. And it's higher interest rates, which means trouble for all of you.

Do you know, the average—the first—people in America who are paying on a $100,000 mortgage today are saving $2,000 every single year in lower interest rates because we got rid of the deficit. It is estimated that Al Gore's plan will keep interest rates one percent lower for a decade. Why? Because he pays off the debt.

Now, you know what that's worth? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher income and a bigger stock market. That's how the rich get richer, and the rest of us do, too. [*Laughter*] Arithmetic.

Now, I'm telling you, you cannot go back to deficits without having higher interest rates and hurting ordinary people and weakening the overall economy. So you've just got to tell people this. You can't—you know, things are going along so well, they say, it's your money—which of course it is, the whole deal is yours. That's what the election is about.

So things are going along so well, they say, let's just take it all now. And here is the Vice President, that they criticize for telling people what they want to hear, and he said, "Uh-uh, we're going to first pay down the debt. Then we're going to take what's left, and we're going to invest in education, health care, and the environment and give the American people a tax cut we can afford, for child care, long-term care, the cost of college tuition, and retirement savings. That's what we're going to do."

But why are intelligent and very wealthy people like Bob Rubin still for Al Gore? Because they know they're better off with lower interest rates and working people having jobs and consuming and keeping this economy going.

Now, you can explain that to people. Anybody can understand that. You can't have a tax cut this big, a Social Security privatization program this big, and promise to spend this kind of money when there is not that much money. And the Gore/Lieberman plan is to pay down the debt, invest in the education of our children, in health care, in the environment, in national security, the things we have to have, and give the people a tax cut we can afford. We'll all be better off.

And you've just got to ask people, "Do you remember where we were 8 years ago? Do you want to build on this prosperity and extend it to others, or do you want to reverse it and go back to the previous economic program? It's not like we don't have a test here. We tried it our way for 8 years; before that, we tried it their way for 12 years. Our way works better. Vote for Gore." You can say that, and people will understand what you're saying.

The second thing I want to say is, this country is not just better off. This is a better, stronger, more united country. And I think it's worth pointing out that there were specific, serious policies of this administration that contributed to that.

The crime rate is at a 26-year low. Why? Because we've got 100,000 police on the street; we're putting another 50,000 on the street. The Brady bill kept guns out of a half million felons and stalkers, and no matter what our friends at the NRA say, there hasn't been a single hunter miss a day in the deer woods or a single sport shooter miss an event in Arkansas, not one, not one single day. It's just all a bunch of hogwash. But people are safer.

The environment: The air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, 43 million more Americans breathing clean air. We have safer drinking water, safer food, 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time. And we've set aside more land for permanent preservation than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt almost 100 years ago. And the economy got better, not worse.

Now, health care: I remember their guy was saying all the time, you know, "You had 8 years; you didn't do anything on health care." And I thought, there you go again. [*Laughter*]

When we took office, Al and I, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year—broke, out of money, kaput, busted. It's now good for 25 more years. And we've added preventive care for prostate cancer and for breast cancer. We have revolutionized care for diabetes. The American Diabetes Association said what we did was the most important thing since the development of insulin.

We've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years, because of the Children's Health Insurance Program we insisted be in the Balanced Budget Act.

Now, there's a difference here, and I'll come to that. What does Gore say? Pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights; pass a Medicare prescription drug program that all our seniors can afford to buy into. Give all our kids health insurance and insure as many of the working parents as we can afford to insure.

Education: I notice that the Republicans have quit saying there is an education recession. So every now and then—usually the facts have no impact on them. I almost admire that about them. [*Laughter*] Never mind the facts, they know what their line is, and they just say it. But they have kind of quit saying that.

But look at the facts here. The dropout rate is down; the high school graduation is up; the college-going rate is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest expansion in college aid in 50 years. But this is important: The math, the reading, and the science scores are up; there has been a 300 percent increase in the last 3 years in African-American and Hispanic kids taking advanced placement tests.

We have 800,000 kids now in after-school programs that weren't there before we took office. We've got, thanks to the leadership of our Education Secretary, Dick Riley, all but one State have academic standards now against which they measure their kids and systems for identifying failing schools and turn them around. So the schools are getting better.

Yes, the work is done by the schools, and yes, most of the money comes from the States. But the way we have spent this money has made a significant contribution to the continuing improvement of education in America.

So what's their answer to that? Change it all. It's not like you don't have a choice here. People need to know what the choice is. On crime they have committed to repeal the 100,000 police program. They say never mind the fact we've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the Federal Government has got no business doing that. Al Gore, he wants to put 50,000 more police on the street and keep going until America is the safest big country in the world.

On the environment, Al Gore wants to build on what we've done, and he'll do even better because the economy is stronger. They want to repeal my order setting aside 40 million roadless acres in the national forests and to weaken the clean air standards. If you want to do that, you should vote for them, if you really believe that I've hurt the economy so bad. But if I was trying to hurt the economy with the environmental policies I have, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*] I made a pure mess of that if I was trying to mess the economy up with my environmental policy.

On health care, they're against the Patients' Bill of Rights, against the Medicare drug program, against our program to expand coverage. Oh, yes, they run these ads, and they say, "We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, too." What they don't say, because they can't afford to say: "We're for as much of a Patients' Bill of Rights as the HMO lobby in Washington will let us be for"—which means it's a bill of suggestions, because if you get hurt, you can't sue.

On the Medicare drugs, they say, "We're for Medicare drugs, too." What they don't say is, "We're for as broad a plan as the big drug companies will let us be for"—so they don't lose their monopoly position. And who cares if they leave half the seniors out who needs these drugs.

You need to tell people this. They have a choice. But if they want every senior in this country to have access to medicine, if they want a real Patients' Bill of Rights, if they want to keep improving the environment as we grow

the economy, if they believe that we ought to be making, for example, fuel out of farm products and biomass—let me just tell you, the reason ethanol never caught on, even though we had a plant in Arkansas way back in 1980, is that it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But the Department of Agriculture is funding research that I believe will bear fruit in the next couple of years. And when it happens they will crack the chemical mystery, and it will be just like when you turn crude oil into gasoline. Then you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol, and you won't even have to use corn—you can use rice hulls; you can use hay; you can use any kind of biomass fuel with one gallon of gasoline. And when that happens, we'll all be going around getting 500 miles a gallon. Now, Al Gore will fund that and push that, and they won't. You can choose.

But you talk about something that could revolutionize life for America's farmers, change everything in rural America and in rural Arkansas, that's it. So that's what Gore wants to do. They think we can drill our way out of the energy problem we've got.

And in education, they want to repeal our commitment to put 100,000 teachers in the classroom. They say the Federal Government shouldn't be doing that. All I know is that when we passed class size standards in Arkansas in the early grades, the achievement of our children went up, and it is happening all over America. We have the biggest number of kids in the history of our country, and we need more teachers in those schools.

So you've got a choice. If you want to take down the 100,000 police and take down the 100,000 teachers and not have a real Patients' Bill of Rights and not have a Medicare prescription drug program that helps all of our people and not have a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition and weaken the environmental standards, you've got a choice. But if you kind of like having safer streets and a cleaner environment and knowing your National Government is supporting school reforms that work and helping more people get access to health care while we grow the economy, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and you need to tell the American people that.

We've got these two big questions. Do you want to build on the prosperity and keep it going; do you want to build on the social progress and keep it going? And there's huge choices.

And the third thing I'd like to say is this—and James Lee said this; it really meant a lot to me. You know, I've watched Rodney and James Lee for the last 20 years, and now they're maybe the two most popular people in the Cabinet. You know, James Lee is from Yell County; Rodney is from Lee County. And I think, you know, one of the reasons that they do so well is they came from little towns, and they learned to talk to people instead of talking "governmentese," and they understand human nature.

And here's James Lee Witt up here giving you a civil rights speech about how he has changed FEMA. [*Laughter*] But what he proved is that FEMA could be both competent and reflective of America. And the truth is, the more reflective of America it got, the more competent it got.

Now, that's the third big issue. You know, I tried to make every American, even when they and, on many occasions, I'm sure you, disagreed with some particular decision I made, I tried to make people feel at home with the White House, to know that I was pulling for ordinary Americans, that everybody—everybody—in this country interests counted, with the White House, with the Cabinet, with the decisions that were made.

And I think it's really important that we keep moving forward to build one America. That's why I'm for this hate crimes legislation and for employment nondiscrimination. That's why I'm for stronger equal pay laws for women. That's why I think it's important that the Supreme Court continue to protect civil rights and human rights.

This is a big deal in this election. They're against the hate crimes legislation. They're even against our attempts to strengthen the equal pay laws for women. And most people believe the only issue at stake in the Supreme Court is a woman's right to choose. That's not true. That's at stake, by the way, and it will certainly change depending on whether Al Gore wins or loses this election. You can go to the bank on that, because there will be at least two appointments in the next 4 years.

But something that could have a more profound effect on America is that there is already

a majority of 5-4 on that Court, that is determined to limit the ability of our National Government to protect and advance the civil rights and basic public health, safety, and welfare of the United States of America. Already, they have invalidated a provision of the Brady law because it required local folks to help us check criminal backgrounds. They invalidated a provision of the Violence Against Women Act—the Violence Against Women Act—because it required local government to do something to support our enforcement of that. And in the last couple of weeks, they invalidated an anti-AIDS-discrimination law. Now, these are bills we even got the Republicans in Washington to vote for.

The Supreme Court is to the right of the Republican Congress—already. You have got to think about this, and you've got to talk to people about this. People need to understand this is a big deal.

Now, it ought to be a happy election because nobody has to say anything bad about anybody else. Near as I can see, the Vice President has never one time questioned the character or the integrity of his opponents. I wish I could say the same thing for them about him. But it still hasn't been too bad an election. The only problem is, people are fixing to go to the polls, and there is still not absolute clarity about what the choice is, what the consequences are to real people and their families.

And look, this is a—I don't know if we'll have another election in my lifetime where we've got so much prosperity, so much social progress, the absence of crisis at home, the absence of threats to our security abroad. And I just want to echo one or two things that Dale Bumpers said.

First, let me say a word about Joe Lieberman. I've known him for 30 years. I met him when he was running for State senate, and I went to law school, in Connecticut. More than anybody else in the Congress, I think he clearly understands the approach that we brought to the country in 1992, whether you call it the New Democratic approach or the DLC approach or whatever. Basically, it was the idea that we would stop making false choices in Washington and try to unify our country. We could bring the deficit down and increase investment in education. We could be pro-business and pro-labor. We could be for a clean environment and for a growing economy.

But you've got to be disciplined to do that. And he understands as well as anybody that the real appeal of our opponents in this election is, "It's your money; let's just take it all now." Even though, as Dale Bumpers said, it hasn't materialized yet.

And they want to talk about spending all this surplus right now. It reminds me of those letters we used to get in the mail from Ed McMahon, you know, the sweepstakes letter: "You may have won $10 million." If you went out and spent the 10 million, you should vote for Bush and Cheney. If not, you should vote for Gore and Lieberman.

And what Dale said about the Vice President is absolutely right. But let me say, I think I know something about economic policy. And I hope I've learned something about decision-making and about the world at large. It matters whether you know about these issues. It matters how hard you work. You know, this is a job. It's not just a media event every day. It's a job.

A lot of reasons that these things have piled up, these good, positive changes, is that every day we had all these folks in the White House and all these folks in the Cabinet and Al Gore and I, we were working. We treated this like a job. We showed up, and we worked like crazy for 8 years. I got the gray hair to prove it. We worked at it.

It matters whether you work hard, and it matters whether you can learn and whether you're curious. But it also matters what kind of experience you have. John Kennedy said the Presidency was preeminently a place of decision-making. Al Gore makes good decisions.

When he had to come off the campaign trail a few days ago—we had all that trouble in the Middle East—and we were sitting in this room and for about 30 minutes he was asking questions from the various members of our national security team, I thought to myself, I would feel absolutely comfortable under any circumstances, with any crisis in the world, knowing that this man had to make the call. And that's a big deal, because it's still a world with real challenges out there.

So, good man, good decisions. I think he will be a great President. And you know as well as I do that if everybody understood the differences and the positions like I just explained them to you today, we'd win. Do you have any doubt of that?

Okay, so I'll say again, you can win this election in Arkansas for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman if you want to bad enough. And you just think about what we've got. We've got a chance, as Dale said, that at least in my lifetime we've never had, and we may not have it again in our lifetime, to literally build the future of our dreams for our kids.

So you just go ask people three questions: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to the people who have been left behind? Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? Do you want to keep doing it as one America, keep bringing people together? Do you want to vote for somebody who is experienced and solid and proven, who will work hard, who knows a lot, who understands the future? You just have one choice. It's not close. But it needs to be clear.

You've got 2 days to make it clear. Please, go do it. You'll be proud you did for the rest of your life.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. in the ballroom at the Statehouse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Arkansas State Attorney General Mark Pryor and his father, former Senator David Pryor; Kenneth L. Smith, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior; James R. (Jim Bob) Baker, Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration; Janis Kearney, Special Assistant to the President and Special Advisory for Presidential History; Carroll Willis, director, community service division, Democratic National Committee; former Senator Dale Bumpers; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen.

Remarks to the Community in Pine Bluff, Arkansas
November 5, 2000

The President. Thank you all very much. I want to thank—first, I thank the choir and my friend of nearly 20 years Carrie Paige, who looks exactly like she did 20 years ago, and I look 50 years older. [*Laughter*] God's been good to you. Thank you for your song; thank you for your music, all of you, so much.

I want to thank all the folks who came here with me: our State party chair, Vaughn McQuary. I want to thank Attorney General Mark Pryor—I don't know if he's here or not—there he is—the chairman of the Gore/Lieberman campaign in Arkansas. Thank you for taking it on. I want to thank my friend Lottie Shackelford and Sharon Priest and Hank Wilkins and all the other local officials.

And I want to thank my good buddy Congressman Danny Davis, who is from the Mississippi Delta in Arkansas, Phillips County, but now represents Chicago and is my great friend; thank him for coming here. I want to thank Carroll Willis, who has worked with me at the DNC for 8 years and has come down here and is working hard for us.

I want to thank James Lee Witt and Rodney Slater. What a great job they have done for you and for all America. They're two of the most popular people who have served in the Government in the tenure I've been there.

And I want to thank Dale Bumpers, who has stood by me through thick and thin and voted to turn this country around with the economic plan of 1993. I cannot tell you what having Senator Bumpers and Senator Pryor there early in my Presidency meant, not only to me but to the United States of America. They miss him in the Senate, but I'm glad he's home and stirring around with you.

And it's not true I fell asleep on him coming down here. [*Laughter*] He just has such a soothing, melodic voice, you just sort of drift off, you know? [*Laughter*]

I wanted to come down here for a couple reasons today, first of all to say thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. [Applause] Thank you.

Mike Ross—I met Mike Ross in 1982, when he was a teenager and he was driving me

around, and I was trying to do something in 1982 that had never been done before. I had been elected Governor and defeated, and I was trying to get elected again. And that's a pretty difficult psychological thing, because you can't go tell the voters they were wrong. [*Laughter*]

On the other hand, if you tell them they were absolutely right, they wonder well, why should they make a mistake then if they were right the first time to kick you out? So we were weaving around it. And we knew that the election would turn on what happened in eastern Arkansas, what happened in the 11 counties of northeast Arkansas, what would happen in the Delta, and whether we could get two-thirds of the vote in Jefferson County.

And I thought about it today, looking out at this sea of faces, when election night came in and the early votes came in and our friends down here said, "You're going to carry this county two to one." I thought, shut the door; the election is over; we're going back into the Governor's Mansion. Thank you for that, too, all of you here.

Now I want to talk a little bit about the future. I came down here for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Ross. But I also came down here for you and your children and your communities in this State that I love so much. You've been so good to me.

Look, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on a ballot somewhere. [*Laughter*] But it's okay. [*Laughter*] It's okay. And I am a little worried about what's going to happen to me when I leave office. They tell me I'll be lost for the first 3 or 4 months because, when I walk in a room, nobody will play a song anymore, and I won't know where I am. [*Laughter*]

But I want you to think about this. This election is just as important as the election in 1992 that sent Al Gore and me to Washington. And yet, sometimes I think people don't think that because things are going so well. And I can just say, number one, anybody in this audience who is over 30 years old knows this statement is true. If you've lived more than 30 years, you can remember one time at least in your life when you made a big mistake not because things were going so tough but because they were going so well, you thought you didn't have to concentrate. Is that right?

Audience members. Right.

The President. Okay. So I just want you to take a minute or two and concentrate, and then I want to ask you to help concentrate the energies of every person you know in this State, and especially in this congressional district, on this election. It's about you and your kids and your grandkids and the future of our State and Nation.

And you know, President Reagan used to say that there was a simple test for whether the party in the White House ought to be continued: Are you better off today than you were 8 years ago? Of course, they have now revised their position. Their position on that is, that's a test only if the Republicans are in. [*Laughter*] But they said it and said it and said it.

What I think the question you have to go out and ask people is—and I want you to think about it—I think this whole race for Congress and for the Presidency and Vice Presidency comes down to three questions: Number one, do you want to keep this prosperity going and bring it to the people that haven't felt it yet? If you do, you have a choice. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Mike Ross—what do they say? They say, "First, let's keep paying down the debt. We've worked too hard to turn that deficit around. Let's get America out of debt for the first time since 1835. And then we'll figure out what we've got to do to do that, and then we'll take what's left, and we'll invest in education and health care and the environment and the national security of the country, and we'll give the American people a tax cut they can afford for college tuition, for long-term care for our parents, for child care, for retirement savings. Pay down the debt to keep interest rates low and economic growth high; invest and cut taxes, but within the discipline of thinking about our kids and our grandkids."

Now, you've got a choice. What do the other folks say in the Republican Party, Mike Ross's opponent and the candidates for national office? They say, "Hey, it's your money. We've got a surplus. We're going to give it all back to you now." Right? They say, "Vote for us; we'll give you a tax cut that's 3 times as big, and if you're young, we'll let you privatize your Social Security taxes so you can put them in the stock market; and if you're not so young, we'll just keep writing your check. And, oh, by the way, here's a little money we want to spend."

Now, what's the problem there?

Audience member. It doesn't add up.

The President. Yes, it doesn't add up. [*Laughter*] I want you all to listen to this. I want you all to listen to this; this is simple. People ask me all the time, "What great new progress did you bring to Washington?"

[*At this point, an audience member required assistance.*]

The President. Do you need to move that, gentlemen? Okay. Go ahead. We need some help here. Can we have one more person up here? He's just hot. Give him a hand. [*Applause*]

You all listen, this is one thing you could say that might change some votes in the next 2 days, and it's simple—and a lot of people don't know it. They admit, the other guys do, the surplus is supposed to be $2 trillion over the next 10 years. Now, who knows? Trillion, schmillion, that's a lot of zeros. [*Laughter*] Let's make it simple. Let's say 2, okay? Then their tax cut and the interest rate associated with it costs 1.6 trillion—1.6. Then their privatization of Social Security, as the Vice President has pointed out, if you give the young people 2 percent of payroll and you promise the old folks the same money that the young people are taking out of the bank, you've got to come up with the money somewhere. Okay? That costs 1. Then the money they want to spend, it's about a half a trillion dollars—.5. Two trillion dollar surplus—2.

Here's the problem: 1.6 tax cut, 1 Social Security privatization, .5 spending equals 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. It doesn't add up, and it's going to take us back to deficits. We'll never pay the debt down; interest rates will be higher; the economy will be weaker.

Look, man, this affects everybody. This affects everybody. On a $100,000 home mortgage, the people paying on a $100,000 home mortgage are paying $2,000 a year less in payments because we turned deficits to surpluses, just on a home mortgage.

I've seen an economic study which indicates the Vice President's plan might keep interest rates one percent lower for a decade. Do you know what that's worth? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loans, more jobs, higher incomes, bigger stock market, stronger economy.

So, question number one—go out across this district and across this State and you tell them, "If you want to build on the prosperity and get America out of debt and take what's left for education and health care and a tax cut, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross."

Now, the second question. Our country is not just better off; it's a better country. Crime is at a 26-year low, welfare at a 32-year low. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up in our 8 years as in there 12 years before, more land set aside than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt, 100 years ago.

We have 90 percent of our children immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in history. We added 25 years to the life of Medicare, and the number of people without health insurance is going down for the first time in 12 years.

In our schools—all across America in our schools, math and reading and science scores are up; the dropout rate is down; the high school graduation is up. Last year, for the first time in the history of America, the African-American high school graduation rate was virtually equal to the white graduation rate. We have, in the last 3 years alone, a 300 percent increase in the number of African-American and Latino kids taking advanced placement classes and going to college, and the highest college-going rate ever, because we've given you the biggest increase in college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago.

Okay, question number two, do you want to build on this progress, or do you want to vote for somebody that will reverse the things we've done? You have a choice. Now look, this is something you can't see in those expensive TV ads. Let's just look at the facts here. Number one, if you vote for the Democrats, they will keep putting police on the streets. South Arkansas is full of law enforcement officers that were put there under our administration's program to keep driving the crime rate down.

Number two, we will keep putting teachers in the classroom and provide money to build and modernize and repair schools and for after-school programs and summer school programs and preschool programs. And we'll make the cost of college tuition tax deductible.

We will build on our clean air, clean water record, especially in the area of energy. And

the thing that will matter most to southeast Arkansas is this: We are funding research now, which Al Gore will double or more, trying to determine how to make farm-based fuel more efficiently. Most of you think of it as ethanol made from corn. But you can actually make fuel from rice hulls, from grass, from hay, from anything.

Here's the problem. It takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But we're doing research which is very promising that, when we're through, you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol with one gallon of gasoline. That's like you all will be getting 500 miles to the gallon. It will change America forever. It will do a lot to solve the problem of global warming, and it will do a lot to raise farm income in Arkansas and everyplace else in the United States of America.

Now, in the area of health care—you heard Mike Ross say this—we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights; we're for Medicare prescription drugs for all the seniors who need it; and we want to expand coverage to children and to their families. That's the Gore plan. Now, you've got a choice. If you vote for them, they have committed—committed—and in the case of his opponent, often voted already—to get rid of the 100,000 police, get rid of the 100,000 teachers, no money for school construction, no money to expand health care coverage, a phony Patients' Bill of Rights that the HMO's will let them have, and a limited Medicare drug program because the big drug companies won't let them provide drugs to every senior that needs it.

You've got a choice. But if you want to keep building on the progress, if you want America to be safer, if you want the environment to be cleaner, if you want there to be more earnings in southeast Arkansas from a new energy future, if you want to expand health care coverage and, most important of all, if you want to make education better and make sure all of our children learn and all of our schools and everybody can afford to go to college—look, you just have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross.

Here's the third thing, and this is maybe the most important thing of all to me. If the good Lord came to me on this Sunday afternoon and said, "Bill, you can't finish your term; your life is over; you're history. I'll give you one wish. What would you wish for?" I wouldn't even wish for prosperity. I would wish for us to be a more united country.

Now look, I know it's hot, and I'm nearly done, but you've got to get this down because you've got to do the talking after I leave. What's the special thing about our economic expansion? It's not just the longest economic expansion in history. It's not just 22 million new jobs. This is the first time in 30 years when people at all income levels benefited. Yes, we had more billionaires and more millionaires. But we also had average income going up over $5,000; median income over $40,000 for the first time; 20-year low in poverty; 30 percent drop in child poverty; senior poverty below 10 percent for the first time in history; the welfare rolls cut in half.

Now, that's what's happened. Why? Because under our way of doing this, we all go forward together. That's why I wouldn't get rid of affirmative action when the Republicans wanted to do it, because I wanted us all to go forward together.

What does that mean? That means we Democrats, we're for things like the minimum wage and the hate crimes bill and equal pay for women and the defense of civil rights and human rights by our courts. That's what we're for. Now, if you want us to go forward together, you've got to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross.

Now, let me just say one other thing about Mike Ross. I'm really proud of him. I've seen him grow up. I've seen him grow in the State Senate. I've seen him grow on this campaign trail. And I haven't seen any of these ads he was talking about. But I want you to know two things. I'll bet you anything there's some ad up somewhere where Mike's opponent is taking credit for all the money that Congress just came up with for two bridges across the Mississippi River. [*Laughter*] Is that right?

Well, I've got the Secretary of Transportation here as my witness. And I want you all to listen to this now. We've been working a long time for those bridges. But the Congress is in the control of Senator Lott from Mississippi and Tom Delay and Dick Armey from Texas, and they didn't want to give us that stuff. But we got those bridges, and we got $20 million for the Delta Commission, which will help this area. We got a lot of that stuff.

But I have to tell you what. You know why we got that money finally this year? Because

Mike Ross ran against the incumbent Congressman, and they're terrified he's going to lose. When those bridges get built, you ought to name them after Mike Ross. They ought to be the Mike Ross Memorial Bridges across the Mississippi River. Don't take my word for it. Ask Rodney. Ask Danny Davis—he's in the Congress. I know what I'm talking about. You put a plaque on those bridges when they get up, and you put Mike Ross's name on it. Now, I just want to say—I just couldn't resist it. [*Laughter*]

I want to say one other thing. This young man has a lot of energy; he will work hard; he will come home; he will serve his constituent faithfully. And that incumbent Congressman could not do a bit better than he will do. And if the Democrats win a majority, as most people think they will, then he'll be more effective at coming home and doing that. But there's a huge difference here. He will vote for you when he's in Washington, too. That is the difference.

And I'd like to say one final thing about Al Gore. You know, we've worked together for 8 years. He's done more good in the position of Vice President than any American in the history of this country. There's no question about that. Whether it is in managing the reduction of the size of Government to its smallest point since 1960 or managing our effort to hook up our classrooms to the Internet or trying to get higher mileage vehicles out of Detroit or dealing with a lot of our most sensitive foreign policy issues, he's experienced. He works like a dog. He works as hard as anybody I have ever known. And I don't care what anybody tells you; in the world we're living in, it matters whether you're willing to work hard. And he keeps learning, and he cares about these things.

Now, here's what I want to ask you to do. You can remember those three things I said, can't you? If you want to build on the prosperity, and you know that 3.1 is bigger than 2, and you want America to be out of debt with low interest rates and high growth, you've got to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross.

If you want a Patients' Bill of Rights and Medicare drugs and funds to construct schools and hire teachers, if you want us to keep investing in new forms of fuel, if you want to keep moving forward with more police in little towns and rural areas in Arkansas, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross.

If you want a policy where we're all going forward together, which is why we're for the minimum wage and equal pay and civil rights as one America, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross.

Now, here's what I want to tell you: This race is tight as a tick—[*laughter*]—here, in this district, in this State, and all over this country. There's 12 or 15 States that are within 2 points, one way or the other. And I'll tell you who is going to win. Who is going to win is, who wants to go bad enough.

If you want Mike Ross to win badly enough, there's enough people right here to win this race for him. If you want Al Gore to carry Arkansas and you believe in what we've done and you're proud of what we've done the last 8 years, and you can't imagine why anybody would want to reverse these policies that are working instead of build on them, there's enough people right here in this room to carry the election.

Every one of you—every one of you has a ton of friends who have never come to a rally like this, don't you? You've got a lot of friends that have never heard a President speak or a Governor speak, and they're probably wondering what you're doing here on Sunday afternoon. You could be home watching football. Is that right?

So what I want you to promise yourself is, every free minute you've got between now and the time the polls close, you will call people and say, "Let me tell you why you ought to vote, let me tell you why you ought to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Mike Ross." We've got to keep the prosperity going, not put it at risk; we've got to keep the progress going, not reverse it; we've got to keep going forward together as one country. If you will do that, Mike Ross and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, they're going to have a big celebration Tuesday night, and our children will have a brighter future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in the Banquet Hall at the Pine Bluff Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to vocalist Carrie Paige; State Attorney General Mark Pryor; Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, and Carroll Willis, director, community service division, Democratic National Committee; Arkansas Secretary of State

Sharon Priest; State Representative Hank Wilkins; former Senators Dale Bumpers and David Pryor; and Mike Ross, candidate for Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District.

Remarks on Funding To Provide Debt Relief for Poor Nations
November 6, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. I'd like to welcome you all here to the White House, especially the distinguished members of the diplomatic corps who are here, and four of the Members of the United States Congress who helped to make this possible: Representative Spencer Bachus, Representative John Kasich, Representative John LaFalce, and Senator Paul Sarbanes. I thank you all for being here.

You know, in Washington, DC, if you get a group this diverse in the same room, you're normally there for a roast. [*Laughter*] Today, happily, it's a celebration.

Just a few moments ago, with the members of the administration who are here, I signed into law a bill to provide funding for the entire $435 million needed for the United States to do its share in debt relief this year for the world's poorest countries. It also gives the International Monetary Fund the authority it needs to do its share, as well.

I am so grateful for everyone here who made it possible, including Secretaries Summers and Albright, Gene Sperling, Sandy Berger, and the other members of the administration, representatives of the religious organizations, the NGO's, the business community, members of the diplomatic corps, and especially the Members of Congress who had the most astonishing bipartisan coalition for this endeavor.

I would like to thank one Member who is not here, Nancy Pelosi, for all the work she did on this as well. And I am sorry that Bobby Shriver, who also played a key role in this effort, could not be with us today because of his mother's illness, and I ask for your prayers for him and his family, and especially for his remarkable mother, Eunice, who has fought for so many good humanitarian causes in her long and rich life.

Our Nation is taking this important step today because we understand that making the global economy work for everyone is not a political nicety but an economic, strategic, and moral necessity. Open markets and open trade are critically important to lifting living standards and building shared prosperity. But they alone cannot carry the burden of lifting the poorest nations out of poverty. While the forces of globalization may be inexorable, its benefits are not, especially for countries that lack the most important building blocks of progress—a healthy population with broadbased literacy.

Here in our Nation, this will be remembered as a time of great plenty, but we cannot forget that for too many of the world—too many in the world, it is still a time of astonishing poverty. Nearly half the human race, 2.8 billion people, lives on less than $2 a day. In many countries, a child is 3 times more likely to die before the age of 5 than to go to secondary school. One in 10 children dies before his or her first birthday. One in three is malnourished. The average adult has only 3 years of schooling. This is not right, not necessary, and no longer acceptable.

I have committed our Nation during my service as President to wage an intensified battle against global poverty. I never accepted the idea that millions have to be left behind while the rest of us move ahead. The health of nations is not a zero-sum game. By lifting the weakest, poorest among us, we lift all the rest of us, as well.

I hope that this idea will be a priority in our foreign policy for a long time to come, no less important than promoting trade, investment and financial stability. It will be good for our economy because it represents an investment in future markets, good for our security because in the long run it is dangerously destabilizing to have half the world on the cutting edge of technology while the other half struggles on the bare edge of survival.

But most of all, as the religious leaders around the world have told us, and as those here will make clear again, it will be good for

our souls, because global poverty is a moral affront and confronting the challenge is simply the right thing to do.

The United States has greatly increased funding to combat diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis in developing countries, which combine to claim one in four of the lives lost on the planet every year. With the bill I just signed, we will have more than doubled our support for HIV/AIDS prevention treatment and care in just 2 years. And again, this is a great tribute to the bipartisan agreement achieved in Congress.

I hope soon Congress will put even more resources behind the World Bank's AIDS trust fund, a bipartisan initiative that I think deserves every American's support, and pass a vaccine tax credit to increase immunization in the world's poorest countries.

We have also launched a $300 million pilot initiative to provide free meals, to encourage the parents of 9 million boys and girls in poor countries to send them to school. We are working to dramatically expand support for nations committed to expanding basic literacy and reducing abusive child labor. We have initiated the Digital Opportunity Task Force, and we're working to help 20 African countries now connect to the Internet, training 1,500 government and civic institutions to do it.

But none of these efforts is more important than relieving the world's poorest nations from the crippling burden of massive debt. Debt that was often piled up by dictators who have now fled the scene. Debt so crushing that in some instances, the annual interest payments on it exceeds the national budgets for health and education. Debt that is a drag on growth and a drain on resources that could be used to help meet the most basic human needs: clean water, schools, medicine, food.

More than a year ago, His Holiness the Pope called for debt forgiveness in this, the jubilee year. With the help of countless others, this grassroots effort grew into Jubilee 2000. The United States made this issue a centerpiece of the G–7 summit in Cologne last year. We crafted a plan for creditor nations to triple the debt relief available to the world's poorest nations, provided—and this is an important "provided"—that they committed themselves to economic reform, that they channel the savings into health and education, and that they resolve to have peaceful relations with their neighbors.

Today the United States follows through on our part of that international commitment. Already, debt relief is making a difference around the world. Mozambique, for example, is buying much-needed medicines for government clinics. Uganda used its savings to double its primary school enrollment.

Now, with the United States' contribution, Bolivia will save $77 million and will start using it on health and education. Honduras will begin to offer every child 9 years of schooling, instead of 6. I believe everyone here is clear about why we have had the success so far. We have worked together across lines that too often divide—lines of party, religion, geography—to accomplish a common aid.

In this group, we have evangelists and economists, Democrats and Republicans, nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, the business community, advocates for Africa. When you get this many people from this many different backgrounds pointing in the same direction, you can be pretty sure it's the right direction.

I thank all of you again for your inspired work. I also want to thank one more person who couldn't be here today, Bono. [*Laughter*] Bono has done—I can't help noting, there have been a lot of ancillary benefits to Bono's passionate devotion to this. [*Laughter*] I'll never forget one day Secretary Summers coming in to me saying, "You know, some guy just came in to see me in jeans and a T-shirt, and he just had one name, but he sure was smart. Do you know anything about him?" [*Laughter*]

So Bono has advanced the cultural awareness—[*laughter*]—of the American political establishment, embracing everyone from Larry Summers to Jesse Helms. It's been a great gift to America's appreciation of modern music. [*Laughter*]

One of U2's biggest hits is "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For." Well, with this bill and these funds and this diverse coalition, Bono and the rest of us, we've found what we're looking for, and we need to build on it. And let's give Bono a big hand today. He'll be watching, I'm sure. [*Applause*] Thank you.

The song goes on to say that we have found the spirit to climb the highest mountains, to break the bonds and loose the chains. It shows that when we get the Pope and the pop stars all singing on the same sheet of music, our voices do carry to the heavens. The question now for us is, where do we go from here?

We have to implement this program well; and if we do implement it well and it works, then there will be broad support around the world to extend it to other nations.

We need to find the same energy to develop a real, comprehensive, and adequate consensus on helping nations to turn around the AIDS struggle. We need to direct this energy toward making sure that every child, even in the poorest countries, gets the chance to develop his or her full potential in a decent school. We need to develop the capacity to help struggling countries that have totally inadequate public health systems and inadequate clean water systems, the basics of a decent life, develop those systems.

In short, we need to redirect this energy toward a worldwide consensus on the importance of building a global economy with a human face that leaves no one behind. Based on what I have seen in these last several months, I think we can do that, if we bring the same dedication, the same commitment, the same energy that have brought about this celebration today.

Let me say, for me, this last year and a half or so has been an incredible experience, thanks to so many of you. I thank particularly the Members of Congress. I embarrassed, I think, Spencer Bachus—I was afraid it would generate a write-in campaign to beat him in his heavily Republican district because I said that he had absolutely nothing to gain by doing this. He just did it because he thought it was the right thing to do. And that's true of so many of you.

So I just want to say that I believe this is one of the most important moments of the last 8 years for the United States of America. I believe that this will put our country squarely on the side of humanity for a very, very long time to come. And I am profoundly grateful to all of you.

And now I would like to ask the president of Bread for the World, the Reverend David Beckmann, to come to the podium.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point Reverend Beckmann, Rev. Elenora Giddings Ivory, director, Washington office, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence H. Summers made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you very much. This is the conclusion of our program. I would like to say that I am personally grateful to a lot of people who didn't get to speak today, but who worked like crazy on this: Gene Sperling, who found an excuse to sleep even less at night until this passed—[*laughter*]—and John Podesta; Steve Ricchetti; Chuck Brain, who lobbied this for us so heavily in the Congress. And I thank Sylvia Mathews and Jack Lew at OMB, and all the others who worked on this. And, Secretary Albright, I thank you.

One of the things that we do with our AID program to try to alleviate poverty is, we make 2 million microenterprise loans a year to poor people trying to develop functional economic enterprises in poor countries. It is absolutely impossible if they're being weighed down. I completely agree with the conclusion of Secretary Summers' talk. But the instruments for creating opportunity that the United States has now are far more likely to succeed in those states where the debt has been relieved.

What a happy day. Let's remember the admonition of all the speakers and keep on working at it. And next year when I'm just Joe Citizen, I'll do my part, too. Let's keep going.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Shriver III, Jubilee 2000 advocate, and his mother, Eunice Kennedy Shriver; Pope John Paul II; and musician Bono. H.R. 4811, making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for fiscal year 2001, approved November 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106–429.

Statement on Signing Legislation for Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations, 2001

November 6, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4811, the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001. As I have often said, there is a right and a wrong way to conduct budget negotiations. When we have worked together, we have unfailingly made progress. When there is a genuine spirit of cooperation and compromise, we can accomplish great things for our people. This Act, the result of just such a bipartisan effort, supports our efforts to promote peace and stability around the world, in turn helping to make our Nation more safe and secure.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation funds our landmark initiative to provide debt relief to the poorest of the world's nations. By fully funding our commitment to debt relief, the bill supports this historic effort to give these poorest countries a critical opportunity to effect reform while using funds to reduce poverty and provide basic health care and education for their people. I commend the bipartisan efforts in the Congress to fund this vital program, as well as efforts of all those across the political spectrum who joined forces to secure this critically important funding.

Likewise, I am pleased that this legislation dramatically increases funding to fight HIV/AIDS. In nations around the world, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death and is undermining decades of effort to reduce mortality, improve health, expand educational opportunities, and lift people out of poverty. The funds provided by the bill will significantly expand our prevention and treatment efforts in Africa and other regions of the world to turn the tide against this deadly pandemic.

This legislation also helps strengthen our efforts to support democracy and stability in Southeastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, and other key regions. In particular, it includes increased funding for our continued efforts to support democracy and reform in Kosovo, and to support the new, democratically elected government in Yugoslavia. It also includes additional resources to combat terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

Certain provisions of the Act could interfere with my sole constitutional authority in the area of foreign affairs by directing or burdening my negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations. Several sections, including 514 (Surplus Commodities), 564 (Sanctuary to Indicted War Criminals), and 577 (Kyoto Protocol), purport to specifically direct the Executive on how to proceed in negotiations or discussions with international organizations and foreign governments. I will not interpret these provisions to limit my ability to negotiate and enter into agreements with foreign nations. In order to avoid intrusion into my negotiating authority and my ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive diplomatic negotiations, I will not interpret section 566(b) (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) to require me to disclose either the contents of diplomatic communications or specific plans for particular negotiations in the future.

The legislation provides increased funding for a number of other programs that support our global interests. It provides additional funding for our Greening the Globe Initiative, which protects biodiversity habitats around the world, and for the Global Environment Facility. It also provides increases for our Peace Corps volunteers around the world, and for the Export-Import Bank, which supports the export of American products overseas. I am also pleased that the Act provides $135 million for emergency disaster assistance for Southern Africa, including Mozambique.

Finally, I am pleased that this legislation commits additional critical funding for international family planning organizations and lifts the restrictions hampering their work, restrictions I have strongly opposed in the past.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

November 6, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4811, approved November 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106–429.

Statement on the Death of David Brower
November 6, 2000

I was saddened to learn today of the death of David Brower, one of the earliest and most ardent defenders of the extraordinary natural heritage that enriches and unites all Americans. Over more than half a century, from Cape Cod to the Grand Canyon to the Alaska wilderness, he fought passionately to preserve our Nation's greatest natural treasures. His fiery activism helped build and energize the modern environmental movement, rallying countless people to the defense of our precious planet. Like the towering redwoods of his native California, David Brower's conservation legacy will stand tall and proud for generations to come.

Hillary and I extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Anne, his family, and his many friends and supporters throughout the world.

Statement on Signing the Executive Order on Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments
November 6, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign a revised Executive order on consultation with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order, itself based on consultation, will renew my administration's commitment to tribal sovereignty and our government-to-government relationship.

The first Americans hold a unique place in our history. Long before others came to our shores, the first Americans had established self-governing societies. Among their societies, democracy flourished long before the founding of our Nation. Our Nation entered into treaties with Indian nations, which acknowledged their right to self-government and protected their lands. The Constitution affirms the United States' government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes both in the Commerce Clause, which establishes that "the Congress shall have the Power To . . . regulate commerce . . . with the Indian Tribes," and in the Supremacy Clause, which ratifies the Indian treaties that the United States entered into prior to 1787.

Indian nations and tribes ceded lands, water, and mineral rights in exchange for peace, security, health care, and education. The Federal Government did not always live up to its end of the bargain. That was wrong, and I have worked hard to change that by recognizing the importance of tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relations. When I became the first President since James Monroe to invite the leaders of every tribe to the White House in April 1994, I vowed to honor and respect tribal sovereignty. At that historic meeting, I issued a memorandum directing all Federal agencies to consult with Indian tribes before making decisions on matters affecting American Indian and Alaska Native peoples.

Today, there is nothing more important in Federal-tribal relations than fostering true government-to-government relations to empower American Indians and Alaska Natives to improve their own lives, the lives of their children, and the generations to come. We must continue to engage in a partnership, so that the first Americans can reach their full potential. So, in our Nation's relations with Indian tribes, our first principle must be to respect the right of American Indians and Alaska Natives to self-determination. We must respect Native Americans' rights to choose for themselves their own way of life on their own lands according to their time honored cultures and traditions. We must also acknowledge that American Indians and Alaska Natives must have access to new technology and commerce to promote economic opportunity in their homelands.

Today I reaffirm our commitment to tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and self-government by issuing this revised Executive order on consultation and coordination with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order builds on prior actions and strengthens our government-

to-government relationship with Indian tribes. It will ensure that all Executive departments and agencies consult with Indian tribes and respect tribal sovereignty as they develop policy on issues that impact Indian communities.

NOTE: The Executive order of November 6 and the National American Indian Heritage Month proclamation of November 8 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Signing the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act
November 6, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 5178, the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act. This legislation requires changes in the bloodborne pathogens standard in effect under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Supported by healthcare workers and their unions, as well as a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, this bill will help to ensure the safety of health care workers who may be exposed to disease while handling certain medical devices. The Needlestick Safety Act makes clearer the responsibility of employers to lessen the risk of injuries to workers from contaminated sharp devices. It also encourages manufacturers of medical sharps to increase the number of safer devices in the market. This legislation will help to make health care occupations safer.

NOTE: H.R. 5178, approved November 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106–430.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
November 6, 2000

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 August 1–September 30, 2000. The previous submission covered events during June and July 2000.

The United States has remained steadfast in its efforts to bring about a negotiated Cyprus settlement based on a bizonal, bicommunal federation. I conveyed our views to Turkish President Sezer during a meeting at the United Nations Millennium Summit, emphasizing the importance of a just and lasting solution for all Cypriots. Secretary Albright delivered a similar message to her Greek and Turkish counterparts during the United Nations General Assembly. Special Presidential Emissary Alfred Moses, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald Bandler continued to provide diplomatic support to the United Nations-sponsored proximity talks in July and early August in Geneva and again in September in New York. The United Nations reports that this process has taken a "qualitative step forward" and was scheduled to resume in Geneva on November 1.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Statement on Signing the Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000

November 7, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1586, the "Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000." This Act is critical to the economic viability of individually owned Indian lands and the success of the Department of the Interior's ongoing efforts to implement the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994. It will help reduce the administrative and financial burden arising from the fractionated ownership of Indian lands.

The Act puts provisions in place for probate reform and establishing uniform rules for the descent and distribution of interests in allotted lands. It also contains provisions for the consolidation of fractional interests, as well as preventing lands from being taken out of trust when inherited by non-Indians. In addition, it will enhance opportunities for economic development by specifying the minimum percentage of owners of fractional interests that must consent to leasing agreements. Finally, it extends the Secretary's authority to acquire fractional interests, of 2 percent or less, for tribal consolidation, through the pilot project that my Administration and the Congress initiated in 1999. Since many Native Americans die without wills, it also authorizes estate planning assistance.

The Act results from our close consultation and collaboration with the Congress, the tribes, and the Indian landowners that began in 1994 and has been one of my Administration's top priorities in Indian trust fund management reform. Today's action will help bring Indian land ownership, management, and development into the 21st century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1586, approved November 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106–462.

Remarks on the 2000 Presidential Election and an Exchange With Reporters

November 8, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. Well, if ever there was a doubt about the importance of exercising democracy's most fundamental right, the right to vote, yesterday put it to rest. No American will ever be able to seriously say again, "My vote doesn't count."

The American people have now spoken, but it's going to take a little while to determine exactly what they said. The process for that is in motion, and the rest of us will have to let it play out.

I want to congratulate Vice President Gore and Governor Bush on a vigorous, hard-fought, truly remarkable campaign.

Thank you very much.

Conversation With Vice President Gore

Q. Mr. President, did you advise the Vice President to rescind his concession last night?

The President. No, sir. I didn't talk to him about it at all, one way or the other. I talked to him afterward.

We had a great talk later, when the situation was as it is now, and we were laughing. We had a—he was in a good humor. He talked—we talked about the unpredictability of life and how he'd done all he could, and he was pleased that he was ahead in the popular vote at the time. I don't know what the latest totals are. And we had a very good talk. And he congratulated Hillary, and they had a nice little visit.

But I was just like you last night—I was a fascinated observer. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:26 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, on his return from Chappaqua, NY. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Interview With Maria Salinas of Univision
October 30, 2000

Budget Negotiations

Ms. Salinas. Okay, let's start talking exactly about what's happening now on Capitol Hill. Of course, you're in the middle of a very bitter battle with Congress on the remaining legislation that you want passed, but Republicans are blaming you and accusing you of not wanting to negotiate. Are you willing to compromise with them on certain issues?

The President. Of course, but let's look at the facts here. We signed—I have signed all but two of the appropriations bills they have passed. There's only two appropriations bills left and one bill dealing with taxes and restoring funds to the health care system.

Now, in every case where we have negotiated in good faith, we have reached compromise, and I have signed a bill. I signed a bill the other day which had the biggest increase in the history of the country for land preservation; another bill which provided almost 80,000 vouchers for people to move from welfare to work and have housing vouchers; another bill which provided real improvements in veterans' health care programs.

So we've had lots and lots of bills that resolved longstanding differences in a principled, compromised way. The only difference is that the ones that are outstanding that they're blaming me for, instead of negotiating, they basically walked out of the room, left the Democrats in the White House there. They came up with their own bill. They said, "This is the best we can do. Take it or leave it." Now, that's not a negotiation. And that's a matter of fact. No one disputes that.

So I'm prepared to negotiate with them but not to let them run over me. That's one of the big things the voters have to think about in this election year, is whether they really want the Republican leadership in control of Congress and then someone in the White House of the same party that allows them to do this sort of thing without any kind of restraint, because they would—the leadership is to the right of their own constituency.

We were just talking before the interview started that at 2:30 in the morning, this morning, we had reached an agreement on an education bill that also involves the Labor Department, that would constitute the biggest increase in education in history. We'd double the number of kids in after-school programs. We would have a lot more teachers to make classes small in the early grades. We put a lot more money into teacher quality. We'd do more for repairing schools that are overcrowded or crumbling. We would provide more funds to identify and then turn around failing schools. It's a hugely important bill.

And it contains some important compromises between labor and business on labor issues, including a bill to protect workers who suffer from stress-related injuries on the job—physical stress, I mean. So the Republicans shook hands on it, and then they went back to their leaders. And they said, "No, our lobbyists won't like this," so they wrecked the deal. Now, that's not a failure of bipartisanship; that's a failure of leadership on their side.

Every bill where we've negotiated, we've gotten an agreement. The only bills where we're at loggerheads now are this one, where the leaders overruled their own negotiators, and the other two, where they won't negotiate with us. And there's a lot in there: immigrant fairness, minimum wage increase, the new markets legislation to give people incentives to invest in the poor areas of America that have been left behind. There's a lot of important work still to be done.

Latino and Immigrant Fairness Legislation

Ms. Salinas. I want to talk about that one bill—the Latino immigration, and it's the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act." It's definitely one of the major barriers in getting the

budget bill passed. How far are you willing to go to get this legislation passed?

The President. Quite far. We've made some headway. They have allowed, for example, the relatives of people who are already in this country legally to come to this country after a certain amount of time if their naturalization process has not been completed. I think that's quite good.

But so far, the Congress has not been willing to treat immigrants from Honduras or Guatemala or El Salvador the same way they treated immigrants from Nicaragua and Cuba. And I just don't think there's any difference there. I think if you fled a violent political atmosphere in your home country, it shouldn't matter what the nature of the regime was, as long as it was a regime that violated the rule of law and human rights and put people in danger.

So I feel very strongly that they should all be treated the same. And that also affects people from Haiti, people from Liberia, as well as the Latinos from Central America. I think it's very important that we treat them fairly, and I'll keep working at it until—we'll make as much progress as we can. I feel very, very strongly about this. I can't imagine why—how the Republicans could justify treating the Cubans and the Nicaraguans different from the Hondurans and the Guatemalans and the Salvadorans.

Ms. Salinas. What part of the immigration bill are you willing to compromise on if you're faced with a Government shutdown?

The President. Well, I don't think they'll ever shut the Government down again. And I think the real issue is whether we can get this whole bill in return for other compromises in this appropriations bill. It's called the Commerce/State/Justice appropriations bill. The negotiations are complicated. They cover a lot of different factors. And all I can tell you is, I'm going to drive the hardest bargain I can on this, because I just feel very strongly about it.

Now, we may or may not be able to get it all, but I am certainly prepared to fight very hard. I just don't think you can justify treating one group of immigrants that have been here legally—they're working; they're paying taxes; they're making a contribution to our country; no one questions that they came here legally. How in the world we could disrupt families and send some of them home or not legalize their position here, when we've done exactly the same thing for people from other countries, is just beyond me. I just don't think it can be justified.

Ms. Salinas. Do you support amnesty, in theory?

The President. Well, that's what—of course, the Republicans are saying this is an amnesty bill, but what we're saying is, at least we want fairness. We want all groups of immigrants treated fairly. Then we can see if there are others who are here that aren't covered by the statute. But we had a general amnesty when the immigration act was passed before. And I think what's important is—look, I don't have any problem with it. I believe we should——

Ms. Salinas. But there hasn't been amnesty since 1986.

The President. That was a long time ago. What I think we should do is to treat all the people who are—who came here legally and who have been here fairly since then—that's what I think we should do. Amnesty implies that this is about people who didn't come here legally. We're talking about people who came here lawfully, that now are being treated differently in terms of whether they can stay. There are people who are working, paying taxes; they have children. It's not right. It's just not right.

You cannot justify the position that the majority party in Congress is taking on this. At least I don't think you can, and I'm trying to get it straightened out.

Ms. Salinas. What do you think we should do with the 6 million undocumented workers that live in the United States?

The President. Well, we've always had some illegal immigration, and I guess we always will. But that's a different subject. I don't know—there are lots of options there. I think my successor will probably have to figure out what to be done about that.

Ms. Salinas. Any suggestions to them?

The President. What?

Ms. Salinas. Any suggestions to your successor? Both Al Gore and Mr. Bush say they do not support an amnesty.

The President. I think it's difficult to justify a general amnesty for people who did not come here lawfully, because if you do that, then you are really burning the people who have been waiting in line patiently to come here legally. And you don't want to discriminate against them.

On the other hand, I don't think you can justify not allowing legal immigrants to stay in this country, when they came here because of troubles in their own country, clearly lawfully under the American law, and now we're saying, "Okay, some can stay, but some have to go." And that's what I think. Let's deal with the biggest and most immediate problem first, and that's what it is. We've got to have fairness for these immigrants. They're legal. They ought to be able to stay here.

2000 Campaign

Ms. Salinas. You're going out on the campaign trail in the next week. Do you miss campaigning for yourself?

The President. No. I thought I would, actually. I thought I'd miss it more than I have. But this year, I think I've worked harder this year than I did when I was running. I've done about, oh, almost 200 events for people running for the House of Representatives and the United States Senate and then for the Vice President and Senator Lieberman on behalf of the Democratic Party, and I've done what I could to help my wife in New York. That's been a joy for me.

So I've enjoyed that. I think there is—you know, I love the campaign, and I'm interested in it. But I've had my time, and I've been very fortunate, and I've enjoyed it immensely. And I only hope that I can be helpful in these closing days of the election, just to clarify the choices before the American people. I have absolutely no doubt the decisions they'll make if they understand the choices, the differences, and the consequences. So if I can help in that regard, I'll be glad to do what I can.

Ms. Salinas. The media is reporting that the Democratic leadership has asked you to come out and campaign in key States with key constituencies. Do you think they waited too long to ask you?

The President. No. First of all, I have been out there quite a lot. I haven't been out there on these kind of election-style rallies. But I don't think that was appropriate. I think that our candidates—this election, fundamentally, is about—in a Presidential election, about Senator Lieberman and Mr. Cheney and, more importantly, about Vice President Gore and Mr. Bush. That's what the election is about.

What I can do is to try to help clarify the choices, say what I believe. Everybody knows who I'm for. That's not the issue. The issue——

Ms. Salinas. Who are you for?

The President. I've even been wearing my pins every day, as you see.

Ms. Salinas. Hillary?

The President. I'm for Hillary, Gore, and Lieberman.

But I think, to go back to your question, it would have been not appropriate for me to be out there much before now because of the work I have to do here and because of the crisis we've been having in the Middle East. But I think in the last week of the campaign, people sort of expect, you know, that it's okay for the President to go out and try to rally the troops and make the last-minute arguments.

There are a lot of votes, I think, that could go either way now. And all I hope to do for the American people, at least, is to clarify their choices, because they have—there are huge differences between these two candidates and these two parties. And if people understand those differences and make their choices, then that's how democracy is supposed to work.

I mean, the country is in great shape. We're moving in the right direction, and this should be a happy election for the American people. They should be able to dream about where they want us to go and then make a judgment about who is most likely to lead us there.

Ms. Salinas. The New York Times reported earlier this month that you were personally hurt because Vice President Gore has not asked you to go out and campaign for him and he has not sought your advice. Is that, in fact, true?

The President. No, it is not true. I don't know where they got the story. I've already told them—I told them back in August; Bill Daley and I were talking about it the other day—that I thought it would not be wise for me to go out too soon, except to continue to do what I was doing. I would help them raise funds; I would do what I could. But I needed to be doing the job the American people hired me to do, and the American people needed to have an opportunity to look at the candidates and make their own judgments. I said then and I'll say now, I don't think people would object to my going out at the end of the campaign to try to make some of the last-minute arguments and rev up our forces.

But that is simply not true, and where we are heavily——

Ms. Salinas. Well, what part——

The President. ——we talk to the Gore campaign several times a day. So I don't know where the story came from, but it's not accurate.

Ms. Salinas. But what part of it isn't true, though: the fact that you are not hurt, or the fact that the Vice President has asked you to go out and campaign for him and has sought your advice?

The President. Both those things are true. It is also true that I agree with them. We both believe that I should not be out before this time. And it is not true that we have not been heavily involved in talking to them about the campaign. But me, personally, I needed to be President. And he needed to establish his own identity and to show, as he said at the convention, that he was his own man and he was out there running his own campaign.

And I think that what has been done to date is appropriate. So the article was not right about that.

Ms. Salinas. Mr. President, you know that there has been a lot of talk about the so-called Clinton factor. Do you believe that you are an asset or a liability to this campaign?

The President. Neither. But I think that the record—because I think it's not about me. I'm not on the ballot. Anybody that is still angry at me because of the personal mistakes I made is—the American people are fairminded. They don't hold one person responsible for another person's mistakes. So that's not an issue.

I think what is a factor in the campaign is what we did here the last 8 years that the Vice President was an integral part of. This is a different country than it was 8 years ago. And the American people need to remember that.

Eight years ago we had an economy in trouble, a society that was divided, and a political system that was paralyzed. Eight years later we've got the longest economic expansion in history; we've turned the biggest deficits into the biggest surpluses; we've got 22 million new jobs; crime is at a 26-year low; welfare is at a 32-year low. We've got a reduction in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in a dozen years. We've got cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, more land set aside than any administration in 100 years, and our schools are getting better. Test scores are up; the dropout rate is down; and college-going is at an all-time high.

And in each of these areas, we had policies that are working. So in each of these areas, Al Gore does not seek the status quo. He wants to change. But he wants to change to build on the progress we've done, to keep the prosperity going. And his opponent has very different ideas on economic policy, crime policy, environmental policy, education policy, health care policy. And the American people, if they know that, can make their own judgment about which one's right. But at least there is a test run here. We do have evidence that our way works pretty well.

Ms. Salinas. Given that you have such a solid record, you and Vice President Gore, why do you think this race is so close? Shouldn't Al Gore be far ahead?

The President. Well, I think that part of it is, when times are good, sometimes people may not pay as much attention in the beginning to the differences between the candidates. And I think, you know, Governor Bush is a gifted campaigner, and he has made his case, and I think that the Republicans have tried with some success to blur the issues at critical points.

But the things that—as President, I've paid a lot of attention to the economy. And one of the things that I think is very important here is that Al Gore's philosophy about this projected surplus is just, first, keep paying down the debt. That keeps interest rates down. That's a tax cut for everybody. His plan will keep interest rates a percent lower for a decade. That's $390 billion in lower home mortgages alone, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, and more business loans, more jobs, a stronger stock market.

So I think—so he says, "Pay the debt down first. Then take what you've got left and invest it in education, health care, the environment, national security, and a tax cut." And the opposition says, "Well, we've got this money. Let's give it back to the people." If the surplus is $2 trillion, they propose to spend, what, about $1.5 trillion on a tax cut, plus interest, and then $1 trillion to partially privatize Social Security, and $.5 trillion—those are big numbers. But if you think the surplus is $2 billion and you spend $1.5 billion on taxes, $1 billion on privatizing Social Security, and $.5 billion on spending, you're in deficit. That means higher interest rates.

Now, so the people have to decide: Do I want this big tax cut now and this privatization now, and do I think it will be so good that it's worth going back into deficits and having higher interest rates?

I think from my point of view, the arithmetic here is very important, and it's really pretty simple. You can forget about all the zeros, and you just think that if you drop all the zeros, whatever you spend and whatever you cut taxes can't add up to more than two. If it does, you're not paying down the debt as you should.

And the other thing that bothers me is, you see in these controversies we're having now, even when we have enough Republicans here to have bipartisan support for bills, the leadership is well to the right of them. And if you have the President of the same party and these leaders in Congress, I don't know who would restrain them when it comes to what they would do in so many areas of our national life, and that bothers me. If you think about the last 6 years, all the times when we've gotten great bipartisan cooperation, but only after I have first restrained them from doing what they initially wanted to do—so I'm worried about that.

Bipartisanship

Ms. Salinas. Mr. Bush said that if he was in office, if he was the President, we wouldn't have that kind of problem, that he could work well with both Democrats and Republicans. Is that realistic?

The President. It's realistic, but look at the scorecard here. Now, when we got—when they won the Congress, they said, "We don't want to work with you. We're going to do it our way." And they had the biggest education and environmental cuts in history, the biggest Medicare premium increases in history, and so I vetoed them. They didn't negotiate with us. They just said, "Take it or leave it," and they shut the Government down. And the public made it clear they didn't like that.

So look what's happened since then, until right now. We had a bipartisan balanced budget agreement, a bipartisan welfare reform bill. We now have the biggest surpluses in history. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, cut in half. We had a bipartisan telecommunications bill, which has created thousands of businesses and hundreds of thousands of jobs. And this year, as I just said, we just had a bipartisan bill to increase the spending on land preservation, the biggest in history; a bipartisan bill to continue welfare reform; a bipartisan bill to relieve the debt of the poorest nations in the world; a bipartisan bill to reach out in trade to our friends in the Caribbean and in Africa.

We've had huge bipartisan cooperation. But the pattern is that the leadership of the Republican Party, at various points, will say, "Take it or leave it," and then we'll say no, and then we'll have a bipartisan cooperation. And in the nature of things, the conflict gets more coverage than the cooperation.

But we've had wonderful bipartisan success here when they've been willing to work with us. You know, I hope and believe that we still can get that done on the remaining business of this legislature.

2000 Campaign

Ms. Salinas. Let me go back to my question again. If the record is so good and the country is so strong, has there been a mistake? Has there been something lost in the message for Al Gore? What's his biggest mistake in this campaign?

The President. I don't know that it's—I think first of all, he's acquitted himself very well. I think the public knows that he knows more, that he's more experienced, that he's better qualified. But I think that in the public presentation of the other campaign, they've done a very good job in kind of blurring some of these differences.

So I think that what I'd like to see is what I always tell all of our Democratic friends, that clarity is our friend, if we can just make the differences clear and the consequences clear. For example, you can decide, if you believe in our program to put 100,000 police on the street and you want to continue it, you have one choice. If you want to get rid of it, you have another choice. If you believe in our program to put 100,000 teachers in the classrooms for smaller classes in the early grades, you can have one choice. If you don't believe it, you can have another one. If you believe that we ought to extend the background checks of the Brady law to people at gun shows, you have one choice. If you don't think they should apply to handguns bought at gun shows, you have another one. If you believe that we should keep trying to improve the environment, you have one choice. If you believe that we should relax some of our clean air standards and get rid

of the order I issued to protect roadless areas in our national forests, you have another one.

So it's like people can really decide what they want as long as they know what the choices are. I always thought it would be a very close race, and I always thought that Governor Bush was a formidable opponent. They don't disagree on everything, but on the really important, big, economic, educational, health care, tax policy issues, there are these—Social Security—big, big, differences. And I think—you know, I just believe the Vice President is going to win in the end. I've always thought he would win.

Hispanic Voters and the 2000 Election

Ms. Salinas. You know that Republicans, particularly Mr. Bush, have been very active in seeking out the minority votes, especially the Hispanic vote. And they have made some inroads with Hispanics. Give me three reasons why Hispanics should vote for Al Gore.

The President. First, because he will keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places that have been left behind. He will pay down the debt, keep interest rates low, and invest much, much more money in education, health care, and the environment, as opposed to the other approach, which will take us back to deficits and won't leave enough money to invest in our people and our future. So the economy is very important.

Secondly, he will push for things like immigrant fairness, an end to racial profiling, the Hispanic Education Action Plan that we created together. He ran the empowerment zone program, which included Hispanic communities around America, which has already helped a lot of economic revitalization. So he's right on the economics; he's right on the social issues.

Third, he believes that it's really important that we work hard to build one America and to reach out to the rest of the world. He'll be a good partner to Latin America. He'll be a good partner to Central America. He will be—he has the experience necessary to handle the crises of the world and to be a strong leader.

I don't have any question that he will be a very, very fine President. He makes good decisions, and he's ready for the job. And I think, to me, maybe those are arguments I could make to all Americans. But if you look at the issues that are really important to Hispanics—just take the minimum wage for example. Look at the difference in the two candidates on the minimum wage. One supported our first increase in the minimum wage and is fighting for the present one; the other was opposed to raising the minimum wage in Texas, which is only $3.35 an hour. That's just one example.

So I believe—the only thing I would say to Latino Americans is, look at the issues; look at the differences. Make up your own mind. But the differences are quite vast. You have two perfectly nice people. Both of them speak Spanish, and I think that's great. I hope I'll be the last non-Spanish-speaking President.

Ms. Salinas. Nada?

The President. Yes, just a little. I speak a little but very little, and I hope I'll be the last one. But beyond that, I think we ought to say you have two good people; they love their country; they love their families; they'll do what they think is right. They really see the world in very different ways. And I think if we can clarify that, I think the Vice President will win and win by more than people think he will today.

President Vicente Fox of Mexico

Ms. Salinas. Let's talk about Latin America for a moment. You have always been a very strong supporter of Mexico. Now that there is a new President—he's an outsider, the same as you were an outsider when you came into office. What do you think Mr. Vicente Fox needs to do to be successful in a country that was governed by the same party, the PRI, for decades?

The President. Well, first, he's a very impressive man. He came up here to see me, and I followed his campaign. And I think, just as a person, he's quite an impressive person. He took on decades of tradition. He imagined how he could make it come out differently, and he did. So—and I identify with him. He lives on a ranch, and I came from a rural area, and I think he's a very impressive fellow.

I think what he has to do is to put together a good team, establish a reputation for real competence, and then develop a certain gift for getting the support of the other two main parties or their representatives in the Mexican national legislature wherever he can, and maintaining the support of the people. It's not going to be easy for him, because he knows he has to make some difficult decisions.

All reforms are always——

[*At this point, a portion of the President's remarks were missing from the transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary.*]

Colombia

Ms. Salinas. ——more involved in their fight against the guerrillas. People are dying every single day.

The President. No. I think what we want to do is to increase the capacity of the Colombian Government to enforce the law. We want to also increase the capacity of the Colombian Government to have a justice system that works and to offer the farmers and the poor people in the rural areas an alternative lifestyle so they don't have to have that drug money to make a decent living. I think that's very important.

And I think we should support the frontline states, the countries that border Colombia, that are also worried that if Colombia succeeds, they'll have even more problems. So we have some money in our Plan Colombia for the other states as well, states like Bolivia, the poorest country in the Andes, which has had, ironically, the greatest success in dealing with the drug issue.

Now, on the guerrilla problem, which is tied to the narcotrafficking problem, we still believe that over the long run, there will have to be some sort of negotiated peace settlement. And I wish—you know, the President, President Pastrana, has gone out of his way to try to seek a peace. And I don't think he's gotten an appropriate response from the rebels.

As I said, the money from the narcotrafficking may have something to do with that, but in the end, it's not good for Colombia to have as much of the land in turmoil and as many people killed every year as possible. But I think if they can get a handle on the narcotrafficking, it will increase their capacity to negotiate a peace on the political issues.

President's Legacy

Ms. Salinas. Let's talk a little bit about your legacy, Mr. President. What do you feel has been your greatest accomplishment and your biggest failures?

The President. I don't know. I think the historians will probably have to make a judgment about that. I think that the main thing is, we've turned the country around. We gave people a sense of hope and possibility. It's not just the economy. But the country is working better now. It's not just the economy. The crime rate is down. All the indicators—that drug abuse among young people is down. Teen pregnancy is down, at historically low levels. As I said, the environment is stronger; the school systems are better; and the health care system is getting better. So I feel good about that.

Are there things that I wish I could have done? Sure. I wish we could have completed the reform of Social Security. I wish we had found a way for all Americans to have health insurance. But because we've got a strong economy, because I'm leaving a balanced budget and a surplus, the next administration, if Vice President Gore is elected, if people like my wife are elected to the Senate, we'll have the ability to extend health care coverage to working families, for example.

So I wish I could have done that, but you never get to do everything you want to do, and I've worked about as hard as I could for 8 years.

Ms. Salinas. Any regrets? Any personal regrets?

The President. Oh, of course I have some. But if I had to do it all over again, I would still want to be President. I would still want to have the chance to serve, and it's been a joy and an honor. I've loved it. I just—the work—having the chance every day to get up and work as hard as you can to fulfill the dreams of the people of this country is a great honor, especially to be here at the turn of the century, with the explosion of this new economy, with the end of the cold war and a whole new different set of affairs in the world, and with American society growing ever more diverse. I think it's so exciting.

This country is more exciting to live in than ever before in human history—in our history, in our 224-year history, and one of the most interesting societies, I think, in history just because it's so diverse. And yet we're still kind of making our democracy work. That's one of the reasons that it's so important for new immigrants to get out and vote, to prove that they believe in the system, and to reaffirm the fact that they have as much influence as anybody else does. On election day, my vote counts no more than someone who just registered.

First Family/President's Future Plans

Ms. Salinas. There's a recent poll that says that you and Mrs. Clinton are the most admired

people in the country. But people want to know, do you feel that you have a solid marriage that will be able to outlive everything that you've been through?

The President. Well, I certainly hope so. I told Hillary when we got married—something I've repeated several times over the last 25 years, and we just celebrated our 25th anniversary—that one of my goals—this literally, when we were in our late twenties, one of my goals was to be an old man in my seventies, sitting on a park bench with her and seeing young people go by just in the beginning of their lives and have no regrets. And I still hope that will happen.

You know, we've got a home in New York now. I'm going to build a library in Arkansas, in my home, and I'm looking forward to this next chapter in my life. And I'm very proud of my wife, for the campaign she's run for the Senate. I'm very proud of our daughter, and I'm glad that Chelsea took this time off away from school to be with us in our last months in the White House and at her mother's campaign. So it's been a happy time for us, and I'm looking forward to the future.

Ms. Salinas. What will you be doing after you leave the White House, and what will you miss most about the White House and being President?

The President. I don't know what I'm going to do for sure. I'll try to be a useful citizen. I'll miss the work most and the daily contact with all different kinds of people. But I love the job. So it's the work I'll miss the most.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 5:27 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; and President Andres Pastrana of Colombia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With José Diaz-Balart of Telemundo in New York City
November 4, 2000

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Mr. President, thank you very much for being with us on "Esta Mañana." It's a pleasure having you.

The President. Glad to do it.

Hispanic Voters and the 2000 Election

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Let's talk about the importance of November 7th, specifically towards the Latino population of the United States. Why should people who, many times, don't feel part of this country, and yet are citizens, why should they vote?

The President. Because there are issues at stake that will directly affect themselves, their families, their communities, and our country. There are huge differences in the economic policies of the two candidates.

Obviously, I favor the ones that Vice President Gore and my wife and others have articulated, but there's the question of whether you think it's better to pay down the debt, have a smaller tax cut focused on the middle class, and invest more in education, or whether it's better to have a bigger tax cut, partially privatized Social Security, and have spending that will take us back in debt but give some people more money right now. That will affect everybody. How do you build on the prosperity of the new—of the last 8 years?

Then, there are differences of opinion on crime, on the environment, on health care, on education, and on fairness toward immigrants, which should be a big issue to the Latino population. I and virtually everyone in my party are fighting for the "Fairness to Immigrants Act," and the leadership of the Republican Party is opposing us. And so we're—and we have a simple position, which is that it was right to let people from Cuba and Nicaragua come into this country if they were fleeing dictatorial or violent environments, but we owe the same thing to the people from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, and other places. So I think that's a big issue.

Then there are issues revolving around whether we should have hate crimes legislation.

Should we have stronger laws guaranteeing equal pay for women? All these things will drastically affect, one way or the other, what life is like for ordinary Americans.

Voter Apathy

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Why do you think, sir, that the polls show that candidates really haven't gotten through to all of the voters, that there's some apathy, and there's some feeling that, "You know what, I don't even want to get involved with this?"

The President. I think the main—anybody that doesn't want to get involved, I think it's because the issues aren't as clear as they should be. But I also think, in a funny way, the general prosperity and sense of well-being of the country could be working against us a little bit. Because people may think, well, you know—younger voters, a lot of them can't even remember what it was like 8 years ago. And I think sometimes when times are good, you tend to be more casual about voting and about studying the differences. And then, maybe they—people, I think, do have a negative reaction sometimes to all this—the air wars, not just the Presidential race but all these ads where they're attacking each other and all that. That sometimes tends to depress turnout.

But I would hope the American people would actually be in a very good humor. I mean, this has been an essentially positive election. The candidates have been sharply critical of each other on the issues, but there has been surprisingly little personal attack. Governor Bush has, I think, wrongly questioned Vice President Gore's character a couple of times, but by and large, both of them have run clean, positive campaigns in which they have strongly disagreed with each other on the issues. But that's what democracy is about. I would think—I think the American people ought to be happy. I mean, the economy is growing; all sectors of the society are benefiting. Crime is down. The environment is cleaner. There are fewer people without health insurance. The schools are getting better.

I think that people should think, "Wow, we've got a chance now to really dream big dreams about what we want America to look like over the next 10 years. What should America's role in the world be over the next 10 years? What is exactly the right thing to do with our projected surplus? And how should we handle all this?" This is, for a citizen who loves democracy, a dream election. We may never have another election like this in our lifetime, where we've got prosperity, social progress, and the absence of crisis at home and threat abroad.

I would just say to the American people, you make a lot of mistakes in life. Sometimes when things are so good, you think it doesn't matter if you concentrate or act. It does matter.

President's Role in 2000 Campaign

Mr. Diaz-Balart. You know, what does surprise me, sir, is that a President with a huge popularity as you do, whose numbers continue to be record-setting as far as anybody is concerned, and yet we don't see you in the battleground States. I don't see you in Michigan. I haven't seen you in Florida. I haven't seen you in Tennessee and even in your home State that much. It surprises me as a journalist. Does it surprise you? Why aren't you there?

The President. Not exactly. I think, first of all, there is a limit to what the President can do in another person's race. I have been out a lot this year. I couldn't go out—I think it would have been actually a negative factor if I had gone out before the Congress went home, because people would think, "What's President Clinton doing trying to tell me how to vote for the next President when he's got a job to do back in Washington?"

Now, when they did go home, I went to California. I spent the day in New York trying to help my wife and our candidates here. And I'm going to spend a day in Arkansas tomorrow, which is a State where I think we're a little bit behind but not too badly, and maybe I can have an impact there.

But I also have done, over the course of this last year, I've been in all those battleground States. I've done 150-plus events for our Congressmen and Senators, every one of them also making the argument for the Vice President. And I cut a lot of radio spots and done some other communications, phone messages, and other things to try to reach swing voters and try to affect the turnout.

But I'm not so sure, if I had been to more places, it would have made a difference in the vote, because I actually have experienced it from the other end. When President Reagan was wildly popular in 1984, he came to Arkansas and campaigned for my opponent. It had no effect on my vote, not at all.

So I've done everything I could do to help the Vice President and Senator Lieberman. And I think that there was a decision made that the best I could do would be to try to articulate a national message, which I can do anywhere—yesterday my speech in California was played live on CNN, for example—and keep the schedule I had set, because I have a unique relationship with Arkansas, and then try to do direct voter contact.

But I want the focus to be on Vice President Gore and Governor Bush. I think the people have to make that decision. All I can do is to help clarify what I think the choice is. You know, the American people have been very good to me, and I've tried to tell them in the last 2 weeks what I think the choice is, and I hope I've had a positive impact.

Perspective on the Presidency

Mr. Diaz-Balart. What would you tell them about these last 8 years for you as a—less as President Clinton and more as Bill Clinton, the man whose dreams, in many ways, came true, and who has had ups and downs?

The President. Well, first of all, I feel an enormous sense of gratitude to the American people. I mean, they gave me a chance to serve, and they sort of took a chance on me at first, because I was the Governor of a small State. I was quite young. I had never served an elected office in Washington. But I had some clear ideas about what I thought we should do. So I feel gratitude.

Secondly, I feel gratitude because they've worked out pretty well. And one of the lessons that I have learned from all this is that it really matters—if you want to run for President, you should have reasons for running that are bigger than yourself, bigger than your desire to do it, because that will sustain you in the tough times. It gives you a game plan. It gives you a way of organizing a team and marshaling the energy of the country. And of course, the people stayed with me in the tough times, too.

So when I leave office, I will leave grateful for the progress America has made, grateful for the generosity and support of the American people, but I'll also be more idealistic than I was the day I took the oath of office. In spite of all the battles I've been through, I'm more idealistic about the potential of America within our country and the potential of America to have a positive impact around the world than I was when I took office.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Diaz-Balart. How do you plan to channel that optimism and continue trying to make a difference?

The President. I hope that what I can do is to try to trade my job in, which now has an enormous amount of power and authority, but requires me to be involved in literally hundreds of things, and identify four or five big areas that I care passionately about and concentrate my energies there, so that whatever influence I have as a former President, being able to concentrate in fewer areas, I'll still have a positive impact.

I'm still working on the details of how to do that, but I really hope I can do that. I think that I have an obligation to my country and to the people who have been my friends and allies around the world to try to use whatever time and energy I have left in this astonishing, unique experience I've had to make the world a better place, and I'll keep trying.

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Give me an idea, something that may or may not work out, but something that we could be seeing you at.

The President. Well, I'm very interested in the economic empowerment of poor people. That's something I've worked on here at home with our empowerment zone programs, with our community development institutions, making loans to people who couldn't get them otherwise, and something that my wife and I have worked on around the world. Last year, through our AID programs, we made 2 million small microenterprise loans in Latin America and Africa and in poorer countries in Asia.

I think one of the problems with democracy is, it's hard for it to take root if people don't feel any tangible benefits. In Latin America today, we have some countries where democracy is more fragile partly because they haven't felt the benefits. One of the problems we have in the Middle East today, with all the tension in the West Bank and Gaza, is that many Palestinians are not better off today economically than they were when we signed the peace agreement way back in 1993. And we have to do a better job in the world of merging politics and economics. So that's one area that I'm very interested in.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Diaz-Balart. We'll talk about the Middle East real quick before we go to Latin America, which is a subject dear to our viewers' hearts. Some critics have said that the United States, your administration, has been so keen on pushing for some kind of concessions on both sides, that maybe it's become an American agenda in the Middle East, versus the Americans acting as brokers and as objective people who can help the system.

The President. I don't think that's a fair criticism. Here's why. We, all along, have basically facilitated what the parties wanted to do. Now, when we met at Camp David, we met knowing that there might not be an agreement. But we did it because both parties were afraid that they were coming up on the September deadline for the declaration of a Palestinian state without an agreement, and that without further progress on these tough issues, we might have a real mess there, even worse than what we've been through.

So what I tried to do was to explore—when they reach an impasse, I did what President Carter did, way back at Camp David I, between Israel and Egypt. If they reach an impasse, then you can offer an idea to see if both sides will take it. But it can never be America's agenda. All we can ever do is try to be an honest and fair broker, because we don't have to live with the consequences. The people that have to live with the consequences are the Israelis and the Palestinians. So for us to try to force something on them is a grave mistake.

On the other hand, the consequences of not making peace have been evident these last 3 or 4 weeks over there, and they are just horrible. So we should nudge them when we can, and as long as both sides trust us, we can nudge them without them thinking it's our agenda, because they know when they have to get off—they know when they can't do something.

Cuba

Mr. Diaz-Balart. This January will mark the 42d anniversary of Castro in power, the longest lasting dictator. Why haven't you helped the internal dissident movement in Cuba like, let's say, Reagan did for Poland?

The President. Well, I don't know what else we could have done. I believe I could have done a lot more if the Cuban Democracy Act had been left intact. And the Cuban community in Florida, for example, and in New Jersey, strongly supported the Cuban Democracy Act. I think we could have done a lot more for the dissident movement in Cuba, because we would have been in a position to have carrots and sticks in return for openness and change, and we could have supported them.

But when Castro's air force murdered those Brothers to the Rescue people in the two airplanes, shot them down completely illegally, we had to have some sort of response. The Congress passed the Helms-Burton bill. I signed it, but it tied the hands of the executives so much that it's hard for us to use the full panoply of pressures we had.

For example, let's just take Kosovo—I mean Serbia. We just had an election in Serbia, Mr. Kostunica. We could put a lot of money into a democratic election there, but we also had something to offer them if they won. I had the power to immediately suspend the embargo, to do other things. We had an embargo on them that was very tough, but I always had the flexibility to use carrots and sticks.

I think it's a great mistake, and I hope the next Congress will correct it to put the President in a position where he can promote positive change in Cuba. Because the Congress believes the only way it can show it's anti-Castro is to make sure that the President has no leverage. The Congress just adopted another bill that I think was a mistake. They put it in the Agriculture bill, and I had no choice but to sign it. The bill purported to sell—allow more food sales to Cuba, but because it doesn't have any financing mechanism, there won't be any food sales. The real purpose of the bill was to further restrict the ability of Americans to travel to Cuba and have person-to-person contact. I think that's a mistake, because I think it again—we have no plans to invade Cuba. If there's not going to be a military invasion of Cuba, then what you need is a balance of carrots and sticks.

I am disappointed that Castro is still in power. I am disappointed that democracy has not been restored to Cuba. I am glad that we have had a very tough line these last 8 years. I wish we could have done better. But I think that it is a mistake—I think the Cuban Democracy Act was right. That was the right concept: more sticks and more carrots, more flexibility. Get in there and find the people in Cuba that are promoting democracy, that are promoting free

markets, that are promoting freedom of speech, that are politically opposed to the communist regime, and find ways to support them. And find ways to give power to just ordinary people doing all kinds of things that are inconsistent with a total communist dictatorship.

And I hope that we'll—he can't last forever. Nobody lives forever, for one thing. And I don't think that the system is sustainable without him, but I would like to see change before then. I know even in Miami and in New Jersey, I hear more and more discussion among my friends in the Cuban communities about what else we could do. I wish we could have done better. I do think the next President should be given more tools. If we want to try to move toward freedom quicker, we've got to give the President more tools to deal with.

Mexico

Mr. Diaz-Balart. One of the good stories coming out of Latin America is this election in Mexico with Vicente Fox winning the PRI after 70-something years.

The President. Great story.

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Tell me how that's—the influence you think or the impact of that story on—not only on the United States-Mexico relations but also on Latin America in general.

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's a great credit to the people of Mexico that they had an honest election, that it was carried off in a forthright way.

It is secondly a great credit to Ernesto Zedillo, because he, first of all, opened his own party's Presidential nomination up to a broader popular choice, and secondly, he basically assured an honest election to make politics competitive in Mexico. So I think President Zedillo will go down in history for many things in a positive way. He had a very good economic policy, but he also had the courage to give up his own party's monopoly of power. And he knew what he was doing when he opened the system.

Then thirdly, I think it's a tribute to Mr. Fox. He's a very engaging, compelling man. He's an interesting man. He's a——

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Charismatic.

The President. Very charismatic. He lives on a ranch. He showed me the boots he was wearing he said were made in a boot factory on his own ranch. His children still, by and large, live on the ranch; I think one of them lives in Mexico City now. He's a very impressive man.

And what I hope will happen is that when he takes office, I hope that the PRI will try to cooperate with him, will try to work with him, will give him a chance to succeed. Because one of the problems that a new President faces, if your party has never been in power or if your party has been out of power a very long time—that even happens here sometimes; we faced some of those challenges when I came in—is, you have to put together a team that not only is smart and knowledgeable on policy but also can figure out how to work through the political culture of a country, in this case Mexico's political culture, which has never before had a President of another party.

So I would hope that since Mexico has one-term Presidencies, the PRI has nothing to lose by helping Mr. Fox succeed and giving him a chance to do good for Mexico. If he makes a mistake, he'll have to live with the consequences, like we all do. But I think that America has a big interest in the success of Mexico, and I think the PRI will rise in the esteem of the public if they are seen to be a constructive force there. So this will be an interesting test for them because they've never been like this before, either.

I like Mexico's chances for the future. I think their—I personally believe their biggest problem is the same thing Colombia is facing, but on a smaller scale. The narcotraffickers have so much loose money to throw around in countries that are poor, and have so much power to throw around in communities and areas where the power structure is weak, that that's a real test for Mexico and its democracy. But it's basically, I think, Mexico is moving in the right direction and deserves a lot of the world's applause for what's happened there.

Immigration

Mr. Diaz-Balart. In interviews with "Esta Mañana," both Governor Bush and Vice President Gore have said that a lot needs to be done as far as how INS handles the Mexicans who try to reach this country for a better life for themselves and for their family. They both have said that they failed to—there's not enough, maybe, human respect towards families that are divided, people who are sent back without any kind of sensitivity towards their cases. Would you agree with that?

The President. Oh, yes. I think there are several problems with the INS. But I think, first, there's the whole issue of how we deal with controlling our borders and immigrants that come here without legal sanction. And then there's the question of how we handle those who are eligible for naturalization and how long they have to wait and how they're treated while they're waiting.

The Vice President headed up a task force for us back in '96 to try to dramatically speed the naturalization process, and we did—you remember we did a project in Miami and in several other cities. We got an enormous amount of criticism from the Congress, I think, because they thought that immigrants would be more likely to be Democratic voters. Although one of the reasons we did it in Miami was because, as you know, Cuban-American voters normally tend to vote for Republicans for President, and we wanted to demonstrate that we weren't trying to be partisan. What we wanted to do was to make the INS work better for people who were eligible for naturalization.

Now, for people who are trying to get in the country, it's a genuine dilemma, because every nation has to have some control over its borders and some limits on immigration. And if you ignore those entirely, with regard to Mexico, because of our long history and the culture of the Rio Grande Valley and all of that you know very well, then you're sort of really hurting those people that wait their turn in line.

So I think what we need is a little better treatment. We need to review the quota. We need to make sure that people are treated right, and then we need to examine whether or not we need to do more on the family unification front. As you know, that's one of things we're fighting for in the Latino immigrant fairness legislation before Congress now, is trying to do a little more on family reunification, because it seems to me that America ought to be a pro-family country. We ought to let people be together. And that's another reason I'm fighting for the Liberians, too. You may be familiar with that case and the Liberian immigrants.

I will say this: I think, on balance, the Government works a lot better than it did when I got here, but I am disappointed that I have not made more improvements in the Immigration and Naturalization Service. So both Governor Bush and the Vice President are right, and I'm glad that they have both committed to focus on it.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Diaz-Balart. My last question is, here's a kid who goes to the White House and meets President Kennedy, then later as a grown man is saying hello to kids on that same lawn. Here's a political animal who has studied all his life politics, history. I see you out there on the line, and you seem to be the last guy who wants to be there. The people who have shook your hand leave before you do, because you want to say hello and touch everybody out there. How in the heck are you going to do—what are you going to do after this? Here's a guy who—you're a young guy, and all your life you've done this, and I see you out there. Now what? What happens?

The President. I do love politics, and I also love public service. I will miss the job of being President even more than the political events, even more than living in the White House, which has been a profound honor. But you know, it is our system, and it's probably a pretty good system, that a person just gets to be President for 8 years, if you're lucky. So I have to do what I've done before at several points in my life. I have to start a new life and figure out how to use the life I've lived to good effect in building a new life.

And I won't have to stop being a citizen of America or a citizen of the world; I just won't be the candidate any more. I hope I'll be a member of the Senate spouses club after Tuesday. I told Vice President Gore that if he got elected, I would do whatever he wanted me to do, anything from coming in to talk or going to funerals. I'd do whatever I was asked to do.

I've done this. I'm grateful. I'm not going to stop being an interested citizen, but I have to make a new life. I just hope it will be one that will be of some use to my country.

Mr. Diaz-Balart. Mr. President, thank you very much. I appreciate you being with us on "Esta Mañana."

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 5:10 p.m. at the African Square Plaza in Harlem for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 9. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of

Texas; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and President Vicente Fox and former President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Signing Proclamations for the Vermilion Cliffs and the Craters of the Moon National Monuments

November 9, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign proclamations extending greater protection to two irreplaceable pieces of America's natural and cultural heritage, the Vermilion Cliffs in northern Arizona and the Craters of the Moon in central Idaho. With this action, nearly one million acres of unique natural and historic resources already in public ownership are fully protected.

The Vermilion Cliffs monument covers 293,000 acres of Federal land on the Colorado Plateau in northern Arizona. Humans have explored and lived on this geologic treasure since the earliest known hunters and gatherers crossed the area 12,000 or more years ago. California condors, desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and other mammals roam the canyons and plateaus.

The expansion of the Craters of the Moon monument, originally created by President Coolidge in 1924, adds 661,000 acres of volcanic craters, cones, lava flows, caves, and fissures of the 65-mile-long Great Rift, a geological feature that is comparable to the great rift zones of Iceland and Hawaii.

With these proclamations, this administration continues its commitment to preserving and restoring America's natural treasures, from the Florida Everglades to the California redwoods, for this and future generations.

NOTE: The proclamations are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Dedication of the National Japanese-American Memorial

November 9, 2000

Earlier today America honored the patriotism of Japanese-Americans during World War II with the dedication of the National Japanese-American Memorial in the Nation's Capital. Attorney General Janet Reno and Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta joined distinguished members of the Japanese-American community and Americans of all ancestries in reminding us of a time when this county lost sight of the very foundations of democracy it was defending abroad.

This Nation must never forget the difficult lessons of the Japanese-American internment camps during World War II and the inspirational lessons of patriotism in the face of that injustice.

Today I have directed the Secretary of the Interior to develop recommendations to preserve existing internment sites and provide for their public interpretation. In addition, I am signing legislation designating the United States Federal Courthouse for the Western District of Washington in Seattle, Washington, as the William Kenzo Nakamura United States Courthouse. William Nakamura was a student at the University of Washington when he and 120,000 other Japanese-Americans were removed from their communities and forced into internment camps. Despite the injustice of his internment, William Kenzo Nakamura volunteered for the U.S. Army and died fighting for this country in Italy on July 4, 1944. In June of this year, I posthumously awarded him the Medal of Honor in recognition of his courage and heroism.

As the Nation prepares to honor its veterans, it is my hope that the unique contribution of

Japanese-Americans to preserving this Nation's freedom and democracy remains a vital part of America's history.

NOTE: H.R. 5302, to designate the "William Kenzo Nakamura United States Courthouse," approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–478.

Memorandum on Preservation of Japanese-American Internment Sites
November 9, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Preservation of Japanese American Internment Sites

The internment of Japanese Americans was a tragic episode in American history. The recent publication of the National Park Service report on the condition of the former internment camp sites, coupled with our Fiscal Year 2001 budget initiative, will help focus attention and resources on preserving the historical values of these sites.

The National Park Service report, entitled "Confinement and Ethnicity: an Overview of World War II Japanese American Relocation Sites," describes the current condition of the internment camps and other relocation sites. To follow up on this report, I direct you to develop recommendations to preserve the existing Japanese American internment sites and to provide more opportunities for the public to learn about the internment. These recommendations should be developed within the next 60 days in consultation with other Federal agencies, as appropriate.

I also direct you to consult with Members of Congress, States, tribes, local officials, and other interested parties as you develop these recommendations. You should also consider expanding partnerships with private organizations and landowners and explore the creation of an interagency team to coordinate the work of Federal agencies. Your recommendations should include proposals for administrative and legislative action to help preserve these sites, within existing budget resources.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on Signing the Energy Act of 2000
November 9, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign the "Energy Act of 2000," which contains a number of measures to strengthen America's energy security that I have repeatedly urged Congress to act on this year. This legislation reauthorizes the operation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a critical line of defense against the threat of energy shortages, and guarantees that a full range of tools will be available to secure America's energy supplies. In addition, this legislation establishes an appropriate trigger for the use of the 2 million barrel Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve that I directed my administration to establish earlier this year. This will help provide an insurance policy against supply shortages and price spikes in winters and assist consumers who rely on heating oil to heat their homes. The act also makes changes in the Weatherization Assistance Program to reduce State costs and better serve low-income Americans.

NOTE: H.R. 2884, approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–469.

Statement on Signing the Energy Act of 2000
November 9, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2884, the "Energy Act of 2000." This Act extends key authorities that aid management of energy emergencies, specifies the conditions under which the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve can be used, and updates the operating rules for the Weatherization Assistance Program.

The Act reauthorizes the operation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a critical line of defense against the threat of energy shortages that can cripple our economy. Extension of the direct authority for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve guarantees that the full range of means will be available to any Administration that may need to take actions necessary to secure our Nation's energy supplies.

The Act also restores the limited antitrust protection for U.S. oil companies assisting the Department of Energy and the International Energy Agency in planning for and responding to an oil emergency. With this protection, these companies can continue their vital participation in preparing and implementing a coordinated and effective response.

As I also requested, the Act provides authority to establish and use a Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve with a capacity of up to 2 million barrels. This Reserve will serve New England and the upper Mid-Atlantic States where consumers rely to a great extent on heating oil to heat their homes. Creation of the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve was a priority of my Administration, and I am pleased the Congress provided bi-partisan support for its inclusion in this Act.

The Act also amends the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program, a program that reduces heating and cooling costs for low-income Americans by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. These changes will make it easier for States to provide timely energy weatherization services and include a repeal of a financially burdensome cost-sharing requirement for the States.

Unfortunately, this Act also contains an objectionable provision that transfers licensing authority for small hydroelectric projects in Alaska from Federal jurisdiction to the State of Alaska. I remain strongly opposed to this provision because it could erode the Federal Power Act's uniform system for licensing hydroelectric projects in the United States and impair the Federal Government's ability to protect Federally managed resources.

The Act also amends the President's existing authority, under section 161(h) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, to draw down the Strategic Petroleum Reserve by making exercise of the authority dependent upon a finding by the Secretary of Defense that the drawdown would not impair national security. This amendment is objectionable because, in effect, it conditions the exercise of judgmental authority by the President upon the agreement of one of his subordinates.

Despite these objectionable features, I believe that the Act demonstrates this Nation's and my own commitment to providing for a more secure energy future, and I am pleased to sign it today.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 9, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 2884, approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–469.

Statement on Signing the Veterans Claims Assistance Act of 2000
November 9, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4864, the "Veterans Claims Assistance Act of 2000." The Act reaffirms and clarifies the duty of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist claimants in developing evidence pertinent to their claims for VA benefits. It eliminates the previous requirement that a claim be well-grounded before VA's duty to assist arises. The

Act requires the Secretary to make reasonable efforts to assist a claimant in obtaining evidence to substantiate his or her claim unless it is clear that no reasonable possibility exists that the Secretary's assistance would aid in substantiating the claim. As under current law, the Secretary must consider the entire record of evidence, and when there is an approximate balance of positive and negative evidence regarding an issue material to the determination of a matter, the Secretary must give the benefit of the doubt to the claimant.

Veterans seeking benefits from this Government are deserving of all reasonable assistance that VA has to offer. The benefits administered by the Secretary are a means by which the Nation expresses its profound gratitude for the many sacrifices our veterans have made to protect and defend our freedom. Veterans Day, a day set aside to honor all veterans, is an especially appropriate time for us to ensure that we will continue to pay our debts to these men and women. This Act demonstrates to veterans and to all those currently serving in our military and to those who may serve in the future, that America honors its commitments to those who have served. I am very pleased to approve this new law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 9, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4864, approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–475.

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

November 9, 2000

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 Iran emergency declared by Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

Because our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981, agreements with Iran is still underway, the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond November 14, 2000. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Iran for 1 year.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
November 9, 2000

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the National Emergency Regarding Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
November 9, 2000

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

On November 14, 1994, in light of the dangers of the proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons ("weapons of mass destruction"—WMD) and of the means of delivering such weapons, I issued Executive Order 12938, declaring a national emergency under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*). Under section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), the national emergency terminates on the anniversary date of its declaration unless, within the 90-day period prior to each anniversary date, I publish in the *Federal Register* and transmit to the Congress a notice stating that such emergency is to continue in effect. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. I am, therefore, advising the Congress that the national emergency declared on November 14, 1994, and extended on November 14, 1995; November 12, 1996; November 13, 1997; November 12, 1998; and November 10, 1999, must continue in effect beyond November 14, 2000. Accordingly, I have extended the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12938, as amended.

The following report is made pursuant to section 204(c) 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)). It reports actions taken and expenditures incurred pursuant to the emergency declaration during the period May 2000 through October 2000. Additional information on nuclear, missile, and/or chemical and biological weapons (CBW) nonproliferation efforts is contained in the most recent annual Report on the Proliferation of Missiles and Essential Components of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons, provided to the Congress pursuant to section 1097 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (Public Law 102–190), also known as the "Nonproliferation Report," and the most recent annual report provided to the Congress pursuant to section 308 of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–182), also known as the "CBW Report."

On July 28, 1998, in Executive Order 13094, I amended section 4 of Executive Order 12938 so that the United States Government could more effectively respond to the worldwide threat of weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities. The amendment of section 4 strengthens Executive Order 12938 in several significant ways. The amendment broadens the type of proliferation activity that can subject entities to potential penalties under the Executive Order. The

original Executive Order provided for penalties for contributions to the efforts of any foreign country, project or entity to use, acquire, design, produce or stockpile chemical or biological weapons; the amended Executive Order also covers contributions to foreign programs for nuclear weapons and for missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, the amendment expands the original Executive Order to include attempts to contribute to foreign proliferation activities, as well as actual contributions, and broadens the range of potential penalties to include expressly the prohibition of United States Government assistance to foreign persons, and the prohibition of imports into the United States and United States Government procurement. In sum, the amendment gives the United States Government greater flexibility in deciding how and to what extent to impose measures against foreign persons that assist proliferation programs.

Nuclear Weapons

In May 1998, India and Pakistan each conducted a series of nuclear tests that brought their nuclear weapon programs out in the open, in defiance of decades of international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Since that time, they have continued production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and have flight-tested ballistic nuclear-capable missiles. World reaction to these developments included nearly universal condemnation across a broad range of international fora. The United States and a number of other countries respectively imposed sanctions and other unilateral measures. The G–8 agreed to new restrictions on lending by international financial institutions.

Since the mandatory imposition of U.S. statutory sanctions, we have worked unilaterally, with other P–5 and G–8 members, with the South Asia Task Force, and through the United Nations to urge India and Pakistan to move toward the international nonproliferation mainstream.

We have supported calls by the P–5, G–8, and U.N. Security Council on India and Pakistan to take a broad range of concrete actions designed to prevent a costly and destabilizing nuclear arms and missile race, with possible implications beyond the region. The United States has focused most intensely on several objectives that can be met over the short and medium term: an end to nuclear testing and prompt, unconditional adherence by India and Pakistan to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); constructive engagement in negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) and, pending its conclusion, a moratorium on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices; restraint in the development of nuclear-capable missiles, as well as their nondeployment; and adoption of controls meeting international standards on exports of sensitive materials and technology.

Against a backdrop of international pressure on India and Pakistan, intensive high-level U.S. dialogues with Indian and Pakistani officials have yielded only modest progress, principally on export controls. In September 1998, Indian and Pakistani leaders, noting that their countries had already declared testing moratoria, expressed to the U.N. General Assembly a willingness to sign the CTBT by September 1999 under certain conditions. Subsequent developments including the Indian election, the Kargil conflict, the October coup in Pakistan, and the U.S. Senate's vote against providing its advice and consent to CTBT ratification further complicated the issue during 1999, although neither country renounced its commitment. Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee announced during his visit to Washington in September 2000 that India would maintain its moratorium until CTBT entered into force. Both governments have said they would work to build domestic consensus for CTBT signature, without which they could not sign. Such consensus has not been achieved and, consequently, neither country has signed the CTBT thus far.

India and Pakistan both withdrew their opposition to negotiations on an FMCT in Geneva at the end of the 1998 Conference on Disarmament session, and negotiations got underway for a brief time. However, these negotiations were unable to resume in 1999 or 2000 due to a deadlock over the negotiating mandate.

Some progress was achieved in bringing Indian and Pakistani export controls into closer conformity with international standards. India recently instituted new, more specific regulations on many categories of sensitive nonnuclear equipment and technology and has said that nuclear-related regulations will be forthcoming. Pakistan has publicly announced regulations restricting nuclear exports and has indicated that further measures are being prepared. However,

both countries' steps still fall well short of international standards. We have begun with India a program of technical cooperation designed to improve the effectiveness of its already extensive export controls, and encourage further steps to bring India's controls in line with international standards. Similar assistance to Pakistan is prohibited by coup-related sanctions.

The summer 1999 Kargil conflict and the October 1999 military takeover in Pakistan resulted in the suspension of the Indo-Pakistani bilateral dialogue begun at Lahore. Tensions remain high, particularly over insurgent attacks in Kashmir, and there are no encouraging signs that talks will resume soon.

We have agreed to continue regular discussions with India at the senior and expert levels, and will also remain engaged with Pakistan, as appropriate. Our diplomatic efforts, in concert with the P–5, G–8, and in international fora, will also continue.

I discussed these issues with the Governments of India and Pakistan during my trip there in March 2000 and with Prime Minister Vajpayee when he came to Washington this September. With India, we have stressed that our relationship will not be able to reach its full potential without progress on our nonproliferation and regional security concerns. With Pakistan, we also emphasized the importance of progress on regional security and nonproliferation, among other pressing issues.

In October 1994, the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) signed an Agreed Framework which, if fully implemented, will ultimately result in the complete cessation of the DPRK's nuclear weapon-related program and its full compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a first step, North Korea froze construction and operations at its Yongbyon and Taechon nuclear facilities. The freeze remains in place, and to monitor the freeze, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has maintained a continuous presence at the Yongbyon site since 1994. The U.S. spent fuel team completed canning of the accessible spent fuel rods and rod fragments from the North's 5-megawatt nuclear reactor in April 2000. The IAEA has confirmed that the remaining few rod fragments that are currently inaccessible do not represent a proliferation concern, and the Agency continues to monitor the canned fuel. The U.S. spent-fuel team returned to the DPRK in October 2000 to continue clean-up and canning at Yongbyon, and to begin looking at long-term maintenance.

Serious U.S. suspicions about an underground facility at Kumchang-ni led the United States to raise its concerns directly with Pyongyang and to negotiate access to the site as long as U.S. concerns remain. In May 1999, a Department of State-led team of experts visited the site and judged it, as then configured, not suited to house plutonium production reactors or reprocessing operations. Based on the data gathered by the U.S. team and the subsequent technical review, the United States concluded that the activities were not a violation of the Agreed Framework. A second Department of State-led team conducted a visit in May 2000 and found no evidence to contradict the 1999 assessment. In light of a final review of these results, the joint communique issued following the visit of DPRK Special Envoy Jo Myong Rok to Washington stated that "U.S. concerns" about the underground site at Kumchang-ni had been "removed."

While the Kumchang-ni visit addressed some of our nonproliferation concerns, future negotiations with the North will seek to discuss ways to allay all of them—in the context of assuring full implementation of the Agreed Framework and improving overall relations. In May and July 2000, the United States and DPRK held rounds of talks concerning Agreed Framework implementation and the DPRK's missile program, respectively. Another round of talks, which included discussion on terrorism issues, was held in New York from September 27 to October 2 of this year. During the talks, the DPRK informed us that DPRK Special Envoy Marshal Jo Myong Rok would visit Washington from October 9 to 12, 2000. The joint communique released at the end of that historic visit noted that both countries "are prepared to undertake a new direction in their relations." Toward that end, the two stated that "neither government would have hostile intent toward the other." Both sides pledged to "redouble their commitment and their efforts to fulfill their respective obligations in their entirety under the Agreed Framework." The DPRK also reaffirmed its ballistic missile flight test moratorium, and agreed that "there are a variety of available means, including the Four Party talks, to reduce tension on the Korean Peninsula and formally end the Korean War by replacing the 1953 Armistice

Agreement with permanent peace arrangements."

The NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. In May 2000, NPT Parties met in New York for the 2000 NPT Review Conference (REVCON). Despite predictions to the contrary, the 158 participating nations adopted by consensus a Final Document that reviews NPT implementation over the past 5 years and establishes a program of action for the future. This is the first NPT Review Conference to achieve such a Final Document since 1985. The Conference met or exceeded all U.S. objectives. It provided an important boost to the NPT and to nuclear nonproliferation goals in general.

The IAEA verifies states' compliance with their NPT obligations by means of its safeguards system. The discovery at the time of the Gulf War of Iraq's extensive covert nuclear activities led to an international consensus in favor of strengthening the IAEA safeguards system's ability to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities. The United States and a large number of like-minded states negotiated in the mid-1990s substantial safeguards strengthening measures, including the use of environmental sampling techniques, expansion of the classes of nuclear activities states are required to declare, and expansion of IAEA access rights. Measures requiring additional legal authority are embodied in a Model Additional Protocol approved in 1997. This Protocol has now been signed by 54 states and has entered into force for 14. Provided the IAEA is given the resources and political support it needs to implement its new safeguards measures effectively, proliferators will now find it much harder to evade the system.

The United States signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty on September 24, 1996. As of early October 2000, 160 countries have signed and 65 have ratified the CTBT, including 30 of the 44 countries required by the Treaty for its entry into force. During 2000, CTBT signatories conducted numerous meetings of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom) and its subsidiary bodies in Vienna, seeking to promote rapid completion of the International Monitoring System (IMS) established by the Treaty.

On September 22, 1997, I transmitted the CTBT to the Senate, requesting prompt advice and consent to ratification. I deeply regret the Senate's decision on October 13, 1999, to refuse to provide its advice and consent to ratify the CTBT. The CTBT will serve several United States national security interests by prohibiting all nuclear explosions. It will constrain the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons; make the development of advanced new types of weapons much more difficult; contribute to the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the process of nuclear disarmament; and strengthen international peace and security. The CTBT marks a historic milestone in our drive to reduce the nuclear threat and to build a safer world. For these reasons, we hope that at an appropriate time, the Senate will reconsider this treaty.

The purpose of the 35-nation Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Exporters (Zangger) Committee is to harmonize implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty's requirement to apply International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards to nuclear exports. Article III.2 of the Treaty requires parties to ensure that IAEA safeguards are applied to exports to nonnuclear weapon states of (a) source or special fissionable material, or (b) equipment or material especially designed or prepared for the processing, use or production of special fissionable material. The Committee maintains and updates a list (the "Trigger List") of equipment that may only be exported if safeguards are applied to the recipient facility. The relative informality of the Zangger Committee has enabled it to take the lead on certain nonproliferation issues that would be more difficult to resolve in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

At its March 2000 meeting, the Committee approved the Chairman's report of Committee activities to the 2000 NPT REVCON. The Committee also agreed to continue consideration of possible future adoption of the full-scope safeguards (FSS) policy. The Committee also agreed to an informal meeting with IAEA staff to discuss procedures for keeping the Agency informed on Trigger List changes and the rationale for such changes, since the Agency uses the Zangger Trigger List as a reference document. A separate working group, chaired by Sweden, is considering the addition of plutonium enrichment equipment to the Trigger List.

During the past year, two new members have joined the Zangger Committee—Turkey in October 1999 and Slovenia in March 2000.

All of the nuclear weapon states, including China, are members of the Zangger Committee.

However, unlike all of the other nuclear weapon states members of the Zangger Committee, China is not a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which requires its members to adhere to a FSS policy of requiring nonnuclear weapon states to accept IAEA safeguards on all of its nuclear facilities as a condition of supply to those states. China has been reluctant to agree to this policy.

With 38 member states, the NSG is a widely accepted and effective export-control arrangement, which contributes to the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons through implementation of guidelines for control of nuclear and nuclear-related exports. Members pursue the aims of the NSG through adherence to the Guidelines, which are adopted by consensus, and through exchanges of information on developments of nuclear proliferation concern.

Turkey, Belarus, and Cyprus became the newest members of the NSG in May 19, 2000. Slovenia was invited to participate as an observer at the 2000 Paris Plenary and has applied for NSG membership this year. NSG members often agree to allow non-member nations deemed eligible for NSG membership to participate in Plenary meetings as observers. While not an NSG member, China has taken a major step toward harmonization of its export control system with the NSG Part 2 Guidelines by the implementation of controls over nuclear-related dual-use equipment, material, and related technology.

In May 2000, the NSG Troika (composed of the past, present, and future NSG Chairs—in this case Britain, Italy and France) met with representatives of the Iranian Government to discuss Iranian criticism of the NSG. The meeting of the Troika followed up earlier meetings by the Italian Chair in Tehran and on the margins of the 1999 NSG Transparency Seminar in New York. The Troika urged Iran to sign the additional protocol with the IAEA that strengthens safeguards. Iranian officials offered to provide additional confidence-building measures to facilitate nuclear exports from NSG members. The United States, as the future plenary chair, intends to be an active participant in all NSG Troika activities in the coming years, though any involvement in Troika contacts with Iran will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis prior to the meetings. The United States does not believe that the ongoing discussions with Iran can or should soften supplier attitudes.

During the Plenary meetings in Paris in June 2000, the Czech Republic presented information on its new legislation intended to halt all tangible and intangible supply to the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in Iran. The Czech delegation stated that the new legislation covers direct transfers to Bushehr, as well as indirect support through a third party. The Italian NSG Chair presented a report of NSG activities at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Chemical and Biological Weapons

The export control regulations issued under the Expanded Proliferation Control Initiative (EPCI) remain fully in force and continue to be administered by the Department of Commerce, in consultation with other agencies, in order to control the export of items with potential use in chemical or biological weapons or unmanned delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction.

Chemical weapons (CW) continue to pose a very serious threat to our security and that of our allies. On April 29, 1997, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (the Chemical Weapons Convention or CWC) entered into force with 87 of the CWC's 165 States Signatories as original States Parties, including the United States, which ratified on April 25, 1997. Russia ratified the CWC on November 5, 1997, and became a State Party on December 8, 1997. As of October 30, 2000, 140 countries will have become States Parties.

The implementing body for the CWC—the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)—was established on April 29, 1997. The OPCW, located in The Hague is comprised of States Parties and international civil servants that are responsible for implementing the CWC. It consists of the Conference of the States Parties, the Executive Council, and the Technical Secretariat (TS). The TS carries out the verification provisions of the CWC, and presently has a staff of approximately 500, including about 200 inspectors trained and equipped to inspect military and industrial facilities throughout the world. As of October 30, 2000, the OPCW has conducted over 790 routine inspections in some 37 countries. No challenge inspections have yet taken place. The

OPCW maintains a permanent inspector presence at operational U.S. CW destruction facilities in Utah, on Johnston Island, and elsewhere. Accordingly, approximately 70 percent of the inspection days currently have been at U.S. declared facilities.

The United States is determined to seek full implementation of the concrete measures in the CWC designed to raise the costs and risks for states or other entities attempting to engage in chemical weapons-related activities. Receiving accurate and complete declarations from all States Parties will improve our knowledge of possible chemical weapons-related activities. Its inspection provisions provide for access by international inspectors to declared and potentially undeclared facilities and locations, thus making clandestine chemical weapons production and stockpiling more difficult, more risky, and more expensive.

The Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1998 was enacted into U.S. law on October 21, 1998, as part of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–277). I issued Executive Order 13128 on June 25, 1999, to facilitate implementation of the Act and the Convention, and published regulations on December 30, 1999, regarding declarations and inspections of industrial facilities. The United States commenced its submission of industry declarations at the end of April 2000, and hosted its first industry inspection on May 8, 2000. Industry inspections are proceeding well. Our submission of the industry declarations to the OPCW and commencement of inspections, has strengthened U.S. leadership in the organization as well as our ability to encourage other States Parties to make complete, accurate, and timely declarations.

Countries that refuse to join the CWC have been isolated politically and denied access by the CWC to certain key chemicals from States Parties. The relevant treaty provisions are specifically designed to penalize countries that refuse to join the rest of the world in eliminating the threat of chemical weapons.

The United States also continues to play an active role in the international effort to reduce the threat from biological weapons (BW). We participate in the Ad Hoc Group (AHG) of States Parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (the Biological Weapons Convention or BWC). The AHG is striving to complete a legally binding protocol to strengthen the 1972 Convention to promote compliance and enhance transparency. This Ad Hoc Group was mandated by the September 1994 BWC Special Conference. The Fourth BWC Review Conference (November/December 1996) urged the AHG to complete the protocol as soon as possible before the next BWC Review Conference in 2001. Work is progressing on a draft text through discussion of national views and clarification of existing text. Differences in national views persist concerning such substantive areas as on-site activities, export controls, declarations, and technical assistance provisions. The United States remains strongly committed to the objective agreed to in the 1996 Review Conference, but will only accept a protocol that enhances U.S. security and strengthens national and international efforts to address the BW threat.

I announced in my 1998 State of the Union Address that the United States would take a leading role in the effort to erect stronger international barriers against the proliferation and use of BW by strengthening the BWC with a new international means to detect and deter cheating. We are working closely with industry representatives to obtain technical input relevant to the development of U.S. negotiating positions and then to reach international agreement on protocol provisions.

The United States continues to be a leading participant in the 32-member Australia Group (AG) chemical and biological weapons nonproliferation regime. The United States attended the most recent annual AG Plenary Session from October 2–5, 2000, during which the Group reaffirmed the members' continued collective belief in the AG's viability, importance, and compatibility with the CWC and BWC. Members continue to agree that full adherence to the CWC and BWC by all governments will be the only way to achieve a permanent global ban on chemical and biological weapons, and that all states adhering to these Conventions must take steps to ensure that their national activities support these goals. At the 2000 Plenary, the Group welcomed its newest members, Cyprus and Turkey. At this year's plenary, the regime continued to focus on strengthening and refining AG export controls and sharing information to

address the CBW threat, especially from terrorism. The AG also reaffirmed its commitment to continue its active outreach program of briefings for non-AG countries, and to promote regional consultations on export controls and nonproliferation to further awareness and understanding of national policies in these areas. The AG discussed ways to be more proactive in stemming attacks on the AG in the CWC and BWC contexts.

During the last 6 months, we continued to examine intelligence and other information of trade in CBW-related material and technology that might be relevant to sanctions provisions under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991. No new sanctions determinations were reached during this reporting period. The United States also continues to cooperate with its AG partners and other countries in stopping shipments of proliferation concern.

Missiles for Delivery of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The United States continues carefully to control exports that could contribute to unmanned delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction, and closely to monitor activities of potential missile proliferation concern. We also continue to implement U.S. missile sanctions laws. In April 2000, we imposed sanctions against a North Korean entity and four Iranian entities for missile proliferation activities. These sanctions followed March 1999 missile sanctions against three Middle Eastern entities.

During this reporting period, the 32 Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) Partners (members) continued to share information about proliferation problems with each other and with other potential supplier, consumer, and transshipment states. Partners also emphasized the need for implementing effective export control systems. This cooperation has resulted in the interdiction of missile-related materials intended for use in missile programs of concern.

In March and September 2000, the United States participated in two MTCR Reinforced Point of Contact Meetings (RPOC). At the RPOCs, MTCR Partners continued their discussions on new ways to better address the global missile proliferation threat. They also undertook to develop a new multilateral mechanism on missile nonproliferation. This mechanism is intended to complement the important work of the MTCR and eventually to include the participation of both MTCR and non-MTCR countries.

The MTCR Partners held their annual plenary meeting in Helsinki, on October 9–13, 2000. The Partners took decisions concerning the substance of a new multilateral mechanism on missile nonproliferation and ways to take it forward. They also discussed cooperation on halting shipments of missile proliferation concern and exchanged information about activities of missile proliferation concern worldwide, including in South Asia, Northeast Asia, and the Middle East.

During this reporting period, the United States continued to work unilaterally and in coordination with its MTCR Partners to combat missile proliferation and to encourage nonmembers to export responsibly and to adhere to the MTCR Guidelines. Since my last report, we continued our missile nonproliferation dialogues with China, India, the Republic of Korea, and North Korea, and have raised this issue with Pakistan at senior levels. Although regular discussions with Pakistan at the expert level have not proceeded since the fall 1999 coup, we remain engaged at the diplomatic level, and I addressed our nonproliferation concerns during my visit to Pakistan in March of this year. In the course of normal diplomatic relations we also have pursued such discussions with other countries in Central Europe, South Asia, and the Middle East.

In July 2000, the United States and the DPRK held a fifth round of missile talks in Kuala Lumpur. This was the first round of talks after a 16-month hiatus. It provided a useful opportunity to assess developments since the March 1999 talks in Pyongyang, including the DPRK's June 2000 reaffirmation of its moratorium on flight tests of long-range missiles of any kind. The United States discussed its continuing concerns about North Korea's missile activities and again pressed for tight constraints on DPRK missile development, testing, and exports. Both sides agreed to hold another round of talks as soon as possible, and a sixth round occurred September 28–29 in New York. The United States continued to urge the DPRK to take steps to address U.S. and international concerns about the DPRK's indigenous missile programs and its missile-related activities. The United States also discussed Chairman Kim Jong-Il's idea, suggested to Russian President Putin in mid-July, of trading missile restraints

for launches of DPRK satellites on foreign launchers. During the October visit to Washington of DPRK Special Envoy Jo Myong Rok, the United States and DPRK agreed that "resolution of the missile issue would make an essential contribution to a fundamentally improved relationship between them and to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region." The DPRK also reaffirmed its ballistic missile flight test moratorium "while talks on the missile issue continue."

Secretary Albright met with Chairman Kim Jong-Il in Pyongyang October 23–24. They had serious, constructive, and in-depth discussions on the full range of U.S. concerns on missiles, including both the DPRK's indigenous missile programs and exports. They also explored Chairman Kim's idea of restraining DPRK missile capabilities in exchange for launches of DPRK satellites on foreign boosters. U.S. and DPRK missile experts are scheduled to continue discussions in early November.

In response to reports of continuing Iranian efforts to acquire sensitive items from Russian entities for use in Iran's missile and nuclear development programs, the United States is pursuing a high-level dialogue with Russia aimed at finding ways to work together to cut off the flow of sensitive goods to Iran's ballistic missile development program and its nuclear weapon program. Russia's government has created institutional foundations to implement a newly enacted nonproliferation policy and passed laws to punish wrongdoers. It also has passed new export control legislation to tighten government control over sensitive technologies and continued working with the United States to strengthen export control practices at Russian aerospace firms. However, despite the Russian government's nonproliferation and export control efforts, some Russian entities continued to cooperate with Iran's ballistic missile program and to engage in nuclear cooperation with Iran beyond the Bushehr Unit 1 nuclear power reactor project, which could further Iran's nuclear weapon aspirations.

Consistent with the Russian government's April 2000 announcement of administrative action against the Rector of the Baltic State Technical University (BSTU) for his involvement in training Iranian specialists at BSTU, and following our own assessment, the United States announced on April 24, 2000, plans to impose trade and administrative penalties on the Rector for his involvement with the Iranian missile program. At the same time, the United States also announced its intention to remove restrictions imposed in July 1998 on two Russian entities—INOR and Polyus—which have ceased the proliferation behavior that led to the imposition of penalties. However, penalties imposed in July 1998 against five other Russian entities and in January 1999 against three additional entities remain in effect.

Value of Nonproliferation Export Controls

The U.S. national export controls—both those implemented pursuant to multilateral nonproliferation regimes and those implemented unilaterally—play an important part in impeding the proliferation of WMD and missiles. (As used here, "export controls" refer to requirements for case-by-case review of certain exports, or limitations on exports of particular items of proliferation concern to certain destinations, rather than broad embargoes or economic sanctions that also affect trade.) As noted in this report, however, export controls are only one of a number of tools the United States uses to achieve its nonproliferation objectives. Global nonproliferation treaties and norms, multilateral nonproliferation regimes, interdictions of shipments of proliferation concern, sanctions, export control assistance, redirection and elimination efforts, and robust U.S. military, intelligence, and diplomatic capabilities all work in conjunction with export controls as part of our overall nonproliferation strategy.

Export controls are a critical part of nonproliferation because every emerging WMD/missile program seeks equipment and technology from other countries. Proliferators look to other sources because needed items are unavailable within their country, because indigenously produced items are of substandard quality or insufficient quantity, and/or because imported items can be obtained more quickly and cheaply than domestically produced ones. It is important to note that proliferators seek for their WMD and missile programs both items on multilateral lists (like gyroscopes controlled on the MTCR Annex and nerve gas precursors on the Australia Group list) and unlisted items (like lower-level machine tools and very basic chemicals). In addition, many of the items of interest to proliferators are inherently dual-use. For example, key precursors and technologies used in the production of fertilizers or pesticides also can be used to

make chemical weapons; bio-production technology can be used to produce biological weapons.

The most obvious value of export controls is in impeding or denying proliferators access to key pieces of equipment or technology for use in their WMD/missile programs. In large part, U.S. national export controls—and similar controls of our partners in the Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, and Nuclear Suppliers Group—have denied proliferators access to the largest sources of the best equipment and technology. Proliferators have mostly been forced to seek less capable items from nonregime suppliers. Moreover, in many instances, U.S. and regime controls and associated efforts have forced proliferators to engage in complex clandestine procurements even from nonmember suppliers, taking time and money away from WMD/missile programs.

The U.S. national export controls and those of our regime partners also have played an important role, increasing over time the critical mass of countries applying nonproliferation export controls. For example: the 7-member MTCR of 1987 has grown to 32 member countries; the NSG adopted full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply and extended new controls to nuclear-related dual-use items; several nonmember countries have committed unilaterally to apply export controls consistent with one or more of the regimes; and most of the members of the nonproliferation regimes have applied national "catch-all" controls similar to those under the U.S. Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative. (Export controls normally are tied to a specific list of items, such as the MTCR Annex. "Catch-all" controls provide a legal basis to control exports of items not on a list, when those items are destined for WMD/missile programs.) The United States maintains a global program, funded by the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Activities account, to assist other countries' efforts to strengthen their export control systems. A principal focus of this important effort is Russia and the Newly Independent States (NIS), where we also employ funds provided under the Freedom Support Act.

The U.S. export controls, especially "catch-all" controls, also make important political and moral contributions to the nonproliferation effort. They uphold the broad legal obligations the United States has undertaken in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (Article I), Biological Weapons Convention (Article III), and Chemical Weapons Convention (Article I) not to assist anyone in proscribed WMD activities. They endeavor to assure there are no U.S. "fingerprints" on WMD and missiles that threaten U.S. citizens and territory and our friends and interests overseas. They place the United States squarely and unambiguously against WMD/missile proliferation, even against the prospect of inadvertent proliferation from the United States itself.

Finally, export controls play an important role in enabling and enhancing legitimate trade. They provide a means to permit dual-use exports to proceed under circumstances where, without export control scrutiny, the only prudent course would be to prohibit them. They help build confidence between countries applying similar controls that, in turn, results in increased trade. Each of the WMD nonproliferation regimes, for example, has a "no undercut" policy committing each member not to make an export that another has denied for nonproliferation reasons and notified to the rest—unless it first consults with the original denying country. Not only does this policy make it more difficult for proliferators to get items from regime members, it establishes a "level playing field" for exporters.

Threat Reduction

The potential for proliferation of WMD and delivery system expertise has increased in part as a consequence of the economic crisis in Russia and other Newly Independent States (NIS). My Administration gives high priority to controlling the human dimension of proliferation through programs that support the transition of former Soviet weapons scientists to civilian research and technology development activities. I have proposed an additional $4.5 billion for programs embodied in the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative (ETRI) that would support activities in four areas over FYs 2000–2004: nuclear security; nonnuclear WMD; science and technology nonproliferation; and military relocation, stabilization and other security cooperation programs. Of the $1 billion Congressional ETRI request for FY 2000, an estimated $888 million is available: State ($182 million), Energy ($293 million), and Defense ($467 million). We are seeking $974 million in FY 2001.

Expenses

Pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I report that there were no specific expenses directly attributable to the exercise of authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency in Executive Order 12938, as amended, during the period from May 16, 2000, through November 12, 2000.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice of November 9 on continuation of the national emergency is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Dinner Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the White House

November 9, 2000

Good evening, Mrs. Johnson, President and Mrs. Ford, President and Mrs. Carter, President and Mrs. Bush, distinguished guests. It has been said that an invitation to the White House to dinner is one of the highest compliments a President can bestow on anyone. Tonight Hillary and I would amend that to say that an even higher compliment has been bestowed on us by your distinguished presence this evening. In the entire 200 years of the White House's history, never before have this many former Presidents and First Ladies gathered in this great room.

Hillary and I are grateful beyond words to have served as temporary stewards of the people's house these last 8 years, an honor exceeded only by the privilege of service that comes with the key to the front door.

In the short span of 200 years, those whom the wings of history have brought to this place have shaped not only their own times but have also left behind a living legacy for our own. In ways both large and small, each and every one of you has cast your light upon this house and left it and our country brighter for it. For that, Hillary and I and all Americans owe you a great debt of gratitude.

I salute you and all those yet to grace these halls with the words of the very first occupant of the White House, John Adams, who said, "I pray to heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this house and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but the honest and wise rule under this roof."

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to Mrs. Johnson, President and Mrs. Ford, President and Mrs. Carter, President and Mrs. Bush for their honest and wise service to the people while they inhabited this house.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:20 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The dinner was hosted by the White House Historical Association.

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November 9, 2000

Well, Mr. Sidey, we just saw the first example of your comment about doing without Air Force One: President Bush is having airplane trouble and will stay with us for the remainder of the evening. [*Laughter*] Actually, I've commiserated with all these people about what our new life is about to be like. And I understand that the worst part of it is that I will be lost for the first 4 months whenever I walk into a room,

because no one will be playing a song anymore. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Lady Bird Johnson and President and Mrs. Ford, President and Mrs. Carter, and President and Mrs. Bush, for being here.

I thought that joke about Harry Truman living with his mother-in-law was particularly apt, since my mother-in-law is upstairs at this very moment. And she has agreed to let me live with her for the next 2 years, when I'm in Arkansas trying to build my library.

I, like previous speakers, would like to acknowledge President and Mrs. Reagan and say that we miss them and wish them well. I'd also like to acknowledge a person who's been a particular friend of Hillary's and mine these last 8 years, who's suffered two losses in her family recently and could not be here tonight, but whom we care very much about, Margaret Truman Daniel. And we're thinking of her and wish her well.

I would like to thank Senator and Mrs. Robb for being here and for their service to America. And I'd like to thank you, General Eisenhower. Thank you for coming. We're honored to have you here. And Ethel Kennedy, thank you for coming; and other members of Presidents' families.

One of the most interesting things, to me, about living here these last 8 years is watching the threads of American history weave their way through the families of Presidents. The other day we had an actual ceremony here commemorating the 200th anniversary of the opening of the White House. And someone played John Adams and came up with his one footman and the horses and the old 18th-century carriage and got out. And then we had a little reception for all the Adams family members in the direct line of John and John Quincy Adams who were here. And it turned out that one of them had two sons in the United States Navy today, one of whom serves on a destroyer that is the twin to the U.S.S. *Cole* and was there when Hillary and I spoke with the families and at the memorial service a few days ago. It made me, once again, very grateful to be an American, as well as to have the opportunity to live here.

I thank the members of the White House Historical Association, and especially Bob Breeden and Hugh Sidey. Hugh, I hope you won't mind—you've had fun at our expense—I was thinking, there are at least two of us up here at the table that you've said more nice things about tonight than you have in our entire career in public life. [*Laughter*] And we are immensely grateful. I was also thinking that between all of us, we've served so long, we've been here together about half as long as Helen Thomas has. And we're delighted to see you. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the members of the Marine Band. You know, I was a band boy in high school, which, if you were from Arkansas and over 6 feet tall, was a bad thing to be. [*Laughter*] But I loved music from the time I was a child. And I think it would be fair to say that I doubt if any President has ever enjoyed the Marine Band as much as I have. I have loved every encounter I've ever had with them, and they are absolutely magnificent.

I know that all of you noticed that every President who has spoken here tonight thanked Gary Walters and the White House staff. They were not going through the motions. They were not saying that because that was something they had to say. Until you've lived here and you realize how totally bizarre your life can get from time to time, it's impossible to express how grateful you are to people who make it normal, no matter what; who are always there for you at all hours of the day or night. When you're up in the polls and down in the polls, when you're celebrating your greatest triumph or the wheel runs off, they still try to make it a home. And then, when you have to get out and make it a public place, simultaneously, they do that as well.

So Gary, from you to all the people that are down in the basement tonight keeping the lights on, making sure that the temperature works, all the people that you never see, to all these wonderful people who served our dinner tonight, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Thank you.

History tells us that even as the city's planners debated the final design of this house, masons laid its stone foundations 4 feet thick. Like our Nation's Founders, these men were building a monument to freedom that they wanted to last. Over the course of two centuries, as all of you know—and we've seen some references tonight—this old house has withstood war and fire and bulldozers, just as its inhabitants have faced a stern test or two.

In this remarkable audience are former residents, historians, and others who have very little

to learn about the White House. But I thought I would use, if I might, the story of the East Room, where we are now tonight, as just a metaphor. You've already heard that Dolly Madison cut down George Washington's picture here, and you may remember that it was said that the East Room began its existence as Abigail Adams' laundry room. But it was soon after that Thomas Jefferson, with Meriwether Lewis, unrolled maps on the floor amidst animal skins to plan what became known as the Lewis and Clark expedition, on this very floor. Whether you agree with all of Thomas Jefferson's policies or not, it's interesting; just in buying Louisiana and doing the Lewis and Clark expedition, he helped to make us the great continental nation that we are today.

Now, a few years after that, President Lincoln introduced Ulysses Grant to well-wishers. You may remember that a lot of people in Washington didn't like General Grant. He was 5'4", unimposing. He forgot to shave on some days when he was more interested in battle, and he was said to enjoy drink from time to time. And when some of the people in Washington were criticizing this rube from the hinterland because of his drinking habits, President Lincoln wryly suggested that he wished the person would find out what General Grant drank and give it to the other generals; it might end the war more quickly. [*Laughter*]

In fact, that was one of many things that were untrue. There's not a single documented reference of Ulysses Grant ever being drunk on the job. I thought I would use this historic moment to clean his slate a little bit. [*Laughter*]

But anyway, Grant was a little guy, and they were mobbing him here in this room, so he did something that I'm not sure I would have the courage to do. He jumped up on the sofa and stood there so that he would not be completely overrun by the crowd.

It was here, more tragically, that just a couple of years later Abraham Lincoln lay in state; and here, quite fittingly, a century after that, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, one of the most important American acts of the last 50 years. Just 25 years ago, Gerald Ford took the oath of office and was sworn in as President here.

We have had so many happy nights here, but I think I'll just mention one because she is here in this room. Not so very long ago, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Association, the embodiment of our commitment in the cold war to stand against communism. And on that occasion, we had this marvelous dinner with this sort of arced head table with all the heads of state, the largest number of heads of state ever to visit Washington at one time. They were entertained here by Jessye Norman, standing and singing alone. And we welcome you here tonight, again. Thank you very much.

This place is a thrill to live in. You heard President Carter say that he told them he wanted to eat the things that the staff was eating. As it turned out, when I came here, we asked them to redo the kitchen so we could have dinner in the kitchen at night. And just about every night for 8 years, Hillary and Chelsea and I have had dinner in the little kitchen upstairs—which is interesting how low standards have sunk. Until Jackie and John Kennedy moved here, the First Family came downstairs to dinner every night, in a formal dining room, for 160 years. Who knows? Maybe the next crowd will be eating on the roof. [*Laughter*]

We have enjoyed being in the Solarium, where President Reagan convalesced after he was shot. We have family and friends there. And I spend a lot of my evenings alone working in the Treaty Room, as you just heard from Hugh Sidey, on the great walnut table that President Grant used for a Cabinet table. Shortly thereafter, it was used in that same room, which was Abraham Lincoln's waiting room, as the table on which the treaty ending the Spanish-American War was signed in 1898. Thereafter, it became known as the Treaty Table, and every single treaty signed in the United States in 102 years has been signed on that table: President Carter's Camp David accords; the treaty signed by Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan, ending the war between their two nations. It always reminds me that I am a temporary resident.

Hillary and Chelsea and I will be forever grateful to the American people for letting us make the White House our home for what was, I find amazing now, 40 percent of my daughter's young life. From the day we moved in, Hillary devoted herself to preserving the White House, to the restoration of public rooms, to the selection of the bicentennial china we use tonight, to installing sculpture in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. I thank her for the work she has done

to make this a more vibrant living museum than ever.

I thank Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Bush for the work they did, which Hillary was able to help complete, to adequately endow the White House Endowment Fund so that this house and its collections will be better preserved for all future visitors, and so that all people who come here will better understand our Nation's past.

Now soon, we, too, will be part of that past. When I leave here, as we all must, I will depart with a great sense of gratitude. I'm being helped along the way by all of my friends who are determined to keep me humble and grounded.

The other day, I went to a meeting of the bishops of the Church of God in Christ, and I thought I was being quite clever. I got up in front of these 400 bishops, and I said, "I wanted to come here today because I wanted to be among some leaders who aren't term-limited." And the head bishop got up and said, "Oh, Mr. President, we're all term-limited." [*Laughter*]

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

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

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

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Hugh Sidey, president, and Robert L. Breeden, chairman and chief executive officer, White House Historical Association; Margaret Truman Daniel, daughter of President Harry S. Truman; former First Ladies Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Barbara Bush, and Nancy Reagan; Lynda Robb, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson; Gen. John Eisenhower, USA (Ret.), son of President Dwight D. Eisenhower; Ethel Kennedy, widow of Senator Robert F. Kennedy; Helen Thomas, Hearst Newspapers columnist and former United Press International reporter; Gary Walters, White House Chief Usher; soprano Jessye Norman; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Gerald R. Ford, President Jimmy Carter, President George Bush, and Mr. Sidey. The dinner was hosted by the White House Historical Association.

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

November 9, 2000

Dear _____*:*

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

We have reviewed the FRY application and have concluded that the FRY has applied on the same basis that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia applied to participate in the OSCE following the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). This mirrors the approach taken by the FRY last week in applying as a new member to the United Nations.

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

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

The President's Internet Address

November 11, 2000

Next week representatives from around the world will gather to help shape an international response to one of the greatest challenges we face, the threat of global warming. Today I want to talk with you about what this challenge means for the United States and how we can meet it together. The scientific consensus is clear: The Earth is warming, and there is strong evidence that human activity is part of the reason why.

Today I received a report from some of our leading scientists that provides the most detailed assessment ever of the potential impacts of global warming across the United States. This landmark report, undertaken at the request of Congress, pulls together a great deal of scientific analysis and paints a sobering picture of the future.

Scientists project that continued growth in greenhouse gas emissions could raise temperatures across our country by 5 to 9 degrees over the next 100 years. To put that in perspective, the Earth has not seen a temperature change of that magnitude since the end of the last ice age, about 15,000 years ago. This new study makes clear that this projected warming threatens serious harm to our environment and to our economy. It could mean more flooding, more droughts, more extreme weather, and a serious disruption in water supplies.

It could mean rising sea levels, the loss of species, and the destruction of entire ecosystems such as the Alpine meadows of the Rocky Mountains. What's more, the scientists warn, there may be many other impacts that we simply cannot predict.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take now to help avert these threats to our future. That's why for the past 8 years Vice President Gore and I have pursued commonsense strategies to reduce greenhouse gas pollution. We've expanded research and development of solar, wind, biofuels, and other renewable energy resources.

We've taken dramatic steps to reduce energy use by the Federal Government, the world's largest energy consumer. We've adopted stronger energy-efficient standards for appliances and forged new alliances with industry, including the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles. These are all steps that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while saving consumers money and strengthening our economy.

But we must do more. That is why today I'm calling for a dramatic new approach to reducing air pollution from America's powerplants, a comprehensive new clean air strategy that will produce significant reductions in the emissions that contribute to global warming.

By adopting one integrated strategy that addresses all the major pollutants—including mercury and carbon dioxide, the largest contributor to global warming—we can give electric utilities the flexibility they need to meet our clean air goals in a cost-effective way. A key part of this strategy is the use of emissions trading, which has proven so effective in curbing the pollution that causes acid rain. There is strong bipartisan support for this approach, and I urge the next Congress to take it up as soon as possible.

As we accelerate our efforts here at home, we are committed to working with other nations to take strong and sensible action to curb global warming. As the world comes together next week in The Hague, the United States will work to make real progress toward a treaty that is both environmentally strong and cost-effective. We must continue to move forward together. The stakes of not acting are simply too high.

Thanks for logging on.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:45 a.m. on November 10 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 8 a.m. on November 11. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 10 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

The President's Radio Address
November 11, 2000

Good morning. On this Veterans Day, as America honors the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, we are witnessing the extraordinary resilience of the democracy they've pledged their lives to defend.

From our earliest days, the right to vote has meant the right to participate and be heard. If ever there was a doubt about the importance of exercising the most fundamental right of citizenship, it sure was answered on Tuesday. No American will ever again be able to seriously say, "My vote doesn't count."

President Franklin Roosevelt once said, "Democracy is not a static thing; it is an everlasting march." Our Founders may not have foreseen every challenge in the march of democracy, but they crafted a Constitution that would.

The people have spoken. The important thing for all of us to remember now is that a process for resolving the discrepancies and challenges to the election is in motion. The rest of us need to be patient and wait for the results.

I want to congratulate both Vice President Gore and Governor Bush for a vigorous and hard-fought campaign. Once again, the world is seeing democracy in action. The events unfolding in Florida are not a sign of the division of our Nation but of the vitality of our debate, which will be resolved through the vibrancy of our Constitution and laws. Regardless of the outcome, we will come together as a nation, as we always do.

As this election unfolds, the Nation's business continues. Tomorrow I will begin a trip to Asia that will end in Vietnam. I will be the first President to visit that nation since the height of the Vietnam war. I will go to open a new chapter in our relationship with its people.

For nearly a decade now, we have been building a more normal relationship with Vietnam, basing each step forward on progress in accounting for Americans missing from the war in Vietnam. We've made great strides, repatriating remains, obtaining documents, never forgetting that each case represents a brave American with a name, a home, a family that cares about his fate.

I will make clear to Vietnam that we expect continued cooperation. I will also offer the support of the American people as Vietnam becomes more open to the world, promoting trade and more ties among our people and championing human rights and religious freedom.

We also have important business here at home. As Congress prepares to finish its work for the year, I urge the Members to build on the bipartisan progress we have already made. Let's finish the job of improving our schools, resolve our differences on immigration and worker safety, and let's raise the minimum wage. We should pledge to get these things done for the American people before the next President takes office in January.

A couple of nights ago, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the White House. We marked much more than the bicentennial of a building. Through two centuries of war and peace, triumph and tragedy, the White House has stood as the living symbol of our democracy. It has welcomed every President since John Adams under its roof, always through a peaceful transition of power.

This January, as it has done for 200 years, it will do so again, because of the timeless power of our Constitution and our undying faith in we, the people.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:30 a.m. on November 10 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 11. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 10 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. The Veterans Day proclamation of November 10 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Veterans Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
November 11, 2000

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. And thank you, Secretary Gober, for your many, many years of friendship and your service to our country. Thank you, Mr. Duggins, for the remarks you made today and your leadership of the Vietnam veterans. General Jackson, Superintendent Metzler, Chaplain Cooke. I think we ought to give a special applause to Lee Thornton for being with us all these years and all the work he's done. [*Applause*] Thank you so much. Thank you. What a faithful friend to America's veterans you have been.

I thank our Defense Secretary, Bill Cohen, and his wife, Janet, for being here. And Secretary Slater, General McCaffrey, the service Secretaries, other members of the Cabinet and the administration, and former Cabinet members who are here, General Myers and other members of the Joint Chiefs. To the Medal of Honor recipients, the leaders of our veterans organizations who have been introduced and who do such a fine job. To the veterans and family members, members of the Armed Services, my fellow Americans.

I welcome you all to this sacred place as we again pay tribute to the men and women who have stood at the barricades so that we may enjoy the blessings of liberty. Here we are, surrounded by the white markers that measure the last full measure of their devotion.

Many veterans died in now-historic places: the Battle of the Wilderness, Belleau Wood, Normandy, Iwo Jima, Inchon, Vietnam, Kuwait. Many others fought bravely and, thankfully, returned home to live out happy, accomplished lives among friends, families, and loved ones. Still others remind us that even when America is not at war, the men and women of our military risk and sometimes give their lives for peace.

Three such heroes were interred here just in the past few weeks. They were members of the United States Ship *Cole,* working to preserve peace and stability in a region vital to our interests, their lives taken on October 12th by a brutal act of terrorism. They are: Hull Maintenance Technician Second Class Kenneth Clodfelter, Electronics Technician Chief Petty Officer Richard Costelow, and Signalman Seaman Cheron Gunn.

Let us say to their families and to all the families who lost their loved ones on the *Cole,* we are grateful for the quiet, heroic service of your loved ones. Now they are in God's care. We mourn their loss, and we shall not rest until those who carried out this cruel act are held to account.

We all saw the TV images of the *Cole* and the massive hole in its side right at the waterline. But what many Americans still don't know about is the heroism that took place after the attack. What we couldn't see was that entire compartments were flooded, hatches blown open, doorways bent, parts of the top deck buckled. So, in addition to finding and bringing home the dead and the wounded, the surviving crew had to save their ship.

They worked around the clock, some in 22-hour shifts, amid smoke, seawater, and twisted steel, with no respite from the desert heat. They used their ingenuity to restore the ship's electrical power so they would no longer have to bail water by hand, bucket by bucket. Some even slept on the deck because the air below was too foul.

In these incredibly difficult circumstances, one helicopter pilot from a ship assisting the *Cole* wrote these words home: "I wish I had the power to relay what I have seen," he said, "but words just won't do it. I do want to tell you the first thing that jumped out at me—the Stars and Stripes flying. Our flag was more beautiful than words can describe. I have never been so proud of what I do or of the men and women I serve with."

Soon the *Cole* will be back home in America for repairs, and soon thereafter, she will be back on the seas, serving America—those Stars and Stripes still flying. We are greatly honored to be joined here today by the commander of the *Cole*—the captain of the *Cole,* Commander Kirk Lippold; his executive officer, Lieutenant Commander Chris Peterschmidt; the Command Master Chief, James Parlier; and some 20 members of their crew. I was honored to welcome them at the White House this morning. I would like

to ask them now to stand and have you welcome them. [*Applause*]

There are many appropriate ways to honor not just the crew of the *Cole* but all the men and women who have defended liberty in our military service. We honor them first of all, of course, by remembering them and their accomplishments, as we do here. Later today I will go to the groundbreaking of the World War II memorial to honor the service and sacrifice of the greatest generation, those who fought and died to free the world from tyranny, totalitarianism, and hate. And we will pledge there never to stop trying to build the world for which they sacrificed so much.

We also honor our veterans by cherishing with all our hearts the freedoms they paid such a price to defend. If ever there was a doubt about the value of citizenship and each individual's exercise of the freedom of citizenship to vote, this week's election certainly put it to rest. [*Laughter*] And if ever there was a question about the strength of our democratic institutions in the face of healthy and natural political argument, it has been answered by the measured response of the American people to these extraordinary events.

We have a Constitution. We have a rule of law. We voted, and now the system is trying to figure out exactly what we said. [*Laughter*] Eventually, they will—the system will do that, according to the Constitution and laws, and America will be just fine.

We honor Vice President Gore and Governor Bush. We honor all those who participated and all those who voted. And I hope they will remind us that the next time the polls are open, without regard to our party, our philosophy, we should show up because we certainly do count.

We honor our veterans as well, in Abraham Lincoln's words, by caring for him who should have borne the battle and for his widow and orphans. Just a few days ago I proudly signed legislation increasing funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs by $1.5 billion. These additional resources will help our Nation's 24 million veterans, serving more patients, ensuring high quality and timely medical care, improving the delivery of benefit payments for veterans, increasing compensation for disabilities, meeting our national shrine commitment to veteran cemeteries.

We also recently provided a 3.7 across-the-board increase in basic pay for the members of our Armed Forces; provided military retirees access to prescription drugs with low out-of-pocket costs; and provided lifetime health care coverage that will allow military retirees over 65 to receive affordable, high-quality health care across our Nation.

Finally, we honor our veterans by meeting our part of the solemn compact we have with each and every soldier, sailor, airman, marine, and coastguardsman, regardless of the conflict in which they fought, that we will do all in our power to find them and bring them home if they are captured, missing in action, or fallen on the battlefield.

Today I am proud to announce that we are bringing home another 15 sets of remains, heroes from the Korean war. They are en route right now from Pyongyang to Hawaii for identification, and we praise God for this event.

Tomorrow I will begin a trip to Asia that will end in Vietnam, and I will be the first President to visit that country since 1969. Over the past decade we have moved, step by step, toward normalized relations with Vietnam, based on one central priority: gaining the fullest possible accounting of American prisoners of war and Americans missing in action in Southeast Asia. Continuing cooperation on these issues is on the top of my agenda for this trip, even as we open a new chapter in our relations with Vietnam.

Our Nation has sought to move forward in developing those relations in a way that both honors those who fought and suffered there and does right by the missing and their families. We have done so with the constant involvement and support of Members of Congress who served in Vietnam, America's Vietnam veterans, and their families.

The result has been tremendous progress, and today, full cooperation from the Vietnamese in repatriating remains, accounting for missing Americans, obtaining documents, and conducting over 60 joint field activities with the Vietnamese to search for our MIA's. As a result of that increased cooperation, the remains of 283 Americans have been repatriated since 1993.

On my second day in Vietnam, I will visit a site where Americans and Vietnamese have been searching for the remains of an American serviceman. We believe it to be the place where Air Force Captain Lawrence Evert was downed on November 8, 1967. I am pleased that I will

be joined at the site by two of Captain Evert's sons, Dan and David. We are honored to have them and their sisters, Elizabeth and Tamra, with us here today. We thank them, the members of the Evert family, for their devotion.

When Captain Evert's plane was shot down 33 years ago, an airman on another flight heard a voice on a radio transmission calling out, "I'm hit hard." That hit his loved ones' lives just as hard. Again I say, we thank them for their sacrifice, and we thank them for joining us here today. Where are the Everts? Would you ask them to stand, please? There they are. [*Applause*] Thank you very much. Bless you.

The presence of these two fine men on our trip will help us all to make it clear, in Vietnam, that our work is not yet finished and that progress in our relations depends upon continued cooperation. We will always keep faith with these families and do our duty to the past, for we must never forget.

In our national memory, Vietnam was a war. But Vietnam is also a country—a country emerging from almost 50 years of conflict, upheaval, and isolation, and turning its face to a very different world, a country that can succeed in this new global age only if it becomes more interdependent and open to the world. This is something we should encourage. We should always remember something a great American Vietnam veteran and former POW, Pete Peterson, said when he went to Vietnam as our Ambassador: "We cannot change the past. What we can change is the future."

The future belongs to veterans and their families who deserve all the support and answers a grateful nation can provide. It belongs to the thousands of ordinary Vietnamese citizens who have helped them in this process. It belongs to the Vietnamese-Americans who have come to live among us, including right here in Arlington, and who now can finally travel home to reunite with their families. It belongs to all the good people who have gone to Vietnam to help clear landmines and aid the victims of flooding. It belongs to the next generation of Vietnamese who want to live in a normal, prosperous country, and to be free to shape their destinies and live their faith. It belongs to all those Americans and Vietnamese who want to build a common future.

On this first Veterans Day of the 21st century, the eighth and last in which I will have the honor to address you and the people of our Nation as President in this sacred place, let us resolve never to stop trying to build that better world for which our veterans have sacrificed. Let us all draw strength from the long legacy of service.

When history looks back upon the records of our age and our Nation centuries from now, I believe it will be written that once there was a great nation of free people who sent their very best young men and women out to serve on the frontiers of freedom in uniform. They went forth to defend their Nation and its ideals, giving up the comforts and conveniences of home. Too many never returned to their families, but none who served ever sacrificed in vain. They led lives of great consequence, for they kept the torch of liberty burning in the oldest democracy on Earth. Each and every one of them were heroes and gave to every child born thereafter a precious and irreplaceable gift. And their Nation remained eternally grateful.

Thank you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to George C. Duggins, national president, Vietnam Veterans of America; Maj. Gen. James T. Jackson, USA, Commanding General, Military District of Washington; John C. (Jack) Metzler, Jr., superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery; Chaplain Jeni Cooke, Director, Chaplain Service, Department of Veterans Affairs; Lee Thornton, master of ceremonies; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; and Dan Evert, David Evert, Elizabeth Dempsey, and Tamra Brown, children of missing U.S. serviceman Capt. Lawrence Evert. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete. The Veterans Day proclamation of November 10 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the World War II Memorial
November 11, 2000

Thank you very much. Secretary Cohen, thank you for your service. To the other members of the Cabinet and the administration, I thank you. General Woerner, thank you for your lifetime of service and your leadership of our Battlefield Monuments Commission. Ambassador Williams, thank you, and all the members of the World War II Memorial Committee. Archbishop Hannan, thank you for your prayers and your leadership in the war.

And to Captain Luther Smith of the Tuskegee Airmen, he told you his story, but I can't help noting that in telling you his story he was rather like a lot of World War II veterans. He left out a few things. He left out the Distinguished Flying Cross, seven air medals, the Purple Heart, and a POW medal. Like many of our soldiers in World War II, his bravery went unmentioned, but we are, nonetheless, profoundly grateful for it.

I'd like to thank Fred Smith, my friend of many years, for stepping up and helping to raise all this money; and also, my friend Tom Hanks, who played Captain John Miller in "Saving Private Ryan" and is now making sure that America never forgets all the Private Ryans. We are grateful for him, as well.

I thank Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, who recognized the vision of her constituent Roger Durbin and introduced this legislation and has fought for it ever since. I can tell you as someone who has dealt with her for 8 years, there is no more determined person in the United States Congress. I am only amazed that this memorial was not built in 1988, since she got behind it. Thank you, Marcy Kaptur, for what you are doing.

I thank the Members of Congress who are here. Senator Thurmond once told me that he was the oldest man who took a glider into Normandy. I don't know what that means, 56 years later, but I'm grateful for all of the Members of Congress, beginning with Senator Thurmond and all the others who are here, who never stopped serving their country.

But most of all, I want to say a thank-you to Bob Dole and to Elizabeth for their service to America. As my tenure as President draws to a close, I have had, as you might imagine, an up-and-down relationship with Senator Dole. But I liked even the bad days. I always admired him. I was always profoundly grateful for his courage and heroism in war and 50 years of service in peace. After a rich and long life, he could well have done something else with his time in these last few years, but he has passionately worked for this day. And I am profoundly grateful.

I also want to thank the men and women and boys and girls all across our country who participated in this fundraising drive, taking this memorial from dream to reality. Their stories are eloquent testimony to its meaning. As Senator Dole and I were sitting up here watching the program unfold today, he told me an amazing story. He said, "One day a man from eastern Pennsylvania called our office. He was a 73-year-old Armenian-American named Sarkis Acopian. And he said, 'I'd like to make a contribution to this memorial. Where do I mail my check?' "—just called. So he was given the address, and shortly after, this man's—who was grateful for the opportunities America has given him—check arrived in the office, a check for $1 million.

But there were all the other checks, as well, amounting to over $140 million in private contributions. There were contributions from those still too young to serve, indeed, far too young to remember the war. More than 1,100 schools across our Nation have raised money for the memorial by collecting cans, holding bake sales, putting on dances.

Let me just tell you about one of them, Milwaukie High School in Milwaukie, Oregon. Five years ago a teacher named Ken Buckles wanted to pay tribute to the World War II veterans. He and his students searched out local veterans and invited them to school for a living history day. Earlier this week, Living History Day 2000 honored more than 3,000 veterans with a recreated USO show that filled the pro basketball arena. Last year's event raised $10,000 for the memorial, and students think that this year they'll raise even more.

Now, what makes those kids fundraise and organize and practice for weeks on end? Many have grandparents and other relatives who

fought in the war, but there must be more to it than that. They learned from their families and teachers that the good life they enjoy as Americans was made possible by the sacrifices of others more than a half-century ago. And maybe most important, they want us to know something positive about their own generation, as well, and their desire to stand for something greater than themselves.

They didn't have the money to fly out here today, but let's all of us send a loud thank-you to the kids at Milwaukie High School and their teacher, Ken Buckles, and all the other young people who have supported this cause. [*Applause*]

The ground we break today is not only a timeless tribute to the bravery and honor of one generation but a challenge to every generation that follows. This memorial is built not only for the children whose grandparents served in the war but for the children who will visit this place a century from now, asking questions about America's great victory for freedom.

With this memorial, we secure the memory of 16 million Americans, men and women who took up arms in the greatest struggle humanity has ever known. We hallow the ground for more than 400,000 who never came home. We acknowledge a debt that can never be repaid.

We acknowledge, as well, the men and women and children of the homefront, who tended the factories and nourished the faith that made victory possible; remember those who fought faithfully and bravely for freedom, even as their own full humanity was under assault—African-Americans who had to fight for the right to fight for our country, Japanese-Americans who served bravely under a cloud of unjust suspicion, Native American code talkers who helped to win the war in the Pacific, women who took on new roles in the military and at home—remember how, in the heat of battle and the necessity of the moment, all of these folks moved closer to being simply Americans.

And we remember how, after World War II, those who won the war on foreign battlefields dug deep and gave even more to win the peace here at home, to give us a new era of prosperity, to lay the foundation for a new global society and economy by turning old adversaries into new allies, by launching a movement for social justice that still lifts millions of Americans into dignity and opportunity.

I would like to say once more before I go to the veterans here today what I said in Normandy in 1994: "Because of you, my generation and those who have followed live in a time of unequaled peace and prosperity. We are the children of your sacrifice, and we thank you forever."

But now, as then, progress is not inevitable; it requires eternal vigilance and sacrifice. Earlier today, at the Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, we paid tribute to the fallen heroes of the United States Ship *Cole*, three of whom have recently been buried at Arlington. The captain of the ship and 20 of the crewmembers were there today. We honor them.

Next week I will go to Vietnam to honor the men and women America lost there, to stand with those still seeking a full accounting of the missing. But at the same time, I want to give support to Vietnamese and Americans who are working together to build a better future in Vietnam, under the leadership of former Congressman and former Vietnam POW Pete Peterson, who has reminded us that we can do nothing about the past, but we can always change the future. That's what all of you did after the war with Germans, Italians, and Japanese. You built the world we love and enjoy today.

The wisdom this monument will give us is to learn from the past and look to the future. May the light of freedom that will stand at the center of this memorial inspire every person who sees it to keep the flame of freedom forever burning in the eyes of our children and to keep the memory of the greatest generation warm in the hearts of every new generation of Americans.

Thank you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:22 p.m. on The National Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Fred F. Woerner, USA (Ret.), Chairman, and Ambassador Haydn Williams, Commissioner, American Battle Monuments Commission; retired Archbishop Philip Hannan of New Orleans, a chaplain in the 82d Airborne Division, USA, during World War II; Capt. Luther Smith, USAF (Ret.), member of the Tuskegee Airmen, an African-American bomber escort squadron in World War II; Frederick W. Smith, national cochairman, actor Tom Hanks, national spokesperson, and

former Senator Bob Dole, national chairman, National World War II Memorial Campaign; Senator Dole's wife, Elizabeth; and Comdr. Kirk Lippold, USN, captain of the U.S.S. *Cole.*

Statement on the Death of Leah Rabin
November 12, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened this morning to learn of the death of Leah Rabin. We have lost a dear friend, and the Middle East has lost a friend of peace. But the work to which she and Yitzhak dedicated their lives must and will continue.

Our prayers are with the Rabin family and with the people of Israel.

Statement on Signing the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000
November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 782, the "Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000." The Older Americans Act of 1965, last reauthorized by the Congress in 1992, provides essential home and community-based services, such as congregate and home-delivered meals, transportation, legal assistance, employment and volunteer opportunities, health promotion activities, pension counseling programs, and protection from abuse in institutions and in the community for millions of older persons across the United States.

I am very pleased that this bipartisan legislation includes, for the first time, an important new program designed to assist families. It provides the authorization for the National Family Caregiver Support Program, which I first proposed in 1999 as part of my long-term care initiative. This program will help hundreds of thousands of family members—spouses, adult children, and others—who are struggling to care for their frail older loved ones who are ill or disabled. Studies have shown that caregiving can take a huge emotional, physical, and financial toll on families. The support provided through this new program includes critical information, training, and counseling, as well as much needed quality respite care for those caregivers who are juggling jobs and other family responsibilities while meeting the special needs of loved ones in their care. This legislation also recognizes the challenges that grandparents and other relatives caring for children face, as well as those of older individuals who are caring for children who have disabilities. When funded, this program will provide valuable assistance to the families who need it most.

Beyond providing this important support to families, the bill I am signing today will strengthen and improve the delivery of important daily services to our most vulnerable aging citizens through our national network of State and area agencies on aging, tribal organizations, and other members of our community, including volunteers, many of whom are older persons themselves. The new legislation gives our States, area agencies, and Tribes more flexibility in serving elders in their own communities and regions, and enhances the coordination of Federal, State, and local programs to maximize the effectiveness of program activities.

This legislation does much to position our rapidly growing aging population for the decades ahead when the number of older persons in need of help will be much larger and more diverse. The Act continues to focus attention on the needs of those in greatest social and economic need, with particular attention to low-income minority elders, and it recognizes the needs of those older persons who live in rural areas of our country. It acknowledges the cultural differences among our tribal populations, and provides them with caregiver support and disaster relief assistance as well as promoting better coordination of services between State and tribal grantees. It promotes innovation and

the development of best practices for supporting not only older persons, but family caregivers living at home, in the community, or on tribal reservations.

I am also pleased that this legislation incorporates the key features of my Administration's proposal for reauthorizing and enhancing the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). This important program provides part-time community service employment to low-income individuals ages 55 and older, and assists them in obtaining unsubsidized employment. The bill would maintain the unique and complementary structure of SCSEP, under which national nonprofit organizations as well as States receive grants to operate the program. It also strengthens SCSEP by establishing an enhanced performance accountability system, reinforcing connections between SCSEP and the broader workforce investment system established under the Workforce Investment Act, and improving the planning process by providing for broad participation in the development of a plan in each State to ensure an equitable distribution of projects and the coordination of services to seniors.

Finally, the Act calls for the convening of a White House Conference on Aging by the end of 2005 in order to continue to prepare our Nation for its own gift of longevity.

Today's enactment of this legislation extending and improving the Older Americans Act, and establishing the new National Family Caregiver Support Program, reflects our continued commitment to our older population, and represents a victory for Americans of all ages.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 13, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 782, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–501.

Statement on Signing the Reauthorization of the Export Administration Act of 1979

November 13, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5239, which reauthorizes the Export Administration Act of 1979 (EAA) until August 20, 2001.

Reauthorization and revision of the EAA is long overdue. The EAA is a Cold War statute and its authorities lapsed on August 20, 1994. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a strong need for a modern export control law that will provide U.S. businesses an updated legal framework in which to operate. This revised Act must recognize the current realities of a fast-paced highly competitive global market and at the same time help ensure our national security by controlling the export of sensitive dual-use items that have military and nonmilitary applications. My Administration proposed such a revision back in 1994. Despite several efforts, the Congress has not yet been able to pass a new revised Act.

In reauthorizing the EAA on a short-term basis, the Congress has taken a small but significant step. Reauthorizing the EAA will overcome the legal challenges now being made to the Department of Commerce's continued operation of its export control system under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act after the lapse of the EAA. In particular, the reauthorization confirms the Department's ability to keep export licensing information obtained during the lapse of the EAA from public disclosure, which is a critical part of the Department's export control system and protects sensitive business information and commercial interests of U.S. exporters. The Congress' actions have reaffirmed the view of the executive branch in this matter—that confidential treatment of export licensing information is continuous regardless of whether the EAA is in a lapse period. The reauthorization of the EAA also reaffirms that the Congress must abide by statutory limitations on public disclosure of such information.

While a comprehensive revision of the Export Administration Act is necessary, this reauthorization of the EAA is a needed short-term step.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 13, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5239, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–508.

Statement on Signing the National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000

November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign S. 1482, the "National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000," further strengthening Nation's commitment to ocean conservation. This Nation prides itself on its conservation ethic, as embodied in our national parks and refuges. The 13 marine sanctuaries extend this ethic into the sea, ensuring a healthy ocean environment for future generations of swimmers and surfers, fishermen and explorers, teachers and students.

National marine sanctuaries enjoy broad bipartisan support, and I am particularly grateful to the Congressional leadership of this legislation for their efforts. I am especially pleased that this act creates the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, named in memory of Dr. Foster, who passed away in June after a 23-year career fighting for ocean conservation. It is a fitting tribute to Dr. Foster to encourage scholarship, particularly by women and minorities, in the fields of oceanography, marine biology, and maritime archeology.

This legislation builds on the Clinton-Gore administration's work to preserve our Nation's oceans. Over the past 7 years, the Vice President and I have fought for healthier beaches and cleaner coastal waters, greater protection for endangered and threatened marine species, sound fisheries management, and support for marine protected areas. We have worked with Congress to secure a fivefold increase in marine sanctuary funding to $26 million and add new sanctuaries off Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, Hawaii, and, most recently, Michigan. Today we extend this program into the future, and with it this Nation's commitment to an ocean ethic for the 21st century.

NOTE: S. 1482, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–513.

Statement on Signing the National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000

November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1482, the "National Marine Sanctuaries Amendments Act of 2000," which reauthorizes the National Marine Sanctuaries Act for 5 years.

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) authorizes the establishment of a unique system of marine protected areas dedicated to the conservation of special areas of the marine environment for the appreciation and enjoyment of present and future generations. The National Marine Sanctuary Program currently comprises 13 sanctuaries around the country, including sites in American Samoa and Hawaii. In the quarter century since its inception, the NMSA has provided a powerful mandate for marine resource protection, resulting in the permanent conservation of many invaluable habitats. Drawing upon this experience, S. 1482 refines the NMSA in substantive ways to reflect the growth and evolution of the Program.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program is a key part of my Administration's ocean policy. In particular, this long-standing program will be an integral part of the national system of marine protected areas, which I recently directed Federal agencies to establish. In addition, sanctuaries are essential to achieving the goals of the Coral Reef Task Force of protecting important coral areas and will be a focus of the Ocean

Exploration initiative, which I recently announced, to better understand the unexplored ocean areas.

This legislation establishes the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, which will support graduate students in oceanography, marine biology, and maritime archaeology. Much of the success of the National Marine Sanctuary Program is attributable to Dr. Foster's advocacy of the program and her tenure as the head of the program in its early years, and I am pleased that these scholarships will honor such a fine leader in ocean and coastal management. Throughout her career, Dr. Foster demonstrated a commitment to mentoring and supporting women and minorities in the marine sciences. She will be greatly missed.

I congratulate the congressional supporters of this Act. I am pleased by the increased interest in our oceans and coastal resources and the recognition of the value of the continued protection and management of these areas. S. 1482 will be instrumental in helping to ensure our ocean legacy for future generations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 13, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1482, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–513.

Statement on Signing the Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2000

November 13, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1752, the "Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2000." This Act reauthorizes and amends the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA), which protects lives, property, and key coastal barrier habitat by prohibiting Federal subsidies for development and disaster relief on many of our Nation's coastal barriers.

First enacted in 1982, CBRA established the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS), which includes undeveloped coastal barrier habitats along the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Last year, these coastal barriers were renamed the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System in honor of the late Senator, who authored the original CBRA and this reauthorizing legislation and championed numerous other environmental laws throughout his distinguished career of public service. Today, CBRA protects over 3 million acres of coastal barrier habitat.

Coastal barriers provide a multitude of services that are foundations of a strong economy and healthy environment. For example, coastal barriers often help provide the conditions necessary to support productive and lucrative fisheries. They also provide essential habitat for threatened and endangered species and protect the mainland from coastal storms, bearing the full force of storm surge and hurricane-level winds and shielding the mainland from the severest storm conditions. By limiting Federal subsidies such as flood insurance from units in the System, CBRA discourages development, keeping lives out of harm's way, protecting fish and wildlife habitat, and reducing wasteful expenditures of taxpayer dollars.

This Act contains a number of amendments that will improve the CBRS and implementation of the CBRA. One provision allows the voluntary addition of lands to the System, which could increase the amount of coastal barrier habitat protected by CBRA. The Act also codifies a set of mapping guidelines, which will help the public understand the criteria used to delineate parts of the System. Most significantly, this Act recognizes the value that digital mapping techniques can add to coastal protection and authorizes a digital mapping pilot program that will help integrate the CBRA with Federal, State, and local government planning tools.

Ultimately, I believe this technology will better serve the public and protect natural resources.

Naming the System after Senator Chafee was a fitting tribute to a man who worked so hard, and so successfully, to find common ground in

the struggle to protect and preserve the environment for future generations. Senator Chafee was very proud of CBRA, often stating his support during hearings of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, which he chaired. Given the laudable goals and achievements of CBRA, I am pleased that the Congress has reauthorized and strengthened the law. This Act reaffirms our Nation's commitment to protecting valuable coastal barrier habitat in this new century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 13, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1752, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–514.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the APEC Business Advisory Council in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei

November 15, 2000

The President. Good morning, and thank you, Dr. Hamdillah. Your Royal Highness, fellow leaders, Madam Ambassador, members of the Business Advisory Committee. I thank you all for your support of this process. And if I might, I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to the three members of ABAC from the United States, Sy Sternberg, Paul Song, and Ernie Micek.

I appreciate what the private sector involvement has done for APEC—for example, last year's auto dialog, which brought regulators and firms together to lower trade barriers. I hope we can do the same this year with the chemical industry dialog. I thank you for your ideas and for your impatience, reminding us always that none of these commitments made at APEC mean anything if we don't follow them with actions.

As you know, this has been a rather interesting week in the United States. [*Laughter*] And as a result, I did not arrive here until late last night. One of the things I think we have learned is that we should all be very careful about making predictions about the future. [*Laughter*] But I know I can safely predict that this will be my last APEC Summit. [*Laughter*] I just don't know who will be here next year. [*Laughter*]

Let me say a few words about the organization, if I might. I remember our first summit in 1993, the first leaders meeting in Washington State at Blake Island. Some of you were there. Before that, APEC had been doing good work but in a low-key way, I think largely unnoticed by many of the politic leaders among all the countries here represented. I wanted to establish a mechanism to bring together the leaders of the most economically dynamic region in the world. I thought that together we could work to be better prepared for a world that was becoming more and more integrated, more and more interdependent, a world in which the Asia-Pacific region was destined to play a larger and larger role.

In 1993 we didn't use the word "globalization" very much, but that is what we were preparing for. And I think we knew the process inevitably would be about more than economics. By bringing our economies and our societies closer together, I believed then, and I hope all believe now, that we could advance not only prosperity but the cause of human freedom and our common ability to avert conflict in this vital part of the world.

By inviting the APEC leaders to Blake Island, I wanted to send a clear message, also, that Asia was even more important to the United States after the cold war. I believe that our partnership with Asia is stronger today than a decade ago and that Asia's future is brighter.

There is no longer any doubt that our link to this region is permanent, not passing. Our troops remain here as a force for stability. We have renewed our alliance with Japan. We have worked to preserve the peace in the two likeliest flashpoints of conflict, the Taiwan Strait and the Korean Peninsula.

In 1994, with our ally South Korea, we negotiated an agreement that froze North Korea's production of plutonium for nuclear weapons. And now President Kim Dae-jung has made his

courageous journey of reconciliation, for which he justifiably won the Nobel Peace Prize.

We have encouraged China's historic choice to open its economy to the world and applauded the similar choice made by Vietnam. I think it is a fitting symbol of where the world is going that Vietnam now chairs ASEAN, an organization originally created in part to contain Vietnam.

In Indonesia, 200 million people are struggling to overcome recent severe economic and political problems, but at least they now have the chance to shape their own destiny. They have great resources and great talent and a great future.

I believe, in these years, APEC has made a difference. I believe these annual leaders summits and the business meetings associated with them have made a difference. I hope very much that they will continue indefinitely. I think it is very important for the leaders to meet, to work together in an informal atmosphere. It creates a much greater sense of community. And I think it's very important for all of you to come here to help us work through practical problems and keep the pressure on the political systems to move forward.

Particularly after the hard economic times of 1997 and 1998, I certainly hope we all know now we have a stake in each other's success. We have no interest in pitting one part of the region or one trading bloc against another. We are managing our crises better, and not just economic ones. Last year in New Zealand, for example, we used the annual APEC leaders summit to forge the coalition that ended the violence in East Timor.

During the last 8 years, we have worked also to ensure that the open world economy works as a means to raise living standards and lower poverty for all nations. We've learned that meeting that challenge requires more than the continued expansion of rules-based open trade. It also requires strong social safety nets, more quality education, anti-poverty efforts, and labor and environment standards so that people believe that globalization is leading not to a race to the bottom but to higher living standards for all who work hard and are a part of it.

In no part of the world has globalization been put to the test as much as in Asia in these last few years. You have felt both its great benefits and its temporary but brutal sting. On balance, the global economy and more open markets clearly have been a positive force in Asia and, indeed, around the world. That is not to downplay the impact of the financial crisis or the abject despair it brought to millions. It is also true that countries with more closed economies did not suffer as much during the crisis, but those same closed economies, isolated from the risks of the global economy, have also been isolated from its fullest rewards.

APEC has pushed all of us to seize those rewards. And the rewards are clear. Per capita GDP in East Asia has doubled since 1990. Among lower income economies in APEC, incomes have grown by 60 percent in the last decade, even as they have shrunk for many less developed countries outside APEC. In 1970, before economic expansion through trade began, infants in this region were 5 times more likely than today to die at birth. Children were 6 times more likely than today to die before age 5.

I think a fair reading of history is that the greatest Asian financial crisis was not the brief one now coming to a close but the one that lasted almost two centuries before Asia began to open its economies to the world. Fifty years ago most of this region was desperately poor. Many economists predicted that the country with the best chance of success, because of its human and natural resources, was Burma. In reality, the most successful countries were not those which started with the biggest advantages but those that made the most of the advantages they had by opening their markets and ultimately their societies.

That is why APEC has been a force for free markets. In our 1994 summit, we agreed to achieve free and open trade in the Asia Pacific by 2010 for industrialized economies and by 2020 for developing economies. We've been making steady, sector-by-sector progress. In 1988 more than half the APEC economies had average tariffs of 10 percent or more. Today, only four do. APEC exports have more than doubled.

Of course, the region is not out of the woods. It would be a cruel irony, indeed, if the recovery were to breed a complacency that stalled the very changes making recovery possible. I believe we need to meet four related challenges to keep the recovery and our share of prosperity going.

First, we must continue to modernize our economies by promoting E-commerce and applying information technology to the full range of economic activity, from agriculture to heavy

industry to transportation, to reduce costs and raise efficiency.

To maximize potential, we must turn the digital divide among and within our nations into digital opportunities. That will be a big subject of this summit. Internet use is growing in the region, and Asia is poised to participate in what will be a $7 trillion global E-commerce market by the year 2005. At the same time, it has been estimated that if we simply maintain the current rate of growth, in 11 of the 21 APEC economies the percentage of the population online by 2005 will average just 4 percent, compared to an average of 72 percent in the top eight economies.

As we discuss Internet access, we must also address the obstacles to E-commerce. For example, being able to order a package online is not enough if a competitive airline cannot fly it to you at low cost, if it can't get through redtape at customs, or if there's no delivery service to take it the final miles to your home. APEC has encouraged all its members to make a comprehensive assessment of their readiness for the information age. The assessment asked questions about access to the Internet, about the reliability and price of services, about the number of schools connected, about local language content, about the business environment for E-commerce, about the protection of intellectual property, and a host of other issues.

Now that the roadblocks are being identified, we propose that governments in this region and companies like yours launch pilot projects to start removing them. I hope as many of you as possible will participate. We cannot close the digital divide without your efforts to provide distance learning, to donate software and low-cost computers for villages, and to train people to use them. We need initiatives like APEC's Knowledge Network, which is compiling on one Internet site information on all the service companies—all the services which companies are providing to help economies close the digital divide.

Now, people are talking about tripling the number of people online in our region by 2005. With your help, I believe we can easily quadruple the number and perhaps do even better.

APEC has also agreed to adopt one test and one standard for all its members to use to measure the safety and quality of computers, agreed that only legitimately licensed software can be used in government offices so companies can be more certain of their copyrights, and to continue its moratorium on E-commerce duties. That's a good step toward meeting the second big challenge we face, to continue to open our markets to more trade and more investment.

At this summit, the United States, Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore are announcing the first multilateral open-skies agreement in the world, a model we hope others will emulate and join. APEC members are also agreeing to post on the Internet our individual action plans for reaching free trade in the region, so you can judge our progress and, frankly, so you can put a little more pressure on us to get it done. The most important thing we can do is to launch a new trade round at the WTO. It ought to happen as early as possible next year.

A third challenge is to continue doing what we all said had to be done in the wake of the recent financial crisis, to improve transparency, to speed up financial restructuring, to strengthen the rule of law, and to build more accountable political institutions. That's easy to say and hard to do. But surely it can't be as hard as living through another crisis. And the imperative for reform will only grow as our economies become more and more intertwined.

The challenge is especially profound for two nations in this region, China and Vietnam. Both have signed trade agreements with the United States as steps toward joining the WTO. For China and Vietnam, these agreements are about much more than lowering tariffs; they are declarations of interdependence, recognition that in a global age no country can succeed without continuing to open up to the world.

Both agreements require far-reaching change, dismantling command and control economies, giving people more access to information and, ultimately, I believe, more freedom to use that information to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

A final challenge is to recognize that open markets alone cannot guarantee the kind of growth that lifts everyone, as I said earlier. We know we need strong safety nets, especially in regions like Asia, with rapidly aging populations. We know we need to invest more in education and spread access to education as broadly as possible. As the private sector knows better than anyone, even if you have 100 percent literacy, every dollar you invest in education continues to bring ever greater economic returns.

We also need to fight the infectious diseases that kill people and progress in too many of our nations. There will not be a lasting recovery in Asia if Asia becomes the next epicenter of a global AIDS crisis. But that could happen without concerted leadership. Government cannot provide that leadership alone. Companies will have to educate their workers; CEO's will have to add their voices to those trying to destigmatize the disease. This is not someone else's problem; it is all our problem. As APEC is recognizing, we must fight it together.

In short, we have a lot to do if we don't want this recovery to be as fleeting as the latest Elvis fad in Japan. The good news is, we know what to do. Painful experience has also taught us what not to do. Experience has also taught us to have faith in this region's capacity to overcome very great challenges. After all, how many people foresaw a generation ago that Asia would grow so rapidly we would be talking today about a Pacific century? How many people said 2 years ago that Asia's success was a thing of the past? The truth is, the problems the financial crisis exposed were very real, and they haven't all been solved yet. But the achievements and the resilience of Asia's people are very real, too, and a lot has been done in the last couple of years.

The commitment of Asia's friends and the stake we have in Asia's success is also real. That is what drives APEC. With your help, it will keep us on the right path.

These last 8 years have been a great honor and opportunity for me to try to tie the United States firmly and forever in a very positive way to the Asia-Pacific region. I think this work should continue. I think the leaders meeting should continue. I think the involvement of the business community is essential.

So I thank you for what you have done, and I hope that you will continue to move forward on these four challenges.

Thank you.

Dr. Hamdillah H.A. Wahab. It is, sir, a very rare opportunity for the President of the largest economy in APEC to grace his presence in this year's summit, hosted by the smallest economy of APEC. [*Laughter*] And I would like to take this opportunity to invite our CEO summit delegates to raise questions to the President of the United States of America.

Please.

The President. I just want to say, after I saw this facility, I did not believe this was a small economy. [*Laughter*] I have here with me today the Secretary of State, our Trade Ambassador, Charlene Barshefsky, as well as Secretary Albright and many other distinguished people from the American Government, and I know they're going to be pushing for us to build an outpost on the South China Sea. [*Laughter*] Now, this is an amazing place.

Does anyone have a question? Yes, sir.

Integration of Technology and Education

Q. [*Inaudible*]—and we're here with some students from—[*inaudible*]—and the United States, covering this event. And so, on behalf of the students, I'd like to ask a question, and that is, how do you feel APEC and the members of APEC can do a better job the integrate technology and education?

The President. Well, one of the things I think that—we're going to be talking about that at this meeting, and it's one of the subjects of the leaders meeting. So I will answer that question, but I would also just say to you, sir, if you and the students have any ideas you want to share with us, this is the time to do it because it will be a major focus of the discussions we have all day tomorrow.

I think perhaps the most important thing we can do is to identify what is now taking place in every country and to see whether or not the best practices in each country can be spread to the others as quickly as possible. I also think it's worth looking at what's being done in some non-APEC countries that might have particular relevance to the developing economies.

I spent some time a few months ago in India, and I went out into a couple of small villages, as well as being in some of the larger cities. And in the State of Rajasthan, which is not one of the wealthiest States in India, they will have a community computer available to all the citizens and all the children of the community within 3 years in every village in the State. In another State where I was, they already have 18 government services on the Internet, more than most American States do, I think.

So I think what we need to do is to take—look, the technology is out there. We are going to have to have, as I said in my remarks, more activity from the business community in donating both the hardware, the software, and the expertise and a lot of things that particularly

are needed in the developing areas. But I think we ought to make a commitment to quadruple access over the next 5 years. And I think we can do much better than that.

But I think that it shouldn't just be E-commerce. There ought to be a serious focus on the schools and having Internet access in the schools and making sure the proper educational software is available and that international communications are available among the schools, which I think are quite important.

Anything else? Yes, in the back.

Asian Economic Integration

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I think that there are inherent constraints on APEC which—the EU is becoming a common economic unit, and I do think that there will be more regional economic cooperation within Asia, as well as more cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region in the future. And I tried to make a very pointed reference to that in my remarks. I don't see the two things in conflict. And I know there are some people who apparently believe that building a stronger Asia-Pacific cooperative economic network is inconsistent with building greater Asian economic integration. I simply don't agree with that.

And I think that we make a grave mistake when we start to create zero-sum games in the global economy. I think it's a mistake; it ought to be avoided at all costs.

Now, I do think that we should look at ways in which this organization could be stronger and more effective in actually pushing for the changes that we recommend. But you know what the problems are. I mean, many of you agree that we ought to do certain things, but the things that you think we ought to do are politically difficult for some nations to do once the leaders go back home and have to deal with the political reality on the ground.

So I think one of the most important things that perhaps could be done is an examination of what the business community both within countries and beyond countries could do to support the political leaders who are willing to try to make the changes that we all think ought to be made. Because it's very easy for us to come to this beautiful place and recommend all these changes, and these changes may well be beneficial to all the business people represented here from all the countries. But it doesn't mean that they can be made painlessly by political leaders when they go back home.

So I think one of the things I'd like to see all of you discuss is what you could do not only to put more pressure on the leaders here once a year but what you could do to provide more systematic support to the leaders who are prepared to make these tough decisions who live in the countries where the decisions are indeed difficult to make.

Yes.

Next President and the Trade Agenda

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, without commenting on what kind of leadership we will have in the other countries, which I think is inappropriate for me to comment on and also not possible to predict, one of the things that both Vice President Gore and Governor Bush agreed on in this election is that the United States should continue its strong leadership for a more integrated global economy and for expanded trade. And as nearly as I could tell, there was virtually no disagreement on that, except that there were disagreements about the extent to which we also ought to push the trade-plus agenda, if you will, that I've been talking about for the last several years. But on the question of leadership for trade, I think the world can rest easy because both our candidates made strong commitments to do that.

Yes, sir.

President's Future Plans

Q. [*Inaudible*]—NAFTA and trade relations with China, but I have a question to ask you. You're still young, articulate, intelligent, and the President of the United States. What do you do now? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, now I have a United States Senator to support. I understand that's an expensive proposition. [*Laughter*] I don't know.

Let me just say that the important thing for a former President, it seems to me, is to find a way to be a useful citizen of both my country and the world and to continue to pursue the things that I think are most important to making the world a better place but to do it in a way that does not get in the way of my successor.

The United States can only have one President at a time, and it's very important to me that I continue to be active in the things that

I care about—many of which I was talking about here today—in a way that is respectful of the fact that the country has a new President, and the people need to bond with the new President, and the new President needs to establish his relationships and role in the world.

But I think I can find a way to do that. So I'll be around. But I also have to support a Senator, and I'm going to do my best to do that, as well.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Ballroom at the Empire Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Hamdillah H.A. Wahab, chairman, APEC-CEO Summit 2000; Prince Abdul Qawi of Brunei; U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Sylvia Stanfield; Sy Sternberg, Paul Y. Song, and Ernest S. Micek, U.S. members, APEC Business Advisory Council; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Bandar Seri Begawan

November 15, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. President Clinton, any comment on the U.S. election?

President Clinton. Yes, let him talk about it. [*Laughter*]

President Putin. We're interested, but with respect to the feelings of the American people, are waiting for the outcomes.

Russia-U.S. Relations

[*At this point, a question was asked in Russian, and a translation was not provided.*]

President Putin. President Clinton, during the term of his Presidency, has caused a breakthrough in the U.S.-Russian relations. And we expect this torch to be given to whoever will be the successor.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, how are you going to explain what's going on back home to Mr. Putin and other foreign leaders?

President Clinton. Well, I think it's pretty clear that no one knows yet who won the election. There are recounts in progress, and there will be a full accounting according to an accepted legal process in America. We have plenty of time. There's nothing to worry about.

I think other leaders should have the same reaction the American people have about it. I think they are pretty relaxed about it now. They're going to let the process play out. Both sides are certainly very well represented, and they'll argue their points, and we'll see how it works.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:10 p.m. at the Assara Guest House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Ratification of the Convention To Combat Desertification

November 15, 2000

On November 13 I signed the instrument of ratification for the Convention To Combat Desertification. Degradation of dry lands affects hundreds of millions of people around the world, especially in Africa. The Convention will help countries marshal the resources needed to mitigate the effects of desertification. It will enhance the effectiveness of foreign assistance and promote a strong role for nongovernmental organizations. Finally, it properly places affected

local communities at the heart of international efforts to meet this critical challenge. I look forward to working with our partners in Africa and around the world to implement this innovative international agreement. I commend the Senate for its approval of this important treaty.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea in Bandar Seri Begawan
November 15, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Have any of the leaders asked you about the election results, sir?

President Clinton. Just briefly.

Q. Did they accept your explanation of what's going on?

President Clinton. No, they were just interested in it. I told them it would all be worked out. The process was underway.

Possible Visit to North Korea

Q. Mr. President, what exactly are you waiting for from the North Koreans, in terms of commitments on their missile program? What do you need to hear from them?

President Clinton. Well, we're working on a number of issues, of which the missile program is one. We're obviously trying to make as much progress as we can, and I'll make an appropriate decision about the trip sometime in the not too distant future.

Q. Sir, do you think it would be helpful to bring the South Koreans' President with you if you make a trip?

President Clinton. Well, I don't—he just went, and he deserves a lot of credit for doing it. I was actually quite thrilled, as I've told him several times, that the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to him for a lifetime of devotion to peace and human rights, and especially for the breakthrough he's achieved here.

So I think he's put this whole business on a different footing. Secretary Albright, as you know, had a very good trip to North Korea. So I think we're going to work together. We've always worked in partnership with South Korea, and we will continue to do so.

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:42 p.m. at the Istana Edinburgh Guest House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Interview With Terence Hunt and Walter M. Mears of the Associated Press
November 14, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Why don't we start with the election? Do you think either Vice President Gore or Governor Bush is going to be able to govern effectively in a situation as divided and increasingly embittered as it is now?

The President. I think it's too soon to draw that conclusion. I think the American people are pretty good about uniting around a President, particularly if the President gets a certain grace period. And I don't think that the circumstances are as rife, or ripe, for discord as they were in '93, where Newt Gingrich was in control and—the Republican apparatus in the Congress—and had a certain theory about what he was trying to do. I think now the country may be quite sobered by this, and the Congress may be somewhat sobered by it. You might well find that there is a real willingness to work together.

The fact that the American people were closely divided on the candidates for President, and would have been closely divided even if Ralph Nader weren't in here, the Vice President would

have won the election probably, what, 51.5 to 48.5 or something. That indicates that the American people—I don't think that means that they don't believe there's a dynamic center that can be achieved. And I think that's what they will want from the next President and from the next Congress. So I think it's too soon to say that bitterness and partisanship will paralyze the next President. We don't know that, and I hope it won't be the case.

This is actually, if you think about it, while it was a hard-fought campaign, there wasn't a lot of personal criticism in it—some from the Republican side against the Vice President but not nearly as harsh as we've seen in some campaigns of the past and even less from the Democratic side against Governor Bush. There was some, but not much. I think, on balance, it was an election fought out over two different approaches to the country's challenges and opportunities and different positions on specific issues. So I don't think we are necessarily doomed to 4 years of stalemate and partisanship, and I hope that won't be the case.

Q. People are talking about the—some people were even saying the election is being stolen, and there's all this bitterness, suits. You don't think that that poisons the atmosphere?

The President. Well, I think that depends on what happens in the next few days. And so far what I've tried to tell the American people is, they have spoken, and we're trying to determine what they said. I think there's another million or so votes to be counted in California, New York, and Washington State, maybe even a little more. I guess still the—some prospect of asking for a recount in Iowa and Wisconsin by the Bush people. And then there's the attempt to resolve all the questions that are out there about the Florida vote. And I think we just—you know, the process is underway. Both sides are clearly very equally represented. And I just think we ought to let the thing play out. It will work itself out in some way or another.

We've had this happen before. In 1800 Thomas Jefferson was elected in a very divisive, highly partisan election and went into the House of Representatives. I think he even had to vote on the fitness of the electors. He was a sitting Vice President. You know, he gave a very conciliatory Inaugural Address, saying, "We are all Federalists; we're all Republicans," and led to a whole new era in American politics, out of what was an exceedingly divisive election. He was reelected, and Mr. Madison was elected, served two terms; Mr. Monroe was elected, served two terms. It was actually probably the most stable period in our country's history, in terms of leadership, born out of an exceedingly divisive election in 1800.

So I think it depends upon whether the people believe that this whole thing plays out in a fair way. So that's why I've encouraged the American people to just relax, take a deep breath, recognize that a result of this kind is always possible in a democratic election that's hard-fought, and that the most important thing is that, when it's all said and done, that people believe that all the issues were resolved in a fair way and that the people—franchise was protected and the integrity of the process was. It's unfolding. We just—and I think as long as it—I just think that's what we ought to keep in mind here.

There's lots of time, you know. The Electoral College is not supposed to meet until December 18th; Inauguration is January 21st. It's a very stable country, and they're working through it, and we'll see what happens.

Q. Are you comfortable with the courts being as heavily involved as they're becoming? Should a judge decide whose vote counts and whose doesn't?

The President. I think, in some of these cases, there may not be any alternative, because the right to vote is protected and defined in both State and Federal law. There's probably no alternative here.

Now, in the first case, I understand today the judge actually declined to get involved. Isn't that right?

Q. Yes, she would not stay the hand-counting.

The President. I think that the courts probably will be reluctant to be involved as long as they believe that nothing—there's been no legal or constitutional infringement on the franchise. We'll just see what happens.

Q. The Vice President has gone back to court against the secretary of state's ruling that it has to be done by 5 p.m. tomorrow.

The President. Like I said, I've done my best not to comment on the process but just to say it's unfolding; both sides are well represented; they're arguing their points strongly. We should not expect either side to do anything less than to make their strongest case. That's what they're supposed to do.

Electoral College

Q. Do you agree with Senator-elect Clinton that the Electoral College should be abolished?

The President. Well, I have mixed feelings about it. I think the idea—first of all, it was established to some extent for practical reasons, as you know, in the 18th century, and the practical reasons are no longer relevant. You know, we know how people voted when they vote. So nobody has to come tell us.

The other argument is that it gives some more weight to the small States, because the votes are not proportional to the House of Representatives; every State gets the two Senate votes, too, in the Electoral College. And arguably, it gets more attention from the candidates to the small States.

Now, I think that ought to be examined. I'm not necessarily sure that's so. For example, if you're a Democrat and you know you're going to lose every State that's not on the Mississippi River, until you get to California, Washington, Oregon, and maybe Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, would you not go there? Would you be any less likely to go there if there were no Electoral College? Or might you take a run through the high plains and stop in Denver and think that it matters what margin you lose by?

Because what happens is, when these candidates have public funds—they have limited funds and limited time—it affects not only their advertising budget but their travel budget. If you're a Republican and you know you can't win New York, you don't go there. But if you knew that it might make the difference in whether you got 35 or 42 percent of the vote—in this case, if you're Al Gore and you don't think you're going to win Ohio, it might make the difference in 46 and 49 percent of the vote—might you go?

So I don't—I'm not quite sure. Again, I believe how this plays out will determine it—not only my opinion about it but maybe a lot of people's opinion about it.

Q. Do you expect there to be a serious move? I mean, do you think that there is——

The President. I don't have any idea. I know that Hillary feels strongly about it, and it has really nothing to do with the fact that she's a Senator-elect from New York now. But you can ask her why she feels that way.

I have mixed feelings. I think that, you know, certainty and clarity of outcome is important, so I think it depends on—I think that a lot of people's views will be determined by the sense they have about the fairness and adequacy of this process over the next however long it takes to resolve. And we'll just have to see.

Presidential Transition

Q. Do you think it's appropriate at this point for either Governor Bush or the Vice President to be planning a transition?

The President. I don't think I should comment on what they do. I don't think it's appropriate for me to comment on that.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Do you think that this is going to be resolved by the time you get back to Washington next Monday? Do you think it should be resolved by then? And at what point do you think Americans begin to lose faith in the outcome?

The President. I don't know whether it will be resolved when I get back. I don't have an opinion about that.

I think the important thing is that the process be resolved in a way that is as fair as possible, meaning that the American people on both sides of this have the highest possible level of confidence that the people who went to the polls and voted—that the totals reflect, as far as possible, a fair assessment of the people who went to the polls and voted.

And I think that, you know, there are lots of questions out there, and I don't think I should comment on it. There is a process in place. They are both arguing their points strongly, as they both should. And I think that's the most important thing, more than whether it's one week or 8 days or 6 days or 12 days or whatever.

Q. Given how far we've come, do you think it's possible that we're going to come out of this and people are going to think it was fair, with all the angry charges that are going back and forth and the court challenges?

The President. First of all, this is not just a matter of charges; there are certain facts. And I think the facts will come out and be established, and then the disputes about how the factual situation should be handled will be resolved, and people will reach a conclusion about whether they believe that or not.

I think it's quite possible that people will think in the end that the matter has been fairly resolved. They may or may not. I certainly hope

that they will. But I think it depends upon what the facts are and then how the facts are resolved.

But again I say, this process is still in play. I don't think the American people should—and I don't think the press should rush to judgment here and just conclude that no matter who is declared the winner that the people who voted for the other candidate will think that something wrong was done. I think it depends on how it is handled and what the facts are.

Q. Sir, what's your outside timetable, and what's a reasonable amount of time?

The President. I just don't want to comment on it because I don't want to prejudice the process. That would be unfair to both candidates for me to say. I think my role now is to uphold the basic principles of democracy and the integrity of the vote and to ask the American people to give this process a chance to play itself out.

Vietnam

Q. Moving on to your major stop on this trip, Vietnam. In 1969, which was the last year an American President went to Vietnam, you wrote a letter saying you hated and despised the war and had worked and demonstrated against it. Now that you've been in the position of making decisions of war and peace, do you still feel that way about Vietnam?

The President. What I feel about Vietnam is that, thanks in large measure to the bipartisan leadership of Vietnam veterans in the Congress—Bob Kerrey, John Kerry, John McCain, Chuck Robb, and Pete Peterson, when he was there, now is our Ambassador—the American people have been able to look to the future and hope that a future can be built which opens a new page in our relations with Vietnam, and hopefully one that will put an end to the divisions between the Vietnamese people and the American people and between the American—within America and within Vietnam and within the Vietnamese people, including the Vietnamese who are in America, who believed in what we were doing.

That's what I think. Now, when we look back on it, the most important thing is that a lot of brave people fought and died in the North Vietnamese Army, the Viet Cong and the South Vietnamese Army and the United States Army; our allies, the Republic of Korea and other allies who were there. A lot of people still bear the wounds of war in this country and in Vietnam. And the best thing that we can do to honor the sacrifice and service of those who believed on both sides that what they were doing is right, is to find a way to build a different future, and that's what we're trying to do.

Everything I have done for the last 8 years has been premised on that, starting with trying to obtain the fullest possible accounting for the POW's and the MIA's. And none of what I have done, as I say, would have been remotely possible if it hadn't been for John McCain and Chuck Robb and Senator Bob Kerrey and Senator John Kerry and Pete Peterson. They literally made this possible, they and the veterans groups and the Vietnamese living in America who all supported the American position in the war.

So I think—I don't see this so much as coming to terms with the past as moving forward into the future.

Q. Were there ever points when you were grappling with some of these questions in the past 8 years, when you thought about Lyndon Johnson facing those things in that very troubled period and having to make those decisions which, at the time, you very much disagreed with?

The President. I see now how hard it was for him. I believe he did what he thought was right under the circumstances. Let me just say parenthetically, I'm glad to see that there is a reassessment going on about the historic importance of President Johnson's term of office, the work he did for the civil rights movement, the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act.

Some people are even beginning to acknowledge that his war on poverty was not a total failure, that in fact poverty was reduced. In fact, we just this year finally had the biggest drop in child poverty since 1966, since Lyndon Johnson was President. And I believe that—you know, these decisions are hard. And one of the things that I have learned, too, is when you decide to employ force, there will always be unintended consequences.

Q. You talked about all the losses on both sides, 3 million Vietnamese losses, 58,000 Americans. Were all those lives wasted?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't think that any person is fit to make that judgment. People fight honorably for what they believe in, and they lose their lives. No one has a right to say that those lives were wasted. I think that would be a travesty.

Every war is unfortunate, and when it's over, you always wish it could have been avoided. But I think it's a real mistake to look at it in that way. I think what we have to do is to think about what we can do today and tomorrow and in the years ahead to honor the sacrifice of the people who believed in what they were doing. And I think that for 8 years that's been the policy of this country. And as I said, it had bipartisan support and absolutely critical support from leading veterans in the country—in the Congress and in the country.

Q. Do you think the United States owes Vietnam an apology for its involvement in the war?

The President. No, I don't.

MIA's/POW's

Q. The MIA/POW question is very crucial to us and obviously has been through these 8 years. Do you have any feeling about the Vietnamese, who have many, many more people never accounted for after this year—is there anything we can do to help them come to terms?

The President. I think if there is anything that we can do to help them, we ought to do it. Of course, their people mostly died there, in their country. I think that we should always be in a position of doing whatever we can to help them get whatever information or records we might have to resolve anything on their front.

They have let us look at tens of thousands of pages of archives and other pieces of evidence which have helped us to identify hundreds of remains and return them, and we're still working on it. And I think this is something we ought to keep doing together. I think this effort we have undertaken is what made it possible for the veterans groups and the families of the people who are still missing to support this step-by-step advancement in our relationship. And I think it ought to be a two-way street.

Q. Do you have any reason to believe that any Americans remain in captivity in Vietnam, after the last American POW's were released in 1973?

The President. We have no evidence of it. I know there are people who still believe that may be the case. And all I can say is that every time we've gotten any lead, we've done our best to run it down completely, and we will continue to do that.

Q. Nothing has panned out in any of these reported——

The President. Nothing has panned out. You know, I'm like every other American, I think. I've always hoped against hope that a few of them were still there and still alive and that somehow we could find them. But so far all the rumors and all the leads have turned up dead ends. But I would never close the door on that. If there is ever any indication of anything else, I'd be glad to look into it, and I think any subsequent American Government would.

Vietnam-U.S. Relations

Q. How would you describe Vietnam, in terms of its relationship with the United States? Where are we now? Friend? Partner? How would you describe the relationship?

The President. I would say that our relationship is evolving. I think our work on the POW/MIA issue has been quite positive and has improved. I think the interviews that they have done of the people we've asked to be approved for relocation to the United States, they've improved that quite a bit in the last couple of years.

I would say that the trade agreement is a very good thing, for the same reason I thought it was a good thing for us to make the trade agreement with China. It's not as extensive, and it requires year-by-year renewal, and will do so until they meet all the terms of becoming members of the World Trade Organization. But it's a very positive thing.

I hope that we will continue to see some progress there on the human rights issues. There are still political prisoners, religious prisoners that we feel should be released. And I hope they will continue to do that. We've had some—seen some movement there in the last year of the release of some of the Protestants and some Catholics from prison. And I think we have to just keep working on that. And then I hope there will be an opportunity for some educational exchanges. And eventually, I hope that some of the Vietnamese living in America will become part of our ongoing development of relationship, because I think that's kind of the next big step, I think, from our point of view.

Q. What do you mean, that the Vietnamese community would become a bridge to their original home or—what do you mean?

The President. I think that a lot of the Vietnamese living in America, as you know, or as I said, were basically people who were strongly supportive of the position the United States took in the Vietnam war, or their children. But the younger people also want to build a new relationship with Vietnam. They want to see Vietnam modernized. They want to be, I think, eventually reconciled with their relatives or the people that lived in their villages. And I think that over time, we'll see some more contacts there, and that will be positive.

Q. Do you ever reflect on what it means for an American President now to go to the place that symbolized and distorted our politics? You know, for much of a generation—I mean, if you look at Watergate, Watergate could almost be traced to Vietnam. So much happened because of Vietnam. Is this a new chapter? Is this a closing of that door, do you think, in any way?

The President. Well, I think it's a new chapter. The thing that makes America work over time is our ability to visualize new futures and achieve them.

We don't need rose-colored glasses here. We still have differences with the Vietnamese about the form of government they have. But we've decided to approach them the same way we've approached China, the same way we deal with other countries with whom we have continuing differences.

But I think there's a strong sense that it's time to write a new chapter here. This is, after all, this country, the 12th or 13th biggest country in the world. They have about nearly 80 million people, and 60 percent of them are under 30, an enormous percentage of them under 18.

Q. So they know of the war, but they didn't experience it the way we did.

The President. What they know of the war is what they hear their parents talk about or what they'll learn in history books, the same way that our children do, those of us that are of that age. I think that what we want to do is give them a chance to—the Vietnamese a chance to find some greater prosperity, the global economy, and we believe it will bring greater openness to their society and a whole different future for them—a different relationship and a different relationship that will involve the Vietnamese who've come to our county and, on the whole, have done so very well in America and enriched our Nation.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. I was going to ask you if there really is anything left to be done in the Middle East, whether diplomats can now cause what's happening in the streets to stop happening?

The President. I think it depends on whether we can reduce the violence to the point where it's possible to resume negotiations.

Q. Can you do that?

The President. The unbelievable irony of the present situation is, with this level of violence is unfolding in the aftermath of the first serious discussion, official discussion that the Israelis and the Palestinians had, which occurred at Camp David on the serious, difficult final status issues of the Oslo agreement. And I might add, after Camp David, they continued to talk in informal ways. And they know that while there are still differences between them, they are agonizingly close to a resolution of these fundamental issues.

I think they also know that violence begets violence and that in the end they're still going to be neighbors. So they're either going to keep killing each other at varying rates with one side feeling beleaguered, the Israelis, and the others feeling oppressed, the Palestinians, or they're going to come to grips with this and complete the process they agreed to complete when they signed the agreement on the White House Lawn in September of 1993.

So that's the frustration. The answer to your question is, yes, there's more that can be done, but I do not believe it can be done with this level of violence going on. I just don't think that's possible.

Q. How do you get control of that—Sharm al-Sheikh, you weren't able to do it there. You've had these——

The President. The Sharm al-Sheikh agreement was perfectly fine. It just hasn't been implemented. So that's why I saw Arafat and Barak this week, and I think within—in this coming week you'll see whether there is going to be any kind of effort to change course.

You know, somebody has got to quit shooting. And I think the demonstrations in the daytime have gone down among the Palestinians, but the nighttime shooting hasn't. I think everyone understands now that it may not be possible for Chairman Arafat to control everything every

Palestinian does, immediately. It may not be possible for Prime Minister Barak to control everything every Israeli does, immediately. But this thing can be reduced dramatically if they want to get back to the negotiating table. I think the Israelis will respond in kind if the Palestinian shootings will diminish now. You know, we had a rough day today, and the Palestinians said it was in retaliation for the shooting of the resistance leader the other day. We'll just have to see what happens.

But the ironic answer to your question is, every time I talk to them, I come away more convinced that we could actually have an agreement if they could free themselves of this cycle of violence and get back to the negotiating table.

And I think if they—I think there's a way to do it, and I'm going to try to see what we can do this week. That's all I can say. I'll do my best.

Q. A secret plan? A Clinton secret plan?

The President. No, I don't have a secret plan. I just think the more I talk about this sort of thing, the harder it is to do.

North Korea

Q. We wanted to ask you about also North Korea. Did the missile talks fail in Malaysia—did they fail to give you what you wanted to hear? How far apart is that, and what's the prospect of a trip there?

The President. Well, we're making some progress, but we haven't resolved it all. We think it's quite important to work out an arrangement with them in which, one, we stop the missile development—they stop the missile development and the sales of missiles. Now, they obviously need to earn some funds from some other places, and we think there are ways they can do that.

Secondly, we want to keep the North-South dialog going. We strongly support what President Kim Dae-jung did with Chairman Chong-il. We think that was a good thing to do, and we think it ought to continue. And we want to also continue the agreement we made with them early in my term, which ended the nuclear development program, which when I became President, I was told by my predecessors that it was the most serious national security problem we were facing at the time.

So I wouldn't rule out or in a trip, if that's where you're going on this. I just think the most important thing is that we're engaged with them and we're making constructive progress. And I hope we can make more before my tenure is over, because I think it will leave my successor an easier time.

President's Accomplishments and Regrets

Q. What's your greatest personal satisfaction of your 8 years, as you near the end of them? And what's your greatest personal disappointment?

The President. Oh, that's hard to say; it's hard to say on both counts.

My greatest personal satisfaction, I think, is that our country is in so much better shape than it was 8 years ago and not just economically. I think it's economically probably the strongest it has ever been, but it's also a more equal society. We have incomes rising at all levels for the first time in three decades. We have a big drop in poverty. We have a big drop in crime. We have the welfare rolls cut in half. We have fewer people without health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years.

Performance of our students in the schools is getting better. We have more minority kids taking advanced placement courses and going on to college. And I think in each of these areas we've had policies which have contributed to this.

We also have a real—I think there is more social cohesion, notwithstanding the division of this vote. We've got 150,000 kids serving in AmeriCorps, more than served in the Peace Corps in the first 20 years. We've had, I think, a real attempt to try to bridge the racial divide in this country and deal with those issues and confront a lot of the problems that still exist in America.

So I feel good about both the fact that the country is in better shape and, I think, there is a lot of self-confidence, a sense of possibility in this country. I think in part that explains how free people felt to debate the issues in the last campaign and to make their choices. I'm very, very grateful for that.

And I will leave office with that sense of gratitude, because I think that's what every President wants to do. Every President wants to feel that during his tenure of service, America grew stronger and healthier and better. I feel good about where we are in our relations with the rest of the world. I think we've basically been a force for peace and prosperity.

What is my greatest regret? I may not be able to say yet. I really wanted, with all my heart, to finish the Oslo peace process, because I believe that if Israel and the Palestinians could be reconciled, first the State of Israel would be secure, which is very important to me personally and, I think, to the American people; secondly, the Palestinians would be in control of their own destiny; third, a peace with Syria would follow shortly; and fourth, the Middle East would not only be stable, which is good for America's interests, and not just because of the oil but the forces of progress and prosperity—progress and reconciliation, excuse me—would be stronger in all countries, including Iran. And I felt that I really think this is a sort of linchpin which could lead to a wave of positive developments all across the region. And I think that's very important.

Most of the people in the Middle East are young; there are all these kids out there. What are they going to—are they going to be raised to believe their faith requires them to hate the Israelis and the Americans and anybody else that's not part of their faith and politics? Are they going to be perpetually poor, even if they have a fairly decent education? Are we going to see that whole region being integrated into a global system and these children having a whole different future, in which they're reconciled with their neighbors in Israel and deeply involved in the world in a positive way? Are they going to be using the Internet to talk to terrorist cells about chemical and biological weapons, or are they going to be using the Internet to figure out how to grow new businesses and have new opportunities and build new futures for their families and their children? So if it doesn't happen, I'll be profoundly disappointed, but I'll never regret a minute I spent on it because I think it's very important for the future.

I have never bought the thesis—on an inevitable collision course with the Islamic societies, or that the 21st century had to be dominated by terrorists with highly sophisticated weapons, fueled by broad popular resentment from people who are both disenfranchised and poor. I don't think it has to be that way, and I think if we could really make a big dent in this problem, it would give confidence to the forces of reason and progress throughout the region.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 12:40 a.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Kona, HI, to Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 16. In his remarks, the President referred to Green Party Presidential candidate Ralph Nader; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A reporter referred to Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan in Bandar Seri Begawan

November 16, 2000

APEC Summit

Q. Mr. President, are you disappointed at the lack of consensus on free trade at APEC?

The President. I might have more to say about that before we go. Don't be too discouraged.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. How about the Florida court ruling, sir?

The President. I'm over here, so I'm not sure what it means. It's obviously going to have to be interpreted now, since the two sides have a different reading on it.

Q. How about the secretary of state denying the hand recount?

The President. I'm over here doing this work; I don't think I should get involved in that. The American people deserve a full and fair count, and I hope the process will produce it. And they're over there debating it in the appropriate way. I shouldn't be involved in that.

Q. Should Gore and Bush meet?

The President. What?

Q. Should Gore and Bush meet?

The President. I don't think I should be involved in that.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:20 p.m. at the Royal Brunei Golf Club. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush. A reporter referred to Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Bandar Seri Begawan

November 16, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. President Clinton, do you feel the chaos in Florida makes it difficult for the U.S. to criticize other countries' elections?

The President. Well, first of all, they're having their—let's wait and see how it's resolved here. I think that there will be a lot of pressure to improve the form and ballots and the methods in voting and have more clear standards around the country. But I think as long as this thing is resolved in a way that people perceive as fair and having counted everybody's vote who lawfully went to the polls to vote—I think that it shouldn't be surprising if over 100 million people vote and the result is close—it takes a while to resolve. It depends on whether the people perceive it's fair when it's over.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, what message do you have for your successor on U.S.-China relations?

The President. That I believe we have made some real progress in developing a mature, honest, and open relationship that is basically quite positive. And I'm very pleased that the Congress approved the permanent normal trading relations and that China's going into the World Trade Organization. I'm very pleased that the work we've done together on nonproliferation and a host of other items, and I think we should continue to build on this relationship. I think it's very important for the United States. And I hope that we'll continue to be active across a whole broad range of issues, including through this organization, to build a common economic future. That would be my message.

You probably want to know more about it than my successor will.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:53 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the Orchid Garden Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Joint Statement by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on a United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

November 16, 2000

The United States of America (USA) and Singapore have agreed to start negotiations on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

USA and Singapore are both firm supporters of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and are committed to APEC's Bogor Goals of free and open trade and investment by 2010 for industrialized economies and 2020 for developing economies.

The USA and Singapore reaffirm their strong commitment to the multilateral trading system and the launch of a New Round in 2001.

The FTA will be modeled after the US-Jordan FTA.

We have directed Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky and Minister George Yeo to endeavor to conclude negotiations before the end of the year.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to Minister of Trade and Industry Yong Boon George Yeo of Singapore. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Signing the FSC Repeal and Extraterritorial Income Exclusion Act of 2000

November 15, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4986, the "FSC Repeal and Extraterritorial Income Exclusion Act of 2000." This legislation is necessary to address a World Trade Organization Appellate Body finding that the Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) provisions of U.S. tax law violated the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and the Agreement on Agriculture. Enactment of this legislation is possible due to extraordinary bipartisan cooperation between the Congress and my Administration and the strong involvement of the business community.

Never before has the United States had to enact legislation—and particularly legislation in the sensitive field of taxation policy—in order to implement the findings of a dispute settlement panel of the World Trade Organization (WTO). We believe that this legislation specifically addresses the concerns raised by the WTO Appellate Body and will be found to be WTO-compliant.

Under a procedural agreement reached between the European Union and the United States, enactment of this legislation will avoid an immediate confrontation with the EU by ensuring that the World Trade Organization must review the new law before any decision authorizing retaliation may be made. We plan to continue working with the EU to manage this difference of views responsibly and to avoid any harm to our strong bilateral relationship, and we remain open to further discussions with the EU about resolving this issue.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 15, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4986, approved November 15, was assigned Public Law No. 106–519. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 17.

Remarks at Vietnam National University in Hanoi, Vietnam

November 17, 2000

Thank you very much, and good afternoon. I can think of no more fitting place to begin my visit at this hopeful moment in our common history than here at Hanoi National University. I was given a Vietnamese phrase; I am going to try to say it. If I mess it up, feel free to laugh at me. *Xin chao cac ban.*[1]

So much of the promise of this youthful nation is embodied with you. I learned that you have exchanges here with students from nearly 100 universities, from Canada to France to Korea, and that you are now hosting more than a dozen full-time students from your partner school in the United States, the University of California. I salute your vigorous efforts to engage the world.

Of course, like students everywhere, I know you have things to think about other than your studies. For example, in September you had to study for your classes and watch the Olympic accomplishments of Tran Hieu Ngan in Sydney. And this week you have to study and cheer

[1] Hello, everybody.

Le Huynh Duc and Nguyen Hong Son in Bangkok at the football matches.

I am honored to be the first American President to see Hanoi and to visit this university. But I do so conscious that the histories of our two nations are deeply intertwined in ways that are both a source of pain for generations that came before and a source of promise for generations yet to come.

Two centuries ago, during the early days of the United States, we reached across the seas for partners in trade, and one of the first nations we encountered was Vietnam. In fact, one of our Founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson, tried to obtain rice seed from Vietnam to grow on his farm in Virginia 200 years ago. By the time World War II arrived, the United States had become a significant consumer of exports from Vietnam. In 1945, at the moment of your country's birth, the words of Thomas Jefferson were chosen to be echoed in your own Declaration of Independence: "All men are created equal. The Creator has given us certain inviolable rights—the right to life, the right to be free, the right to achieve happiness."

Of course, all of this common history, 200 years of it, has been obscured in the last few decades by the conflict we call the Vietnam war and you call the American war. You may know that in Washington, DC, on our National Mall, there is a stark black granite wall engraved with the name of every single American who died in Vietnam. At this solemn memorial, some American veterans also refer to the "other side of the wall," the staggering sacrifice of the Vietnamese people on both sides of that conflict, more than 3 million brave soldiers and civilians.

This shared suffering has given our countries a relationship unlike any other. Because of the conflict, America is now home to one million Americans of Vietnamese ancestry. Because of the conflict, 3 million American veterans served in Vietnam, as did many journalists, embassy personnel, aid workers, and others who are forever connected to your country.

Almost 20 years ago now, a group of American servicemen took the first step to reestablish contacts between the United States and Vietnam. They traveled back to Vietnam for the first time since the war, and as they walked through the streets of Hanoi, they were approached by Vietnamese citizens who had heard of their visit. "Are you the American soldiers?" they asked. Not sure what to expect, our veterans answered, "Yes, we are." And to their immense relief, their hosts simply said, "Welcome to Vietnam."

More veterans followed, including distinguished American veterans and heroes who serve now in the United States Congress: Senator John McCain, Senator Bob Kerrey, Senator Chuck Robb, and Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, who is here with us today, along with a number of Representatives from our Congress, some of whom are veterans of the Vietnam conflict.

When they came here, they were determined to honor those who fought, without refighting the battles; to remember our history, but not to perpetuate it; to give young people like you in both our countries the chance to live in your tomorrows, not in our yesterdays. As Ambassador Pete Peterson has said so eloquently, "We cannot change the past. What we can change is the future."

Our new relationship gained strength as American veterans launched nonprofit organizations to work on behalf of the Vietnamese people, such as providing devices to people with war injuries to help them lead more normal lives. Vietnam's willingness to help us return the remains of our fallen servicemen to their families has been the biggest boost to improve ties. And there are many Americans here who have worked in that endeavor for many years now, including our Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Hershel Gober.

The desire to be reunited with a lost family member is something we all understand. It touches the hearts of Americans to know that every Sunday in Vietnam, one of your most-watched television shows features families seeking viewers' help in finding loved ones they lost in the war so long ago now. And we are grateful for the Vietnamese villagers who have helped us to find our missing and, therefore, to give their families the peace of mind that comes with knowing what actually happened to their loved ones.

No two nations have ever before done the things we are doing together to find the missing from the Vietnam conflict. Teams of Americans and Vietnamese work together, sometimes in tight and dangerous places. The Vietnamese Government has offered us access to files and Government information to assist our search. And in turn, we have been able to give Vietnam almost 400,000 pages of documents that could

assist in your search. On this trip, I have brought with me another 350,000 pages of documents that I hope will help Vietnamese families find out what happened to their missing loved ones.

Today I was honored to present these to your President, Tran Duc Luong. And I told him that before the year is over, America will provide another million pages of documents. We will continue to offer our help and to ask for your help as we both honor our commitment to do whatever we can for as long as it takes to achieve the fullest possible accounting of our loved ones.

Your cooperation in that mission over these last 8 years has made it possible for America to support international lending to Vietnam, to resume trade between our countries, to establish formal diplomatic relations and, this year, to sign a pivotal trade agreement.

Finally, America is coming to see Vietnam as your people have asked for years, as a country, not a war, a country with the highest literacy rate in Southeast Asia, a country whose young people just won three gold medals at the International Math Olympiad in Seoul, a country of gifted, hard-working entrepreneurs emerging from years of conflict and uncertainty to shape a bright future.

Today the United States and Vietnam open a new chapter in our relationship, at a time when people all across the world trade more, travel more, know more about and talk more with each other than ever before. Even as people take pride in their national independence, we know we are becoming more and more interdependent. The movement of people, money, and ideas across borders, frankly, breeds suspicion among many good people in every country. They are worried about globalization because of its unsettling and unpredictable consequences.

Yet, globalization is not something we can hold off or turn off. It is the economic equivalent of a force of nature, like wind or water. We can harness wind to fill a sail. We can use water to generate energy. We can work hard to protect people and property from storms and floods. But there is no point in denying the existence of wind or water, or trying to make them go away. The same is true for globalization. We can work to maximize its benefits and minimize its risks, but we cannot ignore it, and it is not going away.

In the last decade, as the volume of world trade has doubled, investment flows from wealthy nations to developing ones have increased by 6 times, from $25 billion in 1990 to more than $150 billion in 1998. Nations that have opened their economies to the international trading system have grown at least twice as fast as nations with closed economies. Your next job may well depend upon foreign trade and investment. Come to think of it, since I have to leave office in about 8 weeks, my next job may depend on foreign trade and investment.

Over the last 15 years, Vietnam launched its policy of *doi moi,* joined APEC and ASEAN, normalized relations with the European Union and the United States, and disbanded collective farming, freeing farmers to grow what they want and earn the fruits of their own labor. The results were impressive proof of the power of your markets and the abilities of your people. You not only conquered malnutrition, you became the world's second-largest exporter of rice and achieved stronger overall economic growth.

Of course, in recent years the rate of growth has slowed and foreign investment has declined here, showing that any attempt to remain isolated from the risks of the global economy also guarantees isolation from its rewards, as well.

General Secretary Le Kha Phieu said this summer, and I quote, "We have yet to achieve the level of development commensurate with the possibilities of our country. And there is only one way to further open up the economy." So this summer, in what I believe will be seen as a pivotal step toward your future prosperity, Vietnam joined the United States in signing an historic bilateral trade agreement, building a foundation for Vietnam's entry eventually into the World Trade Organization.

Under the agreement, Vietnam will grant to its citizens, and over time to citizens of other countries, rights to import, export, and distribute goods, giving the Vietnamese people expanding rights to determine their own economic destiny. Vietnam has agreed it will subject important decisions to the rule of law and the international trading system, increase the flow of information to its people, and accelerate the rise of a free economy and the private sector.

Of course, this will be good for Vietnam's foreign partners, like the United States. But it

will be even better for Vietnam's own entrepreneurs, who are working hard to build businesses of their own. Under this agreement, Vietnam could be earning, according to the World Bank, another $1.5 billion each and every year from exports alone.

Both our nations were born with a Declaration of Independence. This trade agreement is a form of declaration of interdependence, a clear, unequivocal statement that prosperity in the 21st century depends upon a nation's economic engagement in the rest of the world.

This new openness is a great opportunity for you, but it does not guarantee success. What else should be done? Vietnam is such a young country, with 60 percent of your population under the age of 30 and 1.4 million new people entering your work force every year. Your leaders realize that government and state-owned businesses cannot generate 1.4 million new jobs every year. They know that the industries driving the global economy today—computers, telecommunications, biotechnology—these are all based on knowledge. That is why economies all over the world grow faster when young people stay in school longer, when women have the same educational opportunities that men have, when young people like you have every opportunity to explore new ideas and then to turn those ideas into your own business opportunities.

You can be—indeed, those of you in this hall today must be—the engine of Vietnam's future prosperity. As President Tran Duc Luong has said, the internal strength of the country is the intellect and capacity of its people.

The United States has great respect for your intellect and capacity. One of our Government's largest educational exchange programs is with Vietnam, and we want to do more. Senator Kerry, who's right there—and I mentioned him earlier—is leading an effort in our United States Congress, along with Senator John McCain and other veterans of the conflict here, to establish a new Vietnam Education Foundation. Once enacted, the foundation would support 100 fellowships every year, either here or in the United States, for people to study or teach science, math, technology, and medicine.

We're ready to put more funding in our exchange programs now so this effort can get underway immediately. I hope some of you in this room will have a chance to take part. And I want to thank Senator Kerry for this great idea. Thank you, sir, for what you have done.

Let me say, as important as knowledge is, the benefits of knowledge are necessarily limited by undue restrictions on its use. We Americans believe the freedom to explore, to travel, to think, to speak, to shape decisions that affect our lives enrich the lives of individuals and nations in ways that go far beyond economics.

Now, America's record is not perfect in this area. After all, it took us almost a century to banish slavery. It took us even longer to give women the right to vote. And we are still seeking to live up to the more perfect Union of our Founders' dreams and the words of our Declaration of Independence and Constitution. But along the way over these 226 years—224 years—we've learned some lessons. For example, we have seen that economies work better where newspapers are free to expose corruption and independent courts can ensure that contracts are honored, that competition is robust and fair, that public officials honor the rule of law.

In our experience, guaranteeing the right to religious worship and the right to political dissent does not threaten the stability of a society. Instead, it builds people's confidence in the fairness of our institutions and enables us to take it when a decision goes in a way we don't agree with. All this makes our country stronger in good times and bad. In our experience, young people are much more likely to have confidence in their future if they have a say in shaping it, in choosing their governmental leaders and having a government that is accountable to those it serves.

Now, let me say emphatically, we do not seek to impose these ideals, nor could we. Vietnam is an ancient and enduring country. You have proved to the world that you will make your own decisions. Only you can decide, for example, if you will continue to share Vietnam's talents and ideas with the world, if you will continue to open Vietnam so that you can enrich it with the insights of others. Only you can decide if you will continue to open your markets, open your society, and strengthen the rule of law. Only you can decide how to weave individual liberties and human rights into the rich and strong fabric of Vietnamese national identity.

Your future should be in your hands, the hands of the Vietnam people. But your future is important to the rest of us, as well. For as

Vietnam succeeds, it will benefit this region and your trading partners and your friends throughout the world.

We are eager to increase our cooperation with you across the board. We want to continue our work to clear landmines and unexploded ordnance. We want to strengthen our common efforts to protect the environment by phasing out leaded gasoline in Vietnam, maintaining a clean water supply, saving coral reefs and tropical forests. We want to bolster our efforts on disaster relief and prevention, including our efforts to help those suffering from the floods in the Mekong Delta. Yesterday we presented to your Government satellite imagery from our Global Disaster Information Network, images that show in great detail the latest flood levels on the Delta, that can help Vietnam to rebuild.

We want to accelerate our cooperation in science, cooperation focused this month on our meeting in Singapore to study together the health and ecological effects of dioxin on the people of Vietnam and the Americans who were in Vietnam, and cooperation that we are advancing further with the science and technology agreement our two countries signed just today.

We want to be your ally in the fight against killer diseases like AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. I am glad to announce that we will nearly double our support of Vietnam's efforts to contain the AIDS crisis through education, prevention, care, and treatment. We want to work with you to make Vietnam a safer place by giving you help to reduce preventable injuries on the streets, at home, and in the workplace. We want to work with you to make the most of this trade agreement by providing technical assistance to assure its smooth and full implementation and finding ways to encourage greater United States investment in your country.

We are, in short, eager to build our partnership with Vietnam. We believe it's good for both our nations.

We believe the Vietnamese people have the talent to succeed in this new global age, as they have in the past. We know it because we've seen the progress you have made in this last decade. We have seen the talent and ingenuity of the Vietnamese who have come to settle in America. Vietnamese-Americans have become elected officials, judges, leaders in science and in our high-tech industry. Last year a Vietnamese-American achieved a mathematical breakthrough that will make it easier to conduct high-quality videoconferencing. And all America took notice when Hoang Nhu Tran graduated number one in his class at the United States Air Force Academy.

Vietnamese-Americans have flourished not just because of their unique abilities and their good values but also because they have had the opportunity to make the most of their abilities and their values. As your opportunities grow, to live, to learn, to express your creativity, there will be no stopping the people of Vietnam. And you will find, I am certain, that the American people will be by your side. For in this interdependent world, we truly do have a stake in your success.

Almost 200 years ago, at the beginning of the relations between the United States and Vietnam, our two nations made many attempts to negotiate a treaty of commerce, sort of like the trade agreement that we signed today. But 200 years ago, they all failed, and no treaty was concluded. Listen to what one historian said about what happened 200 years ago, and think how many times it could have been said in the two centuries since. He said, "These efforts failed because two distant cultures were talking past each other, and the importance of each to the other was insufficient to overcome these barriers."

Let the days when we talk past each other be gone for good. Let us acknowledge our importance to one another. Let us continue to help each other heal the wounds of war, not by forgetting the bravery shown and the tragedy suffered by all sides but by embracing the spirit of reconciliation and the courage to build better tomorrows for our children.

May our children learn from us that good people, through respectful dialog, can discover and rediscover their common humanity and that a painful, painful past can be redeemed in a peaceful and prosperous future.

Thank you for welcoming me and my family and our American delegation to Vietnam. Thank you for your faith in the future. *Chuc cac ban suc khoe va thanh cong.*[2]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the auditorium of the university. In his remarks, he referred to Hieu Ngan Tran, Vietnamese Olympic

[2] May you have health and success.

silver medalist in tae kwon do; Vietnamese national soccer team members Le Huynh Duc and Nguyen Hong Son; and Communist Party General Secretary Le Kha Phieu of Vietnam. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary included the English translation of the Vietnamese phrases.

Statement on the Death of Hosea Williams

November 17, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of an American foot soldier for freedom and a driving force for the Voting Rights Act, Hosea Williams. From his bravery in the fields of battle in World War II to his leadership in the civil rights struggle at home, Hosea Williams was a profile in courage. One of the greatest honors of my Presidency was walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with him on the 35th anniversary of the Selma march earlier this year. Hosea Williams dedicated his entire life to making sure we never take a detour on the road to freedom. He helped us all cross the bridge to a better and more just world. With his memory as a guide, we'll keep marching on. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Establish a Memorial and Gardens in Honor of Frederick Douglass

November 17, 2000

I recently signed into law H.R. 5331, a bill "To authorize the Frederick Douglass Gardens, Inc., to establish a memorial and gardens on Department of the Interior lands in the District of Columbia or its environs in honor and commemoration of Frederick Douglass."

It is appropriate that the memorial and gardens be located in Washington, DC, the Nation's Capital, as Mr. Douglass' life was a testament to the democratic principles upon which the Nation was founded. Born into slavery, Frederick Douglass became a renowned international spokesman for liberty, the abolition of slavery, and social reform. Throughout his life, he was a noted publisher of several periodicals and papers in which he discussed the political and social disenfranchisement of Americans of African ancestry. As an American truly committed to the Nation's progress toward the attainment of liberty and justice for all, Frederick Douglass recruited African-Americans for the Union Army during the Civil War; two of his sons served in the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, which was solely comprised of African-Americans. Moreover, Frederick Douglass served as the president of the Freedmen's National Bank, the U.S. Marshal for the District of Columbia, and in several diplomatic positions in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Because of his unyielding faith in and his commitment to the fundamental democratic principles of our Nation, I am pleased to approve this legislation honoring one of the Nation's great citizens.

NOTE: H.R. 5331, approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–479.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Establish National Birmingham Pledge Week

November 17, 2000

Recently I signed into law House Joint Resolution 102, designating National Birmingham Pledge Week. This resolution recognizes that the Birmingham Pledge is making a significant contribution in fostering racial harmony and reconciliation in the United States and around the world. By signing the pledge, signatories state their belief in the worth of every individual, that every person is entitled to dignity and respect regardless or race or color, and that every act of racial prejudice is harmful to all. Those who sign pledge themselves to actively discourage racial prejudice in themselves and others. They recognize that in honoring this pledge, they are making the world a better place.

It is entirely fitting that this pledge began in the city of Birmingham, a place of some of our most painful racial strife. We remember in particular the September 15, 1963, bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church and the death of four children there. We know that the conflicts of the past are not fully resolved today and that we have new challenges before us. The United States is now more diverse than ever in terms of race, ethnic groups, and religion. At the same time, our world is witness to a resurgence of society's oldest demon, the inability to love our neighbors as ourselves.

In my lifetime, our Nation has never had the chance we now have to build the future of our dreams for our children. To do it, we will have to embrace our common humanity with humility and gratitude.

Hillary and I were proud to sign the Birmingham Pledge in 1998. We applaud this effort to recognize its importance nationally. We urge all Americans to use National Birmingham Pledge Week as a powerful tool for helping to build the future of our dreams for all our children, a dream of one America.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 102, approved November 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106–483.

Remarks to the American Embassy Community in Hanoi

November 17, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. I want to thank Senator Kerry for what he said and for what he's done all these years and for being a wonderful friend to Hillary and me in many, many ways. And I want to thank Sandy Berger and our whole team in the White House and the State Department for supporting this trip from the beginning. And I want to associate myself with what Hillary said—now that she's going to be a Senator, I can just let her give the speeches, and I can say, "I completely agree." And that will save everyone from having to hear two speeches. [*Laughter*]

But I do want to say a couple of things, if I might. First, I, too, want to thank you for the endless hours you have put in in preparation for this trip and for the work you have done representing our Nation here in Vietnam. I want to thank especially the Vietnamese nationals who work at our Embassy and who, therefore, embody this new partnership we have worked so hard to build these last several years.

We started this process of reconstructing our relationship a long time ago, and I have been working at it now, with the people on this stage and others, for at least 8 years. And I'm very grateful to all of them. But I want to take my time tonight to say a special word of thanks to Pete Peterson.

Most everybody, I guess, in Vietnam knows that he was a fighter pilot here, that he was a prisoner of war here. You may know that his wife was 9 months pregnant with their third child when he came here. He was supposed to fly 100 missions, and he was shot down two-thirds of the way through. And by the time he got home, his son was 6 years old.

What you may not know is that when I met him, he was a Congressman from northern Florida, and he represented a district in which, I promise you, he was the only American in my party who would have ever been elected from that district. [*Laughter*] Otherwise, any normal person would have had to be a member of the other party.

And I remember the times we spent driving through his congressional district, talking about his commitment to public service and talking about how desperately he wanted us to have a new relation with Vietnam and how he wanted to embody that, going beyond.

So when the time came for a new Ambassador to be named, I literally only considered one person. America has, I don't know how many, 270-something million people; I only considered one person to be our Ambassador to Vietnam, and Pete agreed to do it.

Now, he gave all those speeches about letting go of the past and looking toward the future, and all we can change is the future. So he—one thing I like about Pete is, he always practices what he preaches. So he comes to Vietnam, meets Vi, and starts a new life. So you are the embodiment, madam, of the future for Pete, and we thank you, and we thank you for what you have done.

He traveled all over Vietnam, just like he traveled all over America, promoting this relationship. He worked on the POW/MIA issue. He worked to advance the economy of Vietnam. Three times he led the lobbying to get our Congress to support our Jackson-Vanik waiver. His enthusiasm is completely infectious.

I understand, Pete, today, that CNN and BBC carried the signing of our bilateral trade agreement live, at 3 a.m. Hanoi time, and watch parties were held all over town. Now, that's pretty amazing.

I also want to thank him for the work he did to prevent injuries and accidents here with his safety campaign. And I want to express my sympathies, because I understand after you started this safety campaign, a mischievous television film crew caught you in a rare moment riding your motorcycle without a helmet. [*Laughter*] Now, that's something all of us who have been in public life can identify with. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank you for befriending the villagers in the area where you were shot down and joining them to inaugurate a school. And I want to thank those of you who work in this Embassy, especially those of you who have extended your tours from 2 years to 3. I want to thank the members of the American business community, apparently who have signed a resolution cautioning the new President not to change the Ambassador in Hanoi. [*Laughter*] That's good advice to the new President. [*Laughter*]

One of the most famous sayings of the Buddha is, "Never does hatred by hatred cease; hatred ceases by love alone." This is an eternal law. Even eternal laws have to be made real in the lives of particular people, and that is a law which has been made real in the life and service of Pete Peterson.

He doesn't know I'm going to do this today, but the Ambassador has been honored for his military service with the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Legion of Merit for heroism in the uniform of his country. I think his service as Ambassador to Vietnam is the most important service he has ever rendered to the United States. And so, in the presence of all of his co-workers and friends and many of their rambunctious children, which makes it even better, I am going to award Pete Peterson with the President's Citizen's Medal. And I would like the commander to read the citation and then bring the medal up here so I can give it to Pete.

[*At this point, Lt. Comdr. Pat DeQuattro, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal to Ambassador Peterson. The Ambassador then made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Daewoo Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador Peterson's wife, Vi Le. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Ambassador Peterson.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Tran Duc Luong of Vietnam in Hanoi

November 17, 2000

Mr. President, Madame Luong, distinguished representatives of the Vietnamese Government, ladies and gentlemen: Let me thank you for your welcome to me and to my family and to our entire American delegation.

We are honored to join you in writing a new chapter in the relationship between the United States and Vietnam and grateful that this chapter has a happy beginning. Yes, the history we leave behind is painful and hard. We must not forget it, but we must not be controlled by it. The past is only what precedes the future, not what determines it.

America and Vietnam are making a new history today. A generation from now, people will look back on this time and see the American veterans who came back to Vietnam searching for answers about the past and the Vietnamese who enlisted them in building a common future. They will see the young Vietnamese students, eager to absorb all the world has to offer, and the young Americans who have come here to learn with them. They will see the entrepreneurs and the scientists and the conservationists and the artists, forging links between Vietnam and the world.

In short, people will look back and reach the same conclusion as the great Vietnamese statesman Nguyen Trai when he said 500 years ago, "After so many years of war, only life remains."

Today, our people face a changing world and a changing life together, with the same basic aspirations and even some of the same worries. How can we seize the opportunities of a global economy while avoiding its turmoil? How can we open our doors to new ideas while protecting our traditions, our cultures, our way of life?

Globalization is bringing the world to Vietnam and also bringing Vietnam to the world. Films about life in Vietnam, from "The Scent of the Green Papaya" to "The Three Seasons" are winning awards all over the globe. The paintings of the Vietnamese artist Do Quang Em command fortunes at international art shows. The 200-year-old poems of Ho Xuan Huong are published in America, in English, in Vietnamese, and even in the original Nom, the first time ancient Vietnamese script has come off a printing press. Fashion designers like Armani and Calvin Klein base new collections on the traditional Vietnamese dress, the *ao dai*. Americans are tasting lemon grass, garlic chives, and even bitter melon, all of which, by the way, grow on a Vietnamese farm in our State of Virginia, just a 20-minute drive from the White House.

Mr. President, globalization also means that on the Internet, Americans can read the latest Vietnamese financial news or learn about the challenges in restoring Hanoi's Old Quarter or support the organizations working to preserve new species being found in the central highlands. It means we can download fonts in the Vietnamese language. Indeed, before long, sophisticated translation technologies will make the Internet a force for linguistic diversity, not uniformity.

When we open our doors, we not only let new ideas in; we let the talent and creativity and potential of our people out. That, too, will come to Vietnam. After just one day in your country, I am certain there will be no stopping the people of Vietnam as they gain the chance to realize their full potential. The people of the United States are happy that the time has come when we can be partners.

As "The Tale of Kieu" foretold, "Just as the lotus wilts, the mums bloom forth; time softens grief; and the winter turns to spring." Now the frozen images of the past have begun to thaw. The outlines of a warmer shared future have begun to take shape. Let us make the most of this new spring together.

I ask you to join me in a toast to the President of Vietnam, to Madame Luong, to the people of this great country, and to our future friendship together.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:38 p.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Luong's wife, Nguyen Thi Vinh.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

November 17, 2000

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

As required by section 204(c) 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 J. Dennis Hastert, 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 November 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan

November 17, 2000

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 November 18.

Remarks to the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting Excavation Participants in Tien Chau Village, Vietnam

November 18, 2000

General Axson, General Frost, Lieutenant Colonel Cory, Director Hung, and all the other Vietnamese and Americans who were engaged in this amazing project. It's an honor for me to be here with my family and Senator John Kerry and Members of our Congress and distinguished veterans from the United States who fought in the conflict here.

At this spot 33 years ago this month Captain Lawrence Evert's F–105 was shot down. No parachute was seen; the area was heavily defended; and there was no chance for a search.

Today I am honored to be here with Captain Evert's sons, Dan and David, and I thank them for coming. We believe we owe them, and all Americans like them, what they came here for, a chance, finally, to take their father home.

America is very proud of our Joint Task Force-Full Accounting. These young men and women have traveled half-way around the world

to bring home comrades fallen in the war that ended before many of them were born. They spend up to 200 days a year here working to recover remains for American families.

We are also grateful for the service of the members of the Central Identification Labs, who help to end the anguish of not knowing.

Our Nation has made a commitment that we will not rest until we've achieved the fullest possible accounting for our lost veterans. But it is only possible for us to fulfill our promise with the cooperation and support of the Vietnamese Government and the Vietnamese people.

I want to personally thank the people of this village, this district, and province for your kindness, for coming forward with artifacts and information to help the search, and for working so hard alongside our service members and citizens. I also want to express the profound thanks of the American people to the Vietnamese Government for its support. Among other things, it sent engineers and technicians here to help us figure out how we can dig without destabilizing the railroad nearby.

The United States is doing what we can to repay the cooperation of the Vietnamese and their Government by doing all we can to help the people of Vietnam find answers about their missing, as well. I brought with me over 350,000 pages of documents that I hope will provide some of those answers to the people of Vietnam. Whether we are American or Vietnamese, I think we all want to know where our loved ones are buried; I think we all want to be able to honor them and visit their grave sites. This common endeavor we make as friends is unprecedented in all of human history.

Once we met here as adversaries; today we work as partners. We are committed to keep at it until we bring every possible fallen hero home. In the process, we are committed to building a new future for the children of Vietnam and the children of the United States, a future of friendship and cooperation.

While working together to recover those who were lost in a long-ago war, we reduce the chances that any of our children will know war.

Again, on behalf of the American people, I would like to thank all the Americans who are involved in this astonishing endeavor, and all of our Vietnamese partners, who stand in the mud, who work at the screens to try to find answers that are common to our humanity and go far beyond our differences.

I thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting Excavation site. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Harry B. Axson, USA, Commander, Lt. Col. Rennie M. Cory, USA, Commander, Detachment II, and Brig. Gen. Kathryn G. Frost, USA, Joint Task Force-Full Accounting; and Nguyen Ba Hung, director, Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons.

Statement on Establishing Formal Diplomatic Relations With the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

November 18, 2000

On November 17 the United States joined France, Germany, and the United Kingdom in establishing formal diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

We take this action in response to the remarkable changes in Yugoslavia following the democratic election of President Vojislav Kostunica and the ouster of Slobodan Milosevic. We and our allies are committed to supporting this historic democratic transition. As a first step, the United States will provide about $45 million in emergency food aid to help the people of Serbia through the winter. We are also consulting with Congress on how to utilize the $100 million in assistance appropriated for Serbia, as well as $89 million appropriated for assistance to the people of Montenegro.

President Kostunica and his government have already made dramatic progress in reversing the brutal policies of the old regime. And by taking membership in the United Nations and other international organizations on an equal status with other successor states of the former Yugoslavia, President Kostunica has signaled that his

country is ready to play a constructive and stabilizing role in the region.

The democratic transition in the FRY, however, is far from over. The new government is faced with an economy destroyed by years of mismanagement. Members of Milosevic's regime are still in positions of power. Indicted war criminals continue to escape justice for their heinous crimes. But President Kostunica and leaders of the democratic forces have clearly put their country on a new path, one that includes a commitment to the rule of law and peaceful relations with its neighbors. By establishing diplomatic relations and ending the FRY's isolation, the United States and other Western countries are demonstrating our commitment to supporting the new leaders of the FRY on this journey.

Remarks on Demining in Hanoi, Vietnam

November 18, 2000

Thank you. Ambassador Peterson, Ambassador Le Bang, Mr. Khoan; my good friend Representative Snyder and the other Members of Congress and our American delegation. I want to say most of all how much I appreciate the work that all of you who are engaged in demining are doing.

I thank the Vietnamese people who are doing this, the members of the NGO's. And I'd also like to especially thank the American veterans who have been involved in this endeavor.

The problem of landmines is a global tragedy, and 90 percent of the victims of war are civilians, mostly because of landmines. In all probability, landmines kill more children than soldiers, and they keep killing long after wars are over. This is the tragedy of war for which peace provides no answer.

Vietnam has about 3.5 million mines in its soil and about 300,000 tons of unexploded ordnance. Each year some 2,000 Vietnamese are killed or injured as they go about their daily lives. This year, at Vietnam's request, we began providing assistance to the humanitarian demining efforts. Since June, we provided over $3 million to purchase equipment and help survey the countryside.

I am happy to announce that we will also be working with Vietnam to develop a computer system and a database to help pinpoint the location of mines and ordnance used here during the war. We have also worked for some years with NGO's such as the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation to fund rehabilitation services for victims of landmines, an effort that owes so much to the leadership of Senator Pat Leahy. Today our Defense Department is donating more than $700,000 in hospital supplies to Quang Tri Province for the same purpose.

Finally, we support efforts by organizations such as PeaceTrees and Catholic Relief Services to educate local communities on how to avoid landmines. The children's paintings we saw over here are part of that effort, and again I'd like to thank those four beautiful young boys for being here and for having the courage to help all the rest of us deal with this problem.

Since I became President, the United States has spent about $350 million around the world to pull the hidden killers out of the earth, the landmines, to deal with the unexploded ordnance. We usually spend slightly more than half of all the money spent in the world on this every year. But I think we should do more.

I am thankful for all the work the organizations are doing here. I am grateful for the request that the Government of Vietnam gave, that gave us the opportunity to be involved here. But I hope we will all remember these children who had the courage to come here and share their artwork and who want to give the rest of the children of Vietnam and the world a better future.

There are millions of these bombs in the ground in Africa, millions more in the Balkans. They are the curse of innocent children all over the world. I hope that tomorrow all over the world, people will see these children and their drawings, and it will enable us to get even more support for the work you were doing in Vietnam and the work that must be done like this in other countries. You will have America's support until you have found every landmine and every piece of unexploded ordnance.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at the International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Pete Peterson; Vietnamese Ambassador to the U.S. Le Van Bang; and Minister of Trade Vu Khoan of Vietnam.

The President's Radio Address
November 18, 2000

Good morning. I'm speaking to you from Hanoi, Vietnam, where I'm working to fulfill America's commitment to the families of those still missing from the war and opening a hopeful new chapter in our relationship with Vietnam and its people. Today I want to talk to you, however, about the new steps we're taking at home to strengthen our working families.

It may be hard to remember, but just 8 years ago many Americans were out of work, and Washington was out of ideas. Our economy was stagnant, burdened by a crushing debt and rising unemployment. I said I would work hard to turn the country around, to create a situation where everybody who was willing to work and take responsibility has the opportunity to live the American dream.

Since then we've worked hard to restore the value of work, increasing the minimum wage, expanding the earned-income tax credit, helping more than 15 million Americans work their way out of poverty toward the middle class. Congress passed the family and medical leave law, which has given over 20 million Americans the chance to take time off from work to care for a newborn child or a sick loved one. And we passed welfare reform, ending welfare as we knew it, cutting the welfare rolls in half, to their lowest levels in 32 years, and helping millions of parents move into the work force.

We were able to do this while protecting health care and nutrition for children, investing more in child care, transportation, and housing, to help parents go to work and to succeed at home and at work.

By rewarding work and promoting responsibility, we've helped put the American family back on top again, with 22 million new jobs, the lowest poverty in 20 years, the lowest Hispanic- and African-American unemployment ever recorded, and the highest homeownership in history. While we have made great progress, no one who works hard every day should have trouble putting food on the table at night. And the fact is there are still too many hard-pressed families struggling to get ahead and to make the often difficult transition from welfare to work.

Every day 17 million of our fellow Americans rely on food stamps for proper nourishment. These food stamps allow parents to give their children the necessities while getting their own feet on the ground. But as they return to work and struggle to make ends meet, many don't realize they're still eligible for food stamps. And in some States, parents who do sign up for food stamps have to fill out paperwork as often as once a month, and leave the workplace in order to do so.

Now, this simply should not be the case. So today I'm announcing new steps to remove some of the barriers facing working Americans and to help the families get the food they need.

First, it would allow States to provide recipients with an automatic 3-month food stamp benefit as they make the transition from welfare to work. This gives new workers stability in what can be a trying time. Second, we're eliminating unnecessary bureaucracies by allowing recipients up to 6 months to report income changes, reducing the amount of time they spend in food stamp offices. Third, if we want people to work, they need to be able to get to work. Today's action will make it easier for food stamp recipients to own a dependable car without having to sacrifice proper nutrition for their children. This builds on the steps we took in the Agriculture appropriation bill I signed last month. Finally, to ensure that the families who need assistance get it, we are requiring States to let recipients know that they're still eligible for food stamps when they start to work again.

Supporting hard-pressed working families is the right policy for America. It's also the smart

thing to do. It encourages millions of people to take responsibility to strengthen their families, as well as our economy. I urge our Nation's Governors to implement these steps so that all working families get the nutritional benefits they need and deserve. And again I call on Congress to restore food stamp benefits to hard-working legal immigrants and to raise the minimum wage for all working families this year. No family working full-time and playing by the rules should have to raise children in poverty. In the coming weeks, Congress still has the chance to honor and award work by raising the minimum wage for our hardest pressed working families.

Thirty years ago Robert Kennedy reminded us that work is the meaning of what the country is all about. With the actions outlined today, we can create new opportunities for hard-working families and move our Nation closer to the time when everyone willing to work for it can achieve the American dream.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5 p.m., local time, on November 17 in the Briefing Suite at the Daewoo Hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.s.t., on November 18. Due to the 12-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's schedule of activities in Vietnam for November 18 had been completed. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 17 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks to the Vietnamese Business Community in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

November 19, 2000

Thank you very much. Ms. Liu, thank you for your remarks and for your introduction—and for your excellent English, much better than my Vietnamese. [*Laughter*] I thank Secretary Mineta and the other members of the American delegation. And thank you, Flemming Jacobs, for making us feel welcome in this magnificent port. I would also like to thank the members of the Vietnamese Government and the government of Ho Chi Minh City who are here. I thank you all for the time that we have had together these last few days.

I wanted to come here today to this remarkable place, which symbolizes Vietnam's gateway to the future, to say that one of the things I have learned in the last 3 days is that Vietnam has an ancient history, but it is still a very young nation. Over half your people were born in the last 30 years. And your best days clearly lie ahead, as you continue to find the means to release the skills and the ingenuity of your people.

Over the last decade, Vietnam has taken positive strides toward economic and social reform. In less than a decade, you have seen income per person rise almost 70 percent. You have lifted more than 15 million people out of poverty. You have eradicated polio. And this container port is an astonishing example of how Vietnam is seizing the new opportunities of the 21st century.

You should be very proud of what you have built here. I can tell you that any nation in the world would be happy to have a facility like this. And it should cause you to imagine just how much more you can achieve.

Already in the last decade, Vietnam's exports to the world have increased by 6 times over. You will grow even more as your economy becomes more open and the rule of law develops. More investment will come when people see Vietnamese entrepreneurs creating companies like OPL. And many more companies like OPL will be created if foreign and domestic investors see barriers to investment fall in a more business-friendly Vietnam.

Already the people of Vietnam have the highest rate of literacy in Southeast Asia. Imagine how much more you will achieve as even more young people gain more freedom to shape the decisions that affect their lives if vigorous competition and innovation bring down the cost of using the Internet for all your schoolchildren and all your entrepreneurs, so that all Vietnamese people can benefit from the free and open exchange of ideas.

Another of your great strengths is the burst of ambitious young people who enter the job market every year, about 1.4 million of them. Your country's leaders have acknowledged that state-owned enterprises alone cannot create enough good jobs for all of them. But Vietnam's young people have the talent and ideas to create the jobs of the future for themselves in a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation, and competition. That must be the future for Vietnam and its young people.

Among those who are ready to work with you to build that future are Vietnamese living abroad, including about one million in the United States. With us here today are two Vietnamese-American sisters, their names are Nguyen Cao Thang and Truong Bich Diep. They run a pharmaceutical company named OPV. It was one of Vietnam's most successful companies in the early 1970's, and now our Government has given them a loan to build a new manufacturing plant just outside this city.

Overseas, Vietnamese want to invest in your country, not only with their money but with their hearts. We are glad to be helping them to return, and we thank you, the people and the Government of Vietnam, for welcoming them home.

The trade agreement the United States has signed with Vietnam will help even more investors come to your country. It will also help to develop a more open, sophisticated free market, based on international rules of law. And that will bring more rewards for the creativity and initiative of the remarkable Vietnamese people. Both our nations should ratify this agreement and implement it. The changes it will bring should be embraced, not feared.

I told your leaders in Hanoi a couple of days ago that the United States is committed to providing assistance to Vietnam to help to implement this trade agreement. Among other things, we will establish a $200 million line of credit to support U.S. investment in Vietnam, and we and your Government have agreed to begin an economic dialog to discuss how we can work together to grow our economies in ways that truly improve people's lives.

I believe you can avoid some of the mistakes that the United States and other industrialized countries made on their way to prosperity, thanks to the revolution in information technology and in the economics of energy. For example, we know today that protecting the environment is actually good for the economy. It preserves natural resources and helps to prevent natural disasters like the terrible flooding Vietnam has experienced these last 2 years. We now know that the more you invest in workers, raising their skills and protecting their rights, the more productive they will be and the more profitable companies will be, and the stronger national economies will grow.

I am very pleased that on Friday we signed an agreement with the Vietnamese Government to begin a dialog on labor issues, on safety and standards in the workplace and on the skills workers need for this new information economy, as well as the protections they will need from its disruptions. No one can deny the importance of these issues as we work together for a better future. But no one should deny Vietnam the opportunity to grow. That is the meaning of our trade agreement; that is the meaning of this port. The workers here at this port know better than anyone that trade lifts wages, raises standards, opens opportunities.

It has been a great privilege for me to see today and over the last few days what the Vietnamese people have accomplished. I have been deeply moved by my visit here. I came here, in part, because I believe that America and Vietnam are linked not just by a shared and often tragic past that must be honored and remembered, but that we have a bright future that we can build together to liberate our people and their potential.

The years of animosity are past. Today we have a shared interest in your well-being and your prosperity. We have a stake in your future, and we wish to be your partners. We wish you success.

Chuc cac ban suc khoe va thanh cong.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. on the dock at the Vietnam International Container Terminals. In his remarks, he referred to Le Thi Hai Lieu, director, Duc Thanh Company; and Flemming Jacobs, chief executive officer, Neptune Orient Lines, Ltd. (NOL Group) and its subsidiary, OPL.

Remarks at a United States-Vietnamese Business Forum Reception in Ho Chi Minh City

November 19, 2000

Thank you very much. First, thank you for your warm welcome, Mr. Chairman. And let me thank all the members of the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council, U.S.–ASEAN Business Council, and the American Chamber of Commerce for bringing us all together today.

I am honored to be here with distinguished Members of the United States Congress and my Cabinet and administration and American business leaders who are interested in Vietnam.

I hope this trip has helped the American people to see Vietnam in a new way and has encouraged the people of Vietnam to see America in a new way, so that we will have a partnership for the future.

One important element of that partnership is our bilateral trade agreement, and I want to thank all of you here for your efforts to bring it about. There are so many Americans who want to play a positive role in Vietnam's future, including one million Americans of Vietnamese heritage.

There are also a lot of American business people who came here many years ago, during the conflict—people like Jim Kimsey, who is on my trip here—who have done very well in the high-tech economy and other areas, who would like to give back to Vietnam and do something positive to build a better future.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the work that you have done here in Ho Chi Minh City to promote private economic growth and to encourage others to be partners with you in the future. And I hope that all of us will be able to celebrate that kind of future because of your leadership and the policies of the Government of Vietnam and the willingness of the people of Vietnam to support this new direction.

Again, let me thank all of you for making my family and my delegation feel so welcome in Vietnam. I thank you for your vision for this young and dynamic country, and I am going home determined to continue the partnership we have for a better future for the people of Vietnam, the people of the United States, and all those whom we can reach together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:53 p.m. at city hall. In his remarks, he referred to Vo Viet Thanh, chairman, Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee; and James V. Kimsey, founder, America OnLine.

Statement on the Appointment of Donna Shalala as President of the University of Miami

November 19, 2000

I congratulate Secretary Shalala on her appointment as president of the University of Miami, a post she will assume on June 1. She is a talented manager and an energetic leader who will bring great experience to the task of leading the university, its students, its faculty, and its alumni. I have no doubt she will be a real asset to the university and its community.

For almost 8 years, Secretary Shalala has led the Department of Health and Human Services with vigor and skill, always focused on meeting the needs of the American people. During her tenure as the longest serving Secretary in the history of the Department, she has directed the welfare reform process; made health insurance available to 2.5 million children through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP); raised immunization rates to the highest levels in history; and led major reforms of FDA's drug approval process and food safety system.

As a Medicare trustee, she helped extend the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund, directing management reforms and launching a campaign against waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs that has already paid

enormous dividends. She has strengthened the scientific leadership and budget of the National Institutes of Health, and she has reinvigorated the Federal role in public health.

I am also pleased that Secretary Shalala intends to complete her term, staying through January 20 to finish the work we have to do for the American people. I look forward to working with her to protect the privacy of medical records and to win congressional approval of a budget that increases our investment in biomedical research and other critical public health priorities as well as health insurance coverage to the uninsured.

Interview With John King of CNN in Ho Chi Minh City
November 19, 2000

New Vietnam-U.S. Relationship

Mr. King. Thank you for joining us. We're here in Ho Chi Minh City with the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, this, the last day of his landmark trip here to Vietnam.

First, sir, thank you for joining us.

The facts speak for themselves. The first U.S. President to visit Vietnam since the end of the war, the first ever to set foot in Hanoi, the Capital.

Interested in your thoughts. You've called this a new chapter, turning the page in the relationship. What is it do you think it will mean, first for the people of Vietnam, and also for the people of the United States?

The President. Well, of course, I hope it means for the people of Vietnam continued openness and continued prosperity. This country has made a lot of progress in the last few years. The economy is diversifying. It's becoming more open to the rest of the world. Sixty percent of the people are under 30 years old. Most of them have no memory at all of the war, and they are very much oriented toward the future. They are asking themselves all kinds of fundamental questions about what the world is like now, how they're going to relate to it, what their country should be. So I hope that we have opened a new chapter, and I hope it will be good for them and good for us.

Mr. King. Now obviously, part of the new chapter is a widely expanded economic relationship. Do you have much confidence it will go beyond that, at least in the short term? After your meeting yesterday with the leader of the Communist Party here, he referred to the United States in a daily newspaper as imperialists, said that he hoped there would be respect for the different way of doing things here. You mentioned in your speech, nationally televised here to university students, the examples of the United States in the areas of individual freedom, religious freedom, political freedom.

Do you have much confidence that the Government here, as it accepts and embraces a wider economic relationship with the West, will do anything to bring progress on those other fronts?

The President. Well, I think there will be more personal freedoms. You know, I had a roundtable this morning with a lot of young people, and they were asking themselves these same questions. And I believe that as we implement this trade agreement, and then Vietnam moves toward membership in the World Trade Organization, the rule of law will become more important; openness will become more important; there will be a lot more access to the Internet and information of all kinds; and so there will be more freedom.

And the question then becomes, when does it become political freedom, or will the political system try to restrict them more, as has been the case in one or two other countries? The truthful answer is, we don't know where it's going. But I think that the trend toward freedom is virtually irreversible, and these folks are too young; they're too vigorous. And as you can see in the streets, there is a lot of good will toward America here. There's a lot of interest in our country and how we're dealing with a lot of the challenges of the new century. So I believe that the trend is positive.

Now, of course, the political leaders will have their debates, and I had a nice little debate with the General Secretary of the Communist Party here about our country, and I stoutly disputed that we were an imperialist country. We

had never had any imperialist designs here. The conflict here was over what self-determination for the Vietnamese people really meant and what freedom and independence really meant.

But we have a chance to continue that debate now in a more peaceful and more constructive way. And I think the fact that they feel free to engage us in it and then have publicity about it—they did, after all, allow my speech to the country to be televised, which I think is a good sign. And the people came out in Hanoi and here in Ho Chi Minh City to see me. So—and it wasn't me; it was the United States. There's a lot of interest and support for the United States here. So I think we're on the right direction.

MIA's/POW's

Mr. King. I want to ask you about some of the remarkable moments on this trip. If you're sitting back in the United States watching this, we see this only by the numbers: nearly 300 sets of remains returned to the United States during your Presidency; the money put into the excavation efforts. But it is numbers until you have the opportunity to see what you did yesterday, to actually go out into the field.

The President. It was overwhelming. It's very important for the American people to understand that what has made the progress in our relationship with Vietnam possible over these last 8 years has been their cooperation in our efforts to identify and recover and return home our MIA's and to resolve the POW and MIA cases. And we have resolved hundreds of them. And in the cases where we think someone's remains are located, like the site we visited—we believe a plane crashed there 33 years ago; we believe a pilot's remains are there. His two sons came with me over here. And we watched all those Vietnamese people working with the American people, up to their hips in mud, digging in the ground and taking these big chunks of mud over to sifters, and watching other Vietnamese sift through the mud for any kind of metal object or any cloth object, anything that would give us a clue to whether this was, in fact, a crash site, and whether there's something more down there.

It was profoundly moving to me. And it is that good-faith effort that they have made with us—and by the way, we've made with them. They have 300,000 cases still unresolved. And I brought over about 350,000 pages of documents. We have another million pages of documents we can give them so they can do their own resolution of these cases. That's what's made possible this whole focus on the future and the commercial relations and the educational and health care efforts, all the other things we're doing.

Visit to the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting Excavation Site

Mr. King. What were your personal thoughts? You're standing there holding pieces of the aircraft, a label from a part of the aircraft, your daughter standing next to you, crying. It didn't look like you were terribly far from that yourself. And you're with these two big, grown men who last saw their father when I believe they were 6 and 8. What goes through your mind at a moment like that?

The President. Well, first, I was glad we were doing it. I think it made me very proud to be an American and proud that we had made these efforts and made this progress. I was very grateful for the cooperation we've received from the Vietnamese Government and the individual villages. You know, there were just people out there, stomping around in the mud, trying to find some trace of those boys' father. And I think, for me, it symbolized what was best about our country and what was possible in terms of the reconciliation of people who have been so bitterly divided such a long time ago.

It's not done yet, you know. We still have a lot of work to do to work through all these cases. I still hope and believe that there should be more freedom within Vietnam and recognition of the courage of the people who fought in the South Vietnamese Army, as well as for the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. And I hope and believe that the American Vietnamese community, over a million strong, can make an even greater contribution.

Now, today we were at that port, and we talked about a big pharmaceutical facility owned by two Vietnamese-American women, sisters, and their presence here in the country. But there are a lot more things that the Vietnamese have to give.

But again, to go back to your question, everything begins with what we saw yesterday, the attempt to identify and bring home the remains of everybody who's still here. It was an overwhelming moment, but it should make every American proud.

Mr. King. Thank you. We need to take a quick break. But we'll be back in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, in just a moment to continue our interview with the President of the United States.

[*At this point, CNN took a commercial break.*]

Veterans, the President, and Vietnam

Mr. King. I want to ask you a little bit about your personal thoughts and how—your personal journey here—and your thoughts on it. As a young man, you opposed the war, once wrote that you despised it. Yet as President, with the support of Vietnam veterans, you have led the effort, first to lift the trade embargo, then to normalize relations.

As you come here, how do you think this visit will be viewed back in the United States, not just among the veterans' community but especially among the Vietnam veterans' community, and your own personal thoughts on sort of bridging your youth with your role now in trying to create this new relationship?

The President. Well, let me answer the two questions separately. First of all, I hope the veterans' community will view it with pride, because nothing that we have done in the last 8 years would have been possible without the support of the Vietnam veterans in the Congress and in the various veterans' organizations: Senator John Kerry; Senator Bob Kerrey; Senator John McCain; Senator Chuck Robb; Pete Peterson, our Ambassador, who was a POW for 6½ years. The first 3 years, his wife didn't even know he was alive. He never saw his third child until the boy was 6 years old. Pete was in Congress for a lot of this period before I named him to be the Ambassador. So I would think that the veterans' community would be very proud of this.

And also, I will reiterate, none of this would have happened if it hadn't been for the cooperation of the Vietnamese with our attempts to resolve our outstanding POW and MIA cases. There's never been anything like it in the entire history of warfare, where two countries worked this hard, this long, invested this kind of money and effort to resolve the POW/MIA issues. So I would think, for most of our people who understand that, the central role of the American veterans in the Congress and the country had, this would be a source of great pride.

For me, personally, it was interesting—my overwhelming feeling when I first got here was thinking about the boys I grew up with who died in Vietnam, four of my high school classmates. And I asked Pete Peterson, when he came back, how long it took him to get beyond thinking about how it was before. And he said, "Well, about an hour," he said. Then he had to deal with the challenges of being Ambassador, and he went on with life.

And that's kind of what happened to me. I was the—I had a few moments there where I felt—I was thinking about the personal tragedies that I had been in contact with when I was a boy. And then the moment intervened, and we went on with the future.

Closure on the Vietnam War

Mr. King. Do you think the country is at peace with this now? Even some Democrats late in the Presidential campaign this past year tried to raise questions about Governor Bush's service. Do you think the country is ready, and should this trip maybe be the final impetus for the country to move on?

The President. I hope it will be. I hope it will be. Because the war divided the Vietnamese from the Americans, but it also divided the Vietnamese one from another—and still does—which is why, as I said, I went out of my way to praise the heroism of the South Vietnamese soldiers, too, and the importance of the Vietnamese-Americans who supported the position we had in Vietnam so long ago and have done so well because of freedom.

So we need to heal the rift within the Vietnamese community, and it divided Americans one from another. And I hope that the last 8 years and the journey we've made together in moving forward with Vietnam has helped to put an end to that. My sense is that it did, that we're—that at least the rifts are nowhere near what they were 8 years ago, not to mention 10 or 20 years ago.

North Korea

Mr. King. Let's move around the world quickly. In a matter of weeks, you will hand off to the man who will succeed you, a man as yet unknown—and we'll get to that—the portfolio on some of the most important strategic relationships in the world. I want to start first with North Korea. You had, at one point, hoped perhaps to follow Secretary Albright and visit

North Korea as part of this trip, then decided in the end not enough progress was being made to justify that.

Can you be as specific as possible in saying what it is you're looking for from the North Koreans in terms of the missile program and any other steps, and whether you believe it is conceivable that you still might get there before you leave office?

The President. Well, I haven't made a decision about whether to go, so I'll answer that first. Specifically, what we seek with the missile program is an end to the long-range missile program and an end to the exports of missiles. North Korea needs the foreign exchange money. I understand that they need the funds, and they're very good at making missiles, but the people who are most likely to buy them are those that are most likely to misuse them down the road. So that's what we're trying to do.

We also want to ensure the continued vitality of this North-South dialog for which President Kim of South Korea won the Nobel Prize, the Nobel Peace Prize, and he certainly deserved it. We want that to go on. And we want to have a sense about what the way forward is with regard to North Korea's relations with us, as well as the South Koreans and the Japanese.

So it's conceivable that there could still be a trip, but I just haven't made a decision. The main thing is, I will hand off to my successor a much better situation than I found, because we, first of all, had to end North Korea's nuclear program, and that's what we did and worked on in '93 and '94. And we've been implementing the agreement we made with them then for the last 6 years. Now we're working on the missile program. And it appears that North Korea has made a decision that—Kim Chong-il has made a decision to have a more positive and open relationship with the rest of the world. And I think that's a very good thing. I think the reconciliation and the family reunifications between North and South Korea are profoundly important.

Russia

Mr. King. Russia. You met with President Putin during the APEC meeting in Brunei. Your successor, I assume, relatively shortly after he takes office, will receive a proposal from the Russians to go even beyond anything you and the Russians have discussed. Mr. Putin, because of the obvious budget constraints in his country, wants to go to roughly 1,000 strategic warheads. Is that in the interests of the United States national security? And do you see any potential to get to that level, and also, perhaps as part of that deal, get a compromise on the ABM Treaty that would allow the missile defense program to go forward?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't want to say anything that will compromise my successor's options. I think that's important. Now, I think it is quite possible that we could agree to go down to fewer missiles in our nuclear arsenal and theirs. I think that it's important that there also be fewer warheads. That is, there's a difference between missiles and warheads. I don't think we ought to go back to highly dangerous, richly armed MIRV missiles, multiple warhead missiles.

But what we have to do is to have a target design that we believe is adequate to protect the United States and that our missile component will serve. And if we do that, then we could agree with them to reduce the number of missiles. And I'd hoped that we could get that done even beforehand. So I'm encouraged by that.

Now, on the missile defense, I think the trick there will be somehow having the Russians and others with equity interests here believe that we all have a vested interest in trying to develop enough missile defense to stop the rogue states and terrorists from piercing the barriers not only of the United States but of Russia, China, of any other country that might want to participate. And there is a way, I think, to get this done, but it will require a lot of joint research and a lot of trust and a lot of understanding about what the problem is and how we're going to develop it.

If the technology existed which would give us high levels of confidence that one or 2 or 5 or 10 missiles could be stopped from coming into the country, it would be hard to justify not putting it up. On the other hand, the reason I didn't go forward is, I think it's very hard to justify wrecking the existing treaty system which has served us so well for so long, in effect, gambling that somehow, some day, some way, the technology will be there. We don't want to do that.

The best way to proceed is to do the research and try to find a way to bring these other countries into this. Because, really, if you think about

it, everyone should have an interest in the capacity of a country to resist the errant missile or the missile that would be fired by a rogue state or a terrorist. And they can do this together.

What I tried to do was to buy some time so my successor could sit down with the Russians, with the Chinese, with any others who are parties and interests—and our European allies, of course—and try to plot out a future that would leave us safer than we are today. The whole point is to keep getting safer, not to do different things but to have a system which leads to a safer world.

And we have to consider what the impact of all these things are on the Indian subcontinent, where there are nuclear missiles; on the Chinese who might decide to build—acquire a lot more missiles or develop them or not. And so my successor will have time to do all that. And I hope we've given the next President and our partners the maximum number of options.

Mr. King. We need to take another short break, but when we come back, we'll ask the President about his thoughts on the crisis in the Middle East, as well as the contested Presidential election back home in the United States.

[*At this point, CNN took a commercial break.*]

Situation in the Middle East

Mr. King. I want to ask you, lastly, before asking you about the domestic political situation, I want to ask you lastly about the Middle East. You met separately with Mr. Arafat and Prime Minister Barak before you came on this trip. It has to be a source of enormous personal frustration to you, because of all the time you have put into this. Do you have any reasonable hopes that you can bring the two of them together anytime soon and that we will get anywhere beyond perhaps even just calming the violence before you leave office, and anywhere back toward formal peace negotiations? Is that completely unrealistic at this time?

The President. The honest answer is, I don't know, for this reason: I don't think they can start negotiating again until we can dramatically reduce the level of violence. It's not clear to me that that's going to happen right now, although I'm working very hard on it, and we've been working hard on it since I've been here. And I wouldn't rule it out.

But the tragic thing is that they're not all that far apart on a lot of these big issues and that what we have seen is a sober reminder that the old status quo was not an option. You either have to keep making things better in the Middle East, or eventually they'll get worse.

Mr. King. Is the burden on one side or the other? You came away from Sharm al-Sheikh cautiously optimistic you would stop the violence, have a cooling-off period, and then bring them back together. Obviously, they have not even been able to stop the violence.

The President. Well, believe it or not, I still think Sharm al-Sheikh was very much worth doing, because, first of all, the agreement that we reached there is pretty much what they'd have to do to get the violence back and set in motion conditions which would lead to a resumption of the peace talks. And I felt before Sharm al-Sheikh that we were slipping into a very dangerous situation regionally. And now I think that a lot of the really responsible actors in the region are also trying to get this thing shut down.

But I can't really say more than that it's a troubling, difficult, and painful situation, and we've got to find a way to end the violence. You don't have to end every single instance of it, but there has to be a dramatic reduction in the violence before the parties can talk again and make commitments again that could constitute a peace agreement.

Is it possible? Yes, it's possible. It's possible because they're not that far apart. But they might as well be on the other side of the globe, as long as all the shooting is going on. So that's what we're working on, and I hope that a way can be found to bring it to an end.

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. King. Let me bring your thoughts back home to the United States. When you left on this trip, there was a dispute about who the next President would be. When you made your courtesy call on the Vietnamese President last night, you had to joke that you were hurrying home to see if the country had a President-elect. The recount continues, and along with it, the partisan rhetoric escalates. You have people on the Republican side speaking for Governor Bush saying the Democrats are trying to steal the election; Democrats on the other hand, saying that the Republicans are trying to deny the people a fair count of the vote and shut

down democracy. Is this helpful, in your view? The process is obviously not pretty. Is it helpful what we're hearing from both sides?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't know that that's a particularly useful question, with all respect. You can't, as close as this is—now it appears that, when all the votes are counted, that Vice President Gore will have won a plurality of the popular vote. It appears that unless he wins Florida, he'll be three votes short in the electoral college. Therefore, everything is on Florida. And Mr. Bush has the narrowest of leads out of 6 million votes, far less than a tenth of a percent, one-sixth of one-tenth of one percent, or something like that.

Now, in an environment like that, you have to assume that either side will try to make the best argument they can, because you only have a whisker of difference. I think the important thing is that there is a process underway, and it is being shepherded by the parties—they're both very well represented by articulate, able people—and they have recourse to the courts in Florida and the Supreme Court seems to have been willing to be prompt in its decision-making.

So I think the American people should just let it play out, and they should understand that, with so much at stake, both sides are going to make the strongest case they can. And the only thing that I hope that all of us will keep in mind here is that we don't know who won, but we do know that when people vote, they deserve to have their votes counted, if they can be. So we ought to just respect the process and respect the fact that the advocacy will take place, and it should take place. You can't blame either one of them for making the strongest case they can.

This is not a crisis in the American system of government, because it will come to an end. It will come to an end in plenty of time for the new President to take the oath of office. There is a way of resolving these things. All these cases are in the courts, and as I said, it appears to me that they're being handled in a fairly prompt way. Some of the decisions have gone one way, some have gone another way, and we'll just have to see what happens.

But I think the American people ought to let this—it seems to me the American people are letting this play out in an appropriate way, and that's what I think should be done.

Mr. King. Look around the corner, though. You have considerable experience in your own right trying to govern in a very difficult environment, relations with the Republican Congress not terribly good during most of the latter half of your administrations. And now you have research being done on both sides about, well, maybe this will get thrown to the Congress, and can we disqualify electors. Do you see, A, with the election being so close, and then, B, with the very difficult fight over who wins, can whoever gets this job reasonably govern, in your view?

The President. Well, I would make two points. First of all, it is true that I faced an unusually partisan group of Republicans. But it's also true that we got a lot done. I mean, I've noticed with some pleasure, I confess, that students of American history, several of them have come out in the last few weeks saying that I had kept a higher percentage of my campaign promises than any President in modern history. And we've gotten a lot done with this Republican Congress, in spite of all the partisanship in the last 6 years.

We got a balanced budget agreement. We got welfare reform. We got just this year a sweeping measure on debt relief for the world's poorest nations and any number of other things. I don't want to go through all that, but the point I want to make is that even in a difficult atmosphere, where the Congress is closely divided, and the President is elected by a narrow margin, we should not assume that they won't be able to get something done. If they're willing to work hard, fight for their positions, and then in the end, make principled compromises, quite a lot can be done. That's the first thing I want to say.

The second thing is, if you look at American history, it is not inevitable that the person who wins the White House under these circumstances will have a deeply divided country. Now, in 1876, when President Hayes won, he promised to only serve one term. So we don't know whether he could have been reelected or not, when he lost the popular vote and won the electoral college.

In 1824 John Quincy Adams won in the House of Representatives when he lost the popular vote, and he was voted out, although he came back and had a wonderful career opposing slavery. But when Thomas Jefferson was forced to go for many, many ballots into the House

of Representatives, he came out of it as a more unifying figure, with a commitment to be more unifying. And in effect, he was so successful that he got two terms, and the opposition party, the Federalist Party, disappeared. And then two members of his party, James Madison and James Monroe, succeeded him, and they both had two terms. And arguably, that 24-year period was the biggest period of political stability in the whole history of the republic, until you had the dominance of the Republicans after the Civil War, and then Roosevelt-Truman years and the Depression and World War II.

So I think you—I wouldn't—I don't think we should have all these hand-wringing, dire predictions. We've got a system. It's underway, and yes, these guys are—the advocates for either side are under enormous pressure. And of course, they're being pretty snippy with each other from time to time. But look, you'd expect it. I mean, 100 million people voted, and there's 1,000 votes, more or less, at stake in Florida.

So everybody ought to just relax, let the process play out. But don't assume that no matter who wins and no matter what happens, it's going to be bad for America. It might be quite good, because it might be sobering for the country to realize we're in a completely new era. Nobody's got a lock on the truth. We're all trying to understand the future. It's still clear that about two-thirds of the American people want a dynamic center that pulls the people together and moves us forward. And I think we still have a fair chance to achieve that.

Perspective on the Presidency

Mr. King. We're short on time, indeed, out of time, but just in a sentence or two, you've been at this 8 years, and I think you have 8 weeks. What runs through your head when you get up to go to the office every day?

The President. I want to get everything done I can possibly do while I'm here. And for the rest, I just feel grateful. America is in much better shape then it was 8 years ago. We got to implement the ideas and the policies that I ran on in '92 and '96. I didn't do everything I wanted to do, but the overwhelming majority of things I wanted to do I was able to accomplish, and I'm grateful that it worked out for the country.

And then a lot of other things came up along the way which were good for the country. So I'm happy now, and I'm grateful. And of course, I'm thrilled about Hillary's election to the Senate. And I just feel enormous gratitude. But there's still a lot of things I'd like to do, and so I'll work right up to the end.

Mr. King. Mr. President, we thank you very much for your time.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:30 p.m. in the Caravelle Hotel for later broadcast, and the transcript was embargoed by the Office of the Press Secretary until 6 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; General Secretary Kim Chong-il of North Korea; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Nguyen Bich and Dan Sutherland of Radio Free Asia International From Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska

November 19, 2000

The President. Hello?

Q. Yes. Good evening, Mr. President.

The President. Yes. Good evening.

President's Visit to Vietnam

Q. You must be very exhausted by now. [*Laughter*] That is why we are so grateful for you to grant RFA your very first post-Vietnam interview.

My name is Nguyen Bich, or you can call me just Bich for short. And I am the director of the Vietnamese service at Radio Free Asia. And sitting by me in our studio is Dan

Sutherland, who is vice president for programming.

So, Mr. President, my first question to you is, how do you feel? Do you feel you have accomplished your goal by this first trip ever made by a President of the United States to a reunified Vietnam?

The President. Yes, I think it was a very successful trip; first, because we were able to see and support the attempts that are being made there to recover the missing in action from the Vietnam conflict and to continue our cooperation with the Vietnamese Government in that regard.

We also gave them several hundred thousand pages of documents to help them identify the some 300,000 people still missing who are Vietnamese. Then, I think it was important because we contributed, I believe, to the continuing economic progress of the country which I think will lead to more openness.

And thirdly, I think it was important because I was able to speak on television to the country about the kind of future I hope we will share with Vietnam and the fact that I hope there will be more openness and more freedom in it. And I also had, finally, some very good discussions and some constructive disagreements with the leadership of Vietnam.

President's Impressions of Vietnam

Q. Your speech at Hanoi University certainly was very impressive. And so I think that made a really big impression on the country. As this was your first trip to Vietnam, could you give us a general impression of the country, at least what you saw of it, and of the people? Were they warm and welcoming?

The President. They were very warm and very welcoming and clearly interested in the trip. And the young people with whom I talked were clearly interested in having closer ties with America. So I felt very good about that.

I also was interested in all the changes that are occurring in the northern part of the country. I think there's clearly a lot of new investment going on in Hanoi, a lot of new businesses coming out, a lot of changes there that I think will tend to make the south and the north perhaps less different in terms of the economic lives and maybe the political outlooks of the people at least in the cities. Now, the only village that I went to was the one where the search for the pilot was going on.

Economic Future of Vietnam

Q. People say that, in Vietnam, it is still some distance between the potential and realization. Do you get a feeling that the people are impatient for progress, especially among the young, or do you think, as the Government says, that they are pretty satisfied with the present pace of things?

The President. Well, I would say that they understand that the country is doing better, and they like that. But my impression is that they want to move forward as rapidly as they can. After all, 60 percent of the country now is under 30. And I think they have a keen awareness that they have to make a lot of changes in order to keep creating jobs. I think they need 1.4 million new jobs every year.

On the morning of my last day there, I had an amazing roundtable discussion with a number of young Vietnamese men and women who ranged in age from early twenties to midthirties, and who did everything from working for Cargill, the big international grain company, to running the Vietnam office of Saachi and Saachi, which is a big London advertising agency—excuse me.

Then there was one young man who had a job in the party and others who had other jobs. But what was interesting to me is, they were all thinking about the big questions, you know, how much personal freedom is needed in life, what kinds of decisions should be made by the individual, and what kind of decisions should be made by families or villages or the nation, the Government, and how much of the economy should be private and how much should be public.

The man who runs the city government in Ho Chi Minh City was quite proud of the fact that they had done a remarkable job of creating jobs in the private sector, that he had downsized the government, that poverty had been reduced by 70 percent, and homelessness was reduced by 70 percent. So I think there are a lot of people there who have this feeling that if they go more to a private economy and they have more entrepreneurial spirit, that there will also be more personal freedom associated with it.

First Lady's Discussion of Human Rights

Q. Yes. I understand that the First Lady also had some strong words to recommend human rights at her talk in the morning of Sunday.

The President. Yes. She met with a group of women there. It was something she tries to do in every country in the world she visits. She's been speaking about that, especially as human rights affect women and young girls, ever since she went to the Beijing Women's Conference several years ago.

U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement

Q. That's wonderful. Now, what is your reading of the progress so far made about the U.S.-Vietnam bilateral trade agreements? Did you get any indication while you were there as to when the Vietnamese National Assembly might get to ratify that?

The President. I think they will ratify it pretty soon. I think—I had the feeling they want to make absolutely sure that we're going to ratify it. And they understand that the timing is not good for ratification now, but I think as soon as we ratify it, they will. And then I think that we told them that we would be spending a couple million dollars a year over the next 3 years to help ensure the rapid and thorough implementation of the agreement. And we told them that we would like to have a high-level meeting, at least annually, to plot a joint economic strategy for the future, and they agreed to that. So my instinct is that they do want to get the maximum benefits out of this trade agreement.

Q. But then, what would be your impression as to when the U.S. Congress might ratify that?

The President. I think they will do it as soon as they have a chance, probably early next year. You know, I wish I could do it now, but I just don't know if it's practical. So I think that—I don't think there is any shot that it won't be approved by the Congress. There is just too much support for it.

Press Secretary Jake Siewert. Last question, please.

Discussions With Vietnamese Leaders

Q. [*Inaudible*]—being very diplomatic in handling the question of human rights, religious, and other democratic freedoms in Vietnam. But Hanoi's sensitivity to this question is all too obvious. Did you make any headway in your talk with Secretary General Le Kha Phieu or Prime Minister Phan Van Khai on this front, or do you think the U.S. could work with Vietnam on this matter in a more open fashion?

The President. I had very open conversations with all of them, with the Prime Minister, with the Secretary General and the President. And what I believe is that once they realize that we're not trying to tell Vietnam how to run every aspect of their lives and that we feel that we're going to be in a friendly relation, we have to be honest about our disagreements, and we have to say what we think human rights and religious rights and individual freedom have meant to our country.

I think we will be in a dialog there, and I think that, plus the process of economic and social change which is going on in Vietnam will lead the country in a positive direction. That's what I believe. I think it will be very important for my successor to continue that dialog. I don't think we can drop human rights or religious freedom from our concerns anywhere in the world.

Q. Can we ask you just one last quick question

The President. Sure.

Musicians in Vietnam

Q. Did you have a chance to play your saxophone while you were there?

The President. No. [*Laughter*] But I love the music. I did—however, I heard a Vietnamese saxophone player at the entertainment after the state dinner, and he was really, really good. All the musicians were great. I was very impressed by the musical performances that were done after the state dinner.

Q. You wouldn't allow us maybe just——

Press Secretary Siewert. No, I think we have to wrap up. Sorry.

The President. We're in Alaska, and we have to get back on the plane to go home. I'm sorry. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President

The President. Goodbye.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 6:20 p.m. for later broadcast. The President spoke by telephone from the base. In his remarks, he referred to Communist Party General Secretary Le Kha Phieu, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, and President Tran Duc Luong of Vietnam. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 20. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on the Death of Charles F.C. Ruff
November 20, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Charles F.C. Ruff, who served as my White House Counsel from 1997 to 1999. All of us at the White House admired Chuck for the power of his advocacy, the wisdom of his judgment, and the strength of his leadership. We loved him for his generous spirit and his keen wit, which he used to find humor in even the most challenging circumstances.

Chuck had an extraordinary and distinguished career in private practice with Covington & Burling, and in public service as Special Prosecutor, Acting Deputy Attorney General, and United States Attorney and Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia. We will miss his counsel and friendship deeply.

Hillary and I extend our condolences to his wife, Sue, his daughters, Carin and Christy, and his mother, Margaret.

Statement on Management Reform at the Department of Housing and Urban Development
November 20, 2000

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2020 Management Reform Plan has changed the way that HUD does business for good. That's the verdict from a report issued today by the Public Strategies Group, a leader of the "reinventing Government" movement. The confirmed success of Secretary Cuomo's management reforms is great news for HUD, the administration, and most importantly, the millions of Americans served by HUD's programs.

When we first took office, Al Gore and I promised the American people that we would improve the way our Government serves them. We had no greater challenge than HUD, which was mired in bureaucracy and which Congress had targeted for elimination. That was then, but this is now. Today, we have a Department that has turned itself around and, as this report clearly states, can serve as a role model for all Federal agencies.

I want to congratulate Secretary Cuomo, his team at HUD, and all of the Department's 9,000 employees for this significant achievement. I have no doubt it will serve as a milestone in HUD's history and foreshadow the kind of service that the Department will offer the American people in the years to come.

Statement on Labor Department Regulations on Private Health Care Plans
November 20, 2000

Today I am pleased to announce that the Labor Department is issuing final regulations requiring private health plans covering 130 million Americans to provide a fast and fair internal appeals process for patients when coverage has been denied or delayed. Under this new rule, for the first time, health plans would be required to make coverage decisions quickly—within 72 hours for urgent requests—and to provide consumers with meaningful information on their rights and benefits. Currently, many health plans do not have the medical expertise to make such decisions, and approval of necessary services can take as long as 300 days.

Under the strong leadership of Secretary Herman, we are taking an important step towards providing Americans the health care protections they need. It is the final executive action I can take to provide critical protections to patients

in private health plans. It builds on my administration's previous action to provide critical patient protections to the 85 million Americans in Federal health plans. But the only way to give every American in every health plan the right to see a specialist, to go to the nearest emergency room—not the cheapest—and to hold health care plans accountable when they cause harm, is to pass a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. Whether it is this year or next year, Congress should come together to pass this long overdue legislation.

Statement on the Death of Lars-Erik Nelson

November 21, 2000

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of Lars-Erik Nelson, one of New York's most distinctive voices and one of America's leading journalists. He was a fearless, independent, no nonsense reporter and columnist who believed in getting to the heart of a story and getting it right.

Lars-Erik Nelson distinguished himself as a foreign correspondent and as a skilled Russian translator, but his real gift was translating complex stories about our democracy for the American people. He did it with humor and a dogged pursuit for the truth. As his friends knew, beneath his gruff exterior was a gentle spirit and a warm heart. Hillary and I will miss him and the unique insight that he shared with New York and the entire Nation. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Mary, and his entire family.

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony

November 22, 2000

The President. I want to thank Secretary Glickman and National Turkey Federation Chairman Jerry Jerome and President Stuart Proctor for being here. And I want to welcome the young people who are here, especially those who are from the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington.

[*At this point, there was a noise from the far end of the Rose Garden.*]

The President. I am—what's all that noise up there? [*Laughter*] What is it? It sounds like another turkey about to fly down here. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the National Turkey Federation for once again donating this year's tom turkey. This is the eighth I've had the privilege to meet and set free in the Rose Garden. [*Laughter*]

I'm told that Jerry, the turkey, traveled all the way here from Wisconsin, proving that the Cheese State is about more than good cheese. It's also, I might add, about a very well-behaved turkey. [*Laughter*]

Tomorrow we will celebrate the first Thanksgiving of the new millennium and the last one of our Presidency. As Hillary and Chelsea and I sit down to our dinner, we will give special thanks for the privilege it has been to live here and to serve for the last 8 years.

It's still a bit of a mystery when exactly the first Thanksgiving was actually held. Some say it was in 1513, when Ponce de Leon landed in Florida. But the expert opinions about that are divided, and a recount is still underway down there. [*Laughter*] Others say it occurred in 1541, when Francisco Vasquez de Coronado arrived on the Texas panhandle. Some conspiracy theorists say neither of those are true.

The most popular story, of course, and the one all of us learned as kids, is that Native Americans and Pilgrims shared a feast of thanks to celebrate their first harvest in 1621, soon after the Pilgrims arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It was a famous meal of maize, squash, and venison and lasted 3 whole days. Now, that would take a lot of turkey.

But no matter what its roots, Thanksgiving is a tradition that has been celebrated in this country since our beginning. George Washington was the first President to declare a national day of thanks, in 1789. And Abraham Lincoln made the tradition a permanent one in 1863, in the darkest days of the Civil War, because he recognized, as he put it, "the blessings of fruitful years and healthful skies."

The times have changed, but the message hasn't: to give thanks for all God's blessings, for our strong families, our spirited communities, and the good fortune of living in our country's most prosperous and peaceful time.

I am profoundly grateful on this Thanksgiving that we have now more than 22 million new jobs, poverty and unemployment at record lows, and the highest homeownership in history. The American people worked hard for these results, and I hope they're thankful for them as well.

We should also be grateful for the strength of our democracy and the freedom we enjoy, thanks to the courage and patriotism of our men and women in uniform and the strength and abiding power of the Constitution and the rule of law.

As we gather around our dinner tables with family and friends and celebrate our great bounty, we must not forget, also, those who will be hungry this holiday season. That's why it is so important that all Americans, like the young people here today, not only give thanks but give something back to their communities to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Almost 50 years ago, President Truman began the tradition of keeping at least one turkey off the Thanksgiving dinner table. And I am very pleased to follow in his footsteps and to hereby officially pardon this turkey in order that he be sent to the petting zoo in Fairfax County, Virginia, to live his remaining days in peace and happiness making children happier, if not more peaceful.

Thank you, and Happy Thanksgiving. Let's bring the turkey up.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jerry Jerome, chairman, and Stuart Proctor, Jr., president, National Turkey Federation. The President also referred to Kidwell Farm at Frying Pan Park in Fairfax County, VA, future home of the turkey. The Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 17 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Capital Area Food Bank and an Exchange With Reporters
November 22, 2000

The President. First of all, I want to thank Secretary Glickman and all the people that he mentioned for the work that they've done that he discussed today. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to Lynn Brantley. Thank you for your kind comments, but actually, the District of Columbia could better do without me than you. You have been great, and I thank you so much for everything you have done. This lady has been working on hunger issues since she marched with Dr. King. She's been at it a long time, and she's still a young lady. [*Laughter*] So she's got a long way to go, and we thank her.

I want to thank the wonderful DC Delegate, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and DC City Council chair Linda Cropp and Vincent Orange, Ward 5 councilmember. And I want to say a special word of appreciation—this may be my last public chance to do it—to Representative Tony Hall from Ohio, who, for years and years and years, when it was popular and when no one paid attention, has been the number one opponent of hunger in the United States and around the world in the entire United States Congress. Thank you, Tony Hall, for everything you have done. Thank you.

I also want to point out that we have some participation here from one of my favorite accomplishments as President, the establishment of AmeriCorps, the national service corps. We have AmeriCorps volunteers, and I think we even have some alumni here. And I want to

acknowledge Senator Harris Wofford, the director of the Corporation for National Service, and thank him for all that AmeriCorps has done, including this project and their participation here over the last 8 years. Thank you, sir.

I also want to say appreciations, thanks to all the people that are working here who let me work with them. The folks in the back were tolerant when I couldn't remember what box I was supposed to put which item of food in. [*Laughter*] And the young people there were tolerant when I couldn't remember how many cans of what I was supposed to put in the box. And we got through it all right.

The students are from Garfield Terrace. And I think as we prepare our own Thanksgivings, the people in our country should give thanks for people like all these volunteers here, young and old and those in the middle, who keep the spirit of Thanksgiving alive every day by giving to others. And I thank them. This is a great lesson for these young people to learn early in life, and I hope they'll keep it up. Let's give them a big hand. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I always try to do some community service at Thanksgiving to highlight something good that's going on in our community, in our country. This year I wanted to come here because I think it's too easy for Americans to forget, when we have the strongest economy in our history and we've had the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years and the lowest overall poverty rate in 20 years—that all sounds really good, and it is really good. It's good that we've got 22 million new jobs. It's good that all sectors of the economy have their incomes going up, from the lowest fifth to the top fifth and everybody in between. It's all really good. But this is a very big country, and it's very important at Thanksgiving that we not forget that in the midst of all of our plenty and all of our prosperity, there are still Americans of all ages who have trouble getting enough decent food to eat every single day. And a lot of Americans do not know that.

I hope by coming here, one of the things that will happen—and Secretary Glickman mentioned it earlier—is that more Americans will be aware of this and will support this institution or their local food bank, wherever they live, or their local religious institutions or whoever else is involved in every community. There's somebody in every community trying to feed people that don't have enough food, and they need help in getting the food.

And so that's the main reason I wanted to come here today. We see these people who don't have enough to eat sometimes living on the street. But we don't see them if they're senior citizens on very small fixed incomes. We don't see them sometimes if they're working families getting by on the minimum wage with more kids than can live on a minimum wage. By the way, it's another argument for raising the minimum wage. We've got one more chance to do that when the Congress comes back in December. And a shockingly high number of people who don't have enough to eat are kids.

As Lynn said a moment ago—I want to reemphasize it because somebody might have missed what she said—one in three Washington, DC, children, the Capital of the country that has the strongest economy in the world, lives every single day at some risk of going to bed hungry. One in three in the Capital of the country with the best economy in the world, with the best economy we've ever had, is at risk of going to bed hungry at night.

The Capital Area Food Bank helps to right that wrong by distributing 20 million pounds of food a year to community kitchens, children's programs, and other emergency feeding centers. How many people—did you say you had over 750 groups that come here to get food? Around the Nation, a network of private organizations, religious groups, and civic-minded individuals are doing the same thing, just like our friends from Giant Food here are helping.

Now, this commitment, this grassroots citizens commitment to fighting hunger, is a great national treasure for us. The challenge for people like us in Government is to find ways to work with community groups and businesses and farmers to end hunger in America, and not just on Thanksgiving or Christmas but every day. And we need citizen help there, as well.

Secretary Glickman talked about our community food security initiative and the progress we've made, and I really thank him for his personal leadership and commitment. Soon after I named him Agriculture Secretary, Dan told me about a program he'd started in his home State in Kansas to collect food that would otherwise be wasted and pass it on. He told me then, and he just whispered in my ear again today, one of his—he wants to make sure I remember this, so he said it again—that our

country loses about 96 billion—that's "b," not million, billion—pounds of food a year that could be consumed, but instead it's thrown out or allowed to spoil. So we established a program that allows Federal agencies to send excess food to food banks like this one. In 10 agencies and the United States House of Representatives—thank you, Tony and Eleanor—and several local military bases are now taking part in this.

But now we've got to meet the longer term challenge, to make sure low-income Americans and seniors get the food at affordable prices they need in the neighborhoods where they live. This is a real problem for people in inner cities and in rural areas, where more than 20 percent of the stores carry no fresh produce at all, or there simply aren't any stores at all. It's a tragedy for children who especially need vitamins when they're growing up and for older people who need fruits and vegetables to fight diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

So today I'm going to announce three new initiatives that will at least help to change that and will help America's small farmers find new markets for their produce.

First, we're going to make available $10 million in grants to help seniors take advantage of farmers markets. There are farmers markets all over this country that offer good produce at affordable prices, but you can't take food stamps to them. And so we've asked the States and the Indian tribal governments to apply to the Department of Agriculture by December the 1st to use the funding to create coupons that will allow as many as a half-million seniors on limited incomes to shop directly at farmers markets or buy from local farms directly. And when seniors and low-income people are able to purchase fresh local produce, their health improves and so does the health of the local farm economy.

Capital City Food Bank has demonstrated that here by starting the Anacostia farmers market, which I imagine a lot of you are familiar with, and bringing local growers to Southeast, DC, as well as being one of only four farmers markets in the Nation to accept food stamps. That's why we've got to do this coupon thing, because most of them don't.

Second, the Department of Agriculture will spend $200 million more next year to buy fruits and vegetables and donate them to community kitchens, schools, and other emergency feeding centers. That means millions more healthy snacks in senior centers, fresh vegetables in school lunches, and full shelves at the Capital City Food Bank and others like it across our country.

Third, we're going to spend about $2½ million in new community food project grants to 16 nonprofits in 13 States to help build community gardens at public schools and in vacant lots. They'll then fund training in gardening, nutrition, and food preparation for young people to help create farmers markets in underserved areas, by using land that's out there in communities and towns now to let people grow some food that can either be consumed or sold.

Now, all these initiatives are good for our seniors, our working families, our kids, and our farmers. They will build a direct connection between people who grow food and people who need it. They will take another step toward ensuring that, in this land of plenty, no child—no American—should go to bed hungry.

That ought to be a national goal. It ought to transcend political parties, race, age, and region. But there are people in cities and little country towns, on Indian reservations, who are hungry. And I will say again, if we—I know I have said this so many times about so many of our problems, but if you take this problem—if we cannot deal with this now, when we have the strongest economy in our history, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the highest work force participation in our history, and at least a manageable number of people struggling with this, when are we ever going to deal with it?

So, at this Thanksgiving, we should all be thankful for our blessings. We should all look around at people who need help and try to give them a little. But we ought to make a commitment to deal with this systematically. If Lynn can spend a lifetime dealing with this, the rest of us ought to spend a year fixing it so that she'll have the resources she needs to actually meet the problem that's out there. I hope these steps will help. I'm sure they will, but there's more to be done.

Thank you, and Happy Thanksgiving.

Republican Vice Presidential Candidate Dick Cheney

Q. Any thoughts on Secretary Cheney?

The President. Just that I hope he'll be well and fine. I just found out right before I came over here, and I'm going to go back to the

White House now to either call him or write him a note. I hope he's fine.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. at the food bank's warehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Lynn Brantley, executive director, Capital Area Food Bank.

Videotaped Remarks on the Observance of Ramadan
November 22, 2000

It is a privilege to deliver again this year, on behalf of the American people, a message of friendship and respect to Muslims around the world as they begin the sacred month of Ramadan.

As America's 6-million-member Muslim community grows in numbers and prominence, Americans of every religious tradition are learning more about the origins and meaning of Islam—that on "the Night of Power," the angel Gabriel appeared to the Prophet Muhammad and revealed to him the first verses of the Koran; that the Koran declares that Ramadan was the month Allah's words were sent down and so should be spent in fasting.

The rigors undertaken by devout Muslims inspire respect for Islam among people of all faiths. And this can bring hope of greater understanding for good will. It can overflow old boundaries when wholehearted devotion to one's own faith is matched with a devout respect for the faith of others.

That is why we welcome Islam in America. It enriches our country with Islam's teachings of self-discipline, compassion, and commitment to family. It deepens America's respect for Muslims here at home and around the world, from Indonesia to Pakistan, the Middle East, and Africa.

We all had hoped that when this month's crescent Moon first appeared and the month of Ramadan was announced, fasting would begin in a time of peace. Yet, tragically, violence continues, and lives are being lost in the land that is holy to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. For all Americans, these deaths are a source of great sorrow. The Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University, where I attended college, has told me of a verse in the Koran in which Allah tells us that He created nations and tribes so we may know one another, not so we might despise one another.

As the fasting of Ramadan begins, I pray people of all faiths may come to appreciate this precious wisdom of the Koran. And when next month's Moon appears and the Muslim world celebrates Eid al-Fitr, we may also celebrate the revival of our hopes for peace throughout the world.

Ramadan Kareem.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 11:15 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room for later broadcast on the Department of State American Embassy Television Network. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on the Death of David Hermelin
November 22, 2000

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of our good friend Ambassador David Hermelin.

All of us who knew David admired him deeply for his remarkable combination of energy, wit, optimism, and commitment to family, faith, and the common good. From the businesses he built to the charities he supported to the causes he championed, David demonstrated the qualities of active citizenship which have made our country the greatest democracy in history. He was a magnificent man. I will be forever grateful

for his friendship, support, and outstanding service as our Ambassador to Norway. With characteristic energy, he made impressive contributions to U.S.-Norway relations, something I saw firsthand when he persuaded me to make the first-ever visit to Norway by a sitting U.S. President in November of 1999. I will miss him very much.

Hillary and I extend our condolences to his wife, Doreen, their children, and grandchildren.

Statement on Signing the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2001

November 22, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 5633, the "District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2001."

I commend the House and Senate for passing a version of the District of Columbia appropriations bill that I can sign. I am pleased that the Majority and Minority were able to come together on this legislation under the leadership of Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District's stalwart champion. While I continue to object to the riders in the enrolled bill, some of the most highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon D.C. citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been deleted or modified from previous versions of the bill. This bill is a fair compromise.

I commend the Congress for providing virtually all of the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for Courts, Corrections, and the Offender Supervision Agency, and for the tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill fully funds the New York Avenue Metro station and provides a start on funding for brownfields remediation and economic development in Anacostia.

I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principle of home rule, including, but not limited to, provisions infringing on voting rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, abortion, implementation of the Domestic Partners Act, special education, and the Mayor's personnel authorities.

The Act also includes troubling provisions with regard to needle exchange programs in the District. While I am pleased that it does not prohibit private entities from using their own funds for needle exchange programs, the Act does retain a ban on local funds for that purpose, an infringement of "home rule." Even more objectionable is the language that prohibits the exchange of needles in large portions of the city. In the form in which it passed the House, this language would have had the practical effect of ending needle exchange programs in the District of Columbia. My Administration worked hard to remove this language from the final bill, and we appreciate the work of the conferees to make this provision less harmful and allow for those conducting needle exchange programs to adapt and continue operation. However, even though the language has been improved upon, these provisions are an encroachment on the District's prerogatives, create an unnecessary burden on the District, and could seriously disrupt current HIV prevention efforts.

The Act also prohibits the District from legislating with respect to controlled substances and from freely crafting effective programs for nonviolent, drug-dependent offenders. This provision also significantly encroaches on the District's autonomy, and undermines its ability to deal effectively with this serious problem.

The people of the District of Columbia deserve the same respect in ordering their local affairs that the people of our States enjoy. These provisions must be re-examined in the future.

Today marks an important occasion for the District of Columbia. In 1995, the District faced a severe fiscal and managerial crisis, city services were in a shambles, and the city faced deficits as far as the eye could see. Today, thanks to the leadership of Mayor Anthony Williams, the District's finances are in order, city services are being restored, and the city stands on sound financial footing. Later this year, the District will be able to certify 4 straight years of balanced budgets, with growing surpluses, paving the way for cessation of the Financial Authority and a full return to Home Rule.

For our part, we have tried to be a sure and steady friend of the residents of the District of Columbia. In January 1996, I proposed a

plan to revitalize the District as the Nation's Capital, and to improve prospects for "home rule" to succeed. The plan was designed to relieve the District of Columbia government of major financial and managerial responsibilities that were beyond its capacity and that are commonly performed by States, rather than municipalities; to invest considerable resources to improve the city's criminal justice system and infrastructure; and to strengthen its economic base.

The National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 significantly restructured the Federal-District of Columbia government relationship. The Act increased the Federal match rate for Medicaid from 50 to 70 percent; assumed certain state justice functions, including incarceration of adult felons, supervision of parolees, and financial oversight of the District's courts; relieved the city of $5 billion of unfunded pension liabilities that the District had inherited from the Federal Government in the late 1970s; and provided tax relief to District of Columbia residents and businesses. Last year, my Administration persuaded the Congress to pass further changes to the Medicaid formula, saving the District $9 million per year. The Revitalization Act implementation will save the District well over $2 billion over the next 5 years.

In addition, I signed into law $1.2 billion in Federal tax incentives over 5 years, including a wage credit to hire D.C. residents, additional small business deductions, tax exempt bond financing, a first time home buyer credit, and a zero capital gains rate. In addition to funding to implement the Revitalization Act, we have also obtained additional Federal appropriations for the District: $239 million in FY '99, $34 million in FY '00, and over $55 million in FY '01. These appropriations have been used for critical economic development initiatives, including $25 million to capitalize the National Capital Revitalization Corporation, $25 million to fund a new Metro station at New York Avenue, and funding for key infrastructure projects, management reforms, education, and public safety. I also signed into law the College Access Act, providing $17 million per year for D.C. high school students to attend out-of-state schools at in-state tuition rates.

Lastly, let me mention that since 1995, under the leadership of the Office of Management and Budget, Federal agencies on our D.C. Task Force have been involved in a range of activities designed to draw on the Federal Government's technical expertise and available Federal grants to improve the city's tax collection, education and training, housing, transportation, health care delivery, economic development, and other governmental functions. These activities are ongoing and touch upon virtually every aspect of District government.

I am proud of our support for the District, and even prouder of what the residents and government of the District have been able to accomplish. As the Congress concludes its business for the year, we look forward to working together to address other important issues affecting the District of Columbia.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 22, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5633, approved November 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106–522.

Statement on Signing the Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act of 2000

November 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign the "Health Care Fairness Act" into law. This legislation provides long overdue attention to the dramatic disparities in the incidence of disease and health care outcomes in minorities as compared to the overall population. It is unacceptable that African-American men have a higher overall cancer incidence and infant mortality rates than any other racial or ethnic group; Hispanic and Native Americans suffer much greater rates of diabetes; and Asian-American and Pacific Islanders are afflicted with extraordinarily high levels of cancer of the liver.

The legislation being enacted today authorizes over $150 million to create a new national center for research on minority health and health disparities at NIH, increases funding for research on race and health disparities at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and creates a new program to attract health disparity researchers into this critically important field. We must build on today's achievement by assuring adequate funding for these and other initiatives that will help close the health status gap in this Nation. It will make a major contribution toward eliminating these disparities by 2010—a nationwide goal we established over 2 years ago and one which must be pursued with the same rigor with which we have worked towards eliminating barriers to basic civil rights.

NOTE: The "Health Care Fairness Act," S. 1880, approved November 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106–525.

Statement on Signing the Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act of 2000

November 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1880, the "Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act of 2000." This Act will enhance biomedical and behavioral research on minority health and health disparities, support medical training for minorities and others, and improve the study and collection of data regarding minorities and other populations.

This important legislation builds on the work of my Administration, particularly the efforts of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), Donna Shalala, to develop a truly national commitment to end disparities in health through research, training, and data gathering. Under Secretary Shalala, HHS committed to eliminate disparities in health by race and ethnicity by the year 2010. Eliminating disparities will require additional research and new approaches, but in the process of addressing the health needs of our most vulnerable populations, we will improve the Nation's health care system for everyone. This Act was made possible through the bipartisan efforts of the Congress; a multiracial coalition of leaders in public health, business, education, and charitable foundations; and my Administration.

The Act creates a National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This Center will fund research programs on health disparities and minority health; support training of members of health disparity populations as researchers; and provide education loan relief for health professionals who commit themselves to perform health disparities research. The Center will also coordinate all NIH research efforts in this area. The Center promises to help all Americans who bear the burden of health disparities regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.

This legislation also authorizes the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to conduct and support activities and research to measure health disparities and identify causes and remedies. In addition, it authorizes the Health Resources and Services Administration to support research and demonstration projects to train health professionals on reducing health care disparities.

I would like to thank many individuals who helped develop and pass this landmark law, particularly Senators Kennedy, Frist, Jeffords, and Hatch, as well as Representatives Thompson, Lewis, Jackson, Jr., Watts, Norwood, Strickland, Brown, Bilirakis, Christensen, Towns, Rodriguez, Underwood, and Roybal-Allard. I also would like to acknowledge the diligent efforts of Secretary Shalala; David Satcher, the Surgeon General; Ruth Kirschstein, Principal Deputy Director of NIH; and the many others who worked tirelessly to bring this legislation forward.

The elimination of health disparities will require a comprehensive effort, involving both the Federal Government and the private sector. The Federal Government must continue to make measurable progress against diseases and conditions that are major contributors to health disparities, and our commitment to health disparities research must ensure that new knowledge

generated in federally supported laboratories and clinics benefits all of our citizens. We must also ensure that there is a diverse health care and research workforce in the future by making efforts to attract and train a generation of scientists and health care professionals who are prepared to dedicate themselves to helping eliminate health disparities.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 22, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1880, approved November 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106–525.

Statement on Signing the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000
November 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2712, the "Reports Consolidation Act of 2000." This Act, which passed with bipartisan support, provides permanent authority for Federal agencies to consolidate certain financial and performance reports into a single, comprehensive annual report.

This Act builds on the success of a pilot program started in 1994 and represents an important step in the maturity of financial management reporting by the Federal Government. An agency can now combine its audited financial statements, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act, and its performance reports, required by the Government Performance and Results Act.

These new consolidated reports will give the American people a more comprehensive and useful picture of the many important services we provide to the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 22, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2712, approved November 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106–531.

Exchange With Reporters in Thurmont, Maryland
November 23, 2000

Thanksgiving

The President. Hi, guys. Happy Thanksgiving.

Q. What are you thankful for, Mr. President?

The President. I have a lot to be thankful for this year. I've got my family here. They're all in good health; they're all doing well. I've got my two nephews here. I'm very grateful for how good the people of New York were to Hillary, and I'm very grateful the country's in good shape. I've got a lot to be grateful for.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Sir, do you think the Supreme Court will get involved in the Florida situation?

The President. I think the law on that is pretty clear, and there's no point on my commenting on that. I don't think I should comment about it.

Q. Thankful you're not in this election this year? Wish you were?

The President. I think that the less I say about this right now, the better. I just want everybody who tried to vote—legally voted—to have their votes count, including the service people—everybody. I think that's what they're trying to do, and I hope there will be time to do it. I think that the position that I've taken on this all along is, we ought to just do the right thing and enfranchise everybody that could possibly

do it but let the thing play out. There's a process under way, and the courts will do what they're going to do. That's the way it ought to be. And I don't think I should comment.

I'll tell you, I am thankful that I live in a country with enough faith in its democracy that we're all letting this thing play out. Comedy shows are having fun with it. We're all laughing about it. The two candidates seem to be in a fairly good humor about it. When I was in Asia, I had a couple of people tell me that in some countries people would be in the streets over this. Instead, we trust our system. We just have to trust it, whether we agree with it or disagree with it. Let it play out. I just hope that we don't run out of time.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. at Maple Run Golf Course. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's Radio Address
November 25, 2000

Good morning. All across America, friends and families are still savoring the joys—and the leftovers—of a bountiful Thanksgiving. This weekend also marks the traditional start of the holiday shopping season. But even as many of us head out to buy that perfect gift for those we love, millions of Americans are also extending their generosity to people they've never met.

Last year Americans gave a record $190 billion to charitable causes: to feed the hungry, immunize children, build homes, tutor immigrants, restore parks, and send disaster relief to hard-hit people all around the world. Working with America's extensive network of nonprofit and faith-based organizations, we're making a difference, but we still have more to do.

Today I'm releasing a report from the Council of Economic Advisers that examines this resurgence of charitable giving and outlines proposals to further cultivate public generosity. I'm also announcing the launch of a new $2 million privately funded initiative designed to introduce more young Americans to the rewards of charitable giving.

Both of these efforts emerged from last year's White House Conference on Philanthropy, which Hillary and I organized to showcase America's great tradition of giving. To keep the momentum going, we also formed a task force on nonprofits and governments which will soon issue a roadmap for creating innovative partnerships between nonprofit organizations and Federal agencies. We're tackling America's toughest challenges together and making the most of the American people's enduring spirit of generosity.

Now, according to the Council of Economic Advisers, charitable gifts now exceed 2 percent of our gross domestic product, the highest level of giving in nearly three decades. Sustained by a strong economy and rising incomes, charitable giving has jumped more than 40 percent since 1995. At the same time, both donors and charities have become much more sophisticated, often using the Internet for research, education, and, increasingly, to make contributions.

Overall, 70 percent of America's households made charitable contributions last year, even those who didn't have much extra to spare. In fact, half of all Americans with incomes of less than $10,000 made a charitable contribution. And as a percentage of their net wealth, families with the lowest incomes gave much more than the wealthiest. That's both humbling and inspiring, and suggests a tremendous potential for growth in charitable giving by well-to-do Americans.

This new report also reveals that people over the age of 65 are much more likely to make charitable contributions than younger people, even after accounting for differences in income and wealth. Perhaps, having earned the wisdom of a lifetime, seniors understand that the satisfaction of charitable giving cannot be measured in dollars and cents. And they know that personal generosity is an essential ingredient in the mortar that binds our entire community together.

Given this truth, how can we do a better job of engaging younger Americans in giving? We know already that they care about their

communities, because so many are volunteering for local causes. Nearly 150,000 of them have joined AmeriCorps over the past 8 years, dedicating at least a year of their lives to public service.

According to one recent study, this youthful spirit of community can be translated into a lifetime of financial support for worthy causes but only if we engage people early and teach them the importance of philanthropy. With the help and guidance of several major philanthropic organizations, we developed a national blueprint to do just that, the Youth Giving Project.

Building on the success of a program in Michigan, this grassroots initiative will train young people to identify charitable needs in their own communities, teach them how to raise and distribute money to address those needs, and build leadership skills along the way. It will be coordinated by a nonprofit coalition of experts on youth programs that can provide local groups with training materials, access to a comprehensive web site, and expert advice.

This is just a small investment with a potentially great dividend. The baby boom generation stands poised to inherit $12 trillion from the World War II generation. And it's likely their children will inherit even more. With that in mind, we need to help younger people recognize their own capacity to do good and help them discover the rewards of generosity.

In this time of prosperity and season of sharing, let's remember: When we give what we can and give it with joy, we don't just renew the American tradition of giving, we also renew ourselves.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:15 a.m. on November 24 in the Laurel Conference Room at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 24 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
November 27, 2000

Cabinet Accomplishments/Presidential Transition

The President. Let me say, first of all, I called this Cabinet meeting in part just to thank publicly the members of this Cabinet for 8 extraordinary years of service. A number of them have been with me the whole way. And for all of them, I am very grateful.

The policies we have worked on together have been very good for America. They have sparked the longest economic expansion in history. Our welfare rolls were cut in half. We have crime at a 28-year low. And more land has been protected in the lower 48 States than at any time since Theodore Roosevelt's administration almost a century ago. This is a record that all of them can be proud of, and only a small fraction of the record that they established.

Our country is now moving forward. And in the final weeks of this administration, we are committed to maintaining a steady course. That means providing a smooth transition to the next President, whether it is Vice President Gore or Governor Bush. As you know, an appropriate legal process is now underway. That process will take a few more days to play itself out. Our job is to do what we've done for 8 years now, to focus on the business at hand.

That is why I'm signing today an Executive order creating a transition coordinating council. The council will provide the President-elect's team with coordinated services, especially regarding personnel matters. This action and other efforts by the Cabinet will well ensure that we are as prepared as we can possibly be for an orderly transition to the new administration. Meanwhile, we will be doing what we can to get ready when Congress comes back to town in a few days.

Thank you very much.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, do you think Governor Bush was presumptuous in declaring victory last night?

The President. Well, I don't think I should comment on what he or the Vice President says. There is an election challenge. Both of them

have litigation involved. At least one case involves the U.S. Supreme Court, and the election challenge will play itself out.

I will say what I have said from the first day. In all this interplay, it is easy to lose what is really important, which is the integrity of the voter—every single vote. On election day, every person who voted had a vote that counted just as much as mine. So they have to sort that out in Florida—whose vote should be counted; can every vote be counted; if every vote can't be counted, is there a good reason why you're not counting that vote?

And I think those are the things that will be resolved in this election challenge, and I think we just have to let—both sides are very well represented, and they all both have litigation, and we'll just watch it play itself out.

Q. Mr. President, so you don't accept Florida's certification of George Bush as the winner?

The President. It's not up for me to accept or reject. There is a legal process here. Both of them have filed lawsuits, and the Supreme Court of Florida, when they issued their opinion a couple of days ago, or a few days ago, actually anticipated a challenge. And if you read the opinion, they explicitly acknowledged that it was almost a certainty. So let's just watch this happen. It will be over soon, and we will be ready for the transition.

Presidential Transition

Q. Mr. President, to what extent were you, or was anyone in the White House staff, involved in the decision by the General Services Administration to withhold transition funding from the Bush/Cheney team?

The President. I was not involved in it at all, and as far as I know, no one else here was. But there is a procedure that—we actually went back and reviewed the congressional deliberations on this legislation. And I think the General Services Administration believes that it cannot offer transition assistance to both of them, which is what I would otherwise be inclined to do.

I think they're doing what they think the law requires. But I personally—I can't answer for anyone else in the White House, but I was personally not involved in it. I think they're trying to do what they think the law requires while this election challenge plays itself out. It won't be long now.

Vice President Gore

Q. Have you spoken to the Vice President at all, or——

The President. I talked to him on Thanksgiving, called him and wished him and his family a happy Thanksgiving.

Q. But he hasn't called you for advice or anything?

The President. No.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. The Executive order on the Presidential transition is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks in a Meeting With Metropolitan Law Enforcement Leaders

November 28, 2000

Well, first of all, you guys look good on the steps here. [*Laughter*] Maybe you should just stay all day. It would be great.

I want to thank you for all the help you've given us these last 8 years, in all my many movements and oftentimes in very crowded times of the day and difficult circumstances. And I'm very, very grateful to all of you, and before I left, I just wanted to have a chance to get everybody together and say thank you.

I've had a wonderful time these last 8 years. And I was able to do my job in no small measure because of what you did, and I hope you'll always be glad that you did it.

I thank you very, very much. Merry Christmas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. on the steps of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Remarks at the White House Conference on Culture and Diplomacy
November 28, 2000

The President. Well, thank you very much, and welcome. I want to, first of all, say how honored we are to have all of you here. This is a remarkable assemblage, and I want to thank Hillary and Secretary Albright and all the others who have worked so hard to put this meeting together today. And I thank those of you who have come from around America and from around the world to be here. And I thank, especially, Senator Leahy and Representative Leach and the members of the diplomatic community who have come.

This is a topic that I care a lot about. I think I should begin by saying that Secretary Albright just spoke to you eloquently, wearing a bolo from the Navajo Nation. I spent—I was just, not very long ago, on a Navajo reservation in northern New Mexico. But it represents a very distinctive and important part of America's culture, the first Americans.

This conference, I think, comes at a rather pivotal time in human history, because we all think we know what we mean when we talk about cultural diplomacy. You know, you send your artists to us; we send our musicians to you. We all make nice, and everybody feels better. But the truth is that the world is also full of conflict. Indeed, I was seeing Mr. Lithgow out there, and he may have thought that in the last 2 weeks he has returned to the "Third Rock From the Sun." [*Laughter*]

Let me say what I mean by this. The end of the cold-war, bipolar world and the emergence of a global information society have given rise to two apparently contradictory forces. And what we came here to talk about sort of falls in the middle.

First, you see, as we all get to find our own way at the end of the cold war, the emergence of a huge number of different racial, religious, ethnic, and tribal conflicts within and across national lines that might commonly be called culture wars, if you use culture in a broader sense and not just the sense that most of us use the word.

And secondly, you see how, if they're having a crisis in Russia or an earthquake in China, immediately we all know about it, all around the world, because we live in a global information society. And that means that our musicians, our artists, our movies—particularly here in America, which has been an entertainment capital of the world—go across the world rapidly. And other countries worry about whether we're going to blur all the distinctions between our various cultures and render them meaningless so that they won't have independent power to inform, to enlighten, to enrich our own societies and those around the world. Now, these are not exactly new questions, but they are being felt with increasing force because of the end of the bipolar cold-war world and the emergence of the most globalized society the Earth has ever known.

You can put me, as usual, in the optimistic camp. I still believe that the role of culture, in the sense that brings us here today, will be fundamentally positive, because it will teach us to understand our differences and affirm our common humanity. And that is, after all, the great trick in the world today. Since we don't, you know, have to draw sort of a line in the dust and say you're on one side or the other, the way we did for 40 years after the end of World War II, it is very important that we understand and appreciate our differences and then recognize that, as important as they are, somehow we have to find a way to elevate our common humanity.

That's where cultural diplomacy comes in. And I have certainly benefited from it, in terms of my life as President, probably more than any person who ever held this office, in no small measure because of the time in which I was privileged to serve. But I can think of, just in

my lifetime, a few examples I might mention that I think are important.

I think it's not an exaggeration to say that Glenn Miller and other American jazz bands had a pivotal effect on the morale of our European Allies in World War II. I think it's probably not wrong to say that Elvis Presley did more to win the cold war when his music was smuggled into the former Soviet Union than he did as a GI serving in Germany. [*Laughter*] I think it's worth noting that on the morning of Poland's first free election in 1989, voters woke up to find their whole country plastered with posters of my favorite movie, depicting Gary Cooper in "High Noon" with a Solidarity pin where his sheriff's badge should have been—[*laughter*]—and the gun in his holster airbrushed out. One look and the people knew that the time had come to stand for freedom, nonviolently.

When I was on my state visit to the Czech Republic, Václav Havel took me to the jazz club where he used to gather and plot the Velvet Revolution. And I played with some of the Czech musicians who had been allies of his in that great struggle.

A few years ago in Bosnia, we needed to find a way to teach children how to avoid landmines, so we choose the universal medium of Superman comics. During the darkest days of that war, when books were burned and libraries were shelled, American artists, authors, and performers like the conductor Charles Ansbacher, who is in our audience, traveled to Sarajevo to show their Bosnian colleagues that they were not forgotten.

Even then, cultural diplomacy was a giant step ahead of traditional diplomacy. In 1992, when the time finally came that we could reach out to a democratic South Africa, our path there was forged by the Dance Theater of Harlem.

So cultural diplomacy does have the power to penetrate our common humanity. And I say that not just in terms of the stars but in terms of the way people generally feel. And I was recently on our trip to Nigeria; the First Lady of Nigeria dragged me out onto the dance floor to dance to Nigerian music. And when I was in India, I went to a little village in Rajasthan—Nayla—and the village women got me in the middle of their dancing, and they showered me with thousands of petals of flowers. And I understood, in a way that I never could have read from a book, how they related to the world and what role music and the arts had in their lives.

So I think this is very important. I also don't buy the fact that we know more about each other's culture means that we're all going to be diluted. I think that American culture has been enriched by the rest of the world, and hopefully we've been a positive force on the rest of the world.

In our country, we have the architecture of I.M. Pei or the plays of David Hwang, who is with us today and who reminds us that American art, in many ways, is the art of the rest of the world. Doctor Sam-Ang Sam and his wife, Chan Moly Sam, have also joined us today. They escaped from Cambodia during the reign of the Khmer Rouge and brought to America the gift of Cambodian court dance. It was threatened in the land of its birth, and it is now part of our culture, as well. With the support of foundations like Rockefeller, Ford, and the NEA, they are now returning home to introduce a new generation of Cambodians to their old culture.

I say this to point out that our country really does benefit from this sort of cultural interchange, and I think we can benefit others if, from time to time, we provide a safe haven for cultural preservation. I think this is more important now than it was in the past because of the way the world works, as I have said. I know there are some people who believe that our culture has become too pervasive in the rest of the world. I've encountered this anxiety in every part of the world, from people who don't share our political system's views to those who just worry about the trade impact of American movies or records or other kinds of—or CD's. Many people are absolutely sure that because of globalization, pretty soon their children will be speaking American English, every television will be tuned to MTV, and every French movie will have a happy ending. [*Laughter*]

And in some parts of the world, these kind of fears have fueled a lot of bitterness about the process of globalization. But we can't turn this globalization off. You know, people want to know more about each other. And now they have the means to do it. The Internet is the most powerful means of communication in all of human history.

And I think that globalization, in the end, will be a force for diversity, not uniformity. A week ago I was in Vietnam, where many people are wondering how to open their doors while

protecting their traditions. I pointed out that globalization is not just bringing the world into Vietnam, but it also is bringing Vietnam to the rest of the world. Films about life in Vietnam are winning awards over the globe. Paintings by Vietnamese artists command fortunes at international art shows. Fortunately, we were able to find some wonderful ones in Vietnam that don't yet require a fortune to buy. [*Laughter*] Old Vietnamese poems are published in America in English, Vietnamese, and in an ancient script that never before has come off a printing press.

Consider the Nobel Prize in literature, for those who think the world is becoming homogenized. Of the first 80 prizes given out after 1900, only 5 went to authors outside Europe and North America. Seven of the last 20 prizes have gone to Asian, Latin American, and African authors, including our panelist Wole Soyinka, not simply because the good people of the Nobel Committee are trying to cast a wider net but because we actually do know more about one another than ever before.

And what about this business about language being homogenized? Well, if you get on the Internet, you will find people all over the world chatting in Welsh, downloading fonts in Bengali, ordering courses in intensive Cherokee. With advances in translation and voice recognition technology, before long it will be possible for people to communicate instantaneously on the Internet or even on the telephone in their own languages. Thanks to the Internet, people with similar interests and outlooks can now be dispersed around the world and still form a community. I tell somebody all the time, I've got a cousin in Arkansas who regularly plays chess with a man in Australia. I don't know how they work out the time change, but this is the kind of thing that is happening. And it will open the avenues for more cultural, even subcultural, diplomacy.

Now, we have some obligations here. We have to do more to close the digital divide so that the poor of the world can participate more readily in this sort of cultural interchange, and we are working very hard on that. We also have to work hard in America to make sure that our contributions reflect the diversity of our culture. We have supported public/private partnerships in recent years, for example, that have sent Andy Warhol exhibits to the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Navajo textiles to Latin America, and the art exchange between regional museums in America and France that Elizabeth Rohatyn has recently organized.

And I do want to support the legislation that has been introduced by Representative Leach, who is here, and Senator Biden to create an endowment to support State Department cultural exchange programs, on top of the funds we're already providing. This will become more and more important.

So I've already said more than I meant to, but I care a lot about this subject. I think you should see this for what it is. It's an opportunity for us to learn more about each other, to understand each other better, to reaffirm our common humanity, and in so doing, not to blur the cultural lines but to highlight them in a way that promote peace and reconciliation and, therefore, put a real roadblock in the path of those who would like a 21st century dominated by culture wars, instead of cultural celebrations.

Thank you very much.

Hillary has to go, and we're giving her a cultural excused absence. She's going to sign copies of her new book. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Secretary of State Madeline Albright made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, I think we should basically talk about the first issue that I mentioned, which is preserving diverse cultures in a global economy. I don't buy the argument that we're all going to become homogenized, but I do believe that nations and groups within nations have to work hard to protect their cultures. So I would like to ask you, Highness, to make a few remarks on this subject and thank you for your work.

[*Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, made brief remarks. The discussion then continued.*]

The President. If I could just follow up a little bit on the Middle East to illustrate your point. One of the most successful things that's been done in the Middle East in the last 10 years is this Seeds of Peace program, which brings together Israeli children with children from all the Arab societies surrounding it. And they do things together; they work together. And if you talk to these kids, you know, the sea change in their attitudes that have been affected about each other, and their understandings of one another because of the way they have lived

and worked together, even for brief periods of time—often, I might add, in the United States; they come here a lot and spend time here—is really stunning.

And the flip side of that, to make a particular cultural point, is the profound alienation which occurs when people believe that their cultural symbols are off limits, one to the other, and when even sometimes—in the case of the Palestinian textbooks, what they say about the Israelis is almost designed to create a cultural divide that will maintain solidarity within the society but then makes it harder and harder to create peace and also maximizes misunderstanding.

The one thing that I think ought to be thought about, in view of all these cultural conflicts that I mentioned earlier around the world, is that the most dangerous thing that can happen in trying to—if you're trying to preserve peace and get people to make progress—is when both sides feel like perfect victims, and therefore, every bad thing that happens they believe happened on purpose. They cannot ever admit the possibility of accidents. People do screw up in politics. So bad things sometimes happen not by design. But if you believe that—but if you see this, you realize how desperately we need some cultural coming together, some means of reaffirmation. And so anyway, the Middle East is a classic example, in both good and bad ways, of the point you just made.

I'd like to call next on Rita Dove, who was our Poet Laureate a couple of years ago, and she was a Fulbright Scholar in Germany. She's lived in Israel; she's lived in Ireland and who knows where else—I think France. And I think she has a unique sort of perspective on this. So I wanted to give you a chance to say whatever is on your mind about the subject.

[*Ms. Dove made brief remarks.*]

The President. I don't think I can improve on that. I would like to now ask Yo-Yo Ma to make a few remarks. But before I do, I want to say how much I personally appreciate all the times we've shared these last 8 years and the fact that you have chosen—even though many people believe you're the greatest living classical musician, you have chosen to spend an enormous part of your life in the act of cultural diplomacy as a part of your work, playing with Chinese musicians, with Kalahari bush people, or something that I particularly appreciate, your work with Mark O'Connor on the "Appalachian Suite," which I think is one of the most important pieces of American music in many, many years, uniting the strains of classical music with American hill country music from—which is an important part of my heritage. So you've actually, in a way, made a life of cultural diplomacy, without calling it that, and I'm very grateful to you.

[*Cellist Yo-Yo Ma made brief remarks. The discussion then continued.*]

The President. Well, first of all, I agree with what you said, and I think your remarks lead me naturally into the next question, which is, what is the responsibility of the United States, first of all, to promote our culture around the world and to help to deal with something that His Highness, the Aga Khan, mentioned in the beginning, which is that there are a lot of countries with which we might have cultural exchanges whose artists, whose musicians, whose craftspeople literally can't make a living doing what they do best? And that's something that I think I'm going to think a lot more about. There are no royal courts to support such people anymore—[*laughter*]—and not every country has an economy which will support them.

So I would like to call now on Joan Spero to speak because she has had an unusual career. She was our Under Secretary of State in my first term. She's been a vice president of American Express and is now president of a major foundation and, I think, has a unique perspective on the roles that private foundations, big corporations, and the United States Government can and should play in this whole area.

So, Joan, would you mind?

[*Joan E. Spero, president, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, made brief remarks.*]

The President. That was very good. Let me just say one sort of followup point on that. I really believe that our Government and our foundation community have an obligation to try to deal with this point that you made earlier about the capacity of people in developing countries to make a living at their art, whatever it is.

And you mentioned that, but there are all kinds of things we can do to help people market their music, their acting skills, their crafts work, their whatever, in ways that get—first of all, bring them to the attention of a larger audience and, secondly, get more of whatever income can

be generated from their activity back to them in their communities than would otherwise be the case if they were—we waited for traditional things to develop. And you know, I think this is very important.

One of the things that I have learned because I've had the chance to be President and go to so many countries and listen to so many people is that most of us who get where we are are there in part by accident, and there is somebody else with a heck of a lot of talent somewhere else that never even gets noticed.

And I think it's very, very important that we think of how we can use our money and organizational and media access capacities to bring the largest number of people possible to the attention of the larger world, because I think that has a very important diplomatic impact. I think that the more people from otherwise isolated groups and cultures are in contact in a positive way with the rest of the world, the less likely we are to have debilitating wars and conflicts and isolation. So that's something I want to think some more about.

I wonder if any of you on the panel or maybe Congressman Leach, who is a sponsor of this bill, or Senator Leahy, if any of you have any specific—specific points you want to make about things we ought to be doing here before we wrap up this section? Anybody else? Wole?

[*Wole Soyinka, recipient, 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature, made brief remarks. The discussion then continued.*]

The President. Maybe I will just close by following up on what you said, Wole. I believe that this should definitely be a two-way street; we ought to be putting out and taking in here. And I don't have much else to say. I never learn anything when I'm talking, only when I'm listening. [*Laughter*] Once in a great while when you're talking, you learn something because you didn't really know what you thought until you brought it out, but not very—[*laughter*].

I want to thank all of you for being here. This is quite a luminous group we have in the White House today, and we might have had any number of you also on this panel. And so I want to urge you to please fully participate in the remainder of events. Please make the most of it and try to come out of this with as many specific areas of concern as you can.

I thank His Highness, the Aga Khan, for starting out, because he said, "Look, here are three things you need to really work at, and I think we need to be thinking about this." And I will do my best to put it in the position to be acted upon in the weeks and months ahead. And again I want to thank Senator Leahy and Representative Leach for being here, because they're—along with Senator Hillary—are our sort of lines of continuity to the future American Government. [*Laughter*]

But this was very interesting to me and quite moving, and I think we ought to close by giving our panelists another hand. [*Applause*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actor John Lithgow; President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic; Charles A. Ansbacher, principal guest conductor of the Sarajevo Philharmonic and conductor laureate of the Colorado Springs Orchestra; Stella Obasanjo, wife of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; Sam-Ang Sam, musician, and his wife, Chan Moly Sam, dancer, Apsara Ensemble; Elizabeth Rohatyn, co-founder, French Regional and American Museum Exchange; and violinist Mark O'Connor. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of First Lady Hillary Clinton, Secretary Albright, Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, Mr. Soyinka, Ms. Dove, Mr. Ma, Ms. Spero, and Minister of Culture Giovanna Melandri of Italy.

Remarks at an "Invitation to the White House" Reception

November 28, 2000

Thank you very much, and good evening. Hillary and I are delighted to welcome all of you here, and I want to especially thank Carter Brown and Carl Anthony, who I will recognize shortly. I also want to thank Neil Horstman, the White House Historical Association, and the

White House Curator, Betty Monkman, for their work to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the White House; and to recognize the members of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House for the renovation and the refurbishment which they have made possible.

I hope that you've all had the opportunity to go on the short tour just before we started—I understand you have—and to see again what an extraordinary place the American people's house really is.

For two centuries now, the American people have looked at the White House as a symbol of our Nation's leadership, strength, and continuity; also a symbol of progress and change. The White House wears its history proudly but is forever growing and changing, along with America. If you think about the history of this room, it's illustrative.

The East Room began life as Abigail Adams' laundry room when she moved into the half-finished house in 1801. A few years later, Thomas Jefferson laid out maps and books with Meriwether Lewis to plot the expedition that forever changed the map of America. In this room, Abraham Lincoln lay in state. In this room, a century later, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act.

Hillary and I have had our own opportunities to add to the history of this room, for here we hosted the state dinner for Nelson Mandela, the first President of a free, multiracial South Africa. Appropriately, as we enter the new century, the East Room also hosted the first-ever White House cybercast. And just today we held here another in a series of White House conferences, this one on culture and diplomacy. The others have ranged in topics from the new economy to early childhood development in the brain.

Hillary has led the way in meeting our responsibility during these years to preserve and enhance the White House and its collections. As over 1 ½ million people come here every year, Hillary has taken extraordinary steps to ensure that they experience the best of our past and the promise of our shared future.

She personally oversaw the restoration of several of the public rooms and helped to build and diversify the collection of American art. She established the beautiful sculpture garden in the Jackie Kennedy Garden downstairs and worked with the White House Historical Association to raise a lasting endowment to preserve the White House and its collections. And as we now know, she somehow found the time to chronicle our lives here and how the White House works and makes our lives possible in "An Invitation to the White House."

I hope her book will give millions of our fellow Americans who may never come here a better sense of what is so special about the house, what history tells us about the strength of our Nation, and about the remarkable people who actually make this place work, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

The history of this house is the history of brave men and women, from John and Abigail Adams and the men and women who served them, down to the present day. As the White House enters its third century, I hope that all of those who come after us will find, as Hillary and I have, enormous sustenance and strength in the power of this great place.

I must say, it has been an honor to live here, and I can honestly say that there is never a time when the helicopter lands on the South Lawn that I still don't feel the thrill of just being here, of being able to walk in this place, visit the rooms, and relive, as I have so often, the history of our country and what happened in various places in this grand old house. So I thank you all for that.

Now let me welcome J. Carter Brown, who has been a valued artistic adviser to us and, indeed, to every First Family since the Kennedy administration.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to J. Carter Brown, chairman, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; historian Carl Anthony; and Neil Horstman, executive vice president, White House Historical Association. The First Lady's book, entitled "An Invitation to the White House: At Home With History," was published by Simon and Schuster. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks at a Reception for the United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams

November 29, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, Hillary and I are delighted to welcome all of you here. And I want to thank Secretary Shalala and General McCaffrey for being part of our Olympic delegation to Sydney. I thank the United States Olympic Committee President Bill Hybl for being here, and the Olympians who are here with me, who will come up in a moment.

I'm also grateful, I might say, to the people of Australia, who did a wonderful job in welcoming our American athletes and organizing these Olympics. And really, I asked all the team here so that I could forgive them for completely destroying my sleep habits for several weeks during the Olympics. [*Laughter*] Like so many Americans, I was thrilled by the accomplishments of these remarkable teams.

I have often said that it seems to me the Olympics capture our imagination not just because we love athletics and love competition but because we think the Olympics and Paralympics games work the way life ought to work: people work together; if you work hard and play by the rules, you get rewarded; you're evaluated regardless of race or gender or station in life; individuals and teams find success and wind up winning just by making the efforts.

The summer games in Australia were no different than the ones before them. America did very well, once again, with 40 gold medals, 97 overall, more than any other country. And our spirit was put on display there, as one athlete after another overcame tremendous odds to achieve victory, athletes like our diver, Laura Wilkinson, who captured the gold medal just 3 months after breaking three bones in her right foot; Lenny Krayzelburg, who came here from the Ukraine in 1989 and just a decade later won all three of the backstroke events; the women's softball team lost three games in a row and still came from behind to win the gold medal; and of course, there was the minor matter of a little farm boy from Wyoming, Rulon Gardner, who defeated Alexandre Karelin.

The Sydney games broke new barriers, opening gates of competition to people once left behind. More than 4,000 athletes, representing a record 122 countries, competed in this year's Paralympic games. Americans like sprinter Marlon Shirley and cyclist Pam Fernandes proved that disability is no barrier to success.

We also reached a milestone for female athletes. A hundred years ago the first women competed at the Paris summer Olympics. There were 19, and one, the golfer Margot Abbot, became the first American woman to win an American Olympic gold medal.

This year, in the first Olympics of the new millennium, women comprised a recordbreaking 42 percent of the participants. And for the first time, women competed in the pole vault, water polo, and weightlifting. I might say, I watched the women's weightlifting and water polo competition with great interest, and after it was over, I couldn't tell which one was rougher. [*Laughter*] The final American medal of this year's Olympic games went to a woman, Emily deRiel, in the first-ever women's pentathlon. You pushed the limits of the human body and the human spirit.

Every Olympian stands in the starting blocks alone, of course, but no one wins alone. No one wins without family, friends, coaches, and others who have helped you make the most of your God-given ability. I hope that you, each and every one of you, in your own way, will take some time to help others make the most of their God-given abilities.

And let me just put in one plug for one public interest matter that I care a lot about. One of the great ironies of the present day is that as Americans fall more and more in love with athletes and athletics, more and more of our young people are participating by sitting on the sidelines or on the couch only. More and more of our young children are overweight and out of shape, and they are putting their health, long-term, at risk. We have got to turn this around.

This morning Secretary Shalala and our Education Secretary, Dick Riley, led a meeting with our partners to explore the most effective way to implement a report's recommendation that was issued to me today about this—and you may have read about it in the newspaper—more

and more young people doing less and less exercise mean more and more overweight. It's going to take a team effort for us to turn this around.

Not every young person can win an Olympic medal or even make the Olympics teams, but every young person has a body that is a gift from God that ought to be maximized in terms of health and capacity. So I ask for your help in that.

Let me just say one final thing. For some of you, your Olympic moment may be now just a wonderful memory in your lives. For others, it is just the beginning of a long and illustrious career in your sport. But for all of you, your training and your achievement will bring a lifetime of benefits. You now know what you can do if you do your best. I hope that these benefits will accrue to you, your community, your country, and the rest of our world.

We must always remember that no matter how many records we break or how fast we run or how high we jump, there are still no limits to our quest for excellence—the Olympic motto from the beginning: *citius, altius, fortius,* swifter, higher, stronger. I hope you will bring that to the work of citizenship as well as to your competition, now and forever.

Congratulations. We are very, very proud of you.

[*At this point, U.S. Olympic Committee President Bill Hybl, International Olympic Committee Vice President Anita L. DeFrantz, and members of the Olympic team presented gifts to the President.*]

The President. Thank you. Let me—I don't think I did this right, but the Olympians who gave me the award were Stacy Dragila and Lenny Krayzelburg and Marlon Shirley and Pam Fernandes, and they represent this whole team. And they also made me a little warmer out here today. [*Laughter*] So I want to thank them for their remarks. I thank all of you for being here. We either are or already have taken a picture with the whole team, and then we're going to go inside and let everybody look at the White House. But thank you very, very much, all of you. Welcome again, and happy holidays.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Greco-Roman wrestler Rulon Gardner and pole vaulter Stacy Dragila, U.S. Olympic team; and Greco-Roman wrestler Alexandre Karelin, Russian Olympic team.

Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

November 29, 2000

Today I join millions of Americans in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a landmark civil rights law that opens the doors to education and success for more than 6 million American children each year. As we recognize this milestone, we know that education is the key to our children's future, and it is the IDEA that ensures all children with disabilities have access to a free, appropriate public education. We have seen tremendous progress over the past 25 years—students with disabilities are graduating from high school, completing college, and entering the competitive workforce in record numbers—and we must continue this progress over the next 25 years and beyond.

The benefits of the IDEA stretch far beyond just those with disabilities. The new technologies and teaching methods developed to assist students with disabilities are improving education for all students. Three-quarters of children with disabilities are learning in classrooms alongside their non-disabled peers, contributing to the diversity that is one of America's greatest strengths. This level of success would not be possible without the dedicated involvement of parents and educators who are committed to a strong educational system for all children, and I salute their dedication and accomplishments.

In this time of record prosperity, with more opportunities for success than ever before, we must ensure that all of our children have the

education that will allow them to go to college, get good jobs, and play active roles in their communities. America's ongoing commitment to this principle, embodied in the IDEA, is both an economic and moral imperative for our future.

Statement Announcing Negotiations on a Comprehensive Bilateral Free Trade Agreement With Chile

November 29, 2000

The United States of America (USA) and Chile have agreed to start negotiations on a comprehensive bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The FTA will build on the progress that has been made by the U.S.-Chile Joint Commission on Trade and Investment that was established during President Clinton's state visit to Chile in April 1998. This endeavor reflects our mutual commitment to advancing free and open trade and investment in the Americas and around the world.

The USA and Chile are both strong supporters of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations. The negotiation of a bilateral free trade agreement between us will provide further impetus for the FTAA negotiations. The United States and Chile reaffirm their strong commitment to the multilateral trading system and the launch of a new round in 2001. The FTA will include labor and environmental provisions along the lines of the U.S.-Jordan FTA.

I have directed Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky to assign a high priority to advancing negotiations for an FTA.

Statement on the Death of Henry B. Gonzalez

November 29, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Congressman Henry Gonzalez.

Congressman Gonzalez was a trailblazer and a leader for all of Texas. From his election to the San Antonio city council and the Texas Senate to his successful career in Congress, Henry spent more than 40 years serving his State and his country. He was the first Hispanic to serve in the Texas State Senate in more than 100 years and the first Mexican-American elected from Texas to serve in Congress.

As chairman of the House Banking Committee, Congressman Gonzalez championed the issues of America's working families, fighting tirelessly for economic justice, civil rights, banking reform, and affordable housing. His work over the decades was recognized with countless honors and awards, including the 1994 John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage award. Henry will forever be remembered as a man of conviction and humility who devoted his life to lifting people up and building bridges of understanding.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Bertha, his children, and his family and friends.

Remarks on the Anniversary of the Brady Handgun and Violence Prevention Act

November 30, 2000

Thank you very much. It's ironic; I might say that I was not able to come and receive the award from Jim and Sarah because I was at Sharm al-Sheikh in Egypt, trying to stop a different kind of shooting. And I'm delighted and honored to receive it today.

I want to thank Secretary Summers for his work and the Treasury Under Secretary for Enforcement, Jim Johnson; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Director, Brad Buckles. I can't say enough about what Janet Reno and her Deputy Attorney General, Eric Holder, have done over these years to forge a serious partnership with local law enforcement and to move beyond rhetoric to real policies that would work to make America a safer place.

I want to thank the people here from Handgun Control and the Million Mom March and the other gun safety organizations, and the leaders from the religious community and the National Council of Black Churches, the American Jewish Congress, and law enforcement. And of course, especially, I want to thank Jim and Sarah for all these years of courage and determination.

A few years ago, I gave Jim the Medal of Freedom, and not very long ago we actually named the White House briefing room in his honor. But no honor can possibly repay Jim and Sarah Brady for what they have done to give America a safer future. And I'm very grateful to them.

I want to say, Secretary Summers said that before he became Treasury Secretary, he knew about the economy, but he didn't know much about the law enforcement responsibilities of the Treasury Department. But actually, the work required to have an impact on both challenges is not all that different. People ask me all the time; they say, "You had such a brilliant economic team, you know—Summers, Rubin, Sperling, Bentsen—what great new idea did you bring to Washington, to economic policy management?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*]

We brought arithmetic back to Washington, and you know, 2 and 2 is 4 again. [*Laughter*] And miraculously, the deficit went down, and interest rates went down, and the economy—what do I mean by that? Former Governor of New York Mario Cuomo used to say we campaign in poetry, but we must govern in prose, which is a fancy way of saying ideas matter and policies matter, and rhetoric becomes less important than actually what you do and whether it has a solid foundation in fact. So when I say arithmetic, it's really a shorthand way of saying we got back to clear-headed, fact-based economic policymaking.

Well, the same thing is true when it comes to criminal justice and safe streets. Most people who run for office know that they will be all right as long as they talk tough and as long as they say, "Show me another bill to raise the penalties, and I will vote for it." And because there are all kinds of countervailing pressures out there, if you actually want to do something, as we have seen, and because Washington is a long way from the streets of almost every city, except the one in which we live, people can get elected and stay elected, from the White House and the Congress, by having the right poetry, even if there is no prose.

And that was essentially the problem, in my judgment, with Federal criminal justice policy. I was—the first elected office I ever held was attorney general; 24 years ago this January I became attorney general of my State. And to me, this was always serious business, and I never believed that there was necessarily a liberal or a conservative position. It seemed to me that we ought to do what would work to protect the lives of our people, to give our police officers the tools they need to do the job, to empower community organizations, and to do what makes sense.

So we started a serious debate almost 8 years ago now about what it would take to make America safer. It was a genuine and honest debate, and like all debates, it has been marked by a conflict and often, I think, by people who forget about the arithmetic of crime control and safe streets.

Jim and Sarah and so many of you had been battling for the Brady bill for 7 years. The vast majority of the American people supported it, but we all know why it wasn't law. And I have

pled guilty before to this, so let me plead guilty again. In 1982, when I was running for Governor in my State—and I had been elected in '78 and defeated in the Reagan landslide in '80 and then trying to get reelected—I endorsed the Brady bill—1982, before it was called the Brady bill.

I said, "You know, we ought to have a 3-day waiting period. We ought to do background checks." And I sparked the awfullest firestorm; you can imagine how popular that was in Arkansas in 1982. [*Laughter*] And I wimped out, just like a lot of other people have. And I got elected Governor, and I went on and did my business, and we did a lot of good things, in education, in the economy, and other things. But I never quite got over it.

And I realized that if I became President, I would have a chance to talk to the Nation about these issues in a way that no one else could and that we had a chance, because of the work that Jim and Sarah had done, to actually have an impact and to get this done. And obviously, the votes in Congress were there to pass it. But it wasn't just about Congress passing the law and my signing it. We also had a genuine discussion, a serious effort to think about not what the poetry of safe rhetoric, when it comes to crime, is but what the prose of hard work would be.

One of the main reasons I asked Janet Reno to be Attorney General is that she had been one of the most innovative prosecutors in a big, difficult environment in the United States. Hillary's brother had worked as a public defender in one of the drug courts that she set up, that diverted thousands of people from prison who were first-time, nonviolent drug offenders, but also helped the crime rate to go down because they were people who got off drugs, and if they didn't, then they had to go to prison. And now under her leadership, we've helped set up hundreds and hundreds of these drug courts across America—another part of this serious debate about what it really takes to make America a safer place.

And we've had a world of help. We've had great people in the United States Congress, like Senator Joe Biden and many others. We've had law enforcement officials, community leaders, clergies, and moms joining hands. So this is a safer country than it was 8 years ago. Now the cynics say, "Well, the crime rate always goes down when the economy improves." That's true. But if you look at past trends, the crime rate has gone down more this time and gun crime, as you heard, down 35 percent, because of the other things that were done.

The Brady law—we finished the first 100,000 police ahead of schedule and under budget, and we're now in the process of putting another 50,000 police on the street in the highest crime neighborhoods in the country. It is something that I hope will be continued.

We also had, after the Brady law and the crime bill, in addition to 100,000 police, the ban on assault weapons and support for the most innovative local crime-fighting strategies to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. And one of the things I'm really proud of in our education budget is, we've gone from funding zero to 800,000 kids in after-school programs in America in the last 3 years. And if this education budget passes when the Congress comes back next week, we'll double that. And make no mistake about it, that's also a profoundly important element of this whole debate.

So America is a different place than it was 8 years ago, in many areas, but certainly in the area of crime: crime down 8 years in a row, for the first time ever, the lowest overall rate in 26 years; the lowest murder rate in 33 years. In addition to the prevention measures that I mentioned, Federal prosecutions are up, as well. And today there is more good news. According to the latest figures, the Brady bill has now stopped more than 611,000 felons, fugitives, and domestic abusers from buying guns.

Now, the opponents of the Brady bill, who are still alive and well, said at the time that it would be an enormous burden on hunters and sport shooters, law-abiding citizens that wanted weapons in self-defense, and it wouldn't make a lick of difference. But after all these years, we now know nobody's missed a day in the deer woods, nobody's missed a sport-shooting contest, and it sure made a difference. It made 611,000 differences. That means more children are alive; more police officers are alive; more citizens are alive; fewer people wounded like Jim.

I'll never forget going to Chicago one day to do an event on this, and we did it near a trauma center where most of the people there were young people who were victims of gunshot wounds. And the speaker there was a local Chicago policeman who went through a very, very dangerous tour in Vietnam and never got a nick,

and had 11 bullets in his body because of his service in the streets of Chicago. I'll never forget that guy as long as I live, standing there with all those young kids that were going to spend the rest of their lives in wheelchairs.

Now, this is the record. But I want to say two things as you think about the future and I return to the role of vocal citizen. It's already been said, but I want to emphasize it again. This country is still too dangerous for our children. The crime rate is still too high. The level of violence we put up with is still unacceptable. Thirty thousand Americans are lost to gunfire a year, about 10 kids every day. That's down from 13. That's really good, but it's still 10.

So nobody believes America is as safe as it should be. And if I could go back to the economic analogy, I have said for the last year the American people ought to set big goals because the country is in good shape. And economically, I think one of our goals ought to be to get the country out of debt for the first time since 1835, because that will keep interest rates down and keep the economy going and help the police do their jobs for safer streets. But I think that we ought to say in this area that we do not intend to stop working until America is the safest big country in the world. We do not have to accept—[*applause*].

Now, I want to talk a little today about what I think the next steps should be, because I think that's the way we should mark the anniversary of the Brady law every year. Every year I think we ought to gather—and when I'm not President anymore, we ought to do it anyway, and I hope you'll have a friendly forum in which to do it here, but if you don't, go somewhere else—[*laughter*]—and measure where you are and where you want to go.

First, we have to make law enforcement more effective in this area. So today I'm asking Attorney General Reno and Secretary Summers to build on the success of the national insta-check background system to develop a new system to enhance enforcement of the gun laws by notifying State and local law enforcement officials when felons and other restricted individuals try to buy illegal guns. We should be notifying them immediately, something that we haven't been doing.

Second, even as we work hard to keep criminals from getting guns through the front door of a gun shop, we should do even more to lock the back door by cracking down on illegal gun traffickers. An enormous percentage of these illegal gun sales are done by a relatively small number of people.

Secretary Summers just spoke of the national initiative we started 4 years ago, to build on the success of cities like Boston, in tracing guns seized from young criminals. Today I got the third annual report from that initiative, detailed findings on over 64,000 crime guns recovered by law enforcement and sent to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms for tracing. The data paints a clear picture of where juveniles and criminals are getting their guns, how they're getting them, and what kind of guns they're getting. It shows that kids and guns continue to present a serious crime problem; about 45 percent of all crime guns were recovered from young people.

Now, ATF and its State and local partners are putting all of this trace information together so that we can identify the gun traffickers and get them off the streets. In the last year alone, ATF initiated almost 900 criminal trafficking investigations. And now we're going to expand these efforts in the coming year to 12 more cities, from Newark to Nashville, from Oklahoma City to Anaheim, to find, to prosecute, to punish people who pedal guns illegally to our kids.

Third, I want to ask Congress again to do two things when they come back next week. First, send me a budget that actually funds our proposal for the largest national gun enforcement initiative in history, resources for 500 ATF agents and inspectors, and hundreds more Federal, State, and local gun prosecutors. And second, close the gun show loophole. Close the gun show loophole in the Brady law, require child safety locks on handguns, and stop the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, which enable guns already in the United States legally to be altered so that they get around the assault weapons ban.

Now this, I think, is very important. Where are the American people on this? The results are both encouraging and troubling. Earlier this month, the voters of Oregon and Colorado, in overwhelming majorities—I think 65 percent in one place and 70 percent in Colorado, where they've gone through the searing experience of Columbine—voted to approve initiatives to require background checks at gun shows.

Yet let's be frank, folks. Supporters of these measures are still very vulnerable if they happen

to be candidates for Congress or running for Congress in places where fear can be used to make people think that they're for something they're not. And so I want to say to you what I have said so many times. I decided that I could probably do this for America because I was a southern white male who first shot a .22 before he was a teenager, and that I thought I could go out and talk to people about this.

Janet Reno and I were talking on the way in here about her going to a sporting club, when she proposed the gun safety measure as prosecutor, and sitting there and spending 2 hours with people. And finally, when she left, they were for what she wanted to do.

Every time we propose something like this, it becomes part of some great culture war in America, and it becomes a pretext for fundraising, campaigning, getting people to vote against their own interest because they're afraid. And I thought maybe I should do this in part because I felt like I could talk to the people that were being stampeded in election after election. But it's still a real serious problem. All you have to do is look around the country and look at the huge disconnect between the votes in Colorado and Oregon on the initiative and the votes in culturally similar places on specific elections.

Now, does that mean we ought to fold up our tent and go home? No. Does it mean that we have no choice but to try to put an initiative on the ballot in every State and get the people who disagree with us to spend their money on something that's at least specific? [*Laughter*] Not necessarily, no. But it does mean, if we want elected Representatives who come from challenging environments to stand up and vote for things that we know make sense, we have to keep working to learn how to speak to people who are good people, who were subject to being stampeded. We have to look for ways to make the specifics our friend. The facts are our friends. If the facts were not our friends, this initiative would not have passed 70 to 30 in Colorado, a clearly Republican State. And if you ask people to identify themselves out there, most people would identify themselves as conservatives, but they dealt with the facts.

So I just want to encourage you not to stop but to keep trying to become more effective by not engaging in the rhetorical wars with people who disagree with us, but going straight to the people themselves who vote, who either vote in these referenda or vote in the elections for Congress and for Governor and legislature, and talk to them about the facts, because the facts are our friends. Fear is our foe.

And I think this is so important, because we just can't walk away from all this now. We've got a good head of steam going. And nobody—nobody—has proposed a single thing yet that I'm aware of that would keep a hunter out of the deer woods or a sport shooter out of a contest. But all these things would make America a much safer place. And you just have to keep working at it, and you can't be deterred. But you must be, also, effective. And you have to realize that when people get scared, they are liable to resolve doubt against you. But when they understand what the deal is, they're going to resolve doubt in your favor. The facts are your friends.

So I want to encourage you to do that. Jim and Sarah have shown amazing perseverance and courage. They've kept their spirits up. They've kept our spirits up. They've battled on against the odds. That's what we have to do. But I don't want you to worry about being mad or being angry or even getting even. I just want you to understand that you can win the battle, but you've got to be smart, and you've got to be willing to keep working through setbacks, and you have to be willing to trust the good common sense and fundamental decency of the American people.

If you can get through all the smokescreens and argue the facts and if you look over the last 8 years—if someone had told me 8 years ago that crime would go down every year, that it would be at a 26- or 27-year low, that so many more people would be alive, that we'd actually pass the Brady law and the assault weapons ban and we'd be working on 150,000 police, we'd have 800,000 kids federally funded in after-school programs, I would have been pretty happy. But now, after 8 years, I have to tell you, I still think more about the kids that are left out and left behind. I still think more about those that have been victimized instead of those that have been avoided, because I know we have to keep going until this is the safest big country in the world.

So I implore you—I implore you—do not get discouraged. We know what works. We know what the arithmetic answer is, and we just have to keep after it. We should be gratified and happy in this holiday season that America is

safer, but we should be resolved to make it the safest big country in the world.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former White House Press Secretary James S. Brady, who was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan, and his wife, Sarah, chair, Hand Gun Control, Inc.; former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen; and Hillary Clinton's brother, attorney Hugh Rodham.

Statement on the Death of Robert G. Damus
November 30, 2000

I am deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Bob Damus, General Counsel for the Office of Management and Budget. Bob made invaluable contributions to the common good in his 20 years of Government service, embodying the very finest qualities of our Nation's career civil servants.

Bob's fine intellect and the breadth of his knowledge were respected throughout Government and beyond. This administration and the American people benefited greatly from his keen judgment and wise counsel, and he served my two predecessors with the same loyalty, dedication, and commitment to excellence.

With a distinguished academic background, Bob chose Government service out of a deep desire to contribute to the public good. In recognition of his outstanding service, he twice received the Presidential Rank Award as a Distinguished Executive, the highest honor for career civil servants in the Senior Executive Service.

Bob's probity and integrity were unsurpassed. He was a supremely decent man, and his memory will serve as an inspiration to us all.

Remarks at the G&P Foundation Angel Ball 2000 in New York City
November 30, 2000

Well, first of all, thank you, Denise, for the saxophone. I'll have a little more time to play it in a week or two. [*Laughter*] And thank you for the wonderful gift. But let me say to all of you, I think that we should be here honoring Denise for remembering her daughter in such a magnificent way.

And I also want to thank Philip for all that you have done to make this evening possible. And I want to thank the other honorees tonight, for the power of their examples. Michael Jackson, who has been so kind to us, thank you for the wonderful thing you said, and Sir Paul McCartney. I don't know, I got the saxophone at an event which honored two of the greatest musical geniuses of the 20th century. I don't know what that says. [*Laughter*]

And I would like to thank Her Majesty Queen Noor, who has been a wonderful friend to Hillary and to me and I think is one of the truly great citizens of the world alive today. I thank her.

And thank you, Larry King, for being here. I forgive you for using this occasion to hit me up for our exit interview. [*Laughter*] I am not a very good story. You should be down in Florida doing interviews tonight. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to all of you, I want to just echo a thing or two Hillary said. I love this event. I had a wonderful time 2 years ago. I've had a terrific time tonight. But I look forward to the time when we will be forced to find another reason to meet, because the war on cancer will have been won. Like all of you, I am tired of burying my family members and friends from diseases that it seems that we ought to be able to find a way to cure or even to prevent. It won't be long now, and when that happy day comes, all of you can take pride in knowing that you did something to hasten the moment.

I can tell you that we're already making impressive progress. Earlier this year we learned that for the very first time, cancer deaths in the United States are on the decline. Researchers are now unlocking the secrets of the human genome; revolutionary new treatments are sure to follow. There are now medicines being tested now, not only to cure but to actually prevent various kinds of cancers.

Now, we actually know that the average human body is built to last more than 100 years. And the younger women in this audience who are still having children, in your childbearing years you will be having babies with a life expectancy of 90 years or more, because of the medical research that is now going on.

But it's important for the rest of us to do our part. And our administration, with Hillary and the Vice President in the lead, has worked hard. We've doubled research over the last 8 years. We have speeded the approval process for cancer drugs. We've involved more and more Medicare patients in cancer screenings and test trials. And we've extended coverage to uninsured women with breast and cervical cancer. But there's a lot more to do.

What I want you to understand is that all of us, and mostly you—I have been on the public payroll for some years—but those of us that are fortunate enough to have some income are always given all these opportunities to make charitable donations, and you always hope that the money you give will have some beneficial impact. But what I want you to understand is that the sequencing this year of the human genome is a truly seminal event in the entire history of science.

We have already identified, scientists have, the problems in the gene structure that lead women to be much more vulnerable to breast cancer. And it is just the beginning. There has never been a better time to invest money in cancer research, ever. And it is highly likely, even though none of us can know when the next discoveries are coming or which scientists will make them, it is highly likely that the money you invest in this project will actually directly lead to the dramatic acceleration of cures for cancer, preventions for cancer, and the saving of other children's lives.

And so again I say, thank you, Denise. Thank you for everything you have done to make it possible for Hillary and me to serve. Thank you to those of you who have been so good to my wife. And thank you, Senator Schumer, for showing up. They will be a great team, and I'm very, very grateful for that. And as I leave office, let me say to all of you—I thank Michael Jackson for what he said—this has been the greatest honor imaginable for me to serve.

But the thing that really matters about this country is not who the President is; it's what kind of people we are. The thing about any free society is that it's the citizens who matter, the decisions they make, the work they do, the dreams they dream. There has never been a better time to dream of curing every kind of cancer or to give.

So, even though I won't be President next year, I hope you'll be here, giving next year, because it will really make a difference.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the Broadway Ballroom at the New York Marriot Marquis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Denise Rich, cofounder, G&P Foundation, and her son-in-law, Philip Aouad; musicians Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney; Queen Noor of Jordan; and CNN talk show host Larry King, who served as master of ceremonies.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Plan for Federal Employee Locality-Based Comparability Payments

November 30, 2000

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

I am transmitting an alternative plan for Federal employee locality-based comparability payments (locality pay) for 2001.

Federal employees are the key to effective Government performance. During the last 8 years, the number of Federal employees has declined while their responsibilities have stayed

the same or increased. Nonetheless, recent surveys show the American public believes it is now getting better quality and more responsible service from our Federal employees. We need to provide them fair and equitable compensation to recognize their important role, and to enable the Federal Government to continue to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.

Under title 5, United States Code, most Federal civilian employees would receive a two-part pay raise in January 2001: (1) a 2.7 percent base salary raise linked to the part of the Employment Cost Index (ECI) that deals with changes in the wages and salaries of private industry workers; and (2) a locality pay raise, based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' salary surveys of non-Federal employers in local pay areas, that would cost about 12.3 percent of payroll. Thus, on a cost-of-payroll basis, the total Federal employee pay increase for most employees would be about 15 percent in 2001.

For each part of the two-part pay increase, title 5 gives me the authority to implement an alternative pay adjustment plan if I view the pay adjustment that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare." Over the past three decades, Presidents have used this or similar authority for most annual Federal pay raises.

In evaluating "an economic condition affecting the general welfare," the law directs me to consider such economic measures as the Index of Leading Economic Indicators, the Gross National Product, the unemployment rate, the budget deficit, the Consumer Price Index, the Producer Price Index, the Employment Cost Index, and the Implicit Price Deflator for Personal Consumption Expenditures.

Earlier this year, I decided that I would implement—effective in January 2001—the full 2.7 percent base salary adjustment. As a result, it was not necessary to transmit an alternative pay plan by the legal deadline (August 31) for that portion of the pay raise.

In assessing the appropriate locality pay adjustment for 2001, I reviewed the indicators cited above along with other major economic indicators. As noted above, the full locality pay increases, when combined with the 2.7 percent base salary increase, would produce a total Federal civilian payroll increase of about 15 percent for most employees. In fiscal year (FY) 2001 alone, this increase would add $9.8 billion above the cost of the 3.7 percent increase I proposed in the fiscal 2001 Budget.

A 15 percent increase in Federal pay would mark a fundamental change of our successful policy of fiscal discipline, and would invite serious economic risks—in terms of the workings of the Nation's labor markets; inflation; the costs of maintaining Federal programs; and the impact of the Federal budget on the economy as a whole.

First, an across-the-board 15 percent increase in Federal pay scales would be disruptive to labor markets across the country. This increase would be three to four times the recent average annual changes in private-sector compensation, built into the base of the pay structure not just for 2001, but for subsequent years as well. With job markets already tight and private firms reporting great difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled employees, this increase in Federal salaries could pull prospective job seekers away from private employment opportunities.

Second, in the face of such a large Federal pay increase, private firms would almost certainly react by increasing their own wage offers. Thus, beyond the labor-market disruption of such a Federal pay increase, there would follow a serious risk of inflation; and that risk would far exceed the direct effects of the Federal pay raise taken in isolation. Pay rates economy-wide have already enticed a record percentage of the adult population into the labor force and paid employment. There are few unemployed or underemployed workers available for hire; if private firms need additional labor, they must raise their wage offers to attract workers from other firms. Such bidding wars for labor—which constitutes roughly two-thirds of business costs in this economy—have been at or near the core of all inflationary outbursts in our recent history. To date, intense competitive pressures have prevented private firms from allowing their wage offers to step out of line with productivity gains, and inflationary pressures have remained contained. However, a shock arising outside of the competitive labor market itself—such as an administratively determined Federal pay increase—could convince private business managers that they must increase their offers beyond the current norms. In the past to reverse accelerating inflation, the Nation paid an enormous toll through policies designed to slow the economy and reduce the pressure on prices. In numerous instances, the result was recession and

sharp increases in unemployment. With labor markets as tight as they are we should not undertake a policy likely to shock the labor market.

Third, Federal program managers are already under considerable pressure to meet their budgets, while still providing quality service to the taxpayers. Increasing the Federal employment costs at such an extraordinary rate would render those budgets inadequate to provide the planned level of services. Appropriations for the coming fiscal year have already been legislated for much of the Federal Government, and all sides hope that spending bills for the remaining agencies will pass in the very near future. In particular, agencies that have the greatest responsibility for person-to-person service—the Social Security Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Veterans Affairs healthcare programs, to name just three—could not be expected to bear double-digit pay increases without the most thorough review and adjustment of their budgets.

Finally, despite the current budget surpluses, the Federal Government continues to face substantial budgetary challenges.When my Administration took office in January 1993, we faced the largest budget deficit in the Nation's history—over $290 billion in fiscal year (FY) 1992. By the projections of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and every other authority, the deficit would only get bigger. Furthermore, under both of these projections, the public debt, and the interest burden from that debt, were expected to be in a vicious upward cycle.

While we have pulled the budget back from this crisis, and in fact we have enjoyed the first budget surpluses since l969, adverse budgetary forces are just a few years away. The Social Security system will come under increasing pressure with the impending retirement of the large baby-boom generation. In addition, the aging of the population will increase costs for Medicare and Medicaid. If we become complacent because of the current budget surplus and increase spending now, the surplus could well be gone even before the baby-boom generation retires.

My Administration has put these budgetary challenges front and center. A 15 percent Federal pay increase, built into the Government's cost base for all succeeding years, would be a dangerous step away from budget discipline. The budgetary restraint that produced the current budget surpluses must be maintained if we are to keep the budget sound into the retirement years of the baby boom generation.

Therefore, I have determined that the total civilian raise of 3.7 percent that I proposed in my 2001 Budget remains appropriate. This raise matches the 3.7 percent basic pay increase that I proposed for military members in my 2001 Budget, and that was enacted in the FY 2001 Defense Authorization Act. Given the 2.7 percent base salary increase, the total increase of 3.7 percent allows an amount equal to 1.0 percent of payroll for increases in locality payments.

Accordingly, I have determined that:

Under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments in the amounts set forth on the attached table shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2001. When compared with the payments currently in effect, these comparability payments will increase the General Schedule payroll by about 1.0 percent.

Finally, the law requires that I include in this report an assessment of how my decisions will affect the Government's ability to recruit and retain well-qualified employees. I do not believe this will have any material impact on the quality of our workforce. If the needs arise, the Government can use many pay tools—such as recruitment bonuses, retention allowances, and special salary rates—to maintain the high-quality workforce that serves our Nation so very well.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 December 1.

Remarks on World AIDS Day

December 1, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Belynda, thank you for your wonderful remarks. I'm not going anywhere. I'm just going to be in a different line of work, you know. [*Laughter*] I'll still be there for you. I want you all to know, this remarkable woman actually had a minor car accident yesterday and was told not to come here, but she showed up anyway. And that's the kind of commitment we need from people.

Archbishop Ndugane, I'm delighted to be on the podium with you in this beautiful chapel at Howard. And as you know, I admired your predecessor, Archbishop Tutu, my friend, and I can see he has a worthy successor. Your remarks were wise, and we thank you, sir, very much for what you said.

I thank President Swygert for making us welcome at Howard. And I would like to acknowledge a couple of people—first, a Member of our United States Congress from Oakland, California, and the champion of America, doing more in the global AIDS effort, Representative Barbara Lee. Thank you very much. Thank you. I also was honored to ride over here with our former United Nations Ambassador and Congressman and my great friend Andrew Young. I thank him for his part here.

And Belynda, I thank you for what you said about Sandy Thurman. I knew she wasn't a Barbie doll when I appointed her. [*Laughter*] She had actually spent a lot of her life working in Atlanta at the grassroots with people with HIV and AIDS. And I tried to fill a lot of positions in Government with people who don't often get to serve, because sometimes the best qualified people to serve are the people that are out there on the frontlines. And if they spend their lives on the frontlines, they don't have enough time to play up to the politicians so they can get these appointments. But somehow I found Sandy, and she's been wonderful, and I thank her and all the members of our advisory council, many of whom are here today.

I want to offer a special word of welcome to the distinguished religious leaders and citizens who have come here from around the world, including the First Lady of Lesotho, Mrs. Mathato Mosisili. And we have, I think, 23 others—we have 23 others here from Africa alone, who are here to focus on the HIV/AIDS issue as part of the State Department's international visitors program. We have religious leaders here from Africa, from Asia, from Latin America, and we thank them all for being here.

Today we have come together, people from all over the world, from different circumstances, to ask ourselves a simple, stark question: whether we are prepared to do what is necessary to save millions of lives, to save the lives of those who are living with HIV and AIDS and all those who might yet avoid it. How we answer will depend upon how well we work together as partners across lines of nationality, faith, religion, color, sexual orientation. It will depend upon, in equal measure, our will and our wallet. And it will depend upon, in some places, still, sadly, going beyond denial. I don't know whether this works when translated into French and the other languages that are here, but my daughter's generation has a wonderful saying, that denial is not just a river in Egypt. [*Laughter*] And we even have to laugh, you know, sometimes just to keep going. But that also is important, and I want to highlight some of the heroes in that struggle later.

In the United States there are millions of people involved in the struggle against HIV and AIDS. They are in clinics and community-based organizations across the land, offering information and testing to those at risk; treatment and care to nearly a million people living with HIV; dignity to thousands who are dying. Churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples here are more and more speaking out with a single, clear voice about the importance of prevention as well as care.

For the last few years I have tried to put our Government on the side of this fight. We created an Office of AIDS Research at the National Institutes of Health, and the White House Office of AIDS National Policy. We have the first-ever national AIDS strategy. We have the first biomedical research plan, and we have expanded health insurance options for people with HIV and AIDS. Our overall Federal funding has more than doubled over the last 8 years, and funding for care is up almost 400 percent; help to buy drugs in this country up more than

1,000 percent. As Congress comes back to work, I hope that it will ensure that our global and domestic AIDS programs actually receive the funding increases they are currently slated to receive this year, thanks to people like Representative Barbara Lee.

As Belynda Dunn's story illustrates, marrying our money to our intentions is a formula for real progress here in the United States, a formula for delivering more powerful anti-HIV drugs to more Americans, for helping more HIV-positive pregnant women avoid passing the virus to their babies, for providing better access to health care and housing for those living with HIV. It is a formula, in other words, for people living longer and better lives.

Today, the mortality rate for HIV and AIDS in the United States is down more than 70 percent since 1995. The death rate from the infection is at its lowest rate since 1987. For those of you here from our country who have worked on this, you can be justifiably proud. But we must be humbled by how very far we all have to go, especially around the world.

Today's reality is much worse than the worst case scenarios of just 10 years ago. At the beginning of the 1990's, health experts told us that between 15 million and 20 million people would be living with HIV this year. Well, the real number is 36 million. The religious leaders from around the world who are here understand that these numbers mean something quite stark in human terms, not only for the individuals and the families but, as the Archbishop intimated, for whole nations.

When the disease threatens to triple child mortality and to reduce life expectancy by 20 years in some African countries, it is time to say that AIDS is also a moral crisis. When South Africa's GDP—listen to this—South Africa's GDP is expected to be 17 percent lower in 2010 because of AIDS, it is time to say that AIDS is an economic crisis. When 10 times more Africans died of AIDS last year than in all the continent's wars combined and when the fastest growing infection rates are now in Eastern Europe and the nations of the former Soviet Union—complicated in many countries by a virtual breakdown of the public health systems there—where nations are already struggling against great odds to build prosperity and democracy, it is time to say that AIDS is also an international security crisis.

Once we recognize that AIDS is all these things, it becomes crystal clear that we have to use every available tool to fight it and that the United States, because we have been blessed at this particular moment in history with exceptional prosperity, has an extra responsibility to take a leadership role.

Many developing countries are doing remarkable things to help themselves. By focusing its resources on prevention, Uganda became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to reverse its own epidemic, nearly halving its HIV prevalence. But in too many nations, resources are simply insufficient, and the gap between what people want to do and what they can afford to do is denying millions a chance to survive the onslaught. Together, we must do more to close the gap.

Today our National Institutes of Health is releasing the first-ever strategic plan for international AIDS research, a $100 million blueprint for pursuing new research opportunities with universities in over 50 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Our administration has also launched the LIFE initiative, that in the last 2 years will likely triple U.S. investment in international HIV-AIDS efforts.

That is why we fought for and won passage of the global HIV/AIDS and TB relief act, which authorizes additional funding for prevention, care, and vaccine development, and why I signed an Executive order to help make AIDS drugs more affordable in sub-Saharan Africa, and why we are pushing Congress to pass—to respond to the Archbishop's comment—a vaccine tax credit and to put more resources behind the World Bank's AIDS trust fund.

Right now, it is a problem for our pharmaceutical companies because they know that while there is an enormous need for an AIDS vaccine, the people who need it the worst are the least able to pay for it. And we know that research is very expensive. So the best way we can help get the research done—we get the medicine, and then we'll worry about how to get it out there; we can do that, but we have to get the breakthrough first—is, in effect, gives these companies a tax credit for the research they do, so that the taxpayers share a hefty portion of the cost. And I hope and pray that the Congress will agree to adopt that when they come back in just a few days, or early next year at the very latest.

The Peace Corps is training every one of its 2,400 volunteers in Africa, every one of them, as prevention counselors. And the issue of HIV and AIDS in developing countries was put on the agenda this year for the annual G–8 Summit. I also made it an important part of our relationship with the European Union, and I have worked hard, as the Archbishop said, for debt relief and for mobilizing billions of dollars for the fight against AIDS. And finally, that is why the United States placed HIV and AIDS squarely before both the U.N. Security Council and the United Nations Millennium Summit.

This effort is now on the international agenda. We've got a long way to go, but those of you who worked hard to put it on the world's agenda should also know that you have succeeded, and we're only going to go forward, not backward, now.

Now, despite these efforts, we all know a lot more is needed. Much, much more is needed to make drugs for AIDS and related infectious diseases more affordable and accessible everywhere. I told you, just in the United States, with all of our wealth, we increased funding to help people buy drugs here in this country by a 1,000 percent, tenfold, in 8 years, and we didn't get a tenfold increase in drugs, because of the increase in the costs. So we know that we have to do more to help developing nations in this area.

We know that more is needed to ensure that countries have the health care infrastructure needed to effectively deliver the drugs and the treatment. As I said a moment ago, one of the things that really concerns me about the rising rates in some of the nations of the former Soviet Union is that they are accompanied by a real deterioration in the public health systems, systems which once worked under a very different social and political structure and have not yet been replaced by the kind of grassroots community networks that we see in a lot of other developing countries that were not part of a totalitarian system before. And it's something we have to work very, very hard on.

But let's not forget, as so many of you have proved, even limited resources, well used, can go a long way. And let's all remember that, for all their differences, the fight against AIDS here in the United States and the fight abroad have much in common. To begin, we need to understand that patterns of infection in the U.S. now actually mirror those found elsewhere, with the burden falling most heavily on women, young people, poor people, and people of color. That makes our challenges more alike than different, both practically and morally. It means we must be more vigilant, both in targeting our resources and in overcoming prejudice.

Last August, in Nigeria, I was honored to meet John Ibekwe. He was sitting here on the front row, but his daughter started crying, and he took her out, which is a great expression of family values because he knew I was going to introduce him, and he took care of his child anyway. [*Laughter*] At an event during my trip, he told the story of his great love for his wife, whom he married even though she was HIV-positive and family and friends disapproved. He told how he pleaded with and lobbied with his pastor to persuade him that it was the morally right thing to do. He talked about how when he married, his wife became pregnant, and he became HIV-positive. And then he struggled to hold a job in the face of great prejudice. He told us how he saved enough money somehow for the drugs that allowed his baby to be born without the virus. And when he told this story, the President of Nigeria, President Obasanjo, and his wife stood on the stage, and they embraced John and his wife. I'm told the image had an electrifying impact all over Nigeria on how people should think about and deal with people with AIDS.

As I said, John and his daughter just walked out, but his wife is here, and I'd like to ask her to stand up. [*Applause*] Thank you. There they are. Thank you. John, with that kind of timing, I think you have a future in politics. [*Laughter*] That was well done.

Now, let me say something very serious. The second thing we have to do is to remember that AIDS everywhere is still 100 percent preventable. Prevention is the most effective tool in our arsenal. No matter the cultural or religious factors to be overcome, families must talk about the facts of life before too many more learn the facts of death. Meeting both these challenges—overcoming stigma and overcoming silence—will be impossible without the moral leadership that in so many places only religious leaders, like those who are here today, can provide.

In our tradition it has been said that AIDS is an epidemic of Biblical proportions. Maybe that refers to the sheer geographic scope or perhaps the numbers of people or the enormous

scale of suffering. But I think it also is an apt phrase because it implies that there is a required moral response.

In the New Testament of the Christian Bible, it says that when we bear one another's burdens, we fulfill the law of God. So I ask you to go forth here, remembering that a happy heart is good medicine, too. Do not grow weary in doing this. Know that the sequencing of the human genome will dramatically hasten the day when we will find a medical cure. But in the meanwhile, there are millions, indeed tens and tens of millions, of people whose lives are riding on our common efforts. We can do this if we do it together.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:13 p.m. in the Rankin Chapel at Howard University. In his remarks, he referred to Belynda Dunn, chair, National Association of People With AIDS; Archbishop of South Africa Njongonkulu Ndugane and his predecessor, Archbishop Desmond Tutu; H. Patrick Swygert, president, Howard University; John Ibekwe, president, Nigerian Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, and his wife, Stella. The World AIDS Day proclamation of November 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on a Study on Tobacco Use and Lung and Bronchial Cancer Rates

December 1, 2000

A new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the California Department of Health Services demonstrates that over the last decade, California's extensive antismoking efforts have resulted in dramatic decreases in lung and bronchial cancer rates. These new findings remind us that the lives of Americans are at stake, not just in California but nationwide, and that comprehensive tobacco prevention and education efforts can make a difference.

More than 400,000 Americans die each year from tobacco-related health diseases, and more than 80 percent of them started smoking as children. That is why my administration developed a nationwide plan to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, and I have continued to call on Congress to affirm the FDA's authority to implement this plan and take other steps to ensure that our children have healthy, tobacco-free futures.

The tobacco companies spend 10 times more to market their products than all 50 States combined are spending on tobacco prevention and cessation. California's efforts demonstrate the progress that can be made when States use comprehensive tobacco control and prevention approaches, as recommended in the Surgeon General's recent report, "Reducing Tobacco Use." Today I again urge all States to implement these effective approaches, because we must all work together to improve our Nation's health and save our children's lives.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Modifications to the List of Beneficiary Developing Countries Under the Generalized System of Preferences

December 1, 2000

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

I hereby notify you of my intent to modify the list of beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which offers duty-free access to the U.S. market for eligible products imported from designated beneficiary developing countries. Specifically, I intend to change the designation of "Western Samoa" to "Samoa," to reflect this nation's current name, in the list of beneficiary

developing countries and to designate Samoa as a least-developed beneficiary developing country under the GSP. I have carefully considered the criteria in sections 501 and 502 of the Trade Act of 1974 and have determined that it is appropriate to designate Samoa as such.

This notice is submitted in accordance with section 502(f) of the Trade Act of 1974.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The proclamation of December 1 on the Generalized System of Preferences is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address
December 2, 2000

Good morning. Congress is on its way back to Washington after an extended break. It is very important that we get right back to business and fulfill our responsibility to give our children a world-class education.

Earlier this year I sent Congress a budget that would make vital investments in education, a budget that puts our children first by investing more in our schools and demanding more from them; by modernizing old schools, building new ones, reducing class sizes; by hiring more well-prepared teachers, expanding after-school programs, and turning around failing schools. That was way back in February. Ten months have passed since then; three seasons have turned; and Congress decided to break for the election without passing an education budget.

But this week Congress returns to session with still time to get the job done. Congress should pass the education budget as its first order of business. Fortunately, we're already standing on common ground. When Congress left town, we had already reached an historic agreement with Members of both parties. A broad, bipartisan coalition has pledged to provide much-needed funding to reduce class size, to provide crucial repairs for crumbling schools, to improve teacher quality, to expand Head Start, after-school programs, Pell grants, and support for students with disabilities. I hope when Congress comes back, these commitments to our children will be kept.

Even in the final days of this session, Congress should remember those first, fundamental obligations. Now is not the time to walk away from the agreement we made, especially so close to the finish line.

A lot is at stake here—the condition of our schools, the quality of our teachers, most important, the education of our children. Today I'm releasing a report that shows exactly what's at stake for the children in all 50 States. If Congress fails to pass the bipartisan education budget, California, for example, stands to lose almost three-quarters of a billion dollars in additional funds. New York could lose more than $40 million for more after-school and summer school programs alone. Illinois could lose nearly $70 million in added support for students with disabilities.

With America facing the largest student enrollment in history and with an historic agreement so close to conclusion, there's no reason why we shouldn't work together across party lines to get this job done. If we do, we can complete this year's unfinished business and continue the work of preparing our Nation to meet the challenges of the years to come.

We can also meet our other pressing priorities, from the health of our families to the safety of our neighborhoods, and ensure that we continue to expand the circle of opportunity until it embraces Americans from every corner of our country and every walk of life.

The holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on the values that unite us. As families, there's nothing we hold more dear than our children. As a nation, there is nothing more important to our future than our children and their education. As every parent knows, a good education is a gift that keeps on giving for a lifetime. So let's join together, two parties but one country, to give our children the schools, the teachers, and the future they deserve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the Kennedy Center Honors Reception
December 3, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you, Senator. [*Laughter*] I'm trying to get used to that. I want to—[*laughter*]—look, I've got to take every opportunity I can to practice here. [*Laughter*]

I want to welcome you all here, especially, of course, our honorees and other artists and former honorees; Members of Congress who are here—Senator and Mrs. Lott, welcome; we're glad to see you—and to all our other distinguished guests.

As Hillary said, it has been a profound honor for us and a great joy to do these Kennedy Center Honors for 8 years in a row now. We thank the people we honor tonight and their predecessors for lifting our spirits and broadening our horizons.

Thirty-eight years ago, President Kennedy wrote that "art means more than a resuscitation of the past. It means the free and unconfined search for new ways of expressing the experience of the present and the vision of the future." Each in their own way, tonight's honorees have brought to a venerable art form a spark of the new and unexpected. And each has left it more modern, more brilliant, and forever changed for the better. Now, let me present them.

Very few people visit the East Room, where we now are, and find themselves in danger of striking the 20-foot ceiling. [*Laughter*] But that is exactly what happened to Mikhail Baryshnikov when he arrived to rehearse for a White House performance in 1979. With a portable stage set up, even this stately ceiling was too low for his trademark soaring leaps. No ceiling or boundary, not even the Iron Curtain, has ever held him back for long.

His successful performance of that night was televised for millions of Americans as "Baryshnikov at the White House," another step towards cementing his reputation as the greatest male classical dancer of our time. With his daring leap to freedom in 1974, he also inspired millions with the idea of liberty, and he used his freedom to move beyond classical ballet to movies and to Broadway and, in 1976, to fulfill a lifelong dream by bounding onto the stage of American modern dance. And it has never been the same since.

From "Push Comes To Shove" to his pathbreaking White Oak Dance Project, Mikhail Baryshnikov has pushed the boundaries of a challenging art form even as he has broadened its audience. He continues to give brilliant performances at an age when most of us are, frankly, being told to get our exercise in private. [*Laughter*]

So tonight America says, thank you, Mikhail Baryshnikov, for the heights to which you have lifted the art of dance and the heights to which you have lifted all of us. Thank you.

No less an authority than John Lennon once said, "If you tried to give rock and roll another name, you might call it Chuck Berry." [*Laughter*] The Beatles, the Beach Boys, the Rolling Stones all copied him, but Chuck Berry was the original. He fused country and blues into a new sound that was distinctly American and utterly new. And 40 years later, the Chuck Berry sound still blazes across our stages and from our radios.

He is, quite simply, one of the 20th century's most influential musicians. His guitar riffs were some of rock's first, and they're still some of its greatest. His stage moves, especially the duckwalk, which he invented, are often imitated, sometimes intentionally—[*laughter*]—but never equalled. His fresh and vivid lyrics captured American life, whether you're rich or poor, young or not so young, and they suggested the rhythms of a new and better day for black and white Americans alike. NASA even sent Chuck Berry's music on a space probe searching for intelligent life in outer space. [*Laughter*] Well, now, if they're out there, they're duckwalking. [*Laughter*]

It was my great honor to invite Chuck to play at both my Inaugurals and my 25th reunion

at Georgetown University, which we held here on the White House grounds. I, too, have loved him for more than 40 years. So we say, thank you, Chuck Berry, for making us laugh, making us shout, making us dance, and making us happy together. Thank you.

These days you hear a lot of people saying we need to change the tenor here in Washington. [*Laughter*] They are not talking about Placido Domingo. [*Laughter*] We are truly blessed to have him as artistic director, as a conductor, and still performing as one of the greatest operatic tenors of all time.

It is almost now impossible to imagine opera without him. He has performed 118 roles, probably more than any other tenor ever. He is still adding new ones. He has set new standards, and he has worked unceasingly to bring opera to a wider audience through movies, television, and live concerts, and of course, especially as one of the famed Three Tenors. Their concerts have brought operatic singing to an audience of one billion people across the globe. Think about it: one in six people has thrilled to the sound of this man's voice.

But he has always been more than a voice. As a young man, he prepared for later life in Washington as an amateur bullfighter. [*Laughter*] Now, instead of a cape, however, he waves the baton, which means that he is the only person in Washington who gets at least a finite group of people to do what he tells them to do. [*Laughter*]

As a visionary artistic director of opera here in Washington and in Los Angeles, a frequent performer around our Nation, he has truly sparked the rebirth of American opera. And he has shared his prodigious gifts wider, in support of disaster relief efforts from Armenia to Acapulco. Through his annual vocal competition he has championed young singers all over the world and has worked to bring opera to places it has never before been heard.

So we say thank you—thank you, Placido Domingo, for sharing with us your matchless artistry and for being a true citizen of the world.

For more than 35 years now, Clint Eastwood has been one of America's favorite movie stars. Of course, he's also an Oscar-winning director. He's actually done pretty well for a former elected official. [*Laughter*] I hope I am half as successful. [*Laughter*]

I think he didn't keep running for office because he realized once you get in politics, you can't do what he did in most of his movies to your adversaries—[*laughter*]—although you can wish to do it, from time to time. [*Laughter*]

His path to stardom began with bit parts in movies that starred a tarantula and a talking mule. His break came in the spaghetti western "A Fistful of Dollars," an Italian movie filmed in Spain, based on a classic Japanese film. [*Laughter*] But the rest is history for the Italians, the Spanish, the Japanese, and most of all, for the Americans.

"The Man With No Last Name" has truly become a household name. His characters have ranged the peaks and valleys of human experience, from urban vigilantes to mythical cowboys, from troubled artists to Secret Service agents. And while he keeps making top-grossing movies, Clint Eastwood also keeps taking risks, playing against type, making small, thoughtful films that no one else would, quietly building a second career as one of our best directors, composing songs for five of his movies, and turning his lifelong love of jazz into a movie about the legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker.

Like the strong, silent cowboy he so often played, Clint Eastwood has become a quiet force in American film and a star for the ages. We thank you, Clint Eastwood, for giving us a lot to cheer about and lately, a lot to think about. Thank you very much.

Earlier this decade, TV Guide gave Angela Lansbury a perfect 100 on its lovability index. [*Laughter*] Now, that's what we need more of in Washington. [*Laughter*] There's no mystery why. She's known and adored by tens of millions of viewers as Jessica Fletcher on "Murder She Wrote." But fans who have followed her remarkable career know her just as well as Broadway's greatest stage mother of them all, Gypsy Rose Lee. And everyone who loves movies about politics remembers her brilliant performances in "The Manchurian Candidate" and "State of the Union."

The United States was lucky to welcome Angela Lansbury to our shores as a child refugee from the Nazi bombing of London in 1940. Just 4 years later, she made her first movie and won her first Oscar nomination. She went on to earn two more and became an acclaimed actress in an impressive variety of roles.

Hollywood alone couldn't hold her. She conquered Broadway in "Mame" and went on to

win four Tony Awards. Then she found television, and "Murder She Wrote," which began in 1984, continued for 12 successful seasons.

Over her career her acting has given us a window into the full range of human emotion and experience. Her inventiveness and courage have inspired her colleagues, and her commitment to charity, especially the fight against AIDS, should inspire us all.

Well, Angela, you earned your perfect score. And we thank you for a wonderful lifetime of gifts.

Well, there they are, ladies and gentlemen: Mikhail Baryshnikov, who soared out of the Soviet Union and into our hearts; Chuck Berry, who rock-and-rolled his way from segregated St. Louis into the American mainstream; Placido Domingo, who brought the songs from Spain and changed the tenor of America's music; Clint Eastwood, who rose out of Depression-era California to earn a place on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and Angela Lansbury, who left her childhood home in England to become American royalty.

Each one has given us something unique and enriched us beyond measure. Together they bring us closer to President Kennedy's vision of art as a great unifying and humanizing experience. Their triumphs have lifted our Nation and left us a better and richer place.

Again let me say to all of you, this night and every night before, it has been a profound honor for Hillary and me. You may find people who do this night better in the future; you will never find anybody who loves it as much.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Patricia Thompson Lott, wife of Senator Trent Lott.

Remarks on the Establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve

December 4, 2000

Good morning, and thank you, President Fahey, for making us feel so welcome at National Geographic; Secretary Mineta; Under Secretary of NOAA Baker. To all the members of the Coral Reef Task Force and the Ocean Exploration Panel, I welcome you.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to Peter Benchley for the work that he has done for nearly a lifetime now and for the remarks he made. And I thank our two native Hawaiians who are here, Tammy Leilani Harp, who spoke before me, and our Hawaiian elder, who's affectionately known as Uncle Buzzy. Thank you very much for being here.

I want to thank the National Geographic for giving us a place to make this announcement and for all the years of helping people to understand the universe and this small planet. We are fortunate to live in an age of unprecedented discovery, most of it in the biological sciences. It seems that almost every day there is another unlocking of a secret of subatomic particles or the complexities of the human genome. But we're also discovering more and more evidence every day that our human activity is profoundly affecting and, in some cases, overwhelming the natural systems that surround and sustain us on our planet.

For 8 years now we have worked to act on this understanding to better protect our natural resources for future generations. We have created and expanded national parks, established 11 national monuments, saved the California redwoods, protected the Yellowstone National Park from gold mining. We're restoring the Florida Everglades and preserving vistas of the Grand Canyon, and we are setting aside over 40 million roadless acres in our national forests. All together, this amounts to more land protection in the 48 continental States than any administration since that of Teddy Roosevelt a century ago.

But we must recognize that, just as land is an important part of our legacy in the preservation of our ecosystem, so, too, is our water. We launched a nationwide effort to clean up polluted rivers, lakes, and streams. We created

new marine sanctuaries, in Michigan, Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, and Hawaii. We also organized the first National Oceans Conference to develop a strategy to protect the seas. Today the Department of Commerce—and, Secretary Mineta, I thank you for your leadership on this—is releasing a comprehensive report, "Discovering Earth's Final Frontier." It charts a bold course for U.S. ocean exploration in the 21st century. And I want to thank Secretary Mineta, Dr. Marcia McNutt, and the other members of the Ocean Exploration Panel for their work.

We have a lot of work to do. Many, many important ecosystems are disappearing just as we begin to grasp their unique significance, their role in regulating our climate, their potential for producing lifesaving medicines. A lot of people are most familiar with the destruction of the rain forests and worldwide efforts to save them. Today I want to focus on what we're doing with the people of Hawaii to save the rainforests of the sea, our coral reefs.

These remarkable living structures, built cell by cell over millions of years, are at once irreplaceable and valuable. Coral reefs are beautiful, but more than that, they're home to thousands of species of fish and wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. Worldwide reefs generate millions of dollars through fishing and tourism, putting food on our tables and sustaining coastal communities. Coral reefs also protect these same communities from the pounding waves of fierce storms. And like the rain forests, they're providing us new hope for medical breakthroughs.

Unfortunately, the world's reefs are in peril. Pollution, damage from dynamite fishing, coral poachers, unwise coastal development, and global warming already have killed over 25 percent of the world's reefs. In some areas, such as the Central Indian Ocean, 90 percent of the coral reefs have died, bleached as white as dead bone.

Now, this is not an isolated problem. Scientists at last month's International Coral Reef Symposium presented strong evidence that unless we take action now, half the world's coral reefs will disappear within 25 years. Recently, scientists have shown a strong correlation between global warming and the rising ocean temperatures that contribute to reef destruction.

Recognizing the urgency of this challenge, we remain committed to reaching an international agreement to implement the Kyoto Protocol and to cut the production of greenhouse gases. And despite the recent delays, I still believe that we will get a good agreement. The stakes are too high to let this imperative slip away.

We have reached the crossroads in the development of our natural world. How many times in our lives, each of us, have we dismissed something that went wrong, or that we did wrong, with the phrase, "It's just a drop in the ocean"? Now we have solid proof that millions, even billions of these drops in the ocean are having a profound, lasting, and destructive impact on the oceans and the world around us. So we act now to hopefully save our seas and our reefs so that we do not lose their beauty, their bounty, and their protective qualities forever.

What can we do to turn the tide? What steps can we take? Well, at my direction, the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior have been working closely with the scientific, environmental, fishing, and native communities in Hawaii to determine what can be done to save the vast majority of our remaining coral reefs. At the same time, they solicited public comment and received over a thousand comments from concerned citizens. Ultimately, this unprecedented coalition has recommended a bold and visionary initiative. Today I am proud to protect America's greatest unspoiled reefs by creating the single largest nature preserve ever established in the United States, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Reserve. [*Applause*] Thank you.

This pristine, largely uninhabited archipelago covers more area than Florida and Georgia combined. Integrated into our National Marine Sanctuary Program, the new reserve will encompass nearly 70 percent of our Nation's coral reefs. This area is a special place where the sea is a living rainbow; the only voices, those of half the world's last remaining monk seals and the cry of sea birds wheeling in the sky.

In creating this unique preserve, we're establishing the strongest level of protection for oceans ever enacted and setting a new global standard for reef and marine wildlife protection. Together, we will safeguard the most sensitive areas, permit sustainable fishing and eco-tourism and others, and enable native Hawaiians to honor their age-old traditions.

The islands and reefs we're protecting today have long played an important role in the history of the Pacific. Archaeologists tell us that more than a thousand years ago, local islanders drew sustenance from their brilliant turquoise waters.

Centuries later, Charles Darwin marveled at the wildlife there during his historic voyage. And none of us can ever forget, for 4 bloody days in 1942, America's bravest heroes drew a line in the sand there, winning the Battle of Midway and changing the course of World War II and history.

Today we renew our commitment to winning the battle to protect our global environment, preserving this natural heritage for a long time—I hope forever.

Let me say, it was nearly a century ago, ironically, when President Roosevelt recognized the same imperative and created the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge. He knew then that our natural wonders, on land or sea, form an integral part of who we are as a people and that every generation of Americans must do its part to sustain and strengthen this legacy. Today we do just that, incorporating the refuge he created into a new, vast, and wonderful "Yellowstone of the Sea."

By any measure, creating this coral reserve is a big step forward, not just for marine conservation in the United States but for the health of oceans and reefs around the world.

For thousands of years, people have risked their lives to master the ocean. Now, suddenly, the ocean's life is at risk. We have the resources and responsibility to rescue the sea, to renew the very oceans that give us life, and thereby to renew ourselves. Today is an important step on that road.

But there is much, much more to be done in the years ahead. And I hope that no matter who becomes President—[*laughter*]—no matter what the partisan divide of Congress, that those of you who are here in this room will continue this work for the rest of your lives. It is profoundly important, and how our grandchildren live depends upon how well we do this work.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Grosvenor Auditorium at the National Geographic Museum. In his remarks, he referred to John M. Fahey, Jr., president and chief executive officer, National Geographic Society; author Peter Benchley; Tammy Leilani Harp, member, Native and Indigenous Rights Advisory Panel to the Western Pacific Region Fishery Management Council; Louis (Uncle Buzzy) Agard, board member, Native Hawaiian Advisory Council; and Marcia K. McNutt, president and chief executive officer, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. The Executive order establishing the reserve is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Teleconference Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Team Harmony Rally VII

December 5, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Josh, for that introduction. Your father would be very proud. I also want to thank Jon Jennings, Donna Harris-Lewis, and Joyce Zakim. To Rick Rendon, thank you for helping to organize Team Harmony VII. I also want to send you Hillary's best wishes. As Josh said, she's a big fan of Team Harmony and the great work you do.

And finally, I'd like to thank all the students from throughout New England for taking part in what I am told is the largest gathering of young people against racism, hatred, and bigotry. And of course, I welcome our friends from Belfast and Johannesburg.

The great thing about this modern world we live in is that we can have a conversation like this across the oceans and continents, and it's just the beginning. When I look ahead to your future, I see a time when we'll have unbelievable scientific discoveries. I believe your children will be born, literally, with a life expectancy of about 100 years. We're unlocking the secrets of the human genes. You will be citizens of the world in ways that no one else has ever been because of the way the Internet is bringing us together.

But even though we live in the most modern of worlds, the biggest problem we face, as all of you have been discussing, is perhaps the oldest problem of human society: People are afraid

of those who are different from them because of things like race, religion, or sexual orientation. And they go from fear to distrust; then it's easy to slip from distrust into dehumanization and from dehumanization into violence.

I saw all this when I was a child. I grew up in the southern part of the United States when it was completely segregated and where racial differences meant everything. I went to a segregated school. It was common to sit at segregated lunch counters, to ride even in segregated sections of the bus, to go to movies where the seating sections were divided, black and white.

But lucky for me, when I was a little child, I lived for a while with my grandparents and then spent a lot of time with them afterward, and my grandfather did not believe in this. He was a small grocery store owner. Most of his customers were African-Americans. He taught me, through his example—and my grandmother, as well—that segregation and discrimination were wrong, and it was important that all people be able to live in dignity and respect. There is no greater lesson in life.

I think we can figure out how to solve all our other challenges as people if we can only work this one big challenge out, establishing the right kind of relationships with one another. That's why in the years I've been President, I've worked so very hard to bring us together as one America and to work throughout the world to help ensure that all people have dignity and an equal shot at life, to work against racial and ethnic and religious discrimination, from Northern Ireland to the Balkans to the Middle East. We've come a long way on our journey toward reconciliation and understanding and mutual respect, but we've still got a long way to go. And young people, like you, have a very big role to play.

What is the heart of the challenge? I think it's pretty simple. I think we have to do a better job of teaching young people to value themselves as inherently worthy and good but not to value themselves by comparison to others. Of course, we all belong to groups and cliques and organizations. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. Everybody wants to belong to some group or another. But it is very important that young people be taught, and then that young people teach, that God did not create any of us better than any others.

There are people in life, unfortunately, who just can't feel good about themselves, unless they've got somebody else to look down on. It is our responsibility to confront this and to stand against it. The life we live today is far more interesting, because our societies are more diverse. Differences make life exciting. All our nations are richer, our future will be more exciting because of our differences, as long as we understand clearly that the most important thing we share is our common humanity.

Now, that's what Team Harmony is all about. So I wanted to take a few minutes and speak with you, listen to you, and urge you to keep talking and listening and reaching out to people who are different from you. You may be surprised by what you learn, but you will be confirmed in your instinct that our common humanity is the most important thing.

Not long ago, Hillary sponsored one of our millennial events at the White House, and we invited one of America's top scientists involved in unlocking the mysteries of the human genome. He told us that all humans, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same. Then he said that the genetic differences among people of the same racial groups are greater than the differences between different racial groups. So, we're getting a message here. Science is reaffirming what our faith and our values tell us: We do have more in common than that which divides us.

So if you can do something about violence and fear among young people, if you can deal with this oldest problem of human society, if you can make sure diversity is our greatest strength, then your generation will have the brightest future in all human history. You'll have the chance to solve age-old problems, to cure diseases, to give people opportunities they never could have had before. And we must do our part. We're very proud of your leadership in doing yours.

Again, I thank you for Team Harmony. I thank you for your care and concern. I thank you for giving me a chance to come by and visit for a few minutes. And now I'll be glad to take your questions. Thank you very much.

Jose Masso. Mr. President, thank you so much for joining us this afternoon with Team Harmony. My name is Jose Masso. We have a young woman here who would like to ask a question of you, Mr. President.

One America

Q. Hello, Mr. President. My name is Rachel—[*inaudible*]—and my question is, what advice can you give to the youth of Team Harmony on continuing all the work you have done towards creating one America?

The President. I'm sorry, but I couldn't hear the question.

Q. What advice can you give to the youth of Team Harmony on continuing all the work you have done towards creating one America?

The President. Thank you very much. Well, first let me say that I think that the middle school and high school years, in some ways, are the most important time to do the work that Team Harmony advocates and celebrates.

You know, even though I'm not young anymore, I can still remember when I was your age. I can remember the kinds of things young people worry about. But I'm very grateful that, because of my parents and grandparents, I never felt that for me to be okay, I had to think that someone else wasn't okay; for me to feel important, I had to believe someone else was not important or was insignificant. I'm very grateful to my family for teaching me that, and I think that is the central message that young people have to teach each other. You've got to reinforce the idea that everybody counts, that everybody deserves a chance, and that we all do better when we help each other.

And the other point I want to make about that is that in middle school and high school, peers have such an enormous influence over their fellow students. If you're here at this conference and you believe in what you all are talking about, I hope, when you go back home, you will make sure that in your school there is a systematic effort to share these ideas and values with other young people, because so many of you can have more influence on your friends and classmates than just about anybody, even the President of the United States.

And the most important thing of all is still to get people to be proud of their own racial, ethnic, religious heritage, and at the same time, being absolutely convinced that other people's different heritage is worthy of respect, because the most important thing is our common humanity.

There ought to be a systematic effort to do that in every school in America and in every school in Northern Ireland and in every school in South Africa and wherever else in the world this is an issue.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Barry Tatelman. Thank you, President Clinton. My name is Barry Tatelman, and I'm a supporter of Team Harmony. We're now going to go to Belfast for a question for President Clinton.

Q. Hello, Mr. President. My name is Gary—[*inaudible*]. I'm a 17-year-old student at—[*inaudible*]—College in Belfast. My question for you today is, you're going to be in Northern Ireland next week. What do you hope you will accomplish by a visit?

The President. I think you asked me what I hope will come out of my visit to Northern Ireland. And what I hope will happen is that it will encourage the political leaders and the people of Northern Ireland to continue working to overcome their differences and to keep moving forward on the Good Friday accord.

So much has already been accomplished. A local government is in place that represents all the people; cease-fires are holding; progress is made in putting the paramilitary arms beyond use. Significant work is being done in the vital areas of human rights, police, and judicial reform. We're seeing a lot more investment from America and other countries in helping to create good new jobs.

But if this momentum is not maintained, then the gains would be put at risk. The peace process everywhere is a bit like riding a bicycle: Both legs have to keep pedaling to keep moving forward and straight, and if they don't, then the bicycle could veer off course. And that's not in anyone's interest.

So let me say, we've all got to realize what's at stake here. It's easy to just focus on one part of this process, or one issue, and to complain. The difficult but far more important task is for everyone to keep his or her eyes on the big picture and to work through the issues. The hard way offers the hope of peace and progress for all sides. The easy way could lead to a cycle of recrimination and potentially even to a return of violence and the Troubles.

Now, I hold no illusion that my visit is going to solve all the problems. That is something the parties and the governments have to do. But I have taken a deep and genuine interest in supporting the peace process since before I took office. And when Prime Minister Blair

and Prime Minister Ahern and the First Minister and Deputy First Minister all told me that if I were to visit, it might help, I said, "Sure, I'll do whatever I can." I have worked on this now for 8 years. I care about it deeply.

But I would just say to all of you who are watching, we have come so far. In a troubled world, the progress in Ireland has been a beacon of hope, and we have got to finish the job.

Eliot Tatelman. Thank you very much, Mr. President. My name is Eliot Tatelman, and we're now going to take you to South Africa and ask South Africa what questions they would have for the President.

South Africa

Q. My name is Hloni Mongola. I am 15 years of age. It's an honor to speak to you, Mr. President, and I hope that you answer our question in a positive and a significant way. I'd like to ask you two questions; that's if you don't mind. You know that South African youth struggled against apartheid, and they won, which we are appreciative of that. Now, we suddenly found out that there are no jobs, and AIDS is killing our people. We want to find out how you advise us, the youth of Africa, on solving this problem.

And the second question is this: You realize that most of the youth in Africa admires you. We would like you to give us three of your best—[*inaudible*].

The President. I can't hear you, but I think you asked me a question about South Africa and the AIDS issue. So I hope you can hear me. Let me talk first about AIDS.

I am very concerned about what it could do to South Africa and, indeed, to many other countries throughout the African continent. We have to work together to fight this epidemic. It threatens all South Africans, Americans, the young, the old, black, and white. We are working hard here to support your efforts in South Africa with a dramatic increase in funding for international AIDS programs.

But frankly, the youth of South Africa have a critical role, as well. First, you have to remember that AIDS is 100 percent preventable. You must educate yourselves and educate others and talk about this disease no matter how hard it is. If you and all your classmates do this, you can protect yourselves and an entire generation. Meanwhile, we have to keep working on care, making the medicine more affordable, on prevention, on a cure. We have to work on all that. But don't forget, before medicine, this is still 100 percent preventable. And that's something that those of you involved in this conference in South Africa could have a big impact on.

South Africa's new political freedom is an inspiration to all of us in America and, indeed, to people throughout the world. And I know that the economic challenges are enormous, especially in terms of unemployment. There are differences between what the Government can do and what you can do.

What I would urge all of you to do is to concentrate on getting a good education and learning skills that can increase your country's productivity. You're the first generation to really understand computers, to have access to learning how to run the small enterprises needed to build South Africa's rural economy, to have access to the language skills needed to help your country trade with the rest of the world. If you take advantage of these opportunities, you will take South Africa a long way toward being a stronger country with a better economy, with more opportunities for young people, and a greater chance to prosper in the global economy. I also think you should do whatever you can to encourage all the other young people you know to stay in school.

And finally, let me just say one thing. The AIDS issue and the economic issue are related. Money the Government has to spend on AIDS is money that can't be spent on education and economic development. And if you lose large numbers of a whole generation, they won't be out there in their working years contributing to the wealth and strength of your country.

So again I implore you—we'll do what we can to help, but you make sure that every young person—every young person—is committed to doing what it takes to avoid HIV and AIDS. You make sure that you stay in school as long as you can and to keep your friends in school. And if you do that, then we'll do what we can to work with your Government to create economic opportunity and to bring whatever miracles modern medicine can produce to deal with the terrible horrors of AIDS. We'll get through this, but you have to do your part, as well.

Thank you very much.

Let me say to all of you, I want to thank you for the honor of addressing you, but I want to thank you even more for the work you're doing and the great spirit with which you're

doing it. Nothing is more important to our future. I intend to keep working with you in the years to come. Even though I won't be President, there still may be a thing I can do to help you along the way.

And to all my friends in Belfast, I look forward to visiting you very soon. Keep up the work toward peace. Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, before you go, we would like to make a special presentation to you. On behalf of the Team Harmony Foundation, I'd like to thank you for being a part of today and for your lifelong commitment and leadership.

The President. Thank you. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, for all you have done, to further race relations here in the United States through your initiative, One America, we would like to thank you.

Q. And now we have someone in Belfast, correct?

Q. President Clinton, for all you have done to promote peace amongst the people of Northern Ireland, we thank you.

Q. And now, our friends in South Africa.

Q. President Clinton, for being a friend to South Africa and for your commitment to our freedom and our future, we would like to thank you very much. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, we proudly present you with the Team Harmony lifetime achievement award.

Q. Here it is. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you. Bye, Jon.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 12:14 p.m. from Room 459 in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building to the rally meeting at the Fleet Center in Boston, MA. The President's remarks were also transmitted to participants in Northern Ireland and South Africa. In his remarks, he referred to Josh Zakim, son of the late Team Harmony cofounder Lenny P. Zakim; Donna Harris-Lewis and Joyce Zakim, members, board of advisors, Team Harmony; Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice Jon Jennings and Richard H. (Rick) Rendon, cofounders, Team Harmony; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of Northern Ireland.

Statement on the Report of the Interagency Task Force on Nonprofits and Government

December 5, 2000

Today I am pleased to announce the release of a report by the Interagency Task Force on Nonprofits and Government identifying exemplary partnerships between Federal agencies and private nonprofit organizations, highlighting best practices, and providing recommendations for further Federal efforts to support and expand these partnerships.

When Vice President Gore and I were elected 8 years ago, one of our key priorities was to shape a new model for the Federal Government, one that neither made Government responsible for meeting all of society's needs nor took a hands-off approach, leaving charitable organizations alone to address the challenges faced in so many communities. Instead, we sought a third way—a smaller Government committed to giving people the tools they need to make the most of their lives, while working in partnership with its citizens and living within its means.

For this kind of Government to work, we must have a strong civil society with a thriving network of national and community-based nonprofit organizations that can marshal the resources of the American people to meet the challenges before us. We had this in mind when the First Lady and I hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Philanthropy in October 1999. There I named an interagency task force made up of my White House staff and representatives of 19 Federal agencies to examine one important facet of the Third Way: partnerships between the Federal Government and nonprofit organizations. I directed members of the task force to identify the best examples of these private/public partnerships and evaluate

the ways in which they could be improved and replicated.

In thousands of instances large and small, Government agencies are working with national, State, community, and faith-based nonprofit organizations, and in the process, are redefining the role of Government in the 21st century. From AmeriCorps to the Welfare to Work Partnership, from environmental protection to national immunization programs, nonprofit partnerships are improving the lives of citizens from Florida to Alaska, Hawaii to Maine.

The role that nonprofit/government partnerships play cannot be overstated: They make Government work better, and in turn, nonprofits are strengthened by these relationships. As a result, they are an essential part of our safety net for citizens in need, and when all else fails, nourish and protect the youngest and most vulnerable among us. These partnerships help ensure that the arts and humanities flourish, work to protect our environment and other national treasures, and help foster a community where neighbors can gather and support one another. In these ways and many more, they strengthen and sustain our civil society.

Remarks on Presenting the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights and the Presidential Medal of Freedom

December 6, 2000

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and good morning. Let me begin by thanking Secretary Albright for her remarks and her 8 years of leadership, first at the United Nations and then at the State Department, always standing up and speaking out for human rights.

And my friend of so many years John Lewis, whom I knew before I ever decided to run for President, who started with me, and as you can hear, is going out with me, finishing. [*Laughter*] In my private office on the second floor of the White House Residence, I have a picture of a very young John Lewis being beaten at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, that I was given when we went back there on the 35th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. And he has worked now for more than 35 years. I can't help noting that he's still at it. He had a piece in the New York Times the other day making the simple but apparently controversial point that the right to vote includes not only the right to cast the vote but the right to have it counted. Thank you, John.

I also want to welcome James Roosevelt and his wife, Ann, here, and Members of the Congress, Congressman Ben Gilman, Donald Payne, and Ed Pastor. I want to thank Sandy Berger and Eric Schwartz, who have worked at the White House on human rights since the day we got here in 1993. I want to thank, in his absence, Assistant Secretary of State Harold Koh, who tried to come back from Africa today to be here but couldn't make it, and our Ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Commission, Nancy Rubin.

We're here today to honor six extraordinary people. Like Madeleine, I also want to say that I wish Hillary could be here, but she's at Senator school today. [*Laughter*] It's been a great 2 days at our house, going to Senator school. I had to make sure that—I said yesterday, I said, "This is your first day of school, and so you have to go to bed early. Get a good night's sleep."—[*laughter*]—"Wear a nice dress. It's the first day of school." So today is the second day of school, and I'm sorry she couldn't be here.

But I will always be grateful that part of our service involved the opportunity she had to go to Beijing 5 years ago, to say that women's rights are human rights. And I'm grateful that she'll have a chance to continue that fight in the United States Senate.

I'd also like to thank Melanne Verveer, who worked with us every day for 8 years, and for Bonnie Campbell at the Department of Justice and Theresa Loar at the Department of State.

Thanks to so many of you in this room, for 8 years I've had the privilege of trying to bring Americans' actions more in line with America's beliefs. Secretary Albright and John Lewis both said we have made support for democracy and

freedom of religion an important part of our foreign policy. We stood up for civil rights and against discrimination at home and abroad and made it clear that America cannot simply stand by when human rights are trampled.

Dr. King once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This is a lesson we can never afford to forget, especially in this fast-forward century, when satellites, E-mail, and jet planes expand the frontiers of human contact and human awareness and bring pain and suffering instantly home to us. Globalization is bringing us closer together, with many benefits, but as with all new benefits, new responsibilities accompany them. And we have both the moral imperative and a practical incentive to do even more to recognize the rights and dignity of every person, everywhere.

In spite of what we have accomplished, which the Secretary of State articulated so clearly, major challenges lie ahead. We can never stop striving at home to become the more perfect Union of our Founders' dreams. That means we cannot abandon the struggle against discrimination and injustice here.

Specifically, let me say, I hope that in this abbreviated session of the Congress, that Congress will send me the hate crimes legislation that we worked so hard for, and which both Houses have voted for, but which a minority may yet be able to prevent. If we don't get it, I certainly hope it's one of the first pieces of legislation the next administration will ask for and sign into law.

We also must continue to support emerging democracies abroad. That means, of course, support for free and fair elections but also support for strong democratic institutions, good governance in the fight against corruption, speaking out when the progress of democracy or the most basic human rights are under threat, whether it's the scourge of slavery in Sudan, the denial of rights to women and girls in Afghanistan, curtailing religious freedom in China.

And let me say especially to the students, religious communities, and human rights activists who have done so much to publicize the atrocities of Sudan, America must continue to press for an end to these egregious practices and make clear that the Sudanese Government cannot join the community of nations until fundamental changes are made on these fronts.

Ultimately, support for human rights means preparing to act to stop suffering and violence when our values and our interests demand it. We cannot right every wrong, of course, but we cannot choose inaction, either. I have been reminded again and again that much of the best work in promoting human rights and defending freedom is done by people outside Government, students, activists, religious leaders from all walks of life, sharing an unshakable belief in the simple message of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that all humans are free and equal in dignity and rights.

Ten years after the signing of the Universal Declaration, Eleanor Roosevelt reminded us that the destiny of human rights is in the hands of all our citizens and all our communities. I established the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Awards to honor men and women who have taken the future of human rights into their committed hands. I have had the honor of working closely with several of this year's honorees and the equal honor of receiving advice and, on occasion, criticism from them, as well. So I would like to say a few words about each.

To the Lakota Sioux, the birth of a white buffalo calf is a sign of peace and harmony to come, a prophecy of the end of war and, especially, of the suffering of children. When Tillie Black Bear founded the White Buffalo Calf Women's Society more than 20 years ago, she sought to end the suffering of women and children who were victims of domestic violence. She founded the first women's shelter on an Indian reservation and then went on to help found two more.

A survivor of domestic violence herself, she has taught and counseled victims, batterers, and law enforcement officials alike. She is a founder and former president of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and known around the Nation as a leading advocate for battered women.

I want to add that, fittingly, Tillie was born on Human Rights Day, December the 10th. We thank her for her courage and a lifetime of commitment.

From the tall tales he loved to tell, to the size of his ambitions, Fred Cuny was larger than life in every sense. But the biggest thing about him was his heart and his devotion to saving lives anywhere he could. He participated in more than 70 relief missions to some of the world's most desolate places. And wherever he went, he made a lasting difference.

In Bosnia, he smuggled in enough equipment to build two water purification plants under snipers' noses, providing clean drinking water for 60 percent of the city during the worst days of the siege. General Shalikashvili called him "the hero" of our operations to help starving Kurds in Northern Iraq.

His last mission, like so many others, was to a remote and dangerous place where outsiders rarely go but where help was desperately needed. That place was Chechnya, and Fred Cuny was killed there 5 years ago. His son, Craig, is here today to accept his father's award. And we thank him and all the Cuny family—and there are lots of them here, thank goodness—for the life of one of America's and the world's great humanitarians. Thank you.

The story I am about to tell will not surprise anyone who has ever had any contact with Elaine Jones. She argued her first court case at the tender age of 11. She visited a dentist without getting her parents' permission, and when she couldn't pay the bill, the dentist decided to sue. Her parents had to work, so Elaine went to court alone and convinced the judge to dismiss the case. I wonder what the argument was? [*Laughter*]

That's when she decided she wanted to be a lawyer, and she's been speaking truth to power ever since. She was the first African-American woman to graduate from the University of Virginia Law School; later, the first African-American to sit on the American Bar Association board of governors. With a brief interruption for Government service, she's been a leader in the NAACP's fight for equal justice for almost 25 years now. She is an ardent advocate before Congress, a skillful litigator before the Supreme Court, a constant voice for people in need.

Thank you, Elaine, for being a champion of human rights for all Americans.

In the spring of 1954, a young Army Lieutenant named Norman Dorsen found himself on the frontlines of justice in his very first job out of law school, defending civil liberties from the attacks of Senator Joe McCarthy. Now, Norman has had other jobs and responsibilities, but he never abandoned his post in the struggle to preserve the rights and liberties of every American.

He argued and prepared briefs for landmark Supreme Court cases, such as *Gideon* v. *Wainright,* which established an accused person's right to legal counsel. He was, for 15 years, the President of the American Civil Liberties Union. He is now chairman of the board of the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights. For almost 40 years, he's inspired law students as a professor at New York University Law School and director of its programs in civil liberties.

I've gotten to know him through our discussions of a political Third Way, but today we thank him for reminding us that in every age, respect for civil liberties is the American way. Thank you, Norman.

In tough places, where civilians are struggling to get out, chances are you will find Archbishop Theodore McCarrick working hard to get in and to help them. The litany of countries he has visited sounds more suited to a diplomat than an archbishop: the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, the countries devastated by Hurricane Mitch, East Timor, Ethiopia, Burundi, Cuba, Haiti, Colombia.

Two years ago I was honored to send him as one of my representatives on a groundbreaking trip to discuss religious freedom with China's leaders. This year, he has been a tireless and effective leader in promoting debt relief for poor countries—I might say, one of the truly outstanding accomplishments that we have achieved in a bipartisan fashion in this town in the last 5 years. It's an amazing thing.

At the same time, the Archbishop is much beloved for practicing at home what he preaches around the world. This year, as he pressed the United States to fund debt relief, he forgave the $10 million in debts of poor parishes in his Newark diocese.

Archbishop, we thank you for your devotion to all God's children, and we welcome you to your new home in the diocese of Washington, DC.

These five Americans have made our Nation and the world a better place. May they continue to inspire and guide us all for years to come.

Major, read the citations.

[*At this point, Maj. William F. Mullen III, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the Eleanor Roosevelt Awards for Human Rights.*]

The President. Do you want to know what Elaine said to me? [*Laughter*] So I said, "Well, what argument did you make when you were 11 years old?" She said, "I said he didn't have permission to take all those X rays. I mean, I was just 11 years old." [*Laughter*] So this

guy was supposed to be the only person on Earth who could have said no to her. [*Laughter*] We need you now, girl. That's good. That's good. [*Laughter*]

The Presidential Medal of Freedom was created by President Truman to honor noble service in times of war. It was expanded by President Kennedy to honor service in times of peace. I have been privileged to award the medal to many champions of liberty.

Today we continue that tradition with a difference. The person we honor, Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, cannot be with us. In fact, she doesn't even know we're here today, thinking of her and her struggle in her country. She sits confined, as we speak here, in her home in Rangoon, unable to speak to her people or the world. But her struggle continues, and her spirit still inspires us.

Twelve years ago she went home to Burma to visit her ailing mother and found herself at the helm of a popular movement for democracy and human rights. A decade ago, she led her persecuted party in parliamentary elections that were neither free nor fair; yet they still won 80 percent of the seats. Her victory has never been recognized by the Government of Burma, but her hold on the hearts of the people in Burma has never been broken.

In the years since, she had seen her supporters beaten, tortured, and killed, yet she has never responded to hatred and violence in kind. All she has ever asked for is peaceful dialog. She has been treated without mercy, yet she has preached forgiveness, promising that in a democratic Burma there will be no retribution and nothing but honor and respect for the military.

No one has done more than she to teach us that the desire for liberty is universal, that it is a matter of conscience, not culture. When her son, Alexander, accepted her Nobel Peace Prize, he said she would never accept such an honor in her name, but only in the name of all the people of Burma. I imagine she would say the same thing today—that she would tell us that for all she has suffered, the separation from her family, the loss of her beloved husband, nothing compares to what the Burmese people, themselves, have endured—years of tyranny and poverty in a land of such inherent promise.

Our thoughts are with them. This medal stands for our determination to help them see a better day. The only weapons the Burmese people have are words, reason, and the example of this astonishing, brave woman. Let us add our voices to their peaceful arsenal. Keep using every instrument of influence to support Aung San Suu Kyi's quest for democracy through dialog.

Those who rule Burma should know that they can regain their place in the world only when they regain the trust of their own people and respect their chosen leaders. And the woman we honor today should know, America will always be a friend to freedom in Burma—a friend for as long as it takes to reach the goal for which she has sacrificed so very much.

I would like to ask Alexander to come up here, and I'd like to ask the major to read the citation.

[*At this point, Major Mullen read the citation, and the President presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming today. We are adjourned.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The President presented the awards and medal as part of the observance of Human Rights Day. In his remarks, he referred to James Roosevelt, grandson of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, and his wife, Ann; Eric P. Schwartz, Senior Director, Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs, National Security Council; Melanne Verveer, Chief of Staff to the First Lady; Bonnie J. Campbell, Director, Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice; Theresa Loar, Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, Department of State; and Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA (Ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Statement on the Pathways to College Network

December 6, 2000

I applaud today's announcement of the Pathways to College Network, an important partnership that will complement our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives by helping to put disadvantaged students on track to a college education. While more and more Americans are enrolling in college, too many disadvantaged students in America still lack the support, resources, motivation, and high expectations that they need to succeed.

In today's information economy, education may be the best investment of a lifetime. Over the past 8 years, we have made the largest investment in higher education since the GI bill by increasing Pell grants and creating the HOPE scholarship, the lifetime learning tax credit, and direct student loans. To help more disadvantaged students get on track for college success, we created the GEAR UP initiative and expanded resources for TRIO.

The Pathways to College Network will build on our effort to expand college opportunities by researching successful programs and using the results to help students across the country. I salute the commitment made by six prominent foundations including the Ford and Gates Foundations, leading non-profit groups dedicated to college opportunity, and Secretary of Education Riley. The network recognizes that elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and communities must work together if we are to successfully address this issue. There is no higher priority than continuing to work to ensure that all Americans have access to a quality education.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on Funding for Child Care

December 6, 2000

Today the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is releasing an important report showing that in 1999, States were able to provide child care assistance to only 12 percent of all federally eligible low-income working families. Also today, the Children's Defense Fund is releasing a report showing that the cost of child care is the greatest barrier low-income families face in finding quality care for their children. These new findings demonstrate that too many working families are still struggling with the high cost of child care, and we must ensure America's families have access to affordable, quality child care so they can balance their responsibilities both at work and at home. Under my administration, Federal funding for child care has more than doubled, and the 1996 welfare reform law increased child care funding by $4 billion to provide child care assistance to families moving from welfare to work and to other low-income families, but we can do more.

Two months ago we reached a bipartisan agreement with Congress to provide an $817 million increase for the child care and development block grant program, bringing funding to $2 billion. In 2001 this increase would enable the program to provide child care subsidies for nearly 200,000 more children. With these new resources, combined with the child care funds provided as part of welfare reform, the program could serve more than 2.1 million children in 2001, an increase of nearly one million since 1997. We are still meeting only a fraction of the need, but this is a critical step forward. I urge Congress to complete the work it has left undone for more than 2 months and heed the message of these reports by increasing funding for affordable, quality child care. America's working families should not have to wait any longer.

Interview With Jann Wenner of Rolling Stone Magazine
October 10, 2000

Situation in the Middle East

Mr. Wenner. Last time I sat down with you here in the White House and had a long conversation, it was just right after Wye, and you were feeling real good and real happy and really accomplished and, today, considerably different. How are you feeling? You must be exhausted.

The President. Well, one night about 3—when did I stay up all night?

Press Secretary Jake Siewert. It was Friday night.

The President. Yes, Friday night I was up all night talking to them. That's not quite true. I slept an hour, and then maybe I slept another 30 or 40 minutes in different snippets. I'd just fall asleep. But I've been working this hard now.

Today I feel pretty good because the violence has gone down considerably. Prime Minister Barak had a Cabinet meeting that lasted almost all night last night. It did last all night. It broke up about 5 a.m. this morning. And in the middle of it, he came out and announced that the Israelis would suspend their ultimatum, because they had some encouragement and there was so much effort being made by the world diplomatic community.

Mr. Wenner. What are you doing from here, in Washington, at your desk talking on the phone with these guys? I mean, how are you able to effect this, and what do you see your role as now?

The President. Well, I've spent so much time with both of them, and I know quite a bit about what makes them tick. And I think I understand the pressures they're both under, and I believe I understand what happened here, how they both came to see themselves and their people as victims in this. So I've tried to do what I could to help.

I think that they both became concerned about 24 hours ago, maybe a little more, that this thing could really slide into a much deeper conflict. So at least today we've pulled back from the precipice. Kofi Annan is out there, and I think he's doing some good work there. And of course, there are any number of other people out there trying to make diplomatic efforts to kind of end the violence.

So I feel good today, as compared with yesterday. And I'm sorry that the peace process has been temporarily derailed. Although, if we can end the violence and if we can get agreement between the two sides on some sort of fact-finding commission to figure out how this happened and how to keep it from happening again—which was the thing that the U.N. resolution called for, that, in fact, Barak and Arafat had agreed to in Paris. Although they hadn't agreed to the composition of the commission, they had agreed that it ought to be done. If we can do that, the next big step is to begin the negotiations, the peace negotiations, as immediately as possible, because otherwise the sort of public pressures, both within the Middle East and beyond, will get worse.

Mr. Wenner. Were you shocked by what happened? Were you surprised?

The President. Yes, a little bit. I was surprised it spread as quickly as it did. I was surprised that the feelings on both sides could be stripped to the core as quickly as they did, because they've made so much progress and they got so close.

But in a funny way, I think that from the Israeli point of view, Camp David made them feel even more vulnerable because Barak, at Camp David and since, went further by far than any Israeli Prime Minister had gone before. And I think the Palestinians, number one, really thought it wasn't enough to make a peace agreement but also have a different strategy since basically the physical concessions have to be made by Israel—except for what the Palestinians have to agree on security, in terms of joint security presence in what would become a Palestinian area in the West Bank. They have to make agreements on the West Bank territory, on the right-of-return language in the U.N. resolutions, who gets to come back, and if they don't come back, what is their compensation. They have to resolve Jerusalem, and they have to deal with security.

Interestingly enough, because it was the most concrete with the fewest number of unpredictable consequences in the future, they made more progress at Camp David on security than anything else. They also had a habit of working

together on security and getting along. But I think that the Israelis sort of felt aggrieved that they didn't get more done, because they offered so much. Then the Palestinians felt provoked by what happened on the Temple Mount with——

Mr. Wenner. Sharon?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Wenner. Let's not get too far into this——

The President. We don't have to get into the weeds, but the point is that then a whole series of events happened where each side began—with each successive event it seemed that each side misunderstood the other more.

Mr. Wenner. Does any of it tend to piss you off about the relationships that you formed with—you formed a very strong relationship with Arafat and also Barak. Did it change your mind any, when you get into this—goddammit, Yasser—you have the same interpreter, right, that you used to share?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Wenner. So you've got a close relationship. Doesn't that——

The President. Well, it's frustrating.

Mr. Wenner. This will all be settled by the time this comes out, so just speak your mind. [*Laughter*]

The President. It will all be settled, or it won't by the time this comes out.

The whole thing is frustrating, but you've got to realize we're dealing with fundamental questions of identity. What Jack Lew was saying at Rosh Hashanah, though—the Jews go back and read the story of Abraham and Sarah giving birth to Isaac. I was thinking it's interesting how the circumstances under which the sons of Abraham were born and became separated. And it sounds like sort of epic family tragedy, and they just sort of keep replaying it down through the years.

That's the thing that bothers me. I just hope that somehow, you know, at this moment, however long it takes, we'll get beyond that. To the outsider who cares about them both, it seems so self-evident that the only acceptable answer is for them to find a way to live together in peace.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Wenner. Changing the subject a little bit. When you're out of office, what are the three or four issues you think you're going to want to most focus on and be most concerned with?

The President. Well, first of all, I haven't quite figured out what to do and how to do it, because I'm so into what I've been doing. I've laid the basic plans for my library and policy center. And I know I'm going to have an office in New York, because I'll be there, as well. And I've talked to a lot of people in general terms about it.

But I decided that I would try to be effective in this job right up until the end. And in order to do it, I can't be spending vast amounts of time kind of planning out my next step. I also think I probably need a couple months to kind of just rest, relax, sleep—rest, get a little perspective.

I've thought a lot about ex-Presidencies. There have been two really great ones in history, John Quincy Adams and Jimmy Carter, and they were very different. Quincy Adams went back to the House of Representatives and became the leading spokesman for abolition. *

You see the Washington Monument right behind us that actually, in his last term in Congress, was Abraham Lincoln's only term in the House, and they stood together on that mound when the Washington Monument was dedicated.

But Jimmy Carter used the Carter Center to do very specific things. He works on human rights, election monitoring, getting rid of river blindness in Africa, agricultural self-sufficiency. From time to time, he's engaged in various peace issues, primarily in Africa. And he works here at home on Habitat for Humanity, which is now, by the way, the third-biggest homebuilder in America—stunning thing—and also involved all over the world. I've been to Habitat sites in Africa, or one in Africa, but there are more than one. There are lots of them over there.

So the challenge is to trade power and authority broadly spread for influence and impact tightly concentrated. That's basically the challenge. And I'm sure I'll be interested; I'll try to do a lot on the areas that I've always been involved in, this whole area of racial and religious reconciliation at home and around the world, economic empowerment of poor people, something I'm very interested in here and around the world.

* White House correction.

As we speak, I still don't know for sure whether the new markets initiative that the Speaker of the House and I have built such a broad bipartisan coalition for will pass. We've got 300-some votes for it in the House. It's really got a chance to be one of the signature achievements of this Congress, and it is something that Republicans ought to like, because it basically involves getting private capital into poor areas in America.

And then I've got a big initiative to relieve the debt of the world's poorest countries that will put the money into education, health care, and development back home, if they get the debt relief. So that's something that I've always been very interested in. We make 2 million microcredit loans a year around the world, under AID in my administration. We set up——

Mr. Wenner. The Grameen Bank model.

The President. The what?

Mr. Wenner. The model of the Grameen Bank.

The President. Grameen Bank—Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and in America, the South Shore Bank. We set up a community development financial institution program here in America, and we fund those here in America, as well. So we've done a lot of work on that.

And I'm very interested in this whole idea of the relationship of energy to economic growth and the challenge of global warming, which I believe is real. And I believe we can break the iron link between how nations get rich and how they deal with the environment. I don't think—I think the energy realities of the world have changed drastically in the last 10 years, and they're about to really change with the development of fuel cell engines, alternative fuels. And there's also—we've funded a lot of research on biofuels—not just ethanol from corn, but you can make biofuels out of grass. You can cut the grass out here and make fuel out of it.

But the conversion is not good. It takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to make about 8 gallons of biofuel. But they're working on research which would lead to one gallon of gasoline making 8 gallons. So I'm interested in all that.

I'm interested in the breakdown of public health systems around the world. AIDS, TB, and malaria kill one in every four people that die every year now, those three diseases.

Mr. Wenner. So you would set up something like—you're very mindful of the Carter Center.

The President. I don't know. I don't know how I'm going to do it. I'm thinking about it. I've explored a lot of ideas, but I'm going to take some time when I get out to think about it. I also want to make sure that whatever I do, I give the next President time to be President, and whatever I do, I don't get in the way of the next President, because a country can only have one President at a time, and I want to be supportive of that.

Theodore Roosevelt

Mr. Wenner. Well, you must have obviously thought a lot about Teddy Roosevelt. I mean, you are—or he—are the youngest—you're the youngest President since Teddy Roosevelt, to come out of a successful Presidency, and be in your midfifties, because of your powers, really, and energy. Do you compare yourself much to him? Have you thought much about him?

The President. Well, I think the time in which I served was very much like the time in which he served. And I think the job I had to do was quite a lot like—there are some interesting historical parallels with the job he had to do, because he basically was—his job was to manage the transition of America from an agricultural to an industrial power, and from essentially an isolationist to an international nation. In my time, we were managing the transition from an industrial to an information age, and from a cold-war world to a multipolar, more interdependent world. And so I've always thought these periods had a lot in common.

But when Teddy Roosevelt left, he served almost 8 full years, because McKinley was killed in 1901, shortly after he was inaugurated. But he thought he really should observe the two-term tradition that George Washington had established—that his cousin would later break in the war—before, the election was right before the war. But World War II was already going on when Franklin Roosevelt was—but anyway, Roosevelt, when he got out, then he felt Taft had betrayed his progressive legacy. So he spent a lot of the rest of his life—he built a whole third-party-new-political movement and promoted what he called the New Nationalism around America. And he was a very important political force.

But I think in some ways the impact he might have had was a little tempered by his evident disappointment at not being President anymore.

And I think—that's not an option for me, because I can't run again, because now there's the 22d amendment. Roosevelt didn't have the 22d amendment. So it's not a real issue for me. So I've got to try to use whatever influence and networks and friendships and support I've built up around the world and here at home just to have a positive impact, to be an effective citizen. And I think I'll find a way to do it.

22d Amendment

Mr. Wenner. If there wasn't the 22d amendment, would you run again?

The President. Oh, I probably would have run again.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think you would have won?

The President. Yes. I do.

Press Secretary Siewert. That was an "if." [*Laughter*]

The President. But it's hard to say because it's entirely academic. It's such a——

Mr. Wenner. On the other hand, you've got the advantages of the incumbency; you've got the highest popularity rating of any President; the economy is doing good. It looks like you would have won in a walk. Do you think the 22d amendment is such a good idea? Is it really consistent with democracy, to have this kind of term limit on a President?

The President. I think the arguments for executive term limits are better than the arguments for——

Mr. Wenner. Congressional?

The President. ——all legislative term limits. I've never supported legislative term limits. I don't think they're good ideas. But I think the arguments for executive term limits, on balance, are pretty compelling. I mean, I have an extra amount of energy, and I love this job, and I love the nature of this work. But maybe it's better to leave when you're in pretty good shape, too. Better to leave when you're in good shape.

I think maybe they should—maybe they should put "consecutive" there. Maybe they should limit it to two consecutive terms. Because now what's going to happen is—see, Teddy Roosevelt was young but not so young for his time. He was the youngest person to have been President, but he died at 61. Now, anybody that lives to be 65 has a life expectancy of 82. So you're going to see people who—most people mature, politically—and it's like all different activities have—gymnasts are tops at 14 or 15, basketball players at 25 or 28.

Mr. Wenner. Presidents?

The President. Presidents normally about 50, 51. Roosevelt was 51 when he was elected. Lincoln was 51 when he was elected. In their early fifties, most Presidents do their best.

Mr. Wenner. Retirement is functionally the early fifties.

The President. Yes. And now you're going to have more and more people, particularly that come after me, living much longer lives. So we might decide——

Mr. Wenner. Is that enough time to repeal the 22d amendment, get that through?

The President. No. This is not really about me, because my time is up. But I think that if—you can't predict all the challenges the country will face in the future and whether someone uniquely suited to a given moment will be there. So maybe they should—but I'm just saying, you may have people operating at a very high level of efficiency, in politics, from age 50 to age 80 in the future, because of the changes in the human life cycle that are going to come about as a result of the human genome and pharmaceutical developments and all kind of other things we're learning. We may be able to reverse Parkinson's. We may be able to reverse Alzheimer's. So there's going to be a lot of things that are different about aging in the future. We're going to have to totally rethink it in ways we can't imagine.

And if it seems appropriate, then I think some future Congress may give the States a chance to at least limit the President to two consecutive terms, and then if the people need a person, a man or a woman, to come back in the future, they can bring them back. That might happen. It may take decades, but it wouldn't surprise me if it happened simply because of the lifestyle, the length of life we're looking at.

Mr. Wenner. Not to drag this out—people say that you love campaigning. I mean, that you don't stop campaigning in all aspects. I mean, how are you going to sort of withdraw from that in the next couple of years? How do you stop campaigning?

The President. I don't know. I do like politics. But I like governance, too. I like policy. I liked it all. That's one of the reasons why I've been so fortunate in my life; I got to do something that was basically about politics and policy and governing, and in executive positions, being a

Governor for a dozen years and President for 8. I got to deal with politics, policy, and governing, the three things that I really loved. And I think I got better at it all as I went along.

I'm very interested—I think I'll spend a lot of time helping other people. I'm thrilled about Hillary running as we do this interview. I believe she will win. I hope she will, and I believe she will. I have worked very hard with Tony Blair to try to build this network around the world of kind of likeminded political leaders, and if I can be helpful to them, I want to be. So I'm sure that, from time to time, I'll get a chance to do a little politics after I leave here.

But I'm also looking forward to a different chapter in my life. I mean, this is an interesting challenge. I'm still young enough to learn how to do new and different things. And it's exciting to me. There's never been a period in my life that I didn't enjoy and find challenging and rewarding. And so I just need a little time to get my bearings and hope I'm not too old to change.

Gays in the Military

Mr. Wenner. Going back to the beginning, one of the first things you did in your earlier term was trying to overthrow the military ban on gay people. Why did this backfire, and what did you learn from that?

The President. Well, I think it backfired partly because the people that were against it were clever enough to force it, force the pace of it. I tried to slow it down, but the first week I was President, Senator Dole, who saw it as, I think, an opportunity, pushed a vote in the Senate disapproving of it. And I tried to put it off for 6 months, and the Joint Chiefs came down and raised hell about it. And I wanted to do it the way Harry Truman—Harry Truman issued an order saying, "Integrate the military. Come back in 3 years or 2 years, whatever, and tell me how you're going to do it." And a lot of the gay groups wanted it done right away and had no earthly idea of what kind of—I think they were shocked by the amount of congressional opposition.

So a lot of people think I just sort of compromised with the military because they asked me to. That's not what happened. A lot of people have forgotten that. We knew that there were—at least 75 percent of the House would vote against my policy. So if I were going to sustain a different policy and have it withstand congressional action, I had to have a veto-proof minority in one House or another. But what happened was, the Senate voted 68–32 against my policy, which meant that I could not sustain my policy in either House, which meant they were going to enact it over my—they were going to, in a sense, ratify the status quo in law.

And it was only at that time that I worked out with Colin Powell this "don't ask, don't tell" thing, went to the War College, and explained what the policy was going to be based on, what we had agreed—the agreement we had reached together. And then they wrote that into law. And then we had several years of problems where it was not being implemented in any way consistent with my speech at the War College, which General Powell agreed with every word of, which we'd worked out.

So Bill Cohen has now changed the training and a lot of the other elements that contributed to the fact that this policy continued to have a lot of abuse in it, and I think it's better now. But I still don't think it's the right policy. I think the policy I implemented originally, that I wanted to implement was the right policy.

Mr. Wenner. Would you do it any differently? Do you wish you could have done it differently?

The President. I don't know. I think that what I would like to do, what I wish I had been able to do, is to get an agreement on the part of everybody involved to take this out of politics and look at it.

But the Republicans decided that they didn't want me to have a honeymoon, that they wanted to make me the first President without one, that we were living in a 24-hour news cycle, and that the press would happily go along with my not getting a honeymoon and that they would make this the opening salvo.

And they understood—and I didn't understand exactly what I know now about how what we do here plays out in the country. Because they've added up, first—but because it was one of my campaign commitments and I refused to back off of it, the message out in the country was, "We elected this guy to turn the economy around, and his top priority is gays in the military." That's not true. It was Bob Dole's top priority.

Bob Dole's top priority was making this the controversy that would consume the early days of my Presidency, and it was a brilliant political move by him, because at the time I was not

experienced enough in the ways of Washington to know how to explain to the American people what was going on. If it happened to me again, I would say, "Why is this the Republicans' top priority? I don't want to deal with this now. This is their top priority. We can deal with this in 6 months when the study is done; let's take care of the American people now."

And if it happened now, all the gay groups, who are now much more sophisticated about dealing in Washington than they were then, would come in and say, "That's absolutely right. Why is he doing this? We don't want this dealt with now. We want to deal with—" and we would put it back on them. They would be in the hot box, and we could win it.

But the country has come a long way on gay rights issues since '93. Because keep in mind, we did drop the ban on gays in security positions, national security positions. We had done a whole lot of other things to advance a lot of the causes that the gay rights community wanted. So we have made a lot of progress there—plus all the people I've appointed.

And I think the country has moved on that issue. The country is overwhelmingly for hate crimes legislation. The country supports employment nondiscrimination legislation. The only reason that we can't get those through the Congress is that the leadership of the Republican Party is way to the right of the country.

Mr. Wenner. You know, historically, politicians have never, ever done much for gay rights. But gay issues are in the mainstream—certainly, for instance, Reagan, who was very funny with gay people and had lots of experience in Hollywood. Why did you take it upon yourself, particularly in light of the political heat, to advance the causes of gay people?

The President. I believed in it. It's not very complicated. I just said, from the time I was a kid, I had known people who were gay, and I believed that their lives were hard enough without having to be hassled about it. I saw it as a civil rights issue.

I also didn't buy the kind of conservative attack on them, that this was sort of a conscious choice to have a depraved lifestyle. I had had enough gay friends since I was a young man to know that—to believe, at least, that that's not the case. So I saw it as a civil rights issue. I believed in it.

I also thought that as a white southern Protestant, who could obviously talk to a lot of the so-called Reagan Democrats, the people we had lost that came back, that I was in a unique position to do it. And Al Gore, I must say, reinforced that, because he felt it at least as strongly as I did, and he wanted to do something about it. And we thought that we could do that for the same reason we thought we ought to take on the NRA. You know, that if we couldn't do it, coming from where we came from with our backgrounds and kind of out of the culture we came from, and understanding that opposing elements, who could do it? When would it ever get done? And so we did.

Mr. Wenner. Congratulations. The climate is 1,000 percent different than it was.

The President. You know, if that whole gays-in-the-military thing came up today, I don't think it would be handled in the same way. It might not be that we could win it today, but today we would get a civilized response, and we'd have a long study. There would be hearings. People would handle this straight. It wouldn't just be a—it would be handled in a whole different way today. The climate has changed, I think, rather dramatically.

Boy Scouts

Mr. Wenner. What about what's going on with the Boy Scouts? Were you disappointed with the Supreme Court decision, and what do you think you, as President, can do about that?

The President. Well, I can't do anything as President about the Supreme Court decision.

Mr. Wenner. Were you disappointed with it—not about the decision but about the Boy Scouts?

The President. I think the Boy Scouts were wrong. I think what the Boy Scouts were reacting to was one of these stereotypes for which there is no evidence whatever, which is that adult—gay adults are more likely to abuse children than straight adults, sexually. I think that's what was going on. It's a stereotype. It's not true. There is no evidence to support it. But I think that—I think that's what was behind that. The Scouts were scared. Now, apparently, the Girl Scouts have no such prohibitions and have had no known problems.

Mr. Wenner. Well, there are less gay girls than there are gay guys—Girl Scouts.

The President. I'm not sure about that.

Mr. Wenner. I don't know. I'm just bullshitting. [*Laughter*]

The President. I doubt that. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Wenner. You're smart. You are smart, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

Is there something—doesn't the President have an official capacity with the Boy Scouts as, like, an honorary chairperson or something like that?

The President. Oh, yes. And the gay groups asked me—not the gay groups, the press asked me if I would—whether I should resign from that. The President is always the honorary chairman of the Boy Scouts. And it's going to be interesting when we have our first woman President, if they make her the honorary chair of the Girl Scouts, or she gets to be the honorary chair of the Boy Scouts. [*Laughter*] That will be a kick. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, and I decided I shouldn't, and I think that's right. Because I think that—first, I think the Scouts do a world of good, and in our time they have begun to be more active in the cities, which I think is really important, to go into a lot of these places where the kids don't have a lot of family or community support. And I think that it's near the end of my term, so it would just be like a symbolic thing that would, in my view, probably cause more harm than good.

And I think it's better for me to say I disagree with the position they took and try to persuade them to change their position, which I hope they will do, because I think——

Mr. Wenner. It seems like there are so many States and communities that are moving to pressure them.

The President. To change?

Mr. Wenner. Yes.

The President. Yes, I think there should be a lot of grassroots pressure on them to change. But that's where they will change.

Mr. Wenner. That's a surprise.

The President. That's where they'll change. They'll change at the grassroots level. But what's happening is—look, the overwhelming thing which changes people's attitudes on these issues is personal contact, personal experience.

I'll tell you a little story. When we did the gays-in-the-military thing, I got—not my pollster, another guy that I knew sent me a poll he had done saying this is a political disaster for you, and here's why—but that's not the reason, the point I'm telling you. The polls showed by 48 to 45, people agreed with my position in 1993.

But when asked, do you strongly—so I won it, 48–45. But among those who felt intensely, I lost it 36–18 or 15—36–15.

Mr. Wenner. Not a single-cause vote at all.

The President. No, but for the antis, it was a single-issue vote. For the pros, it was, "You know, I'm broadminded; I've got a lot of other things on my mind."

Press Secretary Siewert. They're still mad at Cheney for what he said the other day.

The President. Yes. What did Cheney say?

Press Secretary Siewert. He wasn't hard over against—he wasn't hard enough over against gay marriage or civil unions.

The President. Let me make the larger point. But in this poll, interestingly enough—now, again, this was '93—there was not a huge gender gap; there was not even a huge regional gap, as you might expect with the South being way bigger than anyplace else. There were only two big gaps. People who identified themselves as evangelical Christians were 72–22 against my position. People who said yes to the question, "Have you personally known a gay person?" were 66–33 for my position.

So this is a matter of personal experience, and the country will come to this. They will come to the right place on this. Most gay people kept their sexual preference secret for a long time. A lot of venerable institutions in society that worry about their respectability and impact—and the Boy Scouts is such a venerable institution—what they're really dealing with is people coming out much more than affirmative prejudice.

It's like, "Hey, let's go back to the way it used to be where people didn't say and I didn't have to deal with this." That's what I believe, anyway. Because I remember—I grew up in a southern town. One of my teachers was gay. There was a gay doctor in my hometown that some people knew and didn't talk about.

So we're dealing with a huge kind of—and this goes to the core of how people think about themselves and how you work through all this. We'll get there. We'll get there. But it's a matter of personal contact.

Richard Nixon

Mr. Wenner. In your first year in office, you regularly talked with Richard Nixon. What did you two talk about, and what were your impressions?

The President. He came up here. Do you remember that?

Mr. Wenner. Vaguely.

The President. He came to the White House. I had Nixon back at the White House. I've got a letter that I treasure that Nixon wrote me about Russia a month to the day before he died. And it was—how old was he then, 80, 81?

Mr. Wenner. Yes.

The President. It was really a lucid, eloquent letter. Have you ever seen that letter, Jake?

Press Secretary Siewert. No.

The President. You know, it was sort of his take on where Russia was and—the early part of my Presidency.

Press Secretary Siewert. He went to Russia right before he died.

The President. That's correct. He went there. He came back. He wrote me a letter about where he thought things were, and a month later he was gone.

Well, I had him back here. I just thought that I ought to do it. He lived kind of in the—he had lived what I thought was a fundamentally constructive life in his years out of the White House. He had written all these books. He tried to—and he tried to be a constructive force in world affairs. And I thought that he had paid quite a high price for what he did, and I just thought it would be a good thing for the country to invite him back.

Mr. Wenner. So when he came up, what was it like when he came here? Was that the first time you had met him, in a way that—spend any time?

The President. Actually it's funny, because I had had two other chances in my life to meet him. We were somewhere in 1969—we were at a dinner. I was working here in the summer—1970—and there was a dinner where he was, and I didn't go shake hands with him, because I was young and mad about the Vietnam war.

And then in the 1980's sometime, we were in the same hotel in Hong Kong. We were staying in the Peninsula Hotel in Hong Kong. I was there on a trade mission, and I was supposed to meet him, and somehow or another it got messed up. I can't remember what happened.

Mr. Wenner. But when he came here, what was that like? What was he like? He was kind of a stiff guy, right?

The President. Yes. He met my daughter, who was then going to Sidwell, and his mother was a Quaker, and I think his children went there, or at least had some association with Quaker schools. So he had this long talk with Chelsea about—who was then 13—about Sidwell and Quaker schools. But it was rather touching, because he seemed still, after all this time, somewhat ill at ease in personal conversations with people he didn't know. But it was obvious to me that he had thought about what he would say when he met my daughter.

Mr. Wenner. How was he like to you? I mean, did he treat you like the young man, or was he nervous?

The President. He sort of identified—it's interesting, he told me he identified with me because he thought the press had been too hard on me in '92 and that I had refused to die, and he liked that. He said a lot of life was just hanging on. So we had a good talk about that. [*Laughter*]

But I found it interesting—I always thought that he could have been—he did some good things, and I always thought he could have been a great President if he had been more, somehow, trusting of the American people, you know. I thought that somewhere way back there, his—something happened in terms of his ability to just feel at home, at ease with the ebb and flow of human life and popular opinion.

And I think also, some of his weaknesses were reinforced by the way he rose to national prominence, because he got elected to Congress by convincing people Jerry Voorhees was soft on communism, and he got elected to the Senate by convincing people that Helen Gahagan Douglas was soft on communism. Then he busted Alger Hiss and got to be Vice President when he was, I don't know, 38 years old—37. He was just a kid. Because he was only—Kennedy was 43 and Nixon was 46, I think. Nixon was my age. Nixon would have been, had he won in '60, would have been as young as I was when he got elected.

So I think all of a sudden, boom, one term in the Congress, a couple years as a Senator, boom, you're Vice President, 8 years as Vice President, and how did you do this? You did this by sort of whipping popular opinion up into this frenzy by demonizing your opponent as being a little pink.

And I think that kind of reinforced some of his weaknesses. Whereas, if he had had to run

like I did, in a little State, where you had to go to every country crossroads, people expect you to run the Governor's office like a country store, and you were used to brutal campaigns and used to trusting people to sort of see through them, if you fought them out hard enough, I think it might have rounded him in a different way. I think it might have prepared him a little.

Mr. Wenner. By all accounts, he was a nicer guy before the Jerry Voorhees campaign—and that there is something in that. And it wasn't even an idea he liked.

The President. Well, look, when he ran for President, he got 35 percent of the black vote. If he had a good record on civil rights—and for a Republican, he had a good record in the House and the Senate. And you know, there is no—when he got to be President, he signed the EPA and OSHA and a lot of other stuff. The guy had some—and he had a very fertile policy mind. He could get out of his ideological box. Remember, it was Nixon that imposed wage and price controls in 1971.

Mr. Wenner. And effectively.

The President. He understood that. He understood that only a Republican could go to China.

Nation-Building Presidents

Mr. Wenner. Which Presidents do you feel the most affinity for, in terms of the way—the problems they faced and the way they've handled them? We spoke a little bit about the similarity with Teddy Roosevelt. Are there any others that you feel a particular kinship to?

The President. Well, I think Roosevelt and Wilson—except I didn't have a war, thank God. But Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson had the same—during that whole period, they were dealing with the kinds of challenges that I have dealt with, both at home and around the world. And so I identified with them a lot.

There are a lot of others that I like, but I think Harry Truman, in a funny way—even though most of the ideas, like the U.N. and the international institutions, a lot of them were hatched and germinated when Roosevelt was still alive—Truman also had to create a new era, had to organize a world where our commitment to the world was not an option after the Second World War. But we had to create a set of international institutions where we could be leaders, but in which we were also interdependent. And that's what not only the U.N. but also NATO, the Marshall plan, and the Bretton Woods institutions that have been—that we've tried so hard to modify in my time.

And Truman—I liked Truman a lot. I'm from Arkansas, and we border Missouri. I was raised on Harry Truman.

Mr. Wenner. The McCulloch book made him look just great.

The President. Yes, it did. David McCulloch did a great job on that book. But I think he was pretty great. If you read Merle Miller's "Plain Speaking"—it's a much earlier book—it also made him look pretty good, and he was an old man when he did a lot of that talking. But he was pretty great.

Mr. Wenner. ——across the street from his house, in the Hay Adams Hotel, walk across the street and come to work.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Wenner. I mean, those are the—the modern Presidents. And you just gave a speech about sort of identifying a progressive tradition of which you feel that you are a part of and trying to sort of consciously come to terms with the idea of——

The President. Have you read—Wilson and FDR, and it ends in Johnson—I can't remember if he put Truman or Kennedy in it or not—but this whole sort of tradition of progressivism, of using Government as an instrument of social justice and economic progress. And so they were—Princeton, where obviously—where Woodrow Wilson was president, did a seminar, or a 2-day symposium, excuse me, on the Progressive Era, on the Presidencies of Roosevelt and Wilson. So they asked me to come and speak about that and about the relevance of that for the work I had done. So I talked about that. But I also said that they were part of a larger tradition that I also felt that this time was a part of, which was defining the Union, defining what America was.

In the beginning of this country, there was a big debate. When we started the—after we ratified the Constitution, there was a huge debate early on between George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and John Marshall on the one hand, and Thomas Jefferson and all his allies on the other, about whether we would have a strong nation and what did that mean. And you know, John Marshall subsequently became Chief Justice, and wrote all the great nation-building decisions of the first 20 years of the 19th century.

But even before that—and Alexander Hamilton you remember, wanted to build a great, strong national financial system. George Washington supported him. That's what the Federalists were. They wanted a Federal Government that was strong. The Republicans wanted more than the Articles of Confederation, but not all that much more. Now, as I said, when Thomas Jefferson got elected President, he was glad the other side won, because he used that to buy Louisiana and send Lewis and Clark out, which are two of the most important things in the first half of the 19th century that were done.

And Louisiana cost only $15 million, but that was one year's Federal budget at that time. Can you imagine what the Congress would say if I said, "Hey, I've got a deal for you, and it just costs $1.9 trillion. Let's go do this"? So that was the first battle.

The second battle was the battle to define the Union in terms of who was part of it. That's what Abraham Lincoln, you know, lived and died for. Gary Wills has argued brilliantly that he, in effect, rewrote the Constitution, the common meaning of the Constitution, for the Gettysburg Address, and brought it closer to the natural meaning of the words—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. So that was the second time.

Then the third time we had to redefine the Union was under Woodrow Wilson—Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, whom we had—one, we moved into an industrial era, and we had this huge wave of immigrants coming into our cities, into our factories. And we had to define, number one, what the role of the Nation was in incorporating all these people and defining the conditions of civilized life—child labor, minimum work week, all that stuff. And number two, what the role of the Government was in mediating between the industrial society and the civil society, which was the antitrust laws, in an economic sense, and in a larger sense, all that land Teddy Roosevelt set aside, when people first began to worry about pollution and using natural resources and all that. Teddy Roosevelt partly was able to be our first great conservation President, because people could see that growth in pollution could take away some of our natural resources.

And then, of course, Wilson built on that with a social agenda and then defining our responsibilities in the world in terms of World War I and his argument for the League of Nations, which ultimately prevailed, even though he lost it. So that was the second great time.

And then the third great time was Roosevelt in the Depression and in World War II, and afterward, Roosevelt and Truman had this—excuse me, the fourth time. You had the beginning, Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. Then you had the fourth great period, was this period, because what they were doing is, they had first to essentially bring the Government into the heart of the management of the economy. That's what—the Federal Reserve and all that had been created, but we didn't really manage the economy until the Depression. Then there was this whole idea that the responsibility of the Government was to help build and sustain a middle class society, everything from Social Security to the GI bill.

Then, after the war, what they had to do was create the conditions of permanent involvement of America in the world, because Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson got us involved in the world in a leadership way, and then we just walked away from it and paid the consequences. So the cold war was on us after the war. So basically Roosevelt and Harry Truman built the structures within which America could lead and operate in an interdependent world.

And I would argue that this period is the fifth great period of nation-defining. Because we have to define what the role of Government is in an information global society, both in terms of empowering people to make the most of their own lives, dealing with a far greater array of racial and religious and social diversity than we've ever had before, and dealing with a world that is very different than the world of the cold war, or the world before that that we used to move in and out of.

So we had to have the permanence of involvement that we had in the cold war, with a greater degree of interdependence than we had in the cold war, because it's not a bipolar world. So we have a different set of challenges. And my election spawned a reaction in the Gingrich revolution, or the Gingrich counterrevolution, where if you go back and look at all their arguments for weakening the Federal Government, for toughening stands against immigrants, for turning away from the civil rights claims of gays, for refusing to strictly enforce the civil rights laws and strengthen laws protecting women, the whole social and economic agenda they had—

and Government is bad; the private sector is good—basically, they were trying to rewrite the Progressive Era that we built up over this time, and we, I think, essentially defeated them in three stages.

One was when they shut the Government down, and we beat their budget back. Then we went on to get a bipartisan welfare reform and Balanced Budget Act and the biggest expansion in child health—under the Gingrich Congress, the biggest expansion in child health since Medicaid. Two was impeachment. And three was when, after Gingrich was gone, I vetoed their big tax cut last year, and the public stuck with me.

Now, I don't know if you saw it, but earlier this week Al Hunt had a piece on Rick Santorum saying, "Where have all the conservatives gone?", in pointing out that all these guys with these rightwing records were out there running away from what they did, running as the new moderates. And in a way, that's a form of flattery.

But the point is, every forward progress in this country has always sparked a reaction. And they won some of their reactions. I didn't prevail on health care. I didn't prevail on gays in the military. I haven't won every fight I've been in. But the big things that would have taken us down and taken the country in a different direction—the budget and Government shutdown, impeachment, and the big tax cut—those three things were the seminal battles, and we prevailed.

And if you look at it, if you look at the arguments that we're having, you can go all the way back to the beginning, and it's the same sort of thing that you saw in the fight that Washington and Marshall and Hamilton had with Jefferson and his crowd; that Lincoln had with the people that were against him, and you know, divided the country; that Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson had with the people against them; that FDR and Truman had with the people against them.

Interestingly enough, little piece of anecdotal evidence, there was a fabulous article in a paper the other day about all the people, Republicans all over America giving money to this Rick Lazio, running against Hillary. And there's a story about him going to—did I tell you this? In the New York Times, in the story about it, about how everybody that hates me or hates her or hates us both, this is their big deal, so they want to give money to Lazio.

So he's at a fundraiser in Alabama—Alabama. And there's a guy that says, "I just can't stand him." He says, "She's a carpetbagger"—and he didn't mean to New York; he meant to Arkansas—"and he is a scalawag." Now, the scalawags were the Southerners who supported the Union in the Civil War. And after the Civil War, all the Southerners who fought for the Confederacy were disenfranchised. So the only people that could vote were the scalawags, the carpetbaggers, and the blacks.

So that guy was actually exhibit A of my argument that I'm making. He was absolutely right. If I'd been there then, that's exactly what I would have been.

And one of the reasons they dislike me so intensely, that crowd, is they think I betrayed—they worked very hard, under the cover of Reagan, being quite nice, to basically have the old, conservative, white southern male culture dominate the political life of America. And they see me as an apostate, which I welcome. I mean, we have this—so when I take on the NRA or do something for gay rights, to them it's worse if I do it. It's like a Catholic being pro-choice. That's sort of that deal.

So when he said I was a scalawag, the guy knew exactly what he was saying, and he did—for anybody that read it, did a great service, because he was absolutely accurate. I have no quarrel with what he said. That's basically the great faultline we've been fighting through.

Mr. Wenner. Like Roosevelt, you're a traitor to your class?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Wenner. Like FDR?

The President. Yes. A traitor to my caste. [*Laughter*] But it's very interesting, when you see sometime—when an adversary of yours says something that you 100 percent agree with, the guy is absolutely right. That's why he's against me, and that's what I've tried to be in my whole life. I mean, I had a grandfather with a fourth grade education, fifth grade education, who was for integration of the schools. I mean, that's who we are.

And we were still having the Lincoln fight in the South, when I was a boy in school.

Mr. Wenner. They're trying to drag you out of here.

The President. I know. We'll finish.

Mr. Wenner. We've got two and a half pages done. [*Laughter*]

The President. It's good, though. Just set up another time. I owe it to him. We'll do one more. I just love Rolling Stone. They've been so good to me.

Mr. Wenner. I'd just like the long view and your philosophy about where we're going, what you've seen, and what you think about America. I want to ask you questions about, you know, what have you learned about the American people. You've had a unique exposure to them that nobody else has ever had.

The President. I'll tell you this. When I leave office, on January 20th, I will leave even more idealistic than I was the day I took the oath of office, 8 years earlier.

Mr. Wenner. Why?

The President. Because the American people almost—they are fundamentally good, and they almost always get it right if they have enough time and enough information. Now, they've got to have enough information. They've got to have enough time. They have to have a way to access it.

But the biggest problem we have in public discourse today is, there's plenty of information out there, but you don't know what's true and what's not, and it's hard to access it. It's all kind of flying at you at once. It's hard to have time to digest it. But if people have the information, they have time to digest it, they nearly always get it right. And if that weren't the case, we wouldn't be around here after 226 years.

I'm glad to see you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:10 p.m. in the Solarium at the White House, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 7. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Republican Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; historian and author Gary Wills; and journalist Al Hunt. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Jann Wenner of Rolling Stone Magazine

November 2, 2000

Mr. Wenner. Thank you for your time; I appreciate it. It takes time to do something like this.

The President. Good.

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Wenner. Why do you think the race is so tight, given the economy, the issues, the incumbency? How could it get to be this close?

The President. Well, I think for one thing, things have been good for a long time, and I think a lot of people may take it for granted and may not have—they may not be as clear as they should be, which I hope we can use the last week to do, on what specific policies contributed to it and what could undermine it. I think that's one issue.

I also think that, you know, there's not as much general awareness as there might be about the differences between the two parties on health care, education, the environment, and crime, where I believe that the things we've done over the last 8 years had a measurable impact on all those things going in the right direction.

And a lot of—most Presidential races are fairly close, you know, because a lot of Presidential voting is cultural.

Mr. Wenner. The way you were raised.

The President. Well, the way you were raised and sort of the neighborhood you live in, your socioeconomic and ethnic background. I mean, a lot of it's cultural. So I think there are a lot of reasons it's close.

Also, keep in mind, in the history of our Republic, only two Vice Presidents have ever been directly elected President. One of them—when Martin Van Buren succeeded Andrew Jackson, we were effectively a one-party country then. And the other, when George Bush defeated Michael Dukakis, the country was not in as good a shape as it is now, but it was in pretty good shape, and Bush basically destroyed Dukakis.

It was a hugely negative campaign with a lot of charges that were never effectively rebutted.

So this has been a much more positive race. There have been differences on the issues, but neither one of them has called each other's patriotism into question or whether they're normal Americans. Basically, the rap that was put on Dukakis was like reverse plastic surgery. So I think that that explains it largely.

Demands of the Presidency

Mr. Wenner. At the end of the interview, I'm going to ask you to make a bet with me.

What physical change in you says that you've served 8 years and it's a job that really takes a toll?

The President. Well, I think I'm in better shape, better health than I was 8 years ago, in a lot of ways. My hair is gray. I think that's about it. I've got a few wrinkles I didn't have 8 years ago.

But I've held up pretty well. I've had a good time. I've enjoyed it. I couldn't help my hair going gray. It would probably have gone gray if I hadn't become President.

Oklahoma City and Columbine

Mr. Wenner. One of the most important jobs that you, as a President, have is to talk to the country in the wake of national tragedies, frame the issues for the American people. I'm going to ask you about two of the things that happened during your two terms: the Oklahoma City bombing and the Columbine shootings.

Where were you when you first heard about the Oklahoma City bombing, and what was your first reaction, personally? And then how did you think you should frame that to the American people, to help them understand what's really a national trauma? And where were you when you heard it?

The President. I was in the White House. I believe I was in the White House, because I remember making a statement at the beginning, right in the Rose Garden, saying what you would expect me to say, expressing the Nation's sympathy for the loss but also urging the American people not to jump to conclusions about who had done it.

Remember in the beginning, there were a lot of people saying it was obviously some sort of act of foreign terrorism. There was one man that was brought back on an airplane. He was flying out of the country through to London, and he was brought back, suspected of maybe being involved, and he wasn't. And of course, subsequently, it was a domestic terrorist act.

But then when I went to Oklahoma, at the memorial service, what I tried to do was to elevate what the people who had been working in that building were doing. They were all public servants, and it was at a time when it was quite fashionable to bash the Government. And I told myself, even, that I would never refer to people who worked for the Government—even in agencies I thought weren't performing well—as bureaucrats again, because this whole—we have gotten, for more than a dozen years, a sort of demeaning rhetoric about the nature of Government and the nature of public service. And I tried to point out that these people were our friends and our neighbors and our relatives, and they were an important part of America's family and that their service ought to be honored in that way.

And also, obviously, I took a strong stand against terrorism. And I was able—later I went to Michigan State and gave a commencement speech and tried to amplify on that. But I really believe that was the turning of the tide in the venom of anti-Government feeling.

Mr. Wenner. Did you see—was it a conscience thought to you that this could be the turning of the tide, and if you focused it correctly, if you said, "You know, you can't love your country if you hate your Government," that this would crystallize that feeling?

The President. I think I felt that after I had some time to think about it. In the beginning I was just horrified about all those people dying, all those little kids killed and hurt.

Mr. Wenner. What I'm trying to get at is, once beyond that obvious first reaction——

The President. Yes. I mean, it occurred to me that, you know, the American people are fundamentally decent, and they've got a lot of sense. And I thought that this might break a fever that had been gripping us for too long. And I think it did.

Mr. Wenner. And you thought, if I can take advantage of this opportunity—I mean, to have this tragedy—in every tragedy comes an opportunity, so is this an opportunity where I can make people rethink that idea.

The President. I think in a way, at least at some—maybe not even at a conscious level, the American people were rethinking it. And I think

maybe that's why what I said at the memorial service struck a responsive chord in the country.

Mr. Wenner. What I'm trying to get at is, was that a deliberate thought on your part? That I have an opportunity as President to——

The President. Well, I thought that—yes, I was conscious of what I was saying.

Mr. Wenner. Did you connect it in some way to a kind of metaphorical bomb-throwing of Newt Gingrich, of the real anti-Government stance that he was taking at the time?

The President. I was careful not to do that. I wanted it to change the American peoples' attitude toward public servants and their Government. But to do it, you had to focus on what happened.

One of the things that I didn't like about Newt—and he certainly wasn't responsible in any way for the Oklahoma City bombing—because one of the things I didn't like about him is, he was always blaming the 1960's or liberals for everything that went wrong. When that woman, Susan Smith, drove her kids into the lake in South Carolina, he blamed the 1960's, and it turned out that the poor woman had been sexually abused by her father, her stepfather, who was on the local board of the Christian Coalition or something.

And when that woman dropped her kid out of the window in Chicago, he blamed the welfare culture. He was always blaming. So I didn't want to get into where I was doing reverse blame. I just wanted to try to make it clear to the American people that we shouldn't have a presumption against Government in general or public servants in particular.

Mr. Wenner. What about Columbine? Where did you first hear the news about that? And again, what was your reaction to that?

The President. I believe I was in the White House when I heard that, but I'm not sure. But I know that I called the local officials and the school officials from the Oval Office. You know, that was only the most recent and the most grotesque of a whole series of highly visible school shootings that we've had—a number of them in the South, one of them in Jonesboro, Arkansas. That was in my home State, and I knew some of the people who were involved, who run the school and in the county and in the city.

There was one in Pearl, Mississippi, and there was——

Mr. Wenner. One in Oregon.

The President. The one in Springfield, Oregon. What I thought there was that—I thought a lot of things. I thought, number one, how did those kids get all those guns, and how could they have had that kind of arsenal without their parents knowing? And I thought, after I read a little about it, how did they get so lost without anybody finding them before they went over the edge?

We had a spate of—before all these killings associated with that kind of darkness on the net, network——

Mr. Wenner. What do you mean, darkness on the net?

The President. Well, those kids were apparently into some sort of a—weren't they into some sort of satanic-like thing?

Mr. Wenner. No, they had their websites and——

The President. Their websites, yes. There were, earlier, a number of kids who killed themselves who were into talking to each other about destruction, but they weren't killing other people. And I just kept—I worry that—I worried then; I worry now about the people in our society, particularly children, that just drift off, and no one knows, or people feel helpless to do anything about it.

You know, I couldn't help thinking, wondering whether those kids could have been saved if somebody got to them, and then whether all those other children would still be alive.

Gun Safety Legislation

Mr. Wenner. It seemed shocking to me and a lot of other people that after that there was no—we didn't get any new gun control legislation after an event like that.

The President. It's going to be interesting to see what the voters in Colorado do. They have a provision on the ballot now in Colorado to close the gun show loophole. And it's a heavily Republican State, and I think it's going to pass.

Mr. Wenner. Right.

The President. I think what happened is that—well, first of all, you can't say nothing came out of it, because there was an organization of young people in Colorado that then organized kids all over the country for commonsense gun legislation. They got about 10,000 kids involved. Now we have the Million Mom March, and they're very active.

But the truth is that when legislation time comes that a lot of the people in Congress are

still frightened of the NRA, because even though there is broad public support for these measures, they are still not primary voting issues for a lot of the people who are for them. Whereas, the NRA can muster an enormous percentage of the vote—maybe 15 percent, maybe even 20 sometimes—for whom that's a primary voting issue.

So if you've got an issue where you're ahead 60–30 but in your 60 it's a primary voting issue for 10 percent of the people, and in their 30 it's a primary voting issue for 20 percent of the people, the truth is, you're a net loser by 10 percent. That's the way—that's what happens in Congress and State legislatures. They're genuinely afraid.

Mr. Wenner. They know they could lose their seats.

The President. You see the tirade that Charlton Heston has carried on against Al Gore and me, before—saying that I was glad some of these people were killed because it gave me an excuse to take people's guns away. We never proposed anything that would take anybody's guns away.

I saw a special—you may have seen it on television the other night on ABC. Peter Jennings actually went out and went to some of these gun shows. And he was talking to all these people who were absolutely convinced that we wanted to take their guns away. The NRA is great at raising money and building their organizational power by terrifying people with inflammatory rhetoric. I guess that's why, since LBJ passed the first law after Bobby Kennedy was killed, I was the first President to take him on.

Mr. Wenner. You got Brady and assault through, but why didn't you take the opportunity with this post-Columbine atmosphere? I mean, you called the White House Conference on Violence immediately——

The President. Well, I did. I tried——

Mr. Wenner. But it focused on, like, violence in the media——

The President. Yes, but we also did lots and lots and lots of events——

Mr. Wenner. ——and then you thought you could reason with the NRA.

The President. No, I didn't think I could reason with the NRA. I thought Congress would be so shocked and the public was so galvanized that we had a window of opportunity.

Mr. Wenner. Right. And what happened to that, is my question.

The President. The Republican leadership just delayed until the fever went down. That's what happened. They knew that they couldn't afford to have their Members voting wrong on closing the gun show loophole or banning the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, which allows people to get around the assault weapons ban.

Mr. Wenner. Were you powerless to do something about that?

The President. No, we had tons of events. And we got a vote—if you'll remember, we finally got a vote in the Senate, where you can bring things up, where we got a majority vote for it. Al Gore broke the tie—another reason he ought to be President, he broke the tie. But we couldn't get a bill out of a conference committee, that had it in there. If we could ever have gotten a clean vote——

Mr. Wenner. You would have won that vote.

The President. Oh, absolutely.

Mr. Wenner. And beat that——

The President. Absolutely. We could win the vote today if you could get a vote. But the leadership of the Republican Party, as long as they're in the majority in both Houses, they can control things, especially in the House. You can write the rules so that you can just keep stuff from coming up.

Mr. Wenner. So despite your power, despite that event——

The President. Yes. And we had lots and lots and lots of events at the White House, not just one. We had a ton of events. We brought people in. We talked about it. We pushed and pushed. We finally got the vote in the Senate. We got 50 votes. Then Al broke the tie. We got 51. And there's no question that we could pass it.

But I'll remind you that one of reasons that Democrats are in the minority today in the House is because of the Brady law and the assault weapons ban. And interestingly enough, we didn't—there is—not a single hunter has missed an hour; not a single sport shooter has missed an event—an hour hunting—I should have finished the sentence—or a single sport shooter has missed an event. But they acted like the end of the world, but a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers haven't gotten handguns because of the Brady law.

The ironic thing is, there's no reason here—when we tried to pass the Brady law they said,

"Well, this won't do any good because all these criminals get their guns either one-on-one or at gun shows or urban flea markets."

Mr. Wenner. Let me change the subject. This is absolutely amazing——

The President. I feel passionately about this, and I'm glad I took them on. I'm just sorry I couldn't win more. There are a lot of good people out there in America who work hard; their only recreation is hunting and fishing; they don't follow politics all that closely; they get these NRA mailings. They're good people, but they think they can believe these folks. And they know that if they can stir them up, they can raise more money and increase their membership. And they do it by basically terrifying Congress.

Race Relations

Mr. Wenner. How would you characterize race relations today, as compared to when you took office?

The President. I think they're considerably better.

Mr. Wenner. In what ways?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, the country is changing. It's growing ever more diverse and, therefore, more and more people are having more contacts across racial, ethnic, and religious lines. And I think that, ultimately, the more people relate to each other, the more they come to not just tolerate—I don't like the word "tolerance" in this context because it implies that one group is superior, putting up with an inferior group and tolerating them.

I think the more they come to genuinely appreciate each other's heritage, find it interesting, and find a fundamental common humanity—I think a lot of it is just systematic human contact. And beyond the human contact, I think that the race initiative we started led to hundreds of efforts all over the country to have honest conversations. You know, sometimes people work around each other for years and they don't know the first thing about one another. Forget about race. I mean, there are people who probably work in the White House who see each other every day that don't know the first thing about one another.

So I think that the one thing we did was to spark all these conversations and also to highlight systematic efforts that were working in local communities and try to get them replicated around the country in communities, in workplaces, in schools. I think that there was a genuine effort to deal with that.

I think the third thing is that we may have had some impact on it, I and my administration, because we were so much more diverse than any other administration in history. And I think people felt, who had never felt that way before, that the White House was their house, too; the Government was their Government, too. So I think the climate in the country was positive for that.

Mr. Wenner. And you sense that change in climate from those factors in——

The President. Absolutely. Look at the difference——

Mr. Wenner. Because this is one of your main priorities?

The President. Yes. And look at the difference in the rhetoric in the Presidential campaign this year. All the rhetoric is about racial inclusion. Now you know, we could argue about the policies. I think that the Republican policies are still divisive, but the rhetoric is about inclusion. And even they—a number of their members have taken a different tack on immigration.

Advice for Youth

Mr. Wenner. Do you have any special message to young people, any sort of valedictorian thoughts to the kids in school right now, as you leave office?

The President. Yes, I do. First of all, I think that they should realize that they're very fortunate to be living in this country at this time, fortunate because of our economic prosperity, fortunate because of our enormous diversity, and fortunate because of the permeation of technology in our society, all of which enables us to relate to the rest of the world and to one another in different and better ways.

Secondly, I think they should understand that our future success is not guaranteed and depends upon their interest in public affairs, as well as their private lives and their participation. One of the things that's really concerned me about this election is all these articles that say that young people think there is not much in it for them. I think maybe that's because there has been a lot of debate about Social Security and Medicare in the debate. They think that's an old folks' issue.

But it's actually not just an old folks' issue, because when all of us baby boomers retire—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers; the

baby boomers are people that are between the ages now of 54 and 36. So when we retire, unless everybody starts having babies at a much more rapid rate, or we have hugely greater immigration, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. Now, more of us are going to have to work into our later years. And more of us have a choice now because—one of the good things that Congress did unanimously was to lift the earnings limit on Social Security.

But anyway, even the Social Security issue is a youth issue. Why? Because the baby boomers, most of them, I know, are obsessed with our retirement not imposing an undue burden on our children and our grandchildren. But there are all these other issues.

We have to build a clean energy future to avoid global warming. Two stunning studies have come out in the last month, and because of the Presidential campaign, they've not been much noticed. One analysis of a polar icecap says that the 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years. The other projecting study estimates that if we don't change our greenhouse gas emissions, the climate could warm between 2.4 and 10 degrees over the next century; 2.4 is too much. Ten degrees would literally flood a lot of Louisiana and Florida. This is a very serious thing.

Then you've got this incredible scientific and technological revolution that will lead to, among other things—if you just take the human genome alone, a lot of the young people in America today, when they have their children, they'll get a little gene card to take home with them from the hospital, and their children will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years, because they'll be able to avoid so many of the illnesses and problems that they have a biological propensity to.

So this is a fascinating time to be alive, but it's not free of challenges. So I would say to the young people, you ought to be grateful you're alive at this time. You'll probably live in the most prosperous, interesting time in human history, but there are a lot of big challenges out there, and you have to be public citizens as well as private people.

Drugs and the Legal System

Mr. Wenner. Do you think that people should go to jail for possessing or using or even selling small amounts of marijuana?

The President. I think, first of all——

Mr. Wenner. This is after—we're not publishing until after the election.

The President. I think that most small amounts of marijuana have been decriminalized in most places and should be. I think that what we really need—one of the things that I ran out of time before I could do is a reexamination of our entire policy on imprisonment.

Some people deliberately hurt other people. And if they get out of prison—if they get in prison and they get out, they'll hurt them again. And they ought to be in jail because they can't be trusted to be on the streets. Some people do things that are so serious, they have to be put in jail to discourage other people from doing similar things. But a lot of people are in prison today because they, themselves, have drug problems or alcohol problems. And too many of them are getting out—particularly out of the State systems—without treatment, without education, without skills, without serious effort at job placement.

Mr. Wenner. You're talking about any offender?

The President. Yes. But there are tons of people in prison who are nonviolent offenders, who have drug-related charges that are directly related to their own drug problems.

Mr. Wenner. Don't you think those people—should we be putting nonviolent drug offenders in jail at all, or should we put them in treatment programs that are more fitting and not——

The President. I think it depends on what they did. You know, I have some experience with this. Let me just say——

Mr. Wenner. Well, I remember your experience is based on your brother's——

The President. Well, let me just say about my brother—whom I love and am immensely proud of, because he kicked a big cocaine habit—I mean, his habit got up to 4 grams a day. He had a serious, serious habit. He was lucky to live through that. But if he hadn't had the constitution of an ox, he might not have.

I think if he hadn't gone to prison, actually been put away forcibly somewhere, I think his problem was so serious, it is doubtful that he would have come to grips with it. I mean, he was still denying that he was addicted right up until the time that he was sentenced. So I'm not so sure that incarceration is all bad, even for drug offenders, depending on the facts. I think there are some——

Mr. Wenner. I meant——

The President. Let me finish. I think the sentences in many cases are too long for non-violent offenders. I think the sentences are too long, and the facilities are not structured to maximize success when the people get out. Keep in mind, 90 percent of the people that are in the penitentiary are going to get out. So society's real interest is seeing that we maximize the chance that when they get out, that they can go back to being productive citizens, that they'll get jobs, they'll pay taxes, they'll be good fathers and mothers, that they'll do good things.

I think this whole thing needs to be re-examined. Even in the Federal system, these sentencing guidelines——

Mr. Wenner. You've got mandatory minimums. Would you do away with those?

The President. Well, most judges think we should. I certainly think they should be reexamined—and the disparities are unconscionable between crack and powdered cocaine. I tried to change the disparities, and the Republican Congress was willing to narrow, but not eliminate, them on the theory that people who use crack are more violent than people who use cocaine. Well, what they really meant was that people who use crack are more likely to be poor and, coincidentally, black or brown and, therefore, not have money. Whereas, people who use cocaine were more likely to be rich, pay for it, and therefore be peaceable.

But my own view is, if you do something violent, it's appropriate to have an incarceration. But I think we need a serious re-examination in the view toward what would make us a more peaceful, more productive society. I think some of this, our imprisonment policies, are counterproductive. And now, you know, you have in a lot of places where, before the economy picked up, prison-building was a main source of economic activity, and prison employment was one of the big areas of job growth.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think people should lose access to college loans because they've been convicted of smoking pot—which is now law?

The President. No. I think that, first of all——

Mr. Wenner. I mean, those are people that seem to need a loan the most.

The President. First of all, I don't believe, by and large, in permanent lifetime penalties. There is a bill in Congress today that has bipartisan support that I was hoping would pass before I left office, but I feel confident it will in the next year or 2—which would restore voting rights to people after their full sentences have been discharged, and they wouldn't have to apply for a Federal pardon to get it.

I changed the law in Arkansas. When I was attorney general I changed the voting rights law in 1977, to restore voting rights to people when they had discharged their sentence. And my State is one of the relatively few States in the country where you do not have to get a pardon from the Governor to register to vote again—or from the Federal Government, for that matter.

Look, it depends on what your theory is. But I don't believe in making people wear a chain for life. If they get a sentence from a jury, if they serve it under the law, if they discharge their sentence, the rest of us have an interest in a safe society, in a successful society, and seeing that these folks go back to productive lives. You know, keeping them with a scarlet letter on their forehead for the rest of their lives and a chain around their neck is not very productive.

Mr. Wenner. Just to wrap this up, do you think that we need a major rethink of what these drug sentencing laws are?

The President. Not just drugs. I think we need to look at who's in prison, what are the facts——

Mr. Wenner. Well, they're filled with drug prisoners, these jails.

The President. ——most of them are related to drug or alcohol abuse, but there are some non-violent offenders unrelated to drug or alcohol abuse, which is not to say that I don't think white-collar criminals should ever go to jail. But I think we need to examine—the natural tendency of the American people, because most of us are law-abiding, is to think when somebody does something bad, we ought to put them in jail and throw the key away.

And what I think is, we need a discriminating view. There are some people who should be put in jail and throw the key away, because they can't help hurting other people. And I believe that one of the reasons for the declining crime rate is that we have a higher percentage of the people in jail who commit a lot of the crimes; a very small percentage of the people are multiple, habitual criminals. And if you could get a significant percentage of them in jail, the crime rate goes way down.

Now, on the other hand, there are a whole lot of other people in jail who will never commit another crime, particularly if they have—if they get free of drugs or free of their alcohol abuse and if they get education and training and if somebody will give them a job and give them another chance.

And what I think we need is a serious reexamination of what we've done, because we've done a lot of good in identifying people who are habitual criminals and keeping them in prison longer, and that's one of the reasons that the crime rate has gone down, along with community policing and improving the economy. But we also have just captured a whole lot of people who are in jail, I think, longer than they need to be in prison and then get out without adequate drug treatment, job training, or job placement.

But the society is moving on this. I notice now back in Washington, there is a really good program where—maybe two, that I know—where they try to keep people who go to prison in touch with their children, and they use the Internet so they can E-mail back and forth. They try to, in other words, not cut people off so completely that they lose all hope and all incentive of returning to normal life, and they try not to damage these kids so badly, to reduce the chances that the kids will follow in their parents' footsteps.

Mr. Wenner. Let me change the subject.

The President. I think we need a whole new look at that. The sentencing guidelines, the disparities, are only a part of it. We have to look at how long should certain people go to prison from the point of view of what's good for society. We need to completely rethink it, because criminal laws and sentencing tend to be passed sort of seriatim in response to social problems at the moment.

Mr. Wenner. You, in general, restored judicial discretion and replace the kind of panic legislation that was passed about crack or——

The President. The reasons for the sentencing guidelines in the first place was to try to reduce the arbitrary harshness. It wasn't because they wanted to make sure everybody went to jail for a while; it was because the citizen guidelines tended to be abusive on the other end of the spectrum.

I think we may need some sentencing guidelines, but I think the impact, the practical impact of the ones we have has led to some people going to prison for longer than they should and longer than they would have under the old system. So there should be some more flexibility than there is.

Military Action in the Balkans

Mr. Wenner. I'm going to change the subject. The Balkans was your only major military engagement. What was it like to run a war night after night? I mean, was it your mentality in feeling that as all of that was going on as you go to sleep every night?

The President. Well, I went to sleep every night praying that it would end that night and that Milosevic would give in, praying that no other——

Mr. Wenner. You were literally praying?

The President. Yes. Praying that nobody would die, no American would die, and hoping that no innocent civilians would die but knowing that they would.

You know, it's easy for people to talk about war when it's appropriate to use military force, but you have to know that once human beings start using big, powerful weapons, there will be unintended consequences. We wound up bombing the Chinese Embassy. Innocent people died. We hit a schoolbus. And we have the most skilled Air Force and the most sophisticated weapons in all human history.

In the Gulf war, which is normally thought of as a 100-hour war and a model of sort of technical proficiency, we had 4½ months to settle in and prepare there, and still a lot of the American casualties were from friendly fire. The same thing happened even in the small engagement in Grenada—and President Reagan. These things happen. There are—once you start killing people, there will be unintended consequences.

Mr. Wenner. How do you get yourself personally comfortable—I mean, how do you get yourself, as a person and as a politician, ready to make that decision with a level of comfort you're now going to go ahead and do this?

The President. You have to be convinced that the consequences of inaction would be more damaging to more people and to your country. And in the case of Kosovo, I didn't think it was a close case. They had already killed several thousand Kosovars, and they were running a million of them out of their homes, 800,000. It was a clean case of ethnic cleansing.

And I thought the United States and our European Allies had to stand up against it. We

couldn't let it happen in the heart of Europe. If we did that, we would lose the ability to stop it anywhere else.

Mr. Wenner. And wouldn't it be on your conscience in some way, for having failed to stop it?

The President. Absolutely. Look, it took us—one of the things that just tore at me—and in the end it didn't require much military engagement, although it required some—was how long it took me to build a consensus. It took me 2 years to build a consensus among our Allies for military action in Bosnia. And you know, what happened there was, after the slaughter at Srebrenica we finally got—you know, everybody said, "Okay, let's go"—we did a few air strikes, and all of a sudden we were at Dayton and the peace talks. And for all the raggedness of it, the Bosnian peace has held, and it's better now because we turned back the tide of ethnic cleansing.

But over 200,000 people died there. And I just knew, you know, there is no point in letting it happen again in Kosovo.

Rwanda

Mr. Wenner. How do you feel, then, about Rwanda? I mean, clearly it's a difference. You didn't have the allies; you didn't have intelligence, all kinds of things. Is there anything that we could have done to prevent it? And whether there was or not, it happened while you were President. Do you feel any responsibility in that, personally?

The President. I feel terrible about it. One of the reasons that I went to Tanzania to be with Mandela and try to talk to the Burundians into the peace agreement—because before my time, over 200,000 people were killed in Burundi. Same deal—the Hutus and the Tutsis, same tribes, fighting the same battles.

In Rwanda—the thing that was shocking about Rwanda was that it happened so fast, and it happened with almost no guns. The idea that 700,000 people could be killed in 100 days, mostly with machetes, is hard to believe. It was an alien territory; we weren't familiar. After that, we began working very earnestly in Africa to train troops to be able to go in and prevent such things. We worked very hard with something called the Africa Crisis Response Initiative.

And when I was in Senegal, I actually went out of Dakar to another city to watch a training exercise—at least a parade exercise—and talk to the troops from Senegal that our American soldiers were working with. We are now working with the Ghanaian forces and Nigerian forces to give them the training and the capacity to prevent the resumption of the slaughter of Sierra Leone.

So I think that—I hope the United States will be much, much more involved in Africa from now on, and everywhere. In economic development, we passed the Africa trade bill this year; in fighting AIDS, TB, malaria in Africa; in debt relief, we passed a big debt relief legislation this year; and in helping them to develop the mechanisms to do this.

The African countries have leaders who are willing to go in and take their responsibility in these areas if we'll give them the logistical and other support necessary to do it, if they're trained to do it. That's what happened in East Timor, where we didn't have to put troops on the ground, but we sent 500 people over there and provided vital airlift and logistical and other support, so that the Australians and New Zealanders and the other troops that came in could bring an end to the slaughter there.

So I think that there is—there is sort of a sliding scale here. In Europe it had to be done by NATO, and the scale of it and the power of the Serbian Government was such that if we hadn't been directly involved with our NATO Allies, we never could have turned it back and Milosevic never would have fallen. If we hadn't stopped him in Bosnia and Kosovo and kept the sanctions on, the people would never have had the chance to vote him out.

So I feel good about that. I wish we had been—Rwanda, if we had done all the things we've done since Rwanda and Africa—training the troops, supporting them, working with them—what I think would have happened is, the African troops would have moved in; they would have stopped it; and we could have given them the logistical support they needed to stop it.

Now, there are other problems that may develop——

Mr. Wenner. Another reason to vote for Gore.

The President. Another huge reason to vote for Gore, because, you know, Governor Bush has said that he doesn't think that's the business of the American military. We're only supposed to fight and win wars and let everybody else do this. He kept talking about Kosovo, I noticed, in a way as if we were the only forces in Kosovo.

We were only 15 percent of the soldiers in Kosovo.

Presidential Politics

Mr. Wenner. Let me change the subject, back to Washington. Why do you think you were such a lightning rod for partisanship and bitterness and so much hatred during your term now?

The President. I think there were a lot of reasons. I think mostly it's just because I won. The Republicans really didn't—they believe the only reason they lost in '76 to Jimmy Carter was because of Watergate. They believe that, from the time Mr. Nixon won in '68, they had found a fool-proof formula to hold the White House forever, until some third party came on. That's what they believe.

Mr. Wenner. Did you ever hear anybody articulate that, the Republicans——

The President. Well, in so many words. I had a very candid relationship with a lot of those guys. They would tell me what was going on. I think they really believed that America saw Republicans as the guarantor of the country's security and values and prudence in financial matters, and that they could always turn Democrats into cardboard cutouts of what they really were; they could sort of caricature them as almost un-American; and that basically the Congress might be Democratic most of the time because the Congress would give things to the American people. But the Republicans embodied the values, the strength, the heritage of the country, and they could always sort of do, as I said about Dukakis, reverse-plastic-surgery any Democrat.

So I came along, and I had ideas on crime and welfare and economic management and foreign policy that were difficult for them to characterize in that way. And we won. And they were really mad. I think I was the first President in a long time that never got a day's honeymoon. I mean, they started on me the next day. I think that was one thing.

I think, secondly, I was the first baby boomer President, not a perfect person, never planned to be—I mean, never claimed to be—and had opposed the Vietnam war. So I think that made them doubly angry because they thought I was a cultural alien, and I made it anyway.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think that the cultural——

The President. ——Southern Baptist, because the dominant culture of the Republican Party—President Reagan put a nicer image on it. But the dominant culture were basically white southern Protestant men who led the surge of the new Republican Party, first under President Nixon and the silent majority and, you know, blue-collar people, and then it came to an apotheosis under President Reagan.

So I think that, you know, they didn't like losing the White House, and they didn't like me, and they didn't like what they thought I represented. And that all happened at the time you had this huge growth in conservative talk shows and these—you know, sort of associated think tanks and groups and networks that grew up in Washington from the time of Nixon through the time of Bush.

And I think they had sort of a permanent alternative Government set up by that time. And they went to war the first day of my Presidency.

Mr. Wenner. Because you were the most threatening politically, and they despised what you represented culturally, age-wise and——

The President. ——think they honestly disagreed with me on a lot of the issues as well, but a lot of it was, they were mad they weren't in, which is one of the reasons they're working so hard now. And one of the big challenges that we face in the closing days of this election is to motivate the people that agree with us to the level that they're motivated. Just because they've been out a long time, they want back in really badly.

Early Democratic Policy Differences

Mr. Wenner. Were you surprised about the difficulties you had in your own party with Sam Nunn on the gays thing and Moynihan on health care and Kerrey on the economic plan?

The President. Not particularly, because—I'll come back to the gays in the military.

Mr. Wenner. Don't, because we've run through that. But just insofar as Nunn?

The President. No. And the answer to that is, no, because a lot of the Democrats who were culturally conservative and pro-military thought that gays in the military coming up so early was inconsistent with the whole New Democratic approach we were taking. Plus which, they thought I was wrong. But as I explained to you, I think when we talked last, I didn't bring it up first. Bob Dole did.

Now, on the other issues, the fundamental problems there was that there were no easy

answers. I mean, Bob Kerrey comes from Nebraska. He and Jim Exon were Democrats, but Nebraska is one of the most Republican States in the country, and I think, you know, he thought we should have maybe cut spending a little more or raised taxes a little less, or cut taxes a little less on lower income working people so we wouldn't have to raise it as much, you know. And I think—and we'd been through that tough Presidential campaign.

Mr. Wenner. These guys were like, you know, the party elders.

The President. Well, Moynihan believed——

Mr. Wenner. Generally, they should like say, "Well, he's our new President." That's——

The President. But I didn't take offense to that. Moynihan believed, first of all, with some justification, that he knew more about most areas of social policy than anybody else did. I think he thought we were making a political mistake not to do welfare reform first, which turned out to be right. We did make a political mistake not to do welfare reform first.

And secondly, I think he felt that the system in Washington could not absorb in a 2-year period the economic plan which he strongly supported. He was terrific. The NAFTA trade agreement, which he strongly supported, which was controversial within our party, and then this major health care thing. He really didn't believe and he's told me that, you know, he said, you know, "We just don't have time to do these." He said, "The system cannot absorb this much change in this short a time."

And you know, that was a mistake I made. Hillary gets a bum rap for that. That was basically my fault, because I knew that basically there's only two ways to get to universal coverage. You either have to have a taxpayer subsidy, which is what we've done now with the Children's Health Insurance Program, because now we've got the number of uninsured people going down in America for the first time in a dozen years, primarily because in the Balanced Budget Act, we insisted—the Democrats did—on getting the Children's Health Insurance Program, which is the biggest expansion of Government-financed health care since Medicaid. You either have to do it that way or you have to have an employer mandate where the employers have to provide the health insurance, and then you exempt smaller businesses and subsidize that somewhat.

Mr. Wenner. You——

The President. I didn't take offense at it. You know, they thought I was being bullheaded, and I think, in retrospect, they were probably right.

Newt Gingrich

Mr. Wenner. What was your relationship with Newt like?

The President. I had an unusual relationship with him. First of all——

Mr. Wenner. Was it——

The President. It depended on which Newt showed up. But I thought the good Newt, I found engaging, intelligent, and that we were surprisingly in agreement in the way we viewed the world.

Mr. Wenner. ——similar——

The President. Partly. But you know, Newt supported me in virtually all of my foreign policy initiatives. And after he got his Congress, he realized that a hundred of them had never had a passport.

I remember him calling me once, wanting me to get them to go on foreign missions. He said, "If you ask them, then they can't be attacked back home for boondoggle trips." So we actually had a very cordial relationship.

He was also very candid with me about his political objectives. And he, in turn, from time to time, would get in trouble with the rightwing of his own caucus because they said I could talk him into too much. We had a pretty good relationship.

You know, on the other hand, as I told you, when he did things like blaming every bad thing that happened in America on Democrats in the 1960's and all that, I thought it was highly destructive.

Mr. Wenner. How did he make you feel, personally?

The President. At some point, probably around 1996, I got to the point where I no longer had personal feelings about those things. But you know, things like the Whitewater investigation and the Travel Office investigation—he was smart. He knew there was nothing in that stuff. It was all politics to him. It was about power.

But he really did believe that the object of politics was to destroy your opponent. And you know, he ran Jim Wright out of the Congress on account of that. That's what he thought he was doing. And he had an enormous amount of success in the beginning, and he won the

Congress basically by having that take-no-prisoners, be-against-everything approach.

Mr. Wenner. Didn't he tell you once on the phone that he was planning to lead a revolution against you?

The President. Well, he thought he was leading a revolution, and I was in the way. And I think he really believed, after '94——

Mr. Wenner. What did you think when he says this to you? "I'm out there to destroy—I'm going to take you on. You're through."

The President. I thought he was a worthy adversary, and I thought I would defeat him, because I thought the American people would stick with me. But I thought he was a very worthy adversary.

I think he thought that he could create, for the rest of my Presidency, a sort of an almost a parliamentary system where he would be the prime minister and make the policy, and I'd be in charge of foreign policy, and he'd help me.

Mr. Wenner. I mean, historically, the Newt versus Bill, I was just trying to think back, there hasn't been as powerful—I mean, powerful and as antagonistic a Speaker to the President, not in modern times. You had an actual enemy. You had somebody actually out there daily fighting you, not a—not a Lyndon, not a McCormack. Everybody went with Reagan and gave him what he wanted.

The President. That's what they decided to do. And you know, now I have a Speaker in Hastert I can really work with. We've got a lot done. But he still has—the dominant power in the caucus is Tom DeLay and Dick Armey. And if they had their druthers, you know, they'd still follow that approach. But the balance of authority is so—power is so close in the House that more often than not, we work things out.

But in the Senate, you've got the same thing with Lott. You know, Lott I have a very cordial personal relationship with. I have a lot in common with Lott in terms of our background and childhood and, you know, that whole thing. His daddy was a laboring person. He could have well been a Democrat.

Mr. Wenner. How did you develop your strategy in sort of dealing with Newt and outflanking him? Just wait him out? Give him enough rope?

The President. Well, that's part of it. You know, I felt after they won that when the people actually saw the fine print on their contract, they would think that there was a contract on America instead of a contract with America. And then I felt that I had to oppose them when I thought they were wrong. But I couldn't let them push me back into the old confrontation where they could say, "Clinton's an old Democrat. He's defending everything, even the indefensible, so you may think we're going too far, but America has to change," because this is a country in constant change. So that was—for example, instead of just fighting them on the budget, I offered my own balanced budget.

Mr. Wenner. I mean, everybody—I think Democrats really wanted to attack him back as quickly as possible, and you took a much more conciliatory——

The President. That's because I felt they had to have a chance to run their—and then when we got to the Government shutdown, I wasn't just against what they were doing; I had an alternative. See, I believe—and I think it's more important, I think it's easier for Republicans to be against everything than Democrats because people view us as the party of affirmative Government. And since I believed in balancing the budget, I just didn't want to do it the way they wanted to.

Mr. Wenner. What's your bottom line on Newt, historically? I mean, what's your—if you were an historian, what would you say about Gingrich?

The President. That he was immensely successful in, first of all, consolidating the power of the Republican Party and its rightwing and then in winning the Congress, winning the historic struggle for Congress in '94 by opposing me right down the line. And in '94, the people—the economy was getting better, but people didn't feel it yet. The budget we passed did not impose great tax burdens on ordinary Americans, but they didn't know it yet. And the crime bill we passed was going to help bring the crime rate down without interfering with people's gun rights, but they didn't know it yet.

So you had the best of all times to run through a gaping hole. And then I had made the mistake of trying to do both, trying to do the economic plan and NAFTA, which dispirited some of our base supporters. And then I tried to do health care under circumstances that were literally impossible. You could not get a universal coverage plan passed through Congress.

So I made a lot of errors, and he ran through them, and he therefore changed the Congress. Then I think people will say that we had one

of these historic battles that periodically happens in America about the role of the National Government and, indeed, what the meaning of the Nation is.

And I think he thought he could actually carry out the revolution that President Reagan talked about, you know, drastically shrinking the Federal Government, drastically limiting its ability to act in the social sphere and moving it to the right.

And to me, we had a series of battles that were really the latest incarnation of this age-old battle of what does it mean to be an American, what is the idea of America, what is the purpose of a nation? And there was a Government shutdown. There was an impeachment. There was my veto of the Newt tax bill after Newt was gone. All these were ongoing battles.

The battle over—the same thing is now happening, shaping up over the courts. The most important issue in this election may well be what happens to the courts. Because there is now already—we are one vote away from having enough votes that would repeal *Roe* v.*Wade.*

But there is this other issue in the courts which I think is quite profound, which is, there are five votes right now to restrict the ability of Congress to require the States to participate in protecting the American people in a lot of fundamental ways. So I think this is an ongoing battle.

But it's the same battle that we had between George Washington and John Adams and Alexander Hamilton and John Marshall on the one side and Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Payne, and a lot of other people on the other in the beginning; the same battle Abraham Lincoln had around the time of the Civil War. Could the States secede? Did the Federal Government have the power to enslave them? The same battle we had at the dawn of the industrial revolution when Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson asserted the authority of the Nation to proscribe basic conditions in the workplace and protection. And it was the same battle that Franklin Roosevelt fought. That was the fourth time it was fought. Now we're in the fifth battle over how to define America. And in the first three skirmishes, we won. But I see that as a big issue in this election, a huge issue.

Impeachment

Mr. Wenner. Let's talk about impeachment a little. You're going to—in the history books, it's going to say, of course, that you were the second President ever to be impeached. How does that make you feel? Do you feel that that will cloud your real accomplishments?

The President. Well, that's for the historians to determine. The history books will also record, I think, that both impeachments were wrong, and that's when they failed. And I'm just grateful that, unlike Andrew Johnson, I was less embittered by it and I had more support from the public and in the Congress, so I was able to resume my duties and actually get a lot done for the American people in the aftermath.

Mr. Wenner. Was there ever a point where you wanted to give up or it just became too hard?

The President. Never.

Mr. Wenner. Did you ever get so angry during it that you think it clouded your judgment?

The President. I got angry, but I always was alone or with friends who would deflate me, so I don't think it ever clouded my judgment on any official thing I took.

You know, I realized that when it was all over, I would have the responsibility to work with the Republicans, as well as the Democrats. One of the things I had to learn—as I said, it took me almost my whole first term to learn it—is that at some point Presidents are not permitted to have personal feelings. When you manifest your anger in public, it should be on behalf of the American people and the values that they believe and the things they do.

You just can't—a lot of this stuff you can't take personally—and especially when I realized that for the people that were directing it, it was just politics. You know, it was about power and politics. So I was largely able to purge myself of it. And I had very strong personal feelings about it, but I tried never to talk about it. I tried to get up every day and just do my job and let others defend me publicly and go on with the work of the country, because——

Mr. Wenner. ——in private?

The President. Yes, because Presidents will always be under siege in some way or another. And if you don't want the job and the attendant heat, you shouldn't ask for it.

Mr. Wenner. Does it make you uncomfortable to talk about this episode now?

The President. I just think the less I say about it right now, the better. I think the more time passes, the more people will see what happens,

and the more it will come out. There have been some pretty good books written about it.

Mr. Wenner. What do you think of Ken Starr now?

The President. I think he did what he was hired to do.

Mr. Wenner. You told me you never really met him and had no ill feelings.

The President. I met him. You know, I met him once when he interviewed me. He was hired to keep the impeachment thing—I mean, to keep the inquiry going past the '96 election and to do whatever damage he could. That's why he was put in, and he did what they asked him to do.

Mr. Wenner. What's your take on Henry Hyde, who was supposedly "Mr. Reasonable," and then he seemed to defy the will of the people after the '98 elections, where he kind of got repudiated?

The President. Well, he did what he was hired to do, too. I mean, the rightwing was in control of the Congress, and they thought they had paid in '98, and they thought they would never have to pay again. They thought it was a free shot to put a hit on me, and so they did. I don't think it's complicated.

Mr. Wenner. Once the elections were done, I remember seeing you a week before, and clearly Democrats were going to take the House in a way they had never taken it before in an off election. And it was a referendum on this issue, and then they went ahead—him and the Republican leadership went ahead despite that. What does that tell you about them?

The President. That they wanted to—they stayed with their rightwing, and they thought they would pay no price in 2000, because they thought, whatever happened, it would all be over by now. And they thought they could put a black mark on me in history, and that was really important to them. They were really angry. They got beat. They were just angry, and they thought they had paid once, and they wouldn't have to pay this time, because the American people would move on to other things as they always do. And so they did it.

Mr. Wenner. It's not an issue now in this election, really.

The President. It is in three or four House seats, but not many.

Mr. Wenner. It's an issue to me.

The President. But it shouldn't be. I've tried—the only way it should be an issue in the election is that it indicates how important it is, if they should maintain their majority, they have somebody in the White House that can restrain them. Because it's just an example of other things they were doing to the environmental laws of the country, to the education laws, to the health care system. That's the only way it should be an issue. It's over. The American people shouldn't be expected to dwell on it. They shouldn't have to deal with it.

Mr. Wenner. Who do you think really came through for you and got up and defended you?

The President. Oh, tons of people. The House judiciary committee Democrats were really good. There were 800 people, including a lot of Republicans who didn't even like me, who filed testimony talking about how inappropriate it was. Then there was that bipartisan panel of career prosecutors who said that no one would bring any criminal charges on this. So a lot of people who—came forward who had no particular reason to do it but who cared about their country and were offended by what was going on.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think in some way this is sort of a referendum on sort of the nature of morality or the character of America in some way?

The President. Not really. No, I think people strongly disagree with what I did. I did, too. I think the—I don't think the—I think that they just were able to discriminate between a bad personal mistake and the justification for a Constitutional crisis. I think—I don't think that it—I think it said more about their ability to discriminate between two different kinds of problems than any changed moral standards.

Mr. Wenner. In the sixties we always talked—still they talk about karma, you know, your karma? Did you ever look at it in terms of what's in my karma that I got this shit-hammer dropped on me?

The President. No. Like I said—no, I don't. If I hadn't made a personal mistake, they wouldn't have the pretext to do what they did, even though what they did was wrong. So no, I don't.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think it benefited us, that process, that we learned from all that, from the impeachment process?

The President. Well, the one thing it did was it pointed out all the other excesses. You know that there was a bogus Whitewater investigation. It was totally bogus and wasted money and——

Mr. Wenner. What was that?

The President. The Whitewater investigation. That civil lawsuit against me was bogus. Even the judge, who was famous for disliking me personally, threw it out as having no merit. So I think that what it did was, at least for the time being, it took a lot of the venom out of our public life. You know, even as hard as George Bush and Al Gore are hitting each other now in this election, they are by and large hitting at each other over the issues. I mean, Bush has got some ad up now questioning Gore's integrity, which is amazing that Bush would question Gore's integrity, but anyway. But he knows that there's a certain number of voters who vote for Republicans because they're convinced that they're morally superior to Democrats, not withstanding the fact that we're awash in evidence now that they're not. And so he's doing that, but there has been very little of that, even from him. They're basically—the level of venom is lower than it was. And maybe I absorbed enough for several years.

And if so, then that alone might make it worth doing. Because I think it's just crazy for America with all these fabulous opportunities and some pretty stiff challenges out there to waste our elections and our public officials' time with things that we know are bogus or trivial and cost the taxpayers a fortune, for no other purpose than for one side to pursue political advantage over another. There will always be some of that, but my instinct is that in the next 4 years, we'll have a lot less of it.

Relations With the Media

Mr. Wenner. The press—as President, you have a relationship with the press that is unique to anybody in the world. You, as an individual, there's certainly more scrutiny or criticism or attention, more everything. What's your take on the press in America?

The President. Well, I think that, first of all, it's very difficult to generalize. I think that on the balance, it's a great advantage for the President to have a bully pulpit that can reach everyone in America and everyone in the world instantaneously. And any criticisms that a President has about negative press or incessant carping or whatever—you've got to temper that with the fact that they make it possible for you to do your job in a communications age.

And they work—especially the working press, I have an enormous amount of respect for them. I mean these people that are on this airplane, because I've worked hard and I keep long hours, it's a hard job for them, because they have to—they go around in the vans, not in Air Force One or the helicopters. They have a lot of hard work to do, and I think by and large, most of them do it as well as they can and as honestly as they can. I have an enormous amount of respect for them.

Now, there's another part of the press that are kind of part of almost a celebrity political press that are—that go all the way from the columnists to the people that are on all these talk shows all the time. And they have—in order for them to be successful, their comments have to have edge. They tend to be more negative and more dogmatic in their attempts to be—and sometimes there is more heat than light in a lot of what's said in a lot of those forums—formats. But that's part of the new age we're living in.

And also they're sort of on the cutting edge between the serious press, the tabloid press, and pure political advocacy and entertainment. You've got all these segments now that are kind of blurred together, compounded by a 24-hour news cycle, and the fact that there are umptydump channels people can watch, some of which are news channels that know they have to go after narrowly segmented markets, and they're targeting certain audiences.

So it's a very different press environment, and if you took it all seriously, it would run you nuts. But you can't—once you realize kind of what the environment is, you just learn to deal with it. I think the important thing is to—for Presidents, especially—to try to hear the criticism, because it's not always wrong. Sometimes it's right. I find it easier, really, when it comes from thoughtful columnists who are really trying to make a serious contribution to the national debate. Even in some other forums it's important.

Mr. Wenner. Which columnists or reporters do you think have been particularly good or particularly smart in their coverage of you in the last 8 years?

The President. Well, I think just in terms of columnists, I think Tom Friedman is the best foreign policy writer we have today, by a long stretch. I think he understands the world we're living in and the one toward which we're moving. Therefore, whether he's criticizing me or analyzing an issue or whatever he's doing, he's

trying to do it from a completely honest point of view of trying to say, here's where the world is; here's where we're going.

I think Ron Brownstein is one of the best political columnists in America today, one of the two or three best. He's truly extraordinary. And you know, he understands this whole New Democrat movement that I have been a part of. He understood the ideas that underlay the '92 campaign and the whole Democratic Leadership Council effort, everything we're trying to do. And he made it his business to study that. I think he's very good.

I think E.J. Dionne is good. I regret that his other responsibilities at the Post don't give him time to write more columns, because I think he's very good.

Mr. Wenner. [*Inaudible*]—towards the Times for their role in Whitewater?

The President. No, I think that—it was sort of like this Wen Ho Lee deal in a way. I mean, the same guy got a story, and it was kind of overwritten, and dire things were predicted. But I think whatever I feel about that, it has to be tempered by the fact that the Times has a serious conscience when it comes to the national issues. I don't think the—I think they had a—they really have tried consistently to think—on the public issues, I think they really have done an excellent job of analysis and are trying to come out in the right place in the right way. So whatever I feel about that is tempered by that.

Mr. Wenner. Do you think institutionally it's working right, the press as a whole, the major newspapers, the networks, and so forth?

The President. I think they're doing the best they can in a very new and different environment. I have a lot of sympathy with them.

Mr. Wenner. So you don't have resentment towards them? Like, a lot of Presidents just hated—once done, they just hated them.

The President. No. Absolutely not. You know, how can Presidents hate the press? I mean, they give you—you can gripe all you want about all the negative coverage you get on the evening news or on these talk shows or being blasted in the newspaper or having to get on something where they're dead wrong—like on Whitewater, whatever it is—dead wrong, but still, every day they're right in all kinds of other things about all the things that affect the American people and their lives. And anytime you want a microphone to have your say, you've got it. So I think to be obsessively negative is a mistake.

The White House

Mr. Wenner. What creature comforts are you going to miss the most about leaving the White House, not living there?

The President. The movie theater, the swimming pool, Camp David. Everybody says I'll miss Air Force One the most once I have to return to commercial travel. But what I will miss the most is not the creature comforts; it's the honor of living in the White House, which I have loved. I've loved living there, because I love my country; I love the history of my country. I know—I was a pretty good American historian before I got there, and I know a lot more than I did then, and I've read a lot about Presidents that most people don't know much about, including me before I got there.

And even more than that, I'll miss the work. It's the job I'll miss the most. I love the work. I actually have loved doing this job.

Mr. Wenner. Do you just get off every single day when you get up, just—I am so lucky?

The President. Even the worst day. Even in the worst times—the whole impeachment thing—I just thank God every day I can go to work. I love the job. I've always loved it.

Mr. Wenner. Looking at the other side of the coin, what—is there anything that seems attractive to you about not living there anymore?

The President. Well, I look forward to kind of having—being a citizen again. It will be the first time in 20 years—you know, I've been—I was Governor for 12 years, and 10 years, the last 10 years in a row—so it will be the first time in 18 years that I've really had a private home that was my primary residence, and where I'll get up every day, feeling a responsibility to be of public service, but knowing that I'm basically in control of my life again. And it will be an interesting challenge for me. Eighteen years is a long time to be a chief executive, living in public housing, with every day scripted out—you know, hours and hours a day, particularly if you work like I do.

It's a challenge, and I'm going to be interested to see whether I can meet it and what it means, you know, to go into this next chapter of my life. I'm actually excited about it.

Advice for the Next President

Mr. Wenner. What's the one thing about being—what's the one thing that would surprise either Bush or Gore about being President that they just can't know now? What was the greatest surprise to you? What advice would you give the next President?

The President. I think they will be surprised how many different things happen at once. Now, Al won't be as surprised by that, because he's been there 8 years. It's another good argument for voting for him, because he's experienced and he makes good decisions. He'll be a very good President if he wins. He'll be quite good. He makes good decisions, and he's had experience. And the environment, I think, will be less hostile for either one of them than it was for me, and they will have more of an opportunity to craft cooperative solutions, because almost under any conceivable scenario, the Congress will be even more closely divided than it is now.

You know, the Democrats are going to pick up some seats in the Senate. They might even be in control. But if they are, they will just have a one-seat majority here, too, and I think the Democrats will win the House. But if they do, they won't have any bigger majority than the Republicans do now, maybe a little more, but not much. So you will have a very closely divided Government which will require them to all work together.

So I think they may have a less hostile environment than I did, and I hope they do, but I think they'll still be surprised at how many different things they'll have crash in on them at once.

Mr. Wenner. What would you tell them to do? You say, look, here's what you've got to do as the next President. Here's what I would like you to do.

The President. Well, first of all, I think after the election, they ought to get more rest than I did. You know, I didn't really take a vacation. I think they ought to clear their heads. I would advise them to work as hard as they can to get a good Cabinet and a good staff, and then really emphasize teamwork, and when you come to the tough decisions, do what you think is right.

A lot of these decisions, you know, that were unpopular that I made—Bosnia, Haiti, debt relief in Mexico, taking on the NRA, doing the debt thing—reducing the deficit, I mean, right now, it's like smooth sailing. But it's just not in the nature of human existence to be free of difficulty. And I think when you come down to those tough decisions, you just have to do what you think is right, tell the American people why you did it, and hope they'll go along with you.

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Wenner. So this comes out after the election. So do you want to—give me a prediction.

The President. I've always believed Gore will win, and I still do. And I think if he doesn't, the only reason that I think that he might not win is if they vote—a higher percentage of the people that want Bush to be President vote than the percentage of people that want Gore to be President. But I believe if we get an even turnout, I think in the closing days of this election, people will begin to think about whether they really want to risk this prosperity by adopting an economic plan that has a huge tax cut, a huge Social Security privatization program, and a bunch of spending that will put us back into deficit.

I think that people have to think about whether they want to risk having nobody to restrain a Republican Congress if they should stay in the majority, and I think they will think about what will happen to the courts.

And so I think that those things will be enough to put Al Gore over, and I think he'll be elected.

Mr. Wenner. What do you think the margin is going to be—the popular vote?

The President. I have no idea. I think it will be—it will definitely be close in the popular vote. Whether it's close in the electoral vote depends on what happens—there's a dozen States it could go either way. So either one of—there could be a sizable electoral victory; it could be——

Mr. Wenner. Predict Florida for me. Predict Missouri, Pennsylvania, Michigan.

The President. I think Gore will win Florida, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. I've always thought Gore would win Florida. We've worked like crazy there for 8 years, and we've done a lot for Florida and a lot with Florida, and Joe Lieberman has helped a lot in Florida. So I think Gore will win Florida. I think he will win Pennsylvania. I think he will win Michigan, and I think he will win Missouri if Mrs.

Carnahan is the choice of the Missouri people for Senator.

Mr. Wenner. And Washington State?

The President. I think we'll win in Washington.

Mr. Wenner. I don't want to take any of your money on that. Did you see the cover on Al that—the Rolling Stone that's gotten so much talk?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Wenner. It took hours to do that interview. I just used—eat up hours of his time. I appreciate your time very much.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 2:45 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Los Angeles, CA, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 7. In his remarks, the President referred to actor Charlton Heston, president, National Rifle Association; ABC News anchor Peter Jennings; former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; former Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr; Thomas L. Friedman, columnists, New York Times; Ron Brownstein, columnist, Los Angeles Times; E.J. Dionne, columnist, Washington Post; former Los Alamos National Laboratory scientist Wen Ho Lee; and Jean Carnahan, widow of the late Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks Announcing the Establishment of the Federal Aviation Administration's Air Traffic Organization

December 7, 2000

Well, Keith, thank you for telling everybody why I'm trying so hard to get something done about this. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much for the work you do and for being here with us today as exhibit A.

I want to thank Secretary Slater and our Administrator Jane Garvey for all they have done in these last several years. And I want to thank John Cullinane and Sharon Patrick for being here. And our NTSB Chairman, Jim Hall; thank you very much, Jim, for your work.

As Secretary Slater said, when the Vice President and I took office in 1993, among other things that were troubled in this economy, we found a very troubled airline industry. And in my first—Rodney mentioned the trip I made to Everett, Washington, to meet with the leaders of the airline industry at the Boeing plant near Seattle. That was the first trip I took outside Washington as President. I did it because I knew that we had to turn the airline industry around if we wanted to turn the American economy around.

Out of that meeting was born the Baliles Commission, headed by the former Governor of Virginia, Governor Gerry Baliles, and a set of recommendations that helped to power the airline industry back to health. Thanks to those recommendations and to a booming economy, the airline industry is strong again and, I think, has benefited from the work that has been done in this administration by the Vice President and Secretary Slater and Administrator Garvey.

We have basically pursued a three-pronged approach: First, we want to preserve and enhance domestic competition so that our people continue to reap the benefits of deregulation. Second, we want to open more foreign markets so that our airlines can compete better internationally. And third, we want to improve the efficiency of our infrastructure, particularly air traffic control, to keep pace with the phenomenal growth in air travel. Now, that's what we're here to talk about today, because, frankly, we haven't been able to do it.

Our infrastructure is just as important to us today as the railroads were in the 1800's or the Interstate Highway System was in the second half of the 20th century. Just as those advancements made us competitive in the 19th and 20th century economies, a modernized air traffic control system will help determine our ability to compete in the 21st century.

The fact is, the FAA's 20-year effort to modernize its air traffic control technology simply has not been able to keep pace with either the emergence of new technology or the growth and demand for air travel. And while we've made significant progress, as the horrendous—and I don't know how else to say it—just the horrendous flight delay statistics demonstrate, we have not done nearly enough.

This is no reflection, I don't hesitate to say, on the leadership of the FAA or the dedication of its employees. They are very, very good. They operate the largest, busiest, and safest air travel system in the world. It orchestrates 93,000 flights every day, more than one every second. They also oversee the safety of the entire system, which has a remarkable record, as all of you who are involved in it know.

Despite the extraordinary efforts of these people, however, the rapid growth in air travel is simply racing ahead of the limits of the FAA's aging infrastructure. Flight delays have increased by more than 58 percent in the last 5 years, cancellations by 68 percent. In addition to widespread passenger frustration and anger, which I hear about wherever I go, these delays are costing airlines and passengers more than $5 billion every year.

Part of the problem is due to outdated technology. We're working with Congress to speed up the upgrade of facilities and equipment at airports and air traffic control centers. But a more fundamental problem is also how the FAA operates. It must be better structured to manage the high-tech, high-demand operations of a 21st century air traffic control system.

David Osborne, who popularized the phrase "Reinventing Government" when he wrote a book by that title, sums up the problem in his new book, the "Reinventor's Field Book." In it, he says—and I quote—"Air traffic control is a massive, complex, technology intensive service business, operating within a conventional U.S. Government bureaucracy. It's like putting a Ferrari engine into a dump truck body and still expecting it to win races."

We need to put the Ferrari engine of FAA excellence into a new, more streamlined, more efficient body. To accelerate our efforts to reduce passenger delays and improve air traffic control efficiency, I am taking, therefore, the following actions. First, I am directing the FAA to create a performance-based organization, the Air Traffic Services Organization, to manage the operation of air traffic control. This semi-autonomous organization, located within the FAA, will have the incentives and tools necessary to operate more effectively and efficiently.

Second, Secretary Slater is designating five outstanding business and management leaders for appointment to the Air Traffic Services Subcommittee. The group will function as a board of directors to oversee the management of the FAA's air traffic control organization to make sure it operates more efficiently. They are: former United States Senator and Chairperson of the subcommittee on aviation, Nancy Kassebaum Baker; John Cullinane, who's here with us today, president of the Cullinane Group and a pioneer in the computer software industry; Leon Lynch, the international vice president for human affairs at the United Steel Workers; Sharon Patrick, president and chief operating officer of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Inc., is here with us; and John Snow, a former Department of Transportation Administrator and current chairman, president, and chief executive officer of CSX corporation. It is a distinguished group, and I think they'll do a fine job.

I am also directing the Department of Transportation and the FAA to review the impediments to the use of airport congestion pricing and other market mechanisms to reduce airport delays. Let me say, I asked about this years ago, and it turns out there are a couple of Federal laws which make it hard to do.

But if you think about how much business travel there is and how much travel travel there is and how much flexibility we might build in the system if we just had some market mechanisms to more uniformly use the airplane and airport infrastructure that we have out there, I think that we really missed a big opportunity not to try to take more advantage of this. And I think we could rather quickly level out and maximize the use of our facilities and our planes in ways that would dramatically reduce delays and cancellations.

But there are some, apparently, some actual statutory impediments to doing it. So we're going to do what we can to identify them and leave them in good shape for the next administration, and given the level of anxiety about this in the country, I think that we could get some pretty quick action. I hope it will happen next year.

I hope that all these actions will accelerate much-needed reform of the air traffic control system, but they are not enough. Congress still has to reform the way air traffic control service is financed and move from a system financed by passenger taxes to one in which commercial users pay the costs of the services they use.

The airline industry is at a crossroads. We can continue on the current course and continue to experience crowded airports, flight delays, and even higher passenger frustration. But if we act decisively now to improve our infrastructure, we can ensure that air travel in the 21st century is the safest, most cost effective, most efficient in the world.

I can hardly think of anything else the Government does now that the consumers feel more directly. And I certainly hope that what we're doing today will help. I believe it will. And I will try to wait patiently in those lines next year for Congress to do its part. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Keith Bellows, editor and vice president, National Geographic Traveler Magazine. The Executive order establishing the Air Traffic Organization is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Ethiopia-Eritrea Final Peace Agreement

December 7, 2000

Ethiopia and Eritrea have accepted the invitation of Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to sign a final peace agreement in Algiers on December 12, building on a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement brokered by the United States and the Organization of African Unity last June.

Last week I was able to inform both Prime Minister Meles and President Isaias that each leader had confirmed to me his acceptance of the text of a final peace agreement. All who have worked for this peace, and all who were moved by the costs of the war, congratulate the Ethiopian and Eritrean leadership and people for achieving this breakthrough.

This agreement ends the biggest conventional war in the world in recent years, in what may be the world's poorest region. It should permit these two countries to realize their potential in peace, instead of squandering it in war. It should free both countries to concentrate on meeting their people's aspirations for democracy and development, as their leaders have pledged to do. The United States stands ready to work with both countries to consolidate the peace and accelerate their return to the urgent task of economic development.

More than 2 years of effort by the United States and the Organization of African Unity went into reaching this final agreement. I want to thank my Special Envoy, former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, Gayle Smith of the National Security Council, and Assistant Secretary Susan Rice for their untiring commitment and selfless dedication to the task. I also wish to extend my personal gratitude and congratulations to President Bouteflika of Algeria and his entire mediation team.

Statement on the Decision To Stay the Execution of Juan Raul Garza

December 7, 2000

Today I have decided to stay the execution of Juan Raul Garza, an inmate on Federal death row, for 6 months, until June, 2001, to allow the Justice Department time to gather and properly analyze more information about racial and geographic disparities in the Federal death penalty system.

I believe that the death penalty is appropriate for the most heinous crimes. As President, I have signed Federal legislation that authorizes

it under certain circumstances. It is clearly, however, an issue of the most serious weight. The penalty of death, as Justice Potter Stewart and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor have reminded us, is "qualitatively different" from other punishments we impose. Whether one supports the death penalty or opposes it, there should be no question that the gravity and finality of the penalty demand that we be certain that when it is imposed, it is imposed fairly.

As I have said before, supporters of capital punishment bear a special responsibility to ensure the fairness of this irreversible punishment. Further, Article II of the Constitution vests in the President the sole authority to grant pardons and reprieves for Federal crimes. Therefore, I have approached this matter with great deliberation.

This fall the Department of Justice released the results of a statistical survey of the Federal death penalty. It found that minority defendants and certain geographic districts are disproportionately represented in Federal death penalty prosecutions. As the Deputy Attorney General said at the time the survey was released, no one confronted with those statistics can help but be troubled by those disparities. We do not, however, fully understand what lies behind those statistics. The Attorney General has said that more information and a broader analysis are needed to better interpret the data we now have and to determine whether the disparities that are evident reflect any bias in our system. She has undertaken an effort to gather and analyze the relevant information so that an appropriate decision can be made on the question of bias.

After a close and careful review of this issue and after conferring with the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General, I am not satisfied that, given the uncertainty that exists, it is appropriate to go forward with an execution in a case that may implicate the very issues at the center of that uncertainty.

In issuing this stay, I have not decided that the death penalty should not be imposed in this case, in which heinous crimes were proved. Nor have I decided to halt all executions in the Federal system. I have simply concluded that the examination of possible racial and regional bias should be completed before the United States goes forward with an execution in a case that may implicate the very questions raised by the Justice Department's continuing study. In this area, there is no room for error.

I have asked that the Attorney General report to the President by the end of April, 2001, on the Justice Department's analysis of the racial and geographic disparities in Federal death penalty prosecutions.

Statement on Providing Compensation to America's Nuclear Weapons Workers

December 7, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign an Executive order that will help implement the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Act of 2000, which authorized compensation for thousands of Department of Energy workers who sacrificed their health in building the Nation's nuclear defenses. These individuals, many of whom were neither protected from nor informed of the hazards to which they were exposed, developed occupational illnesses as a result of their exposure to radiation and other hazards unique to nuclear weapons production and testing.

This order builds on the administration's previously articulated principles and the framework established in the act to ensure the compassionate, fair, and timely compensation of these workers and their families. Specifically, the order defines the respective responsibilities of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Energy, and Justice; establishes an Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health; and creates an interagency group to develop a legislative proposal and address program implementation issues.

While the Nation can never fully repay these workers or their families, they deserve fair compensation for their sacrifices. I am pleased to take the next critical step in ensuring that these

courageous individuals receive the compensation and recognition they have long deserved.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, Nebraska
December 8, 2000

Thank you very much. Didn't Casey do a good job? [*Applause*] She was great. I'd like to thank Chancellor Johnston for her kind remarks and the honorary degree. And thank you, President Smith, and members of the board of trustees, to both the students and the other members.

Thank you, Governor, for your welcome. And I thank the other State officials who are here. I am especially grateful that my long-time friend and former colleague as Governor, your retiring Senator, Bob Kerrey, flew down here with me today. Thank you, Bob, for your service, along with our former Nebraska Congressman, Peter Hoagland. Thank you for coming with me. I congratulate Ben Nelson on his election to the United States Senate. Governor Morrison, thank you for being here today.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to my great friend, your former Senator, Jim Exon, who persuaded me to come here and to come to Kearney. He said—[*inaudible*]—should be here.

When I came in here and I looked at this crowd, one of my staff members joked that we had found a building in Nebraska that would hold every single Democrat—[*laughter*]—and a few charitable Republicans, to boot. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, I'm glad that I finally made it to Nebraska. There were a lot of signs outside that said, "You saved the best till last." [*Laughter*] And I saw the patriotism and the spirit of the people, all the children holding the American flags. It was very, very moving, coming in. All the schools were let out, and there were hundreds and hundreds of people along the way. And it made us a little bit late, and for that, I'm sorry. But I did actually stop, and we got out and shook hands with one group of schoolchildren there just to thank them for being in the cold. So I thank them for that.

I was also reminded at the airport that we are literally in the heartland of America. A gentleman at the airport gave me a sweatshirt that had a little map of Nebraska with Kearney, and it had a line and it said, "1,300 miles to New York and 1,300 miles to San Francisco."

Most Americans have probably forgotten this, but back in the 1870's, there was actually talk of relocating our Nation's Capital away from Washington, DC, to a more central location. And a local publisher in this community, named Moses Henry Sydenham, launched a national campaign to nominate Kearney for the Nation's Capital. He promised to rename it "New Washington" and to use the real estate profits to pay off the national debt. [*Laughter*]

Critics of his proposal asked him what in the world he would do with all those big, fancy buildings in old Washington. He said it was simple. He would turn them into asylums. [*Laughter*] Well, history took a different course, except for that part about turning those buildings into asylums. [*Laughter*] I have occupied one for the last 8 years.

And we are finally paying off the national debt, which is good. [*Applause*] Thank you. But since half of Washington is in Kearney today, maybe we should think again about moving the Capital. I rather like it here. [*Laughter*]

I want to say again, I thank the people of this community for a wonderful welcome, and all of you in the university community, especially. I also want to say again how impressed I was by what Casey had to say. Because I came here today not just to keep my promise to visit Nebraska but to keep working on something at the very end of my term I have been trying for 8 years to do, which is to persuade ordinary, hard-working American citizens in the heartland of America that you should be concerned about what goes on beyond our Nation's borders and what our role in the rest of the world is, because the world is growing smaller and smaller and more interdependent. Every Nebraska farmer knows that. And indeed, when Senator Kerrey and I visited the units of the Nebraska Air National Guard out there, we

asked them where the guardsmen were. We found out that you have some Nebraska guardsman now still in Kosovo. So we are personally affected by it.

But I don't think I have still—people say I'm a pretty good talker, but I still don't think I've persuaded the American people by big majorities that you really ought to care a lot about foreign policy, about our relationship to the rest of the world, about what we're doing. And the reason is, in an interdependent world, we are all directly affected by what goes on beyond our borders—sure, in economics, but in other ways, as well—and by what we decide to do or not do about it.

This is an immensely patriotic community. That's one thing Bob Kerrey kept saying over and over again, "Look at all those people holding the flag. These people love their country." But what we have to do is be wise patriots. This country is still around after 224 years because our Founders not only loved our country; they were smart. They were smart enough to figure out how to give us a system that, as we have seen in the last few weeks, can survive just about anything. [*Laughter*]

And I want to ask you again today, just give me a few minutes to make the case in the heartland about why there is no longer a clear, bright line dividing America's domestic concerns and America's foreign policy concerns and why every American who wants to be a good citizen, who wants to vote in every election, should know more about the rest of the world and have a clearer idea about what we're supposed to be doing out there and how it affects how you live in Kearney. Because I think it is profoundly important.

Let's start with a few basics. Never before have we enjoyed at the same time so much prosperity and social progress with the absence of domestic crisis or overwhelming foreign threats. We're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in our history, with the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 27 years, 3 years of surpluses in a row, and 3 years of paying down the national debt for the first time in 50 years, the highest homeownership and college-going rate in history. Today we learned that the November unemployment rate was 4 percent, staying at that 30-year low.

Now, this is good news for America. But there is good news beyond our borders for our values and our interests. In the last few years, for the first time in all human history, more than half the people on the face of the Earth live under governments that they voted for, that they chose.

And more and more, even in nations that have not yet completely embraced democracy, more and more people, especially young people, see our creative, entrepreneurial society with more and more personal freedom as the model for the success they want. Last month I went to Vietnam, where America fought in a very difficult war for a long time, where Senator Kerrey earned the Medal of Honor and nearly 60,000 Americans died, and 3 million Vietnamese died on both sides of the conflict.

So I was interested to see what sort of a reception that I would get and the United States would get, because the Government there remains in the hands of a Communist leadership. And frankly, some of them didn't know what to make about America showing up. But everywhere I went, from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, tens of thousands of people appeared out of nowhere. Not for me, for America; for the idea of America. Sixty percent of the people who live in Vietnam are under 30. Because of the tragedy of the war, only 5 percent are over 60.

But the ones under 30 like what they know about America. They want to be our partners in the future, and they want to have the chance to build the kind of future they think young people in this country have. That is a priceless gift.

So the first thing I want to say, especially to the young people here, is that we should all be grateful that we are so fortunate to be alive at this moment of prosperity, military and political power, social progress, and prestige for America.

But the really important question is, what do we intend to make of this moment? Will we be grateful but basically complacent, being the political equivalent of couch potatoes? Will we assume that in this era of the Internet, freedom, peace, and prosperity will just spread? That all we have to do is kind of sit back, hook the world up to AOL, and wait for people to beat their swords into shares on the NASDAQ? [*Laughter*] Or will we understand that no change is inevitable—change is inevitable, but

the particular change is not. And we have to actually make some decisions if we're going to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges before us.

To put it in another way, the train of globalization cannot be reversed, but it has more than one possible destination. If we want America to stay on the right track, if we want other people to be on that track and have the chance to enjoy peace and prosperity, we have no choice but to try to lead the train.

For example, you all applauded when I said more than half the people in the world live under governments of their own choosing for the first time in history. We'd like to keep that process going. But we know that democracy in some places is fragile, and it could be reversed.

We want more nations to see ethnic and religious diversity as a source of strength. You know what the chancellor said when the choir was singing? I said, "Boy, they're good." She said, "They got a lot more rhythm since I came here"—we're laughing. [*Laughter*]

Casey talked about her Hispanic heritage. I was shaking hands with these kids out on the street, and about the third young boy I shook hands with was of Asian descent. This is a more interesting country than it has ever been. Everywhere I go—I mean, you can't be President anymore unless you understand the concerns of at least 50 different groups.

It's an interesting thing. For us, this is a big plus, even though we still have our problems with hate crimes and racial or religious or other instances. But basically, our diversity has come to be something that makes life more interesting in America, because we realize that what unites us is more important than what divides us, that our common humanity anchors us in a way that allows us to feel secure about our differences, so we can celebrate them. And this is important.

I don't like to use the word "tolerance" in this context, because tolerance implies that there's a dominant culture putting up with a subordinate one. I don't really think that's where we're going as America. I think we're going to the point where we say, "Here are our common values, and if you sign on to those, we respect you; we treat you as an equal; and we celebrate and find interesting the differences."

Now, that's what we would like for every place. And we know that if everybody deals that way, that America's going to do very well in the global society of the 21st century, because there's somebody here from everywhere else. And that's good. You know, we're going to do very, very well, as the world becomes more interdependent. So that's the outcome we want.

But all we have to do is read the paper everyday to know that old hatreds die hard. And their persistence, from Bosnia and Kosovo to the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the African tribal wars to places like East Timor, have in our time led to hundreds of thousands of deaths and countries being impoverished, for 10 years or more, because people couldn't give up their old hatreds to build a new future together.

So how this comes out is not at all inevitable. We want global trade to keep our economy growing. Nebraska farmers like it when people open their markets and the most efficient farmers in the world can sell their food to people who need to buy it. But it is possible that financial crisis abroad could wreck that system, as farmers here found out when the Asian financial crisis hit a couple years ago, or that alienation from global capitalism by people who aren't a part of it will drive whole countries away. We want global trade to lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, from India to China to Africa. We know if it happens, it will create a big market for everything American, from corn to cars to computers. And it will give all of us new ideas and new innovation, and we'll all help each other in constructive competition.

But the gap between rich and poor nations could continue to widen and bring more misery, more environmental destruction, more health problems, more and more young people in poor countries just checking out of wanting to be part of a global system, because they think there is nothing in it for them.

We want advances in technology to keep making our lives better. I went last year to that annual show in Chicago of all the latest high-tech gadgets. And I held in my hand, in my palm, a little plastic computer—with a complete keyboard that I held in my hand, that also was connected to the Internet. And I was getting CNN on those tiny little—I don't see well enough in my old age to even use the thing. It's so small, and my hands were too big to effectively use the keyboard, it was so small. Very exciting.

But the same technological breakthroughs that put that computer in the palm of my hand could end up making it possible to create smaller and

smaller chemical or biological or nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists. And all the things we're learning about computers will be learned by people who, because they belong to organized crime units or narcotraffickers or terrorists, would like to pierce our secure networks and get information or spread viruses that wreck our most vital systems.

So I'm a wild-eyed optimist. But I've lived long enough to know that things can happen that are not necessarily what you want, and that every opportunity brings with it new responsibilities because the organized forces of destruction can take advantage of them, all these opportunities, too.

A long time ago, one of your citizens, William Jennings Bryan, said, "Our destiny is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for. It is a thing to be achieved." We have to continue to achieve America's destiny. And the point I want to make is that it cannot be achieved in the 21st century without American citizens who care about, know about, and understand what is going on beyond our borders and what we're supposed to do about it.

Now, for the last 8 years, I've had the honor of working with people in Congress, principled people of both parties, like both your Senators, Bob Kerrey and Chuck Hagel, to try to make a choice for American leadership in the post-cold war, global information age. I think it's been good for America and for people around the world. And as I leave office, I think America should continue to build a foreign policy for the global age based on five broad principles, which I would like to briefly state and explain.

First, everything we want to achieve in the world, just about, depends upon maintaining strong alliances with people who share our interests and our values and adapting those alliances to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges. For example, our most important alliance with Europe is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. It was organized to defend Europe against the Soviet Union in the cold war. When I became President, the cold war was over, and the alliance was in doubt. What's it for, anyway? Who's going to be in it? What's it supposed to do?

But the values that we shared with Europe and the interest we shared were very much threatened when I became President by a vicious, genocidal war in Bosnia. Our European Allies were aiding the victims heroically, but unintentionally shielding the victimizers by not stopping them. And for the first time since World War II, America was refusing to help to defeat a serious threat to peace in Europe. But all that's changed. America decided to lead. Our European Allies decided to work with us. We revitalized the NATO Alliance. We gave it new missions, new members from behind the old Iron Curtain, a new partnership with Russia.

We finally ended the war in Bosnia. We negotiated a peace that grows stronger, steadily. When ethnic cleansing erupted in Kosovo, we acted decisively to stop that and send almost a million people back home.

Today, the Serbian leader who began the Balkan wars, Slobodan Milosevic, has been deposed by his own people. And instead of fighting something bad, we're trying to finish something worthy, a Europe that is united, democratic, and peaceful, completely for the first time in all human history. That takes a big burden off America in the future and give us a big, big set of economic and political partners to deal with the world's challenges.

Now, here's the decision for today. Do we believe that we did the right thing or not? If we do, we have to stay the course, keep expanding NATO, keep working with the Russians, keep burdensharing to do what needs to be done. I don't think most people know this, but in Kosovo today, we provide less than 20 percent of the troops and the funds. But we would not be there as an alliance if the United States had not agreed to do its part. America cannot lead if we walk away from our friends and our neighbors.

The same thing is true in Asia. We fought three wars in Asia in the 20th century. Huge numbers of Americans died there, from World War II through Korea, through Vietnam. What should we do now that the cold war is over, but the future is uncertain? What we have done is to decide to keep our troops in the Pacific, to renew our alliance with Japan. We sent ships to keep tensions from escalating between China and Taiwan. We stood by South Korea and diminished the nuclear threat from North Korea, and we supported the South Korean President's decision to seek to end 50 years of tension on the Korean Peninsula, for which he justifiably won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Should we withdraw from Asia? I don't think so. I think we ought to stay there, modernize

our alliances, and keep the peace so we don't have to fight any more wars in the 21st century.

The third thing I want to say about the alliances is that the 21st century world is going to be about more than great power politics, which means we can't just think about East Asia and Europe. We need a systematic, committed, long-term relationship with our neighbors in Latin America and the Caribbean, with South Asia—next to China, the most populous place on Earth—and with Africa, where 800 million people live.

One of the most—[*applause*]—yes, you can clap for that. That's all right. So I think that's important. We've been estranged from India for 50 years. Do you know how many people live in India? Nine hundred and eighty million. In 30 years India will be more populous than China.

In Silicon Valley today, there are 700 high-tech companies headed by Indians—700, in one place. This is totally off the radar screen of American policy during the cold war. So I would encourage all of you who, like Casey, are involved in some sort of international studies, not to just think about America's traditional concerns but to think about what we're going to do with Latin America and the Caribbean, with sub-Saharan Africa and with south Asia, because a lot of our future will be there.

So beyond alliances, the second principle is that we have to build, if we can, constructive relationships with our former adversaries Russia and China. One of the big questions that will define the world for the next 10 years is, how will Russia and China define their greatness in the 21st century? Will they define it as their ability to dominate their neighbors or to control their own people? Or will they define it in a more modern sense, in their ability to develop their people's capacity to cooperate with their neighbors, to compete and win in a global economy and a global society?

What decision they make will have a huge impact on how every young person in this audience lives. It will define what kind of defense budget we have to have, how many folks we have to enroll in the armed services, where we have to send them, what we have to do. It's huge. Now, we cannot make that decision for Russia or for China. They'll make that decision for themselves. But we can control what we do, and what we do will have some impact on what they decide.

So we should say to them what we've been trying to say for 8 years: If you will accept the rules and the responsibilities of membership in the world community, we want to make sure you get the full benefits and be a full partner, not a junior partner. We also have to say, we have to feel free to speak firmly and honestly when we think what you do is wrong by international standards.

When we've worked together with Russia in a positive way, we've made real progress. Russia took its troops out of Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia and put them in joint missions with NATO, something nobody ever thought would happen. We're serving together in Bosnia and Kosovo. Russia helped us find a just end to the war in Kosovo. They worked with us to eliminate 5,000 nuclear warheads from the old Soviet Union and safeguard those that are still there.

Now, do we agree with everything in Russia? No. We think there has been too much corruption at times. We don't agree with wars in Chechnya we think were cruel and self-defeating. We don't agree with backsliding on the free press that we see. But we need a little perspective here. When I went to Moscow for the first time as President, in 1993, people were still lining up for bread, recovering from inflation that got to 2,500 percent. Many people were predicting that an impoverished Russia would go back to communism or turn to fascism.

Since then, Russia has had five—five—free elections. And every time, people have voted to deepen democracy, not to weaken it. The economy is growing. Now, are the positive trends inevitable? No, but they are more than possible. And it's in our interests to encourage them.

The same thing is true in China. We have tried to encourage change by bringing China into international systems, where there are rules and responsibilities, from nonproliferation to trade. That's what I think will happen with China coming into the World Trade Organization. It is a statement by them, by agreeing to the conditions of membership, that they can't succeed over the long run without opening to the world. It is a declaration of interdependence.

It increases the chance that they'll make a good decision, rather than a negative one, about what they're going to do in the 21st century world. And if China goes on and follows through

with this, they'll have to dismantle a lot of their old command-and-control economy, which gave the Communist Party so much power. They'll open their doors to more foreign investment and more foreign information and the Internet revolution. Will it inevitably bring freedom? No, but it will increase the chances of China taking the right course.

So I believe if we stay with this course, one of the most profoundly positive changes the generation of young people in this audience will see could be the change that ultimately comes to China. And I told you the Vietnam story. I felt the same thing in Shanghai. I felt the same thing walking in little villages and talking to people who were electing their mayors for the first time in China, where there are, at least now, a million local villages electing their local officials. So, alliances, constructive relations with Russia and China.

The third thing we have to recognize is that local conflicts can become worldwide headaches if they're allowed to fester. Therefore, whenever possible, we should stop them before they get out of hand. That's why we've worked for peace in the Balkans, between Greece and Turkey on Cyprus, between India and Pakistan, Ethiopia and Eritrea. That's why I'm going back to Northern Ireland next week, the land of my ancestors. And it's why we've worked so hard to make America a force for peace in the Middle East, the home of the world's three great monotheistic religions, where God is reminding us every day that we are not in control.

But we have made a lot of progress. We've seen a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. We saw a sweeping agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians and progress toward implementing it over the last 8 years. But what's happened is, they're down to the hedgerows now and the hard decisions, and they've gotten to those fundamental identity questions, where they have to decide what I was talking about earlier. Is it possible for them to look at each other and see their common humanity and find a solution in which neither side can say, "I have vanquished the other," or have there been so many years of history welling up inside them that neither side can let go? That is the issue, and we will continue to work on it.

But the main point I want to make to you is, you should want your President and your Government involved in these things, and you should support your Congress if they invest some of your money in the cause of peace and development in these hotspots in the world.

And let me say again: This is not inconsistent with saying that people ought to take the lead in their own backyard. I think most Americans feel if the Europeans can take the lead in Europe, they ought to do it. The same thing with the Asians in Asia and the Africans in Africa.

What I want you to understand is that we have unique capabilities and unique confidence-building capacity in so many parts of the world that if we're just involved a little bit, we can make a huge difference. Our role was critical in the Balkans, but it was also critical in East Timor. Do you remember when all those people were getting killed in East Timor? You saw it on television every night. And people that couldn't find it on a map, all of a sudden were living with it every single night.

We provided about 500 troops to provide support for the international operations the Australians led there. But it made all the difference. We're training peacekeepers in Sierra Leone. They don't want us to go there and fight, but they want us to train the peacekeepers.

We've been involved in trying to settle a war between Ethiopia and Eritrea that has claimed over 60,000 lives, that most people don't know much about, but could cause us a world of trouble. And besides, it's just tragic.

We had 10 people—10, total—in the jungle when we settled the conflict between East Ecuador and Peru and got them to agree—but they couldn't agree to let it go unless we, America, agreed to send 10 people into a remote place on the border of these two countries, because they knew we could be trusted to do what they had agreed ought to be done. Now, you ought to be proud of that for your country.

But the only point I want to make is, we should do things with other people, and they ought to do their part in their own backyard. But we're in a unique position in history now. There is no other military superpower or economic superpower. And we can do some things, because we've maintained a strong military, nobody else can do.

And I'll be gone in a few weeks, and America will have a new President and a new Congress, but you ought to support them when they want to do these things, because it's very, very important to the stability and future of the world.

One other thing I want to say. We ought to pay our U.N. dues and pay our fair share

of peacekeeping operations. Now, nobody in the world benefits from stability more than we do. Nobody. Nobody makes more money out of it. Just think about pure, naked self-interest. Nobody. And when we pay for this peacekeeping—I'll say more about it in a minute—but we get more than our money's worth out of it. And when we walk away from our responsibilities, people resent us. They resent our prosperity; they resent our power; and, in the end, when a whole lot of people resent you, sooner or later they find some way to manifest it. When we work with each other and do things that we don't just have to do in the moment, we build a common future.

The fourth point I would like to make to you is that this growing openness of borders and technology is changing our national security priorities. People, information, ideas, and goods move around more freely and faster than ever before. That makes us more vulnerable first to the organized forces of destruction, narcotraffickers, terrorists, organized criminals—they are going to work more and more together, with growing access to more and more sophisticated technology.

Part of the challenge is just to get rid of as many weapons of mass destruction as possible. That's why we got the states of the former Soviet Union outside Russia to give up their nuclear arsenals, and we negotiated a worldwide treaty to ban chemical weapons. That's why we forced Iraq to sell its oil for money that can go to food and medicine, but not to rebuilding its weapons. And I think the other countries of the world that are willing to let them spend that money rebuilding their weapons systems are wrong. And I hope that we can strengthen the resolve of the world not to let Saddam Hussein rebuild the chemical weapons network and other weapons systems that are bad.

It's why we negotiated a freeze on plutonium production with North Korea. Now, dealing with terrorists is harder, as we have seen in the tragedy of the U.S.S. *Cole*. Why? Because terrorists, unlike countries, cannot be contained as easily, and it's harder to deter them through threats of retaliation. They operate across borders, so we have got to strengthen our cooperation across borders. We have succeeded in preventing a lot of terrorist attacks. There were many planned during the millennium celebration that we prevented.

We have arrested a lot of terrorists, including those who bombed the World Trade Center and those who were involved in several other killings in this country. And make no mistake about it: We will do the same for those who killed our brave Navy personnel on the U.S.S. *Cole*.

But the most important thing is to prevent bad things from happening. And one of the biggest threats to the future is going to be cyberterrorism—people fooling with your computer networks, trying to shut down your phones, erase bank records, mess up airline schedules, do things to interrupt the fabric of life.

Now, we have the first national strategy to protect America's computer systems and critical infrastructure against that kind of sabotage. It includes, interestingly enough, a scholarship-for-service program to help students who are studying information security and technology, pay for their education if they will give us a couple of years' service in the Government. It's really hard to get talented people in the Government, because we can't pay them enough. You've got 27-year-old young people worth $200 or $300 million if they start the right kind of dot-com company. It's pretty hard to say, "Come be a GS–13," you know? [*Laughter*]

But if we can educate enough people, we can at least get them in their early years, and that's important. We funded this program for the very first time this year, thanks to bipartisan support. And let me say, I'd also like to congratulate the University of Nebraska—some of you perhaps know this, but Nebraska has set up a new information assurance center which is dedicated to the same exact goal. We need more universities to follow your lead. This is going to be a big deal in the future, a big deal.

There are other new things you need to think about in national security terms. Climate change could become a national security issue. The last decade was the warmest in a thousand years. If the next 50 years are as warm as the last decade, you will see the beginning of flooding of the sugarcane fields in Louisiana and the Florida Everglades; you will see the patterns of agricultural production in America begin to shift. It's still cold enough in Nebraska; you'll probably be all right for another 50 years. [*Laughter*] I mean, we laugh about this; this is a serious thing.

Already, in Africa, we see malaria at higher and higher levels than ever before, where it used to be too cool for the mosquitoes. This is a serious problem. And the only way to fix it is to figure out a way for people to get rich without putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. In other words, we have to change the rules that governed the industrial revolution. And you can play a big role in that, too.

Why? Because scientists today are researching more efficient ways of making ethanol and other biomass fuels. I always supported that, but the real problem with ethanol, you should know, is, is that the conversion ratio is pretty low. It takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to make about 8 gallons of ethanol. But scientific research now is very close to the equivalent of what happened when we turned crude oil into refined gasoline, when we cracked the petroleum molecule.

In other words, they're very close to figuring out how to change the conversion ratio from 7 gallons of gasoline to 8 gallons of ethanol to one gallon of gasoline per 8 gallons of ethanol. When that happens, everybody is all of a sudden getting 500 miles to the gallon, and the whole future of the world is different. And you don't have to use corn, either. You can use rice hulls; you can use grasses on range land. You can do anything. You can do this. This is going to be a big deal.

If I were—no offense, Mr. President—if I were the president of the University of Nebraska, whatever I was spending on that, I'd double it. [*Laughter*] Because if we can do this one thing, if we can do—or you could ask the Department of Agriculture to give you some more money, because we've got some more—[*laughter*]—because the Congress gave us a lot more money this year.

We're all laughing about this, but you think about it. One-third of this problem is transportation. It's an issue. Some people made fun of us a few months ago when we said we considered AIDS a national security issue. You know why? In some southern African countries, it is estimated that half of all the 15-year-olds will die of AIDS. There are four African countries which, within a couple of—a few years, there will be more people over 60 than people under 30.

It is estimated that AIDS will keep South Africa's GDP income 17 percent lower than it otherwise would have been 10 years from now. That obviously makes it harder for them to preserve their democracy, doesn't it, and to give jobs to their children. So that's why we're involved in this international AIDS effort for a vaccine, for more affordable medicines, for better care. It's an important foreign policy issue. Our effort to relieve the debt of the world's poorest countries is a very important foreign policy issue.

Our efforts to help people rebuild their public health systems—they all collapsed, and a lot of the countries of the former Soviet Union, they now have the highest AIDS growth rates in the world because they don't have any public health systems anymore. And all these things will affect whether these countries are breeding grounds for terrorists, whether the narcotraffickers in the places where drugs can be grown will get a foothold, whether we can build a different future. So I hope you will think about that.

The last thing I want to say is that the final principle ought to be, we should be for more open trade, but we have to build a global economy with a more human face. We win in the trade wars, or the trade—not wars, the trade competition. And I know that Nebraska is more—I have not persuaded my fellow Americans of that either, entirely, but in Nebraska, because of the agricultural presence here, has been generally more pro-free trade.

But these 300 trade agreements, from NASA to the World Trade Organization and many others that we negotiated, 300 of them, have given us the longest economic expansion in history. Over 25 percent of our growth is tied to trade now.

Here's the problem: The benefits have not been felt in much of the rest of the world. Eight hundred million people still go hungry every day. More than a billion people have no access to clean water. More than a billion people live on less than a dollar a day. Every year 6 million undernourished boys and girls under the age of 5 die. So if the next President and the next Congress want to spend some of your money to relieve the burden of the world's poorest countries and debt, if they'll put the money into education and health care and development, if they want to spend some money fighting AIDS, if they want to expand a program that we have done a lot with—the microcredit program, which loans money to entrepreneurs in poor countries—we made 2 million of those

loans last year—if they want to double, triple, or quadruple it, I hope you will support that.

If they want to close the digital divide so that people in, let's say, a mountain village in Bolivia can be hooked up to the Internet to sell their rugs that they knit to Bloomingdale's in New York, I hope you will support that. You know why? Bolivia is the poorest country in the Andes, but they've done the best job of getting rid of the narcotraffickers. And so far, they don't have a lot to show for it, because they're still the poorest country. And it would cost us a pittance of what it cost to deal with the drug problem once these drugs show up in America to help those good, honest poor people who are so proud and honorable that they do not want to tolerate the narcotraffickers to make a decent living from their efforts.

Anyway, that's what I want to say. We've got to keep building these alliances; we've got to try to have constructive relationships with Russia and China. We've got to realize there are other places in the world that we haven't fooled with enough. We have to understand the new security challenges of the 21st century. We have to keep building a global economy, because it's the engine of the global society, but we have to do more to put a human face on it.

Fifty years ago Harry Truman said something that's more true today than it was when he said it. Listen to this: "We are in the position now of making the world safe for democracy if we don't crawl in the shell and act selfish and foolish." We still haven't fully—you probably all say you agree with that, but there are practical consequences.

For example, Congress agreed this fall to fund our obligations to the U.N. But because Congress hasn't finished the overall Federal budget, the agreement is at risk, and Congress has got to send me the money pretty soon, or if it doesn't, literally, the very future of the United Nations will be in jeopardy. How would you feel if you picked up the paper and the Secretary-General of the United Nations said, "I'm sorry, we're going to have to close down for a few weeks because the United States won't pay its dues"?

What will that do to us? They share the burden with us of keeping the peace, fighting hunger, protecting the environment, advancing human rights. Listen to this. When you hear people say America spends too much, just listen to this: Right now, at a time when we are the world's only superpower with the strongest economy in the world, less than one in every 800 United Nations peacekeepers is an American—less than one in 800.

Less than 2 percent of our men and women in uniform are involved in ongoing military operations abroad of any kind. Our annual global budget—for everything from diminishing the nuclear threat to preventing conflict to advancing democracy to fighting AIDS—is no more than what Americans spend each year on dietary supplements—in my case with mixed results. [*Laughter*] I want you to laugh about it, because I want you to remember that this is a big deal.

We must not squander the best moment in our history on smallmindedness. We don't have to be fearful. We've got the strongest military in the world, and in history, and we're going to keep it that way. We don't have to be cheap. Our economy is the envy of the world. We don't have to swim against the currents of the world. The momentum of history is on our side, on the side of freedom and openness and competition. And we don't have the excuse of ignorance, because we've got a 24-hour global news cycle. So we know what's going on out there.

We can no longer separate America's fate from the world any more than you could celebrate Nebraska's fate from America's, or Kearney's fate from Nebraska's. So that's what I came here to say. I hope that in the years ahead the heartland of America will say, America chooses to be a part of the world, with a clear head and a strong heart; to share the risks and the opportunities of the world; to work with others until ultimately there is a global community of free nations, working with us, for peace and security, where everybody counts and everybody has got a chance.

If we will do that, America's best days, and the world's finest hours, lie ahead.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. at the Cushing Health and Sports Center. In his remarks, he referred to Casey Mendez; who introduced the President; Gladys Styles Johnston, chancellor, and L. Dennis Smith, president, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Gov. Mike Johanns and former Gov. Frank Morrison of Nebraska; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on Arrival at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, Nebraska
December 8, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. One of my critics once said it would be a cold day when I came to Nebraska. [*Laughter*] But I think I got a pretty warm welcome here today, and I thank you very, very much.

I want to thank all of those who welcomed me, but especially, thank you, Brigadier General Power; thank you, Admiral Mies. I thank the officers and enlisted personnel here.

I want to thank Senator Bob Kerrey for being, first, my colleague. We were Governors together, and we have been friends for a long time, and he has superbly served the people of Nebraska and the United States in the Senate. I know you'll miss him, and I thank him.

I also want to congratulate his successor, with whom I also served as Governor. Thank you very much for running and serving, Senator-elect Ben Nelson and Mrs. Nelson; thank you very much.

I brought with me today former Nebraska Congressman Peter Hoagland, and I thank him; Secretary of State Moore; Mayor Daub; Acting Mayor Sorensen of Bellevue; and the other elected officials who are here.

You know, earlier today I went to Kearney to speak at the University of Nebraska there to the young people about an American foreign policy for the 21st century. And I made a pretty simple argument: that the world is getting smaller and smaller; that people and goods and ideas and information are crossing national borders more freely and faster than ever before; and that, therefore, it was quite necessary, even here in the heartland of America, that every citizen of our country care about what goes on beyond our borders and support the next President and the next Congress across party lines in making the kinds of decisions that will make America safer and more prosperous and a better partner in an interdependent world.

Now, one of the things that I wanted to do in coming here is to say that none of that would be possible if our foreign policy was not backed by the finest military in the entire world.

I was told a couple of weeks ago, you know, since I'm a short-termer, as you might say—[*laughter*]—all the statisticians are coming up to me and saying, "Well, did you know this; did you know that; did you know the other thing?" And I was told a couple of weeks ago by one of the people who is supposed to look at all the White House records that I have now visited more military units than any President in the history of the country.

Having said that, I do not believe my service in that regard would have been complete if I hadn't come to Offutt Air Force Base to see the people of the Fighting 55th and the Strategic Command. Many of those serving in the 55th couldn't be with us today. You heard the General say the Sun never sets on the 55th. They are now serving on this day from Okinawa to Mildenhall to Saudi Arabia, keeping a watchful eye so the rest of us can be secure.

For decades now—for a full decade in the Persian Gulf, the 55th has helped check the ambitions of Saddam Hussein and guard peace in the region. In Bosnia, in Kosovo, you risk your lives to help stop genocide. The days of winter may be short here, but it is really true that the Sun never sets on you and your work.

I also want to honor the men and women of the Strategic Command. For every minute of every day during the past 50 years, you and your predecessors at the Strategic Air Command have never let down our guard. The cold war may be over, but we still need you. You are the cornerstone of our deterrence and our security.

I also want to recognize the other units who serve here: the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, out of Omaha; the U.S. Air Force Heartland of America Band; the 311th Airlift Flight; the 343d Air Force Recruiting Squadron; and the U.S. Air Force Weather Agency. Would someone please ask them to turn up the heat a little bit? [*Laughter*]

Let me just say one other thing. These last 8 years have been a great honor for me, and it has been a joy to serve. But the one thing that I will leave office feeling more strongly than I did even on the day I took the oath of office, almost 8 years ago, is that the true greatness of America resides not in its leaders but in its citizens. And yes, it's important who wins; and yes, it's important that we all believe that the system is truly democratic and fair.

But our system is premised on the hard work, the innovation, the values, and the devotion to freedom of our citizens and especially, of course, those who serve us in uniform.

America is a different and better place than it was 8 years ago. We've had all kinds of economic progress, but a lot of social progress, as well. And I would just like to say to you that as you look ahead in this new century, we will become more and more interdependent on each other and on people beyond our borders. It will become more and more important, therefore, that every person has a chance, that every person carries his or her own load, and that we always remember we do better when we work together.

We have a great future out there, but we've got some challenges. If you look at where we are now compared to where we were 8 years ago, we're here because, as a people, we worked hard; we worked more closely together; we thought about the future; and we decided to pay the price for that future. That's why we're still around here after over 224 years.

So, you stay with it. Stay with it here at Offutt; stay with it here in Nebraska. Keep looking toward tomorrow. And remember that I may have been late, but I sure was glad when I got here.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. on the tarmac. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Gregory H. Power, USAF, Commander, 55th Wing, and Adm. Richard W. Mies, USN, Commander in Chief, United States Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base; Senator-elect Ben Nelson of Nebraska and his wife, Diane; Secretary of State Scott Moore of Nebraska; Mayor Hal J. Daub of Omaha, NE; Acting Mayor Bruce Sorenson of Bellevue; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks at a Nebraska 2000 Victory Reception in Omaha, Nebraska

December 8, 2000

Thank you very much. First, let me say to my great friend Vin, to Laurel, thank you for having me here. It took me a little while to get to Nebraska. [*Laughter*]

I was at Offutt, and I told the crowd, I said, one of my, sort of, critics said, "It'll be a cold day when the President comes to Nebraska." [*Laughter*] So I just picked a cold day and showed up. [*Laughter*] And I'm very glad all of you came. And I'm glad that this wonderful home has been opened to us and previously, a few months ago, to Hillary, something for which I'm very grateful. I expect some of you were here that night, and I'm very grateful for that.

I want to say congratulations to Ben and to Diane. It's great news for me. You know, I served with both Ben Nelson and Bob Kerrey when I was a Governor. I had a hard time getting a promotion. I was a Governor for 12 years—[*laughter*]—and I never got bored with it. I'd be happy if I were doing it, still. But we served together, and I was thrilled when Ben genuinely mustered the courage—both of them, together—to run again.

I've been through that deal, where you run for something and it doesn't work out. And then it's all very well—everybody else is telling you run to again, but they don't know how bad it hurts when it doesn't work—[*laughter*]—and the sort of pain threshold you have to cross to gather yourself together again. And they did it, and I really believe he'll be an excellent Senator. And we need people representing our party in Congress who have a sense of compassion and who are progressive, but who can be trusted to manage the economy, as well.

Because the thing that we have proved, I think, in the last 8 years—and I'm coming to Bob Kerrey on this—is that the most progressive social policy begins with a good economic policy that keeps interest rates down, lets the private sector grow, creates jobs with low unemployment, makes it possible for people to borrow money to start or expand businesses, to pay for college loans or car loans or credit cards or home mortgages.

That's why we've got over two-thirds of the American people in their own homes—over 70 percent in Nebraska—for the first time in the

history of the country, because we've had a combination of—we had a good progressive policy on health care, on education. We had a balanced policy on crime. But it started with an economic policy that would work. And when you put it all together, we wound up with more economic progress and social progress than the country has had, certainly, in our lifetime.

So I'm very grateful for that. But in order to do it, you have to have the right balance of people in the Congress and, certainly, representing our party. So I'm glad he's going to Congress—to the Senate, and he's going to have a partner in the new Senator from New York, which I'm also very proud of. [*Laughter*]

Bob Kerrey and I served together a long time ago. We've been together in a lot of places. We were even at the Indianapolis 500 once. You remember that? Nineteen eighty-six or '87, a long time ago. And we've been friends a long time. I had very mixed feelings when he announced that he wanted to retire from the Senate. I was happy for him, because I think he's got a truly exciting opportunity, which I believe will still keep him in the spotlight in national political life; at least I hope it does. I was sorry for the people of Nebraska and sorry for the United States Senate, because the Senate will be a poorer place.

When I was a young man in college, I worked in the United States Senate. And it was a time that was very contentious and quite partisan in some ways. We were having all the civil rights and the Vietnam war battles of the late Johnson years, when I went to work in the Senate. But the Senate was a place where there were 8 or 10 or 15 people that everybody, without regard to their party, respected and thought, you know, these people talk—they weren't carrying the party line. They weren't just trying to hurt somebody. They were standing up there, saying something that they really believed would make America a better place. Even if they didn't agree, no one really believed that they were just motivated by kind of blind partisanship or power grabbing or manipulation. They believed it was right.

And I think Bob Kerrey has been that kind of Senator. He's been willing to disagree with everybody, including me—[*laughter*]—if he thought it was right. But the main thing is, he's kept us debating issues that we ought to be talking about. And the real problem with all this intense partisanship—and by the way, with the exponential cost of campaigns—and what it does to both sides is that it tends to freeze people into yesterday's position, at the very time they should be debating what tomorrow's position ought to be. Well, Bob was always thinking about what tomorrow's position ought to be. And America is always about tomorrow. And that's the last point I want to make.

You know, it's gratifying for me for people to come up and say, oh, I feel like I got a leg in the grave, and people say, "Oh, I'm going to miss you and all this, and thank you for it." [*Laughter*] But it's been an honor to serve. I've loved it. Even the bad days were good. I would do it all again tomorrow in a heartbeat. But what I want to say to you is, the most important thing is that we do the right things, that we have good ideas, good values, work together, do the right thing.

If we hadn't been doing the right things in the last 8 years, I could have given the same speeches, and the results would not be the same. It's not about talking; it's about doing the right thing. So that's another reason I'm glad you're here today. And I want to ask you to keep supporting the direction that our party has taken, generally represented by those of us who are standing up here, because the country desperately needs—and basically even people who don't know they do, agree with the direction that we've taken in the last 8 years.

About two-thirds of the people support what we're trying to do. They just can't bring themselves to vote for us in an election. [*Laughter*] That's the truth. That's the truth. And so this is very important, because I've worked as hard as I could to get the country turned around. It's been 50 years since we've paid down the debt 3 years in a row. If we keep going—if we keep going, in somewhere between 9 and 12 years, depending on what judgments are made by my successors in the Congress and the White House, America could be out of debt for the first time since 1835. And I can't tell you what that means.

In a global economy where we compete for every dollar with people all over the world and where, so far, we've been doing so much better than everybody else—we keep buying more than we're selling—to pay that debt off guarantees a whole—all these young people here, we'll give them 20 years of lower interest rates, a stronger economy, higher productivity, a whole different future. That's just one example.

So I'm going to try to be a good citizen, and I'm going to try to help work on the things that I worked on as President as a private citizen but to do it in a way that doesn't get under foot of the next President. And I have loved doing this. But the most important thing is that people like you stay active in our party and keep pushing us to be thinking about tomorrow. Just keep pushing us toward the future, keep moving, and keep reaching out like a magnet.

And again, I would like to thank Ben. I would like to thank Bob Kerrey for the 8 years that we have worked together, President and Senator, and the many years of friendship before that. I want to thank Peter Hoagland, who came down from Washington with us today, for the years that we worked together when he was a Congressman from Nebraska.

I want to say to you that the best days of this country are still out here. We've had 8 good years, but if we build on it instead of reverse it, it's just going to get better.

But keep in mind, I will say again: It's more important that the people be pushing toward tomorrow than who has a particular office. As long as we're open to the proposition we have to keep working; and we have to keep working together; everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; we all do better when we work together. That's what the Democrats believe, and if we keep doing it, we're going to be just fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:38 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Vinod Gupta and Laurel Gottesman, reception hosts; and Senator-elect Ben Nelson of Nebraska, and his wife, Diane.

Statement on the Death of Representative Julian C. Dixon

December 8, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Congressman Julian Dixon. Julian was a champion for the people of his district, his State, and our Nation. In his 22 years in the United States Congress, Julian worked tirelessly for his district, served with distinction on the appropriations and intelligence committees, was a powerful advocate for the people of the District of Columbia, and worked hard to make sure that the voices of the less fortunate could always be heard. He was a kind, gentle man who earned the admiration and respect of all who knew him. I saw that recently when we visited a wonderful diner in his district together. I will miss him, and I join all Americans in honoring Julian Dixon for this lifetime of service to his country. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Bettye, his son, Cary, his family, and many friends.

The President's Radio Address

December 9, 2000

Good morning. Eight years ago this week, I brought together leading minds from all around our country for my first economic summit. The challenge then was immediate and clear: The deficit was $290 billion and rising; 10 million Americans were out of work; interest rates were high; and confidence was low.

Al Gore and I were determined to change that by putting into action a new economic strategy, one of fiscal discipline, investment in our people, and expanded trade. Since then, we've turned record budget deficits into record surpluses and produced the longest economic expansion in American history, with more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment ever, and the highest homeownership on record.

Over the last 2 years, our economy has grown at an exceptional pace, often achieving growth rates as high as 5 percent. Obviously, economic growth at such a brisk level cannot be sustained forever, but the bulk of evidence suggests that our recordbreaking expansion is continuing. In fact, just this week we received a report showing continued growth in private sector jobs. We also learned that unemployment in November was 4.0 percent, among the lowest rates in 30 years.

I'm also pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of private sector experts are predicting solid but measured growth in the coming year, with low unemployment, low inflation, and strong productivity. This is good news for the American economy and for the American people, and this is no time to abandon the path of fiscal discipline that helped get us here.

Our economic success was not a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice—a commitment to commonsense American values, to responsibility and fairness, to putting people first, to not spending what we don't have. We must not take our economic strengths for granted. That's why it is critical that we continue to pay down the debt, to keep inflation and interest rates low. That's why we should keep expanding trade, opening markets abroad, and keep investing in our people—that's the most important thing—closing the skills gap with more training and better education.

Education is an important part of any strategy for economic growth. And in this information age, it is essential. If we want our children to be able to compete in the high-tech, high-wage job market of the 21st century, we must ensure that all of them have the skills they need to succeed.

With this in mind, I have met twice this week with congressional leaders of both parties to make sure we pass an education budget that prepares our children for the future. When Congress left town last month, we already had reached an historic bipartisan agreement on education. It would provide much-needed funding to reduce class size, repair crumbling schools, improve teacher quality. It would also expand Head Start, after-school programs, Pell grants, and support students with disabilities.

We know these are the basic building blocks of a 21st century work force. I hope Congress will keep its commitment to America's children and pass a balanced budget that makes education the number one priority.

Once President Lyndon Johnson said, "We must raise our sights to develop more completely our people's talents and to employ these talents fully." If we want to invest in the prosperity of our Nation, we must invest in the education of our children so that their talents may be fully employed. Working together, we can complete this year's unfinished business, keep paying down the debt, keep the prosperity going, and by investing in our children's education, prepare our Nation to meet the challenges of the years to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on the Unveiling of the Design for the William J. Clinton Presidential Library

December 9, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to begin by saying how glad I am to see all of you here. I want to thank my two Arkansas Cabinet members, Rodney Slater and James Lee Witt, for being here. And thank you, Skip Rutherford, for all the work you've done. And I want to thank the other Arkansans here who have tried to help us get this off the ground, including Mack McLarty and Joe Ford and all the local officials. And I want to say a special word of appreciation, obviously, to Jim Polshek and all the people in the architectural firm who worked on this; and to Ralph Applebaum, who is not here today, but I will say a few more words about why that's important.

I want to thank Hillary and Chelsea, who have spent a lot of time on this, working with me, trying to imagine what we wanted to do and how we wanted to do it. And I want to thank Terry McAuliffe, who is sitting here trying

to make sure we can pay for it, as Jim reels off all these things we're going to do. [*Laughter*]

Since President Roosevelt started a Presidential library—and he had the only Presidential library, actually, where the President worked in the library while he was President, because he built it in 1939 and he actually used it whenever he went home to Hyde Park, until his death in 1945—there have been 10 Presidential libraries. I have actually visited seven of them, myself, and I've looked at the plans and the scheme of the other three. And I've tried to lift some of their best ideas in this building.

But basically what I wanted to do was to, first of all, have a building that was beautiful and architecturally significant, that people would want to walk in 100 years from now, but one that would also work—would work for average citizens. Ninety percent of the people who come to Presidential libraries are people who come as visitors. They want to see the museum; they want to know what happened in this point in our history related to everything else and how it relates to the present and the future.

And the challenge for any architect is that you've got to protect all these documents, and they have to be in buildings that don't get overly exposed to the light. So if you put all that stuff in one building, you have to have a lot of solid walls. And so the thing that we were able to work out that I'm really pleased about is, we're protecting all the documents in the back there, and we don't have to worry about that interfering with the enjoyment of the people who actually come to see the museum and the building and participate in all of that.

So I think that's really the thing that will make it fundamentally more interesting and more enjoyable for all the people, plus the fact that we—thanks to the good people of Little Rock, we've got enough land here to have a park, which will always be accessible to the local citizens as well as to all the visitors. And I'm very, very pleased about that.

I also want to say that it was very important to me to try to faithfully present the history of this time. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to Ralph Applebaum. Some of you know he did the Holocaust Museum here in Washington, which I think is the finest museum of its kind anywhere in the world. And I was elated when he agreed to do this.

I also want to say, since we'll be living in New York, I think that the planetarium that's been done in Manhattan by the Polshek firm, which some of you have seen pictures of, is basically this great square building in steel and glass with a globe inside—it's just breathtaking. And I knew that when I saw that, that they could do what I wanted to do down here. And so I'm very, very pleased.

Skip has already talked about this, but I wanted this library to also benefit the city and the State. And I think recovering this portion of the river, recovering this part of the neighborhood—you can't tell here, but those of you who aren't from Arkansas don't know, but once you get down here, over here, you're immediately into perhaps the most historic part of our State, the Old State Capitol, which is mentioned, where I announced for President and where I had my very first reception as a public official in January of 1977 in an ice storm—was built during the period in which we became a State, from 1833 to 1836. And it's a wonderful, wonderful old building.

So it was very close to this present State Capitol and a lot of other very historically significant buildings, including the magnificent new library we have there. So I'm very pleased about it.

I'm very pleased that the library will be accessible and interactive. You know, because of technology, you don't really have to go anyplace anymore to get whatever is there. And we were laughing about all these tens of millions of documents. The people who work here at the White House who are part of the permanent staff, who work from administration to administration and preserve these documents, one of the things—I went over to visit them not very long ago, and they showed me what they are doing, and it's amazing.

This may be somewhat embarrassing for me, but people will actually be able to pull up on the Internet copies of actual memos that I wrote on. And the woman said, "The reason we've got to have so many documents here is that you wrote more letters, more notes to your staff on more pieces of paper than any President in history." [*Laughter*] And unfortunately, most of them are unreadable, but—[*laughter*]—at least the people will be able to get a picture of that. You will be able to see drafts of the Inaugural Addresses and what I wrote and what they wrote, and that's good, because it will let a lot of my speechwriters off in history. People will think, "Gosh, what he marked out was better than what he said." But anyway, all that

will be available, and I think that's very important.

The third thing I would like to say is that I really wanted the relationship that this library would have to the University of Arkansas to be focused on public service. I want more and more people to want to go into public service. And we are going to offer a master's degree in public service, but in addition to that, I'm going to attempt to set up partnerships with employers all across America to get them to come and send their young executives to our place for a couple of months as a kind of an orientation in preparation for doing a year of public service in the National, State, or local governments all across the country.

I got this idea just basically from the Presidential Fellowship program we have here. But I can tell you that all the people who come here as White House Fellows make an incredibly unique contribution, as do all the volunteers, all the interns, everybody who works here, and it changes them forever, but they also help us do what we're doing here.

And it occurred to me that if we had a critical mass of people all across the United States who are out there working in businesses of all kinds and nonprofits and whatever, but they had spent at least one year of their lives working in the public sector at the Federal, State, or local level, that, number one, the Government would always work better, would always have a sense of how whatever is being done affects people who are not in Government, but secondly, we would not ever return to a period where the American people felt as alienated from their Government as we did for, in my judgment, too many years in the latter part of the 20th century.

And I really think it could—if we can get enough people to do this, it could pretty much permanently change the relationship of the American people to the way the Government works and the way that would have the Government making better decisions, and also, having more people in the private sector who had actually had the experience of being there. So I'm very, very hopeful about it.

In 1941 President Roosevelt's library was dedicated. And he said, and I quote, "Building a library is really an act of faith, a belief in the capacity of a Nation's people, so it will learn from the past that they can gain in judgment in creating their own future."

Well, this is a similar act of faith. And I hope that it will not only allow people to see these remarkable 8 years but will help to empower people and give them the confidence to believe that they can build America's greatest days in the new century.

So again, I want to thank you all. And especially, I want to thank those who have helped me to develop these plans. And I want to thank Terry and all the others here who have agreed to help me figure out how to build it, which is now the next big challenge. But I'm looking forward to it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to J.L. (Skip) Rutherford, president, and Terence McAuliffe, fundraiser, William Jefferson Clinton Foundation; former White House Chief of Staff Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty; Joe Ford, chairman and chief executive officer, ALLTEL Corp.; and James S. Polshek, lead architect, and Ralph Applebaum, interpretive designer, William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Library.

Exchange With Reporters Following the Unveiling of the Design for the William J. Clinton Presidential Library

December 9, 2000

Florida Supreme Court Decision

Q. Mr. President, can you comment on the Florida Supreme Court decision?

The President. Well, it appears to me that they basically said we ought to get an accurate count, and we have time to get one. I think that's what all the American people want, and I think that the more people feel there was an accurate count, the more legitimacy will be

conferred on whoever the eventual winner is. So I think this is a positive development.

Q. Do you think it gives Gore the advantage for the first time?

The President. Well, I think—I honestly don't know. I don't know the answer to that. I think it shows that what the Supreme Court, in their first decision, is what they meant. People voted and their vote—and it can be determined for whom they voted; their votes ought to be counted so that the count will be accurate. And I think that's a positive thing.

But it's not clear to me—I've got to go back; I've got to look at the decision. I don't know—are they going to go back through Palm Beach again, because there are still a lot of undervotes there? I don't know a lot of the questions. I just know that the thrust was to get the most accurate possible count, and I think that is something the American people feel good about. And when it's done, I think it will help the eventual winner, whether it's Governor Bush or Vice President Gore, to settle things down and get on with the business of America.

So I think it will be positive.

Q. Do you think all of this is going to deliver the people a weakened Presidency?

The President. Not necessarily. I said before, I think that we have had—we had two Presidencies that went into the House of Representatives: One produced John Quincy Adams, who only served one term; one produced Thomas Jefferson, who started a dynasty that lasted 24 years. We had two Presidencies that were decided where a majority of the votes went to one candidate and the majority of the electoral votes went to another. One was quite controversial, in 1876; the other just happened in the course of things. So I don't think you can draw any conclusions. I think that the American people will be inclined to give a spirit of good will in supporting it and a grace period to the incoming President. The country could hardly be in better shape, if we have to go through this level of uncertainty. And if the Members of the Congress will work in good spirit, I think we can have 4 very good years.

So I wouldn't be very worried about it. I think that, truthfully, if this whole process leads people to believe that every reasonable effort was made to get an accurate count, then I think that will help the incoming President. Then I think the country will rally behind the new President, and we'll go on with our business the way we always do.

Russian Pardon of Edmond Pope

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Mr. Putin——

The President. Well, I talked to him yesterday, and he told me he was going to do it, and we've had several conversations about this. I'm very appreciative of his action. Mr. Pope is not in good health, and we need to get him——

Q. Does the U.S. have to give back anything?

The President. There was no deal. We just had a discussion about it.

Press Secretary Jake Siewert. Thank you.

William J. Clinton Presidential Library

Q. [*Inaudible*]—favorite building is?

The President. [*Inaudible*]—coming here by the tens of thousands all the time, and look at all these exhibits and everything and kind of being caught up in it—unless there was a lot of light in the building. But I didn't want it to be a total energy guzzler and one that would be an environmental nightmare. So we really worked hard on this, and I think we've got a good balance here. I think it's going to be a very good building.

Florida Supreme Court Decision

Q. Do you think the Vice President was thrown a lifeline yesterday?

The President. I think the Supreme Court decision, as I understand it, just said we ought to have an accurate count. And I think that's how the American people feel. And I know that's how the people in Florida must feel. I mean, if you went to vote, you would want your vote counted.

So I think that's all. I don't know how it's going to come out; I don't think anybody does. But I think when it's over, if we believe we've done everything we could do to get an accurate count, that will confer greater legitimacy on the result, whichever one of them wins. And when there is a final winner, then the rest of us ought to say, "Okay, let's give this new President a chance to do the job." That's what I'll do, and I'll do whatever I can to facilitate it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:50 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas;

President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and American businessman Edmond Pope, detained and convicted of espionage in Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Russian President Vladimir Putin's Decision To Pardon Edmond Pope

December 9, 2000

I welcome President Putin's statement of his intent to pardon and release Edmond Pope. It will be a great relief to all Americans when Mr. Pope is finally freed and reunited with his family. We want to see him home and safe as soon as possible.

Remarks at "Christmas in Washington"

December 10, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I would like to thank my good friend Gerry Levin, George and Michael Stevens. Thank you, Sarah Michelle Gellar. I thank the Corrs for what they said about the work we've tried to do for peace in Ireland.

Thank you, Billy Gilman. I think you've got a future. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Brian McKnight, Jessica Simpson, Marc Anthony, and my old friend Chuck Berry.

Our family looks forward to this "Christmas in Washington" every year. But tonight, as many have noted, it's more special than ever to us, because it's our last one here. It also is the first Christmas of the new millennium.

Tonight I am grateful that we can celebrate in an America blessed with unprecedented peace and prosperity, a nation that, as we see when we look at all of these young people who sang for us tonight, is growing increasingly more diverse, and yet, at least if the young are our guide, increasingly more united as one community.

So this is a time for us to be grateful for our good fortune and to rededicate ourselves to the lessons of love and reconciliation taught by a child born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. As people all around the world gather this season to decorate trees and to light menorahs, we should remember the true meaning of the holidays, the spirit of giving. A gift was given to us, and we should in turn give—to bring a little light into every child's life, to give a little love and laughter and hope to those who don't have it.

That's really what Christmas is all about and what this celebration, and the work of the Children's National Medical Center, has been about. They've been at it for 130 years. In healing children, they remind us that every one of our children is a miracle.

As we rejoice in their lives, let's also take time tonight, when we look at the Navy Glee Club, to remember our men and women in uniform and all those around the world working for peace who will not be home this Christmas.

Finally, let me just thank all of you and the American people for giving Hillary, Chelsea, and me this incredible opportunity to share this joyous season and seven previous ones with you in the White House.

Thank you. God bless you. Merry Christmas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:27 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald M. Levin, chairman and chief executive officer, Time Warner, Inc.; George Stevens, Jr., executive producer, and Michael Stevens, producer, "Christmas in Washington;" actress Sarah Michelle Gellar, master of ceremonies; and musicians the Corrs, Billy Gilman, Brian

McKnight, Jessica Simpson, Marc Anthony, and Chuck Berry. "Christmas in Washington" was videotaped for broadcast at 8 p.m. on December 17.

Interview With Forrest Sawyer for the Discovery Channel
December 6, 2000

Mr. Sawyer. Good evening, Mr. President.
The President. Good evening.
Mr. Sawyer. Thank you for talking to us.
The President. Glad to do it.

Mars Exploration

Mr. Sawyer. Let us talk about Mars. It is much in the news right now, some new discoveries on Mars that suggest there is at least a real possibility that this was once, some good long time ago, a land of lakes. That puts it on the radar screen.

The President. Yes. All along, our people have thought there was some chance, based on other research that had been done, that there might have been some kind of life on Mars, at least for the last couple of years we've had some evidence of it.

Now, these new pictures that we've seen indicate that there might have been water there, quite near the surface, and much more recently than had previously been thought. So I think it's important that we continue our exploration, that we continue to take photographs, and that we keep working until we can set a vehicle down and get some things off the surface of Mars and bring it back home so we can take a look at it.

We had a couple of difficult missions there, but we learned some things from them. NASA was very forthright, and they came up with a new plan, and I think we should keep going at it.

Mr. Sawyer. The question is how you should keep going at it. As you mentioned, there had been a couple of losses, and that's been a hard public relations blow to get by. This new information at least raises what's going on in Mars, to the public's attention, a little higher. Do you continue more aggressively than you had before?

The President. Well, I think the NASA people will be the best judge of that, but they are and they should be committed to Mars exploration. They should continue to do more, I think, with the photographs. We should get as much information as we can from observation, in the greatest detail we can. And I think they should keep working on trying to get a vehicle to land on Mars that will be able to not only give us more immediate photographs but actually, physically get materials off the surface of Mars that we could then return to Earth. I think they should keep working on it.

Priorities for the Space Program

Mr. Sawyer. Look out a little further with me. You recall President Kennedy saying there should be a concerted effort to put a man on the Moon. Should there be a concerted effort to go that much greater distance and put humans—men and/or women—on Mars?

The President. I think it's just a question of when, not if. I think that now that we are committed to space exploration in a continuing way, now that we've got the space station up and the people there are working, and they're there 3 years ahead of the original schedule—I'm very proud of them—I think that what we should do from now on is to figure out how much money we can devote to this and what our most immediate priorities are.

The space station, I think, is going to prove to be an immense benefit to the American people and, indeed, to all the people of the world, because of the research that will go on there and what we'll find out. And so I think it's just a question of kind of sorting out the priorities, and the people who will come here after me in the White House and the space people and, of course, the interested Members of Congress will have to make those judgments.

Possibility of Life in Space

Mr. Sawyer. Do you think there is life out there?

The President. I don't know. But I think the—what we know from Mars is that the conditions of life may well have—for some sort of biological life—may well have obtained on Mars at some point in the past.

Now, we know also that our solar system is just a very tiny part of this universe, and that there are literally billions of other bodies out there. And we're only now really learning about how many they are, where they are, how far away they are. And we can't know for sure what the conditions are on those bodies. We just can't know yet, but I think that we will continue to learn. And I hope we will continue to learn.

International Space Station

Mr. Sawyer. The International Space Station is not without controversy, and you have pushed hard for it. It is expensive. It is challenging. It is, in good measure, risky. Why do this project in this way?

The President. Well, first of all, it is expensive. It will cost us about $40 billion over about 10 years. That includes the cost to put it up, our part of the cost, and then to maintain our part of it over 10 or 15 years. But I think it's important for several reasons.

First of all, it is a global consortium. There are 16 nations involved in it, each of them making some special contributions. The Russians, for example have—because they had the *Mir* station and we conducted some joint missions to *Mir,* I think nine of them over the last 2 years and 3 months—have made it possible for us to expand the size of the station and the number of people we can have there.

I think that it's important, because we can do a lot of basic research there in biology. We can see without the pull of gravity what happens with tissues, with protein growth. We've got a whole lot of things that we might be able to find out there that will help us in the biological sciences.

Secondly, I think we'll learn a lot about material science without gravity, how can you put different kinds of metals together and things like that. And the revolution in material science here on Earth is a very important part of America's productivity growth. It's just like our revolutions in energy that are going on now, our revolution in information technology. Advances we've made in material sciences are very important to our long-term productivity and our ability to live in harmony with the environment here.

Then there are a lot of basic physics things we're going to find out there. So I think the whole range of scientific experiments that we'll discover will be enormous.

Now, there are a lot of corollary benefits, too. When countries are working together, they're less likely to be fighting. And we've been able to keep literally hundreds of Russian scientists and engineers occupied who otherwise would have been targets of rogue states to help them produce nuclear or biological or chemical weapons or missiles or do some other mischief-making thing. So I think that's been a positive side effect.

But I believe in the potential of the space station, and I think that over the years we will come almost to take for granted a breathtaking array of discoveries, what they'll be beaming back to us.

Mr. Sawyer. The critics are saying, Mr. President, we've been doing work in weightless conditions for 20 years. This is not new. And when you take 16 nations, each one of them contributing a piece, this is enormously complicated; it makes it much more expensive; and frankly, for the astronauts, it can make it more risky.

The President. First of all, we're ahead of schedule. We're doing well up there, and we have never been able to keep people up, essentially, continuously. There were limits to our previous manned missions in outer space and the period of time in which weightlessness was available to them.

You're going to have now, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 52 weeks a year, for more than a decade, to see this work done and develop. And I believe in its potential. The scientists who believe in it sold me a long time ago, and I've never wavered in my belief that it's a good investment, and it'll pay back many times over what we're doing.

Mr. Sawyer. I think you said $40 billion for the United States part.

The President. But over 15 years, total.

Mr. Sawyer. Correct. And what the critics say, not the right calculations. In fact, all you have to do is look at the Russians right now, and they're not contributing what they were expected to contribute at all. And that could happen with the other nations, as well.

The President. It could, but I don't expect it will. What I think about the Russians is that as their economy comes back—and it's important to realize they went through a terrible, terrible economic crisis at the same time oil was less than half, almost a third of the price it is now—so I think as their economy comes back

and they become more financially stable, I don't have any doubt that they'll pay their part.

Mr. Sawyer. Do you have any question in your mind about sharing technology with a nation that is certainly more politically unstable than we would like—and that includes sharing missile technology?

The President. Well, we try to have some restraints on that. But I think, on balance, the technology we're sharing up there, the benefits of it, the benefits of cooperation, the sense of the—what we get by working together and how much greater it is than what we get from being in competition with one another, I think makes it a good gamble. It's a good risk.

Future of the Space Program

Mr. Sawyer. Look down the road. What do you see the space program transforming to?

The President. Well, I think we will focus—I think we've already talked about it. I think there will be more and more focus on how we can do specific things with enormous potential in the space station. And I think there will be a lot of interest in Mars, in terms of exploration. And then with our powerful telescopes, I think there will be more and more emphasis on what's out there beyond the solar system.

Mr. Sawyer. And to those who say, AIDS, famine, the countless problems that array themselves before us right here on Earth, those billions of dollars are so precious to those problems—you say?

The President. I say, first, we should address those things. But the United States has tripled the money we're putting into international AIDS program. We pioneered for the last 2 years the largest international debt relief initiative in history. It's one of the finest achievements of this Congress that they embraced in a bipartisan fashion the legislation that I presented them on debt relief. We should continue to move ahead with those things.

But you all must take some of your wealth to invest toward tomorrow, the long-term tomorrow. And that's what our investment in space is. It's the investment in the long term. We have to know more about the universe, and we have to know more about what space conditions, particularly the space station, can do to help us with our environment here at home, to help us deal with diseases here at home, to help us grow our economy here at home.

I believe this is an investment that has a return. And I feel the same way about other scientific investments. We've increased investment in basic science. You can argue that, well, it has a long-term payout; maybe we should spend something else on that. I just don't agree with that. I think you have to—societies have to take some of their treasure and invest it toward the long run. And that's how I view this.

Wilderness and Wildlife Preservation

Mr. Sawyer. Let's come back down to home, then. Earlier this week you set aside thousands of square miles of coral reefs off Hawaii, to be protected in perpetuity. And your administration is not yet over. Now, if my calculations are right, since 1996, you have 13 times established national wildlife protection areas. And you're considering some more?

The President. Yes, we have set aside more land, through legislation—we've established three national parks in California, the Mojave Desert Park. We saved Yellowstone from gold mining and saved a lot of the old-growth forests, the redwood forest in California, and we're recovering the Florida Everglades over a multiyear period. We've basically protected more land in this administration in the United States than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, about a hundred years ago.

So I think that's important. And the coral reefs are important because what's happening to the oceans as a result of global warming and local environmental degradation is deeply troubling, long-term, for everybody in the United States and everybody on the planet. Twenty-five percent of the coral reefs have been lost—are now dead. Over the next several decades, we'll lose another 25 percent of them within 20 to 25 years unless we do something about it. So that's why we moved there.

We did not end all fishing. We did not end all recreation. Indeed, we're preserving for the natives, the Hawaiian natives who live in that area and for those who come as tourists—leave live, vibrant coral reefs. But we had to protect them. And others will have to do the same thing.

We've got big challenges to the Great Barrier Reefs in Australia, big challenges to the magnificent reefs off the coast of Belize, and these are very important sources of biodiversity. So I'm glad we did it.

I'm looking at—I've asked the Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, to follow the same process we followed the whole time we've been here, to look at other potential areas for protection, make some recommendations to me, and we'll take one more look before I go to see if there's anything else I should do.

Mr. Sawyer. One of those areas he has just visited is a wide swath of the Sonoran Desert in Arizona——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Sawyer. ——which happens to be near a military bombing range.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Sawyer. Will you set that aside for protection?

The President. Well, I'm looking for a recommendation from Bruce on that, but I think there is a lot of support out there for that, across the board, members of both political parties and all the different cultures that make up Arizona. And we're trying to work through that, and there are some very compelling environmental arguments there. And when he gives me his recommendation, I'll make a decision. But we're both very interested in that, and of course, he's from Arizona, so he knows a lot about it.

Mr. Sawyer. The military wants its flying rights to continue, and you would approve that?

The President. We're working on that. I haven't made a decision yet. We've got to work through all that.

Mr. Sawyer. You know that a lot of folks are talking about the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Sawyer. Some suggest that you could, by executive fiat, establish it as a protected site from oil drilling. Can that be done?

The President. It is. As a national wildlife refuge right now, oil drilling is not legal there. There are some people who believe if I were to make it a national monument, as I have created national monuments, for example, and a million acres around the Grand Canyon to protect the watershed area there, that it would have extra protection.

Now, as a legal matter, I don't believe that's right. That is, there is nothing to prevent Congress from specifically authorizing drilling either in a national wildlife refuge or in an arctic national monument. That is, I don't think—sometimes I don't think people understand that in order to have drilling there, I believe legislation is required, regardless.

So there may be some other reason to establish some part of the National Wildlife Refuge as a national monument, because it would have other beneficial impacts during the time a monument existed. And of course, it depends in part on what happens in the ultimate resolution of this election, because one of the candidates, Vice President Gore, is against drilling; the other, Governor Bush, is for drilling. But he would still have to get some legislative acquiescence or approval of drilling even if it's a national wildlife refuge, just like it is now.

Mr. Sawyer. Will you consider making the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge a national monument?

The President. I have not made a decision on that, but I will just say I do not believe that the drilling issue should be the determinative factor, based on the research I've seen so far. I don't think it has—in other words, I don't think that it would make it any harder to pass an act of Congress. And I think that as the land is now, it would still require an act of Congress.

So I'm not sure that that should be the determinative factor. There may be other reasons to do it, and as I said, I'm going to talk to Secretary Babbitt, and we'll look at what the arguments are.

Mr. Sawyer. May I ask how many other areas you are considering?

The President. I think there are three or four or five that we've been asked to consider by people around America or things that we've been interested in. We always like to get out and talk to the local people in the communities and see what the arguments are, pro and con.

Mr. Sawyer. Which one stands highest on your radar screen?

The President. I don't want to talk about it until I can give the recommendation. No point in stirring everybody up unless we're going to do it.

Technology in the Future

Mr. Sawyer. High tech underpins all of this. And we've been going through a bit of a resettling period here. It's been a tough, tough time.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Sawyer. Look out. How do you see that happening?

The President. Well, I think the future is still quite bright. I know that a lot of the dot-com companies have been up and down, just like biotech companies go up and down. But that shouldn't be surprising, because a lot of these companies don't make money in themselves, that they really have value, inherent value for what they can do and how they might someday add to some other enterprise. So that shouldn't surprise people.

But I think that the continued explosion in information technology and in biotechnology is inevitable. I do believe that the vagaries in the market should strengthen the resolve of Members in Congress of both parties who care about science and technology to keep up the basic research budget.

For example, one of the things I have fought very hard for is a lot of investment into nanotechnology, or super, super microtechnology, because, among other things, it will enable us to have computer capacity the size of a supercomputer some day on something the size of a teardrop.

I have a piece of nanotechnology in my office. It's a little outline of me playing the saxophone that has almost 300,000 elements in it, and it's very tiny. So I think that—what does this mean to real people? It means that if you take nanotechnology and you merge within it the sequencing of the human genome and the ability to identify defective or troubled genes, what you're going to have before long, I think, is the ability to identify cancers when they're just several cells in the making, which—and if you could do that and you develop the right kind of preventive screening, you can make virtually 100 percent of cancers 100 percent curable.

Mr. Sawyer. For any of these things to be accomplished, Government has to function and function well.

The President. Yes.

Resolution of the 2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Sawyer. And we are living in an extraordinary time. As you look forward, whoever becomes President, is that President running the risk of not being considered legitimately the President of the United States?

The President. Well, I think—first of all, it's a difficult question to answer, because it depends on how this plays out. If the Vice President is elected, there will always be some Republicans who don't believe he should have been. If Governor Bush is elected, there will always be some Democrats who believe that Al Gore not only won the popular vote in the country but also had more people in Florida who wanted to vote for him, and perhaps more who did, which is—one good argument for counting all the so-called undercounted ballots and all the punchcard counties is trying to help resolve that.

But once we actually get a determinative decision, that if it is in accord with our Constitution—and the Constitution, you know, our Founders foresaw close elections and tough fights, and they have prescribed all kinds of ways to deal with it. Back in 1800, we had 36 ballots in the House of Representatives before we resolved it. And it produced Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Jefferson turned out to be successful because he was mindful of how divided the country was. He served two terms. He retired in honor. A member of his party succeeded him, served two terms; a member of his party succeeded him and served two more terms.

So then, in 1876—nobody ever really quite felt good about it—the President who won didn't run for reelection, and then everything was sort of up in the air for a while. So I think that you cannot predict how this is going to come out. I think it depends a lot on whether the constitutional system is followed, the will of the people is determined, and then it depends on how people behave once they get in office.

Prospects for the 107th Congress

Mr. Sawyer. I think what a lot of people are worrying is that it's very difficult to determine what the will of the people is when the country appears to be divided right down the middle and, in fact, Congress is divided right down the middle.

The President. That's right.

Mr. Sawyer. And we have the Democrats on one side saying, "What we really want when we have a 50-50 split in a Senate is cochairmen, and we want an equal split of everything." And the Republicans are saying, "Not on your life." Now, that looks to me to be a recipe for gridlock.

The President. Well, it depends. You know, I'm leaving the budget in pretty good shape, and they're going to ride up the surplus a little bit, although they should be cautious about that,

because, again, these surplus numbers are 10-year numbers, and I always believe in taking them with a grain of salt.

Our success here these last 8 years has been based in no small measure on being conservative on economic forecasts and trying to make sure we had the numbers right. And I personally believe that America is best served by continuing to pay the debt down. I know it's not as appealing as having a bigger tax cut now or having the money go to—all to some spending program or whatever. But I think that if you keep paying that debt down, you're going to keep interest rates lower than they otherwise would be, and that's money in everybody's pocket—business loans, car loans, home mortgages, college loans, credit card payments—and it keeps the economy stronger.

But still, even if they do that, they'll still have money for a tax cut; they'll have money to invest in education; they'll have circumstances that will argue for cooperation rather than conflict after the election.

Mr. Sawyer. Your worst critics admire your political acumen. When you look at what's happening in Congress right now and the pushing and shoving that's going on, where is the resolution? How do you resolve the Democrats saying, "I want cochairmen" and the Republicans saying, "It's not going to happen"?

The President. Well, of course, if all the Republicans vote together, they can stop it, because they'll have—if the Vice President is elected President, then Senator Lieberman leaves the Senate and his Republican Governor appoints a Republican Senator, and they have a 51–49 lead. And then it will be a more normal circumstance. If Governor Bush is elected, and then all the Republicans vote with him, with Vice President Cheney, they could vote 51–50 for whatever system they wanted.

But since in the Senate it only takes 41 votes to stop anything except the budget, that's a difficult sell. Now, Senator McCain said today that he thought there ought to be sharing. And I think—all I can tell you is, I think the country would like it. The country would like to see that one House of the Congress shared the resources, even-Steven, and shared the responsibilities. Somebody could chair a hearing today; somebody else could chair it tomorrow, because as a practical matter, to pass any of these bills, they're going to have to have broad bipartisan cooperation anyway.

And I think that it—we know that there is kind of a dynamic center in America that has the support of two-thirds of the American people, and if they could reach out for that in the Senate, it might be quite exciting.

Now, it's also going to be interesting in the House. The House is more closely divided. Now, there will only be, depending on—I think there are one or two recounts still going on in the House, so there will be, in effect, a three- or four-vote difference in the House—margin. And they need to decide whether that's going to change their rules any, because individual House Members or even our whole caucus in the minority, no matter how narrow the minority, very often cannot affect a rule. So in the House, debate tends to be cut off much more. So they're going to have to think, should they change the procedures in the House as well, at least—not necessarily to have cochairmen, because they do have a narrow majority in the Republican Party, but at least to have the opportunity for more options to be considered.

It's going to be quite challenging. But I wouldn't assume it's going to be bad, because they do have more money. They have a strong economy, and if they keep paying the debt down, it will keep going for some time to come, I think.

Election Reform

Mr. Sawyer. Let's look at what we've learned from this extraordinary period. Should we now consider voting reform, looking at these machines, looking at the vote count?

The President. Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. For one thing, even—I was impressed—I didn't know very much—I'm probably like most Americans; I didn't know very much about some of this beforehand. When I voted absentee, most of the time I was here in the White House, from Arkansas, instead of a punchcard system, we had a system with an arrow by every choice, and you had to take a pencil and fill in the arrow. There was a gap in the arrow, and you had to fill it in. So it was much less subject to misinterpretation. I didn't know what a butterfly ballot was until this happened.

And I think—the question I think is, can we find a way to both simplify the ballot but also feel good about the return? For example, in northern California this year, in a county there was an experimental computerized voting system, where you punched on a screen the person

you were for, and it would say, "You have voted for Ralph Nader. If that's correct and that's what you meant to do, punch 1," and you punched 1, so it had a guarantee. None of these 3,400 predominantly Jewish voters that now think they voted for Buchanan—or did vote for Buchanan, who apparently meant to vote for Vice President Gore—you couldn't have that happen there.

The only question I would have with that is, every computer from time to time goes down, so you wouldn't have any error in the voting there like you did with the 19,500 double-punched ballots in Palm Beach County or the 10,000 African-Americans who apparently were told they had to vote on two pages, and then they wind up voting for some of these minor Presidential party candidates they never even heard of and didn't know what they were doing, so that's 10,000 more votes out the window that were lost. You could probably fix that with electronic voting.

Then the question would be, what are your assurances that the count won't be lost if the computer goes down? In other words, there may not be any perfect system, but it seems to me that—I think particularly troubling to people is the evidence that's come out that these punch-card systems where there was most of the trouble had a plastic coating underneath, rather than the original sort of spongelike design which would have made it much easier to pierce all the way through—that they tended to be in the counties that had lower per capita income voters, and therefore, the people that maybe needed to vote the most, that we've always tried to bring into the political system, lost their votes because of a flaw in the system. That's tragic, and we can't let it happen again.

It's interesting. But the only thing that bothers me about the northern California system is—I think you can probably design it, but to have the confidence in the voters—because every system has to be subject to a recount at some point if it's a close enough election. Even a computerized system has got to be very hard—like in Canada. Of course, they only have 30 million people in Canada, but in Canada, interestingly enough, they all still vote with paper ballots, and they have like 100,000 counters, so they count all the ballots within an hour of the polling close, even though they're all paper ballots.

Chretien was just here. He played golf with me over the weekend. And I said, "Don't you all vote with paper ballots?" He said, "Yes." And I said, "How did you count them all?" He said, "We have 100,000 counters." He says, "Every community has equal—all the parties are represented, and then there's sort of a judicial overseer type. And we all sit there and look; everybody can watch everybody else; and you just count the ballots right away." It's interesting.

Mr. Sawyer. You are an advocate of high-tech. You are an advocate of applying science to technology and applying that to our lives. Should that not also be applied to the way that we choose our representatives?

The President. Yes, I think anything that increases the likelihood that a legal voter will have his or her vote counted in the appropriate way should be done. Anything that increases the likelihood that every legal voter will actually fully understand the ballot and not make the wrong choice by accident should be done. And as I said, this new system that we see, that was used in northern California, which is rather like the systems that some companies have—if you order things over the Internet now, some of them have not one but two different checks, where you have to say not once, but twice: Yes, this is what I ordered; this is what it cost; this is what I know. If you can simplify the voting that way, that would be good.

The only question I have is, what do you do if the computer goes down, and how do you know for sure that no votes are lost, so that there has to be a recount, you know that the tabulation is accurate, because that's also very important? You're never going to have a time in America where we're never evenly divided over something. So anyone who runs for office ought to have access to some sort of legitimate recount if it's very tight or if it's a dead-even vote. But I think that, surely, a lot can be done to make sure that no one ever goes into the polling place in a national election with ballots as confusing and as subject to error as we've seen here. I think that the system has got to be cleaned up.

You just think how you'd feel if you were one of the people who had lost his or her vote. We have a lot of friends with kinfolks down in Florida who think they may be some of the people whose votes were wrongly cast. And they

are sick—sick, sick. So you don't want that to ever happen again.

Science and Technology Accomplishments

Mr. Sawyer. Mr. President, we're talking about science and technology. And your administration is coming to a close. In years to come, looking back, how would you like the administration to be remembered in this area?

The President. First, I would like to be remembered for a serious commitment to pushing America forward and keeping us on the forefront of science and technology in two or three areas. We reorganized and revitalized the space program, kept it alive, and kept it moving. We had a very serious attempt to deal with the climate change in the development of alternative energy sources and conservation. We finished the sequencing of the human genome and began to work on its practical implications. We worked on—that's what the whole nanotechnology issue and all that. And fourthly, that we worked on information technology and tried to make sure it was democratic—small "d"—with the Telecommunications Act, the E-rate, hooking the schools up to the Internet, so that—and finally, that we dealt with the scientific and technological implications of national security—biological warfare, chemical warfare, cyberterrorism—that we prepared America for those things.

I think that will be our legacy in this area.

Mr. Sawyer. Mr. President, thank you for talking to us.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:30 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 11. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the Childhood Immunization Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters

December 11, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. And let me say, I took a lot of pride just listening to Mrs. Carter speak here. She seemed right at home.

When Hillary and I moved into the Arkansas Governor's mansion in 1979, Betty Bumpers began her lifelong campaign to wear me out about immunizations. [*Laughter*] And I reminded Rosalynn that it was in 1979 or 1980 that we actually did an immunization event in the backyard of the Arkansas Governor's mansion. I can't remember whether it was '79 or '80 now, but it was, anyway, a year or 2 ago.

So I can't thank these two women enough for what they have done. And I was marveling, when Mrs. Carter was going through all those issues, at just how well she knows and understands this issue. So I'm very grateful to both of them, because we wouldn't be here today if it weren't for them.

I also want to thank Secretary Shalala and Secretary Glickman and, in her absence, Hillary. They have worked very hard on this for the last 8 years, and we have made some remarkable progress.

I want to recognize also Dr. Walter Ornstein of the CDC and Shirley Watkins of the Department of Agriculture, who will be very active in the steps that I'm going to announce today.

I think it's worth noting that we're meeting in the Roosevelt Room, which was named for our two Presidents and Eleanor Roosevelt. And Franklin Roosevelt spent almost half his life in a wheelchair as a result of polio. And I was part of the first generation of Americans to be immunized against polio.

And I remember, as a child, seeing other children in iron lungs. And I remember what an enormous elation it was for me and my classmates when we first got our polio vaccines, to think that that's one thing we didn't have to worry about anymore. It's hard for people now who weren't alive then and weren't part of it to even imagine what that meant to a whole

generation of children. But it was profoundly important.

We now know that vaccines save lives and agony. They also save money. They're a good investment. And we have done what we could, over the last 8 years, to make sure that our children get the best shot in life by getting their shots. And we have, as Rosalynn said, made progress.

In 1993 almost two out of five children under the age of 3 had not been fully vaccinated. And Secretary Shalala and Hillary and the rest of our team went to work with the Childhood Immunization Initiative to improve immunization services, make the vaccines safer and more affordable, and increase the immunization rates. We enacted the Vaccines for Children program to provide free vaccines to uninsured and underinsured children. And thanks to the work of people in this room and people like you all across America, these rates, as Mrs. Carter said, are at an all-time high. And the incidence of diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella are at an all-time low.

In recent years, we've been able to say that for the first time in our Nation's history, 90 percent of our children have been immunized against serious childhood diseases. And just as important, vaccine levels are almost the same for preschool kids across racial and ethnic lines. So our children are safer and healthier.

But as has already been said today, there is still a lot to do. At least a million infants and toddlers are not fully immunized. Too many children continue to fall victim to diseases that a simple immunization could have prevented. Low-income children are far less likely to be immunized. In some urban areas, for example, immunization rates are 20 percent below the national average.

In Houston, just 63 percent of low-income kids are vaccinated. In Detroit and Newark, it's 66 percent. And we know areas with below-average immunization rates are at greater risk of potentially deadly outbreaks, such as what we saw with the measles epidemic in the early eighties—the late eighties. So today we are here to announce three new steps that we hope will build on the record and meet the outstanding challenges.

First, we have to go where the children are, as Mrs. Carter said. Over 45 percent of infants and toddlers nationwide are being served by the Women, Infants, and Children program. It's the single largest point of access to health care for low-income preschool children who are at highest risk of low vaccination coverage. The immunization rates for children in WIC in some cases is 20 percent lower than the rates for other children. So WIC is clearly the place to start on the outstanding challenge.

Today I am directing WIC to conduct an immunization assessment of every child participating in the program, all 5 million of them. Each time a child comes in, their immunization status will be evaluated. Children who are behind schedule or who don't have records will be referred to a local health care provider. I am asking the CDC to provide WIC's staff with the information they need to conduct immunization assessments accurately and efficiently. We know this will work. WIC centers that have experimented with this type of approach have seen vaccination coverage increase by up to 40 percent in just one year.

Second, I am directing Secretary Shalala and Secretary Glickman to develop a national strategic plan to further improve immunization for children at risk—so they'll have something to do in this last 40 days. [*Laughter*] This would include steps to utilize new technology, share best practices, and examine how we can enlist other Federal programs serving children in the effort to improve immunization rates.

But it isn't a job just for Government alone. We need to work with other caring organizations to succeed. So third and finally, I'm announcing that the American Academy of Pediatrics is launching a new campaign to urge all 55,000 of its members to remind WIC-eligible parents to bring their immunization records with them when they visit WIC sites. I want to thank the members of the AAP for their initiative as well. We need to keep working until every child in every community is safe from vaccine-preventable disease.

Dr. Jonas Salk, the father of the polio vaccine, once said, "The greatest reward for doing is the opportunity to do more." We've done a lot together, and we have more to do. Thank you very much.

Supreme Court

Q. President Clinton, any comment on the Supreme Court today and what they might do?

The President. No, I think we ought to just wait and see what they do. One way or the

other, it will be an historic decision that we'll live with forever.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, on Northern Ireland, you're going to be traveling to Britain and Ireland later this evening. Do you have any particular message for Sinn Fein on the issue of IRA disarmament?

The President. Well, I think I'll save my words for when I get to Ireland. But let me just observe what the state of play is here. We've had a peace now for a couple of years, overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of Northern Ireland, the people of the Irish Republic, the majority of both communities in Ireland. We've had a functioning government where people worked together across lines and did things that amazed one another in education and other areas.

No one wants to go back to the way it was. But there are differences about the implementation of the new police force and how that—and also about the schedule and method of putting the arms beyond use. And those are the two things that could still threaten the progress that we're making. And if there's something I can do before I leave to make one more shot to resolve this, I will do it.

The main thing is, the people there are doing well. The Irish Republic has the highest growth rate, economic growth rate, in Europe now, and things are happening that were unimaginable just a few years ago. So I don't believe the people will let it slip back.

We have just got to get over—ironically, both issues, though they are related to one another, independently reflect kind of the lingering demons of the past, and we just have to get over there and try to purge a few more. And I hope I can make a contribution.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:54 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former First Lady Rosalynn Carter and Betty Bumpers, wife of former Senator Dale Bumpers, cofounders, Every Child By Two; and Dr. Walter A. Ornstein, Director, National Immunization Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Memorandum on Improving Immunization Rates for Children at Risk
December 11, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Subject: Improving Immunization Rates for Children at Risk

In 1992, less than 55 percent of children under the age of 3 nationwide had received the full course of vaccinations. This dangerously low level of childhood immunizations led me to launch, on April 12, 1993, the Childhood Immunization Initiative, which helped make vaccines affordable for families, eliminated barriers preventing children from being immunized by their primary care provider, and improved immunization outreach. As a result, childhood immunization rates have reached all-time highs, with 90 percent or more of America's toddlers receiving the most critical vaccines by age 2. Vaccination levels are nearly the same for preschool children of all racial and ethnic groups, narrowing a gap estimated to be as wide as 26 percentage points a generation ago.

Despite these impressive gains, immunization levels in many parts of the country are still too low. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, low-income children are less likely to be immunized than their counterparts. In fact, immunization rates in certain inner-city areas are as low as 65 percent, placing them at high risk for potentially deadly diseases such as diphtheria, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, and rubella. These diseases are associated with birth defects, paralysis, brain damage, hearing loss, and liver cancer. In addition, children who are not fully immunized are proven to be at increased risk for other preventable conditions, such as anemia and lead toxicity. Clearly, more needs to be done.

Today, I am directing you to focus your efforts to increase immunization levels among children at risk in a place where we clearly can

find them: the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). This program, which serves 45 percent of infants nationwide and more than 5 million children under the age of 5, is the single largest point of access to health services for low-income preschool children who are at the highest risk for low vaccination coverage. State data indicates that in 41 States, the immunization rates for children enrolled in WIC are lower than the rates for other children in their age group—in some cases, by as much as 20 percent.

Therefore, I hereby direct you to take the following actions, in a manner consistent with the mission of your agencies:

(a) Include a standardized procedure as part of the WIC certification process to evaluate the immunization status of every child applying for WIC services using a documented immunization history. Children who are determined to be behind schedule on their immunizations or who do not have their immunization records should be referred to a local health care provider as appropriate;

(b) Develop user-friendly immunization materials designed to ensure that information on appropriate immunization schedules is easily accessible and understandable for WIC staff conducting nutritional risk assessments. WIC staff should be trained to use these materials by State and local public health authorities;

(c) Develop a national strategic plan, within 60 days, to improve the immunization rates of children at risk. In developing the plan, the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services should: consult with representatives from the Office of Management and Budget to ensure consideration for the FY 2002 budget; include input from provider, health care consumer, and nutrition communities, and develop a blueprint for action to:

1. expand the availability of automated systems or computer software to provide WIC clinics with information on childhood immunization schedules, with the eventual goal of providing this service in every WIC clinic nationwide, to provide more accurate and cost-effective immunization assessment, referral, and follow-up, in a manner that addresses cost-sharing concerns by both agencies;
2. disseminate a range of best practices for increasing immunization rates for low-income children to WIC State and local agencies, as well as immunization programs nationwide, including developing efficient and effective ways to educate WIC staff about the importance of immunization, appropriate immunization schedules, and the information necessary to make a meaningful referral;
3. foster partnerships (through written guides and/or technical assistance) between WIC offices and health care providers/advocates who can assist with immunization referrals and conduct appropriate follow-up with families;
4. include information on the importance of immunizations and appropriate immunization schedules in standard WIC efforts to educate families about breastfeeding, anemia, lead poisoning, and other health-related topics; and
5. evaluate whether other Federal programs serving children should require a standard question on immunizations as part of their enrollment process, and if deemed appropriate, develop a plan for implementing that requirement.

The actions I am directing you to take today, and any further actions developed as a result of interagency collaboration or public-private partnerships, should not create barriers to WIC participation. Immunization outreach and assessment procedures should never be used as a condition of eligibility for WIC services or nutritional assistance. Rather, activities to improve immunization rates for children participating in WIC should be complementary, aggressive, and consistent with my Administration's overall initiative to increase immunization rates for children nationwide.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree
December 11, 2000

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. First, I'd like to thank Peter Nostrand and all the people who work on the Pageant of Peace every year. They give us a wonderful night, and I think we ought to give them all a big hand. Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

I'd love to thank these people who have come out in the cold to perform for us: our friend Kathy Mattea; Charlotte Church; Billy Gilman; the cast of "Fosse;" the West Tennessee Youth Chorus; Al "Santa Claus" Roker. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank Anastasia Wroblewski and Kwami Dennis, our Camp Fire Boy and Camp Fire Girl. They did a great job up here. It's not so easy to remember those speeches. [*Laughter*] I thought they were terrific.

And I'd like to thank Thomas Kinkade for his beautiful portrait that's on the cover of our program, and the United States Navy Band. Thank you very much.

On Christmas Eve more than 75 years ago, President Calvin Coolidge lit the first National Christmas Tree. He later said, "Christmas is not a time or a season but a state of mind, to cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy."

Every President since President Coolidge has been part of that tradition, gathering around the Colorado spruce to rejoice in the spirit of Christmas and to celebrate a new season of peace and good will.

Hillary, Chelsea, and I always look forward to celebrating the Pageant of Peace with you, and the many traditions of the holiday season. Tonight, as we enjoy our last Christmas season in the White House and the last time I'll have a chance to be here at the lighting of the Christmas tree, we are profoundly grateful for the gift you and all the American people have given us, the privilege to serve these last 8 years, to live in this marvelous old house, and to participate in wonderful ceremonies like this.

For Americans of many faiths, this is a season of renewal, of light returned from darkness, despair transformed to hope, a time to reflect on our lives, rejoice in our blessings, and give thanks. Tonight, on this first Christmas of the new millennium, we celebrate an America blessed with unprecedented peace and prosperity and a nation that through more than 220 years and even the toughest times has held together by the enduring values enshrined in our Constitution.

This is a time for us to reflect, too, on that good fortune and a time to rededicate ourselves to the lessons of love and reconciliation taught by a child born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. As we gather to decorate our trees and light our menorahs, let us remember the true meaning of the holidays by taking some time to give to those who need it most. And let us be thankful for the sacrifices of all those who serve us, especially those who serve us in the military who won't be home this year for Christmas.

Let me say that when I leave you tonight, I'm going to Northern Ireland, to a small island where people were born that eventually came to America and gave us over 40 million of our citizens; a place where Saint Patrick brought the spirit of Christmas almost 1,500 years ago. I hope that we can finish the business of peace there and help, again, America to give a gift to the rest of the world.

To all of you, again I say, this has been a humbling and wondrous gift. We thank you, all of us in our family, for the chance to serve yours. God bless you; Merry Christmas, and let's light the tree.

Thank you very much. Ready, set, go!

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. on the Ellipse during the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to Peter Nostrand, chairman, and television weatherman Al Roker, master of ceremonies, Christmas Pageant of Peace; musicians Kathy Mattea, Charlotte Church, and Billy Gilman; and artist Thomas Kinkade.

Statement on the Termination of Deportation Proceedings in Support of the Northern Ireland Peace Process

December 11, 2000

I strongly support the Attorney General's decision, at the request of the Secretary of State, to take action to terminate deportation proceedings against six individuals and to refrain from initiating proceedings against three others. All nine individuals had served sentences in the United Kingdom for activity connected with the IRA but are physically present in the United States. While in no way approving or condoning their past criminal acts, I believe that removing the threat of deportation for these individuals will contribute to the peace process in Northern Ireland. The Attorney General's decision is consistent with steps taken by the British Government under the Good Friday accord to release prisoners in Northern Ireland and reintegrate them into normal society as part of a process of reconciliation. Her decision will also reinforce efforts by the Governments and the parties in Northern Ireland to implement in full all aspects of the Good Friday accord.

Statement on Signing the Water Resources Development Act of 2000

December 11, 2000

Today I have signed into law S. 2796, the "Water Resources Development Act of 2000," a multibillion dollar omnibus bill to authorize water projects and programs of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

I am very pleased that this bill authorizes the Administration's plan to restore an unprecedented natural resource—America's Everglades. Thanks to an historic partnership among Federal, State, tribal, and local leaders, we can begin in earnest an over 30-year journey to complete the largest and most ambitious ecosystem restoration project in the world.

Since the beginning of our first term, the Vice President and I have made Everglades restoration a priority. We have provided the necessary resources to Federal agencies and made timely completion of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan an essential part of our environmental agenda. Through the leadership of the Army Corps of Engineers and the support of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, and other Federal agencies, the State of Florida, and a diverse group of stakeholders, the authorized plan provides a scientifically sound blueprint to guide Everglades restoration. The legislation provides assurances that water developed under the Plan will be available for the restoration of the natural systems. We must all now make implementation of this Plan a priority if we are to save this threatened resource and leave an Everglades legacy that will make future generations proud of their Government. By acting now, we can reverse the damage of the past and rescue this unique and remarkable landscape.

I am pleased that S. 2796 also authorizes a major project to deepen channels into New York/New Jersey harbor, our Nation's third largest container port, that will benefit consumers and producers, create jobs, and make the United States more competitive in world markets. The Act also authorizes my proposal for projects to improve the Puget Sound ecosystem and authorizes efforts to restore the estuary of the lower Columbia River, boosting the recovery of threatened and endangered salmon species in the Pacific Northwest.

In addition, I am pleased that the Congress has adopted my proposals to strengthen the authority of the Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate comprehensively the water resources needs of watersheds throughout the Nation and to enhance its ability to work with Native American tribes and Alaska native communities to study proposed water resources projects. I also endorse the authorization for a National Academy of Sciences study on suggestions for an independent review of Army Corps of Engineers projects.

I am very concerned and disappointed, however, with many of the provisions in S. 2796. Earlier this year, I submitted water resource legislation to the Congress directed at certain fundamental issues. First, the bill included several high-priority Corps initiatives addressing important needs currently facing the Nation. Second, the bill proposed a number of much needed water project reforms. Finally, my Administration developed this bill with a Federal cost of about $1 billion within a framework of overall fiscal discipline that helps ensure that only the most worthwhile projects are funded.

The version of this legislation as passed authorizes roughly $5 billion in new Federal spending according to Corps of Engineers estimates, an amount that far exceeds a reasonable assessment of the available future Federal budgetary resources for this program. The vast majority of the new projects and modifications to existing projects in this bill have not completed the study phase or are under review and simply are not ready for authorization at this time. Until these proposals have completed the appropriate prior planning and review, including the review required for water resources project proposals under Executive Order 12322, neither the executive branch nor the Congress knows which of them will raise significant concerns regarding scope, feasibility, environmental acceptability, cost-sharing, or other issues. I strongly recommend that the Congress await completion of this process before reaching a decision on authorizing future projects and project modifications. Particularly in view of the Congress' directive to study benefits of an independent review of Corps of Engineers water projects, we need to find ways to strengthen the project planning and review process. I am pleased, however, that the Congress decided to drop proposed authorizations totaling more than $550 million for local infrastructure projects that should not become a responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers.

Furthermore, my Administration proposed improvements to the procedures used for deauthorizing dormant projects, changes to close a loophole in the existing ability-to-pay law, an increase in the local cost-share for structural flood damage reduction projects, and a program to clean up brownfields. I am disappointed that the Congress did not authorize any of these important reforms.

Finally, section 601(b)(2)(D)(iii) provides that appropriations for certain water resources projects within the Everglades shall not be made unless technical reports on those projects have been approved by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. This provision is a direction to the Congress regarding how the Congress will exercise its authority to appropriate funds. The provision does not limit the authority of agencies to spend funds that the Congress has appropriated.

Notwithstanding our concerns, the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 authorizes the Army to undertake much needed and important projects for improvements to the Nation's ports and harbors, and the restoration of our aquatic resources, including America's Everglades, and deserves enactment into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 11, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2796, approved December 11, was assigned Public Law No. 106–541.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland in Dublin

December 12, 2000

President's Visit to Ireland

Q. Mr. President, why do you keep coming back to Ireland?

The President. Well, I got invited. And you know, I've had a special interest, in my tenure here, in the peace process. And the *Taoiseach* and Prime Minister Blair have worked hard, as the parties in Northern Ireland have, and there's still a little work to be done. So I thought maybe if I came back, I could help a little, and I hope I can.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. What's your message to the politicians, to the people of Northern Ireland and, indeed, to the paramilitaries?

The President. Well, first, I think the people, by and large, have embraced the peace and are in some ways leading the process. And I don't think they want to go back. I think the leadership of the Irish Government, the *Taoiseach* particularly, and the support of the British Government have helped. I think the incredible success of the Irish economy has helped.

I think people can see the benefits of peace. So my message is, to those parties which aren't involved in the process, they ought to join and not wreck it. There's too much to be gained, and too much has already been gained. And to those who are part of the process and have disagreements, I hope they'll try to work them out.

Q. Mr. President, do you care to comment on the suggestion that after you leave the White House, you might be prepared to become a special peace envoy to Ireland?

The President. [*Laughter*] Well, I think the new President, whoever it may be, will want to have a new team in place, and I will support that. I want to support whatever decisions the new administration makes on foreign policy. And if I can be a resource, I will. If I can ever help the Irish, of course I will.

But I think in terms of my Government's representation, that will be entirely up to the new President, and I will support whatever decisions are made on that.

Q. Taoiseach, do you expect the President's visit, and especially the visit to Belfast tomorrow, to move the process forward? At the moment, it's caught up in the old difficulties over demilitarization—and all the rest of it. Do you expect the President——

Prime Minister Ahern. Well, first, I say it's a great honor for us in the Irish Government and, I think, everybody in Ireland that the President is here. He is more and more welcome than I think even his other two visits. We're so pleased, and I think everybody in this country is pleased, and all of you in the media know that from the reaction over the last number of weeks since it was confirmed.

Of course I think the President can help. To expect all of the problems to be resolved in one go, of course, is impractical. But the very fact the President's coming has helped in the last few weeks for people to focus on still what are difficulties and to try to narrow down those difficulties and to look at the possibilities—and they are only possibilities—of what we can do.

I know that the talks we'll have now, the talks during the course of the day and tomorrow and the visit to Dundalk tonight, will allow people to see all that we have achieved. And I think now, what we're doing is, we're dealing with some of the side issues that are still residual issues out of the Good Friday agreement, and we still have to deal with those. And we are dealing with them, and this visit will help that.

Q. Taoiseach, will you miss Bill Clinton when he steps down?

Prime Minister Ahern. I will, yes. No doubt about that.

Q. Mr. President, when you were here, you called on the parties to take a risk for peace. Are we now at a situation where you will call on the parties again to take a further risk?

The President. Well, I think we have to keep going. I don't think there's—I don't think reversal is an option. And as I said, the people are not there. It's obvious to me, from all the human contact, just the increasing cross-border contacts, that the people want this thing to go on. And I think the leaders just have to find a way through the last three or four difficult issues, and I think it can be done.

I'll do what I can to be helpful.

Q. You really care about this, don't you?

The President. Yes, I do. I always have. You know—let me just say, the Americans—you know, the American people, about 40 million of us have some Irish blood. And we also have had a unique relationship with Great Britain. It's been—I mean, they burned the White House in 1814, but since then it's been pretty good. [*Laughter*] You know, we fought two World Wars together; we stayed through the cold war together. And the way it used to be was a source of immense pain to a lot of Americans. Many of the American people who have wanted to be involved had no constructive way to do that. And I hope and believe we've changed that over the last 8 years.

So to me, it's just a question of you've just got to keep going and keep bringing more and more and more people in, because the Irish have proved that you can do this.

I said something before when I was here, I'll say again: I don't think you can possibly imagine the impact of a success in the Irish peace process on trouble spots throughout the world. That's another thing that's been very important to me as the President of the United States, because I have to be involved in Latin America and Asia and Africa, the Balkans.

And so I care a lot about this. But I also—I want you to know how much people around the world look to your—and draw courage from what you do here.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:15 p.m. in the Office of the *Taoiseach*. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Reception Hosted by Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland in Dublin

December 12, 2000

Thank you very, very much. First, let me say to the *Taoiseach*, I am delighted to be back in Ireland, glad to be with him and Celia, glad that Hillary and Chelsea and I could all come together at once. We've all been here, sometimes together, sometimes at different times. I thank you for your friendship and the work we have done. I thank your predecessors who are here and all the members of the Dáil. I thank the ministers of the Government and Members of our Congress who are here, and the citizens of Ireland.

I have often wondered how I got involved in all this. [*Laughter*] I have pondered all these deep explanations. For example, less than a month ago we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the White House. And you may know that America's most famous home was designed by an Irish architect named James Hoban, who defeated an anonymous design presented by Thomas Jefferson. [*Laughter*] Maybe there's something in Hoban's spirit in the house that infected me.

In the Oval Office of the President on the mantle, there is a beautiful ivy plant which has been there for almost 40 years now. It was given to President Kennedy by the then-Irish Ambassador to the United States as an enduring sign of the affection between our two people. Maybe I got the political equivalent of poison ivy. [*Laughter*]

When I started coming here, you know, I got a lot of help in rooting out my Irish ancestry. And the oldest known homestead of my mother's family, the Cassidys, that we've been able to find is a sort of mid-18th century farmhouse that's in Rosleigh and Fermanagh. But it's right on the—literally right on the border. And in my family, all the Catholics and Protestants intermarried, so maybe I was somehow genetically prepared for the work I had to do. [*Laughter*] Maybe it's because there are 45 million Irish Americans, and I was trying to make a few votes at home. [*Laughter*] The truth is, it just seemed to be the right thing to do.

America has suffered with Ireland through the Troubles, and even before. And we seemed paralyzed and prevented from playing a constructive role when I became President. I decided to change America's policy in the hope that, in the end, not only the Irish but the British, too, would be better off. I think it is unquestionable, after 8 years of effort, thanks to the people and the leaders of Northern Ireland, of the Republic, and of Great Britain, that the people of Ireland and the people of Britain are better off for the progress that has been made toward peace.

So when the *Taoiseach* and our friends in Northern Ireland, the leaders of the parties, and the British Prime Minister asked me to come back to Ireland one more time, Hillary and Chelsea said, yes—[*laughter*]—and I said a grateful yes.

I also want to say to all of you, with reference to the comments Bertie made about the Irish economy, I think every one of you that has played any role in the remarkable explosion of

economic opportunity in Ireland and the outreach and impact you're having beyond the borders of your nation, is also a part of the peace process, because you have shown the benefits of an open, competitive, peaceful society.

And nobody wants to go back to the Troubles. There are a few hills we still have to climb, and we'll figure out how to do that, and I hope that our trip here is of some help toward that end. But as long as the people here, as free citizens of this great democracy, and as long as their allies and friends in the North increasingly follow the same path of creating opportunities that bring people together instead of arguments that drive people apart, then the political systems will follow the people.

So it is very important that all of you recognize that whatever you do, whether you're in politics or not, if you are contributing to the present vitality of this great nation, you are helping to make the peace hold. And for that, I am very grateful.

Let me just say in closing, when I started my involvement with the Irish peace process, to put it charitably, half the political experts in my country thought I had lost my mind. [*Laughter*] In some of the all-night sessions I had making phone calls back and forth over here through the whole night, after about the third time I did that, to put it charitably, I thought I had lost my mind. [*Laughter*] But I can tell you that every effort has been an honor. I believe America has in some tiny way repaid this nation and its people for the massive gifts of your people you have given to us over so many years, going back to our beginnings. I hope that is true.

For me, one of the things I will most cherish about the 8 years the American people were good enough to let me serve as President is that I had a chance to put America on the side of peace and dignity and equality and opportunity for all the people in both communities in Northern Ireland, and for a reconciliation between the North and the Republic. I don't know how I happen to have such good fortune, and even though it gave me a few more gray hairs, I'm still grateful that I did.

Good luck. Stay with it, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the Arrol Suite at the Guinness Storehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Celia Larkin, who accompanied Prime Minister Ahern; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Bertie Ahern.

Statement on the Ethiopia-Eritrea Final Peace Agreement

December 12, 2000

I congratulate the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea for the final peace agreement signed today in Algiers. My relief and happiness on this occasion mirrors the sadness I felt when I witnessed two allies and friends embroiled in a tragic conflict. I look forward to resuming our strong cooperation with Ethiopia and Eritrea across the spectrum of bilateral issues.

Remarks to the Community in Dundalk, Ireland

December 12, 2000

Thank you very much. First let me thank the *Taoiseach*, Bertie Ahern, for his leadership and his friendship and his kind and generous words tonight.

Mr. O'Hanrahan, thank you so much for the gift and your words. Joan McGuinness—it's not easy for someone who makes a living in private business to stand up and give a speech before a crowd this large. If you look all the way back there, there's a vast crowd. You can't see it in the dark, but all the way back here there are just as many people. So I think we ought

to give Joan McGuinness another hand for the speech she gave here. [*Applause*]

I thank the Government ministers, the Members of the Congress, and other Americans who are here. I'd like to thank the musicians who came out to play for us tonight and those who still will. You know, I like music, and so I have to say it may be cold and dark, but I'm back in Ireland, so, in the words of U2, "It's a beautiful day."

And I am particularly glad to be here in Dundalk, the ancient home of Cuchulain. I want to acknowledge some natives of Dundalk who are among our group here—the *Taoiseach*'s spokesman, Joe Lennon; the White House correspondent for the Irish Times, Joe Carroll; a member of our American Embassy team in Dublin, Eva Burkury, who has been taking late-night calls from us all week to make sure we do the right things in her hometown.

Let me also say that for Hillary, Chelsea, and me, it's great to be in the home town of the Corrs. Now, we had the privilege of being with them and hearing them sing in Washington just Sunday night. They did you proud. I understand their success has been great for your community, except that in this tight labor market, you haven't been able to replace them down at McManus' Pub.

In a few weeks, I'll have a little free time. [*Laughter*] You know, I feel at home here. And so, even though I can't claim to have a granny buried in Castletown, I hope you won't call me a blow-in. In America, over 40 million of us claim Irish roots, and the number keeps going up every year. I'm not sure whether that's because so many millions are green with Irish ancestry or just green with envy of Ireland.

There are so many reasons to admire Ireland: the beauty of the land, the people, the music, the dance, the movies, the golf—[*laughter*]—the literature. You know, according—Americans in the audience will understand this—according to the latest manual count—[*laughter*]—you have won approximately 66 times the number of Nobel Prizes in literature you would be entitled to, based on your percentage of the world population. In so many ways, you have had an impact far beyond your numbers, especially in your worldwide reputation for compassion and taking on humanitarian causes.

And then there is your amazing Irish economy. Today, we're seeing your economy reaching out across the ocean to us in the United States, with Irish technology firms in Boston, New York, and Atlanta.

And I want to note, because we're here in County Louth, that the man famous for the ideas behind this prosperity grew up just a short distance from here, in Drogheda—or Drogheda. [*Laughter*] Anybody here from Drogheda? [*Applause*] I told them to put you in the front row. [*Laughter*]

Listen to this: In a major report in the late 1950's, T.K. Whittaker wrote, "Sooner or later, protectionism will have to go and the challenge of free trade accepted, if Ireland wishes to keep pace with the rest of Europe." Well, over the last 6 years, Ireland has outpaced the rest of Europe. Indeed, you have turned deficit to surplus, slashed debt, seen employment grow 4 times the rate of Europe, and seen your economy grow faster than any other nation in the entire industrialized world.

Earlier this year, as the *Taoiseach* said today, Ireland was selected by our distinguished Massachusetts Institute of Technology as the European location for its media-lab research center. The director said he did this because—I love this—because of Ireland's antiestablishment attitude to innovation. [*Laughter*] The Wall Street Journal says, Ireland enjoys one of the freest economies in the world and one of the most responsive governments.

With the strong leadership of Prime Minister Ahern and the Government, computer science graduates in Ireland have jumped fourfold in just the last 4 years. Now Microsoft, Intel, Nortel, IBM, Oracle, Lotus, Xerox, and Heinz and so many others are in Ireland. And Ireland has now displaced the United States as the number one software exporting country in the entire world. But you enjoyed respect in the world long before this boom because Ireland has been exporting compassion a lot longer than software.

Probably the saints in heaven don't spend too much time boasting of their achievements. But if they do, I suspect the saints can bear no more bragging from Saint Patrick, for no nation has ever lived up more fully to the virtues of its patron saint than Ireland.

Some years ago, when your then President, Mary Robinson, paid a visit to America, she told of a kindness Ireland received and never forgot. During the Potato Famine, the Choctaw Indians in the United States, who, themselves, were very poor and displaced from their own land, collected from among themselves $147 and

sent it to Ireland to help ease the suffering. One hundred and fifty years later, the President of Ireland remembered that kindness on the South Lawn of the White House, because it so closely mirrors your own compassion.

To know suffering and reach out to others in suffering is woven into the heart of Ireland. And in your rising prosperity, you have not forgotten what it is to be poor. So you continue to reach out to the dispossessed around the world. In your newfound peace, you have not forgotten what it is to be at war, so you continue to stand guard for peace around the world. That is a powerful reason that I am very glad Ireland is now on the United Nations Security Council.

You might be interested to know—and you may not—that Ireland is so well thought of around that world that when the campaign was on for the Security Council members, you found help in surprising places. Your Ambassador to Australia, Dick O'Brien, visited 14 countries in the South Pacific, seeking their votes. In the tiny island nation of Tuvalu, he was met by a local journalist by the name of O'Brien. [*Laughter*] He learned then that the Prime Minister of Tuvalu's mother's name was O'Brien. [*Laughter*] Turns out, there was an Irish sailor in the 19th century shipwrecked on Tuvalu, named O'Brien. [*Laughter*] He liked it there, stayed on, and now, a full quarter of the population are O'Briens. If the math is right, maybe there are more than 45 million Irish-Americans.

We are delighted to have you as our partner on the Security Council. But as we look to Ireland and to America, we remember that for all our efforts to heal the world, sometimes the toughest healing problems are right at home.

The story of the United States, I believe, is largely about three things: love of liberty; belief in progress; struggle for community. The last has given us the most trouble and troubles us still. Matters aren't so different for Ireland. For hundreds of years and intensely for the last 30, you confronted the challenge of religious difference. You in Dundalk know what it's like to face fear and isolation with unemployment rising, the economy stalling, and hope failing.

A young businessman once said, "Now, money isn't everything, but it's up there with oxygen." We know violence suffocates opportunity. We know in the end, there can be no full justice without jobs. Fortunately, the Irish had the courage to grasp the chance for peace and the new beginning.

Those who argued for peace promised a better life. But then, there was no proof. Today, you are the proof of the fruits and wisdom of peace. The border between Ireland and Northern Ireland is now more a bridge than a barrier. Newry, just across that border, is your sister city and economic partner.

Some fear the change won't last, but some of the smartest business people in the world are already betting that it will last. You have a cluster of information technology companies and broadband networks. Here in this community, Xerox is making the second-largest American investment in all of Ireland, and your Institute of Technology is building classes to meet the growing needs of technology-based employers.

I appreciated Prime Minster Ahern mentioning the late Secretary Ron Brown and his trip here in 1994. When he came back, he encouraged us to continue investing in Dundalk through the International Fund for Ireland. I'm very glad we did. I know you haven't solved every problem, but this is now a boomtown. It's a new day in Dundalk and a new day in Ireland.

My friends, I come here near the end of my 8 years of service as President of the United States to ask you to protect this progress, to cherish it, and to build on it. As Pope John Paul said in Drogheda more than 20 years ago, "Violence only delays the day of justice." The Bible says, "There are many parts, but one body. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it." It takes some people a long, long time to fully grasp that. But life teaches us over and over and over again that in the end, you cannot win by making your neighbor lose.

Unionists and nationalists, native-born Irish and immigrants, to all of you, I say again, you cannot win by making your neighbor lose. Two years ago, after the horrid bombing in Omagh, you good people filled these streets. Young people came, not wanting to lose their dreams. Older people came because they wanted a chance to live in peace before they rest in peace. You stared violence in the face and said, "No more." You stood up for peace then, and I ask you, stand up for peace today, tomorrow, and the rest of your lives.

Oh yes, there are still a few hills to climb on the road ahead. The *Taoiseach* mentioned them. But the people of Ireland have two advantages now. You now know the value of peace,

and in the hard moments, you can also still draw strength from the inspiration of your poets. Seamus Heaney once said of William Butler Yeats, "His intent was to clear a space in the mind and in the world for the miraculous." Seamus was born the year Yeats died, and has spent his own life clearing that space, following this instruction to himself: "Walk on air against your better judgment."

As extraordinary as Ireland's efforts are in exporting peace and peacekeepers to troubled areas all around the world, I can tell you nothing—nothing—will compare to the gift Ireland gives the world if you make peace here permanent. You can give people all over the world desperately needed hope and proof that peace can prevail, that the past is history, not destiny. That is what I came to ask you to redouble your efforts to do.

Every Saint Patrick's Day, the *Taoiseach* comes to the United States, and we have a ceremony in the White House. We sing Irish songs, tell Irish stories—everything we say is strictly true, of course. [*Laughter*] In my very first Saint Patrick's Day occasion as President, I said I would be a friend of Ireland not just on Saint Patrick's Day but every day. I have tried to be as good as my word. And every effort has been an honor and a gift.

Your kindness to me has brought life to Yeats' wonderful lines, "Think where a man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was, I had such friends." And so, my friends, as I prepare to leave my office, a large part of my heart will always be in Ireland, for all the days of my life. And let me say, I will pray: May the road of peace rise up to meet you. May the wind of prosperity be always at your back. And may the God of Saint Patrick hold you in the hollow of his hand.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:52 p.m. in the Courthouse Square. In his remarks, he referred to Pearce O'Hanrahan, councillor, Dundalk Urban District Council No. 1; and Joan McGuinness, company secretary, Facility Management Workshop, Ltd. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair and Northern Ireland First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon in Belfast, Northern Ireland

December 13, 2000

Supreme Court Decision on Election

Q. Mr. President, do you have any reaction to the Supreme Court's decision?

The President. Actually, I haven't had a chance to read all the opinions yet. I think that what I'd like to focus on now is what I can do, what the United States can do to be helpful to this ongoing peace process. I may want to make a statement later, but I'd really like to have a chance to read all the opinions first and then I'll probably——

Q. Have you spoken to the Vice President today?

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what would you say to your successor, whoever he may be, about continued involvement in the peace process here?

The President. I think it's important for the United States to continue. I think it also has the side benefit of increasing confidence among American investors in Northern Ireland. I saw a story yesterday in the local press, indicating that some 600 million pounds in American investment had come here over the last 5 years. That's the sort of thing we need more of. So I hope the next President will be intimately involved and highly supportive of the efforts that the parties are making to carry out the Good Friday accords and get on with it.

Q. Mr. President, what progress do you think can be made today? Do you think the peace process can be improved upon?

The President. I hope so. But I think it's important for me to listen to the leaders here and see what we can do first.

Q. Would you like to return and have a role in the peace process?

The President. Oh, I'd like to return, but I won't be President. And that's—the next American administration that will have to take up that mantle.

Q. Mr. President, will your last act—will one of your last acts be to do something in relation to dissident republican groups, like the Real IRA, and do something in terms of stopping them from fundraising and organizing in the United States?

The President. Well, we've got this whole subject under review as part of our ongoing look at people who use violence for political or other means, not just here but throughout the world. And I may have something more to say about that later, but not now.

Q. Mr. President, the two men to your left and right, in many ways, hold the key to our future. What can be done—what can the Prime Minister do to bring the two men together, to secure this?

The President. I don't—I think that we'd better get on with our talks. [*Laughter*] I want to give a speech later, but I'd like to get on with the business here.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:26 a.m. at the Stormont Parliament Buildings. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to the People of Northern Ireland in Belfast
December 13, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Let me, first of all, thank Prime Minister Blair, First Minister Trimble, Deputy First Minister Mallon, for their strong leadership and their kind and generous remarks today.

I am delighted to be with them, Cherie, Mrs. Trimble, my longtime friend John Hume; Senator George Mitchell, who is here; the Members of the Parliament in Northern Ireland; the Members of the United States Congress and the American delegation over here to my right. I thank Chris Gibson of the Civic Forum and many others who helped to make this day possible. Hillary, Chelsea, and I are delighted to be back in Northern Ireland, and here.

I also can't help noting that this magnificent new arena is new since I was last here in '98—a new team, a new sport, a new facility, a new Northern Ireland. I want to thank the Belfast Giants for letting us use the arena tonight. I understand they don't treat their opponents as kindly as me, and I thank them for that. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Believe it or not, I actually read in the press this reference that said that since I'll be out of work soon—[*laughter*]—that if I can skate and shoot and I'm not very expensive, the Giants would consider offering me a position. Well, I'm used to absorbing blows, but that's about the only qualification I have. [*Laughter*] Senator Mitchell, however, comes from Maine, where they play hockey all the time, and I think you should consider offering him a position. He is very well suited for it.

Let me say to all of you, I have been honored to be involved in the quest for peace here for almost 8 years now. It has been not a passing interest but a passion for me and my administration and, as many of you know, for my family as well. And I want to say a special word of thanks to my wife and to the women here in Northern Ireland who have worked with her through the Vital Voices program and other things to try to make a contribution to the peace.

I came here 5 years ago for the first time. Now I am back on my third visit. No other American President can say that. I want you to know that I'm here not just because I have Irish roots, like millions of Americans, and not simply because I love the land and the people. I believe in the peace you are building. I believe

there can be no turning back. I believe you are committed to that. And I think it's very important that people the world over see what you are doing and support you along the way.

Some of you may know, I left Dublin yesterday, and I had to drive to Dundalk for this rally we had last night—and there were one or two people there. We had this vast crowd of enthusiastic supporters of the peace. And because the weather was too bad for me to helicopter there and I drove, apparently, some people thought I was going to drive from there to Belfast. So I want to give a special word of thanks to the thousands of people in Armagh who waited along the road. I'm sorry I wasn't there. If I'd known you were there, I would have been there. But thank you for supporting the peace process.

Let me say to the leaders who are here and the others who were involved with the development of the Good Friday accord back in 1998, I remember it very well. I remember how hard Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern, and George Mitchell, and all the leaders here worked on the Good Friday accord. I remember time and time again being called, saying that this or that problem had arisen and maybe the agreement couldn't be reached.

And just before dawn on Good Friday, when the final momentum was building, one of your leaders said to me in a very tired voice—I'll never forget it—"This is a life-and-death meeting." And then he added, "But we'll make it happen." When they did, I remember saying to that person, "Go and claim your moment."

That is what I have to say today. After the Good Friday accord was reached, the people of Northern Ireland sealed it in an overwhelming vote for peace. And so I say, it is still for you to claim your moment.

Look what has happened: a local government representing all the people; everyday problems addressed by local ministers who answer to local citizens—across party lines, I might add, as I have personally witnessed; an Executive that has adopted a budget and a program of government; and along the way, all the sort of messy squabbles and fights that you expect in a democracy.

I mean, look at us; we've been doing it in America for 224 years, and as you might have noticed, we still have these minor disagreements from time to time. [*Laughter*]

I ask you to remember this. The difficulties of sharing power in a free, peaceful democratic system are nothing compared to the difficulties of not having any power at all or of living with constant insecurity and violence. It's easy to overlook that. When people are in war, they measure the progress by counting victims. When people are involved in peaceful endeavors, it's easy to forget to measure, because the measurement is in pain avoided.

How many children are alive today in Northern Ireland because deaths from sectarian violence are now a small fraction of what they were before the Good Friday accords? How many precious days of normality have been——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

The President. Tell you what, I'll make you a deal: I'll listen to you, if you let me finish. [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you.

[*The audience interruption continued.*]

The President. I think he rejected the deal. [*Laughter*] I'll tell you what. I'll make you a deal. I'll ignore him if you will. [*Applause*] Thank you.

How many days of normality have you gained because the checkpoints on the border aren't there anymore, because honest people can go to a pub or a school or a church without the burden of a search or the threat of a bomb? You have spent so many years mourning your losses. I hope you will now celebrate with pride and defend with passion the progress you have made.

Just look at this arena here. Ten years ago I'm not sure you could have gotten the investment necessary to build this arena or to revitalize the entire Laganside area. But over the 5 years just passed, as hopes for peace have grown, the economy has grown, manufacturing up 27 percent, foreign investment almost 70 percent, the number of American firms growing from 40 to 100, 22,000 new jobs there alone, more people coming in than moving out.

Once, President Kennedy said that happiness is, I quote, "the full use of your powers along lines of excellence." Today, more and more young people have a chance to fully use their powers along lines of excellence here at home. Of course, there are still challenges, to spread opportunity to the most disadvantaged, to integrate into the mainstream those who have turned their backs on violence. But bitter, old divisions are falling away.

A few months ago, students from St. Joseph's College and Knockbreda High School, who study a half-mile apart, met for the very first time and toured the sights of Belfast. One of them said, "I always just saw their school badge but never talked to them. But when we met, we got on brilliant."

Students from both schools are working with their counterparts from Mullingar Community College in the Republic to promote local recycling efforts. They're all taking part in Civic Link, an initiative supported by the Department of Education in the United States. Give them a hand there. [*Applause*]

This initiative we have supported through the Department of Education, and under your good friend Secretary Dick Riley, it has already brought together some 2,000 students and over 70 schools to break down barriers, build good will, and live lives based on tolerance and mutual respect. So I thank the ones, the students who are here, and I hope more will participate.

Now, amidst all this momentum, why are we having this meeting, and why are all you showing up here? Because we've still got problems and headaches. And I just went through a whole lot of meetings about it.

Two years ago George Mitchell said that implementing the Good Friday agreement would be harder than negotiating it. Why? Well, first, because the devil is always in the details, and second, because human nature being what it is, it's always easier to talk about high-minded change than it is to pull it off, or even to feel it inside.

In spite of the overwhelming support for the Good Friday agreement and the evident progress already brought, opponents of peace still try to exploit the implementation controversies, to rub salt in old wounds, and serve their own ends. And others, for their own purposes, still stand on the sidelines watching and just waiting for something to go wrong. Well, I wanted you all to come together, first to show the world that the great majority of the people of Northern Ireland are still on the side of peace and want it to prevail; second, to say again to the proponents of violence that their way is finished; and third, to reaffirm, even in this great arena, that peace, unlike hockey, is not a spectator sport. No one can afford to sit on the sidelines. The progress that the leaders have made has only been possible because they knew when they took risks for peace they were acting on the yearning of the people for peace.

For years you have made your view clear: Violence is not the answer; peace is the path to justice. The Good Friday accords define that path. Last week's tragic killings are a brutal reminder of a past we all wish to leave behind, that is not completely gone and a sober reminder that failing to move forward risks slipping backward.

As the promises of the Good Friday accords are fulfilled or deferred, trust between the parties will rise or fall. We have seen that when trust rises and people work together, peace grows stronger, and when trust unravels, peace is made more vulnerable.

The people of Northern Ireland must be clear and unequivocal about your support for peace. Remember, the enemies of peace don't really need your approval. All they need is your apathy.

I do not believe you want Northern Ireland ever again to be a place where tomorrow's dreams are clouded by yesterday's nightmares. The genius of the Good Friday agreement still remains its core principles of consent, equality, justice, respect for each other and for law and order. These ideas are big enough to embody the aspirations, hopes, and needs of all the people of Northern Ireland.

As I said before, your progress in putting these principles into practice has truly been remarkable. But again, we all know there is still much to do before the agreement's vision is fully and finally realized. We know, for example, there must be a full and irrevocable commitment to effecting change only through peaceful means, through ballots, not bullets. That means putting all arms fully, finally, and forever beyond use. Last week's IRA statement on this topic was a welcome development; the followthrough will be even more so.

We welcome the contribution of those paramilitaries observing a cease-fire. Those who reject peace should know there is no place for them to hide. Based on my conversations with Prime Minister Ahern in Dublin yesterday and with Prime Minister Blair today, I want to say that the United States will intensify its cooperation with British and Irish authorities on counterterrorism, to combat groups seeking to undermine the Good Friday accords through violence.

We are going to get experts from the three nations together in the near future, and the United States will continue to work in a systematic way to do whatever we can to help to root out terrorism and to make this peace agreement take hold.

Now, we also know that real respect for human rights must be woven into the fabric of all your institutions. The light this will cast is the best guarantee that political violence will disappear. That's why it is so important to have a police force that inspires pride and confidence in all the people.

Just before our gathering here, I met with victims of the violence, quite a large number of them who lost their children, their husbands, their wives, their limbs, their livelihood. Among them was the widow of an RUC officer and the sister of a slain defense attorney. Together, they offer the best testimony to the need to honor those who unjustifiably sacrificed their lives, their health, or their loved ones. We should honor those who have done their duty in the past while making a fresh start toward a police service that will protect, serve, and involve everyone equally in the years to come.

Finally, and maybe most important of all, for the vision of the Good Friday agreement to be fully realized, all sides must be fully engaged with each other, understanding that they must move forward together or not at all, that for one community to succeed, the whole community must succeed.

Over the last several hours today, I have talked to the parties. I'm convinced they do all genuinely want this peace process to work. They know how far it has come. They know how irresponsible it would be to permit it to fail. On the basis of our discussion, it is clear to me that's what must happen to move the process forward. First, the Patton Report must be implemented, and on that basis leaders from every part of the community must commit to make the new police service work.

There must be security normalization, and arms must be put beyond use. This will lead to a reduction of fear and mistrust on all sides. And somehow these processes must take place together, giving practical effect on the ground to the rhetorical promise of peace.

I think we can do this. Of course, it will be difficult. But I urge the parties, the political parties here, the British and Irish Governments, the communities themselves, to work out the way forward in the coming days and weeks. And we will do all we can to help.

I have said before to all of you—I did 2 years ago when I was here—how profoundly important peace in Northern Ireland is to the rest of the world.

This morning, when I got up, I saw the Prime Minister of Ethiopia on television, discussing the agreement the United States helped to broker there, between Ethiopia and Eritrea. I have been heavily involved in the Middle East for 8 years now and in many of the tribal conflicts in Africa, in a little-understood border conflict in the Andes, and many other places. And let me tell you, you cannot imagine the impact of the Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland on troubled regions of the world—in Africa and the Middle East, in Latin America, and, of course, in the Balkans, where the United States has been heavily involved in my time. Peace continues to be challenged all around the world. It is more important than ever to say, but look what they did in Northern Ireland, and look what they are doing in Northern Ireland.

In the end, there has to be a belief that you can only go forward together, that you cannot be lifted up by putting your neighbor down. You know, I think—and I talk in the United States about this a lot—our children will live in a completely different world than the one we have known. Just for example, because of the human genome project, which is going to give us cures for many kinds of cancers—Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and more important, will give mothers bringing little babies home from the hospital, roadmaps of their children's genetic makeup and future—very soon, life expectancy in places with decent health systems will be over 90 years. And the lives of the young people in this audience, I am convinced, average life expectancy will rise to 100 years.

You will see new sources of energy tapped and new conservation technologies developed that will enable human beings for the first time both to increase wealth and to reduce energy use and global warming, ensuring a longer future on this planet for the great-grandchildren of the youngest people in this audience today. You will be able to, you young people, travel farther and faster through outer space and cyberspace even than people can today. The world will be so different for you.

Now, I think the children of Northern Ireland deserve their fair chance to be a full part of

that future. I believe the people of Northern Ireland want that for their children, and that means the leaders of Northern Ireland must find a way to do what is necessary to give that future to your children.

You know, this is the last chance I will have as President to speak to the people of Northern Ireland. Let me say to all of you that I have tried to be pretty straightforward today in my remarks and not nearly as emotional as I feel. I think you know that I have loved this land and love the work I have tried to do for peace. But the issue is not how I feel; it's how your kids are going to live.

I say to all of you, it has been a great honor for me; it has been an honor for the United States to be involved in the cause of peace in a land that produced the forbearers of so many of present-day America's citizens. I believe that the United States will be with you in the future. I know I will be with you in the future in whatever way I can.

But in the end, I will say again, what really matters is not what America does, and what really matters is not even all the encouragement you give to people around the world. What really matters is what you do and whether you decide to give your children not your own yesterdays but their own tomorrows.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:06 p.m. at the Odyssey Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, and his wife, Cherie; First Minister David Trimble of Northern Ireland and his wife, Daphne; John Hume, member, Social Democratic and Labor Party; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Chris Gibson, chairperson, Civic Forum; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of Northern Ireland; and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Blair, First Minister Trimble, and Deputy First Minister Mallon. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Faith Leaders Initiative of the National Conference for Community and Justice

December 13, 2000

Today I want to commend the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) on its innovative efforts to further engage the faith community in racial reconciliation. NCCJ's Faith Leaders Initiative builds on my Initiative on Race and the March 9 White House meeting where leaders of institutions of faith announced important new steps as they rededicated themselves to fight racism.

Today's Joint Statement on Racism, drafted and endorsed by a broad group of faith leaders, recognizes the important role of people of faith in fighting racism. It states: "Racism is a problem of the heart and an evil that must be eradicated from the institutional structures that shape our daily lives, including our houses of worship." Those who affirm this statement and make its seven pledges will indeed be part of transforming our society to eradicate racism.

In addition, the directory of promising practices, guidelines for interreligious forums, and list of 10 actions every individual can take to fight racism are significant contributions toward fulfilling our vision of one America.

Many groups and individuals have worked long and hard to develop the initiatives announced today. It will take many more groups and many more individuals to put these initiatives into action. When the National Conference for Community and Justice chose to continue the work of the race initiative within the faith community, I trusted this unique organization to bring new vision and extra vigor to that call. Today's announcement again attests to both its creativity and your commitment. It is only through work such as this that our Nation will truly come to know both racial justice and racial reconciliation—truly be one America.

Statement on Guidelines for Environmental Review of Trade Agreements
December 13, 2000

I am pleased to announce the completion of a strong set of guidelines for environmental review of major new trade agreements. These detailed guidelines, required by an Executive order I issued last year, will ensure that we fully integrate environmental considerations into our negotiation of new trade agreements and will provide unparalleled opportunities for public involvement in trade policy. America's experience has proven that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand, and these new guidelines will help protect the global environment as we work with other nations to build prosperity worldwide. Bringing environmental issues into the mainstream of our trade policy has been a top priority for my administration. The guidelines issued by the United States Trade Representative and the Council on Environmental Quality are another major milestone in this effort.

Remarks on the Resolution of the 2000 Presidential Election and an Exchange With Reporters in North Aylesbury, United Kingdom
December 14, 2000

The President. Good morning. Last night President-elect Bush and Vice President Gore showed what is best about America. In this election, the American people were closely divided. The outcome was decided by a Supreme Court that was closely divided. But the essential unity of our Nation was reflected in the words and values of those who fought this great contest. I was proud of both men.

I pledged to President-elect Bush my efforts and the best efforts of every member of our administration for a smooth and successful transition.

I want to say I am profoundly grateful to Vice President Gore for 8 extraordinary years of partnership. Without his leadership, we could not have made the progress or reached the prosperity we now enjoy and pass on to the next administration.

I am also profoundly grateful to him for putting into words last night the feelings of all of us who disagreed with the Supreme Court's decision, but accepted it. And as he said, all of us have a responsibility to support President-elect Bush and to unite our country in the search for common ground.

I wish President-elect Bush well. Like him, I came to Washington as a Governor, eager to work with both Republicans and Democrats. And when we reached across party lines to forge a vital center, America was stronger at home and abroad.

The American people, however divided they were in this election, overwhelmingly want us to build on that vital center without rancor or personal attack.

I thank the Members of Congress from both parties who have pledged to work with the President-elect. They have also pledged to elect commonsense bipartisan election reforms so that the votes of all citizens can be easily cast and easily counted in future elections.

Finally, I want to thank the American people for their patience, passion, and patriotism throughout this extended election season. In the days of service left to me, I will do all I can to finish our remaining work with Congress and to help President-elect Bush get off to a good start.

As I've said so many times over the last year, our country has never before enjoyed so much peace and prosperity with so few internal crises and so little external threat. We have the opportunity to build the future of our dreams for our children, and every one of us has an obligation to work together to achieve it.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, what do you say to Democrats who want to run on the election issue in 2 years? Do you think that's a way to take back the House?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, the election 2 years from now is difficult to predict, and it will take whatever shape it does. But for right now, we're in a period where we've had an election, but we haven't had the Inauguration. We have to ensure a smooth and constructive transition, and all of us should ensure that we do our part to give the President-elect his chance to do this job. And I would hope—and I believe that my fellow Democrats would be willing to do that, and I hope they will. I hope they will set a good example by getting off to a good start and trying to unite the country.

Two years from now, what I hope will happen is that the honest differences that remain between the two parties will be the subject of a wholesome, vigorous, constructive debate, but that we will be moving further and further away from rancor. That, I think, is actually good for our party, because I think people do agree with us on the issues—on so many of the vital issues of the day.

But I don't think that now is the time to do anything other than follow Vice President Gore's lead. He spoke for all of us last night, and he did it eloquently and well. And President-elect Bush responded with generosity in kind, I thought, in his remarks. And I think we ought to use this opportunity to let the country come together and try to get the new administration off to a good start.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, will your successor continue the special relationship you've enjoyed with Britain, do you hope?

The President. I can't imagine anybody who wouldn't do that. I think he will, yes. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:49 a.m. outside Chequers, the country estate of Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Remarks at the University of Warwick in Coventry, United Kingdom
December 14, 2000

Thank you very much, Vice Chancellor Follett and Lady Follett, Chancellor Ramphal. Lord Skidelsky, thank you for your biography of Keynes. I wonder what Mr. Keynes would think of us paying down the national debt in America today. [*Laughter*]

I would like to thank the president of the student union, Caitlin McKenzie, for welcoming me. And I am delighted to be here with all of you. But I'd like to specifically, if I might, acknowledge one more person in the audience, a good friend to Hillary and me, the renowned physicist Stephen Hawking. Thank you, Stephen, for being here. We're delighted to—[*inaudible*].

Tony and Cherie Blair and Hillary and Chelsea and I are pleased to be here. I thank the Prime Minister for his kind remarks. It is true that we have all enjoyed an unusual friendship between the two of us and our families. But it is also true that we have honored the deeper and more important friendship between the United States and Great Britain, one that I believe will endure through the ages and be strengthened through changes of party and from election to election.

I wanted to have a moment before I left this country for the last time as President just to say a few words about a subject which, as the Prime Minister said, we have discussed a lot, that I believe will shape the lives of the young people in this audience perhaps more than any other, and that is the phenomenon of globalization.

We have worked hard in our respective nations and in our multinational memberships to try to develop a response to globalization that we all call by the shorthand term, Third Way. Sometimes I think that term tends to be viewed as more of a political term than one that has actual policy substance, but for us it's a very serious attempt to put a human face on the global economy and to direct the process of globalization in a way that benefits all people.

The intensifying process of economic integration and political interdependence that we know as globalization is clearly tearing down barriers

and building new networks among nations, peoples, and cultures at an astonishing and historically unprecedented rate. It has been fueled by an explosion of technology that enables information, ideas, and money, people, products, and services to move within and across national borders at increasingly greater speeds and volumes.

A particularly significant element of this process is the emergence of a global media village in which what happens anywhere is felt in a flash everywhere—from Coventry to Kansas to Cambodia. This process, I believe, is irreversible. In a single hour today, more people and goods move from continent to continent than moved in the entire 19th century.

For most people in countries like ours, the United States and Britain, this is helping to create an almost unprecedented prosperity, and along with it, the change to meet some of the long-term challenges we face within our nations.

I am profoundly grateful that when I leave office, we will still be in the longest economic expansion in our history, that all income levels have benefited, and that we are able to deal with some of our long-term challenges. And I have enjoyed immensely the progress of the United Kingdom, the economic progress—the low unemployment rate, the high growth rate, the increasing numbers of people moving off public assistance, and young people moving into universities.

But I think it's important to point out that globalization need not benefit only the advanced nations. Indeed, in developing countries, too, it brings the promise but not the guarantee of a better future. More people have been lifted out of poverty the last few decades than at any time in history. Life expectancy in developing countries is up. Infant mortality is down. And according to the United Nations Human Development Index, which measures a decent standard of living, a good education, and a long and healthy life, the gap between rich and poor countries actually has declined since 1970. And yet, that is, by far, not the whole story. For, if you took another starting point or just one region of the world, or a set of governments that have had particular vulnerability to developments like the Asian financial crisis, for example, you could make a compelling case that from time to time, people in developing countries and whole countries themselves, if they get caught on the wrong side of a development like the Asian financial crisis, are actually worse off for quite a good while.

And we begin the new century and a new millennium with half the world's people struggling to survive on less than $2 a day, nearly one billion living in chronic hunger. Almost a billion of the world's adults cannot read. Half the children in the poorest countries still are not in school. So, while some of us walk on the cutting edge of the new global economy, still, amazing numbers of people live on the bare razor's edge of survival.

And these trends and other troubling ones are likely to be exacerbated by a rapidly growing population, expected to increase by 50 percent by the middle of this century, with the increase concentrated almost entirely in nations that today, at least, are the least capable of coping with it. So the great question before us is not whether globalization will proceed, but how. And what is our responsibility in the developed world to try to shape this process so that it lifts people in all nations?

First, let me say, I think we have both the ability and the responsibility to make a great deal of difference by promoting development and economic empowerment among the world's poor; by bringing solid public health systems, the latest medical advances, and good educational opportunities to them; by achieving sustainable development and breaking the iron link between economic growth, resource destruction, and greater pollution, which is driving global warming today; and by closing the digital divide.

I might say, parenthetically, I believe there are national security and common security aspects to the whole globalization challenge that I really don't have time to go into today, so I'll just steer off the text and say what I think briefly, which is that as we open borders and we increase the freedom of movement of people, information, and ideas, this open society becomes more vulnerable to cross-national, multinational, organized forces of destruction: terrorists; weapons of mass destruction; the marriage of technology in these weapons, small-scale chemical and biological and maybe even nuclear weapons; narcotraffickers and organized criminals; and increasingly, all these people sort of working together in lines that are quite blurred.

And so that's a whole separate set of questions. But today I prefer to focus on what we have to do to see that this process benefits people in all countries and at all levels of society.

At the core of the national character of the British and the American people is the belief in the inherent dignity and equality of all humans. We know perfectly well today how children live and die in the poorest countries and how little it would take to make a difference in their lives. In a global information age, we can no longer have the excuse of ignorance. We can choose not to act, of course, but we can no longer choose not to know.

With the cold war over, no overriding struggle for survival diverts us from aiding the survival of the hundreds of millions of people in the developing world struggling just to get by from day to day. Moreover, it is not only the right thing to do; it is plainly in our interest to do so.

We have seen how abject poverty accelerates turmoil and conflict, how it creates recruits for terrorists and those who incite ethnic and religious hatred, how it fuels a violent rejection of the open economic and social order upon which our future depends. Global poverty is a powder keg, ignitable by our indifference.

Prime Minister Blair made the same point in introducing his government's White Paper on international development. Thankfully, he remains among the world's leaders in pressing the commonsense notion that the more we help the rest of the world, the better it will be for us. Every penny we spend on reducing worldwide poverty, improving literacy, wiping out disease will come back to us and our children a hundredfold.

With the global Third Way approach that he and I and others have worked on, of more open markets, public investments by wealthy nations in education, health care, and the environment in developing countries, and improved governance in those countries themselves, we can develop a future in which prosperity is shared more widely and potential realized more fully in every corner of the globe.

Today I want to briefly discuss our shared responsibility to meet these challenges, and the role of all of us, from the richest to the poorest nations to the multilateral institutions to the business and NGO and religious and civil society communities within and across our borders.

First, let me say, I think it's quite important that we unapologetically reaffirm a conviction that open markets and rule-based trade are necessary proven engines of economic growth. I have just come from Ireland, where the openness of the economy has made that small country the fastest growing economy in Europe, indeed, for the last few years, in the entire industrialized world. From the early 1970's to the early 1990's, developing countries that chose growth through trade grew at least twice as fast as those who kept their doors closed and their tariffs high.

Now what? If the wealthiest countries ended our agricultural subsidies, leveling the playing field for the world's farmers, that alone could increase the income of developing countries by $20 billion a year.

Not as simple as it sounds. I come from a farming State, and I live in a country that basically has very low tariffs and protections on agriculture. But I see these beautiful fields in Great Britain; I have driven down the highways of France; I know there is a cultural, social value to the fabric that has developed here over the centuries. But we cannot avoid the fact that if we say we want these people to have a decent life, and we know this is something they could do for the global economy more cheaply than we, we have to ask ourselves what our relative responsibilities are and if there is some other way we can preserve the fabric of rural life here, the beauty of the fields, and the sustainability of the balanced society that is important for Great Britain, the United States, France, and every other country.

The point I wanted to make is a larger one. This is just one thing we could do that would put $20 billion a year in income into developing countries. That's why I disagree with the antiglobalization protesters who suggest that poor countries should somehow be saved from development by keeping their doors closed to trade. I think that is a recipe for continuing their poverty, not erasing it. More open markets would give the world's poorest nations more chances to grow and prosper.

Now, I know that many people don't believe that. And I know that inequality, as I said, in the last few years has increased in many nations. But the answer is not to abandon the path of expanded trade but, instead, to do whatever is necessary to build a new consensus on trade. That's easy for me to say—you can see how successful I was in Seattle in doing that. [*Laughter*]

But let me say to all of you, in the last 2 years we not only had this WTO ministerial in Seattle—I went to Switzerland three times

to speak to the WTO, the International Labor Organization, and the World Economic Forum at Davos, all in an attempt to hammer out what the basic elements of a new consensus on trade, and in a larger sense, on putting a human face on the global economy would be.

We do have to answer those who fear that the burden of open markets will fall mainly on them. Whether they're farmers in Europe or textile workers in America, these concerns fuel powerful political resistance to the idea of open trade in the developed countries.

We have to do better in making the case not just on how exports create jobs but on how imports are good, because of the competition they provide; because they increase innovation and they provide savings for hard-pressed working families throughout the world. And we must do more to improve education and job training so that more people have the skills to compete in a world that is changing very rapidly.

We must also ask developing countries to be less resistant to concerns for human rights, labor, and the environment so that spirited economic competition does not become a race to the bottom. At the same time, we must make sure that when we say we're concerned about labor and the environment and human rights in the context of trade, it is not a pretext for protectionism.

Both the United States and Europe must do more to build a consensus for trade. In America, for example, we devote far, far too little of our wealth to development assistance. But on a per capita basis, we also spend nearly 40 percent more than Europeans on imports from developing countries. Recently, we passed landmark trade agreements with Africa and the Caribbean Basin that will make a real difference to those regions. If America matched Europe's generosity in development assistance and Europe matched our openness in buying products from the developing nations, think how much growth and opportunity we could spur.

At the same time, I think it's important that we acknowledge that trade alone cannot lift nations from poverty. Many of the poorest developing countries are crippled by the burden of crushing debt, draining resources that could be used to meet the most basic human needs, from clean water to schools to shelter. For too long, the developed world was divided between those who felt any debt forgiveness would hurt the creditworthiness of developing nations and those who demanded outright cancellation of the debt with no conditions.

Last year, at the G–7 Summit in Cologne, we—Prime Minister Blair and I and our colleagues—began to build a new consensus responding to a remarkable coalition, asking for debt relief for the poorest nations in this millennial year.

We have embraced the global social contract: debt relief for reform. We pledged enhanced debt relief to poor countries that put forward plans to spend their savings where they ought to be spent, on reducing poverty, developing health systems, improving educational access and quality. This can make a dramatic difference.

For example, Uganda has used its savings, already, to double primary school enrollment, a direct consequence of debt relief. Bolivia will now use $77 million on health and education. Honduras will offer its children 9 years of schooling instead of 6, a 50 percent increase.

The developed world must build on these efforts, as we did in the United States when we asked for 100 percent bilateral debt relief for the least developed nations. And we must include more and more nations in this initiative. But we should not do it by lowering our standards. Instead, we should help more nations to qualify for the list—that is, to come forward with plans to spend the savings on their people and their future. This starts with good governance—something that I think has been overlooked.

No matter how much we wish to do for the developing world, they need to have the capacity to absorb aid, to absorb assistance, and to do more for themselves. Democracy is not just about elections, even when they seem to go on forever. [*Laughter*] Democracy is also about what happens after the election. It's about the capacity to run clean government and root out corruption, to open the budget process, to show people an honest accounting of where their resources are being spent, and to give potential investors an honest accounting of what the risks and rewards might be. We have a moral obligation both to provide debt relief and to make sure these resources reach people who need them most.

The poorer these people are, of course, the less healthy they're likely to be. That brings me to the next point. The obstacles to good health in the developing world are many and of great magnitude. There is the obvious fact

of malnutrition, the fact that so many women still lack access to family planning and basic health services. Around the world today, one woman dies every minute from complications due to childbirth.

There is the fact that 1½ billion people lack access to safe, clean drinking water; and the growing danger of a changing climate, about which I will say more in a moment. But let me just mention the health aspects.

If temperatures keep rising, developing countries in tropical regions will be hurt the most, as disease spreads and crops are devastated. Already, we see in some African countries malaria occurring at higher altitudes than ever before because of climate change.

Today, infectious diseases are responsible for one in four deaths around the world—diseases like malaria, TB, and AIDS, diarrheal diseases. Just malaria, tuberculosis, and diarrhea kill 8 million people a year under the age of 15. Already, in South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, half of all the 15-year-olds are expected to die of AIDS. In just a few years, there will be three to six African countries where there will be more people in their sixties than in their thirties. This is a staggering human cost. Parenthetically, the economic toll is also breathtaking.

AIDS is predicted to cut the GDP of some African countries by 20 percent within 10 years. It is an epidemic with no natural boundary. Indeed, the fastest growing rate of infection today is in Russia and the nations of the former Soviet Union. Why makes the point of what we should do. In no small measure because those nations, in the aftermath of the end of communism, and actually beginning a few years before, have seen a steady erosion in the capacity of their public health systems to do the basic work that must be done.

We must attack AIDS, of course, within our countries—in the United States and Britain. But we must also do all we can to stop the disease from spreading in places like Russia and India, where the rates of growth are large, but the overall numbers of infected people are still relatively small. But we must not also forget that the number one health crisis in the world today remains AIDS in Africa. We must do more in prevention, care, medications, and the earliest possible development of an affordable vaccine.

The developing countries themselves hold a critical part of the answer. However limited their resources, they must make treatment and prevention a priority. Whatever their cultural beliefs, they must be honest about the ways AIDS spreads and how it can be prevented. Talking about AIDS may be difficult in some cultures, but its far easier to tell children the facts of life in any culture than to watch them learn the fact of death.

In China, a country with enough resources to teach all its children to read, only 4 percent of the adults know how AIDS is transmitted. Uganda, on the other hand, has cut the rate of infection by half. So there are a lot of things that the developing world will have to do for itself. This, too, is in no small measure an issue of governance and leadership. But the bulk of the new investment will have to come from the developed world.

In the last few years, our two nations have gotten off to a very good start. And yet the difference between what the world provides and what the world needs for treatment and prevention of AIDS, malaria, and TB is $6 billion a year. Now that may seem like a great deal of money, but think about this: Take America's fair share of closing that gap, $1.5 billion. That is about the same as our Government spends every year on office supplies, or about what the people of Britain spend every year on blue jeans.

So I hope that some way will be found for the United States and its allies to close that $6 billion gap. It will be a very good investment, indeed. And the economic and social consequences to our friends in Africa and to other places where the rates of growth is even greater will be quite profound unless we do.

The government alone cannot meet the health needs, but thus far, neither has the market. What is the problem? There is a huge demand for an AIDS vaccine, but the problem is, as all the economists here will readily understand, the demand is among people who have no money to pay for it. Therefore, the companies that could be developing the vaccines have virtually no incentive to put in the massive amounts of research money necessary to do the job. Only 10 percent—listen to this—10 percent of all biomedical research is devoted to diseases that overwhelmingly affect the poorest countries.

Now, we have sharply increased our investment in vaccine research, boosted funding for buying vaccines so that companies know there will be a guaranteed market not just for AIDS

but for other infectious diseases, proposed a tax credit to help provide for future vaccines to encourage more companies to invest in trying to find vaccines where there are none presently.

I think we should expand that approach to the development of drugs and keep pressing pharmaceutical companies to make lifesaving treatments affordable to all. But we can't ask them to go broke; we're going to have to pay them to do it—directly or indirectly through tax credits.

One of the best health programs, the best economic development programs and the best antipoverty strategies, as the vice chancellor said very early on today, is a good education. Each additional year spent in school increases wages by 10 to 20 percent in the developing world. A primary education boosts the farmers' output by about 8 percent. And the education of girls is especially critical. Studies show that literate girls have significantly smaller and healthier families. I want to say just parenthetically here, I'm very grateful for the work that my wife has done over the last 8 years around the world to try to help protect young women and girls, get them in school, keep them in school. And I hope that we will do more on that. That can make a huge difference. And there are still cultures where there is dramatically disparate treatment between girls and boys and whether they go to school and whether they can stay. If all children on every continent had the tools to fulfill their God-given potential, the prospect for peace, prosperity, and freedom in the developing world would be far greater.

We are making progress. In the past decade, primary enrollments have increased at twice the rate—twice the rate—of the 1980's. Still, more than 100 million kids get no schooling at all; 60 percent of them are girls. Almost half of all African children and a quarter of those in south and west Asia are being denied this fundamental right.

Just this year 181 nations joined to set a goal of providing basic education to every child, girls and boys alike, in every country by 2015. Few of our other efforts will be successful if we fail to reach this goal. What it will take is now known to us all. It's going to take a commitment by the developing countries to propose specific strategies and realistic budgets, to get their kids out of the fields and factories, to remove the fees and other obstacles that keep them out of the classroom. And it's going to take an effort by the wealthier countries to invest in things that are working.

I hope a promising example is something that we in the United States started in the last year, a $300 million global school lunch initiative, using a nutritious meal as an incentive for parents to send their children to school. I am very hopeful that this will increase enrollment, and I believe it will. And I want to thank the U.K. and other countries that are willing to contribute to and support this.

But the main point I want to make is, we can't expect to get all these children in the developing world into schools unless we're willing to help pay. I've been to schools in Africa that have maps that don't have 70 countries that exist today on them. And yet, we know that if they just had one good computer with one good printer, and someone paid for the proper connections, they could get all the information they need in the poorest places in the world to provide good primary education. Should we pay for it? I think it would be a good investment.

Let me say just a few words about the digital divide. Today, south Asia is 700 times less likely to have access to the Internet than America. It's estimated that in 2010, in the Asia-Pacific region, the top 8 economies will have 72 percent of their people on line, but the bottom 11 will have less than 4 percent. If that happens, the global economy really will resemble a worldwide web, a bunch of interlocking strands with huge holes in between.

It's fair to ask, I suppose, are computers really an answer for people who are starving or can't yet read? Is E-commerce an answer for villages that don't even have electricity? Of course, I wouldn't say that. We have to begin with the basics. But there should not be a choice between Pentium and penicillin. That's another one of those false choices Prime Minister Blair and I have been trying to throw into the waste bin of history.

We should not patronize poor people by saying they don't need 21st century tools and skills. Microcredit loans in Bangladesh by the Grameen Bank to poor village women to buy cell phones has proved out to be one of the most important economic initiatives in one of the poorest countries in the world.

I went to a village co-op in Nayla, Rajasthan, India, last year, last March, and I was astonished to see the women's milk co-op doing all of its

billing on computers and marketing on computers. And I saw another computer there that had all the information from the federal and state government, with a wonderful printer, so that all the village women, no matter how poor, could come in. And one woman came in with a 2-week-old baby and printed out all the information about what she ought to do with the baby for the next 6 months.

So I think it's a copout to say that technology cannot be of immense help to very poor people in remote places. If it's done right, it may be of more help to them than to people who are nearer centers of more traditional, economic and educational and health opportunity.

So from my point of view, we have to begin to have more places like those poor villages in India, like the cell phone businesses in Bangladesh, like the city of Hyderabad in India, now being called "Cyberabad." Developing countries have to do their part here, too. They have to have laws and regulations that permit the greatest possible access at the lowest possible cost. And in the developed world, governments have to work with corporations and NGO's to provide equipment and expertise. That's the goal of the digital opportunity task force, which the G–8 has embraced, and I hope we will continue to do that.

Let me just say one word about climate change. If you follow this issue, you know we had a fairly contentious meeting recently about climate change, with no resolution about how to implement the Kyoto agreement, which calls for the advanced nations to set targets and for some mechanisms to be devised for the developing nations to participate. There are lots of controversies about to what extent countries should be able to get credit for sinks. Trees—do the trees have to be planted? Can they already be up? To what extent the developing countries should agree to follow a path of development that is different from the one that we followed in the United States and the United Kingdom. I don't want to get into all that now, except to say there will be domestic and regional politics everywhere. But let's look at the facts.

The facts are that the last decade was the hottest decade in 1,000 years. If the temperature of the Earth continues to warm at this rate, it is unsustainable. Within something like 50 years, in the United States, the Florida Everglades and the sugarcane fields in Louisiana will be under water. Agricultural production will have to be moved north in many places. And the world will be a very different place. There will be more extreme weather events. There will be more people displaced. It will become virtually impossible in some places to have a sustainable economy. This is a big deal.

And the only thing I would like to say is that I do not believe that we will ever succeed unless we convince people—the interest groups in places like the United States which have been resistant and the driving political forces in countries like India and China who don't want to think that we're using targets in climate change to keep them poor—we have to convince them that you can break the link between growing wealth and putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. There is ample evidence that this is true, and new discoveries just on the horizon which will make it more true.

But it is shocking to me how few people in responsible positions in the public and private sector even know what the present realities are in terms of the relationship in energy use and economic growth. So I think one of the most important things that the developed world ought to be doing is not only making sure we're doing a better job on our own business—which is something the United States has to do—not only doing more in emissions trading so that we can get more technology out into the developed world but making sure people know that this actually works.

An enormous majority of the decisionmakers in the developed and the developing world still don't believe that a country can grow rich and stay rich unless it puts more greenhouse gas into the atmosphere every year. It is not true. And so this is one area where we can make a big contribution to sustainable development and to creating economic opportunities in developing countries, if we can just get people in positions of influence to get rid of a big idea that is no longer true.

Was it Victor Hugo who said, "There's nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come"? The reverse is also true: There's no bigger curse than a big idea that hangs on after its time has gone. And so, I hope all of you will think about that.

Finally, let me just say that no generation has ever had the opportunity that all of us now have to build a global economy that leaves no one behind and, in the process, to create a new century of peace and prosperity in a world

that is more constructively and truly interdependent. It is a wonderful opportunity. It is also a profound responsibility. For 8 years, I have done what I could to lead my country down that path. I think for the rest of our lives, we had all better stay on it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. in Butterworth Hall at the University of Warwick Arts Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sir Brian Follett, vice chancellor, Sir Shridath Ramphal, chancellor, and Lord Robert Skidelsky, professor of economics, University of Warwick; Sir Follett's wife, Lady Deb Follett; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and his wife, Cherie.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One
December 14, 2000

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress*]

European Union

The President. Seriously, what we were just talking about—maybe I should make the general point I was going to just make. She said it was so interesting to her when she goes to Europe, people are so interested in these decisions, and Americans don't seem to be. But the truth is, this is their lives, you know. I mean, for people in the Republic, they live with sort of an open wound with all this trouble in Northern Ireland. But for people in Northern Ireland, it's just being able to get in your car and not worrying about going down the street and having a bomb go off. It's worth a lot.

So, it matters to them that—some people, you know, questioned over the last 8 years whether—first of all, whether I should have done that, because it made the British mad, eventually. But in the end, they were very glad we did. But when the United States is involved, even in a small place, it has big psychological significance to the entire Continent. It makes a big difference.

I mean, it's obvious what was at stake in Bosnia and Kosovo, but in Northern Ireland it said to the rest of Europe that the U.S. still cares about Europe; we're still involved with them. So it has an effect in helping us, because we have all kinds of problems with Europe. You know, we have all these tough environmental issues related to the trade issues and then the trade issues themselves and all that, and we will have. And they're going through all their growing pains.

You saw they just had this real tough meeting in, I think, Nice, where they were arguing over how to aggregate the votes and whether Germany should have more because they have more people. And they argue they should have more, because they have more people and they have to pay more money. So, if they have to pay more money and have more people, they ought to have money.

And then you've got France, Italy, and Britain all at the same population. They're all at 60 million, and then it's a pretty good drop down to Spain. I think Spain has got like 40 million.

Q. But no recounts from what I understand.

The President. No. They all use hand ballots, pencil ballots. So go ahead, what were you going to say about Ireland?

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. If you wanted to give some advice about Northern Ireland——

The President. To President-elect Bush?

Q. Yes, on Ireland. The people there are faced with a significant amount—[*inaudible*]—on Gerry Adams. What was the makeup? How did you come to that?

The President. Well, I reached the conclusion that it was worth the risk for two reasons. And the risks were two. One is, would it do irreparable damage to our relationship with Great Britain? And two, would the IRA really declare a cease-fire and honor it, or would it look like I gave a visa to him, and they were still getting money out of Boston and New York for bad purposes that were still going on?

On the second, I felt based on people we knew in Ireland, starting with the then-*Taoiseach*, Albert Reynolds, that they would honor their word, because it was in their interest

to do so, and they had made a decision to try to work out a peace.

And on the first, I felt that the relationship between the U.S. and Britain was so strong, and we agreed on so many foreign policy issues related to Europe—like the expansion of NATO, the importance of trying to solve the Balkans crisis, just to mention two—that if I put a lot of my time and effort into going to the U.K. and working at it, that we could work through it. And it turned out to be a good gamble.

And I had actually quite a good relationship with John Major. I mean, the British press just killed us for a while, and they said, "Clinton did this because Major and the Tories supported President Bush, helped—look at Clinton's passport file." It was all ridiculous. I didn't give a rip about that.

Q. But what finally made you——

The President. So my advice to the President-elect, I think—and I really haven't had a chance to talk about it—is just sort of stick with the policy and work with the leaders, because now, you know, you have a consensus in Great Britain and in Ireland for continuing to work with the parties in Northern Ireland. And they will have to make—there will be specific calls along the way they will have to make. Maybe they will make them the same way I would; maybe they wouldn't. But that's not as important as the general trend there, because, you know, there are some problems that are unresolved where time is running against you, so you might as well go ahead and bite the bullet and do it.

I feel very strongly about that in the Middle East. They need to reach some sort of new accommodation; that is, we have come to the end of the road of the September '93 agreement, plus the Wye accord, plus incremental measures. They need a new understanding. They need to—they've got to either resolve it all or at least decide what the next step up is, so they can get back to living in peace and the Palestinian economy can start to grow.

With Ireland, the Irish Republic is the fastest growing economy in Europe. Northern Ireland is now the fastest growing part of the U.K. They come in from a low base, but they're catching up in a hurry.

There was a big headline, I don't know if you saw it, in one of the papers during our trip that said that there had been 600 million pounds in American investment alone in Northern Ireland, where it only has a million-and-a-half people, in the 5 years since I went there the first time.

So, in Ireland, all you got to do is just keep it going because the people will stay a little ahead of the politicians. The people will not let the politicians crater this deal as long as their lives are getting better.

Q. Have you heard back from Belfast, sir, and has your trip had its desired effect?

The President. Well, they all were happy with it. You know, that is, all the parties that are actually involved in the Government and the peace process support the Good Friday accords, are all happy, and we're inching along. And they may get another breakthrough. The point is that the atmosphere was much better.

I saw Sky TV. That's the European—the way they played the Northern Ireland event—they had a little clip from me; they had little deal about my swansong in Ireland and blah, blah, blah; and then they have a little clip from me, a little clip from Tony Blair; and then they had a great line from David Trimble's speech about how he wouldn't let us go back to the—he had that one poetic line about the dark and the hatred.

Q. Grudges.

The President. All that, that line. They played that on television. Well, that's a huge deal because it reassures the Protestants that they're supported, and it's immensely reassuring to the Catholic community that, you know, he's still—even if they disagree with some particular position that he's taking, that he's still on the track.

And so my belief is that they will eventually work this out if they just give it enough time, because they're doing better every day. That's the right strategy. So, I don't think this is going to be a difficult challenge for President Bush.

Q. [*Inaudible*].

The President. That's entirely up to all of them, starting with him. I don't think it's—I think the Irish—a lot of them asked me about it, but it's only because they know me and they're comfortable. And once he gets in there and has a good policy, they'll be fine.

So, if they ever needed me, I would do it. But I think, on balance, it's not going to be essential. They'll do just fine with this.

Q. What do you see when people—when the Irish, for instance, asked you to stay involved, or in the Middle East, a lot of people have suggested you should stay involved? Is that an apprehension on their part just about the

change? I mean, you also have a unique relationship with the people.

The President. I think that always happens. And we're going to have a good transition. Al Gore made a fabulous speech last night. The country will get into it. We'll adjust very quickly, and so will all of them. They'll all adjust quickly. So it will be fine. I think, you know, it will just be fine.

The essential thing about democracy is that no one is indispensable. That's why you have a system like this. And you know, whenever you're the first person to do something, people have a feeling about you. That's a nice thing for me, personally. And if I can ever be helpful in some—you know, if your President asks you to do something, you do it. Bob Dole was on television last night talking about how I had asked him to go to Bosnia and Kosovo and things we had done together.

But it's not important. The most important thing is that we have a good transition and that he get off to a good start. The rest of it will take care of itself.

Conversation With President-Elect Bush

Q. Can we ask what you said to the President-elect?

The President. I congratulated him, and I told him that I thought he made a fine statement last night, and I thought that Al had made a fine statement, and that I look forward to seeing him. He said he was coming early next week, and we would get together. That's all.

Conversation With Vice President Gore

Q. What about Vice President Gore? Did you have to console him at all?

The President. I just called him—he was having his Christmas party—I called him and told him how proud I was of the statement. I told him that it was—I thought it was fabulous. I told him I wasn't sure I could have done it as well as he did. It was just fabulous. And he laughed. Al's got a friend that he went to college with who is a standup comic, and he says his best line now is something like, "Gore got the best of all worlds: He won the popular vote and doesn't have to do the job." It's a great line.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. [*Inaudible*]—where they have to go now—a lot of it in our country seems to be reconciliation, reconciliation for the U.S., as is typical in a Presidential race, reconciliation for the issues that you had to face in the last couple of years, reconciliation for Catholics and Protestants, what would you take away from that? What advice would you give to somebody——

The President. To the Irish? Well, they have to keep working together. For example, it's hard for us as outsiders to appreciate the significance of that event yesterday. But in that event yesterday, you had huge numbers of Catholics and huge numbers of Protestants sitting in a room together, a big room, clapping at the same lines. Now, that seems like self-evident, say, "Well, it's almost like the rhetoric of peace, and so what's the deal here?"

But I'm not sure even 2 years ago we could have gotten that big a crowd from both communities, from the young to the old—the kids would have done it that were there yesterday, but all the adults, I don't know that we could have done it, even 2 years ago. So, I really believe this is largely a question of sustained personal contact.

Their interests are clearly far more served by what they have in common than their differences. They just have to continue to build trust. All these issues that they're debating now are basically trust issues.

Immigration in Ireland

Q. In regard to that, the Celtic Tiger, the economy that's going so strong—but a new component in Ireland is the idea of immigration to their country, and the eight people killed in Ireland, immigrants, last year——

The President. It's going to be a whole new challenge for them because they're—it's funny, the Irish have emigrated all over the world, and I don't believe there has been day since the United Nations sent its first peacekeeping force out that there hasn't been an Irish peacekeeper somewhere around the world involved in peacekeeping efforts. It's stunning.

So, there is no nation on Earth as small as Ireland that has had the impact and the outreach Ireland has had to the rest of the world, partly because they had to come to America to live, the Potato Famine and later, and significant numbers of them were still coming when I became President. You know, there were an enormous number of nurses in Arkansas from Northern Ireland when I was Governor.

Q. Which they'd like back now.

The President. Yes, which they would like back now, and they may want to go home because they can make decent money now, but they never had the reverse happen. Saint Patrick was an Englishman. He was practically the last significant immigrant into Ireland, if you think about it. I mean, he was an Englishman. There had never been a huge in-migration. So, you know, it's tragic that those people were killed, but they're dealing—this is going to be a whole new experience for them.

It's not like London. England has had—I saw some of this when I was a student in England in the late sixties and 1970. They had—what was that guy's name—I never thought I would forget that rightwing politician's name that was leading all the anti-immigrant stuff?

Q. In America?

The President. In Great Britain. I can't believe I've forgotten his name. But the point is, there was all this early tension. Now you walk the streets of London, and the immigrants are there. They're all intermarried, but they still have their communities and their traditions. There are movies being made now about kind of like—I saw a great movie on the plane about a—a British movie about a Pakistani family, about the Pakistani family trying to preserve its traditions and cultures, a Pakistani husband and English wife, but he wants his kids all to have proper Muslim marriages with other Pakistani families. All those things that are—they're still playing themselves out. But they're operating at a highly, I think, functional level now compared to 30 years ago.

The Irish will work through this. They're basically incredibly generous, spirited people, but they have had a very distinct Irish culture and mentality for hundreds of years. And with the economic success of the Irish Republic now and the romantic appeal of Ireland and the great lifestyle—and Dublin is a fabulous city, you know; it's big enough to be fascinating and not too big to be overwhelming—they're going to have a lot of people who want to live there.

Q. Did Chelsea like it?

The President. Oh, Chelsea loves Dublin. Chelsea loves Ireland. Chelsea loved Ireland before I ever got involved in all of this. She was reading Irish historical novels when she was a kid.

Q. Would she go to grad school there?

The President. I don't know. But if she did, it would be fine with me. It would give me an excuse to go back.

But I think the Irish will do fine with this. They will just have to work through it. I don't think people should be too judgmental or alarmist because this is an experience they're dealing with that the Americans had to begin dealing with at the turn of the century when we had our big wave of immigrants, or even before, when the Chinese came to build the railroad, and the British dealt with, in the middle of this century, the last century, up through the 1960's and the early seventies. And they're dealing with it.

You know, so you will have some of this stuff happen. It's terrible and regrettable, but they will absorb them. And I think it will be quite amazing 10 years from now to go there and see all these people with different colored skin quoting Yeats' poetry.

President's Future Plans

Q. Mr. President, did this trip, and the fact that there is now a President-elect, cement your thoughts about your own future any more?

The President. Not really. I'm thinking about it. I need to get a little sleep here. I've worked pretty hard for the last 8 years, for the last 27 years, and I'm going to just—I want to try to be a useful citizen. But I will—I've got to build that library. I've got a lot of things to do.

Q. So, you're tired. Does that mean that this is your last foreign trip? You don't have that look about you, sir?

Q. We could do this all the way to North Korea.

The President. I don't have anything to say about that now. [*Laughter*] I can't comment on that.

Q. I do have an example of Irish generosity, if you will hold on for just a second.

The President. Do it.

President-Elect Bush

Q. Some people are comparing George Bush to you, saying that he has the same type of—[*inaudible*]. Do you see that in him?

The President. Well, I think he's, you know, trying to build good will, which I think is important. And maybe the last few years have bled enough poison out of the system where it will be possible. And I think the Democrats, anyway,

are more generally inclined toward working—you know, we basically believe in Government. We believe in the possibility of doing things. And so I think that the Democrats will give him a honeymoon and an opportunity to get his feet on the ground and pass some of his program and do some things. And I think they ought to.

Discussions With Queen Elizabeth II

Q. Can I ask you about the visit with the Queen? You were saying earlier that you actually discussed a little bit of politics.

The President. Yes. She's very careful, you know. She observes strictly the British tradition of not making policy statements. But she's a highly intelligent woman who knows a lot about the world. She has traveled a lot. She has fulfilled her responsibilities, I think, enormously well, and I always marvel, when we meet, at what a keen judge she is of human events. I think she's a very impressive person. I like her very much.

Q. Did you have tea?

The President. We had tea. We had proper tea, yes. Actually, I had a little coffee, but Hillary had tea.

Souvenir Presentation

[*At this point, a reporter presented the President with a box of tea.*]

Q. Last time I went to Ireland with Hillary, she liked that.

The President. Yes, we do like this.

Q. And because you won't be having this, I think you deserve a little memory of your time. [*Laughter*]

The President. Believe it or not, I don't have one of these.

Q. You can keep the limo and play with that, you know, up on the desk.

The President. What I need is an automated tape of "Hail to the Chief" so I know when I'm going into a room that I won't be lost. [*Laughter*] This is great. Thank you.

Supreme Court Decision on Election

Q. Mr. President, you said in your statement this morning that the Vice President spoke for a lot of people who disagreed with the Supreme Court decision. Is there a way——

The President. But accept it. I agree with both the things he said. He said it just right. Is there a way what?

Q. Do you think, though, there is the sense that the Court was political or is—and that is bad for the country that the Court ever got involved in deciding the election?

The President. I think that the statements of the Vice President and the President-elect should stand on their own, and at this time I should not say anything about it. I think it's just—I don't think I should comment on it now.

Q. You said on Saturday that in order to bestow legitimacy on the President-elect, the Supreme Court should allow the vote. Do you not feel that same way now?

The President. No, I said I disagree with the Court decision, but I accept it. The right of judicial review established by John Marshall in *Marbury* against *Madison*, then involving review of executive actions of the President, has been extended to every other aspect of our law wherever there is a Federal question involved.

And somebody has to make the final call. And the American people obviously make their judgments about it. And the Court, as you know, often had different positions than they do now, that we've been through a lot of, you know, a lot of cycles of this. Remember, the Supreme Court struck down all the New Deal legislation until 1937. Then they turned around, and they changed.

Plessy v. *Ferguson* was the law until the Warren Court came along and basically redeemed the promise of the Civil War and the 13th and 14th and 15th amendments. Before Abraham Lincoln and the war and the amendments, the Supreme Court said in the Dred Scott case that even a freed slave that—I mean a slave that escaped to a free State was still property.

So, the Supreme Court—people can make their judgments there. No one looking back on history would say that every decision they have made is right. We could all find ones we agree and disagree with. But the principle of judicial review is very important in this country, and therefore we must all accept the decisions we don't agree with.

Q. Justice Stevens, in his dissent, said the one loser here is—I'm paraphrasing, obviously—the belief of Americans in a nonpolitical unbiased nature of the Court. [*Inaudible*] Is that what he said?

The President. I just don't want to comment on it. I don't think—I can serve no purpose by commenting on it. If I did, I would not be honoring what Vice President Gore said he

wanted us to do in his speech and what President-elect Bush said he was trying to establish in the country.

There will be time enough to comment on it. And a lot of law professors and other people who understand the history of the Constitution will comment on it. And the American people will read it and discuss it. And at some future time, it might be appropriate for me to put down somewhere my thoughts about it. But I don't think it's right, now. I think that this is a period when we ought to let—get the country going forward and give the President-elect a chance to put his transition in order. That's what's best for the country, and I want to honor that.

Visits to Ireland

Q. What was your favorite trip to Ireland?

The President. My favorite trip to Ireland? It's very hard. But the first time I went—I loved '98. I loved Limerick. You know, that was great when we went there.

Q. Not to mention Ballybunion?

The President. Not to mention Ballybunion, yes, which I missed because of Bosnia. You remember, in '95, I had to go see our troops off in Germany. I think I went to Ramstein in Germany.

But in '95 it was like a dam breaking. You know, the emotion, the feeling for peace. Keep in mind, things were much more uncertain then. We had a good cease-fire, but we were still 3 years away from the Good Friday accord, or 2½ years. It was the end of '95 when I went, and then the spring of '98 was the Good Friday accord. But you know, I never will forget being in Derry, turning on the Christmas lights in Belfast with—who was singing there?

Q. Van Morrison.

The President. Van Morrison was singing there, and then I went to Derry, and Phil Coulter sang "The Town I Love So Well" in the square with all the people filling the square, and then that street that goes up the hill behind it as far as you could see.

I mean, there wasn't a dry eye in the place, you know. I mean, I just can't—and then we went to Dublin. There were over 100,000 people in the streets in front of Trinity. We set up on the bank, you know, in front of the Bank of Ireland building—it was just amazing; there were a lot of interesting people—and quoted Seamus Heaney's poem, you know, from the "Cure of Troy," for which the next year I took a phrase and made it the title of the book I put out in '96.

And when I got to Dublin, Seamus came over to the Ambassador's residence and had handwritten out the section of the poem that I quoted. It's what the chorus says, "History says don't hope on this side of the grave. But once in a lifetime the longed-for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme. Believe in miracles and cures and healing wells." I have it on the wall in my private office on the second floor, and I look at it every day.

And so he wrote it out in his hand, and then at the end he said, "To President Clinton: It was a fortunate wind that blew you here," and that line is also from the "Cure of Troy," which I would have every person involved in any of these kinds of things read.

It's only about 90 pages long, and it's a play written in the form of a Greek tragedy so that the chorus speaks for the collective wisdom of the people. It's a play about Philoctetes, who was a Greek warrior with Ulysses. He had the magic bow, and whenever the Greeks have Philoctetes in the Trojan Wars, they always won. They never lost a battle when he was there.

And they were in a battle, and he was badly wounded. And they thought he was certain to die. His leg was horribly wounded, and they were afraid to carry him. And they were trying to make a quick getaway. So they dumped him on this tiny island in the Aegean, which was just basically rock and shrub. And he didn't die, and his leg never fully healed. It just sort of became a stump.

And for 10 years, he was alone on the island. He became this sort of wild feral creature, just hair everywhere and his stump leg. And Odysseus got a message for the gods—Ulysses did—that Philoctetes was alive and that he had to have him to win the final battle of the Trojan War with the famous Trojan Horse.

So, he—Ulysses devised this ruse to try to con him back into the deal. He took a very nice young man with him on a boat, and they found this island, and he sent the young guy up to see him. And he had some line he put on him about—he figured out there was something wrong; this didn't make sense; this guy appears after 10 years.

So finally Ulysses kind of fessed up, went up and said, "I left you. I shouldn't have. I'm sorry, but we need you. Will you come?" And

he forgives him, and he comes. He gets his magic bow, and he limps down to the boat, and they go off, and they win the Trojan War.

So, it's a story about how this guy is living alone on this God-forsaken rock while his leg never heals, and yet somehow what happened to him over those 10 years, he just gives it up. And he goes on. And when he is leaving, as he is pulling out of the—you know, away from the island, the three of them in the boat—Philoctetes looks back at the island and says, "It was a fortunate wind that blew me here."

But he somehow, in that 10 years, just purged his soul. I mean, it's really—all the things Seamus ever wrote for the peace process in Northern Ireland and for people struggling with tribal wars in Africa or any of these conflicts, or people that are still mad at each other—you know, when I got to Washington, there were Members of Congress still mad at each other over things that happened in the 1970's, literally, still mad. And you know, there were times when I felt like a piñata in somebody else's ballgame.

So you know, when I read this—I remember I read it one night in the Presidential guest residence in Cairo. I had been carrying it around with me, and you know, my body clock was all messed up, and I couldn't sleep. So Hillary went to sleep, and I just sat up and read it. And I thought, "Wow, this is really—I wish I could just get everybody to read this."

Q. Cairo was—[*inaudible*].

The President. Well, whenever—one of the times I was in Cairo. The one thing about me, I have a reputation for having a good memory, but it's totally shot. I literally—I remember things that we did now, and I can't remember what year we did them. And if I'm going to write my memoirs, I'm going to have to get all these young people that work for me to come in and sort of fill in the blanks.

So much has happened in such a compressed way. On a deal like this, you know, maybe I get 3 hours of sleep a night. I just can't remember things, or I remember things, but I don't remember exactly when they happened.

Q. Why did an Irish playwright write a Greek tragedy?

The President. I think that he believed that it was a simple, clear way to capture some timeless wisdom that would speak to Ireland and maybe to others in the same position.

It's really an astonishing work, you know, because if you read it—if you didn't know anything about it, you would think, "Is this some play of Aeschylus I missed when I was in Greek Literature 101 or something?"

Northern Ireland/Middle East

Q. Before you leave office, do you think that there will be a sense of permanency—[*inaudible*]?

The President. That's what I was trying to say in the beginning. I think that it's creeping in. And I think that the psychological impact of this visit, more than anything else, was designed to help create that. But I think there will be rough spots along the road. I think there will be arguments back and forth.

Q. Do you think there will be—[*inaudible*]?

The President. No, I think they will still have arguments. I just don't think they will ever let it slip the tracks.

Q. Do you think that the policing and decommissioning—[*inaudible*]—have some kind of common ground—[*inaudible*]?

The President. I think they're moving on them. Whether they will be resolved or not, I don't know. But the main thing is, I think every time you do something that really builds confidence and mutual trust, at least if they think—both sides think that they want to make it, you know, then it's—you increase the likelihood of success one way or the other. And the time deadlines don't matter so much.

I'm more concerned about, you know, giving that sense again to the Middle East. We had that sense for a while, and then Rabin got killed, and then we had those two terrible terrorist incidents, and the whole Middle East rallied around the Israelis at Sharm al-Sheikh, totally unprecedented, never happened before.

And then there was this sense of possibility again. And then, even with all the difficulties they had with the Netanyahu government, the differences of opinion wound up producing the Wye accords. It was 9 days and nights, and it was sort of like the last person standing won the argument, but it was—they did it. There was a sense of it. That's what they need again. They need a sense that, you know, the direction is right, and it's going to work.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—some Israelis suggest that you will go back there and give it one more shot.

The President. I don't want to comment on that either. I don't want to comment on that

or North Korea, because all these things are very delicate. The less I say, the better it is for them and for whatever I can do and for the next President.

Q. Were you surprised by Prime Minister Barak's resignation—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, sort of, but you know it's—it's all been written about. Everybody knows kind of what's going on. I think he decided that he wanted to bring some finality to it. He wanted to have some deadline, some election, whether either his course will be ratified or something will happen. I think it was—it's a bold move. We will have to see how it works.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—mentioned that Jim Baker being back on the scene—remembered that he was the one that uttered that you were working on "Gulliver's Travels" in 1996, regarding your work in Northern Ireland. Do you think he owes you an apology for that statement?

The President. I don't know. I don't make judgments about—I think when it comes to apologies, you ought to save your judgments for yourself—to whom should you apologize, and let other people make those decisions. I think that, look, nobody is right about everything. He is an immensely talented man. And I think the course is right, now. And I think the fact that I'm leaving the scene is not—won't be significant. I just don't think they will let it go.

Q. Do you think Hillary will take up where you left off in Washington?

The President. Well, she will be a Senator, not President, but I think that she will be passionately interested in the Irish question. And she is kind of like me—although, unlike me, she has no Irish relatives. Her people are English and Welsh, but she is very familiar with Great Britain. She made all my trips there, and I think she will be a very positive force.

And of course, we've got that huge Irish crowd in New York. They were the people that really introduced me to the Irish issues—the New York Irish and Bruce Morrison from New Haven, who had been a friend of Hillary's and mine since we went to law school together, and the late Paul O'Dwyer and his son—Niall O'Dowd, that whole crowd.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the Irish Echo.

The President. The Irish Echo, yes. They were there at the beginning, my first meeting in 1991. We had that little meeting, you know. And I thought, you know, it makes a lot of sense to me. I will do something on this. I will pander to her. I don't mind. I will give her the pander. Hey, I'm leaving. I'll pander. [*Laughter*]

President's Travel/Foreign Policy

Q. What was your favorite trip outside of Ireland?

The President. I don't know. I loved so many of them. I loved that trip to India. I loved my trip to China. I loved the—the Africa trip was amazing. There was a Guinean woman—you were standing there on the street today; you were there with me—when we were walking down, you know, on Portobello Road. Did you see that woman come up to me and say, *Aproba, aproba, aproba*? That's the Guinean word for welcome. I said, "Were you there?" She said, "I was there. I was there in the square." It was so touching. It was wonderful.

I think it's really important that the United States have a sort of 21st century view of what really counts in the world. I think that Africa has to count for us. I think that Latin America has to count for us.

I think President-elect Bush, I think, will be very, very good in Latin America. One of the things that I noticed about him that I liked, during all the years when I fought the Republicans in Congress and in California over immigration issues, he never got over there with them. And it's probably the only issue on which Texas Republicans are more liberal or less conservative than California Republicans. And it's because of the whole history and culture of the Rio Grande Valley, which I love very much. I went down there 30 years ago, and I've always loved it. I think I was the first President in 50 years, almost, to go down there as President. And I have been three times to the Rio Grande Valley. And you can't understand how Texans feel about immigration if you've never spent any time in the Rio Grande Valley and understand how it works for them. It's a whole different deal.

And he will be very comfortable. He will be good with Mexico. And I think it will lead him to an interest in not only in the big countries of South America but, I would hope, the small countries of Central America, too. But I expect he will be quite successful in building on the outreach we've done in the Latin American countries.

It's going to be important. That's the point I was trying to make today in my speech at

Warwick. As the world becomes more interdependent, pursuing our interests involves more than great power politics.

It's like in the Middle East. Now, I think pursuing our interests involves having a good relationship with the Saudis and, insofar as we can, the other oil producers, except for Iraq, where I just don't think—I think they're still unreconstructed.

But it also involves caring about the Palestinians. Life is more than money and power. And ideas are power, and emotions are power. I have tried to reconcile the legitimate desires of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. We didn't succeed yet, but we—I think that in the end, if we want Israel to be fully secure and at peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian question has to be resolved in a way that enables them, actually, not only to live but to actually start, you know, having a successful economy and a functioning society.

I've got to go. It's been interesting.

I can't really say I had a favorite trip because all of them, you know, I can remember too many things about them all.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. e.s.t aboard Air Force One en route from the United Kingdom to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; First Minister David Trimble of Northern Ireland; musicians Van Morrison and Phil Coulter; former Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Niall O'Dowd, publisher, The Irish Voice.

Statement on the Release of Edmond Pope

December 14, 2000

I welcome today's release of Edmond Pope after 8 months of detention in Russia and appreciate President Putin's decision to pardon Mr. Pope.

Mr. Pope's ordeal was unjustified. It is fortunate that humanitarian considerations prevailed in the end.

I admire the impressive support Mr. Pope received from his wife and family and from Congressman John Peterson of Pennsylvania and other Members of Congress. I commend their tireless efforts on his behalf.

Statement on the 2000 Monitoring the Future Survey

December 14, 2000

Today's 2000 Monitoring the Future Survey confirms that we are making real progress in our fight against youth drug and tobacco use. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) study released by Secretary Donna Shalala and Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey shows teen cigarette use falling sharply across all grades surveyed. The percentage of teenagers reporting cigarette use in the past month dropped by nearly 10 percent among high school seniors, and over 15 percent among eighth graders. The study also shows that efforts to change student attitudes on tobacco are having a positive impact: More teens now believe that smoking carries risks, while fewer report that cigarettes are readily available. This year also marks the fourth in a row that overall teenage use of illicit drugs has remained stable or declined. In particular, the data shows a significant drop in cocaine use among high school seniors and heroin use among eighth graders in 2000. In combination with the National Household and PRIDE surveys this year, these results demonstrate a continuing downward trend in overall youth drug use.

Today's research shows that the efforts of the Clinton/Gore administration have put us on the right track to give our children safer, healthier futures. Vice President Gore and I have fought hard to reverse the dangerous youth smoking trends we saw throughout the earlier part of the 1990's. We worked to raise the price of tobacco to keep it out of the hands of children and urged States to do their part by implementing effective, comprehensive tobacco control and prevention approaches. My administration also developed the first nationwide plan to protect children from the dangers of tobacco, and I have continued to call on Congress to take further steps, including passing legislation to approve FDA's authority to implement this plan. Meanwhile, our National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and other initiatives have helped to change attitudes and steer children away from illegal drugs.

These efforts have made a difference, but we cannot afford to let up in this fight. Today's results also show emerging threats, such as increased Ecstasy use, while also reminding us that the overall levels of youth drug, tobacco, and alcohol use remain unacceptably high. I urge the next Congress to support these proven efforts to give our children the safe and healthy futures that they deserve.

Remarks at a Special Olympics Dinner

December 15, 2000

Thank you, Senator. Trying to get in practice, guys. I want to thank Victor and Katy and Barry and all the Special Olympics global messengers. Let's give them all a big hand again. [*Applause*] Actually, I don't know whether I want to thank Victor or not. I understand that the very first time you played golf, you hit a ball 250 yards. And I want to know the secret before we go any further with this friendship of ours.

I also want to thank our friend Jamie Lee Curtis, who has been a great master of ceremonies and has walked us all through this tonight. Let's give her a big hand—[*applause*]—and all the wonderful performers who have graced this stage tonight because they believe in Special Olympics. Hillary and I have been proud supporters of Special Olympics for many, many years, and we're proud to be part of this very special evening.

Special Olympics is a program of sports, training, and competition, but ultimately it's a strong statement of optimism about human life. It says that every human being can learn and grow and contribute to the society we all share. It casts a spotlight on the dignity of human life and the beauty of the human soul.

Special Olympics teaches us that when people with disabilities gain skill and confidence, we all win from their abilities. When Special Olympic athletes from America meet their counterparts from places like China and Botswana, people all over the world are enriched. And in this century, we have just begun. If we help Special Olympics establish global networks for families, create new health programs for athletes, and open new opportunity for 2 million athletes around the world, every one of us will be better off.

Special Olympics began as a small flicker in the heart of one remarkable woman, Eunice Kennedy Shriver. We miss her tonight, and we thank Sarge and her whole family for being here. Special Olympics enters a new century, not a small flicker but a bursting flame of pride and a beacon of inspiration for every one of us.

So tonight we celebrate what has been accomplished, and even more, we look forward to the future with determination and confidence. And now, I want all of our artists to get a big hand. They're back on the stage, and they're going to sing us—you know, I only have just a few days left—[*laughter*]—so I'm going to take every opportunity I can to ask for everything I can. I want one more song.

Merry Christmas, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:11 a.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Special Olympics Global Messengers Victor Stewart, Texas, Katy Wilson, Georgia, and Barry Cairns, Jr., United

Kingdom; actress Jamie Lee Curtis; and Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder, and her husband, Sargent Shriver, chairman of the board, Special Olympics.

Videotaped Remarks on the Shutdown of the Chernobyl Nuclear Powerplant

December 15, 2000

President Kuchma, honored guests, people of Ukraine, today is a great day for Ukraine and for the world.

On April 26, 1986, reactor number four at the Chernobyl nuclear powerplant suffered a runaway chain reaction, causing the worst nuclear disaster in history. That horrible destruction has offered us lessons not only in nuclear technology but also in people and governments. For when governments are arrogant and unaccountable, they will impose unacceptable risks on the health and safety of their people.

After the disaster, the outspoken father of the Soviet atomic program, Dr. Andrei Sakharov, declared that the safe use of nuclear technology demands open discussions and informed citizens. So it is fitting that while a Communist government of the U.S.S.R. built the unsafe plant, a free and independent Ukraine is shutting it down. It is also fitting to recall that the very event that exposed the weakness of the Soviet system revealed the courage and valor of the Ukrainian people.

Fourteen years ago Ukrainians took heroic steps to contain the danger and protect their people. Today, we see that same commitment, as Ukraine, with the cooperation of the United States, the G–7, and the EU, fulfills its historic decision to shut down the Chernobyl nuclear powerplant forever. This is a triumph for the common good. It is what is possible when free, democratic nations pursue common goals. As President Kuchma noted some years ago, after Ukrainian cosmonaut Leonid Kadenyk joined American astronauts on the space shuttle, "Not even the sky is the limit to Ukrainian-U.S. cooperation."

America will stand with Ukraine as you fight for a free and prosperous future. We will support Ukraine's efforts to take your rightful place among the nations of Europe and alongside the world's free market democracies.

As you open your economy, strengthen the rule of law, and protect a free press, you are both attacking the ills that led to the Chernobyl disaster and building a future where the children of Ukraine can live their dreams. America is on your side. We wish you Godspeed.

Slava Ukrayini.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:15 p.m. in Room 459 in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, and his remarks were videotaped for later broadcast in Ukraine. In his remarks, he referred to President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on International Trade Commission Action Against Gray Market Cigarettes

December 15, 2000

Today I am allowing the U.S. International Trade Commission's exclusion order and cease and desist order regarding certain Brown & Williamson cigarettes (ITC Case Number 337–TA–424) to stand. Together with the legislation (Public Law 106–476) that I signed on November 9, 2000, these orders will ensure that no so-called gray market cigarettes are imported into the United States—including not only the two brands covered under the ITC orders but all brands of gray market cigarettes as provided in the November legislation. In the same way

that the report language for the November legislation made clear that it was in no way intended to alter current policies with respect to other gray market goods, I want to make clear that my allowing these orders to take effect should not be interpreted as setting a precedent for the treatment of other gray market goods.

Statement on Action Against International Crime

December 15, 2000

The growing reach of international crime poses threats to American citizens and American interests, both at home and abroad. Illegal activity from terrorism to trafficking in arms, drugs, or humans violates our values and threatens our safety. Intellectual property theft, financial fraud, and corruption also can endanger our prosperity and undercut public confidence in democracy and free markets around the world.

To confront these challenges, today I am pleased to announce several important initiatives in our ongoing efforts to combat international crime.

First, we are releasing a comprehensive International Crime Threat Assessment, prepared at my direction, as part of our International Crime Control Strategy adopted in May, 1998. The new assessment highlights the global dimensions of international crime and the ways this pervasive problem threatens U.S. interests. This broader understanding is necessary if we, together with our international partners, are to strengthen our response to this global problem.

Second, earlier this week in Palermo, Italy, the United States joined many other countries in signing the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, along with two supplementary protocols on migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. By harmonizing criminal laws and promoting increased cooperation, the new convention and its protocols will enable the international community to better combat international organized crime.

Third, the Departments of State and Justice are establishing a Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Coordination Center. The Center will integrate and improve our efforts to counter these distinct but related global crime problems. The Center also will promote and assist increased efforts by foreign governments and international organizations to combat these problems.

The United States is strongly committed to strengthening our international crime control programs to achieve a world of greater safety, prosperity, and justice. We urge the international community to join us in enhancing our common efforts to advance these common aims.

Statement on the Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Agreement

December 15, 2000

I am pleased that Congress and I have reached agreement on a budget for the coming year. It is a budget that is fiscally responsible, pays down the debt, and makes vital investments in our Nation's future. In education, health care, and community renewal, this budget provides more opportunity for more Americans than ever before.

First and foremost, this budget tops 8 years of commitment to education with dramatic new investment in our Nation's schools. This includes an historic $1.2 billion initiative to help renovate classrooms in thousands of school districts across the country. It includes the largest increases ever in funding for the Head Start program. It nearly doubles funding for after-school programs—the largest increase ever. It increases by 25 percent funding to meet our goal of hiring 100,000 new, highly qualified teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. It dramatically

expands our GEAR UP and TRIO programs to prepare young people for college. It increases the maximum Pell grant to an all-time-high of $3,750—part of the biggest expansion of college opportunity since the GI bill. And it boosts accountability with more funding for teacher training and for turning around failing schools. With this budget, we have now increased funding for the Department of Education by 76 percent since 1993—and targeted that funding to programs that work.

Second, in this budget, we're also passing our historic, bipartisan new markets and community renewal initiative—the most significant effort ever to help hard-pressed communities lift themselves up through private investment and entrepreneurship. With the help of our new markets tax credit, 40 strengthened empowerment zones, and 40 renewal communities, this initiative will spur billions of dollars in private investment and ensure that every American will share in Nation's economic prosperity.

Third, this budget reaffirms our longstanding commitment to expand access to quality health care for all Americans. It includes a multibillion dollar effort to provide low-income children, seniors, and people with disabilities, and those leaving welfare for work, with health care coverage. It expands preventive benefits like cancer and glaucoma screenings for Medicare beneficiaries. It ensures quality health care services for those beneficiaries by investing approximately $30 billion in hospitals, home health agencies, hospices, nursing homes, and managed care plans. It will establish a new program to provide families caring for aging and ill relatives with essential support services, such as adult day care. It includes a new program to provide people with disabilities with community-based health care services. It increases funding for AIDS prevention, research, and treatment at home and abroad. It boosts support for graduate medical education at children's hospitals and for food safety efforts. It includes new efforts to improve nursing home quality and a downpayment to eliminate racial health disparities. And it includes a historic $20.3 billion investment in biomedical research, nearly doubling since 1993 our investment in the National Institutes of Health.

Finally, this budget will allow nearly 700,000 immigrants who have worked, lived, and paid taxes in America for years to stay in the United States legally without fear of being separated from their families.

Every year since 1993, I have worked with Congress to craft fiscally responsible budgets that are true to our values and that invest in the capacity of the American people to seize the new opportunities of the 21st century. This year's budget does the same by continuing to pay down the debt and invest in education, research, health care, and other priorities. I am confident that this budget will help keep our progress strong and our prosperity going in the years ahead.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

December 15, 2000

I am delighted that loyalist paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland have today committed themselves to an open-ended cessation of hostilities and developed peaceful mechanisms to address disputes that may arise. This action responds to the overwhelming desire of the people of Northern Ireland to see their peace flourish and endure, which I sensed during my visit this week. I congratulate the loyalist political leaders who I know worked so hard to bring this about.

The President's Radio Address
December 16, 2000

Good morning. This week, as I work to conclude the last budget negotiations of my Presidency, I'm reminded how far we've come these past 8 years. We now live in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity. But we didn't get there by accident. We made tough choices based on core values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans.

Today I want to talk about two elements critical to our continued success: first, our progress in moving people from welfare to work; and second, our continuing commitment to fiscal discipline and a budget that puts our people first.

Vice President Gore and I took office in 1993 with a pledge to end welfare as we know it. Thanks to comprehensive welfare reform, a renewed sense of responsibility, and the strongest economy in a generation, millions of former welfare recipients now know the dignity of work.

Today I am pleased to announce that over the past 8 years we've cut welfare caseloads by more than 8 million people. Last year alone 1.2 million parents on welfare went to work, determined to build better lives. Nationwide over the last 8 years, welfare rolls have dropped nearly 60 percent and now are the lowest in more than 30 years.

We've been able to sustain this progress year after year because Government, the private sector, and welfare recipients themselves all have done their parts. Together, we are finally breaking the cycle of dependence that has long crippled the hopes of too many families.

When we enacted landmark welfare reform in 1996, I insisted that Congress provide incentives to reward States for helping people to find jobs and to keep jobs. Today I'm pleased to announce that 28 States will receive a total of $200 million in bonuses for doing just that. These grants will enable States to help even more parents go to work and succeed on the job. I urge States to use these resources to provide the necessary support—from child care to transportation to training—that can make a critical difference between welfare checks and paychecks.

We've also worked hard to help families leaving welfare meet the challenge of affordable health care. In the bipartisan budget package I will soon sign, we will extend Medicaid coverage so that thousands of parents who leave welfare can keep the health coverage protecting them and their children. This budget also includes funding to help cover more uninsured children, speed coverage for patients with Lou Gehrig's disease, and increase payments to hospitals, teaching facilities, home health agencies, and nursing homes in order to ensure quality health care.

We have also secured an extra $817 million to help working families afford child care, to meet their responsibilities both at work and at home. These and other child care resources will serve over 2.2 million children next year.

In this budget, we're also passing our historic new markets and community renewal initiative, the most significant effort ever to help hard-pressed communities lift themselves up through private investment and entrepreneurship. With the help of our new-markets tax credit, 40 strengthened empowerment zones, and 40 renewal communities, this initiative will spur billions and billions of dollars in private investment to communities that have not yet shared in our Nation's great economic revival.

From the streets of our central cities to the hills of Appalachia to the rugged vistas of our Native American reservations to the Mississippi Delta, we are giving people the tools of opportunity to make the most of their potential.

Finally, this budget also includes vital investments in our children and their education. With over $900 million dedicated for the very first time to school renovation, thousands of local school districts finally will be able to give our children the classrooms they deserve.

We've increased funding by 25 percent to stay on track to hire 100,000 highly qualified new teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. We have nearly doubled funding for after-school programs to help more than 1.3 million students, while increasing support for teacher training and for turning around failing schools. And to open the doors of college even wider so that more of our young people can walk through them, we've increased the maximum Pell grant to an

all-time high of $3,750. That's up nearly $1,500 since 1993.

If we continue to invest in our people and create opportunities for them, if we continue to honor and reward work, our possibilities are truly without limit. By reaching out and working together, our best days still lie ahead. This budget proves it. The work of the American people prove it. The successful desire of people to move from welfare to work proves it.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:49 a.m. on December 15 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Charles F.C. Ruff
December 16, 2000

Sue, Christy, Carin, Maggie, other family and friends. I was sitting in this service listening to Chuck's family members, friends, partner speak about him, and I was thinking he'd be fairly embarrassed by all these attempts to canonize him. So they put one client on the program. [*Laughter*]

I have been on the receiving end of all this wisdom you have been celebrating, and he always told me what he thought, especially when I did not want to hear it.

Chuck Ruff became the White House Counsel at an unusual point in history, when the White House was in the hands of the Democratic Party and the Congress was in the hands of a particular wing of the Republican Party, and a lot of the work of the White House Counsel was generated by the attempts of Congress to turn every political difference into a legal issue.

And Chuck had to be calm in the face of all of it: Attempts to prove that our policy on climate change, for example, was actually a secret socialist plot to destroy the free enterprise system; serious questions from a person who believed that a good form of criminal investigation was shooting bullets into a watermelon in his backyard. And Chuck never lost his cool, never lost his temper, and never let me entirely lose my sense of humor about what often was a patently absurd situation.

And then there were the serious issues beneath all the rancor and back-and-forth. And every single day—every single day—I was so profoundly grateful that my Counsel was so strong and wise and good and that he believed so profoundly in our Constitution and rule of law.

As others have said, he never sought the spotlight, but when the moment came, he certainly shined. Millions of Americans saw him at work, mind and spirit. He cared about justice. He taught it; he shared it; and he lived it. His whole life was about doing good and doing right.

Others have commented on his propensity for doing two things at once. I liked that. He once said that he finally understood that he had been picked as the White House Counsel because he was the only person who was not distracted by my doing crossword puzzles when we reviewed our latest strategy in dealing with the congressional requests.

He was famous in the West Wing for watching football and listening to opera at the same time. But really, that captures the best of who he was, a competitor with passion, equal parts grace and guts, someone determined to make the most of every moment.

For those of us who knew and loved him, Chuck Ruff may have been in a wheelchair, but he had more moves than Magic Johnson or Michael Jordan, and when he heated up, he could hit any ball further than Tiger Woods, because he was so intensely committed to doing right and doing good.

I also would like to say a special word of appreciation, in front of his family and friends, for the fact that, in spite of all of the high-profile things Chuck did as the White House Counsel, one of the things that I most appreciated was that he was always there for the people in the White House, especially for the

young people. He was always there with a calming and reassuring word, even in the craziest of times. He could always help people stop and take a breath, listen a little better, think a little harder, gather up their energies, and go on. In a town so often contentious, it was truly amazing to be reminded that you can be civil and effective at the same time.

I'd also like to thank him publicly for how much he loved the District of Columbia and how strongly he supported our administration's efforts to be a good neighbor and a good partner. Who can forget that he began his closing statement last year in the well of the Senate: "My name is Charles Ruff. I'm from the District of Columbia. And we don't have a vote in the Congress of the United States."

I wish, in a way, this platform today in this house of God could be shared by every person in the White House who loved him. And I wish so much that every person out there on the streets of Washington, DC, whom he loved could know just a portion of what he labored to do for them. The reason I was proud to have him as my White House Counsel is that he was not a power lawyer; he was a powerful lawyer for people who had no power.

No matter what he was asked to do, he did it with grace and honor, as if that alone was what God put him on Earth to do. And for that I am profoundly grateful.

Chuck Ruff left us far too soon. But you can hear in the words and see in the voice of every person who has spoken today that he is still here. I hope he thinks we did all right by him today. I hope he is pleased by this vast assemblage of people, because he certainly always did more than all right by all of us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. at the National Cathedral. In his remarks, he referred to Mr. Ruff's wife, Sue, his daughters, Christina Ruff Wagner and Carin Ruff, and his mother, Margaret Carlson.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With European Union Leaders

December 18, 2000

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, are you making any progress on the Middle East, and do you think you may try to make a trip in that direction before you leave office?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, the parties are reengaging, and they've asked us to be involved, and that's good. But we're going to be on their timetable, so I can't say for sure. I'm willing, as always, to do whatever I can, and I will do whatever I can. But the timetable will be up to them.

President's Future Plans

Q. Mr. President, millions of people at home, in France, and in Europe are wondering: What is Bill Clinton going to do after the 20th of January? So, outside the library and the Democratic Party's future, are you set onto anything international?

President Clinton. Well, I hope that I will be able to be involved in a lot of the things that I have cared greatly about here. I'm very interested in the economic empowerment of poor people around the world. I'm very interested in efforts that President Chirac and President Prodi and we're all making together to try to fight AIDS and deal with public health problems around the world.

But I think it's important that at least that, for a time, that I do what I can to help President-elect Bush have a good transition and that he have the chance to do his job in a way that is uninterrupted by me or anyone else, and I need to find an appropriate way to continue my activities.

And of course, now I have a Senator to support. I have to go out and make a living, so I'll do that, too.

European Union-U.S. Relations

[*At this point, a question was asked, and President Jacques Chirac of France answered in French.*]

President Clinton. Will you translate what he said to the press? We've got some Americans

over there, though. Just roughly summarize what he said.

Interpreter. I can't because I didn't take any notes. I'm sorry.

President Clinton. Jacques can tell him what he said. [*Laughter*]

Interpreter. Well, essentially, President Chirac said that the relationship between—first of all, he thanked President Clinton for his role in helping at the construction of Europe, and secondly, he also mentioned that the relationship between the Europeans—I hope I understand you correctly, Mr. Chirac—and the Americans would be, he said, brotherly.

President Chirac. I think that there is too much preoccupation at the moment. The relations must change, of course, because the world is changing. Europe is large, but we are all convinced that there is no future if there is not a strong, strong common action between the U.S. and Europe. And NATO is the natural place for this. I see only necessity of adaptation, not necessity of change.

Q. President Chirac, like, I imagine, for a lot of people, you will miss President Clinton. I think you had friendly relations with him. How do you see the relationship with the new American President?

President Romano Prodi. Concerning Europe, European troubles?

President Chirac. I want to repeat that I think that the action of President Clinton has been extremely positive for Europe and also for our transatlantic relations. And for that, I want to express the credit to the esteem and the friendship of all Europeans for President Clinton.

And so the path is now open, and I have no doubt that there is a will, a determination both in the United States and in Europe, to continue to advance, hand in hand, in order so progress can be made, both on a human and on a political level in order to continue to construct Europe. And I will say that I hope that this will be done in a spirit of universal solidarity. And I have no doubt that our relations with the new American President will also be excellent.

President Clinton. Let me say, I basically agree with that. I would like to—we've gone through a period here, an 8-year period in the aftermath of the cold war in which we dealt with three very large questions, and we in the United States, one of them indirectly: How do we feel about the European Union, the deepening of the European Union, and the expansion of the European Union?

From the time I started running for President, I strongly supported that. I think that's good. I want Europe to be more integrated if the Europeans want it, and I want the European Union to be bigger if the Europeans want it. I think, on balance, that's a very good thing for world peace and prosperity and for the strengthening of freedom.

Second question: What would we do with NATO? Well, we expanded NATO. I expect it to continue to expand. President Chirac has got some countries he wants in NATO, and I agree with him. And we had a new relationship with Russia, which I hope will be strengthened, and with Ukraine.

The third big question: What would we do with southeastern Europe, with Bosnia and Kosovo, Serbia? And I think while there is a great deal of work still to be done in all three places—and we're going to talk about that—on balance, the fact that the United States and Europe stood for freedom, stood against ethnic cleansing, stood together for an entire Europe that is free, was a very great thing and gives a much brighter prospect to the 21st century.

So I believe that the new administration will find that these three developments are all positive, and I think that the relationship between the U.S. and Europe will be positive. Will there be trade disputes and other disputes? Of course there will. But that's natural, and I would say that those are high-class problems.

We're not worried about the survival of freedom here. We're not worried about the survival of our democracy. We're not worried about whether we share the same values. So I feel very good about this, and I think the future will be quite good between the United States and Europe.

Thank you. It's been a great honor. These men have done a great job, and I've enjoyed their personal friendship and our partnership, both of them. I'm very, very grateful.

President's Future Plans

Q. Will you meet again?

President Clinton. I certainly hope so. You know, they might not have as much time for me when I'm out of office, but I'll have more time. And I love France, and I love Italy, so maybe I can find some reason to walk the

streets and see the people, be of some use in the future.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:09 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The President met with President Chirac, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Romano Prodi of the European Commission. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Declaration by the United States and the European Union on the Responsibilities of States and on Transparency Regarding Arms Exports

December 18, 2000

The United States and the European Union share a common vision on the question of arms export controls. That is why we have decided to work jointly to encourage all arms exporting countries to adopt the principles and degree of transparency which we apply to our own exports. We are agreed that we have special responsibilities in this respect. Accordingly, together we will pursue the promotion of these principles with rigor and seriousness of purpose.

The European Union expressed, very early on, its determination to promote common high-level standards in this field with the adoption in 1991 and 1992 by the Luxembourg and Lisbon European Councils of the first set of common criteria for arms exports. The adoption in 1998 of the EU Code of Conduct for arms exports was a new step forward as it introduced a mechanism for notifications and consultations, the only one of its kind. Since its entry into force in June 1998, the Code of Conduct has helped to increase significantly the level of transparency in arms exports and to promote convergence of the national arms export policies implemented by Member States. The European Union encourages other countries to adhere to the principles of the code of conduct and welcomes the fact that 17 countries have declared they would apply these principles to their own export decisions.

The United States, for its part, maintains comprehensive national arms export control policies, including registration of manufacturers and exporters of defense articles and services subject to U.S. jurisdiction, wide-ranging controls on exports of defense services, manufacturing licenses, technical assistance and brokering transactions, rigorous case-by-case review of applications or other requests for approval, requirements for U.S. government consent for retransfers of U.S. origin defense articles and services, and effective enforcement measures including a vigorous program of pre- and post-shipment monitoring of U.S. arms transfers. The United States has also supported efforts to strengthen international and multilateral controls involving greater responsibility, transparency and restraint. The United States has welcomed and expressed its strong support for the principles embodied in the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports, which are consistent with the U.S. arms transfer policy criteria. In furtherance of these policies and efforts, the United States has recently proposed the development and negotiation of an "international arms sales code of conduct" as a means of promoting principles and practices of responsibility, transparency and restraint on a wider international scale.

In deciding to collaborate in the promotion of these principles regarding arms exports, the United States and the European Union reaffirm the right of States to acquire the means of self-defense, consistent with the UN Charter Implementation of stringent and responsible controls by exporting States is a *sine qua non* for the acceptable conduct of arms exports. The efficiency of such controls is enhanced by a close dialogue between the licensing authorities and the exporting companies.

We reaffirm the fundamental importance we attach to the promotion of democracy and the respect for human rights. For this reason, we deem it crucial to avoid export of military equipment when there is reason to believe that it will be used for internal repression or violation of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We also stress that arms transfers should not contribute to or result in excessive or destabilizing arms accumulations, regional instability,

armed aggression, the precipitation, escalation or aggravation of internal or interstate conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles capable of delivering them, international terrorism, or in arms diversion. We reiterate the fundamental importance of respect, by all countries, of international commitments, in particular arms embargoes imposed by the United Nations Security Council and other competent international bodies.

Illicit trafficking and diversion of military equipment are also serious concerns. We will continue to exercise particular vigilance with regard to exports of small arms and light weapons. We adopted a joint declaration on "Common Principles on Small Arms and Light Weapons", on December 17, 1999, which encompasses these standards. We support the Moratorium and the Code of Conduct adopted by ECOWAS in 1999 and assert our intention to respect the Moratorium's principles when examining export applications at the national level.

In this context, the United States and the European Union have decided to act jointly to encourage all arms exporting countries to submit their export decisions to rigorous criteria and to greater transparency. In particular, we commit ourselves to promoting the highest possible standards of conduct and enhanced export control practices based on our shared principles of responsibility, transparency and restraint, including:

- implementation of stringent national controls over exports of arms and military equipment, and of related technologies;
- authorization of exports of arms and military equipment, and of related technologies only after an in-depth review of the internal situation of the buyer country and of the regional context in order to assure that such exports are not likely to create or heighten internal tensions or conflicts, to be used for the violation of human rights, to threaten peace and regional stability, or be diverted or re-exported in undesirable conditions; and
- promotion of transparency by regularly circulating public information at the national level on authorized arms transfers and supporting expanded transparency regarding arms exports in the competent international fora, including the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the OSCE and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

The United States and the European Union affirm their commitment to work together to promote the aforementioned principles and enhanced export control practices.

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

Statement of the United States and the European Union on Building Consumer Confidence in *E*-Commerce and the Role of Alternative Dispute Resolution

December 18, 2000

In the U.S.-EU Joint Statement on Electronic Commerce issued in December 1997, we agreed to work towards important goals and objectives in the area of electronic commerce. We now reaffirm these important goals and objectives, including the agreement to provide "active support for the development, preferably on a global basis, of self-regulatory codes of conduct and technologies to gain consumer confidence in electronic commerce." We also reaffirm our commitment to the OECD Guidelines on Consumer Protection in the Context of Electronic Commerce issued in December 1999.

Our common aim is to help generate consumer confidence, which is necessary for open, competitive, and cross-border electronic commerce. Ensuring consumer protection and generating consumer confidence requires a combination of private sector initiatives and a clear, consistent and predictable legal framework.

The means of building consumer confidence and consumer protection in shopping online is good business practice and enforceable self-regulatory programmes such as codes of conduct and trustmarks. Key elements to building consumer confidence and consumer protection also

include security and confidentiality, respect for privacy, high standards of customer service, timely delivery, full and fair disclosure of information, and responsiveness to complaints.

We recognise that consumers should have meaningful access to redress consistent with the applicable legal framework and should be protected from fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair practices. The Internet, which can support the growth of cross-border consumer transactions at unprecedented levels, poses challenges to the existing legal framework. The issues of applicable law and jurisdiction will be difficult to resolve in the near term, but solutions at the international level would help to achieve our shared goals of global electronic commerce growth, consumer confidence and the predictability of transactions.

If parties cannot resolve consumer issues directly, using ADR is one means of doing so. Easy access to fair and effective ADR, especially if provided online, has the potential to increase consumer confidence in cross-border electronic commerce and may reduce the need for legal action. We, accordingly, agree on the importance of promoting its development and implementation.

The expansion of electronic commerce will be essentially market-led and driven by private initiative. In addition, all interested stakeholders—including governments, consumer groups, industry and academics—should work cooperatively to facilitate a dialogue, encourage private sector and other initiatives, raise consumer awareness about enforceable self-regulatory programs and promote the development and use of fair and effective ADR mechanisms, in particular online. Moreover, in order to promote fair and effective ADR in the cross-border context, efforts to develop and implement ADR should involve international cooperation among all interested stakeholders and the promotion of international partnerships. In addition, we encourage all stakeholders to continue to participate actively in international workshops and other fora on this important topic, which will help support further development of ADR.

At present, there are a wide variety of ADR schemes being developed and implemented in the marketplace, employing various different approaches and technologies. Governments should maintain adaptable policies that encourage the continued growth and development of new and innovative ADR mechanisms, technologies or approaches that are fair and effective.

In order to promote consumer confidence, ADR mechanisms should be fair and effective. We agree that we share certain general principles to achieve fairness and effectiveness. These general principles include: the impartiality of any decision-makers; the accessibility of the systems and procedures, which should be easy to find and easy to use; the need to ensure that the mechanisms are at low or no cost to the consumer relative to the amount in dispute; transparency, including the importance of providing consumers with clear and conspicuous information about the procedures and commitments involved sufficient to enable informed choice and decision-making; and the timeliness of redress. Stakeholders should continue to work to implement these fundamental principles and others that relate to fairness and effectiveness in the context of particular ADR mechanisms, taking into account the value, complexity and other characteristics of the transaction or dispute at issue.

Concerning law enforcement, businesses, consumers and governments should work together to detect, prevent and stop fraudulent, deceptive or unfair activity related to ADR. ADR providers, consumers and businesses should be encouraged to forward information on consumer complaints regarding fraud, deception, or other serious misconduct with regulatory and law enforcement agencies. Governments should cooperate in enforcing consumer protection laws against businesses engaging in fraudulent, deceptive or unfair activity related to consumer transactions on the Internet, such as misrepresentation of compliance with seal programmes or codes of conduct related to ADR. For example, we should cooperate on consumer complaints and explore cooperation on online information sharing.

Businesses, consumer groups and governments should work together to educate consumers and businesses about good business practices, including ADR, as a means to ensure fair and effective implementation and enforcement, and promote consumer confidence to the fullest extent possible.

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

Statement of the United States and the European Union on Communicable Diseases in Africa

December 18, 2000

At the Queluz Summit on May 31, 2000 the U.S. and EU made a commitment to help stem and roll back the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in Africa, and to address their severe economic, social and personal consequences. The scope of the problem requires a multi-faceted approach and the mobilisation of significant resources. As proof of this commitment, the U.S. and EU have dramatically increased financial resources dedicated to combating these scourges. Together we are now waging the battle against these diseases on all of the major fronts.

The U.S. and EU agree that the response to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria must be placed within a broad multisectoral framework of development aiming at the overall objective of alleviating poverty and to ensure a lasting impact of any specific action to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The U.S. and EU call upon countries to address and incorporate fully the health and development implications of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the elaboration of their poverty reduction strategies and programs.

The U.S. and EU plan to coordinate among the appropriate institutions and organisations at the global and regional level in order to ensure that all aspects of the response are endorsed by relevant stakeholders. The U.S. and EU are working to ensure that governments, institutions and civil society, including NGOs and the private sector, fully participate in these efforts.

Diplomatic Cooperation in Africa

The U.S. and EU participate together in donor coordination groups across Africa, assessing local needs and capacities and developing diplomatic and public awareness strategies. U.S. and EU diplomats have successfully encouraged African leaders to speak openly about the threat of HIV/AIDS, to set national priorities, to establish high level governmental coordinating mechanisms, to establish broad health sector and action plans to strengthen regional, national and local capacity to deliver health services and treatment, and to commit resources. We are making great strides in ensuring that our diplomatic activities are responsive to the needs and priorities of host countries, and complement the activities of other donor partners.

- Regular high-level coordination involving the U.S. and EU, other donors and host governments has been established in several African countries. Similar coordination is proposed throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Development Assistance Cooperation

The U.S. and the EU are working together in planning and implementing country activities that are responsive to the needs and priorities of countries and regions. This assistance is being placed within national and regional health and development frameworks.

- The U.S. and the EU are collaborating in sub-Saharan African countries to support health policies and activities aiming at preventing the expansion of the diseases and at caring for and supporting people with HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and those close to them.
- The U.S. and the EU are enhancing their support for national health and other sector plans and policies. This support can take the form of a general support, either direct or through budget, or by supporting specific elements of those plans and policies for combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, for example training, provision of commodities such as condoms and test kits, and improving access to interventions that reduce mother-to-infant HIV transmission.
- Under the enhanced HIPC initiative, the U.S. and the EU will work together in close collaboration with national authorities of selected countries to identify mechanisms for the utilisation of debt relief towards comprehensive social programs responding to the challenge of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.
- The U.S. and the EU will set up a working group to identify and take advantage of their respective comparative advantages in supporting procurement and the provision of technical assistance.

International Partnerships

The U.S. and the EU jointly support multilateral HIV/AIDS initiatives such as UNAIDS and the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa. The U.S. and the EU continue to support the Roll Back Malaria Initiative and the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria, as well as coordinating our assistance to the Stop TB Initiative and the TB Coalition.

The U.S. and the EU support new innovative partnerships to increase the availability and affordability of global public goods.

Research Cooperation

The U.S. and the EU agree that to combat these diseases, the international scientific community needs to work together. Long-term investments in the full range of scientific endeavour are necessary to accelerate the development and evaluation of new and affordable vaccines and drugs.

- The U.S. and the EU are enlarging public investment in research and development activities focused on confronting the three communicable diseases, and call upon the private sector to follow this example.
- The U.S. and the EU will work together to strengthen the coordination of research projects and to ensure that the coordinated efforts contribute to strengthening sustainable capacities at local, national and regional levels in Africa.

Access to affordable drugs, vaccines and other commodities

Better access to affordable pharmaceuticals and commodities to prevent or to treat the three communicable diseases is crucial. The U.S. and the EU will seek to assist in setting up effective infrastructures and will take steps to make key medicines and commodities more affordable and available. African leaders' commitment to improving health systems is essential to the success of these efforts, and we stand ready to provide technical assistance in this regard.

- The U.S. and the EU urge the pharmaceutical industry to make drugs for HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis more affordable, particularly for the poorest countries. We reaffirm the importance of providing more affordable pricing and strict compliance with safety and quality assurance laws and regulations.

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

Statement of the United States and European Union on Southeast Europe
December 18, 2000

At a time when democracy is taking root throughout the region and when it should be consolidated for the benefit of all, the very successful cooperation to date between the United States and the European Union in the South East Europe region must continue to be close and sustained.

The year 2000 began with democratic change in Croatia. It comes to a close with the victory of democratic forces in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). These are heartening developments that offer significant new prospects to all of the countries of the region.

Recent historic changes pave the way for regional reconciliation and cooperation. They allow all the countries in the region to establish new relations that are beneficial to each of them as well as for the stability of the region, the development of their economies, and peace, prosperity and stability on the European continent. They give a fresh impetus to a policy of good neighborliness based on the negotiated settlement of disputes, respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities, respect for international obligations, including vis-à-vis the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, the lasting settlement of the issue of refugees and displaced persons and respect for the international borders. They reinforce regional security and should promote the conclusion by the countries concerned of negotiations for weapons control and reduction at regional level, as envisaged by the Dayton Agreements.

We give our full support to this process of reconciliation and regional cooperation, which offer new prospects for the countries in the

region. We welcome the results of the Zagreb Summit on November 24. The Summit underlined the connection between the progress of the countries of the region towards democracy, the rule of law, regional reconciliation and cooperation, on the one hand, and the rapprochement of each of these countries with the European Union on the basis of an individual treatment, in the framework of the European Union's stabilization and association process, on the other hand. In this regard, we welcome the commitments undertaken by the five countries of the stabilization and association process in the Zagreb declaration.

We also emphasize the importance of the Stability Pact for South East Europe as a means to accelerate the integration of the region into the Euro-Atlantic mainstream. The inclusion of the FRY in the Stability Pact will make it possible for the Pact to reach its full potential. The Stability Pact deserves our continued political and financial support. We welcome the call of the High Level Steering Group, which met in Paris on November 14, 2000, to organize a second Stability Pact Regional Funding Conference as early as feasible in 2001.

The United States and the European Union have mobilized considerable resources to support the consolidation of democracy in the FRY. We look forward to continued democratic progress in Serbia's elections on December 23. We also welcome the initiative shown by the European Commission and World Bank in hosting the donors' coordination meeting on December 12, 2000, in response to the most urgent needs of the FRY/Serbia. The European Commission and the World Bank should ensure that, in the framework of the High Level Steering Group, the efforts being made by Europe, the United States and all the other donors are coordinated and contribute to the consolidation of democracy and to the economic development of that country. We welcome the decisions already taken by the High Level Steering Group at its meeting in Paris on November 14, 2000, in particular to pursue a funding conference for the FRY as early as feasible in 2001.

We strongly condemn the outbreak of violence in the Presevo area of southern Serbia, and call upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint and to resolve differences exclusively through peaceful, transparent dialogue.

We welcome the progress made in Kosovo in the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1244: the setting up of an interim administration has taken place in a satisfactory manner, reconstruction is continuing, municipal elections have taken place in a peaceful and democratic fashion and security conditions have improved. We vigorously condemn the use of violence, any form of extremism and any act which makes the coexistence of communities more difficult and which adversely affects regional stability. We fully support the right of all displaced Kosovars to return in peace and security. We confirm our full support to the implementation of Resolution 1244. In this regard, we fully support the efforts of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General to establish democratic, self-governing institutions in Kosovo based on clearly enunciated principles in accord with Resolution 1244.

We thank and congratulate Mr. Kouchner for the remarkable work he has done in difficult circumstances. We welcome the action jointly carried out by UNMIK and KFOR. We pledge our full support for Mr. Haekkerup who has recently been appointed the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Kosovo.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina we welcome the constructive contributions of the High Representative and of SFOR to the building of a functioning State. We note with satisfaction that those parties committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina's European orientation received the majority of the votes in the recent general election. We expect the new authorities to demonstrate their commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's European reform agenda by taking the necessary urgent actions on key political and economic issues. Any government, at State or Entity level, must base its action on strict compliance with the Dayton Agreements and the ensuing obligations, in particular the conclusions of the Ministerial Conferences for the implementation of those Agreements.

We welcome the continued progress made elsewhere in the region. However, we are concerned at increased political violence in Albania and support the Albanian Government's efforts to uphold the rule of law.

We call upon all States in the region to continue and intensify efforts to resolve bilateral differences and internal ethnic minority issues

exclusively through peaceful, democratic dialogue, and to show full respect for international obligations including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia.

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

Statement on Releasing Funds From the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

December 18, 2000

Today I am directing my administration to release $156 million to help low-income households throughout the Nation cope with substantial increases in home heating fuel costs. The significant and sustained rise in energy costs has posed a special burden on low-income families, in many cases forcing them to choose between food and other essentials or a bare minimum of heat in these winter months. Releasing these heating funds today will ease the burden on the Nation's low-income families by helping cover their higher home heating costs in the cold weeks and months to come.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Military Personnel as Part of the Kosovo International Security Force

December 18, 2000

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

In my report to the Congress of June 16, 2000, I provided information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. military personnel as the U.S. contribution to the NATO-led international security force in Kosovo (KFOR) and to other countries in the region in support of that force. 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 Kosovo.

As noted in my previous report, the U.N. Security Council authorized member states to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999. The mission of KFOR is to provide a military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities; verify and, if necessary, enforce the terms of the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY); enforce the terms of the understanding with the former Kosovo Liberation Army to demilitarize and reintegrate itself into civil society; provide operational direction to the Kosovo Protection Corps; and maintain a safe and secure environment to facilitate the work of the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Currently, the U.S. contribution to KFOR in Kosovo is approximately 5,600 U.S. military personnel. An additional 500 U.S. military personnel are deployed as the National Support Element in Macedonia with an occasional presence in Albania and Greece. In the last 6 months, all 19 NATO nations and 20 others, including Russia, have provided military personnel and other support personnel to KFOR in Kosovo and the surrounding countries.

In Kosovo, the U.S. forces are assigned to a sector principally centered around Gnjilane in the eastern portion of Kosovo. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, maintaining a safe and secure environment remains the primary military task. United States forces conduct security patrols in urban areas and in the countryside throughout their sector. Approximately 75 percent of KFOR soldiers are dedicated to patrolling, manning check-points, and

mounting border and boundary patrols. The KFOR forces operate under NATO command and control and rules of engagement.

Since my report to the Congress of June 16, free and fair municipal elections have been held in Kosovo, electing municipal assemblies in 27 Albanian-majority municipalities. In addition, on October 5, former FRY President Slobodon Milosevic stepped down from the presidency in the midst of popular outcry after he was defeated in the September FRY presidential elections. Despite the progress of democracy in Kosovo and the FRY, ethnic tensions persist. The United States is actively engaged with our allies in Kosovo and leaders in the region to stop ethnic violence.

The UNMIK continues to make progress in establishing the necessary structures for provisional self-government in Kosovo. The KFOR supports UNMIK at all levels, including public administration, and is represented at the Kosovo Transitional Council and the Joint Civil Commissions. Also, KFOR provides a security presence in towns, villages, and the countryside, and organizes checkpoints and patrols in key areas of Kosovo to provide security, protect minorities, resolve disputes, and help instill in the community a feeling of confidence. Finally, KFOR is helping to provide assistance, within means and capabilities, in the areas of humanitarian relief, international civil police training, and the maintenance of civic works resources.

In November, NATO formally reviewed KFOR's mission, and will continue to do so at 6-month intervals. The reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. Over time, KFOR will incrementally transfer its security and policing responsibilities to the international civil administration, local institutions, and other organizations.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Action To Implement the African Growth and Opportunity Act

December 18, 2000

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

I hereby transmit a Proclamation to implement the non-textile/apparel benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (Title I of Public Law 106–200) (AGOA) by expanding the list of products eligible for duty-free treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program when imported from beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 December 19. The proclamation of December 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President-Elect George W. Bush

December 19, 2000

Advice for the President-Elect

Q. What's your best advice——

President Clinton. Get a good team and do what he thinks is right.

National Economy

Q. Mr. President-elect, you've spoken about the economy, about problems with the economy. Are you going to inherit a recession from President Clinton? And President Clinton, what are your thoughts about that?

President-elect Bush. I really don't have any comments. I look forward to talking to the President. I'm so honored that he extended his hospitality to me and my wife yesterday. He didn't need to do this, and I'm most grateful that he would do so.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—what do you think about a recession?

President Clinton. Well, a recession is two quarters in a row of negative growth. I don't think we're going to have that. But we couldn't keep up 5 percent growth a year forever. I think 49 of the 50 blue chip forecasters think that growth will be 2.5 percent or better next year, and that will keep unemployment low. But I think there will be things to be managed. He'll have economic challenges, and you ought to give him a chance to meet them, if not try to figure it all out in advance.

Advice for the President-Elect

Q. Are you going to——

Q. What advice do you have for him, Mr. President?

Q. [*Inaudible*].

President Clinton. My only advice to anybody in this is just to get a good team and do what you think is right.

North Korea

Q. Are you going to North Korea?

President Clinton. No decision has been made on that. We've been talking, our people have, about what we've attempted to do in North Korea. It's interesting, when I had this meeting 8 years ago with the President-elect's father, he told me that the biggest problem that we were facing was the nuclear program in North Korea. And we were able to build on the work they had done and put an end to that.

And now the big problem there is the missile program. We may have a chance to put an end to it, and if we can, I think we should. But this is something that I want to consult with the President-elect and his team about, and we'll see what the facts are, and I'll try to do what's best for the country.

Q. Governor, I understand that you're not against him going. Is that right?

President-elect Bush. I haven't had a chance to talk to the President yet, Helen [Helen Thomas, Hearst Newspapers].

President Clinton. We've got to talk about this.

Discussion With the President-Elect

Q. What will you tell him is the biggest problem, Mr. President?

President Clinton. I want to talk to him, not you. [*Laughter*] He can talk about that. I waited 8 years to say that. [*Laughter*]

The White House

Q. Governor, how different is it to come to this house in your position now than what it was as a family member?

President-elect Bush. It's vastly different. It's such a huge honor to come as the President-elect. I don't think I'll really fully realize the impact until I swear-in. I suspect the President would say the same thing. I am humbled and honored, and I can't thank the President enough for his hospitality. He didn't need to do this.

Q. Yes, he did. [*Laughter*] It's protocol.

President-elect Bush. I hadn't quite finished yet. [*Laughter*]

Q. Go ahead and finish.

President-elect Bush. And I'm grateful. And I look forward to the discussion. I'm here to listen. And if the President is kind enough to offer some advice, if he is, I will take it in.

Q. Are there questions you have for the President, sir?

President-elect Bush. If there are, I'm going to ask it in private—and afterwards not share them with you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:27 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting
December 19, 2000

I am very pleased with the outcome of NATO's foreign ministers meeting in Brussels last week. Secretary Albright and her NATO colleagues reaffirmed the Alliance's commitment to peace, democracy, and respect for human rights throughout southeast Europe. They also reviewed the important progress we have made towards meeting our April 1999 Washington summit commitments—including improving our defense capabilities, increasing efforts against weapons of mass destruction, and reviewing the enlargement process at our next summit, to take place no later than 2002. I applaud the selection of Prague as the site for the next NATO summit. The Czech Republic under President Havel has been a driving force in the continued integration of Europe.

Working closely with the EU, NATO also has advanced the goals we set at the Washington summit for strengthening European defense capabilities. I welcome the agreement at the EU's Nice summit to improve Europe's ability to act in times of crises and to put arrangements in place for close collaboration with NATO. NATO Defense and Foreign Ministers also acted to establish a strategic partnership with the EU. These efforts will strengthen NATO's European pillar, promote the EU's ability to manage crises where NATO is not engaged, and reinforce our transatlantic ties.

We still have work to do to implement these arrangements and strengthen the habits of cooperation that have been NATO's hallmark since the end of the cold war. The United States looks forward to working with our European allies and partners to enhance our partnership and advance our common goals.

Memorandum of Disapproval for Bankruptcy Reform Legislation
December 19, 2000

I have withheld my approval of H.R. 2415, the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 2000. I firmly believe that Americans would benefit from bankruptcy reform legislation that would stem abuse of the bankruptcy system by, and encourage responsibility of, debtors and creditors alike. Unfortunately, this bill is not balanced reform and it omits critical language to require accountability and responsibility from those who unlawfully bar access to legal health services. I hope the next Congress can work in a bipartisan spirit to enact balanced legislation.

Over the past several months, my Administration has engaged in a good faith effort to reach agreement with the bill's proponents on a number of outstanding issues. With this goal in mind, we have pursued negotiations notwithstanding my deep concern that the bill failed to address some creditor abuses and also unnecessarily disadvantaged all debtors to stem abuses by a few.

An agreement was reached in those negotiations on an essential issue—limiting homestead exemptions—with compromises made on both sides. Unfortunately, H.R. 2415 fails to incorporate that agreement, instead reverting to a provision that my Administration has repeatedly said was fundamentally flawed and contrary to the central premise of this legislation: that debtors who truly have the capacity to repay a portion of their debts do so. The agreement would have benefited not only those debtors' creditors but also all other debtors through lower credit costs. In contrast, the current bill's unlimited homestead exemptions allow debtors who own lavish homes to shield their mansions from their

creditors, while moderate-income debtors, especially those who rent, must live frugally under rigid repayment plans for 5 to 7 years. This loophole for the wealthy is fundamentally unfair and must be closed. And the inclusion of a provision that limits—to some degree—a wealthy debtor's capacity to move assets before bankruptcy into a home in a State with an unlimited homestead exemption does not ameliorate the glaring omission of a real homestead cap.

Moreover, I have made clear that bankruptcy legislation must require accountability and responsibility from those who unlawfully bar access to legal health services. Far too often, we have seen doctors, health professionals, and their patients victimized by those who espouse and practice violence at health care clinics. The Congress and the States have established remedies for those who suffer as a result of these tactics. However, we are increasingly seeing the use of the bankruptcy system as a strategic tool by those who seek to promote clinic violence while shielding themselves from personal liability and responsibility. It is critical that we shut down this abusive use of our bankruptcy system and prevent endless litigation that threatens the court-ordered remedies owed to victims of clinic violence. The Senate was right in its bipartisan vote of 80–17 to adopt an amendment that would effectively close down any potential for this abuse of the Bankruptcy Code. Nonetheless, this critical provision was dropped from the final bill without public debate, and I fail to understand why the bill's proponents refuse to include this consensus provision to shut down the use of bankruptcy to avoid responsibility for clinic violence.

On the positive side, the bill would improve credit card disclosures—although more can and should be done—and impose limitations on misleading creditor practices that encourage debtors to reaffirm dischargeable debts on potentially unfavorable terms. However, these beneficial provisions are outweighed by the bill's flaws and omissions.

I would have signed a balanced bankruptcy reform bill that addressed known abuses, without tilting the playing field against those debtors who genuinely turn to bankruptcy for a fresh start. I have withheld my approval of H.R. 2415 because it does not strike the right balance.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 19, 2000.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on United States Participation in the United Nations

December 19, 2000

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

I am pleased to transmit herewith a report of the participation of the United States in the United Nations and its affiliated agencies during calendar year 1999. The report is required by the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 79-264).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Interview With Dan Rather of CBS News
December 18, 2000

End of the President's Term

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, when I was walking over here, I mentioned to one member of your staff, "Well, it must be a bittersweet time." And he bristled a little. He was gentlemanly about it, but he bristled a little. Do you see it as a bittersweet time?

The President. Well, only a little bit, actually. I'm very happy and very much at peace and very grateful for the chance to serve and grateful especially that the country is in such good shape as I leave office. But I think, for all of us, it may be bittersweet in the sense that people—virtually everybody that works here likes the work, and we tried never to forget that it was a job and that we were privileged to do it.

But everything comes to an end; you have to do something else. And I think we've had our time here. I'm just focused on doing everything I can in the days that remain, helping President-elect Bush have a successful transition and kind of savoring and being grateful for the good things that have happened.

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Rather. The country is still in the midst of an almost 8-year boom. The country is at peace. You've had, by many measurements, if not most—perhaps even all measurements—at least a reasonably successful Presidency. Why are we having a Republican President come in behind you?

The President. Well, I think partly because of the prosperity. I think they both debated how to use the prosperity, and the country was evenly divided. One candidate won the popular vote, and the Supreme Court decided the electoral vote. People will be analyzing that for years to come. Maybe I'll have a chance to analyze it, too, after some time. But I don't know that I have anything to add to what's been said by others.

Vice President Al Gore/2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Rather. Maybe we ought to come back to that later. Through most of the 8 years of your Presidency, you and your Vice President seemed to all the world to be joined at the hip. There were historians who were writing that Vice President Gore had been given as much or more responsibility than any Vice President in the history of the country.

The President. Oh, more. There's no question about that.

Mr. Rather. And that he did a very good job as Vice President.

The President. And he did. I think that when the period of this history is written and people who care about American Government look at how we organized and ran the administration, they will say a number of things, including the fact that we came here with a well-thought-out set of ideas and policies, and we basically did what we said we'd do in '92 and then again in '96, and that we had a real team operation in the White House, and that the Vice President had more responsibility in more areas than any Vice President in history and carried them out very well. I don't think there is any question that in the job of Vice President, he's the most effective person that has held that job and had more responsibility than anyone who ever had it.

Mr. Rather. That being the case, Mr. President, when he, in effect, ran away from you during the campaign, you had to be disappointed at that.

The President. Well, I think, first of all, everybody has got to run their own race. And it's a difficult thing running as Vice President. There is no accident that only two Vice Presidents in the history of the country have ever been directly elected President.

If you get to be Vice President, you've got an excellent chance of getting to be President, because something could happen to the President, and you've got a terrific chance of being the nominee for President of your party. But to be directly elected, it's only happened twice. And once, when Martin Van Buren succeeded Andrew Jackson, we were still virtually a one-party country. And the only other time it happened was in 1988, when basically there was an enormously contentious and negative campaign which succeeded in painting the Democratic nominee, Governor Dukakis, as virtually un-American.

This was basically a pretty positive campaign. They had a debate about what to do. They talked about the various issues, and the people split.

Mr. Rather. But back to the question—had to feel disappointed?

The President. I really believe every person has to decide what's best for them. And I thought that it was—let me just say, I thought that it was the right thing for me not to be out there very much until the end, the last week or 10 days. I did most of what I could do early by going to scores of events for our House and Senate candidates and for the Democratic Party, which helped the Vice President, of course, directly, the Democratic Party work did.

And when a Vice President becomes a President, he tries to figure out some way to establish his own identity and to get the benefit of the good things that have happened, but still to be an independent person. And I don't think that anybody else should second-guess that. Once your party has a nominee, then the rest of us should be on the team. I think politics is a team sport. It's about addition, not subtraction. And I don't believe the rest of us should second-guess the leader of the team, including me.

Mr. Rather. Do you agree or disagree that some of your failures, policy as well as personal failures in the White House, had an impact on Al Gore's losing?

The President. Yes, to the first; no, to the second. To say that people would hold him responsible for any personal mistake I made is an insult to the American people. I mean, people just aren't that unfair. The people of this country are basically good people. And moreover, there were a lot of surveys along toward the end of the campaign that showed that if I could have run again, I would have done fine. So I just don't think there's any evidence of that.

On the policies, however, there were—you know, I don't know if the fact that we drew the short straw and had that terrible mess with the Elian Gonzalez case cost him a lot of votes in Florida, but it could have. And if it did, I feel very badly about it, because this wasn't anything anybody dreamed up.

I don't think there's any question that a number of—in West Virginia, some people voted against him in the northern part of the State because they blamed us—I don't think they're right about it, but they did blame us for the closing of a steel mill there that occurred more or less at the same time of the Asian financial crisis. They thought we should have moved more quickly than we did to stop the inflow of cheap steel.

I don't think there is—I don't know if you'd call this a policy failure, but I don't think there's any doubt that in at least five States I can think of, the NRA had a decisive influence because they disagreed with our attempts to close the gun show loophole and have child trigger locks, safety locks, and ban large-scale ammunition clips.

You know, presumably, some people voted for him because we were for those things. But one of the sad things about all gun safety legislation is that people tend to vote for the issues, but when they're voting for candidates, the "antis" tend to be more intense than the "pros." I mean, if you look at Colorado, which is basically a Republican State now, the Vice President lost there, but closing the gun show loophole passed 70–30. In Oregon, because of the Nader candidacy, he only won a narrow victory, but the gun show loophole closing carried 2–1.

So I think you have to give the—so the policy issues that we fought out, I don't think there's any question they cost him some votes. I think that, on balance, I believe he gained more because of the economic success of the administration, because we have 8 years in a row of declining crime, because the welfare rolls were cut in half, because of the millions of people that were benefited by family leave, because of the things we did.

So I think, on balance, it was more of a plus than a minus by a good long way; two-thirds of the people thought the country was going in the right direction.

But in a race like this that's so close, you think about some of the issues we had in West Virginia on that steel mill or the Gonzalez case, and you wonder—I mean, President Kennedy once said that "victory has a thousand fathers, and defeat is an orphan." In this case, where the Vice President won the popular vote and, by decision of the Supreme Court, lost the electoral college, defeat may have a thousand fathers, too. We'll all be chewing over this for—heck, people will be writing about this 100 years from now.

Supreme Court Decision on Election

Mr. Rather. I have so much ground I want to cover with you, about your legacy, about the future, and I don't intend to spend the rest of our time talking about the election just finished. But anyone who's ever been around a courthouse knows that judges, high and low, frequently engage in raw politics—all hope they'll deal with the law.

You mentioned earlier the Supreme Court. To those who are absolutely convinced that the Supreme Court, they just had a Republican majority, wanted a Republican as President, and voted politics, not the law—as an attorney and as our President, you say what?

The President. I say, when I get out and start teaching constitutional law again, I'll tell you exactly what I think about it. [*Laughter*]

The important vote there, the 5–4 vote—there were actually three separate opinions, but the 5–4 vote was a vote to stop the vote count——

Mr. Rather. That was the clincher.

The President. ——6 days in advance of the electoral college meeting. And the American people will just have to make their own decisions about it. But I think that it will be viewed in history as a momentous decision, and I think that it will be debated a long time. But it's very interesting. You know, there's a lot of stuff already been written about it. I noticed there were three articles in this week's Economist about it, basically critical, even though the Economist endorsed President-elect Bush. There's going to be a lot of stuff written about it.

But I think that from my point of view, as long as I'm President, what I should be focused on doing is telling the country that we should accept it, because the principle of judicial review has served us well. And all of us believe, looking back in history, that there were periods when the Supreme Court made serious mistakes, but when they did, they normally were corrected over time.

So I think the Vice President spoke for all of us when he said he strongly disagreed with the decision, but he accepted it. And right now we need to focus on pulling the country together, giving President-elect Bush a chance to get off to a good start, to hit the ground running, dealing with all these issues that are out there. And there will be lots of time for me and others to say exactly what the elements of the Supreme Court decision were. But I just don't think I should say more than that now.

Mr. Rather. We're going to move on and talk about the economy. Before doing so, as one who taught law, as an attorney, were you surprised that this Supreme Court ever took the case? I ask this, again, for backdrop. Many attorneys I've talked to, of all persuasion and all parties, said they were surprised—some say stunned—that this Court would have even taken the case.

The President. Well, let me say, I think most lawyers—or a lot of them—are surprised they took the case. Even those that were surprised they took the case were shocked when the vote count was stopped on the Friday.

Mr. Rather. Were you?

The President. No. No, not after 8 years in Washington, I wasn't. But I hadn't found a single lawyer who believes that there is precedent any time in American history for it. I've asked probably 50, 60. But I wasn't surprised, no.

They had the power to do it, and they did it. And it's done, and we should accept it, because the country has to go on. We can't reverse the principle of judicial review, and we shouldn't. And we should try to help the President-elect get off to a good start, give him a chance to govern the country. I hope he'll be given a decent honeymoon. I know what it's like not to have one, and I hope he will get one.

And I think we should—we ought to just—right now, everybody can think what they think about it, but for me, I believe I owe my country. The people of this country have been good to me, and I've had a chance to serve in this job. It's hard enough under the best circumstances. The President-elect won the electoral college, and he deserves a chance to have a good start. And that's what I'm going to focus on, and I'm going to try to give it to him.

National Economy

Mr. Rather. Let's talk about the economy. I think, by any reasonable analysis, that the incoming Bush administration is trying to position the economic picture in the following way: The economy is starting downward, maybe headed toward a recession, and therefore they're positioning themselves to be able to say, whatever happens on the downside, particularly if we have a recession, "Don't forget, it's the Clinton/Gore

administration, not this new incoming administration."

The President. Well, they do that. You know, you can't blame them for trying to buy low and sell high if they want to try to do that. But I personally believe that no one knows how long we can keep this recovery going. But the overwhelming majority of the experts believe that we're going to have a pretty good year next year.

Now, it's already the longest economic expansion in history. We had over 22 million new jobs. I don't think you can totally repeal the business cycle, but it's certain that it's changed. And what has changed it?

First of all, you have to give the American people a lot of credit here. You have this explosion of entrepreneurial energy, not only among small businesses and dot-com companies but people integrating technology and productivity into big old traditional firms. There's no question that technology has enabled productivity to grow much more rapidly than in the past, and that keeps these recoveries going.

And we've kept interest rates down, and we continue to invest in the education and training of the American people. And we continue to open new markets around the world and at home. Those are the things that I think are important for the Government to do.

Now, for the last couple of years, we were growing at a blistering pace. In other words, we've been growing ever since I got here, but we've been growing at a blistering pace. No one believed we could continue to grow at 5 percent a year. Most people believe next year growth will be around 3 percent. And I believe that the important thing is to just keep following a solid economic policy.

I think we can have a tax cut; I've always said that. But I think it needs to be modest enough so that there's no question that we're going to continue to pay down the debt and pay it off within a decade or so, at least 12 years. I think that will keep interest rates down. That's a big tax cut to ordinary people and to business people and to investors, because it keeps the market up and it keeps inflation down.

Then I think it's important to save back enough money to invest what we have to invest in education and our other responsibilities, including national security. I think it is important to save back enough money to deal with the long-term challenges to Medicare and Social Security. You've got the baby boom generation about to retire. And depending on what you decide to do with it, it costs more or less money to do it.

But I think that—there's no question that we can. I believe we should have a tax cut. The question is, how big should it be, and whether you can meet your other obligations? But the most important thing people want is to keep this economy going. And I think, you know, it's got quite a little life left in it, I think.

Mr. Rather. Quite a bit of life left in it, you say. Mr. President, with respect, you know as I know that in politics, a lot of it is trying to pin a tail on somebody else. This economy goes down even a little, it's fairly clear that the tail is going to be—at least they'll try to pin the tail on you.

The President. Well, they'll have the microphone, of course. But I think that what—the American people hire us not so much to place blame as to produce. And over the long run, that's how we're all judged, I think. And I don't think any—at least no economist thought we could continue to grow at 5 percent a year indefinitely.

Interest Rates

Mr. Rather. Are you in favor of interest rates staying low, or do you think they need to be raised some or lowered some?

The President. Oh no, I think—well, no, no, no. I think—I like low interest rates, which is why we've been paying the debt down. Now, if the Federal Reserve believes that the economy is slowing too much, they might want to cut short-term rates again and try to get a little more investment going. And I think that that's something that they have under consideration.

I have found that, basically, Chairman Greenspan has had a pro-growth policy. He's tried to see this economy grow as much as it could without inflation. On a couple of occasions over the last 8 years, he may have made a call different than I would have made it, but on the whole, I think he's managed this thing in a responsible way, and I've tried to manage my part of it in a responsible way. And that's enabled us to have the longest expansion in history with low inflation.

You know, I'd just like to—when I took office, the deficit of this country—the debt had quadrupled, and the deficit was $295 billion. This year we're going to pay off—we will have paid

off, in the last 3 years, $360 billion on the national debt. And I just learned, about 30 minutes before we started this interview, that with the budget we finished last weekend, we're going to pay off another $200 billion on the national debt. So we will have paid down $560 billion on the national debt over 4 years. Now, that's a huge impact to keep interest rates low and growth high.

So I still think they can—if this thing is managed properly, I think they'll have some more growth here. Now, like I said, I don't know—no one knows how much you can combine the entrepreneurial spirit of the American people, the explosion of technology and productivity growth, and proper Government policies, and how long you can keep this going. No one knows the answer to that, but I think they can—I think we can keep it going quite a while longer.

Mr. Rather. So to move on, are you in favor or not in favor of cutting interest rates now?

The President. For 8 years, I have refused to second-guess the Fed publicly, and I don't think I should change as I'm going out the door. The press indicates that they have that under advisement, that they're thinking about it. And it's something I think they ought to think about. It depends upon what the data shows about how much they think the economy is slowing. Everyone—they wanted—the Fed's raised interest rates, you remember. They knew it had to slow some. If we kept growing at 5 percent a year, there was too big a risk we'd have an explosion in inflation or an explosion of interest rates or both.

But then we had the increased fuel prices, which slowed things down some, and a few other developments and some corrections in some of the high-tech stocks. So I think they've got it under consideration. I think that if they do it, I think it will certainly be an understandable decision.

But my point is, the thing that keeps interest rates really low is the fact that we're paying the debt off. That will keep interest rates low, inflation low, and if we keep investing in education, investing in technology, investing in scientific research, staying on the cutting edge of change, and opening new markets around the world—something I think that this incoming administration and I agree on—I think that we've got quite a bit of life left in the economy. The American people are still working hard, and they're very innovative. So I expect them to have a good year next year.

Advice for the President-Elect

Mr. Rather. Let's have some fun. If you could recommend one book that the incoming President, George Bush, should read, what would it be?

The President. That's hard. But if it were only one book, I'd probably tell him to read David Herbert Donald's biography of Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. Rather. If you could recommend he see one movie that you think might help him in his years here, however long they would be, what would that be?

The President. "High Noon," because Gary Cooper does the right thing, even when people leave him, and even though he's scared, he doesn't pretend to be macho. He's scared to death, and he does the right thing anyway.

Washington Politics

Mr. Rather. You're not going to believe this, but when I went over with my staff what your answer would be, I told them, "High Noon." I want you to check it later. [*Laughter*]

Let's move along. When you look back over your 8 years, what's the one thing now that you wish you had known 8 years ago?

The President. Oh, boy, that's hard to answer. There are so many things I wish I had known 8 years ago. But I wish I had understood better, 8 years ago, exactly how what I do here both is seen by and reacted to by Congress and by the American people, better than I did then. I could give you lots of examples, but I think if I had done that, I think a lot of the—some of the early conflicts that I had would have been different.

I also wish I had understood better than I did when I came here the different views generally held by the two parties on the nature of political power and its uses in Washington—ways that I just didn't understand then.

1993 Economic Plan Legislation

Mr. Rather. Your finest hour as President?

The President. That's very, very hard to say. I had a lot of great times, for which I'm very grateful. But I think when we prevailed in both Houses by one vote on the economic plan in '93, that's what really turned the economy around and made possible so much else that

happened. If we hadn't had a functioning economy, I don't believe the welfare reform efforts would have worked as well as they have; I don't think the family leave law would have benefited 25 million people; I doubt if the crime rate would have gone down for 8 years in a row, even though we had a good crime policy; and I'm not sure I would have had the support from the American people to end the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, or be involved as I was in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, a lot of other places. We might have had too much trouble here at home for me to do that. It probably—the fact that we had that lonely battle that only succeeded by one vote probably made so much else possible.

Somalia

Mr. Rather. Your darkest hour?

The President. I've had more than one of them, too. But certainly one of them was when those 18 American soldiers were killed in Somalia. It was awful, because of the circumstances, which I hope to be able to talk about in some detail someday. But to lose them all in what was a humanitarian mission, because they were asked to try to arrest a person who had been responsible for killing our Pakistani comrades who were there also on a humanitarian mission, and then to wind up with all those Somalis dead and losing 18 of our people, it was a dark day.

Impeachment

Mr. Rather. Impeachment had to be a dark day.

The President. Well, by the time they got around to voting, I knew what was going to happen. And I didn't—no, my darkest day came long before that when I had to come to terms with the fact that I made a terrible personal mistake, which I tried to correct in private and which then got dragged into public. That was dark for me. By the time they got around to voting on impeachment, I knew what it was, and it didn't have any—I felt that to me, if we could defeat impeachment, it was like the second big battle of the Gingrich revolution. The first was when they shut the Government down, and that was the second one.

That doesn't mean that I didn't make a terrible mistake, but there were 800 people, including a lot of Republicans, who were legal and constitutional scholars, who wrote a letter saying this was not an impeachable offense and shouldn't even be considered. And they all knew that, too. That was a political battle we were involved in. I didn't seek it. I didn't want to fight it, but I was only too happy to take it up, because I believe the real purpose of it was to try to weaken me and our side and what we believed in, and to strengthen their side and what they believed in.

Mr. Rather. In that, they succeeded.

The President. Well, I'm not sure they did. In 1998 we won seats in the House of Representatives for the first time since 1822 in the sixth year of a President's term. So I'm not sure they did. It may be that, after the fact, that what they did will acquire some historical legitimacy. But what I regret about that was what I did wrong, not the fact that they impeached me, because that was wrong, too. I agreed with Joe Lieberman, as I said at the time. I agreed with what he said, that what I did was wrong and what they did was wrong. And I think that's the way history will record it.

President-Elect George W. Bush

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, the clock rolls. Allow me to pick up the pace a little. I want to read you off a list and ask you to tell me the first thing that comes into your mind.

George W. Bush.

The President. President-elect.

Mr. Rather. Like him?

The President. I don't know him very well. I like his father very much, and I've actually had more contact with his brother, who is the Governor of Florida, than I have with him. But I have a lot of friends in Texas who like him, who say he's a good man, like his wife very much, like his daughters. And I hope he'll succeed.

Vice President Al Gore

Mr. Rather. We'll go down the list, and we'll stop on each one.

Al Gore.

The President. Best Vice President this country ever had, a partner who without I could not have been successful as President.

Former Speaker Newt Gingrich

Mr. Rather. Newt Gingrich.

The President. A brilliant adversary and a complicated man.

Mr. Rather. A bit of an adversary?

The President. Brilliant. A brilliant adversary.

Mr. Rather. Brilliant adversary.

The President. And a complicated man. He's a complicated man, interesting man.

National Rifle Association

Mr. Rather. The National Rifle Association.

The President. An effective adversary, but I think, on balance, a negative force, because they're trying to convince their people that we're trying to do something we're not trying to do.

Mr. Rather. Which is?

The President. Take everybody's guns away. That's why I like giving speeches in debate with them, because I always tell everybody I talk to, if you missed a day in the deer woods or a single sport shooting contest, you ought to vote against me and our whole crowd. But if you didn't, they must be telling you something that's not true here. Let's look at what we're really for.

So I think the NRA did a lot of good things in Arkansas when I was there—hunter education programs; they helped me resolve some property disputes. They really did some good things, but now they're just into terrifying people and building their membership and raising money. And it's just not true we're trying to take their guns away. It's just not true that we've interfered with legitimate hunters and sports people. And it's just not true that we've done enough in America to protect people from the dangers of criminals and kids having guns.

But you've got to give it to them; they've done a good job. They've probably had more to do than anyone else in the fact we didn't win the House this time, and they hurt Al Gore.

Attorney General Janet Reno

Mr. Rather. Going on down the list, Janet Reno.

The President. Good woman, tried really hard to do a good job. She's a good person.

Virginia Kelley

Mr. Rather. Your mother.

The President. First thing that comes to my mind? I still miss her every day.

First Lady Hillary Clinton

Mr. Rather. Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The President. I love her, and I'm really proud of her.

Chelsea Clinton

Mr. Rather. Chelsea.

The President. I love her, and I'm really proud of her.

Mr. Rather. Do you expect her to run for something some day?

The President. Oh, Lord, I kind of doubt it. Although, I'm proud of her; she got into this deal helping her mom, and she traveled with me some when Hillary couldn't go the last year and 3 or 4 months. She cares about public issues and public life, and she's got a big heart. And she's really interested in all of it, but I don't know that she would ever run for office. But if she did, if she wanted to do it, I'd sure support her and do whatever I could to help her. But it's totally up to her.

Lincoln Bedroom

Mr. Rather. The Lincoln Bedroom.

The President. It's the place where Lincoln freed the slaves.

Whitewater

Mr. Rather. Whitewater.

The President. Biggest bogus issue in modern American politics—classic. It was a fraud from the get-go, and a lot of the people that were propagating it knew it was a fraud. And in that sense, people will look at this years from now and be amazed that anybody rode it as hard as they did for as long as they did.

Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr

Mr. Rather. Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr. Independent Counsel.

The President. First title is better than the second. But I don't have any—he just did what he was supposed to do. I don't have any particular bad feelings about him.

Mr. Rather. He did what he was supposed to do?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Rather. What was he supposed to do?

The President. They put him in there because Fiske was a fair, balanced man, and the whole thing was going to be over before the '96 election, and they didn't want that. And so they put him in there, said, "Drag it out and get a bigger body count." And that's—he just did what he was supposed to do.

But I don't really have any—that group, that faction of the Republican Party controlled those independent counsels, and that's what they did.

But I don't have any personal animosity toward him like that. I mean, he really—he's part of that crowd, and they really believe it. They think that whatever they do to our side is okay, and that's what they really believe.

I didn't—I underestimated that when I got here. I just didn't really believe it. I always had good relationships with Republicans at home, even very conservative ones, members of the so-called Christian right. We always dealt with issues head up. And I just didn't understand that before I got here, but once I figured out what the deal was, I could sort of let it go. I realized they just had a different world view than I did.

Republican Leadership in Congress

Mr. Rather. At the end of my list—well, first, the Republican leadership on Capitol Hill.

The President. We got a lot done together and could have gotten more done if they hadn't given their rightwingers veto power from time to time. For example, we had—look what we got done this year. We just passed the best education budget of my entire 8 years as President, huge increases for after-school programs, school modernization and repair, nearly doubled the number of kids in the after-school programs, big increase in Head Start. We've now done more to expand college access than anything since the GI bill. We passed the China trade bill, the Africa-Caribbean Basin trade bill. And we took the earnings limit off of Social Security. We did a bunch of stuff this year, and we did for the last 6 years.

But we have a majority in the Congress—in this Congress, not the new one coming in, in the one that went out—we had a majority for campaign finance reform. We had a majority for a Patients' Bill of Rights. We had a majority for an increase in the minimum wage. I believe we had a majority for closing the gun show loophole.

Mr. Rather. But you couldn't get that through.

The President. No, because the rightwing blocked the leadership from letting us have a full and fair vote on that. So that I regret. But I worked with them, and I have very—personally, I like Senator Lott; I like Speaker Hastert. I've even acquired——

Mr. Rather. Do you like Tom DeLay?

The President. I've even acquired a rather jovial relationship with Dick Armey. We've gotten to where we joke around with each other.

I think—Tom DeLay I don't know as well. I told him, I said, the only thing he ever said about me that really hurt my feelings was when he said he didn't believe my golf handicap was as low as it was. And I sent him—I think I sent him a score that was in the Syracuse newspaper. [*Laughter*] But Tom DeLay worked with Hillary. They both got an award—Tom DeLay and Hillary both got an award from an adoption group because they'd done so much to try to facilitate adoptions. And that's the one area that I found real common ground with him on, that I think he's really genuine on.

My problem with him is, his whole view about how you should treat your opponents is very different from mine. I just think he's got a total scorch-and-burn policy: take them out, whatever the cost, whatever you have to do. And he's real nice about it. If you smile, you'd have a very cordial conversation with him. I think he really believes that. I think he thinks that's the way you're supposed to treat your political opponents. And I just don't agree with that.

For example, I never would have sent—I wouldn't let someone from the White House go to a contested State and try to intimidate vote counters. I wouldn't do that. I just don't believe that. That's not who I am. I don't think—I think that a great country has to have some voluntary restraint on the exercise of authority. But he's a very able guy, and if you don't stand up to him, he'll run right over you. So he's a worthy adversary.

Monica Lewinsky

Mr. Rather. At the end of my list—and you expect it—Monica Lewinsky.

The President. Sad chapter in my life that I wish were not public, but it's in the past. And for her, I wish her well. I hope she has a good life.

Mr. Rather. Do you take the responsibility, the personal responsibility, full responsibility?

The President. Absolutely. I did, and I do.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Rather. There was a report today you're thinking about hosting a television program. Anything to that?

The President. [*Laughter*] No. You guys make more money than I have, though. Maybe it's not a bad idea. I hear it costs a lot of money to support a Senator. Maybe I ought to look into it. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Rather. Don't believe everything you read, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

The President. I don't have an offer on the table. Is CBS getting into the bidding here? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Rather. What about running for something? Are you going to run for mayor of New York?

The President. No.

Mr. Rather. Governor of Arkansas?

The President. No.

Mr. Rather. Governor of——

The President. I loved it—no. Let me just say something about running. I think it's very important that—first of all, I need to take a couple of months and just go down. I need some rest. I've been working like crazy for 27 years. And I want to help Hillary, however I can, to succeed, because I think she—I'm so proud of her, and I think she is immensely talented, and I think she'll do very well. But I've got to support my family. I want to try—I've never had a chance to save any money. I want to try to save some, so they will be all right if anything happens to me. I've got to make sure we've paid all our bills. And I want to have some time to rest and just be a private citizen again.

And then what I would like to do is to find a way to be a useful—to use all this incredible opportunity I've had as President to work on things that I care most about, here in the United States and around the world, but to do it in a way that does not in any inappropriate fashion get underfoot of the next President. I don't want to do that. I just want to try to be a good citizen.

And I think there have been two truly great former Presidents in terms of their public service, John Quincy Adams and Jimmy Carter.

Mr. Rather. John Quincy Adams because he went back and served in the House?

The President. He went back and served in the House, and he served 16 years—or served 8 terms, anyway——

Mr. Rather. Any chance you would do something like that?

The President. ——and he's great. Well, let me finish. Then William Howard Taft went on the Supreme Court, served with some distinction. And for some years, Teddy Roosevelt kind of organized another political movement. Herbert Hoover did a lot of good. He went out and headed the commission for President Truman. So they also did well. Thomas Jefferson did some productive things after he left the White House. So there's evidence that if you don't just vegetate, you can do some good. And I'm going to try to use my center and foundation to do some really good things.

But I think that what I need to do is, I just need a little time to sort of decompress. And like I said, I want to try to take care of my family and just see what happens. But I care a lot—I just gave a speech in Coventry at the University of Warwick for Tony Blair, talking about, sort of, these big issues for the 21st century.

Mr. Rather. Your globalization speech.

The President. Yes. How do you put a human face on a global economy? How do you empower poor people in America and around the world? What are we going to really do about AIDS and the breakdown of public health systems around the world? How are we going to figure out—how do you deal with global warming and still have economies growing? Unless we can break the link between putting more stuff into the air, greenhouse gases, and getting richer, we're going to have a disaster on our hands, because people are not going to agree not to become wealthier, and they shouldn't. These big questions, these are things that I care about.

I ran for the White House—sometimes I feel like a fish out of water, especially like this interview. We spent more than half our time on kind of like political questions. But the reason that I had some success as President, I'm convinced more than anything else, is that I always thought Presidential elections and Presidential administrations were about ideas that resonated with the values of the American people but were appropriate to the present and the future. And I still believe that.

If somebody asked me for advice, I'd say, "Figure out what you believe, what's your vision of America; come up with a strategy to achieve it; then make your specific tactical move here. Decide what ideas you're going to push." I think that's very important.

So when I'm not President, that's what I think I ought to be doing, fighting for the things that I believe in, helping the people that I'd like to help, people that would be—people or problems that would be ignored by a lot of other people. So I hope I can do that. That's what I care about.

And finally, of course, the great work of my life has been in racial and religious and ethnic reconciliation. And I've tried to carry it forward here as President. And I hope I'll be able to make a contribution on that in the future.

Future Residences and Offices

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, the clock is running quickly here. First of all, are you and the First Lady planning on selling the place in Chappaqua, New York?

The President. Gosh, I hope not. I've gone to a lot of trouble to fix that place up.

Mr. Rather. Are you buying a place here in Washington, in Georgetown?

The President. [*Laughter*] I don't know. But you've got to have a place to live here. And I hope—we'll either have to rent a place or buy a place, and we'll figure out what to do about it. But——

Mr. Rather. Haven't bought one yet?

The President. No, we haven't bought one yet, and we're definitely not going to sell our place in Chappaqua if I've got anything to say about it. We've just got it all fixed up. We've done lots of work on that house. It's a delightful place. I'm going to have an office, Presidential office, in New York City. I'll have a—I'll have my transition office here for 6 months, but I'll have my permanent office up there. And I'll have the home in Chappaqua, and I expect we'll spend virtually all of our weekends there. But you've got to have a place to sleep down here.

First Lady's Memoirs

Mr. Rather. Now, the First Lady is going to be paid now—I'll go to my notes here because this figure is a whopping figure—$8 million for her memoirs. What is she going to say about you in that book?

The President. [*Laughter*] I don't know. I don't know if there's $8 million worth to say. You all know it all already. But she's had two bestsellers, and she gave all the money away from the first one. The second is on the bestseller list, the book on the White House now. It's a really good book, I think. And she's given all the money away to that. So she just auctioned this one. I think she was probably as surprised as anybody that the auction brought that price. But the publisher that won it published her other bestsellers. I guess they think she's got a third one in her.

Mr. Rather. I want to say this respectfully, Mr. President. Surely you don't want her writing about Paula Jones, Monica Lewinsky, and all those things again. Is she likely to do that?

The President. You ought to ask her. She can write about whatever she wants. I tell you, I bet it will be a good book.

Senator-Elect Hillary Clinton's Political Future

Mr. Rather. The First Lady's future. It's assumed among Democrats she's going to run for President. I guess the question is, does she do it in 2004 or 2008?

The President. Well, I'll tell you what I believe. I believe that that's worse than idle speculation. I can tell you what I've urged her to do. What I've urged her to do is, number one, solidify her roots and her ties with the people of New York State; have an agenda for New York; have an agenda for America, because every Senator is a Senator on American issues, too; stay on the forefront of ideas, keep pushing and getting things done; and the future will take care of itself. But I think—she said she intends to serve her term in the Senate, and I believe that's what she intends to do.

We already assume there are a lot of other people who will run for President again 4 years from now, including the Vice President. And of course, he would have a big leg up, because he won the popular vote this time.

Mr. Rather. Do you consider him head of the Democratic Party now?

The President. I certainly think he is the leader of the party, and he won the election—the popular vote, I mean. He won the popular vote. And I think he will decide what he's going to do. Then other people will decide what they're going to do.

But look, the world will look entirely different—could look different 6 months from now, a year from now. No one has any idea what it will be like 4 years from now. When I ran for President—this is why I said ideas are the most important—when I started running for President in late '91, my mother was about the only person who thought I could win. That's not quite true; Hillary did. But the incumbent President, President Bush, had an approval rating of over 70 percent. These things are not predictable. And I think people waste so much energy thinking about them and maneuvering.

I want Hillary to enjoy being a Senator and to be the best Senator she can be. This seat

was held by Senator Moynihan and Robert Kennedy, and they were great Senators. And that's what I want for her.

Mr. Rather. You do, or do not, think it is a given that she'll one day run for President?

The President. Oh, I don't think anything is a given like that. I don't think it's a given that any—if you could name me any person in this country, Democrat or Republican, and say, do you think it's a given that they'll run for President, I would say no, because I don't.

Abraham Lincoln once said about this—I think he'd always thought he'd run for President. He's the only person, apparently; we forgive his ambition. He once said, "I will work and get ready, and perhaps my chance will come." That's about all anybody can do. But no, I don't know if any of them are going to run.

Post-Presidency Legal Issues

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, I'm so sorry to step on your line. I'm so afraid time will run out on us. And you've been very generous with your time. Do you expect to be indicted after you leave the Presidency, by a current independent counsel, the successor to Kenneth Starr?

The President. Well, that's up to them. We had a bipartisan panel of prosecutors testified in the Congress that no ordinary prosecutor would do such a thing, would even think of it. There were five of them that testified to that. And the Republicans in the Congress argued that they didn't have to have an indictable offense; you could impeach somebody for something that you wouldn't indict them for.

So I don't know. I may have more to say about that later. Look, I don't have any idea. I don't have any control over that, and I don't spend much time thinking about it. All I know is, Whitewater was a fraud; the civil lawsuit was a fraud. They knew that for a long, long time; everybody did. And a lot of innocent people have already been hurt for purely political reasons. And if I had to do it all over again, I still would, because the country is in better shape.

So all I can tell you is, nothing can take away my feeling of gratitude for having had the chance to serve and my feeling of gratitude that it worked out so well for the American people.

Mr. Rather. Do you think President Bush will pardon you to keep—possibly prevent an indictment, or in case of indictment?

The President. I haven't given any thought to that. But I doubt it. I mean, no, I haven't thought about that.

Mr. Rather. There are those who say, "Look, it would be a great unifying thing for the country," quote, unquote, for him to do that.

The President. Well, since I don't believe I should be charged, I don't want that. I'll be happy to stand—I told you before, if that's what they want, I'll be happy to stand and fight.

Presidential Pardons

Mr. Rather. Speaking of pardons, you still have your power to pardon people. True or untrue that you've considered pardons for the financier Milken, for Hubbell, for others involved in the Whitewater case, and for the killer of two FBI agents, Mr. Peltier? Any truth to that?

The President. I have been asked to consider pardons for hundreds and hundreds of people, and we are reviewing them all. And I will make decisions at an appropriate time. I don't want to discuss them until I make the decision about them.

I'll just mention one. On the Milken thing, the main thing I've heard from there is the people that are involved in prostate cancer, because he's been so active in that—I've heard a lot from people who say, "He served his time. He paid a big price. You ought to do this because of the contribution he's made to the fight against prostate cancer."

Mr. Rather. It sounds like you might—fair to say you might?

The President. No, it's not fair to say I will or I won't. I haven't made a decision about that.

North Korea

Mr. Rather. Foreign policy, I wanted to talk to you about your legacy on foreign policy. This time it didn't work out that way. Are you planning a trip to North Korea?

The President. I haven't decided yet. We worked hard with North Korea. We made a big breakthrough there with the Secretary of State going. I'd like to do what I can to make sure that—we started this administration with the North Korea problem being the number one national security threat to the United States because of their nuclear program. We terminated that, and we're trying to figure out a way to terminate the missile program. If there was

some way to do that, I might consider doing it.

But I wanted to wait until we had a President-elect because they'll have to have their own Korea policy. It may be something they prefer to do, maybe something they disagree with doing. So I just thought, while I don't think that the President-elect should have a veto—like I didn't—President Bush went—did the Somalia thing after the election 8 years ago—I think it should be something that we discuss and we just try to work through what the best thing for America's interest is.

Cuba

Mr. Rather. Do you agree or disagree that U.S. policy in Cuba is out of step with your approach on other countries and has more to do with domestic policies and domestic politics than it does, actually, foreign policy?

The President. Well, I think it had a great deal to do with domestic policy and politics for a long time, in the sense that we have a lot of people in America who were personally hurt by the Castro regime and whose families were hurt and who lost their property, and they even lost their lives, lost their loved ones. So it's, in that sense, more personal. But I don't think there's any question that we would have made more progress with Cuba than we have if they hadn't shot those planes down and murdered those innocent people a few years ago.

Mr. Rather. The "Castro regime" meaning Fidel, himself?

The President. Yes. They shot those Brothers to the Rescue planes down in blatant violation of international law. We don't believe they were in Cuban territorial waters. But even if they were in Cuban territorial waters, it was illegal. Cuba is a signatory to the Chicago convention, which specifically says how you have to handle planes like that. It governs what we do when we see planes take off from South America, small planes that we know are unarmed that may have drugs on them. A lot of times we have to follow them until they go down somewhere, or do that. What they did, it was a deliberate, illegal killing.

Mr. Rather. That's a matter of foreign policy.

The President. Yes. And when they did that, the Congress reacted basically by passing the so-called Helms-Burton Act, which dramatically restricted the ability of any President to relax relations with Cuba. And it made me wonder if the person in the whole world that least wanted the embargo lifted was Fidel Castro. I mean, I've often wondered whether he and the people in America that don't want any change in relations are in some sort of unconscious dance with each other, because as long as that embargo is there, he's got an excuse for the failures of his regime.

China

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, last question, China. There are reports out of China that they're razing church buildings, blowing them up, burning them down, on the eve of Christmas. And they've been doing this sort of thing for a year and a half. Are you now ready to recommend that the United States back this resolution at Geneva, before the United Nations Human Rights Commission, to condemn this kind of thing?

The President. Well, let me say, I have been—I have worked, I believe, as hard as any President for religious liberty at home and around the world, even for people who disagree with me on a lot of things. And I have had innumerable conversations with Jiang Zemin and with other Chinese officials about this. I think that their view that people who have strong religious convictions represent a political threat is just wrong. So I will do what I think is appropriate at the time on this.

Mr. Rather. Does that include considering backing this resolution?

The President. I gave an answer. That's all the answer I want to give right now.

Mr. Rather. Mr. President, you have been very generous with your time, and I appreciate it.

The President. Thank you, Dan.

Mr. Rather. Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:28 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Cuban youth Elian Gonzalez, rescued off the coast of Florida on November 25, 1999, who returned to Cuba on June 28, 2000; Senator Joseph Lieberman; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and President Jiang Zemin of China. The transcript was embargoed for release by the Office of the Press Secretary until 9 p.m. on December 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on Presenting the Arts and Humanities Awards
December 20, 2000

The President. Thank you very much, Senator. [*Laughter*] I'm trying to get in the habit here, you know? [*Laughter*]

If I might, I'd just like to say a word of appreciation to all those Hillary has mentioned, to the young people who entertained us at the beginning, who I thought were wonderful, to the Members of Congress who have supported these endeavors.

But I'd also like to thank Hillary for what she has done. She has been the Honorary Chair of the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities, a strong advocate for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the driving force behind our Millennial Evenings and our campaign to Save America's Treasures, which is the largest single historic preservation movement in the history of the United States. So I thank her for what she has done.

It is true, as Hillary said, that this has been for 8 years now a labor of love for me, because of my own personal history with the arts and humanities. But each passing year has convinced me more strongly of the importance of every nation elevating the kind of people we honor today and of the fundamental lessons of the human spirit being imparted in the broadest possible manner.

I think it is quite interesting that we live in a time where there is more personal freedom than at any time in human history, where, in the last few years for the very first time, more than half the people on the globe live under governments of their own choosing. But in the aftermath of the cold war, it's almost as if an artificial lid had been lifted off the darker spirits of people around the world when we see this remarkable upsurge of racial and religious and ethnic and tribal warfare, sometimes leading to breathtaking numbers of casualties and so often leading to hatred and misunderstanding.

Mostly, if not always, the arts and humanities bring us together. By making us more self-aware and more human, they make us more likely to understand our neighbors and to be better neighbors ourselves. And so I hope that in the years ahead, when we literally have an opportunity never before seen in my lifetime to build a world of unprecedented peace and harmony and shared prosperity and interdependence, the work we honor today will become more important to every single American citizen.

That's one of the reasons that I strongly support the idea of a National Arts and Humanities Day, which the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities has recommended. And if I might, I would also like to recognize as a group the recipients of the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence, given every 4 years by the National Government's General Services Administration, to celebrate excellence in Federal design—the things your Government builds with your tax money.

They remind us that with a little vision, we need not settle for the mundane when it comes to the objects, arteries, and architecture that the Government places in the world around us. I'd like to especially thank Bob Peck, the Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service, for his role in our doing better with the Federal Government's construction. And I'd like to just mention the award winning projects. Most of you will probably have seen at least one of them, but you might want to look for more as you move around America.

The new U.S. Census Bureau National Data Processing Center in Bowie, Maryland; the innovative U.S. Port of Entry in Calexico, California; the wonderful refurbished Grand Central Terminal in New York City; the soaring sweep of Interstate 70 through Glenwood Canyon, Colorado; the Mars Pathfinder Mission; the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, here in Washington; the National Park Service's Park Cultural Landscapes Program; the Westside MAX light-rail system in Portland, Oregon; and the Mayor's Institute on City Design, here in Washington.

I would like to ask the representatives of each of these projects to stand and be honored by us. Please stand. [*Applause*]

Now, the honorees for the National Medal of Arts.

Maya Angelou once wrote, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived and, if faced with courage, need not be lived again." Offering us always the raw truth and the eloquence of hope, Maya has shown our world

the redemptive healing power of art. Author, actor, poet, professor, and, incidentally, San Francisco's first female streetcar conductor—[*laughter*]—she has literally and figuratively navigated life's ups and downs. [*Laughter*]

She has had a great impression on my life and, as all of you know, wrote a magnificent inaugural poem for our first Inauguration in January of 1993 called "On The Pulse of Morning." I reread it again this morning, and it still thrilled me. America owes Maya Angelou a great debt for keeping us looking toward the morning.

[*Comdr. Michael M. Gilday, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

As a boy growing up on a Tennessee farm, Eddy Arnold learned to plow fields with teams of mules and to play country music on the guitar. Fortunately for us, when it came time to pick a career, he made the same decision that a lot of us young southerners made: He did not want to work that hard with the mules. [*Laughter*] He chose the guitar, and country music has never been the same.

In his career, he's made records that broke all records. His "Bouquet of Roses" stayed on the charts longer than any country song in history, even down to today. And he's had more hits than any other country artist. He brought music into millions of homes across America. I told him this morning when I met him, I could still remember when I was a very young boy listening to him sing on the radio before my family even had a television.

He has earned the title, the "Ambassador of Country Music," and we are honored to honor him today. Mr. Eddy Arnold.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Now we honor the greatest male classical dancer of our time, and one of the greatest forces in American modern dance, Mikhail Baryshnikov.

From his 1974 flight to freedom to his reinterpretation of the classics, from his soaring leaps to his bold forays into new forms, Mikhail Baryshnikov has taken risk after risk. And they have paid off, not only for him but for all the rest of us, as well.

His audiences have grown bigger and broader, and he continues still to inspire us again and again with a renewed sense of wonder.

Thank you, Mikhail Baryshnikov.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Since I never had in my whole life more than about a 6-inch vertical jump—[*laughter*]—it was a great thrill for me to give that award. [*Laughter*]

And because of my musical life, it is a great thrill for me now to honor Benny Carter, a force in the jazz world for over 75 years now. He liked to say, "My good old days are here and now." This attitude, his enduring focus on the future and the present, and his enduring, extraordinary talents help to explain how he has marvelously, miraculously continued to compose, arrange, teach, and perform music that speaks to the human soul.

From the day he picked up his first alto sax, the jazz world has never been the same. Benny Carter, your entire life has been a great riff to the human spirit. We honor you today, still young, at 93.

[*Commander Gilday, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. As a young painter just out of art school, Chuck Close decided to spend an entire year painting a single portrait. His goal was nothing less than a new form of realism that would honor people without embellishment, in all their so-called imperfection.

That early artistic gamble would pay off, not just for Chuck's career but for all of us who have had the provocative, often astounding pleasure of seeing his art. Like many people, I am always torn between stepping in for a closer look and stepping back for a broader perspective. That ambiguity is part of what makes his art so powerful, so interesting, so clearly a reflection of life itself.

I want to thank you, Chuck, for your friendship to Hillary and me and for helping us see in new ways.

Mr. Chuck Close.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Believe it or not, the great writer Horton Foote got his education at Wharton—[*laughter*]—but not at the business school. He grew up in the small town of Wharton,

Texas. His work is rooted in the tales, the troubles, the heartbreak, and the hopes of all he heard and saw there.

As a young man, he left Wharton to become an actor and soon discovered the easiest way to get good parts: Write the plays yourself. [*Laughter*] And he hasn't stopped since.

Among other things, he did a magnificent job of adapting Harper Lee's classic, "To Kill A Mockingbird" for the silver screen and writing his wonderful "A Trip To Bountiful" and so many other tales of family, community, and the triumph of the human spirit.

Along the way, he's won Academy Awards, the Pulitzer Prize, and countless other honors. Today we add this honor for his lifetime of artistic achievement and excellence.

Mr. Horton Foote.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. In Chicago, there's a booming art and theater scene that rests, to a remarkable extent, on the shoulders of one man, Lew Manilow. A founder and past president of the city's renowned Museum of Contemporary Art, Lew has personally donated some of the finest pieces of contemporary art ever shown at the Art Institute of Chicago. For 20 years, he has pursued his vision of reestablishing a vibrant theater district in Chicago's North Loop. That vision, too, is now becoming a reality.

President Roosevelt once said, "The conditions for art and democracy are one." Lewis Manilow, philanthropist, collector, patron, has spent his entire life creating those conditions and sparking Chicago's theater renaissance. I can also tell you, he is a remarkable person and a good friend.

Mr. Lew Manilow, thank you very much.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. For 30 years, National Public Radio's cultural programming division has turned a small slice of the Nation's airwaves into a stage big enough to hold the world. From the mechanics on "Car Talk"—[*laughter*]—to the music of "Carmen," NPR covers it all, enlightening and entertaining us around the clock.

I don't know how many years our family has gotten up every morning to NPR blaring away on Hillary's radio. NPR plays a unique role in America's cultural and intellectual life, examining with wit and wisdom the myriad facets of the human condition, our national life, and the state of the world. We are a better, more humane Nation for the efforts of NPR.

NPR President Kevin Klose will accept this medal, on behalf of his colleagues. And we thank them all.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. The art of Claes Oldenburg has a deceptively simple purpose. He once said his aim is to "face the facts and learn their beauty." For nearly a half century, this pop art pioneer has done exactly that. His sculptures and happenings begin in commercial culture but quickly blur the lines between painting and performance, art and actual experience.

With his partner in art and in life, Coosje van Bruggen, Oldenburg has made monuments to the mundane: a towering clothespin in a Philadelphia plaza; a massive matchbook on a hill in Barcelona; a buried bicycle in a Paris park. Together, they have transformed everyday objects into enduring art and added, I might add, a welcome sense of whimsy to our public places. He's touched us all in that way, and we are grateful.

Thank you.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. When Itzhak Perlman plays his violin, he takes us to places we have never been, where melodies linger in our hearts long after the music has stopped. From his concerts behind the Iron Curtain to his classical recordings to his collaborations with jazz and pop performers, Itzhak Perlman makes music for the sheer joy of it, reminding us that pure beauty can help us all to transcend ourselves and our differences.

I must say, in all the times I've ever seen him perform in person or on television, I am always struck by the sheer energy, courage, and happiness with which he has embraced life, without pity or regret. He is an astonishing musician, and we thank him for sharing his gifts with us.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. As a boy in New York City, Harold Prince went to Broadway shows with

his family every weekend. It wasn't long before the plays his family came to see were his. [*Laughter*] By the age of 30, he had already produced four hit shows. Over a lifetime, he brought to the stage musical plays and operas that have earned him a record 20 Tony Awards. From "West Side Story" to "Fiddler on the Roof" to "Phantom of the Opera," Hal Prince's work has made America and the world sing. Today we give our regards to Broadway's Prince.

Thank you, Hal Prince.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Few performing artists are instantly recognized by only their first name. But when you mention Barbra, the whole world knows her voice, her face, her capacity to touch the deepest chords of our being.

From the moment she won her first vocal competition at a Manhattan club when she was still a teenager, Barbra Streisand has been without peer. Whether on stage, screen, or in the director's chair, whether in musicals, comedies, or drama, she has been a singular presence. She won the Oscar, the Grammy, the Emmy, the Peabody, because she has a great mind, an enormous creative capacity, a huge heart, and the voice of a generation. I'm glad we have this one honor left to give her, and I thank her for all she has given us.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. And now, the winners of the National Humanities Medal.

If there is a common critique of the social sciences, it is that their leading voices talk often to each other but rarely to the rest of us. This has never been the case with Robert Bellah. For decades now, he has been raising issues at the very heart of our national identity and rejecting the easy answers. Like Alexis de Tocqueville, whose legacy he has studied, Robert Bellah understands the tension between two of America's core values, individuality and community.

His studies on the moral and religious underpinnings of American civic life have helped us to know better who we are as a people and where we are headed as a nation. And through some very difficult periods in our Nation's life, he has reminded us that for all our enshrinement of individuality, we can never make the most of our individual lives unless we first are devoted to our shared community.

Thank you, Robert Bellah, for priceless gifts.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Scripture tells us to be "doers of the word, not hearers only." William Davis Campbell is a doer. He has devoted his life as a preacher and writer to breaking down racial barriers. A member of the National Council of Churches, he was the only white minister asked by Dr. Martin Luther King to attend the first Southern Christian Leadership Conference. From bailing demonstrators out of a Selma jail, to escorting nine black students to Little Rock Central High School, he was an unsung hero of the civil rights struggle.

He has also authored 16 books, including his remarkable memoir, "Brother to a Dragonfly." Will Campbell said to me today when I met him, he said, "You know, I'm just another yellow dog from Mississippi." [*Laughter*] And I said, "Well, there's not many of us left down there anymore." [*Laughter*] There don't have to be many, as long as there's someone at every critical time for our country like Will Campbell. He represents the best of what it means to be an American, and we thank him.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Producing great television documentaries is a passion Judy Crichton comes by honestly. As a girl in the 1950's, her father, a pioneer network producer, taught her to believe in the power of television to communicate the grandeur and tragedy of history and to illuminate the great issues of the day.

In her own career as journalist, writer, and producer, she has stayed true to that belief. Traveling from war-torn African jungles to dusty historical archives, she has produced documentaries that not only have won prestigious awards but very large audiences.

And in creating and producing the PBS series "The American Experience," she set a new standard for what television documentaries can be. With talent, passion, and purpose, Judy Crichton has elevated a medium she loves and lifted all those who watch it. We honor her today.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. In a poem called "The Dream Keeper," Langston Hughes once wrote, "Bring me all your dreams, you dreamers. Bring me all your heart melodies that I might wrap them in a blue cloud-cloth, away from the too-rough fingers of the world."

David Driskell is a modern day dream keeper. As one of the world's foremost authorities and collectors of African-American art, he has devoted his life to keeping alive the dreams of hundreds of artists and art lovers.

In doing so, he has helped to lift the veil on the struggles and triumphs of a people and a nation yearning to be free. His vision, creativity, scholarship, mentorship, and passion have touched the core of what it means not only to be African-American but to be human in a too-rough world.

Hillary and I thank him for helping to bring us the first work by an African-American artist into the White House: Henry Ossawa Tanner's "Sand Dunes At Sunset, Atlantic City." For that and for more than four decades of excellence in art, we are proud to honor him today.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Ernest Gaines was born on a sugarcane plantation near New Roads, Louisiana, a town where, as he once put it, "There were places you couldn't go, things you couldn't say, questions you couldn't ask." At least that was the case until he took up writing.

It wasn't until the age of 15 that he first stumbled on the public library and discovered Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Faulkner. After that, he was never caught without a book in his hand or a writing pad in his bag.

His best-selling book, "The Autobiography Of Miss Jane Pittman," made him an icon in black literature. His last work, the remarkable "A Lesson Before Dying," won him a National Book Critics Circle Award.

His body of work has taught us all that the human spirit cannot be contained within the boundaries of race or class.

Mr. Ernest Gaines.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Of all those whom we honor today, none has traveled farther to be with us than Herman Guerrero. He flew 10,000 miles from his home in the Northern Mariana Islands. The son of a baker, he has led the effort to preserve and promote the rich history and culture of his beloved islands, particularly the legacy of the Chamorro people, who were nearly wiped out by Spanish colonists in the 17th century.

"Education and the humanities," he once said, "allows the people of the Northern Marianas to rediscover their identity." By honoring the past, Herman Guerrero is moving the Northern Mariana Islands into the future. Today we thank this baker's son for raising the hopes and dreams of his people.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. America has been blessed with many outstanding musicians, composers, writers, producers, arrangers, conductors, actors, mentors, and humanitarians. But there is only one person in our lifetime who has displayed all these talents in unparalleled excellence.

For more than 50 years, Quincy Jones has stood as a true renaissance man of music, defying all the labels, daring to explore the entire musical spectrum. From bebop to hip hop, from pop to jazz, the breadth of his musical repertoire is only matched by the bigness of his heart. From South Central L.A. to South Africa, he has emerged as one of the leading humanitarians of our time, especially in his work to uplift and inspire young people. He is an American treasure, and he is my friend. And I am honored to join all of you in saluting him today.

Mr. Quincy Jones.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Barbara Kingsolver writes with beauty and wisdom about the ethnic and cultural divides that challenge humanity. She offers in novels and essay a compelling vision of how they might be healed. From Indian reservations to inner cities to the forests of the Congo, she writes about our limitations and our capacity to overcome them.

Above all, she reminds us of the value of hope, telling us not to admire it from a distance but to live right in it, under its roof. I have rarely seen an author that I thought had a more direct impact on people who read her works and loved them, including the two women in

my home. So Barbara Kingsolver, we thank you for challenging our heart and keeping us going.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Edmund Morgan is one of the foremost historians of our colonial beginnings. As an author and an educator, he has shed new light on our history, from the tyranny of slavery to the intellectual sparks that set off the American Revolution. Historians and general readers alike have savored his clear writing and clear thinking and his knack for the human touch, the anecdote or detail that brings history alive for every reader.

For more than 50 years now, he has brought America's own history alive for millions of us. And millions of us are grateful.

Mr. Edmund Morgan.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Toni Morrison once said, "The best art is political, and you ought to be able to make it unquestionably political and irrevocably beautiful at the same time."

For more than 30 years, she has been following her own advice. And in so doing, she has blessed us with some of the most powerful, unflinching, and beautiful stories imaginable, while winning a Nobel Prize, a Pulitzer, and a beloved following of readers.

Hillary and I are fortunate to be among her readers and her friends. But Toni Morrison has not only earned an honored place on Americans' bookshelves; she has entered America's heart. She is, in so many ways, remarkable. I don't know how many times I've heard her say something or seen something she's written and thought, "Gosh, I wish I had thought of that." [*Laughter*] I'm glad we thought to honor her today.

Miss Toni Morrison.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Like many of us, Earl Shorris first encountered the works of Socrates and Plato as a freshman in college. The only difference between him and most of us is, he was only 13 years old at the time. [*Laughter*]

That kindled a lifelong passion for the humanities, a passion he has helped to pass on to others from all walks of life. He knows the humanities mean the most as a part of people's daily lives, not locked away in some ivory tower or secret closet. His Clemente program in the humanities has inspired thousands of young people from hard-pressed communities to pursue a college education. Earl Shorris once said, "People who know humanities become good citizens; they become active, not acted upon."

Today we honor him for many things but most especially for his work as a champion of the humanities and as a very good citizen.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. When Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve was a young girl, she came across an old, 20-volume encyclopedia called the "Book of Knowledge." She read every one of those tomes, cover to cover, twice.

In the years since, her love of words and a deep pride in her Native American heritage have propelled her to write more than 20 books of her own, including several about her Lakota Sioux people. A gifted teacher and storyteller, she has devoted the past three decades to educating children and others about Native American culture, to breaking down stereotypes and replacing them with knowledge and understanding.

Her stories have helped us to better define the American experience, to understand the Native Americans who were here before the rest of us had the good fortune to have our ancestors arrive. We thank her for sharing her timeless wisdom.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you for joining us today to honor these remarkable people. And I want to thank them again for their remarkable work.

For 8 years now, Hillary and I have had the honor of presiding over this ceremony. I don't think we've ever had a more stellar group of honorees. But in each and every one of those 8 years, I have again felt the profound importance of preserving human freedom, so that people like these will be free to think and speak, create, to do their work, to lift our better selves, and lead us away from dark alleys and wrong paths. We thank them, and we thank God that

our country is a place where people like them can flourish.

God bless you all, and happy holidays.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. at Constitution Hall.

Remarks on the Issuance of Final Regulations on Protection of Medical Records Privacy

December 20, 2000

Thank you. Well, first, I want to thank Janlori Goldman for her wonderful remarks and for her ongoing work in the area of health privacy. I thank the representatives of the doctors, nurses, consumers, and privacy community who are here today and who add input into this effort.

I would like to thank my great friend Senator Pat Leahy for being here and for his strong support of privacy issues in the United States Congress. As others have said, I want to thank the entire team of people who worked on this. They worked on this issue for months and months and months. They worked hard. Some of them worked, I might add, at great personal sacrifice to themselves, because of developments unrelated to this issue, to get this out, because they believe so strongly in what they were doing. And I also would like to thank my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, who has been a fanatic on this issue in the best sense. [*Laughter*]

Now, I want to thank all the folks at HHS for—Donna Shalala went over just some of the things that we have done in this administration over the last 8 years, thanks to all of you at HHS. And she said you were beginning to feel like Nebraska. [*Laughter*] But look, there's a big difference.

You know, they say that because of the 24-hour news cycle, we're all in a permanent campaign. And when you're in a permanent campaign, it's hard to take the time to go to someplace you have no chance of winning—Nebraska—[*laughter*]—or someplace you have no chance of losing—the HHS Building. Right? So—[*laughter*].

I might say, just parenthetically, I had a wonderful time in Kearney, Nebraska, and in Omaha, and you would be amazed at all the letters I've gotten. I have already received more letters than I thought there were Democrats in the State of Nebraska. [*Laughter*] It was quite wonderful. So I'm grateful.

I want to thank all of you, and especially Donna Shalala, for these last 8 years. I believe that Donna Shalala is a superb leader, a great administrator, always full of energy. You will be happy to know, and not surprised, that she has steadfastly defended the people who work at the Department of Health and Human Services in pitched battles at the White House over various issues.

You guys have so much responsibility over so many things; every day you get a new chance to wreck an administration. [*Laughter*] The fact that you somehow managed to avoid doing so, and along the way to get us up to record levels of childhood immunization, to get the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years, to involve women and seniors in clinical trials to an unprecedented extent, to add 24, 25 years to the Medicare Trust Fund and 2.5 million kids to the ranks of insured, and do so many other things, to be a positive force in the welfare reform movement, is a real tribute to you, but I think, also, to Donna Shalala and her remarkable tenure as the leader of this Department.

And she makes it fun, you know? Now she's going to become president of the University of Miami. We're just sort of a way station on her move south. She was at Wisconsin and then here and then going to Miami. I think you can confidently predict two or three things that will flow out of her tenure there: She will improve the academic quality of the institution; the football team will get even better—[*laughter*]; and they will do whatever is necessary to clarify the voting procedures in Dade County.

Look, we're having a good time today, but I want to take a moment to be very, very serious. We say that we are a free nation in a world growing increasingly free. And in so many ways, that is literally true. During the period in which I was President, I was fortunate

enough to serve here at a time when, for the first time in all of human history, more than half the people on the globe live under governments of their own choosing.

Now, that's a wonderful thing. That's one manifestation of freedom. Then, there's free speech, the freedom of the press, the right to travel, and also, I might add, minority rights of all kinds, restrictions on the ability of government to compromise the fundamental interests and rights of those who may not agree with the majority.

But we must never forget, in this age of increasing interdependence, fueled by an explosion in information technology that is completely changing the way we work and live and relate to each other, that increasingly, we will have to ask ourselves: Does our freedom include privacy? Because there are new and different ways for that privacy to be restricted.

In 1928 Justice Brandeis wrote his famous words saying that privacy was "the right most valued by civilized people," and he defined it simply as the right to be left alone.

Nothing is more private than someone's medical or psychiatric records. And therefore, if we are to make freedom fully meaningful in the information age, when most of our stuff is on some computer somewhere, we have to protect the privacy of individual health records.

The new rules we release today protect the medical records of virtually every American. They represent the most sweeping privacy protections ever written, and they are built on the foundation of the bipartisan Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation I signed 4 years ago.

This action is required by the great tides of technological and economic change that have swept through the medical profession over the last few years. In the past, medical records were kept on paper by doctors and stored in file cabinets by nurses; doctors and nurses, by and large, known to their patients. Seldom were those records shared with anyone outside the doctor's office.

Today, physicians increasingly store them electronically, and they are now obliged to share those records in paper or electronic form with insurance companies and other reviewers. To be sure, storing and transmitting medical records electronically is a remarkable application of information technology. They're cost-effective; they can save lives by helping doctors to make quicker and better-informed decisions.

But it is quite a problem that, with a click of a mouse, your personal health information can be accessed without your consent by people you don't know, who aren't physicians, for reasons that have nothing to do with your health care. It doesn't take a doctor to understand that that is a prescription for abuse.

So, the rules that we release today have been carefully crafted for this new era, to make medical records easier to see for those who should see them and much harder to see for those who shouldn't. Employers, for instance, shouldn't see medical records, except for limited reasons, such as to process insurance claims. Yet, too often they do, as you just heard.

A recent survey showed that more than a third of all Fortune 500 companies check medical records before they hire or promote. One large employer in Pennsylvania had no trouble obtaining detailed information on the prescription drugs taken by its workers, easily discovering that one employee was HIV positive. That is wrong. Under the rules we released today, it will now be illegal.

There's something else that's really bothered me too, for years, and that is that private companies should not be able to get hold of the most sensitive medical information for marketing purposes. Yet, too often, that happens as well. Recently, expectant mothers who haven't even told their friends the good news are finding sales letters for baby products in their mailboxes. That's also wrong. And under these new rules, it will also be illegal.

Health insurance companies should not be able to share medical records with mortgage companies who might be able to use them to deny you a loan. That actually happens today, but under these rules, it will be illegal. Health insurance companies shouldn't be able to keep you from seeing your own medical records. Up to now, they could. Under these rules, they won't be able to do that anymore.

Under the rules being issued today, health plans and providers will have to tell you up front who will and won't be allowed to see your records. And under an Executive order I am issuing today, the Federal Government will no longer have free rein to launch criminal prosecutions based on information gleaned from routine audits of medical records.

With these actions today, I have done everything I can to protect the sanctity of individual

medical records. But there are further protections our families need that only Congress can provide. For example, only new legislation from Congress can make these new protections fully enforceable and cover every entity which holds medical records. So I urge the new Congress to quickly act to provide these additional protections.

For 8 years now, I have worked to marry our enduring values to the stunning possibilities of the information age. In many ways, these new medical privacy rules exemplify what we have tried to do in this administration and how we have tried to do it. We can best meet the future if we take advantage of all these marvelous possibilities but we don't permit them to overwhelm our most fundamental values.

I hope that these privacy rules achieve that goal. And again, let me say, for this and so much more, I am profoundly grateful to the people who work here at HHS, the people who work with them at OMB and in the White House. In this action, you have done an enormous amount to reassure and improve the lives of your fellow Americans.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:46 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Department of Health and Human Services. In his remarks, he referred to Janlori Goldman, director, Health Privacy Project, Georgetown University. The Executive order on the privacy of protected health information in oversight investigations is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Resignation of Arthur Levitt as Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission

December 20, 2000

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Arthur Levitt for his almost 8 years as Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. As the longest serving Chairman in the Commission's history, Arthur's leadership, experience, and steadfast dedication have helped promote and sustain America's capital markets as the very finest in the world, during a period marked by a renewed emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship, and investing. This time of unprecedented growth has brought new and unique challenges to America's markets, and Arthur Levitt led the SEC's response to the forces of technology, competition, and globalization.

Above all else, he has been a true champion of the individual investor. He has worked tirelessly to educate and protect America's investors, speaking to thousands of investors in Investor Town Hall Meetings across the country. In addition, he has worked to put more information and greater power in the hands of investors, increasing transparency in the marketplace, and making financial information accessible to everyone. He has responded quickly to the rise in Internet fraud by launching an Internet enforcement team to prosecute it.

In a period when timely and accurate financial information is more critical than ever before, Arthur led campaigns to improve the quality of financial reporting and sponsored market initiatives to increase market disclosure and lower costs for investors. America's capital markets and its investors have benefited significantly from Chairman Levitt's enduring vision, judicious oversight, and abiding sense of fair play. I wish Arthur and his wife, Marylin, all the best in their future endeavors, and join our Nation's investors in thanking him for his years of commitment and public service.

Statement on the Death of John Lindsay
December 20, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of John Lindsay. As a Member of Congress, and later as mayor, John Lindsay built a remarkable rapport with the people of New York City—people of every race, in every neighborhood, in every walk of life. In times of great change, John Lindsay was a progressive yet pragmatic force for the public interest. New Yorkers and all Americans will miss not only his confident style but his commitment to social progress for all.

Statement on Action by India and Pakistan To Reduce Tensions in Kashmir
December 20, 2000

I welcome today's announcements by both India and Pakistan aimed at reducing tensions in Kashmir. The decision by Prime Minister Vajpayee that India will continue the ceasefire it initiated last month in Kashmir is an important step forward. In the meetings we held earlier this year, the Prime Minister told me of his determination to pursue a course of peace in Kashmir. I applaud today's announcement as a sign of his continuing commitment to that course. This initiative, along with Pakistan's announcement today that it will withdraw part of its forces deployed along the Line of Control and its earlier decision to exercise maximum restraint there, raises the hopes of the world community that peace is possible in Kashmir. To achieve that end, I continue to believe that all parties should reject violence and work for a peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialog.

Statement on Signing the Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance, and Protection Act
December 20, 2000

I am today signing into law H.R. 3514, the "Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance, and Protection Act." This Act is a valuable affirmation of the Federal Government's responsibility and moral obligation to provide an orderly system to ensure a secure retirement for surplus Federal research chimpanzees and to meet their lifetime needs for shelter and care. However, I sign this measure with reservations concerning flaws in the bill that the next Administration and the Congress should correct to ensure the viability and effectiveness of the proposed sanctuary system.

The Act requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish a sanctuary system of lifetime care for chimpanzees that have been used by Federal Government entities for research and that are determined to be no longer needed for research. The sanctuary system is to be operated by a nonprofit private entity with appropriate expertise under contract with the Secretary, under standards established by the Secretary and meeting the criteria established in the Act. Chimpanzees accepted into the sanctuary system may be used for further research only if stringent conditions are met, including a determination by the sanctuary operator's board that the research design minimizes harm to the chimpanzee. At the Secretary's discretion, and upon payment of such fees as the Secretary may establish, chimpanzees that are not "surplus chimpanzees" from Federal research programs may be accepted into the system.

Certain aspects of this Act will require amendment to eliminate defects relating to biomedical research and to the viability of the proposed sanctuary system.

The Act puts severe constraints on use of a chimpanzee for further research, once it has been declared "surplus" and accepted into the sanctuary system. Before it could thereafter be used, other than for noninvasive behavioral research, the Secretary must determine that extremely stringent criteria are met concerning the indispensability of that particular chimpanzee and the key nature of the research. In addition, the board of directors of the nonprofit entity operating the sanctuary must determine that the research design minimizes physical and mental harm to the chimpanzee—a determination that can be set aside only if the Secretary finds it arbitrary or capricious. Finally, the Secretary's and board's determinations must be published for a public comment period of not less than 60 days. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other HHS components using chimpanzees in research already employ a rigorous screening procedure required by law to assess the necessity and quality of any research using chimpanzees. The added criteria mandated by H.R. 3514 are complex and give insufficient weight to important public health issues, which could prevent or delay valuable biomedical research. In addition, of the total number of chimpanzees that have participated in biomedical research, over 250 are currently being maintained by NIH at a military installation. These chimpanzees may or may not be declared surplus, and I am signing this legislation with the understanding that implementation will neither conflict with the installation's military mission, nor further burden the installation's national security requirements.

Other concerns about H.R. 3514 relate to the administrative structure and funding of the proposed sanctuary system. Prescriptive details concerning organization and management, notably with respect to the qualification, terms, and role of the nonprofit operator's board of directors, eliminate flexibility to respond appropriately to unforeseen and varied circumstances. The requirement to contract with a single nonprofit entity to operate the sanctuary system presents the risk that, if that entity withdraws or ceases to qualify for the contract, there will be no alternatives for placement of the chimpanzees in the system. In addition, the bill virtually eliminates any Federal role in the operation or oversight of the system, although the Federal Government will remain responsible for the welfare of the chimpanzees accepted into the system.

Despite the concerns detailed above, I am approving H.R. 3514. My Administration agrees with the bill's sponsors about the Federal Government's obligation to provide comprehensive, compassionate lifetime care to chimpanzees that are no longer needed in federally supported research. The Act provides a statutory framework for a sanctuary system in fulfillment of this obligation. I am confident that the executive branch and the Congress can work together to satisfactorily resolve the problems inherent in the legislation in its current form.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

December 20, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3514, approved December 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–551.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

December 20, 2000

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) emergency declared in Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992, and with respect to the Kosovo emergency

declared in Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at the Arts and Humanities Awards Dinner
December 20, 2000

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I will be brief. I said what I had to say this afternoon. I loved it. I hope all of you did. I can hardly believe this is the eighth and last event like this that I will have a chance to preside over. But I want all of you to know, it has been a great honor.

And one of the things that I have prized most about being President is the opportunity to highlight the good that others do—many times famous and powerful people, many times people who would otherwise have been completely unknown. But I have a special feeling about the arts and humanities because in politics, we are always concerned with the moment and trying to win the moment for the American people. But in the end, those things that are timeless matter more. And that is what all of you have given us.

I want to thank those who sponsored these events today and made them possible. I want to thank the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, Bill Ferris and Bill Ivey and all those who work with them. Since we're celebrating the arts tonight, I want to thank the magnificent musicians of the United States Marine Corps, who have made my life so wonderful these last 8 years, and Maestro Slatkin and our hometown symphony here, who will be playing later. And my friend Thomas Hampson—thank you all very much.

I would like to ask all of you just to begin this evening by joining me in a toast to our honorees. They are an amazing assemblage of creative people, each unique, sharing the common fact that they have given us more than we ever could have imagined. Please join me in a toast to the 2000 honorees to the National Medal of the Arts and the National Medal of the Humanities.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:18 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Leonard Slatkin, music director, National Symphony Orchestra; and baritone Thomas Hampson. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Interview With Ellis Rubinstein of Science Magazine
December 6, 2000

Government and Science

Mr. Rubinstein. Our thinking is, you're finishing your second term at the millennium. We're in a new millennium, so you have a lot to look back on that would be interesting. We know you're a visionary, so we're interested in what you think about the future. I thought that we would start with a couple of philosophical things before getting into the practical things, because I think it would be interesting for our folks to hear you address the following issue.

Some of us would make the case that science is becoming such a core part of our individual human lives that something is actually transformed from the way it was some decades ago. That is to say, you almost can't turn around without needing to have information about science. I don't know if that's something that

you feel, but I was hoping that you would address the notion about whether you feel that the impact that science can have now on society, individuals, or government is substantially greater in your mind than it was when you were younger and if that, in effect, has some sort of question——

The President. Well, first, let me say I think, at a minimum, we are much more aware of the impact of science on our daily lives than we were when I was young. I'll just give you just one example. You just take the space program, for example, where we—if you go back and look at the rhetoric of President Kennedy and the space program, we had to get out there, and we worried about—we didn't want the Russians to beat us into space, and could they do something negative back here?

And then you look at the rhetoric around what we're saying about the space station. We've got 16 nations working together. And we want it because it will give us some sense, looking back at Earth, about what's happening to the environment on Earth, how to handle climate change, what else should we do about global warming. It will help us in our studies in a gravity-free environment of all kinds of biological issues, how proteins form, what happens to tissues, all these kinds of things. It will help us in our efforts to resolve remaining questions in the material science area, which have been so pivotal to our growth of productivity and economic strength. So if you think about the range of subjects that are part of kind of the basic language of space research, as compared to where it was 35, 40 years ago, it's just one example of that.

And of course, most people didn't know there was any such thing as a human genome; most people still don't know what nanotechnology is. But if you combine the sequencing of the human gene and the capacity to identify genetic variations that lead to various kinds of cancers with the potential of nanotechnology, you get to the point where, in the imagination, you're identifying cancers when—assuming you have the screening technologies right—there are only a few cells coagulated together in this mutinous way, so that you raise the prospect of literally having 100 percent cure and prevention rate for every kind of cancer, which is something that would have been just unimaginable before.

Those are just two examples, and I could give you lots of others. And I think this whole—the inevitable increasing preoccupation of the world with climate change—yesterday I set aside 70 percent of the reefs that the United States has for protection in the northern Hawaiian Islands—I think that will lead inevitably—when people start thinking about the prospect that the sugarcane fields in Louisiana or the Florida Everglades could flood or agriculture could move north, people will get a lot more of the science.

And the other thing I would say is, I think that the globalization of society has made us all more vulnerable to each other's epidemics and viruses.

Mr. Rubinstein. More bioterrorism?

The President. Yes. And that's the final point I was going to make, that I think that you've got—that science has become essential, indispensable to dealing with national security—bioterrorism, chemical warfare, cyberterrorism.

So for each of those reasons, I think the whole—the language of science and the necessity of understanding at least the basic concepts will make science a much more pervasive part of the average citizen's life in the next 20 to 30 years than it ever has been.

Mr. Rubinstein. So following on that—I thought you might feel that way—one of the things that one observes is that most international leaders are trained as lawyers, or they come up in the governments. We tend to have science not in the key place in the ministries, often. And so I thought maybe you could give our folks a sense of you, yourself—I think perhaps—or at least some people thought that in the first term you weren't that familiar with scientific issues, maybe uncomfortable with them, not sure that you understood them as well. But certainly since I've seen you, for example, at the millennium dinner that your wife did on informatics meets genomics, you were so obviously enthusiastically involved in the questioning and aware of the stuff. And you'd also given a very good talk at the AAAS on the genetic rights of Federal employees and so forth.

So I'd like to hear both on a personal level—has there been a rather marked change in yourself, in your own relationship to what you feel you need to know about science? And then in a general sense, what do you think that—do you think that governments have to be structured in a different way to deal with this world that you've just described?

The President. Well, let me answer the first question first. First, I've always been interested in science issues, but the nature of my life was such that I didn't have a lot of time to be consumed with them, except the one or two areas where my universities were doing important research in Arkansas when I was Governor. And one of the reasons that I asked Al Gore to be my Vice President is that he's devoted so much more of his life to studying scientific issues and understanding them. And one of the reasons I thought and still think he would be a good President is that he does understand those things, and he cares about them.

But what happened is, after I got here, I began to try to imagine, just go through the categories you talked about: What are our responsibilities in basic research; how can I make a stronger case? Are we going to save the space program or not; if so, what are the arguments for it, and what are the real implications of what we'll be doing there? What are the national security issues of the 21st century, and how much will science play a role in that? And I think we were all shocked at that sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway, just for example.

And then, of course, I had to deal with these global—the sweep of the age problems: the fact that one-quarter of all the people who die in the world today die from AIDS, TB, and malaria; what are the implications of the breakdown of public health systems all over the world—all of these things. So the more I learned, the more I saw these things related one to the other, and the more I began to study and read and try to learn so I could get myself comfortable with what I thought my responsibilities were at this moment in time.

Mr. Rubinstein. And do you think, from that experience, that you're confident that other countries have structures that are going to allow them to be able to react to these kinds of issues?

The President. I don't know that. But even in this country, what I did here was to establish this National Science and Technology Council, to get the Cabinet involved, to let my Science Adviser—first Jack Gibbons, then Dr. Neal Lane—kind of drive it for me.

Mr. Rubinstein. I think you only went to one PCAST meeting, though.

The President. I think, over 8 years, I think I met with them three times. I think I did.

Mr. Rubinstein. Does that say anything about your——

The President. But I thought about what they did a lot, and especially when—some of the members I knew quite well, and I also had talks with them. And then some of the specific scientific issues, particularly those relating to the national security—and one thing we didn't mention, which was the safety of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union, I spent quite a bit of time on it. And of course, I spent an enormous amount of time on the climate change issue.

But what I would like to see—I would hope the next President would think of ways to even further elevate and institutionalize scientific concerns. Because I don't think you can sort of separate out science, except to say we've got to have a strong basic research budget. And I don't see that this is troubling for science. The stock values of dot-com companies or biotech companies go up and down. That's totally predictable and absolutely inevitable. But what it should remind us of is that venture capital cannot be expected or even the research budgets of big, established corporations cannot be expected to carry the whole research and development load for America. So, should we have a permanent R&D tax credit? Of course, we should. Will it ever be a substitute for basic research? Never—never, at least, in the timeframe I can imagine.

President's Accomplishments in Science

Mr. Rubinstein. So, going down that road, I think we would like to ask you what you feel are your big accomplishments. I assume that one of the areas that you feel proud of is the amount of funding in basic research, but maybe you could give a little more flesh to that idea, of what it is that you think it was important to have done, and also after that, what frustrations you might have had about it.

The President. Well, I think, first, I think we did do a great deal of good with basic research. There was enormous support in the Congress, and among the Republicans as well as the Democrats, for more funding for the National Institutes of Health and all related health research. And I think it was most—there were some politics in that, because it's easier to sell that to voters back home because we all want to live forever. But I think a lot of it was genuine. I think men like John Porter, a retiring

Republican Congressman from Illinois, I think he—his commitment was deep and genuine. So I think there was that.

But we've kept fighting for overall increases. We got the biggest increase for the National Science Foundation in history this year. So I think we got research back on the national agenda, and big. And you know—and we had some unlikely allies. Newt Gingrich, even after he left the Congress, continued to speak out for it. So I think that was quite important.

And then, specifically, I think that research and the funding for the climate-change-related areas and the development of alternative energy sources and energy conservation technologies is profoundly important. In the end, that has got to be the answer. We have to be able to create wealth with smaller and smaller amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. We have to. And you're either going to have alternative energy or greater conservation. If India and China have to grow wealthy the same way we did, since they will not give up the right to become wealthy, we're not going to whip this climate change problem. So I think that's important.

The other new area that I think—I'm glad we continue to support the sequencing of the genome and all of the genome research. And we identified a couple of the genetic variants that lead to breast cancer and other conditions that I think are important. And I think the work we've done in nanotechnology in 10, 20 years from now will look very big, indeed. I just think that the potential of this is just breathtaking, and it will change even the way we think about things like calculation or what we're supposed to know how to do. It will—it's going to really, I think, have a huge and still underappreciated impact on our understanding of human processes and our capacity to do things.

Science Infrastructure

Mr. Rubinstein. I had heard you talk a little bit off-line with somebody at a meeting about how you had come to feel that it was one thing to support the disease-related research and the NIH and so forth, but it was crucial to support what I guess you call the infrastructure, if I remember correctly—I'm not sure—the computing, the physics that is now being used in bioinformatics, and so on. I'd rather you would tell it.

The President. You remember, we had that millennium meeting here——

Mr. Rubinstein. That's what I was thinking.

The President. ——where we had Eric Lander here, sort of talking about genomics research, and you had Vint Cerf, who sent the first E-mail to his then profoundly deaf wife 18 years ago, and how they both agreed that the sequencing of the genome would have been impossible without advances in information technology. And we now know, to make the point in even a more personal way, Vint Cerf's wife can now hear because she has a deeply embedded hearing device that would have been completely inconceivable without information technology, without the ability to have a computer chip with greater power on a smaller device.

So the thing that I kept arguing with the Congress on is that, "Look, it's fine. You can't give health research too much money to suit me. It's perfectly all right, but you've got to do this other, too." And this year, I think we've reached a happy accord.

Mr. Rubinstein. So, related to that, some people give you credit for pushing the NSF agenda. Some people wonder why it is, however, that DOD research has been cut by—the figure I've seen is 40 percent from the—which used to support a lot of infrastructure, math and Internet issues and so forth.

The President. First of all, I think a lot of the research is going to have dual benefits running back the other way. For many years, it was all this defense research which had a lot of nondefense implications. I think a lot of the civilian research is going to have a lot of defense implications now, because if you think about the kinds of restructuring that the Defense Department is going to have to do, an enormous amount of it will have to do with information technology and weapon systems and troop deployments and intelligence gathering. And I also think that a lot of what they will have to do in the fields of chemical and biological warfare will be driven in no small measure by nondefense research.

Now, I think the Defense Department, frankly, they had to make some very tough calls. In this last election, the Vice President said that he would put some more money back into the defense budget. And we began to turn the defense budget around a couple of years ago because we thought we basically reached the limits of the post-cold-war peace dividend.

So I think that's something that the next administration will have to look at, because we

had limited dollars and we tried to put it into quality of life, into training, into the basic things that would make the force available to meet the challenges of the moment. And maybe, you know, maybe it does need some more money.

International Collaboration in Science

Mr. Rubinstein. I'm going to jump a little bit to international issues, because again, I was thinking about you—direction to some degree with things that you've done. And I noticed an interesting event, that you would never have known about, at Davos when you were there last year. I happened to be running some panels there. And before you ever got on stage, there was sort of a revolt in the audience of the Europeans and the Asians who didn't want to leave, because they had gotten seats 3 hours early because they were so excited to see you. And when folks wanted to sweep the room, they were afraid they were going to lose their seats, you know. And the thing about that was, they refused to move. And eventually your guys said okay and relented, and they stayed. But what I actually noticed about that was that for hours thereafter, people going, "Yes, finally America had to listen to us."

And I think that increasingly I've heard this sort of discussion as a sort of subtext, that we're such—we are the only superpower left. And if you talk to Europeans and Asians, some of them worry about this sort of power that we have and whether we are using it wisely all the time. They feel we moralize to them. I think this is not going to be news to you.

So what I thought would be interesting for you to talk about a little bit in the science context is, we've actually dropped some collaborations with Europeans and Asians on a number of their projects. It was hard for the Japanese to get us in their human frontiers program; I don't know if you recall that particular thing. We haven't supported some of the big European initiatives. So in relation to this, what would you say, maybe either about your own experience or feelings or what you would advise your successor about how science might be used internationally for an effort to try to deal with the kinds of feelings that our European allies and Asian allies might——

The President. I think I would advise my successor to do as much to fund as much international collaboration as possible. If I could just take two examples where it has worked very well, the work that we did through the NIH with the human genome project involved several other countries. And when we announced the sequencing, we not only had Craig Venter here from TIGR from the private effort, we did it jointly with Tony Blair and with the Ambassadors of the other countries that were involved in the project with us. I don't think there is any question that even though there are all kinds of unresolved issues there, that the fact that we're doing this together has been a plus.

To give you another example which I think is profoundly important and somewhat controversial, the 16-nation collaboration with the international space station, I think, has been very, very important. I've spent a lot of time, as you know, on this space station, and to see what the Canadians have done, to see what the Japanese contribution is.

And the Russians got criticized for not being able to come up with the money, but the price of oil collapsed, and they were killed by this horrible financial crisis. It gripped Asia and also affected them. I think they're getting back on their feet, and I think they'll pay their way. But the contributions that they made, based on the *Mir* and based on the fact that they had certain capacities we didn't have, and what we learned by working together with them and the nine trips to the *Mir* we took together with them, and the fact that the corollary benefit of keeping—I don't know—hundreds and hundreds of their scientists and engineers working on a positive international project, instead of being picked off by rogue states to help them develop weapons and missile technology and things of that kind, I think, were enormous. So I think the more that we can make this an instrument of constructive interdependence, the better off we're going to do.

Also, there are a lot of smart folks out there. And I think we have to recognize that—when I took office, there weren't all that many people that resented us, because they thought our economy was a basket case and they were worried about us being too weak. Then, when we had a great deal of success, even though we bent over backwards not to lord it over anybody, and we did have—we had some inevitable conflicts—our desire to end the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, things of that kind—that we were criticized when we did it, and then when we didn't go in quickly enough in

Rwanda, we were criticized. Part of this is inevitable. But I think we do have to try to wear our power lightly and also with some humility, because there's always a chance we could be wrong, number one, and number two, nothing lasts forever.

Mr. Rubinstein. Are you aware, as President, of the brain drain that—the tremendous power we have to get the best young scientists coming over here and how few of our young people go over to work now——

The President. There might be a way for my successor to institutionalize a little offset there. For example, you know, I worry about that—if you just take in the information technology area, and you get out of it—you just forget about the labs, there are 700 companies today, in Silicon Valley alone, headed by Indians—700—and just in Silicon Valley. It was just stunning, you know? Now, a lot of them are also active back home.

But I think there needs to be a way for us to try to share both the scientific and the economic benefits of our enormous infrastructure here. I'd like to see America used, in that sense, as sort of a global lab, but with the ability to send our folks back out, send their people who come here back out, finance educational and research exchanges, and even, as I said, even operational exchanges. I think that we need to—this is not a resource we should husband so much as share.

Mr. Rubinstein. Jiang Zemin—you remind me of Jiang Zemin, because he is very proud of his trip to Silicon Valley, where he noticed the incredible percentage of the folks in one of the companies that he visited who were Chinese born and so forth. I know that—I was told by one of the vice presidents at Merc that 20 percent of their hires are born in China. But thinking about Jiang Zemin, he made the remark that, on a personal level, one of the things he was proud of was that he thought he brought some engineering expertise and discussions on the highest level. And I was wondering, is it really the case that when you guys get together at big events, that science is even discussed amongst Presidents?

The President. Oh, yes.

Mr. Rubinstein. Yes?

The President. Of course. I've worked with Jiang Zemin for 8 years now, and I have a very high regard for him. He's a highly intelligent man, and he also—he speaks Romanian, Russian, English. He lived in Romania for a while. I think he speaks a little German.

Mr. Rubinstein. He said very nice things about Hillary.

The President. He did?

Mr. Rubinstein. Yes, because he said he was sitting next to her——

The President. Yes, he likes her.

Mr. Rubinstein. He thinks she's great.

The President. He is quite proud of his training. And he tries to bring that perspective to a lot of what he does. So we've had a lot of discussions about it. We've also had some arguments about it. I've had some—I even had the Chinese Environmental Minister thank me, on my trip to China, for doing a climate change event because, he said, "We've got to convince people that you're not trying to slow our economic growth." This really is a whole different way of looking at the world.

Mr. Rubinstein. So with Blair and Chirac and so forth, occasionally science issues are actually discussed?

The President. Yes. I talk to Tony Blair about them a lot. And of course, we're dealing with them in more contentious areas, too. Within Europe, what do they do about mad cow disease, vis-a-vis the United States? What do they do about genetically modified organisms? How do you balance political pressures with scientific reality? How do you define scientific reality? Do they need a European Union-wide equivalent of the FDA?

Mr. Rubinstein. Genetically modified foods and whatnot?

The President. Yes, because all these things are really—these are hot issues now. I didn't even mention that earlier when we started, about all the things that will require a higher level of scientific knowledge, but that's another example. I mean, all this controversy over how we produce food and all that, that's going to be—that's not going away any time soon.

Science and Math Education

Mr. Rubinstein. Well, you sort of have gotten to some of the questions I was going to ask you about the future. I thought maybe I'd just ask you a couple of quick ones, and I don't know, I don't want to take too much of your time. But I would really like—I know you and Mrs. Clinton have been very interested in education. I don't know to what degree you're familiar with the state of science education, and

I don't know if you have some feelings about—we just had the latest report come out about young kids in math and science being—I think we were 18th or something. I don't remember myself what the number is now. So I was wondering if you have some strong feelings about the situation. I know you do about education in general, but in science in particular?

The President. Well, I think there are basically two issues. One is, in a country as big and diverse as ours, how do you get more kids to take math and science courses at more advanced levels? And secondly, if you could do that, how would you have enough qualified teachers to do it? I think—the one thing I would say is that some States—I noticed California passed a really sweeping initiative this last year to try to give bonuses to people who will enroll—I think that what you're going to see inevitably in the future is that you will have to have more alternative certification mechanisms, and you'll have to pay people more.

I also think at the advanced levels of science and math, you may even see a lot of high school systems operating the way colleges do now and bringing people in to teach one course or something like that. I think that you're going to—since we are going to have a critical mass of people out there in America who know the things that all of our kids now need to know, but virtually 100 percent of them are making a lot more money than they can make teaching school, you're either going to have to get people who make a lot of money and then can retire—I have a friend who's got a daughter who made, I don't know, $30, 40 million in her early thirties or late twenties in a software enterprise, who's now just cashed out and spends all of her time teaching inner-city schools.

But you're either going to have to find tons of people like that; or you're going to have to find ways to finance the education of young people to do this work for 4 or 5 years and just recognize you're only going to have them for 4 or 5 years; or you're going to have to have, like in junior and senior year at least, have people who have this knowledge come in and teach a course just like a—someone would come into a college and teach one course.

In other words, we're going to have to be, I think, flexible if we want to lift the level of performance in America above where it is now, because we have a lot of poor kids, a lot of poor school districts, very diverse student body, and a huge number of kids. I mean, most of these places that are doing very well have a much more—either a more homogenous or smaller, or both, student body and a system that's much more nationalized and much easier to control.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Mr. Rubinstein. Could you just tell me a couple things about—how do you feel about, right now, about why NASA, which you're very enthused about, continues to get a sort of flat budget? Is this a wise thing at this point?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that NASA, when I took office, needed to show that it knew how to economize and could be managed better. I think Dan Goldin has done that. I think they have proved that they can do more with less. I mean, they got the space station up 3 years ahead of time.

Mr. Rubinstein. But they've also had some disasters, which some people——

The President. They've also had some disasters, but look—I mean, they're out there fooling around with Mars. You're going to have some disasters. You know, if you want something with 100 percent success rate, you've got to be involved in something besides space exploration. You're never going to have that. I think the important thing is that, from our point of view, NASA responded in an honest, up-front way to their difficulties with the two Mars probes that didn't work so well, the lander mission and the other one. And they're going forward.

And I would like to see their budget increase now, because I think that they have proved, after years and years of flat budgets, that they have squeezed a lot of blood out of this turnip. They have really restructured themselves. They have gotten rid of a lot of their relatively inefficient costs. And I believe that now is the time at least to let them start growing with inflation again, if they're going to be able to handle their missions.

And I think that what we'll have to see over the next few years is where we go with Mars, because you've just got these new pictures, and it looks like there was water there closer to the surface more recently in time than we thought. So we need to keep taking pictures. We need to keep trying to—not withstanding what happened to the lander module, we need to find some way to put a vehicle down there

that can actually physically get some stuff off the surface and bring it back to us.

We need to keep—and then I think the rest of the space budget may be in some measure determined by exactly what is going on at the space station, how much progress we'll be making in the whole—you know, there's seven, eight, nine areas of basic research that I think are likely to have enormous advances as a result of what's going on there. And I think that in these two things, more than anything else, will dictate how much money NASA needs and what they need it for.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Rubinstein. So, now that you've released your inner nerd, my last question is, do you think you'll do anything related to science in your next years?

The President. When I leave here?

Mr. Rubinstein. Yes.

The President. Oh, I certainly hope so. I'm very interested in continuing to work in the climate change area in particular and doing what I can to convince the political systems of countries that have to participate in this that there are economically beneficial ways to do the right thing for the global environment. And in order to do that, we have to continue the basic research into alternative fuels and alternative technologies. There is no way to solve this over the long run unless you can get more growth out of fewer greenhouse gases. There is no way to do it. And so, on that alone, I will continue to be very interested.

The other thing that I'm particularly personally interested in is the breakdown of public health systems in so many countries, and how it disables them from dealing with things like the AIDS epidemic and other problems, and what we can do to sort of put that back together again. So I expect those are two areas that I'll be involved in for a long time to come, if I have the opportunity to be.

Mr. Rubinstein. Thanks very much. I hope that we can ask you some questions about it later, when you're doing those things.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 21. In his remarks, the President referred to Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; J. Craig Venter, founder, The Institute for Genome Research, and president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp.; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Jacques Chirac of France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on Signing the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

December 21, 2000

Sit down. Thank you. You just have to do what I ask for a few more days. [*Laughter*]

First, I'd like to thank the very large delegation from the United States Congress and both parties who are here: Senator Specter, Senator Conrad, Senator Dorgan; from the House, Chairman Goodling, Representative Obey, Representative Kildee, Representative Kelly, Representative Talent, Representative Porter, Lowey, and Clement. Did I get everybody? [*Laughter*]

I'd like to thank the mayor of Philadelphia, John Street, for joining us; and our neighbor, the Prince George's County Executive, Wayne Curry; and the members of the Cabinet who are here: Secretaries Riley, Shalala, Summers, Herman, Slater; EPA Director Browner; SBA Director Alvarez. Did I leave anybody out? Chief of Staff Podesta and my Economic Adviser Gene Sperling. And I'd like to thank Jack Lew and Sylvia Mathews and all the people on the budget team who worked so hard at OMB for this.

This is a good day for our country. For 8 years now, we have worked in this administration to prepare our country for the new century and a whole new era of human affairs by building a nation in which there is opportunity for every responsible citizen, a community of all Americans, and a nation that leads the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity. Today we have two more examples of that in implementing our strategy of trying to make the right, real choices for America and not be trapped in the old, false choices.

Earlier today, this morning, we announced new steps to preserve our environment by cleaning our air, steps that will protect the health of all Americans by dramatically reducing pollution from trucks and buses powered by diesel fuel, building on the announcements last year to reduce pollution from cars and sports utility vehicles. Together, these measures will preserve our environment and protect thousands of children from the agony of asthma and other respiratory diseases. By the end of the decade, because of these steps, every new vehicle sold in the United States will be up to 95 percent cleaner than those rolling off the assembly line today.

Again, this was the right, real choice, proving once again that we can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time. And I want to thank Carol Browner for her work on this. She's here. Thank you.

Now, in a few moments it will be my honor to sign the very last budget bill I will sign as President. And in so many ways, it could truly be said, we saved the best for last. This bill is called the Labor-HHS appropriation bill. But more than anything else, it's a bill about these children behind me today, about their hopes, their dreams, their capacity to learn, and their need to learn about their future and the future of our country. Again, it is further proof, as the evidence of these distinguished Members of Congress from both parties prove, that when we put progress ahead of partisanship, there's no limit to what we can do for America and our future.

We are now in the longest economic expansion in our history. A critical part of our strategy to get there was to put our fiscal house in order, to replace record deficits with record surpluses. With this budget, in spite of the investments—and I would argue because, in part, of past investments—we are going to be able to pay off another $200 billion of our national debt, on track to paying down $560 billion of the national debt over the last 4 years and this year. And because together we made the right, real choices, we were able to increase investment in the things that matter most. That's what this budget bill does today.

And let me just begin with education. Under Secretary Riley's leadership, we have worked hard to make the right, real choice—to have more investment and higher standards, more accountability, and spend the money on the things that the educators tell us work best. Test scores are up today, with some of the greatest gains coming in some of the most disadvantaged communities. Two-thirds of our high school graduates are going on to college; that's up 10 percent from 1993. In the last few years, there has been a 300-percent increase in the number of Hispanic students taking advanced placement courses and a 500-percent increase in the number of African-American students doing so.

With the largest student enrollment in our entire history, and the most diverse student body in our entire history, education must be priority number one for any administration. With this budget, while turning the largest deficits in history into the largest surpluses, we also will have more than doubled funding for education during the life of this administration. This clearly is the biggest and best education budget in our Nation's history, and it will make a difference in the lives of millions of young people. Let me just give a couple of examples.

Our first-ever initiative to renovate classrooms will mean that, over time, millions of children will attend more modern, more dignified, more functional schools. This is about moving out of housetrailers, and it's about going to school in old buildings that provide modern education.

With $1.6 billion on its way to help communities with smaller classrooms, we will help roughly 2 million children learn in smaller classes, with more individualized attention in the early grades. With nearly $1 billion more for Head Start, the largest increase in history, we'll have more than doubled the program, adding 60,000 more kids to this quality preschool program this year alone.

There is a dramatic increase in child care in this budget that, along with the child care funds provided in welfare reform, will help more than 2.2 million kids next year, an increase in

nearly a million just since 1997. By over doubling funding for after-school programs, we are providing 650,000 more students with a safe place to learn, bringing to 1.3 million the number of young people benefiting from this after-school initiative, something that did not even exist 4 years ago.

With another major increase in the GEAR UP program, 1.2 million disadvantaged children will now be preparing for college as early as the sixth grade. Together with one of the largest increases in the TRIO program ever, we are building greater pathways to college for economically disadvantaged young people.

This bill has the largest increase ever in Pell grants. We've now increased the maximum grant by nearly $1,500 since 1993, for 4 million young people every year from low- and moderate-income families. This significant expansion of Pell grants is part of the biggest expansion in college aid since the GI bill, including the Direct Student Loan Program, which has saved students $8 billion already in loan repayment costs, and the HOPE scholarship tax cut, which 10 million families are benefiting from this year.

I want to say to all of you who worked on this—to Chairman Goodling and Mr. Kildee, Mr. Obey, all the other Members of the House; and to you, Senator Specter, and the other Senators who are here; and most of all to you, Secretary Riley, who is now the longest serving and, I believe, clearly the finest Education Secretary our country ever had—I thank you all very much. Thank you. This education budget is a real tribute to the bipartisan work of this Congress, and I am very grateful.

The budget also makes good on our commitment to help every community share in our Nation's prosperity. This is a big deal to me, and also to America's future. About 18 months ago, I began the first of what I called new markets tours, to shine a spotlight on people and places that had been left behind in this long and remarkable recovery. I wanted every American investor to see the potential of these communities and the promise of the people who live there.

I knew that government couldn't do it alone and that, in fact, we would have to find a way to get more private investment into these communities. But I also knew that business could not be expected to go it alone, that we had to find some way to bring hope and opportunity home to these communities.

Now, at the same time, to be fair, there were people in the Congress who were interested in this who were struggling for some bipartisan consensus to bring free enterprise to parts of America that have been left behind. Among them, in the House, were Representative Talent, who is here, and J.C. Watts and Danny Davis, who represents Chicago but, like me, was born in Arkansas. And there were other groups that were looking at this.

So we all worked together to give you a budget that delivers something that I believe is truly unique and significant. It includes the landmark new markets and community renewal initiative. It's the most significant effort ever to help hard-pressed areas, both rural and urban, to lift themselves up through private investment and entrepreneurship. It is a triumph of bipartisanship. And again, I want to thank those whom I just mentioned—especially you, Mr. Talent—and I want to thank the Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, who went to Chicago with me and Reverend Jackson and without whom we could not have passed this important initiative.

Here's what it does. First, it establishes the first-ever new markets tax credit. It sets up a new market venture capital initiative. Now, what does all that mean? It basically means if we can get people to put money into really depressed areas, all the rest of America will share part of the risk by giving them a tax credit to do it. And it's a darn good investment.

We also expanded and strengthened 40 empowerment zones; that's the program our administration has run for the last 8 years under the able leadership of Vice President Gore. And we created 40 renewal communities across our Nation; that's an alternative designed essentially by Republicans in the House, with the Democrats who worked with them. And we decided that since nobody knows how to do this, we ought to try in 40 places with each approach and see which one works better, and see what works better with each approach. It's a terrific idea, and I only wish I was going to be around when all the results come in. [*Laughter*]

But over the next—sometime over the next, I'd say, 2 to 4 years, probably more like a 4-year period, we'll actually have evidence of what happened in the 40 empowerment zones, what happened in the 40 renewal communities. That Congress will take the evidence and, I hope, as a result of that evidence, will then enact legislation that will permanently establish a

framework for always encouraging America to invest in the areas that otherwise would be left behind.

And if, like me, you've spent a lot of time in the Mississippi Delta or Appalachia or inner-city neighborhoods or on Native American reservations, you doubtless have concluded, as I have, that intelligence is pretty equally distributed throughout this country and so is the work ethic. But we have not yet equally distributed opportunity and access to capital. We're trying to figure out how to do it. This is a truly historic day, and we did it together, and I am very grateful. Thank you.

This budget also does more to improve health care and to strengthen families and community. And again, I want to thank the Members of Congress who are here who had primary responsibility for the health care issues, and Secretary Shalala, who has also been with me from day one. And we were together yesterday with our sweeping health care privacy announcement. She may be the only one of us that is absolutely convinced she is getting a promotion, because she's going to become president of the University of Miami—[*laughter*]—and she gets a football team, which she does not have in her present job. Thank you.

This budget includes options for States to enroll tens of thousands of uninsured children in the Medicaid program by using schools, public housing, and other sites easily acceptable to parents and children.

Let me explain why this is important. We have got 2.5—since the Congress—in the balanced budget bill, Congress adopted the CHIP program, the Children's Health Insurance Program, 1997. Since then, 2.5 million * kids have been enrolled. And as a result, this year, for the first time in 12 years, the number of people without health insurance in the United States went down—for the first time in 12 years. But the money is there for five million kids to be enrolled. And we know, from the evidence of all of the States that have been particularly vigorous, that if we can just find the kids, their parents will sign up.

This program provides funds so that we can do CHIP enrollment in schools, public housing, and other places where the people are. It also provides options for States to help low-income seniors enroll in programs that cover their Medicare premiums and copayments. It provides critical support to those moving from welfare to work by ensuring that working does not mean losing your health care. It ensures quality health care services for people on Medicare by investing about $30 billion in hospitals, home health agencies, hospices, nursing homes, and managed care plans.

And this is very important. I admire the Congress for doing this. We adopted the Balanced Budget Act in '97. We adopted some substantive changes in our Medicare program that we thought would produce a certain level of savings. They produced more savings than we estimated, at great cost to the quality of health care, or the capacity of our providers to do it. So they asked us to make some corrections, and we did. And that's what this is. It's a very, very good thing for America.

The other thing this bill does, that I think will be very important to people for a very long time, is that it expands preventive benefits like cancer and glaucoma screenings for Medicare beneficiaries. It creates a new program to provide people with disabilities with community-based health care services, and it increases fundings for AIDS prevention, research, and treatment.

Also, it includes a $20.3 billion investment in biomedical research, nearly doubling since 1993 our investment in the National Institutes of Health. And I would like to say a special word of thanks to a retiring Member of Congress, Representative John Porter, who's been a great leader in this. Thank you very much.

The bill provides $11.9 billion in funding for the Department of Labor, for funding from job training to eliminating abusive child labor practices and promoting education around the world. Nearly 900,000 dislocated workers will receive support and assistance in their efforts to return to work.

Secretary Herman's here. I'd like to thank her for many things, and 8 years of service in this administration, 4 in the White House and then as Secretary of Labor. But one of the relatively little noticed but, I think, profoundly important initiatives that this administration has undertaken is to try to eliminate abusive child labor in the United States and everywhere it exists in the world. And I thank you for your leadership in that regard. I thank you very much.

* White House correction.

Finally, the bill would allow nearly 700,000 immigrants who have worked, lived, and paid taxes in the United States for years to stay here legally without fear of being separated from their families.

When I outlined our budget priorities in the State of the Union last January, I urged Congress to work with me to pass a fiscally responsible budget that would be true to our values and invest in the capacity and future of the American people. I recall the good advice of President Theodore Roosevelt, who said that a growing nation with a future takes the long look ahead. This budget takes the long look ahead, to educate our children, renew our communities, and build our common future. I am very proud of it and very grateful. If we stay on this course, our best days are ahead.

Thank you very much. Now I'd like the Congress and the members of the administration to come up.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001, approved December 21, incorporating H.R. 5656, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, was assigned Public Law No. 106–554.

Statement on Action To Reduce Diesel Emissions

December 21, 2000

A year ago today I announced the toughest air pollution standards for new cars and sport utility vehicles. Today we take another bold step to clean our air. We are adopting strong new measures to dramatically reduce unhealthy and unsightly emissions from trucks and buses powered by diesel fuel. Together, these actions represent the most sweeping effort ever to protect our air and our health from the pollution caused by the vehicles we drive. They ensure that by the end of the decade, every new car, truck, and SUV in America will be up to 95 percent cleaner than those on the road today.

Today's action by the Environmental Protection Agency mandates cleaner diesel fuel and extends the latest pollution control technology to all trucks and buses for the first time. These advances will prevent not only the thick plumes of diesel exhaust all too familiar to motorists but also thousands of cases of respiratory illness and premature deaths. We will spare thousands of children and elderly the agony of asthma and bronchitis and help to fulfill the promise of clean, healthy air for every American.

For the past 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have been guided by the conviction that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Indeed, our Nation entered the 21st century enjoying both unprecedented prosperity and the cleanest air and water in a generation. Our actions a year ago and today will help ensure an even safer and more prosperous future for generations yet to come.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

December 21, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4942, the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001. I commend the Congress for approving a bill that provides critical funding for enforcing our Nation's laws, protecting our precious natural resources, promoting international peace, and supporting our diplomatic operations.

Many portions of the Act are considerably improved compared to the previous House and Senate versions. I appreciate and commend the Congress for the many changes that have been

made, including providing additional funding to finance the Lands Legacy program; to improve the health of our Nation's ocean fisheries; to help close the digital divide between our more and less affluent citizens; to improve trade compliance; to prosecute local firearms violations; to toughen our Nation's stance against cybercrime and terrorism; to provide additional law enforcement assistance to Native Americans; to fund peacekeeping requirements; and to improve worldwide embassy security.

I applaud the Congress for providing over $430 million for the Department of Commerce's components of the Lands Legacy Initiative. This funding will help protect marine sanctuaries; support the new Northwestern Hawaiian Coral Reef Reserve and restore other coral reefs; expand estuarine research reserves; and promote recovery of Pacific coastal salmon runs through grants to western States and Tribes. The Act fully funds activities for the Pacific Salmon Agreement with Canada at $60 million and for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) work on Columbia River Basin salmon populations. Acceptable funding is also provided for a new climate observation initiative, a new education program with Minority Serving Institutions, and two smaller programs: Global Observations to Benefit the Environment and the Global Disaster Information Network.

The Act takes an important step toward closing the digital divide by providing the requested tripling of funding for the Technology Opportunities Program. This program will provide grants to promote innovative applications of information technology in under-served communities.

I am pleased that over $1.0 billion is provided for the COPS II/21st Century Policing initiative, the successor to the highly effective Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which will enable local police departments to begin a five-year plan to hire up to 50,000 additional community police officers, hire new community prosecutors, and expand community-based prevention efforts. While the appropriated funding level is still below my original request, it is $444 million above the FY 2000 level, and will enable the COPS II program to fund almost 6,000 new officers in FY 2001.

The Act provides almost $100 million for the Department of Justice's counterterrorism and cybercrime initiatives. This funding level will allow for improved efforts to meet the growing challenges of terrorism and cybercrime, including State and local first-responder training, staff support for the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and enhanced technology and intelligence-gathering along the northern border. The Department of Justice's components of the Gun Enforcement Initiative are funded at $103 million. This appropriation will support over 600 Federal, State and local gun prosecutors, and increase research on smart gun technologies. The Indian Country Law Enforcement initiative is funded at $111 million. This funding, which is $19 million above the FY 2000 level, will allow the Department of Justice to assist tribes in hiring and equipping law enforcement personnel, constructing detention and court facilities, and developing alternative sentencing programs for alcohol and substance abusers.

I am pleased that the Act provides $4.7 billion for the regular operations of the Department of State, including diplomatic and consular programs; information technology investments; and, building leases, maintenance and repair. These funds will pay for support costs critical to maintaining the Department's network of overseas posts and the conduct of foreign affairs worldwide. The funded increases include expanded efforts to promote trade compliance and enhance labor and environmental monitoring. Funding for embassy security and construction also includes requested support for projects of the Agency for International Development. The Act also provides full funding for the Administration's pilot program to allow unclassified communication and sharing of information for all U.S. Government agencies operating at an overseas post, as recommended by the Overseas Presence Advisory Panel.

The Act also provides $846 million for Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities. Funding at this level will allow the United States to continue to support vital UN peacekeeping operations, including ongoing missions in Kosovo, East Timor, Ethiopia/Eritrea and Sierra Leone.

I am also pleased that the Act provides $17 million for the Departments of Commerce and State and the United States Trade Representative to help ensure U.S. companies and workers receive the full benefits from the WTO and other bilateral agreements signed by the United States. This funding will help to put experts overseas to deal with compliance issues that continue to hinder fair access to markets, double

staff focused on China and Japan, and strengthen antidumping/countervailing duty investigation capabilities.

I am pleased that H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations bill, modifies immigration provisions included in this Act, and that the modified legislation will ease immigration restrictions on an estimated 700,000 immigrant families living in the United States. The provisions will extend section 245(i) until April 30, 2001, as opposed to January 14, 1998, under current law, to allow aliens (and their spouses and children) who apply for an adjustment of status or a labor certification to remain in the United States until such petition is approved. Additionally, the provisions will create a new, temporary non-immigrant visa for spouses and children of spouses of legal permanent residents and U.S. citizens seeking to enter the United States to await approval of legal permanent resident status for themselves (the "V" visa). The provisions will also allow certain individuals who were not granted amnesty under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 who are currently seeking such relief through the courts to apply for permanent residency. While I am disappointed that the legislation fails to eliminate the disparate treatment under our immigration laws sought for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, Haitians, and Liberians and does not provide any relief for deserving individuals affected by changes in the 1996 immigration law, it is the best compromise that could be reached after several rounds of intense negotiations.

I am also pleased that the Consolidated Appropriations bill, once signed, will eliminate an objectionable provision in the Commerce/Justice/State Act that purports to protect citizens from the unauthorized sale or display of social security numbers but would not, in fact, provide privacy safeguards that are adequate.

Although the funding levels in this Act are acceptable, I am troubled that several issues could not be resolved despite my Administration's best efforts during the final negotiations on the Act. Notably, the Act does not include new hate crimes protections, and fails to extend the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund. I strongly urge the next Congress to reconsider these actions in future legislation.

In addition, this bill greatly restricts low-power FM radio broadcast. Low power radio stations are an important tool in fostering diversity on the airwaves through community-based programming. I am deeply disappointed that Congress chose to restrict the voice of our nation's churches, schools, civic organizations and community groups. I commend the FCC for giving a voice to the voiceless and I urge the Commission to go forward in licensing as many stations as possible consistent with the limitations imposed by Congress.

I also oppose language in the Act related to the Kyoto Protocol. The language is inappropriate because the Administration has no intent of implementing the Protocol prior to congressional ratification. The Act includes an additional number of provisions regarding the conduct of foreign affairs that raise serious constitutional concerns. My Administration's objections to these and other language provisions have been made clear in previous statements of Administration policy. I direct the agencies to construe these provisions to be consistent with the President's constitutional prerogatives and responsibilities and where such a construction is not possible, to treat them as not interfering with those prerogatives and responsibilities.

Finally, section 629 of the Act amends the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978 to include within the definition of the term "interstate off-track wager," pari-mutuel wagers on horseraces that are placed or transmitted from individuals in one State via the telephone or other electronic media and accepted by an off-track betting system in the same or another State. The Department of Justice, however, does not view this provision as codifying the legality of common pool wagering and interstate account wagering even where such wagering is legal in the various States involved for horseracing, nor does the Department view the provision as repealing or amending existing criminal statutes that may be applicable to such activity, in particular, sections 1084, 1952, and 1955 of Title 18, United States Code.

Several essential modifications to this bill are contained in H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations bill. I am signing H.R. 4942 into law today because I believe the Act, as modified by H.R. 4577, will meet the overall needs and priorities of the American people. I urge the next Congress and my successor to continue to promote the needs of the American citizenry

by pursuing resolution to the troublesome issues I have highlighted above.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 21, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4942, approved December 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106–553.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 2000
December 21, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Hanukkah.

Every year during the month of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, Jews around the world celebrate the Festival of Lights. They remember with sorrow the desecration of the Holy Temple, with pride the triumph of the Maccabees over the forces of oppression, and with a renewed faith in God's providence the miracle of a day's worth of oil burning for eight straight days—a miracle commemorated by lighting the candles of the menorah.

This year, Hanukkah is celebrated during the same week Christians celebrate Christmas and Muslims celebrate the Eid Al-Fitr. The coinciding of these special days, sacred to followers of the world's three Abrahamic faiths, serves as a powerful reminder of the fundamental values we share: a reverence for our Creator, a belief in human dignity, and a conviction that we must love our neighbors as ourselves. These ancient lessons still hold great meaning for us today, as the global community grows ever closer and American society becomes increasingly diverse. By taking them to heart at this blessed season, we can build a future where we respect one another's differences, embrace our shared values, and where all God's children live together in peace.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a joyous Hanukkah celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping Operations in Kosovo
December 21, 2000

Dear _____*:*

As required by section 1213 of Public Law 106-398, the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the contributions of European nations and organizations to the peacekeeping operations in Kosovo.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services.

Statement on Signing the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2001

December 21, 2000

I have signed into law H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2001. I am pleased that my Administration and the Congress were able to reach agreement on the remaining appropriations bills and produce a hard-won victory for the American people.

The legislation reflects my Administration's longstanding commitment to education, worker training and assistance, and medical research, and continued opposition to unrelated anti-environmental riders, which have no place in these appropriation bills. As a result of extensive negotiations, my Administration was able to secure significant funding increases for many programs that represent significant victories for the American people, including teacher training, class size reduction, worker protection programs, and mental health programs.

I am very pleased that the legislation creates a new $1.2 billion school renovation grant program, targeted to high-need districts. It provides $0.9 billion for urgent school repairs, including $75 million for public schools with high concentrations of Native American students, $0.3 billion for special education and technology-related activities, and $25 million for a demonstration program to assist charter schools in obtaining non-Federal financing for their infrastructure needs. The initiative will enable schools to undertake much-needed renovation, such as repairs to roofs, heating and cooling systems, and electrical wiring.

The bill also provides $1.6 billion for the third installment of my plan to help reduce class size in the early grades. While the Republican proposal did not guarantee funding for the teachers already hired and would have instead allowed Class Size dollars to be used for virtually any activity, I am pleased that the bill that I have signed provides $1.6 billion for Class Size Reduction, enough to support the over 29,000 teachers already hired, plus an additional 8,000 teachers.

I am also pleased that the budget agreement provides $567 million for my Teaching to High Standards plan to improve teacher preparation and help train teachers to meet higher standards. This funding level is $194 million more than last year's level. The bill includes $485 million for Eisenhower Professional Development State Grants, providing training for as many as 2.3 million teachers and strengthening accountability by requiring that States and districts use new Eisenhower funds to reduce the number of uncertified teachers in their schools. The bill also provides $44 million for new national-level activities, including initiatives to train early childhood educators and measures to recruit talented mid-career professionals into teaching.

The legislation provides $846 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers to support after school and summer school programs that make extended learning opportunities available for students and offer a safe place for "latch-key" children to learn during the after-school hours. At this funding level, nearly 650,000 more students than last year will have access to these services.

I am very pleased that Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies are funded at $8.4 billion, an increase of $0.4 billion more than last year, to continue efforts to help disadvantaged students catch up with their peers. In addition, the bill supports my Accountability Fund proposal by providing $225 million, an increase of $91 million, to help States turn around the lowest-performing schools and hold schools accountable for results. This funding level will provide help to 4,500 schools, an increase of 1,800 over last year.

I am pleased that the bill provides an increase in funding to $286 million for the Reading Excellence Initiative. This program supports literacy services for children, including local reading programs, teacher training, tutoring programs, and family literacy services. With this funding, all the remaining States and territories will be able to receive grants, bringing the number of children served to 3.1 million.

I am pleased that the budget agreement provides $872 million for educational technology that will be used to fund programs that train an additional 110,000 teachers to effectively use modern technology in the classroom. The bill also provides a $32 million increase for Community Technology Centers, creating up to 650 centers that provide access to computers and

Information Age tools to children and adults that cannot afford them at home.

The bill includes $125 million for the Small, Safe and Successful High Schools program, $80 million above the FY 2000 enacted level. The additional funds will help over 1,000 of the Nation's high schools implement smaller, more intimate learning environments through reforms like schools-within-schools and career academies.

I strongly support the $190 million provided in the legislation for the Charter Schools program. The additional funds will support the startup of nearly 500 new or redesigned schools that offer enhanced public school choice and the freedom to pursue innovative educational programs. At the beginning of my Administration, there was only one charter school. With this increase, the Charter School program will have supported over 2,800 charter schools.

I also support the $644 million provided in the bill for Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities programs. Within this amount, the bill contains $35 million to expand the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative; $50 million for the middle school Coordinator Initiative; and $10 million for Project School Emergency Response to Violence, to provide emergency assistance, such as crisis counseling and increased security, to school districts that experience a violent or traumatic crisis.

I strongly support the $7.4 billion for Special Education programs, an increase of $1.4 billion over the FY 2000 enacted level. Included in this total is $6.3 billion for Special Education State Grants. The bill also provides my requested increase for Grants for Infants and Families, for a total of $384 million.

I am very pleased that the bill contains a major increase in funding for Pell Grants. The bill provides $8.8 billion to support a $3,750 maximum award.

The bill includes $295 million for GEAR-UP. Compared to last year, this funding level provides needed college preparation services to nearly 500,000 more low-income students. Equally important is the funding provided in the bill for TRIO, which receives $730 million and will help 765,000 disadvantaged students attend and complete college.

I am pleased that the Congress fully funded my $1 billion request for Federal Work-Study. This level continues to enable one million students to work their way through college.

I am pleased that the legislation provides over $1 billion in increases to programs included in my Administration's Hispanic Education Action Plan (HEAP). These programs help to improve overall the educational outcomes of Latino and limited English proficient students by increasing their levels of academic achievement, high school graduation, post-secondary participation, and opportunities for lifelong learning.

I commend the Congress for including $70 million for my English Language/Civics Initiative, nearly triple last year's funding. This program helps States and communities provide recent immigrants and other limited English proficient individuals with expanded access to quality English-language instruction linked to civics education, including understanding the U.S. Government and public education systems, the workplace, and other key institutions of American life. Funding for this initiative in FY 2001 will provide services for almost 250,000 individuals.

The bill includes $306 million for Education Research, Statistics, and Assessment. The funds will provide additional support for the Interagency Educational Research Initiative, the new Birth Cohort of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, and new grants for the Initiative on Language Minority Students, a program that seeks better ways to educate children whose first language is not English.

The bill provides $11.9 billion in discretionary funds for the Department of Labor (DOL), a $0.7 billion increase above the FY 2000 enacted level. The funding provided supports my major proposals for job training, worker protection programs, and grants for working with developing countries to eliminate abusive child labor.

I am pleased that the legislation provides $1.6 billion for dislocated worker assistance. The program will provide training and re-employment services to 883,000 dislocated workers. Since FY 1993, my Administration has succeeded in almost tripling funding for, and participation in, programs that help dislocated workers return to work. In addition, the bill includes $35 million of the $50 million I requested to provide job-finding assistance to 156,000 unemployment insurance claimants to speed their reentry into the workforce.

The bill provides nearly my full request to expand services to job seekers at One-Stop centers as recently authorized in the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The bill funds

$150 million of the $154 million requested to provide improved access to One-Stops as well as continued support for electronic labor exchange and labor market information. The enrolled bill also fully funds my $20 million request for work incentive grants to help integrate employment services for persons with disabilities into the mainstream One-Stop system.

The bill provides $55 million for the Responsible Reintegration of Youth Offenders (RRYO) initiative. RRYO will bring roughly 10,300 young ex-offenders into the workplace through job training, placement, and support services, and by creating new partnerships between the criminal justice system and the WIA system. In addition, the enrolled bill includes $20 million to enable DOL to contribute to the Safe Schools/Healthy Students joint initiative with the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services that will expand efforts to address out-of-school youth.

The enrolled bill also provides additional funding for other youth job training programs. Specifically the bill includes $275 million for the Youth Opportunity Grants program to finance the third year of five-year competitive grants that provide education, training and support services to 63,000 youth in Empowerment Zones/Empowerment Communities (EZ/ECs). In addition, the bill provides $1.1 billion for the Youth Activities Formula Grants to provide training and employment opportunities to an estimated 660,000 youth in FY 2001.

I am disappointed that the Congress has not provided $255 million as requested for the Fathers Work/Families Win initiative. As a result, 80,000 non-custodial and low-income parents will not get the additional support to get a job or upgrade their skills.

The bill provides $148 million for the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, an increase of $78 million, or 112 percent, above last year's level. The legislation provides a total of $82 million for efforts to address international child labor issues. I am pleased that my $45 million request to expand the work of the International Labor Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor was fully funded and that the bill provides $37 million to support my new bilateral assistance initiative to improve access to basic education in developing countries.

The legislation also provides $23 million to establish the Office of Disability Policy, Evaluation and Technical Assistance. Headed by a new Assistant Secretary, this office will provide leadership in helping people with disabilities enter, re-enter, and remain in the workforce. In addition, I am pleased that the bill includes $60 million to administer the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program to help workers who have developed illnesses associated with nuclear weapons production and testing.

The bill provides the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with $49.9 billion in funding, $7.1 billion above the FY 2000 level.

I commend the Congress for fully funding my request of $817 million for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, bringing the total level of the block grant to $2 billion in FY 2001 and allowing nearly 150,000 additional children to be served. The bill also authorizes and provides $20 million for the Early Learning Opportunities Act, which is similar to my Early Learning Fund proposal. Early Learning funds may be used to improve child care quality and promote school readiness through activities such as training parents to facilitate cognitive development and offering training, recruitment, and retention incentives for child care professionals.

The enrolled bill provides the largest increase for Head Start in the program's history. An increase of $93 million over the FY 2000 enacted level will bring total program funding to $6.2 billion, adding approximately 60,000 new slots for low-income children and continuing on the path to serve one million kids by FY 2002.

I am pleased that the enrolled bill fully funds the Family Caregivers program established in the recently reauthorized Older Americans Act at $125 million. The program will provide information, respite care, and other support services to 250,000 families caring for loved ones who are ill or disabled.

The enrolled bill increases Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds by $300 million for total non-emergency program funding of $1.4 billion. These additional funds will help low-income families cope with continued high heating fuel prices. The bill also provides $300 million in contingent emergency funds.

I strongly support the increase of $2.5 billion, or 14 percent, over the FY 2000 level provided to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for biomedical research. The $20.3 billion will enable NIH to continue to pursue new methods

for diagnosing, treating, and curing diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and HIV/AIDS. The bill also provides $130 million for the newly-established Center for Research on Minority Health and Health Disparities, which will coordinate and support NIH's trans-Institute, billion dollar research portfolio on minority health.

The bill provides $3.9 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The increased funds will support: $163 million for domestic and global HIV/AIDS prevention efforts; $78 million to improve childhood immunizations; $67 million for infectious disease activities; $37 million for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health; and $18 million for breast and cervical cancer screening activities.

I am pleased that this legislation provides $357 million for the Congressional Black Caucus HIV/AIDS initiative, an increase of $105 million above the FY 2000 enacted level of $252 million. This will support an expanded scope of HIV/AIDS prevention, education, treatment, and outreach activities for minority community-based organizations working to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS in their communities.

I support the $5.6 billion provided to the Health Resources and Services Administration, $1 billion above the FY 2000 enacted level and $890 million above the FY 2001 request. Increases over the FY 2000 level include: $100 million to continue funding demonstration projects that address health care access for the uninsured; $15 million for Family Planning; $213 million for Ryan White activities; $150 million for Community Health Centers; and, $195 million for Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education. In addition, I am pleased that the bill provides $550 million for the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act so that additional relief payments may be made to hemophiliacs who contracted HIV/AIDS, and their families.

The bill provides $2.9 billion for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. Mental Health increases over the FY 2000 enacted level total $151 million, including $64 million for the Mental Health Block Grant, and $25 million in new targeted grants for early intervention and prevention, as well as local capacity expansion. Substance abuse increases over the FY 2000 level total $135 million, including $65 million for the Substance Abuse Block Grant, $42 million for substance abuse treatment grants and $28 million for substance abuse prevention grants.

The bill invests $50 million in Real Choice Systems Change Grants to help States develop comprehensive plans to care for persons with disabilities in the most appropriate setting. These funds would be used to do the following: conduct intensive outreach efforts to educate people with disabilities about the home and community-based options currently available to them; streamline application and eligibility processes for home- and community-based care services; and modify State policy that results in the unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities.

The bill includes $79 million for my Nursing Home Initiative, a $32 million, or 68 percent, increase over the FY 2000 enacted level. This funding provides $66 million for more rigorous inspections of nursing facilities and improved Federal oversight of nursing home quality, and grants to the States to develop ways for the disabled to move into community-based care rather than nursing homes. Congress also provided $13.5 million for HHS' Office of the General Counsel and Departmental Appeals Board to address the backlog of nursing home appeals and handle increased legal advice, litigation support, and hearings on nursing home enforcement cases.

The bill provides a program level of $270 million to the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, $70 million over the FY 2000 level, to expand research on the costs, uses, and quality of health care, and to enhance the Medical Expenditures Panel Surveys. This includes $50 million for research on patient safety and the reduction of medical errors and $10 million for research on health care worker safety.

I support the $326 million to expand HHS' bioterrorism initiative. Congress fully funded my request of $52 million for CDC's national pharmaceutical stockpile and provided $168 million for CDC to expand national, State, and local epidemiologic laboratories, surveillance capacity for biological agents, strategic planning, and capabilities to screen toxicants.

The bill provides the Health Care Financing Administration's (HCFA's) program management with a total program level of $2.3 billion, $173 million, or eight percent, over the FY 2000 enacted level. This funding will support HCFA's efforts to strengthen its oversight of Medicare

contractors and efforts to ensure the quality and safety of nursing homes, non-accredited hospitals and other facilities. Funding is included for the National Medicare Education Program that educates beneficiaries, enabling them to make informed health decisions on topics like managed care, long-term care and supplemental insurance.

I am pleased that bill language was modified to allow the Secretary of Commerce to issue regulations in January that will protect the endangered Steller sea lion, not undermine the Endangered Species Act, and allow an appropriate level of fishing to resume in the affected Alaska fisheries. In addition, the bill provides $50 million for research into the recovery of Steller sea lions, and for economic assistance to Alaskan fishing communities that may experience economic impacts from the new regulations. The bill sustains my Administration's longstanding commitment to protect the Nation's environmental laws from inappropriate and unrelated anti-environmental riders.

I am pleased that the bill does not include language prohibiting the promulgation of the Department of Labor's ergonomics standard. The standard, which was promulgated last month, seeks to prevent work-related injuries arising from risk factors such as repetitive motion or overexertion.

The bill extends the current availability period for Welfare-to-Work grant funds for an additional two years, allowing grantees the chance to take advantage of eligibility changes made in the FY 2000 Appropriations Act.

I am also pleased that the bill includes a provision to compensate beneficiaries of Federal programs who experienced a shortfall in their benefit payments as a result of the understatement of the Consumer Price Index that occurred in 1999. The bill provides that any compensation payments will be disregarded as income for purposes of means-tested programs. The bill also provides that the corrected CPI series for 1999 be taken into account for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code, effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2000.

I am very pleased that the legislation does not include language that would have restricted public health funds for emergency contraception health services in primary and secondary schools. I was strongly opposed to this language because decisions about what kinds of services should be provided in school settings are more appropriately left to local decisionmakers, who can take into consideration their community's health needs.

I am very disappointed that Congress has mandated that all schools and libraries receiving Federal educational technology funds implement Internet filtering technology. Under the provisions of this bill, noncompliant schools and libraries will be ineligible for E-rate discounts and other Federal technology funds. My Administration has actively promoted the protection of children from harmful materials on the Internet, and I have been a strong supporter of locally driven efforts to make our schools and libraries safe portals for students to explore the World Wide Web. Because of the importance of protecting children from inappropriate material online, I believe that local development and implementation of an Internet-acceptable use plan is a more effective, appropriate solution than mandatory filtering for ensuring comprehensive protection while meeting the diverse needs of local schools and libraries. Although I am pleased that the required technological protection measures will be included as part of a locally developed policy, I would have preferred to allow communities more flexibility in developing appropriate policies by not imposing this potentially expensive and restrictive requirement. I am also concerned that because current technology may not be able to differentiate between harmful and non-harmful expression with precision, these provisions may have the effect of limiting access to valuable information in a manner that offends our tradition of freedom of speech. We will seek to implement the policy in a way that maximizes local flexibility and minimizes local burdens within the framework of the statute.

The bill includes a provision making clear that religious organizations may qualify for substance abuse prevention and treatment grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on the same basis as other nonprofit organizations. The Department of Justice advises, however, that this provision would be unconstitutional to the extent that it were construed to permit governmental funding of organizations that do not or cannot separate their religious activities from their substance abuse treatment and prevention activities that are supported by SAMHSA aid. Accordingly, I construe the bill as forbidding the funding of

such organizations and as permitting Federal, State, and local governments involved in disbursing SAMHSA funds to take into account the structure and operations of a religious organization in determining whether such an organization is constitutionally and statutorily eligible to receive funding.

I am also pleased that, unlike earlier versions of the bill, the final bill excludes or modifies many provisions that would have changed our environmental protection and natural resource conservation laws without adequate public and congressional scrutiny. In particular, I am satisfied that a provision restricting the regulation of snowmobile use in national parks has been sufficiently modified to allow completion of a pending rule for Yellowstone National Park and two adjacent parks, so long as that rule does not reduce snowmobile use during the first two winter seasons.

The bill fully funds my IRS modernization and reform program for FY 2001. However, Congress denied a requested FY 2002 advance appropriation of $422 million for IRS technology modernization. In addition, the bill provides only $141 million of my $225 million request for enhanced staffing to improve tax compliance and customer service activities.

I am pleased that the bill includes $185 million for the Office of National Drug Control Policy's National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, as well as $207 million for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas.

I am very disappointed that the bill continues objectionable current law provisions that restrict Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) coverage for abortions except in the cases where the life of the mother is endangered or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. The bill continues current law requirements that health plans participating in the FEHBP that provide prescription drug coverage must also provide prescription contraceptive coverage.

I am pleased that the bill provides funding and authority for priority agricultural conservation programs, including $26 million for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and authority to spend existing funds on the Farmland Protection Program. These programs will improve our environment and protect our Nation's open spaces while boosting farm income.

There are several authorization bills included in H.R. 4577, including the Medicare, Medicaid, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Benefits Improvement and Protection Act. This legislation provides States with increased allotments aimed at assisting hospitals serving significant numbers of low-income and uninsured patients; makes it easier for States to enroll uninsured children in Medicaid and SCHIP by permitting enrollment through schools, child support enforcement agencies, homeless shelters, program eligibility offices, and certain other sites; increases Medicaid reimbursements for federally qualified health centers and rural health centers; and directs HHS to issue the final Medicaid upper payment limit rule by December 31, 2000. The bill provides an additional $70 million in FYs 2001 and 2002 and $100 million in FY 2003 for the special diabetes programs at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Indian Health Service.

The legislation also includes a two-year extension of the medical savings accounts program, which allows employers to make tax exempt contributions on behalf of employees to cover medical expenses.

I am disappointed that the bill fails to include my proposals to expand coverage to uninsured families; restore Medicaid and SCHIP benefits to immigrant pregnant women, children, and disabled individuals; and improve equity in Medicaid by allowing States to serve individuals in their homes and communities rather than in nursing homes. I am also disappointed that the bill does not include my proposal to bring payment rates for hospital services in Puerto Rico more in line with the rates that apply elsewhere in the country.

H.R. 4577 includes tax incentives and programs to help low-income people in distressed communities by encouraging private sector partners to increase investment and growth in low-income communities.

I am pleased that the bill includes the creation of a New Market tax incentive for investors that invest in equity investments in qualified low-income communities; an increase in the low-income housing volume caps for tax-exempt private activity bonds; and an expansion of eligibility for the brownfields tax incentive to cover all contaminated sites certified by a State, other than sites on the Superfund National Priorities List, and an extension through 2003.

The bill amends the Commodity Exchange Act (CEA) to provide regulatory relief for investors and authorize appropriations of such sums

as are necessary to carry out the CEA for FYs 2001–2005. The bill would deregulate most over-the-counter derivatives (financial instruments whose value depends on the value or change in value of an underlying security, commodity, or asset) traded electronically between sophisticated entities such as banks, broker/dealers, and high-net-worth individuals.

I support the reauthorization of a number of Small Business Administration programs in the bill, including my proposal to increase the number of small loans below $150,000, reduce borrower fees, and improve technical assistance programs available to microentrepreneurs. The bill would also extend the authority for a number of expiring programs such as the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Disadvantaged Business programs. Finally, the bill authorizes the New Markets Venture Capital, New Markets Technical Assistance, and BusinessLINC programs, which provide authority for $250 million in public and private capital for rural and urban small business investments, technical assistance, and mentoring services for aspiring entrepreneurs. The bill also authorizes establishment of a set-aside program for women-owned small businesses that are classified as economically disadvantaged or in an industry in which women owned businesses are substantially underrepresented.

I am pleased that this legislation amends immigration provisions included in the Commerce/Justice/State Appropriations Act thereby easing immigration restrictions on an estimated 700,000 immigrant families living in the United States. The provisions would extend section 245(i) until April 30, 2001, to allow aliens (and their spouses and children) who apply for an adjustment of status or a labor certification to remain in the United States until such petition is approved. Additionally, the provisions would create a new, temporary non-immigrant visa for spouses and children of spouses of legal permanent residents and U.S. citizens seeking to enter the United States to await approval of legal permanent resident status for themselves (the "V" visa). The provisions would also allow certain individuals who were not granted amnesty under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 who are currently seeking such relief through the courts to apply for permanent residency. While I am disappointed that the legislation fails to eliminate the disparate treatment under our immigration laws sought for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, Haitians, and Liberians and does not provide any relief for deserving individuals affected by changes in the 1996 immigration law, it is the best compromise that could be reached after several rounds of intense negotiations.

H.R. 4577 also includes authorization for the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), a newly created agency that will focus $20 million for area development and technical assistance on distressed counties in the Mississippi Delta Region. The authorization will permit the establishment of the DRA which will work to improve the economic status of some of our Nation's most impoverished communities.

There are provisions in the Act that purport to condition my authority or that of certain officers to use funds appropriated by the Act on the approval of congressional committees. My Administration will interpret such provisions to require notification only, since any other interpretation would contradict the Supreme Court ruling in *INS v. Chadha*.

Section 620 of the Treasury/General Government Appropriations section of the Act prohibits the use of appropriations to pay the salary of any Federal Government officer or employee who interferes with certain communications between Federal employees and Members of Congress. I do not interpret this provision to detract from my constitutional authority and that of my appointed heads of departments to supervise and control the operations and communications of the executive branch, including the control of privileged and national security information.

Another provision of the Act raises Appointments Clause concerns. Subsection 111(b) of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2000 portion of the bill provides joint grant-making authority to the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, who is a constitutional officer, and to two other officials, who are not. In order to avoid an Appointments Clause problem raised by this provision, I will interpret that subsection as giving the Administrator the final say concerning selection of grant recipients after consultation with the other designated officials.

Section 313 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations portion of the Act would establish in the legislative branch a "Center for Russian Leadership Development." The principal function of the Center would be to administer a grant program to support visits to this country by Russian nationals. I fully support the goals

of this grant program. The Department of Justice advises me, however, that because the program is not administered by the executive branch, it is unconstitutional. I urge the Congress to enact new legislation reassigning the Center to an executive branch agency.

Several provisions of the Act also raise concerns under the Recommendations Clause. These provisions purport to require a Cabinet Secretary or other Administration official to make recommendations to Congress on changes in law. To the extent that those provisions would require Administration officials to provide Congress with policy recommendations or draft legislation, I direct these officials to treat any such requirements as precatory.

In addition, I hereby designate the following amounts as emergency requirements for the Department of Defense, pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control act of 1985, as amended: $100,000,000 provided to the Overseas Contingency Operations Transfer account and $150,000,000 provided to the Operations and Maintenance, Navy account in H.R. 5666, as enacted by H.R. 4577.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 21, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4577, approved December 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106–554. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 22.

Message on the Observance of Eid Al-Fitr, 2000

December 22, 2000

On behalf of the American people, it is my honor to congratulate Muslims around the world on the occasion of the Eid Al-Fitr.

Whether native-born or immigrants from Africa, the Middle East, Asia, or Europe, Muslims now represent an increasingly important element in the tapestry of American society. Because of the growth of Islam in our country, American citizens of all faiths are coming to appreciate the significance of Ramadan as Muslims fast, pray, and rededicate themselves to the teachings of the Qur'an.

United in faith, America's Muslims are also united in their commitment to building a society rich in diversity and grounded in mutual respect. I believe America is made stronger by the core values of Islam—commitment to family, compassion for the disadvantaged, and respect for difference.

There is special significance this year as the three Abrahamic faiths all celebrate holidays in the span of the same week. As Jews celebrate Hanukkah, Christians celebrate Christmas, and now Muslims celebrate Eid Al-Fitr. The Qur'an, the Bible, and the Torah all call on believers to love one's neighbors and to welcome strangers. The Qur'an tells us that we are all People of the Book and that we share a common humanity and dignity.

As the appearance of the new moon brings to a close this holy month, we all pray that it will usher in a year of reconciliation and peace. The First Lady and I wish all Muslims a blessed celebration of the Eid Al-Fitr and peace, health, and prosperity in the years ahead.

Eid mubarak.

BILL CLINTON

Message on the Observance of Christmas, 2000
December 22, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Christmas.

At this joyous season each year, we savor our treasured Christmas traditions: a favorite ornament placed carefully on the tree, candles in the windows, a wreath on the door, family and friends gathered to exchange not only material gifts, but also the gifts of love and laughter. But amidst all these traditions, we remember that the true message of Christmas is in the Child whose birth we celebrate—the living proof of God's mercy and unending love. Christ's message of renewal and reconciliation is as fresh and powerful today as it was on that first Christmas two thousand years ago.

For Americans of many faiths, this is a season of renewal—of light shining through the darkness, of despair transformed to hope. This year, Christmas is celebrated during the same week as Jews celebrate Hanukkah and Muslims celebrate the Eid Al-Fitr—a powerful and moving reminder that followers of the three Abrahamic faiths share fundamental values: a reverence for our Creator, a belief in human dignity, and a conviction that we must love our neighbors as ourselves. By building on these shared values, we can create a future where all God's children live together in peace and understanding.

As Hillary, Chelsea, and I enjoy our last Christmas in the White House, we extend best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration and for peace and happiness in the years to come.

BILL CLINTON

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa, 2000
December 22, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Kwanzaa.

One of the best ways we can shape the future is to preserve what we value of our past. The celebration of Kwanzaa is a wonderful example of this endeavor. With its focus on the values that have sustained African Americans through the centuries—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—Kwanzaa also emphasizes the importance of strong families and communities to our success as a nation in the years to come.

African Americans have a proud history and a rich heritage. During this holiday season, as Americans of many different back-grounds remember and rejoice in their cultural and religious traditions, let us all give thanks for the diversity that is among America's greatest strengths, and let us unite around the shared dreams and values that bind us together as one nation.

Hillary joins me in sending best wishes to all for a memorable Kwanzaa and for peace and happiness in the years to come.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

The President's Radio Address
December 23, 2000

Good morning. This weekend we not only celebrate the first Christmas of the new millennium; we also celebrate an America blessed with the gift of unprecedented prosperity and progress.

We're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in our Nation's history, with record surpluses, more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in history, and the lowest Hispanic- and African-American unemployment ever recorded.

We have strengthened the cornerstone of the American dream along the way: the chance to own a home. Today, we have the highest homeownership in our Nation's history with record levels of minority homeownership. And more Americans than ever are celebrating that gift this holiday season.

Over the last 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to give nearly 10 million more families the opportunity to own their own homes by cutting redtape, speeding up loans, making financing available for families who were too often locked out of the market, creating more opportunity and choice for families who live in assisted housing.

In the last 3 years, our administration has secured nearly 200,000 new housing vouchers to help hard-pressed families find decent and affordable housing. I want to especially thank our HUD Secretary, Andrew Cuomo, for his extraordinary commitment to making affordable housing accessible to citizens who need it most.

Today we're introducing new measures to more fully integrate public housing, so families from different social and economic walks of life have the chance to live in diverse communities. In addition to expanding opportunity for more Americans, this will also help to break down destructive barriers of race and class.

We're also taking action to increase loan limits from the Federal Housing Administration by nearly 9 percent to help more working families to own their first home. Since 1993, the FHA program has given more than 4 million Americans that chance. We have made real progress.

But too many Americans still will be spending this Christmas without a roof over their heads. That's why we've helped to move thousands of families off the street. Yet, there still are more than a half million men, women, and children whose only home every night is a neighborhood shelter or a park bench.

In this time of unparalleled prosperity, we must do more to help them. Today I'm pleased to announce $1 billion in new grants to help more than 200,000 homeless people along the path to self-sufficiency. This is the largest amount ever dedicated to helping homeless Americans rebuild their lives.

The grants will fund proven successful programs like Continuum of Care, which helps homeless families with transitional and permanent housing, drug treatment and medication, job training, and child care. It also funds efforts like the Emergency Shelter Grants program, which provides for transitional housing and helps communities maintain emergency shelters.

Taken together, these grants are a gift that will give back to us in many ways. They will empower communities to employ innovative solutions to helping homeless adults and their children, people like Juanita Price, a recovering drug addict who once spent her nights in abandoned buildings and hollowed-out cars. Thanks to the Continuum of Care program, Juanita found the support she needed and turned her life around. Today, she's got a steady job, an apartment, and she's studying to be a nurse at Howard University here in Washington, DC.

There are lots and lots of people like Juanita who could use a helping hand. Today we're lending that hand by giving more homeless Americans the tools they need to succeed, so that this Christmas they can find warmth inside a home, not from the top of a steam grate.

It is said in the Scripture: "I will appoint a place for my people so they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more." Today, in this season of hope and giving, we should redouble our efforts to ensure that every American can have a place of his or her own.

The steps we're taking now will create new opportunity for the homeless, for hard-pressed working families, and for those struggling to buy their first home. I can't think of any better way to celebrate this holiday season.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:40 p.m. on December 22 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Resolution of Puerto Rico's Status
December 23, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Resolution of Puerto Rico's Status

Although Puerto Rico was acquired in connection with the Spanish-American War and United States citizenship is granted to persons born on the islands, Puerto Rico's ultimate status has not been determined. Until that issue is resolved, questions remain about how United States economic and social policies should apply to the citizens of Puerto Rico.

Further, although our citizens in Puerto Rico have been granted the exercise of authority on local matters similar to that of citizens of a State, they do not have voting representation in the Federal Government.

All three of Puerto Rico's major political parties are based on different visions of what the options for a fully democratic status are, and what the best status would be. And all advocate a substantial change in the islands' status. The Commonwealth held a referendum on options for its future status in December 1998, including the current governing arrangement, and other recognized options, but a majority of the vote was for a "None of the Above" column.

Much of the debate on the issue concerns what options are available to Puerto Rico, in light of the Constitution and the basic laws and policies of the United States. The elected representatives of the people of Puerto Rico have, therefore, repeatedly petitioned the Federal Government to clarify the islands' status options as well as the process by which Puerto Ricans can determine the islands' future status.

The United States has a responsibility to answer such questions. Successive Presidents, and the Congress in 1998, have supported the people of Puerto Rico in determining their status preference from among options that are not incompatible with the Constitution and basic laws and policies of the United States. I have made it the policy of the executive branch to work with the leaders of the Commonwealth and the Congress to enable Puerto Ricans to choose their future status. We also have the responsibility to help Puerto Ricans obtain the necessary transitional legislation toward a new status, if chosen.

To ensure that the Federal Government continues to address the fundamental question concerning the islands until it is resolved, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including Public Law 106–346, I have today issued an Executive Order establishing the President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status (President's Task Force) and further direct as follows:

1. The Co-Chairs of the President's Task Force shall conduct an ongoing dialogue with the Governor and Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico's major political parties and other groups that advocate a change in the islands' status, and the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the House of Representatives Committee on Resources and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. This dialogue shall focus on the options for Puerto Rico's future status and the process by which Puerto Ricans can realize such an option. It shall seek to facilitate communications among the offices that the aforementioned officials represent on matters relating to the status of the Commonwealth, and ensure official attention to, and facilitate action on, such matters. In particular, the dialogue shall seek to clarify the options for Puerto Rico's future status and enable Puerto Ricans to choose among those options.
2. The Co-Chairs of the President's Task Force shall monitor the expenditure of funds for public education on and a public choice among Puerto Rico's status options pursuant to Public Law 106–346. This monitoring shall include ensuring that educational materials are accurate, objective, and nonpartisan and that they are consistent with the standards set forth in the Executive Order entitled "Establishment of the President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status."

3. The heads of executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the Co-Chairs in fulfilling the assignments provided for herein and in the accompanying Executive Order.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Christmas Greeting to the Nation
December 24, 2000

The President. On this holiest of holidays, Hillary and I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas. Tonight we gather with family and friends to reflect on our good fortune, rejoice in the memories of the year past, and look forward with hope to the days ahead.

And we give thanks to America's men and women in uniform, who are spending this holiday protecting freedom around the world.

The First Lady. And we also remember those who are too often left behind, because Christmas isn't just about getting gifts; it's about the miracle of giving them. As we enjoy our last Christmas in the White House, the President, Chelsea, and I are profoundly grateful for the gift you've given our family, the privilege of serving your family these last 8 years.

The President. So from our family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The greeting was videotaped at approximately 4 p.m. in the Map Room on December 19 for later broadcast, and the transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 22 but was embargoed for release until 12:01 a.m., December 24. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line.

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Statement on Signing the Shark Finning Prohibition Act

December 26, 2000

I have signed H.R. 5461, the "Shark Finning Prohibition Act." Shark-finning is the taking of a shark, removing the fin, and returning the carcass to the sea. This legislation prohibits shark-finning in all U.S. waters; provides for initiation of international negotiations to prohibit shark-finning; and authorizes research to conserve shark populations.

The Administration has actively supported the prohibition of shark-finning because of the harmful impact on sharks and shark populations. The practice has been administratively banned in the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean Sea. H.R. 5461 will establish the ban in law and extend it to the Pacific Ocean.

The United States has been a leading proponent of international shark conservation at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and has advocated prohibiting wasteful fishing practices, including shark finning. We have also demonstrated considerable leadership in other international fora to conserve sharks and ban shark-finning. In the Eastern Pacific, the United States has been active in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission in dealing effectively with issues such as shark management on the high seas. And the United States has been participating, along with thirty other countries, in the High-Level Multilateral Conferences for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Species in the Western and Central Pacific. Finally, the United States plans to continue in its efforts at the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas to obtain a proposal that would ban shark-finning, as well as implement a variety of conservation measures.

Only through international cooperation can effective management be ensured for sharks, especially on the high seas. The United States will intensify efforts to convince other countries to join in prohibiting shark finning, consistent with the goals of H.R. 5461.

I note, however, that two provisions of the bill raise constitutional concerns. Because the Constitution vests the conduct of foreign affairs with the President, Congress may not dictate the executive branch's negotiations with foreign governments (section 5). Because the Constitution preserves to the President the authority to decide whether and when the executive branch should recommend new legislation, Congress may not require the President or his subordinates to present such recommendations (section 6). I therefore direct executive branch officials to carry out these provisions in a manner that is consistent with the President's constitutional responsibilities.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 26, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5461, approved December 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106–557.

Remarks on the Recess Appointment of Roger L. Gregory to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and an Exchange With Reporters

December 27, 2000

The President. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Thirty-nine years ago the great grandson of a slave became the first African-American to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. In 1961, amidst fierce opposition, President John F. Kennedy appointed Thurgood Marshall as only the second African-American to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals. In doing so, President Kennedy not only ensured that the people of the Second Circuit would be served by an excellent jurist; he also took a big step forward in America's ongoing efforts for equal opportunity in every aspect of our life, including our courts.

Judge Marshall went on to become one of our Nation's most distinguished jurists, highlighted by his 1967 appointment by President Johnson as the first African-American Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

President Kennedy's action was in the grand tradition of Presidents of both parties, dating all the way back to George Washington, who have used their constitutional authority to bring much-needed balance and excellence to our Nation's courts.

Four of the first five African-Americans to ascend to the appellate bench were initially appointed in the same fashion that I employ today. To fill a similar gap in our judicial system, I am honored today to announce my appointment of Roger Gregory, one of Richmond's most respected trial lawyers, to fill an emergency vacancy on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. I will renominate him when Congress returns in January, and I urge the Senate to confirm him.

I take this extraordinary step for extraordinary reasons. First, the people of the fourth circuit are not receiving the judicial representation they deserve. The U.S. Judicial Conference has declared this seat a judicial emergency. It has been vacant for more than a decade. In the last 5 years alone, fourth circuit caseloads have increased more than 15 percent; yet one-third of its judgeships are vacant. This has left too many citizens waiting in line for justice. It is a travesty in a nation that prides itself in the fair and expeditious rule of law.

Second, it is unconscionable that the fourth circuit, with the largest African-American population of any circuit in our Nation, has never had an African-American appellate judge. As I said when I first nominated Roger Gregory, it is long past time to right that wrong. Justice may be blind, but we all know that diversity in the courts, as in all aspects of society, sharpens our vision and makes us a stronger nation.

Time and again, for 5 years now, I have tried and tried to fill these gaps in justice and equality. And time and again, for 5 years now, the Senate majority has stood in the way.

Third, and perhaps most important, Roger Gregory is the right man at the right time to fulfill this historic role. His life is a testament to the power and promise of the American dream.

The son of factory workers, he's the first in his family to graduate from high school, let alone college and law school. He graduated summa cum laude from Virginia State University and went on to earn his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He returned to teach at Virginia State, where his mother had once worked as a dormitory maid.

He is now one of Virginia's leading litigators and one of its most civic-minded citizens. He's earned high praise from all quarters, including the American Bar Association, religious leaders, and both of Virginia's Senators, Republican Senator John Warner and Democratic Senator Chuck Robb.

I want especially to thank Senator Robb for all he has done to make this day possible, for his tireless leadership in the Senate on this and so many other issues. He worked very hard to get back here today, but the bad weather down in Texas made it impossible. But I do want to thank him. He convinced me, and when I looked into the record I saw that it was absolutely true, that Roger Gregory would make an excellent judge for all the people of the fourth circuit.

In closing, let me say I have not come to this decision lightly. I have always respected the Senate's role in the appointment process. Indeed, I have made far fewer recess appointments than President Reagan did in his 8 years, and I believe that the record on that is perfectly clear. On the other hand, I am compelled by the facts and history to do what I can to remedy an injustice that for too long has plagued the fourth circuit, and that I have tried for too long to remedy in the established way.

As President, it is my constitutional responsibility to see that justice for all is not just what we promise; it's what we practice. That is the principle behind my appointment of this distinguished American today.

Mr. Gregory, congratulations.

[*At this point, Judge Gregory made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you.

I'll answer your questions—I can't resist injecting just a little bit of levity here. One of the things you want in a judge is someone who is well-organized and has a good sense of timing. His children are 18, 12, and 6. [*Laughter*] I think that ought to be evidence in the hearing on his appointment. [*Laughter*]

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, has the Mideast peace process been set back by the Palestinian reluctance to accept your proposals for an agreement with Israel? And do you have any indication of whether Thursday's summit is going to go forward?

The President. Well, let me say first, this is the first chance I've had to comment on the substance here, so—the parties are engaged in a renewed effort to reach an agreement. Based on the months and months of discussion I've had on these final status issues, we have attempted to narrow the range of outstanding matters in a way that meets the essential needs of both sides.

The whole question now is whether they agree to continue the negotiation on the basis of these ideas. We've got to bring this to a conclusion if we're going to continue. The issues are extremely difficult, but they are closer than they have ever been before. And I hope and pray they will seize this opportunity. And I think that is all I should say at this time. The less I say, the better.

Q. Is that right—you haven't heard from them? It sounds like you have not. The Palestinian officials have been saying they cannot accept your proposals.

The President. Well, we'll see what happens. Prime Minister Barak has said that he would accept and continue the negotiations if the Palestinians would, and we'll see what happens. There's a lot of things going on now, and will be in the next several days, and I think, as I said, the less I say about them all, the better.

Q. Have you received a response, an actual response from the Palestinians yet?

The President. I've said all I'm going to say about this today.

Shootings in Wakefield, Massachusetts

Q. Mr. President, what were your first thoughts when you saw the news of the shootings up in Massachusetts?

The President. Excuse me?

Q. The shootings in Massachusetts—I'm wondering what your first thoughts were and what you would say to the Nation in this holiday season with that happening.

The President. Well, I feel what I always feel when tragedy befalls Americans. And I hope that they will remember that this holiday season—interestingly enough in this season is not only the Christian season of Christmas, but the great Jewish and Muslim holy days happen to coincide in the same week this year. So I hope that we will remember, amidst our celebration, to pray for all the people involved.

Appointment of Roger Gregory

Q. Mr. President, do you think the issue of minority judgeships should be brought up in the Ashcroft confirmation hearings? And was this appointment in part aimed at highlighting that issue, and could, in fact, those hearings increase Mr. Gregory's chances of a confirmation?

The President. Well, I think I should answer the second question clearly. This is unrelated. I have tried for 5 years to put an African-American on the fourth circuit—for 5 years. Now—and for all the reasons that I made in my—stated in my remarks, I think it is most unfortunate that it has not been done, and I just determined to do it. It's just time to do it.

On the other question, that is something that the Senate will have to deal with. I'll be—it's not my appointment, and I won't be President,

and I don't think I should say any more about it. The Senate will do what it thinks is proper there.

North Korea

Q. The President of South Korea says he thinks it is unlikely you'll visit North Korea before January 20th. Have you moved any further toward a decision, whether to send an envoy there to see if North Korea is ready to reduce its missile program?

The President. We have been in touch with the North Koreans, and I may have some more to say about that. You know I just have a limited number of days here before I leave office, and I'm trying to get as much done as I can, including on that. I may have some more to say in the next few days about it.

Pharmaceuticals Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the reimportation-of-drugs law that you signed and which today you received the letter from Secretary Shalala—some folks are wondering why you would sign a law that contained such supposed flaws as were identified by the Secretary. Do you have any plan to negate, circumvent, or seek to counteract or overturn her ruling?

The President. Well, what she—I said when I signed the law that it was deeply flawed. She is required by law to make a determination that—two things—one, that the reimportation would not weaken the safety standards that we have for Americans and their pharmaceuticals. I think she could do that. But the second was, she had to make a determination by law that this would lower prices for American consumers. And the law was so different from the one we proposed and is so full of loopholes that she could not say in good conscience that she believed that the prices for consumers would go down, which is exactly what I warned when I asked them not to do this.

So what we'd like to see is a law that protects safety, that will lower consumer prices. I do think that people ought to be able to do this, and—I did before, but I will again, as soon as the Congress comes back—I'll send them a statement of the things that I believe would meet the standard of the law. I think that Secretary Shalala did what she thought the law required her to do, and since she couldn't certify that American consumers wouldn't get lower prices, she didn't want to hold out false hope and be involved in something she thought was not legitimate.

So I hope we can work this out. I do think there was in the last Congress, and I think there will be in this one, a majority for allowing Americans to reimport drugs under strict safety standards at lower prices. But I think we have to do it in a way where we don't promise something that doesn't materialize. That's all, really, that was at issue here. And I think—we'll send something up in the way of clarifying language as soon as they come back next week and see what we can do.

Incoming Bush Administration

Q. Mr. President, the Bush team has said that they're going through all of your Executive orders and your administration's regulations with a fine-tooth comb, and they may undo them. Are you concerned about this, and do you think that this recess appointment could go the way some of your Executive orders might?

The President. Well, they have very different views on the environment, particularly, and on some other issues. And when they take office, you have to expect them to do what they think is right. And you have to expect the people who disagree to disagree. And democracy will work its will, and then the citizens of the country will make their judgments.

All I can do is to do what I think is right. And these things that we've been doing lately are things that we've been working on for years. For example, the—let me just use one example—the medical privacy regulations, which I think are profoundly important, we tried to do that through legislation, and the Congress—to be fair to the Congress—adopted a bill which said, okay, we've got to get this work done by a certain date, but if we can't get it done, then the administration can take action. So when it became obvious that because of all the conflicting interest groups that it wouldn't be possible for them to do that, when the date elapsed, passed, we decided that we would take action, as the Congress had explicitly authorized us to do.

In terms of Secretary Browner's order regarding the trucks and the fuel, diesel fuel—which I think is a very, very important part of our clean air efforts, when asthma is the number one health problem among children in our country today—we've been working on that for years. That's not some sort of eleventh-hour thing. It's

just that we didn't—this is when we finished, and so we did it.

And I think we should just do what we think is right, and then when they get in, they'll do what they think is right. That's what democracy is all about. And they'll either—if they want to undo these things, then they'll either be able to do it or they won't, as the process plays itself out. That's the way the system works. And I have no problem with that. They have to do what they think is right, just like we do.

Presidential Pardons

Q. Mr. President, are you still considering providing pardons for some of the Whitewater figures?

The President. I expect to do another round of pardons, but I haven't had any meetings or made any decisions about any others yet. I just expect to do some. I have done—I haven't seen the final numbers, but before the last batch at least, I had done fewer than any President in almost 30 years. And part of that, frankly, is the way the system works, something I'm not entirely satisfied with. But I think that it is appropriate for the President to do them where circumstances are appropriate.

I have always thought that Presidents and Governors, when I was a Governor, should be quite conservative on commutations—that is, there needs to be a very specific reason if you reduce someone's sentence or let them out—but more broadminded about pardons because, in so many States in America, pardons are necessary to restore people's rights of citizenship. Particularly if they committed relatively minor offenses, or if some years have elapsed and they've been good citizens and there's no reason to believe they won't be good citizens in the future, I think we ought to give them a chance, having paid the price, to be restored to full citizenship.

And in that sense, I think that the word is almost misused, because it's not like you—you can't erase the fact that someone has been convicted and served his sentence, in the case of those who have. But there are many people, including more people than I get their applications to my desk—many people don't have lawyers; they don't even know to ask for a pardon—but they'd like to vote at election time; they'd like to be full citizens. And they're out there working hard and paying taxes, and they have paid the price.

So I would like to be in a position to do that. A lot of the folks—virtually all of them on the first list I released, 58, I think, were people that are unknown to most Americans. They're not people with money or power or influence. And I wish I could do some more of them—I'm going to try. I'm trying to get it out of the system that exists, that existed before I got here, and I'm doing the best I can.

Summation Speeches

Q. You gave wrap-up foreign policy speeches in London and in Nebraska. Do you have any other speeches, summation speeches planned for other policy areas?

The President. I expect I'll do one on domestic policy; I'm trying. We're looking for a venue, and after the first of the year, I'll probably do at least one more.

Thank you all very much.

Q. What about Gray Davis?

Q. Are you going to take reporters on your next househunting trip, Mr. President?

The President. [*Laughter*] I hope I don't have to do any more.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. Reporters referred to outgoing Senator John Ashcroft, the incoming Bush administration nominee for Attorney General; Gov. Gray Davis of California; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Judge Gregory.

Statement on the Death of Jason Robards

December 27, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Jason Robards. An accomplished actor, Mr. Robards was a commanding presence on the big screen and a passionate force on the stage.

Jason Robards' numerous accomplishments represent the esteem in which his colleagues and his fans held him. After winning two Oscars and a Tony award, Hillary and I had the privilege of honoring Jason's long career both in 1997 with a National Medal of Arts and again in 1999 with the Kennedy Center Honors award for his lifetime of contribution to American arts and culture. Mr. Robards was also a hero in his pre-acting days. Surviving the attack on Pearl Harbor, he earned the Navy Cross—the second-highest naval decoration.

Mr. Robards will be missed by all of us who cherished him and his work. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Lois, and their six children.

Statement on Signing the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001

December 27, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5630, the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001." I am pleased that the Act no longer contains the badly flawed provision that would have made a felony of unauthorized disclosures of classified information, and that was the basis for my veto of a previous version of this legislation. I thank the Congress for working with me to produce a bill that I can sign.

I appreciate the inclusion of section 308 concerning the applicability of Federal laws implementing international treaties and other international agreements to United States intelligence activities. Section 308 applies only to intelligence activities of the United States and addresses particular concerns regarding the potential application of future United States domestic laws implementing international agreements to otherwise lawful and appropriately authorized intelligence activities. This provision does not in any way address the proper interpretation of preexisting implementing legislation or other United States statutes, nor does it in any way address other United States Government activities.

Title VIII of the Act sets forth requirements governing the declassification and disclosure of Japanese Imperial Army records, as defined by the Act. The executive branch has previously been declassifying United States Government records related to Japanese war crimes under the provisions of the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, Public Law 105–246; consequently, I understand that title VIII does not apply to records undergoing declassification pursuant to the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act.

Finally, I acknowledge the efforts of the Congress to bring about a more capable, secure, and effective Diplomatic Telecommunications System. I am concerned, however, that the proposed changes for the Diplomatic Telecommunications Service Program Office do not yet represent the best methods for improving the management of this system. As the executive branch implements this legislation, I encourage the Congress to work with the executive branch to consider alternatives for further improvements.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 27, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5630, approved December 27, was assigned Public Law No. 106–567.

Statement on Signing the Omnibus Indian Advancement Act
December 27, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 5528, the "Omnibus Indian Advancement Act." This Act is the product of lengthy negotiations among the Congress, my Administration, tribal governments and other interested parties. I commend all of the participants in these negotiations for their work in producing a bill that will benefit many Indian communities.

This Act emphasizes my Administration's commitment to self-determination and self-governance of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian people. In particular, the Act establishes an American Indian Education Foundation to encourage and accept private gifts to help further the education of Indian children attending Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in grades K-12; offers increased economic development opportunities for Indian tribes; authorizes new activities to help support and improve tribal governance, including the new Native Nations Institute at the Morris K. Udall Foundation; provides for the settlement of an historic land case in California; restores and reestablishes the Federal and trust relationship to two separate tribal groups; improves housing assistance to and affordable housing for Native Americans and Native Hawaiians; and includes other benefits and authorities for various American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities.

Section 1104 of this bill raises a constitutional concern insofar as it could be read to interfere with my constitutional authority to determine when and whether to recommend legislation to the Congress. I will therefore treat it as precatory.

This Act demonstrates our commitment to providing more support to the aboriginal peoples of this Nation. I am pleased to sign it into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 27, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 5528, approved December 27, was assigned Public Law No. 106–568.

Statement on Signing the Assistance for International Malaria Control Act
December 27, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2943, the "Assistance for International Malaria Control Act." In doing so, however, I note that section 405(b) of the Act purports to restrict the President's constitutional authority to appoint "Officers of the United States" by requiring that individuals be appointed to the Pacific Charter Commission only "after consultation" with specified members of the Congress and by requiring that not more than four of the appointees "may be affiliated with the same political party." Because the work of the Commission may interfere with the constitutional authority vested in the President to conduct foreign affairs, the restrictions in section 405(b) are constitutionally problematic and I therefore construe these restrictions to be precatory only.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 27, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2943, approved December 27, was assigned Public Law No. 106–570.

Interview With the New York Times
November 30, 2000

Vietnam and China

Q. Thank you for seeing us. As you probably know, we're preparing to write this fairly lengthy series that looks back over the past 8 years. And we felt we'd start with the Vietnam trip, because it seemed at moments as if this was sort of an effort to put bookmarks on your approach to defining the world these days. When you came into office, there was still a trade embargo on Vietnam. As you leave, you have used every one of your economic and diplomatic levers to draw them out. And we saw the response on the streets.

Looking back now, are you convinced that this approach that you developed of using this web of economic engagement as thoroughly as you can, not only in Vietnam but with China, attempts with North Korea, has actually worked, and that's proved your thesis that as you engage more economically, you actually do bring countries around to democracy—this despite the Vietnam and Chinese examples?

The President. Well, the short answer is, yes, I think it is—I think it will work. But I think it's a question of whether you—whether we're prepared to pay the price of time and what the options are. I don't think there's any way for us to bring openness and freedom to China or to Vietnam more quickly than the one we've adopted. I don't think that either country—I don't think we have any levers of pressure, for example, that would bring change more quickly. And I think the downsides of adopting a different approach are greater than the upsides.

I think the—first, let me back up and say, my whole view of this period in which we're living is that the world is becoming exponentially more interdependent, and with all kinds of new opportunities and all kinds of new dangers—that if you want to make the most of an interdependent world, you have to let people within your country have more freedom over the basic aspects of their lives.

Now, in different ways, the Chinese and the Vietnamese have taken the position that they're going to allow a lot more personal freedom. In China they even have a million village elections now. But they're going to try to keep a one-party state with control of the political apparatus, with the intent at restrictions on political speech and freedom, and regrettably, often religious speech and freedom.

So the question is, how can we respond to the good things about the decisions they've made, and how can we hasten the day when, from our point of view, they'll give up a lot of the bad things? And it seems to me that this sort of combination of economic and political integration and cooperation, where possible—for example, we cooperated with the Chinese in dealing with a lot of the North Korean issues; we cooperated with the Vietnamese most clearly in the MIA area—and then having a dialog and having fairly frank and open disagreements, where we still have disagreements—which you saw in China with my press conference there and the speech I gave at the university in Vietnam—I think that's the best way to do this.

It depends on whether you think—I don't think freedom is inevitable or the triumph of democracy is inevitable. But I think it is rendered far more likely by the power of our example and the strength of our engagement and having more oneness, having more people in these other countries who come from the United States and from other places where people are freer.

So I think that, from my point of view, that it will be a successful policy. But it has to be pursued, and we have to be patient, and we have to realize that we have limited control over other people's lives.

Q. What kind of timeframes are we talking about for China and Vietnam, do you think?

The President. I don't know. I think, if you look at Vietnam, it was really interesting to me when I was there to see the differences in the approaches taken sort of in gradations from the mayor of Ho Chi Minh City to the Prime Minister to the President to the General Secretary of the party. And if you—the way they—even the way they talked was so much a function of their responsibilities and the extent to which they are dealing with the emerging world, I was actually, on balance, quite encouraged by what I saw there and where I think it's going.

In China, I think it's really just a matter of time. If you go to—as I've said, you've got a lot of different things going on in China. It's a vast country. But if you go to Shanghai, or just go out in those villages—like I went to a couple of those little villages, where they elected their mayors and all—I think there's more and more personal freedom, freedom of movement, freedom of choice of career, freedom in educational choices, things that did not exist before. And I think that eventually the country will become more open and free if we do the right things and they do the right things. There is always the possibility you will have people get in office in either country that will make mistakes. But I think that the policy is right, and the direction is right.

Q. Mr. President, sort of coming back to Vietnam from a domestic side, were there ways in which you felt your going there and the trip had brought you full circle kind of culturally and politically? Did you think there was any way in which you'd brought a certain kind of closure to your own personal relationship with, obviously, that incredibly tense period in our national life of 30 years ago, or for the country, at a time when, for admittedly very different reasons, the country once again seems to be somewhat politically polarized and divided?

The President. Well, it was interesting—I had this encounter with the General Secretary of the party, sitting there with Pete Peterson, who was a POW for 6½ years. And he is, parenthetically, not just our Ambassador but a very good personal friend of mine—we've been close for years—and a man who is astonishingly free of resentment and demons, given what he went through.

But—and some of this has been reported, but basically, the General Secretary was saying—he was the most hard-line of all the people I talked to—and he said, "Well, we can talk all about the future here, but we've got to get the past straight. And we didn't invade your country; you invaded our country, and it was terrible. And I'm so glad that so many of the American people opposed it. I'm glad you opposed it. I'm glad the people were in the streets. But it happened, and we've got to somehow work this out."

And I looked at him, and I said, "If you want to talk about history, we can, but"—and it's true that we were deeply divided over the war. I said, "Most of our division related to what the character of the conflict was and what if any impact we could have on it." But I said, "Mr. Chairman, we were not France. We were not colonialists. We were not imperialists. And people like Ambassador Peterson that served 6½ years in one of your prisons, they came here believing they were fighting for freedom and self-determination for the South Vietnamese."

I said, "Now your country is unified, and you are at peace. But you still have to face the age-old questions: How much of the economy should the state control? How much should be in private hands? How much personal freedom should people have, and how many decisions should be made by their families, their villages, or the state?" And I said, "I think it would be better if we had these discussions looking to the future." It was a fascinating encounter.

But for me, I think if it was liberating, it was because it sort of—well, let me back up. I asked Pete Peterson a question, because when we came there—and we had the state arrival the next morning, and then we were standing there and they were playing the anthem, and they were playing—all these things were happening. For about 15 minutes, I was just—all I could think about were my four high school classmates who died in Vietnam and my Oxford roommate who committed suicide. That's all I could think about for about 15 minutes. And then finally I was sort of—it came time to be President, and I sort of snapped out of it.

So after this arrival ceremony, I asked Pete, I said, "Pete, how long were you here before you quit thinking about what happened to you before?" He said, "Thank God, only about an hour." It was very interesting. I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, I couldn't let—I mean, how could I not think about it? And then we had a couple of crises, mini-crises, that I had to be Ambassador to deal with, and I got out of it." He said it never happened again. He said, "I'm okay now. I just get up every day and go to work, and it's part of my past and part of my life. We're dealing with the future."

I think that's how I felt. After about 15 or 20 minutes, I was into what was going on. I was grateful that we were where we are with them, and I thought we had the basis to build a new future.

And then the next day, when we went out to the site, with the two——

Q. That was quite a day.

The President. Yes. It was amazing, wasn't it? Let me tell you one thing that I took away from all this. Because we've been working on this for 8 years now, and our point person on this, nonmilitary point person, has been Hershel Gober, when he was Deputy Director of Veterans Affairs, and then Director. And he did his tours in Vietnam. He was in two branches of the military service. He has a real feel for where all the veterans are. But one of the things I was talking to him about is that when we started this 8 years ago, and our relationships with the Vietnamese were somewhat more halting, they kind of wondered why we were so obsessed with finding the remains of 2,500 people, because they had still 300,000 people that they were missing, and they know a lot of them are just blown away in bombs, and they'll probably never find them.

And the feeling was that the Government of Vietnam thought that this was—was this real, or are we just so obsessed with individual people, and why do we care this much about it? But the more we worked on it, and then we started sharing data with them—you know, I took 350,000 pages of material there, and we're going to try to give them another million pages of material before the end of the year—I could never believe that the Vietnamese people felt that way, because it's one of the most family-oriented cultures in the world.

And if you read that wonderful novel by the North Vietnamese soldier, "The Sorrows of War"—you've seen it?—I mean, there's one whole section in there where this guy who was a veteran from the time he was a teenager, at the end of the war, in '75, he is in charge of a unit trying to find information about people who are missing. And so to me, one of the things that I got out of this, it really confirmed my hunch that the Vietnamese people, they care a lot about this, too. They sympathize and respect what we're trying to do. And they're glad we're trying to help them do the same thing, even though their losses were staggering and far greater than ours on any scale of things.

The integrity of the event was amazing. When I looked at all those villagers out there, stomping around in the mud, trying to find pieces of metal to recover the proof that those two young men's daddy was in the ground there—I mean, it was just an overwhelming emotional experience. But I think the point I want to get to is that I think that this is not a Western or an American obsession. This is something that they feel every bit as deeply as we do, and I think it has kind of helped to bring us together as a people.

And you saw in the streets—of course, 60 percent of the country is under 30, and only 5 percent over 60—they are very much into their lives and their future, and they're ready to get on after it.

Third Way Democratic Politics

Q. Mr. President, there's been a lot written about how you redefined the Democratic Party and turned it in the direction of the Third Way. I guess the question that comes to a lot of people as you leave office is how transferable your vision is, how lasting Third Way Democratic politics will be, and what this recent election really says about that?

The President. Well, I won't answer the third question, partly because I don't know the answer.

Q. About the election, or what it says about the election?

The President. Yes, the whole business about the election. A, I don't know the answer to who won the election, and B, I don't know that. But we'll have lots of time for that. Remember what Jack Kennedy said when he won the Presidency. He said, "Victory has a thousand fathers, and defeat is an orphan." So we'll all have time to sort of dig around over the bones or celebrate the victory, depending on what happens.

But first, let's back up and say what I believe. I never believed—this is an argument I used to have with my friend Reverend Jackson all the time; I don't suppose we've finally resolved it yet—but I never believed there was an inherent conflict between the traditional objectives of progressives and liberals in the Democratic Party and what I thought of as the Third Way or the New Democratic approach.

What I felt was, from my perspective having been a Governor all during the eighties, and looking at Washington, was that the country had become polarized, and the rhetoric of Washington had a paralyzing rather than an empowering effect. Now, we've had a lot of fights here, since I've been here. A lot of it has been mean and bitter and tough and ugly. But nobody has been paralyzed. We've gotten a lot of stuff done. You know, most of what I said I wanted to

do in '92, we've accomplished. And the Republicans got some of their business done, too. We did some things. A lot of things happened here. And so I think that it has changed the politics of America.

I mean, basically—let me back up a second. My whole theory of this new Democratic Third Way is that when you go through a period where the human affairs change, and we're in a period of enormous change in all of human affairs, how we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world, you have to find an approach that works, that explains the way the world is and opens up people to take the necessary actions to keep moving forward.

And what I thought when I ran in '92 was that there were—Washington, and the country because of Washington, was paralyzed into all these either/or choices. Either you invest in education, or you reduce the deficit. Either you took care of the poor kids on welfare, or you made their parents go to work. Either you protected the environment, or you grew the economy.

And what happened was, very often nobody could do anything, because they'd just fight, or they'd make decisions that didn't make a lot of sense. So let me just—to go back to basics, when I said in '92 that I thought we ought to organize our Nation around a vision for the 21st century of opportunity for every responsible citizen, a community of all Americans, and America leading a very different world toward peace and freedom and security, to me, that was really real. And what it meant was, instead of either/or, I tried to find some "both" solutions, some win/win solutions.

And a lot of people criticized me at the time. They said, "Well, he doesn't have a foot in either camp. Therefore, he must not have any convictions." But that's not where I saw it at all. For example, I didn't think we could have an economic policy that would work unless we both got rid of the deficit and invested more in education and science and technology. I didn't think we could have a welfare reform policy that worked unless we both required people to work and then rewarded work and helped them with their kids, with the food stamps and the Medicare and all that—Medicaid—because that's the most important work of any society. I didn't think we could in the end sustain an environmental policy if everything we did in the environment hurt the economy.

I thought we had to find a way to clean up the environment and preserve it and improve the economy. I didn't think we could have a crime policy that would work unless we had more police and more prevention. And I thought just the rhetoric of having more punishment was—it sounded good, but it wouldn't lower the crime rate. I didn't think that—in the Government, we reduced the size of Government and increased its activism. I wanted to take on a lot of these diversity issues, race and gender and gay rights. But I thought I had—and I brought in an unprecedented number of people from minority communities into the Government, but I thought if I didn't also have a high standard of excellence, that I would fail; that you had to prove that diversity and community and excellence, that they all went hand in hand.

So to me, this whole so-called New Democratic approach was a way of synthesizing our values and our policies in a way that would work. And probably the test of all this is whether it worked or not, and I think that if that's the test, that we pass.

And if you look at the debate in this election, to go back to your election question, if you look at the debate—I remember the first time I heard Governor Bush give his compassionate conservative speech. He was out in Iowa, and everybody was sitting around on bales of hay. And I thought, this is pretty good; this basically says, "Okay, I'm a New Democrat, except I'll do more of it with the private sector than the public sector, and I'll give you a bigger tax cut."

Now, we obviously felt that the differences were much more profound. But the point is that it shows the extent to which the idea of finding a synthesizing, progressive movement that unifies instead of divides people has captured the public imagination.

Q. So you think it will last, or too soon to tell?

The President. I think it will last if that's the only way to get stuff done. For example, if you look at the fact that the Congress is now more closely divided even than it was before, and it was pretty closely divided before, I think that if you want to fight, you can fight and have a dead-even split on everything. If you want to do things, I think it will be possible to do quite innovative things in the next 4 years, important things. But in order to do it, you'll have to define a dynamic center, which is what I've

tried to do. I've tried to restore a vital, dynamic center to American life.

President's Policies and Conduct

Q. Mr. President, sort of following up on that, given how over the past couple years virtually every poll has shown a strong generic issue advantage for the Democrats on almost every issue, except this one lingering problem of morality and values—given how hard you had worked, in your first term especially, to make personal responsibility and sort of join personal responsibility with opportunity and community, and how successfully you seemed to be able to do that, do you feel any regret or responsibility that the issues of the last 3 years and impeachment and so forth, that you bear any responsibility for the Democrats having problems in that regard now?

The President. Well, I don't know. I think the evidence of that is, to put it charitably, mixed. The big problem there is, that was the way—it was that way when I took office in '92. It was that way in '88. We were making some headway, but, look, a big part of that is—I think it's wrong, by the way. I think it is dead wrong. But a big part of that is that married—especially white, married Protestants, the biggest voting block in America, tend to identify things like the abortion issue—even though people are basically pro-choice, the pro-life crowd tends to get a morality edge there, and the gay rights issue have had a lot to do with that, among a lot of people who measure these things.

And I think the Republicans, frankly, are much more—because they are less likely to want the Government to do anything, that is, in terms of affirmative social programs, for 30 years, and certainly for 20 years, since President Reagan—have been much more likely to talk in rhetorical terms that are value laden and instructive. And if you just listen to them, the Democrats are much more likely to be talking about, "Here's what we want to do." And they're much more likely to talk about, "Here's what's right and wrong."

And I think that with a certain group of people, our advocacy of gay rights and our pro-choice position has reinforced that. Even when people disagree on the issue, they may give them credit for sort of being more stern and more righteous and more moral and all that.

Q. So you think it had more to do with those kinds of policy things than with whatever personal——

The President. I know it did. Yes, because otherwise, you have to believe that the American people are guilty of guilt by association, and I don't believe that. I don't believe that voters hold one person responsible for another person's mistake. I mean, that's an insult to the American people. That acts like if you do something—if you write a piece about me that I think is dishonest, I wouldn't condemn the New York Times. [*Laughter*] I wouldn't say—if you say something about——

Q. We get that all the time. [*Laughter*]

The President. No, but if you write something to me that I think is terrible, I say, God, there must be something wrong with Sanger because he worked at the same place. I just don't believe—you know, people are not like that. I don't think that—people are fundamentally fair-minded, and whatever their judgments of me are, by the same token, they—two-thirds of them disagreed with the impeachment process, but they didn't, all of a sudden, declare the Republicans immoral for doing it.

See, I think that might be the best illustration of it. I mean, the Republicans——

Q. From the other side, then?

The President. Yes. So I think if somebody makes a personal error, I don't think it gets transposed onto the whole political scene in any kind of lasting way. I think that if you look at the history of this, I think that the Republicans have really been very, very good at sort of adopting the family values rhetoric and doing all this, and they stick with it. And I think when we push the envelope as we have on the gay rights issue, or we stand up and fight for the pro-choice, I think they got a lot of benefits out of their partial-birth abortion advocacy, even though I thought it was—the issue was wrongly stated, and I didn't agree with their position, as you know.

I just think that a lot of these things—these are the issues that they hear about. I'll give you another example. There is one other example where they're on a big issue lead. How in the world could they have kept the lead they did on national defense after the record of the last—you know, we reversed the declining defense spending under the cold war. We had a successful conclusion of the conflict in Kosovo, and the Vice President was out there having

a 20-year record on all of these issues and actually advocating, at least at the moment, spending more money than his opponent was in the campaign, but they kept the lead in that.

So I think a lot of these things, they build up over a long period of time, and people develop certain takes on them. I'm actually glad we took down their lead in a lot of—you know, they don't have the lead in crime and welfare and balancing the budget and managing the economy and managing foreign policy any more that they used to have, and that's good.

Q. Just at the risk of creating an impression of unfairness in the New York Times, could I ask you one other kind of corollary that's kind of really a philosophical question? I guess since as long as I've known you and as long as I've known people in your orbit, the thing that seems to be a common thread that all your senior aides have said over time is that your greatest strengths are inexorably, I suppose as all human nature is, bound up in some of your potential weaknesses, and that the same aptitudes and appetites that have made you the most formidable political person of your generation have sometimes got you in trouble.

I just wonder if you think there is any way that, over the last 8 years, somehow America could have had the best of you without getting the worst of you, or is it all sort of wrapped up in one package?

The President. Oh, that's a judgment for somebody else to make.

Q. You don't want to take a——

The President. Yes. You guys were wrong about Whitewater. I wish we had the—that Gertz piece was ridiculous, absurd on its face. I wish we could have had the great New York Times without that. It was like Wen Ho Lee, chapter one. I wish we could have had it. [*Laughter*] But we couldn't. So we still got the New York Times. Is the country better off for having the New York Times? Absolutely it is. Are we better off having the New York Times? Of course we are. I'll let—the American people will have to make that judgment.

Q. Let me ask you—is it ever a kind of thing that you would like to take a good crack at some day in your own writings or your own thinking about this, some day when there's perspective? Because I sense it's——

The President. I might. I might. I've been—nobody has any—most people have no idea about what, personally, I've gone through for the last couple of years—and I might do that. But I did the right thing not to do it—this point, because the people hired me to do a job, and I got up every day and did it.

The price I paid for my personal mistake was, believe it or not, more than anything else, a profound personal price. I'm glad that I saved my family. I'm glad that my life is happy and in good shape, and I'm glad my country is still in good shape. But that whole episode was fundamentally a political move. It was not rooted in any established principles of Constitution, or law, or precedent. And so, you know, I didn't have time to be as personally reflective or harshly judgmental of myself, except for once, as I would otherwise have been inclined to do, because I was finding it too hard to save what we had worked for and the direction the country had taken.

And I just think that one of the things I hope—and I saw it in this election—I noticed that there was much less appetite for the politics of personal destruction in this election than there had been in many others, and I hope that maybe that's one of the consequences of all that I did, and maybe—I mean, what we all went through—and maybe that will be something that's really good for the country over the long run. Maybe nobody else will ever have to go through this.

Modern News Cycle and the Presidency

Q. Can I ask you one other thing about the changing universe you talked about, and—obviously you've been the President who has presided over this enormous flowering of the information age. Usually, you cite that as an incredibly good thing. I happened to see Waldman on Charlie Rose last night who was very thoughtful in talking about the one colossal difference between your predecessors and you was, the world knows your flaws in real time now because of this endless kind of news cycle. Is there any way in which that's been a personal burden for you or an institutional burden for the Presidency that you think is problematic or potentially a challenge for your successors?

The President. Well, let me just say, I think one of the challenges that I think that we have is, although—let me back up—the short answer to that question is yes, but it's also a great opportunity. If you live in a world of the 24-hour news cycle, it has to be managed and dealt with. I mean, one of the things that—you have

choices in dealing with it. But for example, if you watch in this election coverage the last 2 or 3 weeks, the two sides made very different choices. And you can draw your own conclusions, and we probably won't know until we see how it all comes out, whether the choices they made about how to deal with it had any impact on the outcome or what it was. But there were different choices made.

The trap really is not to forget that while you have to manage and deal with and respond to the 24-hour news cycle, it's still a job. And it's a job with a term—4-year term—or if you get lucky, it's an 8-year term. And it matters what your ideas are going in, whether you have a clear vision of what you want to do, and whether you keep doing the job.

So for us, the challenge was both—and sometimes, we would fall off the tracks either way for the first year or two—you know, sometimes you ignore the demands of the information-intensive environment which you're in, and even if you're doing the job, nobody knows it, and you could get totally derailed and never get to finish.

Q. Because you're not seen as doing it——

The President. Yes, you're not managing it. On the other hand, I think what is more likely to happen, what you're more vulnerable to doing—and this is, I think, what we tried never to have happen, even when we were going through the whole impeachment thing, is you don't wall off enough people who keep doing their job. They say, "What is the mission here? What do we get hired to do? How are we going to do it? Who is going to work on it? And how are you going to keep doing it?" And then you've got all these people that are managing the 24-hour news cycle, and how do you integrate the two so that you don't have a total disconnect?

But I think that is a unique challenge. I might say with all respect, I also think it makes your job harder. I mean, by the time you get around to writing something—this is something that you can do that television can't do. This is important, what we're doing now. You're going back retrospective, evaluating what's—for the future and all that kind of stuff.

But if you think about what it's like—I think about this all the time—by the time the evening news comes on at night, more than half the time, whatever it is they're talking about has already been on CNN five times. Now, we know that not many people have seen it, not in the grand scheme of things, but psychologically it still affects—well, what do you do, what would you do, for example, if you were putting together the evening news at night instead of in your business you are doing? Would you report it in the same way that you would have if CNN had never broken it in the first place? You could, rationally, because not that many people have seen it, but I think it affects what you do.

Okay, then by the time you write about it for the next morning, you know it's already been on CNN 20 times and it's been on the evening news twice. So everybody in America knows this thing, whatever this thing is, has happened, so how do you write about it? Or, to put it in another—what about another major story you've got that wasn't on the news at all? How does it affect the way you present it and develop it in the context of what you have to put in the paper because of what has happened in the 24-hour news cycle?

So it's not just the politicians. This whole thing is—and I think having all these talk shows and—is it sort of the blurring lines between all the distinct media areas. I think that's also a problem.

One of the things that I think newspapers are supposed to do is help people think. And one of the things that bothers me about a lot of the talk shows is, it seems to me that they're designed to confirm whatever your prejudice is and actually keep you from thinking.

For example, I think some of these people would be kicked off the shows—for example, suppose Bill Press looked at Mary Matalin one day and said, "You know, I never thought about that; you're really right." [*Laughter*] Well, they would have to get somebody else to represent the Democrats. You see what I mean? [*Laughter*] I mean, God forbid you should listen to what the other person is saying, because you might find some wisdom there. And so, from my point of view, that's exactly what we ought to be trying to avoid.

My whole view of the world is that we're in a new aspect of human affairs. Nobody's got a pointer on the truth. Nobody is totally right, and we need to be doing more listening to each other and trying to find common ground.

The best example of that this year was the work we did, Denny Hastert and I did, in trying to put together this new markets legislation,

which I still hope and pray will pass when the Congress comes back. Because the Speaker did a lot of good work on that, and we took a lot of their ideas; they took a lot of ours; we got a good—but this is the milieu in which you operate and in which the next President will operate.

But on the other hand, let me say this: There are vast benefits to it as well. For all of the problems, there are vast benefits. If the President has to make an unpopular decision—Kosovo, the Mexican bailout, whatever, you name it—at least a significant percentage of the people who hired you to do this job know what you're doing and why from your perspective. They don't have to get it secondhand.

You may not make the sale—you arrive on the air. You're just being repeated on CNN 20 times or whatever, the way it all works. And then you come and tell the next day, and you analyze it and all, but you may not make the sale. But at least you've got your shot.

Q. In those two examples, did it make a difference in Kosovo and the Mexico bailout? Can you say that those would have been less successful if you had not had this direct approach?

The President. I don't know. I don't know, because I think if I had—I can't answer that. I can't answer whether—in the Mexican case, it may not have made any difference, because by the time the election rolled around, it was obvious that what we did worked. In the Kosovo case, it might have been more difficult to get off the starting blocks if I hadn't had access to the American people direct. That would be my guess.

Somalia/Bosnia/Rwanda

Q. Talking about foreign policy for a second, I wonder if I could talk about Somalia and ask you—given your experience in Somalia when Colin Powell was still the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in 1993, do you think that made you overly hesitant to go into Rwanda and Bosnia? And, given your successful intervention in Kosovo last year, what advice would you give to the new administration in similar situations?

The President. First of all, I know you all have a lot of questions, and I'm trying not to give long answers, so I'll try to——

Q. You saved us our speech there. [*Laughter*]

Q. I'm happy for a long answer. [*Laughter*]

The President. But the short answer to your question on Somalia and Rwanda and Bosnia is that I do not believe what happened in Somalia affected Bosnia, and really not Rwanda very much, and let me explain why.

What happened in Somalia was as follows: General Powell came to me one day, very near the end of his term, and says, "Aideed's crowd killed these Pakistani peacekeepers who were there with the Americans. We are the only people in the mission there that have the capacity to arrest Aideed. They want us to approve the Americans who are otherwise there as peacekeepers having some people devoted to try to—his apprehension and arrest." I said, "What are the chances of success?" He said, "I think we've got a 50/50 chance to get him, probably not more than a one in four chance to get him alive," something like that.

But he said, "I think you ought to do it." So I said okay. I asked him if he thought I ought to do it, and he said, "Yes, I do. On the balance, I think you should, because you can't just walk away from the fact that these Pakistanis were murdered."

What happened was, that was the extent to which anybody ever asked me about any of this, that in terms of the operation—we learned a lot from that Somalian thing in terms of what kind of operational control we should have in United Nations missions. I don't think we learned that we should never be involved in U.N. missions and work with other people and all that; I don't believe that. But from my point of view, I thought it was sort of a *sui generis* thing. I didn't believe it meant that we could never go anywhere else.

The problem in Bosnia was trying to develop enough of a consensus with our European allies to get something done. And lamentably, we were making progress and then—but the massacre of Srebrenica basically galvanized our NATO Allies, and they were willing to support a more aggressive approach that we and the British had favored all along.

But I think the important thing for me in Bosnia was that the United States should not be acting unilaterally there. We should be going with our allies, and we should be doing everything we can to move. I wish it hadn't taken 2 years to put together a consensus, but it's worked out pretty well now, given how messed up it was when we started.

In Rwanda, I think the real problem was that we didn't have a ready mechanism with which to deal with it, which is why after Rwanda,

we started working on this Africa crisis response initiative and why we were working on training all these Africans to do—Sierra Leone—we were going to work with them and help them, and I also frankly think that it happened so fast.

As it turns out, in retrospect, maybe we and the British and French could have—four or five others—gone in there with a relatively small number of troops and slowed it down. But if you think about it, all those hundreds of thousands of people who were killed in 100 days and hardly anybody had a gun, and I think that we were not really properly organized to deal with it and respond to it.

I hope and believe now that we are and, were such a thing to happen again, we would be able to play our proper role. I also think the Africans, you've got to give them a lot of credit. They're doing a lot better, too. They wanted to be part of this training for Sierra Leone. Mandela got all those people together to try to head off another Burundi and tribal slaughter, and it might work yet. I went over there to help him, as you know, in Arusha.

So I don't think that Somalia—if you think I made a mistake in either Rwanda or Bosnia, I don't think that Somalia is the reason we did it. Because I always thought that Somali thing was just—had much more to do with the fact that we hadn't worked through the command and control and policymaking issues when we were in a U.N. mission that had one mission and then all of a sudden had a very different one when we had to go try to arrest somebody.

I think whatever the problems in Somalia are, they need to be viewed on their own bottom, and I don't think—at least for me, they weren't some demonic nightmare that kept me out of these other places.

Race Relations

Q. Mr. President, a couple of domestic issues, and then I'm going to run to Andrews and meet you in New York. Race relations. It can be said that the state of race relations has never been better. I'm sure you're not going to argue with that. And another observation one can make is that black people, black politicians supported you, gave you tremendous support in some of your toughest political moments. I want you to try to explain an interesting dynamic, though. Some of your—many of your policies, especially earlier in your Presidency—welfare reform, the abandonment of the fiscal stimulus package, support of the death penalty—were opposed by these traditional civil rights leaders, these minority politicians. How do you reconcile this? What's going on here?

The President. Well, first of all, I had a record on civil rights matters and relations with blacks that went back through my whole public life, when I started. I also probably had more extensive personal contacts and friendships before I started—not so much in the Black Caucus and the Congress, but I mean in the country—than any white politician who had run for President in a long time, because it's been such a part of my life; it was so important to me, and because of just fortuitous things. The first AME church was in Little Rock; I hosted all the AME bishops when I was Governor. We had black leaders from all over the country come back when we celebrated the 30th anniversary of Little Rock Central High School. Most of the black churches had their national conventions there at one time or another.

When I ran for President in '92, in Chicago, the county attorney, the man who is now president of the Cook County Board, Congressman Danny Davis, three aldermen, three Democratic ward chairs were all from Arkansas. [*Laughter*] We're all born there, part of the history of the diaspora after the war, you know.

So a lot of this was just personal, and I think that even when some people disagreed with some of my policies, they knew where I was on the big issues of race and civil rights and equal opportunity. I think that's right. And I think that the fact that when we got into welfare reform, they saw that I was going to fight for what I wanted—that I did think there should be mandatory work requirements, but I would not abandon the food stamps and Medicaid requirements for the kids.

Welfare Reform

Q. I'd like to really jump in and ask you about a welfare question because I think it fits perfectly here. What's your biggest worry about the future of the welfare bill? And let me give you a couple of possibilities here. Is it that Congress might someday cut the money, that the States will turn their backs on the very poorest of the poor, that a recession might come along and hurt these folks, or that the time limits will prove damaging?

The President. I think the biggest worry—first of all, I think if there is a recession that

makes it impossible for people to work, even though they're able-bodied, we have built in a big cushion of money in there. We gave the States the money in a block of money, based on the welfare rolls in February of '94—I believe that's right—which was the highest welfare rolls we'd ever had. So even though the welfare rolls went down, as long as they were putting it back in—so I think there will be an appropriate response.

What I've always worried about is that some of the people who would be hardest to place might be caught up in time limits because they superficially looked like they could work but that the States would not provide enough support to make sure they could get into and stay in the work force.

But the other major criticism of the welfare reform bill I just thought was wrong—and I think a lot of people didn't even know this at the time, meaning a lot of people who were writing about it—which is that, by agreeing to let the States set the benefit level by block-granting that money, I was somehow abandoning a Federal commitment to poor people. But the truth is that since the early seventies, States had been able to set their monthly benefits; they just couldn't go below where they were back then.

So when we started working on welfare reform, the support levels for a family of three—before welfare—varied from a low of under $200 a month in Mississippi, Texas, and one or two other places to $665 a month in Vermont. And everybody—so, in other words, they had, in effect, been setting their own benefit levels all that time.

What I was really worried about was the desire of the Republicans in Congress to block-grant the money going—to stop the food stamps and Medicaid for the kids. But I really felt that if we gave them enough money and they had to put more money into child care and into job training, into transportation, and all that sort of stuff, this thing would work pretty well. And I think it plainly has. But I am worried about the hardest-to-place, when you have a combination of tough times and people who may not care about them.

Democratic Party

Q. Mr. President, you're given a lot of credit for recreating the Democratic Party as a viable Presidential party. But your critics say that, on the other hand, when you came into office, there was a Democratic majority in the House, a Democratic majority in the Senate, and a majority of Democrats in the governorships around the country. And, of course, none of those majorities now exist. What happened? How do you explain these two trends?

The President. Well, I think—first of all, I don't know what the answer is on the governorships. Sometimes—I remember in the years when—in the Reagan years, there were times when we had, like, nearly 30 Governors, or maybe more, I don't know. We had tons. So I think sometimes it's hard to make hard and fast judgments.

Q. ——maybe State-by-State anomalies, just things happen?

The President. I don't know that. I don't know the answer to that. It may be when you had a Republican Governor, people wanted—and a Republican President, people wanted Democratic Governors more. I don't know. All I'm saying is, I don't know the answer to that.

In the Congress, I think we had a combination of two things. First of all, all the Democrats will tell you that we had a lot of older Democrats who represented districts that had grown more and more Republican over the last 20 years. And when they retired, we were going to have a hard time holding them.

And then I don't think it's complicated; I think I got in and I adopted an economic plan that they characterized as a big tax increase, and the benefits of it weren't yet felt, and people weren't sure whether they were getting their taxes increased or not then. I adopted a crime bill which the NRA told everybody was going to take their guns away, and people hadn't felt the lower crime rate or seen the community police on their streets, but they heard the fear. And I tried to pass a health care reform and failed. So that when you fail, people can more easily characterize what it was you tried to do, even if what they say you tried to do has no relationship to what you tried to do.

And we almost had the reverse of what happened in '98. What happened—so a lot of our people, our base voters in the '94 election, they were kind of sad that welfare reform didn't pass—I mean, health care didn't pass. They didn't know about—they didn't know how they felt about this economic plan because they maybe didn't feel their lives were better yet.

And they didn't perceive that the crime rate had come down yet.

So we were running in the worst of all environments, and I basically have some significant responsibility for that because I jammed a lot of change through the system in a short time. And maybe politically, I made a mistake not doing welfare reform in '94 and trying to put health care off until '95 or '96. And maybe it would have been less. I think we would have lost seats in any case because of the dynamics of who was running and what the seats were and all that. But I think that it was much worse than otherwise it could have been. And it's pretty much what happened to Harry Truman when he tried to do health care reform.

I mean, basically, we sort of repeated the cycle of history. And I just made an error. And I felt terrible about it, and I spent the last 6 years trying to undo it. We picked up several House seats in the '96 election, and then in '98, when we won seats in the House and didn't lose seats in the Senate, is the first time in 122 years that in the sixth year of a Presidency, the President's party picked up seats in the Congress.

And this year we did immensely well in the Senate races, because for the first time in 6 years, for the first time we had a good rotation, and we had good candidates. And because the House was so close, the energy of the Republican right—the public energy of the Republican right shifted from the House to the Senate the last 2 years. And I think that's one of the reasons that we did better in the Senate.

When Hastert became the Speaker, they tried to present a more moderate image. I mean, there are lots of other things—I haven't had time to analyze all these House races—but we're in the position we're in partly because we were going to lose some seats which had been moving Republican when our senior people retired or got beat, but also because of all the things I did in '93 and '94. And one of the things I feel badly about is, I think that those decisions were good decisions. I think one of the reasons I got reelected in '96 is because the economy was in good shape and we were getting rid of the deficit, and a lot of the people who made the decision to do it paid the price.

The same thing on the crime. We celebrated the anniversary of the Brady bill today. Now over 611,000 people have not been able to get handguns because of the Brady bill handgun checks. But we lost a dozen House Members over it. And there's no point in kidding around about it. They did—I mean, the NRA took them out. And now, of course, all those voters, if they had a chance to vote again wouldn't do that, because now they know, after all, they didn't lose their handguns; they didn't lose their rifles; and they didn't lose their opportunity to go into deer season. But at the time, they didn't know that.

So what I tried to do after the '94 elections was not to slow down the pace of change but to figure out how much I could jam through the system in any given time and to make sure that if we were going to do something really controversial, we tried to sell it in advance a little better. Because I don't think there's any question that we lost more seats than we would have if I hadn't done the economic program and the crime bill and the health care in 2 years.

Health Care Reform

Q. Is health care your biggest regret?

The President. Well, I regret the fact that there are a lot of people in this country who still don't have health insurance. But we finally got the number of people without insurance going down again, for the first time in a dozen years, because of the Children's Health Insurance Program triggering in. So we're moving on it.

And I suppose on a policy front, that certainly ranks right up there. I wish we'd gotten—I wish we'd been able to do more. But we got the number of uninsured people going down, and now we know how to do it, interestingly enough.

I think in next year, I think the Congress ought to let the parents of the CHIP kids buy into it. I think they ought to let people over 55 buy into Medicare, as I proposed. There's three or four things you could do to dramatically reduce the number of people without health insurance in a piecemeal basis.

But let me say—people say, "Well, why didn't you do that back in '94?" The reason is, we didn't have the money to. If you want to provide health insurance, universal health insurance, there's only two ways to do it. It's not rocket science. You've either got to require the employers to offer the health insurance and then give a little financial—a tax break to the people who have a hard time providing it, or you have to pay for it with tax money. And we had just

raised taxes in the economic plan of '93 to get the deficit down. And we didn't have any money, so we couldn't raise taxes, and we didn't have—and the economy was not strong enough for the Congress to feel comfortable putting the employer mandate on it.

So I think—that was my mistake. That wasn't—I've always thought that my wife took too big a hit on that. That was—I asked her to come up with a universal plan that maintained private health providers. And there aren't any other options, and neither option, frankly, in 1994 was politically doable in that Congress, and maybe not in the country by the time the interest groups got through mangling on it. So that was my mistake, and it's one I have to live with—like all my other mistakes. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President, we know your ride has arrived, so we'll try to——

The President. Yes, I don't get to do this much more, so you don't want to cut me out—[*laughter*].

Economic Globalization and Opposition

Q. But to go back to where we started, you've clearly done more than any President has in history to describe the opportunities to both Americans and foreigners about what globalization, what global markets are going to do for them. Yet, around the globe you hear more anger at America now about its primacy, its economic and its military strength, its cultural strength, than ever before, certainly than when you came in in '93. Was there something that you could have done differently, or something that you would advise your successor to do differently to diffuse this anger?

I'm talking about, in part, the kind of anger you saw at Seattle, not downstairs but upstairs, among the countries that were getting in the way of your agenda.

The President. Well, first of all, I think when you are—most people didn't think we were worth resenting in '92. [*Laughter*] They had pity for us. They thought, "How sad it is, America can't pay its bills. They've got this deficit," and all that kind of stuff.

I think a lot of the resentment is due to the success that we've had, and a lot of people feel that we have not done as much probably as we could have to share that success. But a lot of things, like little things like the unwillingness of the Congress to pay our U.N. bills and stuff like that, that grates on people.

But my sense is that most countries, even though they disagree with the United States from time to time, or they don't like what they see as our unilateralism when we disagree with them, still have a lot of respect for this country and still believe that we basically mean well in the world, and that—I think the answer is that we have to keep—there isn't a silver-bullet answer—the answer to this is, we have to keep working along to work with other people to try to find common ground where we can in an increasingly interdependent world. I think that's just the short answer.

Look, on the trade issue, the interesting thing about Seattle was—both in that room, as you pointed out, and in the street, is you had people who acted like they were marching in solidarity who had diametrically opposed positions. I mean, my friends in the labor movement who were there, they believe that globalization is bad because people in other countries work for a little bit of money and sell into America and knock folks out of jobs that have to have more money to live. But a lot of the people in those developing countries who were marching are mad at America because we, almost alone among the advanced countries, would like to have a global trading system that has minimum labor and environmental standards. And so a lot of them thought that's my indirect way of being a protectionist, in protecting the good jobs in America and keeping them poor.

And I think a lot of this—I don't have a dim, a pessimistic view of this. I think a lot of this was inevitable because of the scope of change and because—frankly, because there are a lot of societies where the last 10 years have been pretty tough. But I think if you take a broader view, if you look over the last 50 years, it's plain that global integration spawns more economic opportunity, creates wealth in wealthy countries, and creates more opportunities in poor countries, if they're well-governed, if they have good social safety nets.

So I think—let me just say, this is a big issue with me and rather than just talk on and on about it—remember, I went to Geneva twice to speak about this; once before to talk about child labor at the ILO, and once at the WTO. I went to Davos to give a speech about this, as well as to Seattle. I think that one of the four or five biggest challenges in the next 20 years will be creating, if you will, a globalized system with a human face. You cannot have

a completely global economy without having some sort of global social understandings.

So you're going to have more political interdependence; we're all going to have to be working more together; more concern is going to have to be evident for the poor. One of the things that I'm proudest of about this last year is that we got bipartisan agreement—I give the Republicans credit for working with us—on this big debt relief initiative to help the poorest countries of the world, but only if they take the savings and put it back into education, health care, and development in their own country. This is a huge thing. And it's part of putting a human face on the global economy.

So I think that my successor and his successor will be struggling with this whole issue of a global capitalist system and how you create the kind of underpinnings to make people believe it can be a more just society. And I think the resentment against the United States is altogether predictable: We seem to be doing well, and they're not.

And I also think, on the foreign policy front, if you have to use power to achieve an objective—and anytime you start shooting people, some unintended consequences will occur, and it's easy for people who don't have that power to resent it, which is why you have to wear it lightly—you have to be careful.

Highlights of the President's Term

Q. We have a couple of really quick—at the risk of sounding like Tim Russert, we have some quick, snappy—as you look back on your Presidency, what was your single best meal? [*Laughter*]

Q. Apple would never have forgiven us if we didn't ask.

The President. Oh, my God.

Q. Does anything come to mind?

Q. It could have been that restaurant in Saigon that last night.

Q. Well, while you think about that, what was the most outrageous request you ever received from a Member of Congress?

The President. Let me say, I loved the Bukhara meal we had in Delhi.

Q. Oh, at the hotel there. I ate there with the First Lady.

The President. I loved it. I mean, I can't say that was my best meal. I probably liked some—one of the Mexican restaurants in Phoenix, or something. [*Laughter*] But I liked Bukhara.

The most outrageous request I ever got from a Member of Congress?

Q. You don't have to name names.

Q. Just the request.

The President. That's such a good question. [*Laughter*] What I'd like to do, it's such a good question, I'd like to talk to a couple of our guys and let's think of all the crazy things—"Well, if I vote for you, will you have a picture taken with my grandchild, or something?" I mean, it's crazy. But let me think about it. Because we may be able to come up with something that's really, really good.

Q. We'd even take the top three. [*Laughter*]

The President. The 10 greatest reasons.

Q. Favorite foreign trip?

The President. Oh, boy. That's really hard. I loved India. I liked China. The Vietnam thing was—but I suppose Ireland, 1995. I suppose, just because my mother's family is Irish, and we're—our oldest known homestead is in Roslea, which is right on the border of Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Q. ——know what day—you lit the Christmas tree at Belfast City Hall, and Van Morrison sang "Have I Told You Lately That I Love You," dedicated from you to the First Lady.

The President. Yes. Van Morrison. Were you there?

Q. Yes, I was there.

The President. What a great day.

Q. Froze my tail off, with Anne Edwards' hands on my behind.

The President. And the trip to Derry. And Phil Coulter was singing "The Town I Love So Well."

Q. What was your best speech?

The President. I don't know. I think the speech I gave in Mason Temple in Memphis in '93 was good. It was a good one. I think the speech I gave at the convention this year was pretty good. But I really don't know.

Q. Worst speech?

The President. Oklahoma City was pretty good, because I was overcome by—I don't know. I don't know that anybody is a good judge of his own or her own speeches. I'm not sure.

And I don't know what my worst speech was. My worst speech, certainly in historical terms, was the nominating speech I gave for Dukakis in '88. [*Laughter*] People are still making jokes about it—although I thought—I got 700 positive letters, and I found out that 90 percent of them

heard it on radio. [*Laughter*] Isn't that funny? We actually checked.

Q. How about single best campaign event?

The President. Oh, wow.

Q. Where you really felt connection with everything.

The President. When I knew I wasn't going to die in New Hampshire. When I was in Dover, right before the election, and I gave my—I just was talking off the top of my head. Curtis Wilkie sent me a tape of this once, the speech I gave, and that was my famous "I'll be with you till the last dog dies" speech. And I walked out there, and I thought, this is not over. We are not dead.

I remember that. But I had so many wonderful campaign events. I remember, we went to Akron in '92—they've got an airplane hangar that holds blimps, the dirigibles. It's like the third-biggest covered building in America. And I got up there and I said, "It doesn't look like there's many people in here." And John Glenn said, "It's cause it takes a quarter of a million people to fill it. There are over 50,000 people there, and it means you're going to win Ohio." And that's what—I knew if we won Ohio in '92, we'd win the election. I remember that was a great night.

But I had so many wonderful—I can't remember my single greatest campaign event. But I love that moment in that hot building in Dover, New Hampshire, in '92; I knew at least I wasn't going to die in New Hampshire.

President's Future Plans

Q. You're not going to run for mayor of New York, are you?

The President. Not anytime soon.

Q. What does that mean? [*Laughter*]

The President. It was very flattering. I mean, but, no. I have to work. It costs a lot of money to support a Senator. I've got to go to work here. I've got to get out there and—Hillary supported me all those years; I've got to get out there and do it.

I'm going to try to be—I'm giving a lot of thought and talking to a lot of people about how I can use these years and my experience and my knowledge to have a positive impact. I want to be a good citizen of our country and have a positive impact around the world, but I have to do it in a way that is appropriate and that does not get underfoot of the next President. The next President needs time, and especially now after all these events, will need time to bond with the American people and get up and going. And so I have to think through—that's what I'm doing now, thinking through exactly what I want to do and what the appropriate way to do it is.

But I think if you look at the example of Jimmy Carter, it's possible to be quite useful to the world when you're not President anymore.

Q. You sound so passionate about globalization. Do you think you—and having a human face on it—do you think you might be able to work with that?

The President. Absolutely. Absolutely. I believe in that. But there's lots of things to do. I'm very interested in economic empowerment, poverty elimination. The thing that—we're never going to be able to sell this globalization thing unless we prove that ordinary people can benefit from it. That's what we've got to do. Real people that show up for work every day have to benefit.

One of the problems we've got in the Middle East right now, and I'm desperately—we're killing ourselves trying to get it back on track—is that the average Palestinian income is no higher today than it was when we signed the peace accords in September of '93. Now, there are special facts there; I know that. But we've got to prove—if you want democracy to last, and you want free enterprise to last, which I think is important to freedom, it's got to work for ordinary folks. It worked for ordinary people in America; that's what's sustained us here.

The great thing about this economic recovery to me is, I tell everybody, this is what I call positive populism. We made more millionaires and more billionaires, but the highest percentage increase in income in the last recovery was in the lowest 20 percent of the people. And so this is the first recovery in three decades where everybody got better at the same time. And I just think that's so important.

Q. And on the Palestinian front, those special facts have kept the peace process from moving forward.

The President. Yes.

Q. And it's hard to combat that in a month.

The President. But I think Barak actually—this deal that he made for new elections, early elections, and the other guys really didn't want to go right now, I think it opens a new avenue.

And they are obviously working—they're obviously trying hard, both of them are, to bring this *intifada* under control now, I think.

Q. And then you step in.

Press Secretary Jake Siewert. We've got to go.

The President. I can't tell you—let me just say this: I'm working hard on this. I always have, and I always will.

Q. Thank you, sir. You should have been in Tallahassee. It's unbelievable. You just can't believe what's going on there.

The President. Well, when this is all over, we'll have a conversation about it. But right now I need to be the President. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The interview began at 3:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House, and reporters David Sanger, Todd Purdum, Marc Lacey, Robin Toner, and Jane Perlezof participated. In his remarks, the President referred to Vo Viet Thanh, chairman, People's Committee, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; President Tran Duc Luong, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, and Communist Party General Secretary Le Kha Phieu of Vietnam; civil rights activist Rev. Jesse Jackson; President-elect George W. Bush; Bill Gertz, reporter, Washington Times; former Los Alamos National Laboratory scientist Wen Ho Lee; "Crossfire" cohosts Bill Press and Mary Matalin; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; former Senator John Glenn; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. Reporters referred to New York Times chief correspondent R.W. Apple, Jr., and Tim Russert, moderator, NBC's "Meet the Press." The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 28. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks Announcing the Global Food for Education Initiative
December 28, 2000

The President. Good morning, everyone; please be seated. First, I want to thank Senator Dole and Senator McGovern for joining me and for their leadership. I thank Senator Dorgan and Senator Leahy for being here; Representatives Hall and McGovern; Catherine Bertini, the Executive Director of the U.N. World Food Programme; Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization; Sven Sandstrom, the Acting President of the World Bank; representatives of nongovernmental organizations; and all those who have worked to make this global feeding initiative a reality.

I also want to especially thank Secretary Summers, Jack Lew, and the White House staff who worked so hard on this in what, in Washington time, is a very short period of time to put this all together. [*Laughter*]

This morning we gather just 3 days after Christmas, the second day of Eid Al-Fitr, a few hours before the last night of Hanukkah, a time sacred to men and women of faith who share a belief in the dignity of every human being, a time to give thanks for the prosperity so many enjoy today, but also a time to remember that much of humanity still lives in astonishing poverty. Nearly half the human race struggles to survive on less than $2 a day; nearly a billion live in chronic hunger; half the children in the poorest countries are not in school. That is not right, necessary, or sustainable in the 21st century.

The most critical building block any nation needs to reap the benefits of the global era is a healthy population with broad-based literacy. Each additional year spent in school increases wages by 10 to 20 percent in the developing world. Today, however, 120 million children get no schooling at all, 60 percent of them girls. So this year in Dakar, Senegal, 181 nations joined to set a goal of providing basic education to every child in every country by 2015. At the urging of the United States, the G-8 nations later endorsed this goal at our summit in Okinawa.

Experience has shown here at home and around the world that one of the best ways to get parents to send their children to school is a healthy meal. That's why today I'm very pleased that we are announcing the grant recipients who are going to help us put in place our $300 million pilot program to provide nutritious meals to schoolchildren in developing countries.

The program will provide a free breakfast or a free lunch to some 9 million children in 38 developing nations. It will work closely with some 14 private volunteer organizations, many of whom are represented here, with the U.N. World Food Programme, and with recipient nations and farm groups so we don't disrupt local farm economies. The result will be increased school enrollment and attendance, especially among girls, and real improvement in these children's nutritional well-being and ability to learn.

We know from experience that this approach works. In Cameroon, for example, efforts led by the World Food Programme and USAID are feeding almost 50,000 schoolchildren, helping to increase school enrollment by over 50 percent, and cutting the dropout rate for girls to virtually zero. We also know we can take that kind of success and extend it across Asia, Africa, the Balkans, and beyond, because a little funding goes a very long way, indeed.

Under this pilot program, for example, we will start providing nutritious food to more than 500,000 children in Vietnam. We will start providing high protein bread and milk each day to some 60,000 students in 170 schools in Eritrea. And in Kenya, we will start giving some 1.4 million elementary school children a nutritious meal every single day.

Of course, this initiative by itself is not a solution to the global hunger problem, but it's a downpayment and a beginning. Now it's up to Congress, the United Nations, other developed countries, the NGO's represented here, and the next administration to continue this fight. We're going to need the World Bank to implement its pledge to increase lending for education by 50 percent. Developing countries need to make basic education a real priority. We need to mobilize private sector resources, something we've worked hard to do, by raising awareness of this issue among foundations.

And in addition to the $300 million for school feeding, we have also fought hard for and won a new $37 million initiative called School Works, to support basic education in developing countries, and an overall 50 percent increase for all international basic education programs, including the fine education work being now done at USAID. Finally, we secured $45 million this year for the U.S. funding for the international program to eliminate child labor, a 15-fold increase since 1998.

The fight for better education is only part of the battle we must wage to make the global economy work for everyone. Implementing landmark trade agreements we've reached with Africa and the Caribbean is a part of it. Leading the worldwide fight against infectious diseases, like HIV and AIDS, is important. Removing the crushing burden of debt from impoverished nations that will, in turn, invest those savings in their people and their future is fundamental. We must also continue to offer more microcredit loans and close the digital divide.

We've worked hard these last few years to put the battle against abject poverty higher on the world's agenda, and America must keep it there. This is not just about our moral obligation to help the needy, although it is great. It's also part of the answer to what kind of world we want our children to inhabit a generation from now; what do we want to avoid?

The world is becoming more and more interdependent, and America needs strong and healthy partners. We need to invest in future markets, and we need to do it in every part of the world. We want to avoid a world that is hopelessly and violently divided between the rich and the poor, a future in which hundreds of millions of people decide that they have no stake in a peaceful and open global society because there's nothing in it for them and their children. If we can prevent that from happening, it will be good for our economy, for our security, and for our souls.

We are greatly honored today to be joined by two leaders who clearly understand this. George McGovern and Bob Dole served their country in war and peace with uncommon courage, candor, and commitment to their principles. Springing from the soil of our Nation's heartland, they have long believed that America has global responsibilities and must therefore have a global vision.

Over 30 years ago, these two leaders strongly supported the creation of the domestic school lunch program. Last May they both advanced the idea of an international school feeding program. Today we're putting that into practice. The country will always be strong as long as we have leaders like them, leaders with their energy and vision, willing to reach across party lines to build a common future.

Following their example, I am convinced we can put together the kind of bipartisan and international public/private coalition needed to

build the global economy in a way that leaves no one behind and, in the process, creates a new century of unprecedented peace and prosperity. It's a great opportunity and a great responsibility.

Now, I'd like to ask Senator McGovern to say a few words.

[*At this point, former Senators George S. McGovern and Bob Dole made brief remarks.*]

The President. Let me make two brief comments. First of all, on the way in here, the young man who was advancing this event pulled out a copy of a picture of me escorting Senator McGovern across an airport tarmac in 1972. And Senator Dole saw it, and he knew immediately that if he had had that picture in 1996, the outcome of the entire election would have been changed. [*Laughter*] My hair was rather long, and my sideburns look like Burnside; I look like one of those Civil War generals. [*Laughter*] But we were able to cover it up, thank goodness. [*Laughter*]

Let me make a serious point, if I might. First of all, I feel very indebted to all the people who are here. Senator Leahy and Senator Dorgan have long been advocates of fighting hunger. Congressman McGovern came to me with Senator McGovern—no relation, I might add—with this and worded me to death on it. [*Laughter*] And my good friend Tony Hall has been the foremost advocate of dealing with the problems of the poor and the hungry in the world in Congress, and all of us acknowledge that.

But let me just sort of say one thing we did not explicitly say, that I think we should say before we leave. I was talking to Senator McGovern about it. What we would like, as Senator McGovern and Senator Dole said, is to prove through this pilot program that, A, we can make this work and, B, we can do it without disrupting local farm economies. If we can do that, then the goal is to provide this sort of meal at breakfast or lunch, depending on which works better in each country, to every child in the world that needs it. And I think Senator Dole said that we reckon about 300 million. The estimate is, it would cost between $6 and $7 billion to do that. So if we were to go that route and the United States were to pay its fair share, it would be about $1.5 billion, give or take, over the next few years, a year.

But if you think about that, if you think about being able to give a meal to 300 million kids a year every single day of the year for an aggregate international cost of somewhere between $6 and $7 billion a year, and you think about all the hundreds of billions—indeed, the trillions of dollars that are spent by governments around the world, I mean, it's just walking-around money; it's such a tiny amount of money compared to the aggregate expenditures of the governments of the world on everything else they spend money on.

I wanted just to do this; we've worked very hard this year to get this off. I'm not trying to saddle the future administration or a future Congress with an unbelievable burden. This is a relatively small new commitment that I think the United States should embrace in cooperation with its allies and friends and others around the world, and one that I hope and pray will be embraced, and it can be funded in any number of creative ways. But I just wanted to say that I believe, 10 years from now, this will have been done. And I believe when that happens, we will be profoundly indebted to these people who have come here today to advance this idea.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Remarks on the Budget and an Exchange With Reporters

December 28, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. I wanted to take this opportunity to say a few words about our latest budget projections and what they say about the continuing strength of the American economy.

We began 8 years ago to put our fiscal house in order at a time when the Federal deficit was $290 billion and rising and the national debt

had quadrupled in the previous 12 years. Interest rates were high, growth was low, and the confidence of the American people was shaken.

Our new strategy of fiscal discipline, investing in our people, and expanding trade has helped to bring us the longest economic expansion in history. That has given us the chance, along with continued fiscal discipline to balance the budget, to turn decades of deficits into the biggest back-to-back surpluses in history.

Over the past 3 years, we have paid down our national debt by $360 billion. Today we received more good news. Our updated projections show that in this fiscal year alone we expect to pay down the debt by an unprecedented $237 billion, meaning that over the course of just 4 years, we will have paid down the debt by $600 billion.

When I took office, our Nation's debt was projected to be $6.4 trillion this year. At the end of this year, it will instead be $3.2 trillion, one half of what it was projected to be. It will be 31 percent of our annual gross national product. In 1993 it was 50 percent of our gross national product.

In interest rates savings alone, there will be in one year—this year—$166 billion. We are spending—this year we will spend $166 billion less in interest on the debt than we were projected to be spending 8 years ago.

There is more good news in these numbers. Let's start with what the budget experts called the baseline. That's a budget that just increases with inflation and no new initiatives. The new projections show that if we took that budget and committed the entire surplus to reducing the debt, we could make America debt-free by 2009.

Of course, no one is suggesting that any administration and Congress will go that long with no new initiatives. I have often said that I believe we should use a portion of the surplus to make critical investments in education, provide a prescription drug benefit through Medicare to our seniors, and have a targeted tax cut.

If the incoming administration and the new Congress make such decisions, they could still get us out of debt early. And I want to emphasize, obviously, it is for the incoming administration and the new Congress to decide exactly which projects to address and in what manner. But these new projections mean that a fiscally responsible approach that includes new investments similar to the ones I described would still permit us to make America debt-free by the end of the decade—in other words, 2 years earlier than the last time we met.

Therefore, even though I told you I would never draw on another one of these charts—[*laughter*]—because there is more good news, I'm going to do it. But this is the last time I will do it—[*laughter*]—this year. It means we can get out of debt by 2010. Now, that is a future that all Americans can look forward to. And we don't wait to reap the benefits of this sort of debt reduction. By paying down the debt, we have already helped to keep interest rates down.

This is an amazing thing. Secretary Summers told me this before I came out here: After 8 years of very strong economic growth, long-term interest rates are about 2 percent lower than they were when I took office. That's meant lower mortgage payments, lower car payments, lower student loans, lower business loans. It has freed up more capital for private sector investment. We aren't borrowing the money that people thought we would be borrowing in the Government, and that means there is more money for others to borrow at lower cost.

If we stay up on the path that got us here, by 2010 we will free up 12 cents of every dollar the American people pay in taxes that can go back to them in tax relief or can go into investment in our common future. And that is a profoundly important thing. Just think of it, in 9 years, 12 percent of the Federal budget now committed to interest on the debt could be gone, and that money then would be free for tax relief or for investment in our future.

I think, as I have said many times, that as these interest rates go down, some of this money ought to be dedicated to Social Security, because no matter what path you take for preparing for the retirement of the baby boom generation, any of the proposed scenarios have a significant associated costs. And one of the ways to do this and a way that is painless to the American people is to take advantage of the fact that you're not going to be making interest payments that previously would have been made.

This shows the long-term consequences of a long-term responsible budget policy. There are huge economic benefits. And if we continue, then we can honestly say, for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835,

the children of America will face the future unburdened by the mistakes of the past. That is something that I believe we ought to do. The American people have earned an unprecedented opportunity to build that kind of America for our children, and I hope we will do it.

Thank you very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, since last we asked you about the Middle East yesterday, there have been a number of developments. There have been bombings in Tel Aviv, an ambush. Prime Minister Barak did not go to that summit meeting in Egypt. What does that make you think about the prospects for nailing down a final agreement while you're still in office?

The President. Well, first of all, I condemn the violence. And I believe it is the violence and the bus that prevented the Prime Minister from going to Egypt; I don't think it is a lack of desire to pursue the peace process. Chairman Arafat is consulting with President Mubarak and, I believe, wants to talk to some of the other Arab leaders.

The important thing to note is that Israel has said—I put some ideas on the table. They go beyond where we were at Camp David; they meet the fundamental needs that both sides expressed at Camp David. And the Israelis said that they would agree to try to close the remaining gaps within the parameters of the ideas I put forward if the Palestinians will agree. And I think that this latest violence only reminds people of what the alternative to peace is.

Look, I expect there to be more in the next few days, as long as we're moving toward peace. There are a lot of enemies of peace in the Middle East, and there are a lot of people that have acquired almost an interest in the preservation of the status quo and the agony of the Israelis and the abject misery of most of the Palestinian population.

So I expect that we will have to continue to combat violence. But if we can get a peace which meets the fundamental longstanding desires of both parties and we start to have common efforts in security that go even beyond what we've had for the last few years and we start to have common efforts to build an economic future that benefits everyone, we will have more political and economic stability and we'll have a different future. But in the meanwhile, this thing has been going on a long time, and a lot of people don't want to give it up. And so they're going to try to disrupt it.

But if you just look at the last few months, it's the best argument for going ahead and finishing this. It's not going to get any easier. So this is by far the closest we have ever been. We are much closer than we were at Camp David, but there are still differences, and we're just waiting. If the—the Israelis have said they will meet on these conditions within the parameters that I laid out; if the Palestinians will, and the Palestinians are negotiating—or talking—excuse me—with the other Arabs, and we'll just see what happens.

Decision Not To Visit North Korea

Q. Mr. President, did the President-elect have any influence on your decision not to go to North Korea?

The President. No. He said—actually, we had a very, very good talk about it, and he did not discourage it at all. And it would not be fair to put that on him. Let me just say, I briefed him on what I was doing. I told him that Sandy Berger and Secretary Albright had talked to General Powell and Condi Rice about it, and I explained what we were trying to do. But I also told him that I wouldn't take the trip unless I thought that I had time to organize it and devote the time to it to make it right, because I was convinced that because of the leadership of President Kim in South Korea, and because of the very good talks that we have had with the North Koreans and the success we've had now for 6 years on the nuclear issue, that further progress could be made and that it might just have to be something that was done when he became President.

And that is the conclusion I made. We've made a lot of progress with the North Koreans. On what we're discussing now, on the missile issues, we've made a lot of progress. But I concluded that I did not have sufficient time to put the trip together and to execute the trip in an appropriate manner in the days remaining.

Q. Were they willing to go for a halt in the missile——

The President. I think that's all I should say. We made a lot of progress with them, and I believe that the next administration will be able to consummate this agreement. I expect visits back and forth. I think a lot of things will happen, and I think it will make the world a much

safer place. I feel very good about what we've done. I simply concluded that in the days I have remaining, I didn't have the time to put the trip together in the proper way and to execute it in the proper way. And so that's why I decided not to go.

But you should not infer from that that I'm concerned about it. Indeed, I'm very pleased with the progress that has been made, and I expect the next administration to build on it. And I think they'll be pleased, too, when they look at the facts.

Budget and Incoming Bush Administration

Q. Mr. President, in your remarks on the budget, you almost seem to be addressing an audience beyond this room, beyond most people on television. You seem to be addressing your remarks to the next administration. Do you think—what impact do you think a tax cut of the proportions that George W. Bush campaigned on would have on the course of the arrow on your chart?

The President. Well, first, I don't think it's appropriate for me to comment on the specific decisions they will have to make—and the Congress will make. But you can't see any of this in isolation. You have to say—the real issue on the fiscal side is, what is the revenue estimate; are you being conservative? We always were, and even these reflect, by the way, pretty conservative estimates—because you can always have a bad couple of years, and it throws everything off.

And then it's not just a question of a tax cut; you have to ask yourself, in all these things—when you all are doing the math in your head, you have to do the tax cuts plus whatever extra spending there will be plus whatever you do on Social Security. And it's the aggregate amount of money here; it's not just a question of the tax cut.

So I don't really think I can comment, nor do I think I should comment on the specifics. I'm more interested in the big picture, the arithmetic issues. But I'm just saying that I believe that as long as we can do so, we should be shooting for a debt-free America by the end of the decade, because I think that that will strengthen our country enormously.

Clinton Family Income and Future Residences

Q. Mr. President, what can you tell us about the Clinton family debt picture? Is there a new house in your future here in Washington, DC?

The President. Well, I hope so. Hillary has got to have someplace to live. But we don't have—we haven't closed a deal yet. When we do, we'll let you know. She needs an address, and I'd like to have someplace to come see her. [*Laughter*]

Q. Will you be able to afford all that, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I hope so. I'm going to go out and go to work. And——

Q. Where? [*Laughter*]

The President. I expect to make a living, and I'll get out of your hair and get out of the media spotlight and go back to making a living. And I expect to—I'll do a—well, I'll write a book and do a few other things. But I think——

Q. For $8 million? [*Laughter*]

The President. I think I'll be able to support her. I don't know. I don't have two bestsellers to my credit like she does, so I don't know.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, back on the Middle East. Two elements seem different now than were present at Camp David. First of all, the outlines of peace proposal are open, and you want to take a look at them. And second, there seems to be much more of an effort to involve Arab leaders as the negotiations move forward. Those two things were not present at Camp David, yet the Palestinians still are holding back. What do you think is holding them back, and what do you think would push them across the line and move this forward?

The President. Well, I think the—first of all, I think that while we have talked to all of the Arab leaders, I'm not sure that Mr. Arafat has gotten to talk to enough of them. I think that he believes that—he has always believed, I thought, that he was representing not only his people but the larger Arab world, and in some ways the larger Muslim world, in the Jerusalem issues. So I think that he's trying to work through that.

But I don't think, as I've said repeatedly over the last several years, I think when you're in a period like this—that is, where we're sort of—the thing is in gestation, and it's either going

to go forward or it's not—I think that the less I say about it, the better.

Japanese Whaling

Q. Is your decision not to impose sanctions on Japan for their whaling program a reflection of the fact that you view your friendship with Japan more important than the environment? And as a followup, how do you expect a Bush administration to go through with Japan-U.S. trade relations?

The President. Well, the first thing is, the answer to the first question is no. We're working this whaling issue. We have serious disagreements with them about it, and we have some options that we're pursuing. But is our security relationship with Japan important? Of course it is. Is our larger economic relationship important? Of course it is. Is this whaling issue a big deal? I think it is.

So I'm trying to leave this situation in the best possible light for my successor to look at all available options and go forward. That's what I'm trying to do.

Q. How can you impose sanctions when the deadline has already passed?

The President. Well, there are lots of other things that can be done on this, though, in the future, and I did what I thought was right, given all the factors involved. But I still think this whaling issue is an important issue, and I think that—I understand the role it has in Japanese culture and the political impact of the interests that are involved in it. But I think they are going to have to modify their practices.

International Criminal Court Treaty

Q. Are you going to sign the World Criminal Court Treaty?

The President. I haven't decided that. I have a couple of days, and I'm getting a last paper on it, and then I'm going to discuss it with our people.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Back to the Middle East. Have you given the Palestinians any sort of deadline to give you an answer, or are they going to be given an unlimited amount of time to decide? And also, do you expect them to come here? Do you need to talk to them again before you can see if they are making headway?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it is obvious we are all operating under a deadline. We're all operating under a deadline; it's just some of us know what our deadline is.

What I have said to them is, there is no point in our talking further unless both sides agree to accept the parameters that I've laid out—not because I am trying to dictate this, but because I have listened to them for months and months and months—indeed for 8 years—and this is the most difficult of all the issues I've dealt with. If there is a peace agreement here, I'm convinced it's within the four corners I laid out.

And then there are still—they both have legitimately a lot of questions, and they ought to ask those questions and get answers to them. But there is no point in even doing that unless we've got a basic framework so we can close. The time has come to close here. And the last several months have shown us this is not going to get any easier, and prolonging it is only going to make it worse. So I'm doing my best to facilitate what I think is what they want, which is to try to resolve this.

Q. Do you really think you can resolve it in the remaining—are you really optimistic that you can resolve it in the remaining 3 weeks? And, if you cannot, would you keep at it after you leave office?

The President. Well, the answer to your first question is, I think that if it can be resolved at all, it can be resolved in the next 3 weeks. I don't think the circumstances are going to get better. I think, in all probability, they'll get more difficult.

In terms of what I do when I leave office in the way of official work like that, that will be up to the next administration and any parties there or anywhere else in the world. That would not be for me to say.

One of the things I am determined to do when I leave—I'm going to work until the last day, because I'm drawing a paycheck, and I'm going to work to the last day. After that, I'm going to observe strictly what I think is the proper role of a former President. And we will have a new President, and he has to make the calls, and I will support that entirely. Around the world, I think that's very, very important. So anything I might ever do, indeed, for the whole rest of my life, not just in the first few years I'm out of office, will be determined by what whoever happens to be the President does or doesn't want me to do, and whatever parties in other parts of the world do or don't want

me to do. That's just the only appropriate thing, and I will rigorously adhere to that.

Q. Have both sides asked you to, sir? Have both sides asked you to keep at it?

The President. No, I didn't say that. It depends upon—I think that it is—first of all, in this context, I believe that is exceedingly unlikely. That is, I honestly believe, given the pendency of the Israeli election and the developments within the Palestinian community and the larger Arab world, that the best chance they have to make an agreement is in the next 3 weeks.

Now, none of us who long for peace in the Middle East would ever give up on it. But I think that is both a theoretical question and an unlikely one, because if you look at where the forces are today, they have a better chance to do it now, if they're ever going to do it. It's just—it's really hard. If it weren't hard, they would have done it before this. I mean, they signed the Oslo agreement in '93 and put all this stuff off to the end because they knew it was hard, and it's still hard.

But if you look at where we've been the last few months, it's not going to get any easier. And I just hope that—I've said this before, I said it earlier—we had a confluence of Christmas, Hanukkah, and the end of Ramadan and the beginning of the Eid, and maybe there's something in the stars that will give them the divine strength and inspiration to do it. I don't think it's going to get easier.

Q. Well, are your terms negotiable, or are they just parameters?

The President. No, they're the parameters. The negotiations, in other words, have to occur within them.

Q. So East Jerusalem could be negotiated more?

The President. No. I do not want to talk more about this. They understand exactly what I mean. Both sides know exactly what I mean, and they know exactly what they still have to do, and that's enough right now.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:37 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; President-elect George W. Bush; and Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), and Condoleezza Rice, incoming Bush administration nominees for Secretary of State and National Security Adviser, respectively. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Census 2000

December 28, 2000

Today I am pleased to receive from the Department of Commerce the first data released from Census 2000, our country's 22d decennial census. I congratulate Secretary Norman Mineta, Secretary William Daley, and Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt for their leadership in Census 2000, the longest continuous scientific effort in American democracy. Since 1790, these data collected during each decennial census help to tell the ongoing story of America, its rich heritage and broad diversity. Most importantly, I want to thank the American people for their participation in Census 2000. With their help, the country is better equipped to meet the needs of every American and the challenges in the 21st century.

Statement on Efforts To Improve Relations With North Korea
December 28, 2000

For several years, we have been working with our east Asian allies to improve relations with North Korea in a way that strengthens peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. We have made substantial progress, including the 1994 Agreed Framework, which froze North Korea's production of plutonium for nuclear weapons under ongoing international inspections, and the 1999 moratorium on long-range missile tests. I believe new opportunities are opening for progress toward greater stability and peace on the Korean Peninsula. However, I have determined that there is not enough time while I am President to prepare the way for an agreement with North Korea that advances our national interest and provides the basis for a trip by me to Pyongyang. Let me emphasize that I believe this process of engagement with North Korea, in coordination with South Korea and Japan, holds great promise and that the United States should continue to build on the progress we have made.

Our policy toward North Korea has been based on a strong framework developed at my request by former Secretary of Defense William Perry and carried out by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Special Adviser Wendy Sherman. We have coordinated each step forward with our allies the Republic of Korea and Japan. The engagement policy of President Kim Dae-jung and his personal leadership have spurred this process and earned the world's admiration. Taken together, our efforts have reduced tensions on the Korean Peninsula, improved prospects for enduring peace and stability in the region, and opened an opportunity to substantially reduce, if not eliminate, the threat posed by North Korean missile development and exports.

This past October, when DPRK Chairman Kim Chong-il invited me to visit his country, and later when Secretary Albright traveled to Pyongyang, Chairman Kim put forward a serious proposal concerning his missile program. Since then, we have discussed with North Korea proposals to eliminate its missile export program as well as to halt further missile development. While there is insufficient time for me to complete the work at hand, there is sufficient promise to continue this effort. The United States has a clear national interest in seeing it through.

Statement on Signing the National Moment of Remembrance Act
December 28, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign S. 3181, the "National Moment of Remembrance Act," which designates 3:00 p.m. local time on Memorial Day each year as the National Moment of Remembrance, in honor of the men and women of the United States who died in the pursuit of freedom and peace. The Act also establishes a White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance, to coordinate and encourage commemorative events on Memorial Day each year, and a Remembrance Alliance, to assist the Commission in promoting the observance of the Memorial Day holiday and organizing an annual White House Conference on the National Moment of Remembrance.

Each Memorial Day, the Nation honors those Americans who died while defending our Nation and its values. While these heroes should be honored every day for their profound contribution to securing our Nation's freedom, they and their families should be especially honored on Memorial Day. The observance of a National Moment of Remembrance is a simple and unifying way to commemorate our history and honor the struggle to protect our freedoms.

This Act recognizes in law a commemoration begun on Memorial Day in May 1997, when "Taps" was played at 3:00 p.m. on many radio and television stations across the Nation as Americans paused to remember the men and women who have lost their lives in service to

our country. This past May, both a Congressional Resolution and a Presidential Proclamation called for the observance of a National Moment of Remembrance. It is my hope that the establishment of the National Moment of Remembrance in law, along with the creation of the White House Commission, will promote greater understanding of the meaning of the Memorial Day holiday for all Americans.

In signing this Act, I note that the Appointments Clause of the Constitution requires that all Federal officers exercising executive authority be appointed in conformity with that Clause. Because the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution—who would be a member of the Commission—is not so appointed, he may not exercise significant governmental authority on the Commission but may directly participate in the ceremonial or advisory functions of the Commission. Moreover, because the members of the Remembrance Alliance are not appointed in conformity with the Appointments Clause, they must remain under the supervision of the Commission, and I interpret the Act to establish such a relationship between the two bodies.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 28, 2000.

NOTE: S. 3181, approved December 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–579. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Japanese Whaling Practices
December 29, 2000

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

On September 13, 2000, the Secretary of Commerce certified that Japan had authorized its nationals to conduct research whaling activities that diminish the effectiveness of the International Whaling Convention (IWC) conservation program. This message constitutes my report to the Congress pursuant to section 8 of the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967, 22 U.S.C. 1978 (the Pelly Amendment).

Secretary Mineta's certification was the third against Japan for scientific research whaling. The first was in 1988, when Japan initiated its Antarctic program that now entails an annual take of 440 minke whales. The second was in 1995, after Japan extended its program to the North Pacific, where it has been taking 100 minke whales per year. This year, despite a specific resolution passed by the majority of IWC parties calling on Japan to refrain from conducting lethal research in the North Pacific, Japan expanded its program in the North Pacific to permit the take of 10 sperm whales and 50 Bryde's whales. The total harvest in this summer's hunt was 40 minke whales, 5 sperm whales, and 43 Bryde's whales. I remain very concerned about Japan's decision to expand its research whaling to two additional species.

I also remain concerned about Japan's practice of taking whales in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary north of Antarctica. This is an internationally recognized sanctuary that was approved by the IWC. I see no justification for Japan's practice and will continue to urge Japan to reconsider its policy, which I believe undermines the effectiveness of whale sanctuaries everywhere. I note in addition that Japan's practice is clearly out of step with the growing international consensus in support of whale sanctuaries, and in sharp contrast to the strong leadership that Mexico and Brazil have both shown in the last 3 months in designating areas off their coasts as whale sanctuaries.

Along with many other members of the IWC, the United States believes the Japanese research whaling program has dubious scientific validity. Information relevant to management of whale stocks can be collected by nonlethal techniques. Products of the research harvest are sold in Japanese markets, which raises questions about the true motivation for the program. In addition, Japan has conducted the same set of scientific research experiments on significant numbers of minke whales for more than 10 years.

I want to underscore that concerns about Japan's lethal scientific whaling program are not simply a bilateral matter. A substantial majority

of IWC members share our concern and want Japan to curtail its program.

My Administration has already taken a wide range of economic and diplomatic measures in response to Japan's expanded program. On September 13, I directed the Secretary of State to make Japan ineligible to conduct fishing operations within the United States exclusive economic zone. I, members of my Cabinet, and other United States officials, have raised our strong concerns at the highest levels of the Japanese Government and will continue to do so. I have personally intervened with Prime Minister Mori. We also joined 14 other governments in making a high-level demarche to the Japanese Government to protest its decision to issue the permits. In September, we canceled a bilateral fisheries meeting that we have been holding annually for more than a decade. We also declined to participate in a ministerial meeting on environmental issues in August hosted by Japan. We have also actively supported the selection of a country other than Japan to host the next intersessional meeting of the IWC. As a result, the IWC voted 17–10 to hold the meeting in Monaco instead of Tokyo.

The United States has intensified its serious engagement on these issues with Japan. In November, we held bilateral consultations with Japan in Tokyo on scientific research on whales. At that meeting, we appreciated receiving the news that Japan is preparing to conduct two nonlethal scientific whale programs in the next 12 months. This is a very encouraging sign. We expect our bilateral meeting will lead to an IWC Scientific Committee workshop on methods for whale research. I view this meeting as a positive but limited step. Our goal remains that Japan substitute nonlethal techniques for its program. We will vigorously pursue this objective in conjunction with our partners in the IWC.

We are concerned that the presence of these additional species of whales in the Japanese market could increase the risk of derivatives of whale products entering international commerce. To this end, we have raised these matters within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and an interagency team continues to consider additional measures to enforce international and national prohibitions on trade in whale products. If warranted, the Secretaries of Commerce and the Treasury will take appropriate additional measures.

In sum, I remain deeply concerned by Japan's unilateral actions. For this reason, I have directed the Departments of State, Commerce, the Interior, and the Treasury, as well as the Office of the United States Trade Representative, to keep this matter under active review. I will also direct these agencies to further examine the relationship between Japanese companies that both manufacture whaling equipment and export products to the U.S. market. I would consider actions regarding any imports from whaling equipment manufacturers, as well as actions regarding a broader range of imported products, should they be warranted by lack of progress from our bilateral and multilateral efforts; however, I do not believe that import prohibitions would further our objectives at this time. We are committed to a sustained effort in order to bring about positive movement in Japan's whaling policies.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address
December 30, 2000

Good morning. The year 2000 is drawing to a close at a moment of great progress, prosperity, and peace for America. But while we have many reasons to be thankful, good weather is not one of them.

Terrible ice storms in the Southern Plains States have left more than a dozen people dead and thousands without heat and electricity. Two days ago I declared that an emergency exists in Arkansas and Oklahoma so that Federal aid

can be made immediately available to help families in those States. Now a major snowstorm is rolling into the Northeast, and weather experts tell us that this November and December are shaping up to be among the coldest on record. All this, along with the increased demand for energy that has accompanied unparalleled economic growth, is putting enormous pressure on the energy supplies Americans need to heat their homes and businesses.

Fortunately, we're far better prepared for this winter energy challenge because of actions we took this fall, and the new steps I am taking will ensure that we remain prepared. In late September, I directed the Department of Energy to exchange 30 million barrels of crude oil from the Federal Government's Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This was a step to prevent a supply crisis that would have had a particularly harsh effect on heating oil inventories in the Northeast.

At the time, many said that using the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help Americans heat their homes was a terrible idea, that it would never work. Well, now we have the results. I'm pleased to report that inventories of crude oil are up, and prices have dropped substantially, from $37 to $26 a barrel. Home heating oil prices also have fallen in recent weeks, and supply shortfalls have been cut by more than half.

But even though heating oil prices have begun to ease, the cost of heating a home still is too high, especially for families on low and fixed incomes. That's why I'm releasing $300 million in funds from our Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Along with similar funds I released earlier this fall, we've now devoted more than $850 million to assist families who can least afford to bear the burden of high energy prices this winter.

The simple lesson we've learned again and again is that the best way to meet challenges is to stay ahead of them. So I am taking some new steps to prepare for more cold weather this winter. First, I'm directing the Departments of Energy and Transportation to make extra efforts to keep navigation lanes in U.S. harbors free of ice for ships bringing in heating oil. I'm also asking them to work with States to relieve bottlenecks on our Nation's roads, rivers, and pipelines.

Second, in the Northwest, which is experiencing tight electricity supplies, I am asking all Federal facilities to join those in California that are already reducing their electricity consumption during peak hours. This will help to keep lights and heat on in homes and businesses across the West.

Third, Energy Secretary Richardson has extended an emergency order to powerplants providing electricity to California to keep the power flowing in that hard-hit State.

Fourth, I am asking the Small Business Administration to reach out to small businesses with high energy costs to make them aware of special SBA loans that will allow them to stretch out their energy payments. That could be a big help for businesses trying to get through this cold winter.

None of us can control the weather. But all of us are responsible for how we respond to and prepare for it. With the actions I am taking, the Federal Government is fulfilling its responsibility. Across the Nation, Americans are doing their part: snowplow drivers are working late into the night; emergency shelter workers are offering a warm place to sleep for families whose homes are without power; younger neighbors are bringing hot food to their older neighbors and shoveling their walkways.

The worst weather always seems to bring out the best in the American people. If we continue to work together and bring out the best in each other, we'll get through this cold weather just fine and usher in a new year of unlimited promise for our great Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:50 p.m. on December 29 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Potential Electricity Shortages in Western States
December 30, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Potential Electricity Shortages in Western States

Increased demand for electricity during cold winter weather can make it a challenge for electric utilities to meet the demand of their customers and keep lights on and their homes and businesses warm. Currently, the supply of electric power is tight on the West Coast due to record demand for electricity. The region faces the possibility of electricity shortages in some areas, which would put both consumers and businesses at risk.

The Federal Government is among the largest consumers of electricity in Western States. It is important that the Federal Government lead by example in taking energy conserving steps to reduce the risk and severity of power outages. Therefore, I direct that:

- All managers of all Federal buildings in Washington and Oregon join those in California and take steps to reduce consumption of power to the maximum extent practicable consistent with public health and welfare, and that of employees; and
- Federal agencies coordinate with other State and local government agencies to minimize the use of electricity in all government buildings in Washington, Oregon, and California.

When the Federal Government, State governments, businesses, and consumers work together to use electricity wisely, we can reduce the risk of power shortages in the short term and keep the power on.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Memorandum on Keeping the Heating Fuel Distribution System Open
December 30, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Transportation, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard

Subject: Keeping the Heating Fuel Distribution System Open

When inclement weather strikes and the demand for heating fuel rises, the distribution system through which fuel is delivered is often placed at great strain. Freezing harbors delay the delivery of critical fuel supplies, and the demand for heating fuel deliveries rises, increasing workload of drivers who deliver fuel to homes and businesses. Last winter, for example, critical deliveries of heating oil were delayed as harbors froze and barges were unable to reach their docks.

In order to minimize the likelihood of bottlenecks in the heating fuel distribution system, I direct the Secretaries of Energy and Transportation to work together and take all reasonable measures to keep the harbors open and the delivery trucks on the roads. If shipping channels freeze, the Coast Guard shall be prepared to keep them open to the extent possible. The Department of Transportation shall inform State and local governments and private companies as appropriate about the criteria and procedures for obtaining waivers from hours of service regulations in order to increase trucking capacity for emergency fuel deliveries and shall respond to such requests as quickly as possible.

Finally, the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Emergencies shall coordinate closely with the Department of Transportation's Emergency Transportation Representative to address any other transportation problems as they arise in order to keep heating fuel moving through the distribution system to the consumer.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Memorandum on Providing Loans to Small Businesses Facing High Energy Costs
December 30, 2000

Memorandum for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration

Subject: Providing Loans to Small Businesses Facing High Energy Costs

Increased demand for energy and a colder than normal winter has led to higher than normal energy costs. Because many small businesses lack significant capital reserves, they may lack the resources or cash flow to meet higher energy bills.

In order to assist such businesses, I am directing you to begin aggressive outreach programs to potential borrowers, SBA lenders, and other partners to make them aware of the SBA lending and technical assistance programs that are available to assist small businesses that may need assistance in meeting energy bills. SBA-guaranteed loans offer eligible small businesses sufficient cash to continue to meet their immediate energy needs and will allow them to spread their energy payments over a longer period than the payment period typically provided by their vendors.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on the Rome Treaty on the International Criminal Court
December 31, 2000

The United States is today signing the 1998 Rome Treaty on the International Criminal Court. In taking this action, we join more than 130 other countries that have signed by the December 31, 2000, deadline established in the treaty. We do so to reaffirm our strong support for international accountability and for bringing to justice perpetrators of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. We do so as well because we wish to remain engaged in making the ICC an instrument of impartial and effective justice in the years to come.

The United States has a long history of commitment to the principle of accountability, from our involvement in the Nuremberg tribunals that brought Nazi war criminals to justice, to our leadership in the effort to establish the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Our action today sustains that tradition of moral leadership.

Under the Rome Treaty, the International Criminal Court (ICC) will come into being with the ratification of 60 governments and will have jurisdiction over the most heinous abuses that result from international conflict, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The treaty requires that the ICC not supersede or interfere with functioning national judicial systems; that is, the ICC prosecutor is authorized to take action against a suspect only if the country of nationality is unwilling or unable to investigate allegations of egregious crimes by their national. The U.S. delegation to the Rome Conference worked hard to achieve these limitations, which we believe are essential to the international credibility and success of the ICC.

In signing, however, we are not abandoning our concerns about significant flaws in the treaty. In particular, we are concerned that when the court comes into existence, it will not only exercise authority over personnel of states that have ratified the treaty but also claim jurisdiction over personnel of states that have not. With signature, however, we will be in a position to influence the evolution of the court. Without signature, we will not.

Signature will enhance our ability to further protect U.S. officials from unfounded charges and to achieve the human rights and accountability objectives of the ICC. In fact, in negotiations following the Rome Conference, we have worked effectively to develop procedures that limit the likelihood of politicized prosecutions. For example, U.S. civilian and military negotiators helped to ensure greater precision in the

definitions of crimes within the court's jurisdiction.

But more must be done. Court jurisdiction over U.S. personnel should come only with U.S. ratification of the treaty. The United States should have the chance to observe and assess the functioning of the court, over time, before choosing to become subject to its jurisdiction. Given these concerns, I will not, and do not recommend that my successor submit the treaty to the Senate for advice and consent until our fundamental concerns are satisfied.

Nonetheless, signature is the right action to take at this point. I believe that a properly constituted and structured International Criminal Court would make a profound contribution in deterring egregious human rights abuses worldwide and that signature increases the chances for productive discussions with other governments to advance these goals in the months and years ahead.

Statement on Judicial Vacancies

January 3, 2001

The most fundamental right of American democracy is the right to equal justice under the law. Whenever our citizens knock on the door of justice, they have a right to expect a judge to answer. Unfortunately, too many courts around the country are in a state of emergency because of judicial vacancies. In these places justice is being delayed. The people's appeals are not being heard. That is simply unacceptable. That's why today I renominated eight highly qualified appellate court nominees for vacancies that are considered by the U.S. Judicial Conference to be judicial emergencies.

They are Roger Gregory of Virginia, nominated to fill a vacancy on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit; Judge James Wynn of North Carolina, nominated for the fourth circuit; Enrique Moreno of Texas, nominated for the fifth circuit; Judge Helene White of Michigan, nominated for the sixth circuit—the longest waiting nominee; Kathleen McCree Lewis of Michigan, nominated for the sixth circuit; Bonnie Campbell of Iowa, nominated for the eighth circuit; Barry Goode of California, nominated for the ninth circuit; and James Duffy of Hawaii, nominated for the ninth circuit. Together, these nominees have waited a total of 4,757 days for Senate action—that's more than 13 years combined. Only one of them has even received a hearing. And two—the nominees from Hawaii and North Carolina—are from States with no current representation on the appellate court, even though under Federal law every State should have such representation.

It is my sincere hope that we can work with the Senate in a bipartisan spirit to get these nominees confirmed. The qualifications of these nominees are not in question. All of them are highly rated and respected. They also represent the kind of diversity that we all know enhances fairness and confidence in our courts.

In a nation that prides itself in the fair and expeditious rule of law, the people have a right to expect that judicial emergencies are treated with the urgency they demand. So, I urge the new Senate to give these nominees the simple up or down vote they deserve without further delay.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel

January 3, 2001

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, with a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to an understanding and a reservation, the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel adopted by the United Nations General Assembly by consensus on December 9, 1994, and signed on behalf of the United States of America on December 19, 1994. The report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention is also transmitted for the information of the Senate.

Military peacekeepers, civilian police, and others associated with United Nations operations are often subject to attack by persons who perceive political benefits from directing violence against United Nations operations. The world has witnessed a serious escalation of such attacks, resulting in numerous deaths and casualties. This Convention is designed to provide a measure of deterrence against these attacks, by creating a regime of universal criminal jurisdiction for offenses of this type. Specifically, the Convention creates a legal mechanism that requires submission for prosecution or extradition of persons alleged to have committed attacks and other offenses listed under the Convention against United Nations and associated personnel.

This Convention provides a direct benefit to United States Armed Forces and to U.S. civilians participating in peacekeeping activities by including within its coverage a number of types of operations pursuant to United Nations mandates in which the United States and U.S. military and civilians have participated in the past. If the United States were to participate in operations under similar conditions in the future, its forces and civilians would receive the benefits created by this instrument. The Convention covers not only forces under U.N. command, but associated forces under national command or multinational forces present pursuant to a United Nations mandate. In situations such as we have seen in Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and Haiti, certain attacks on these associated forces would now be recognized as criminal acts, subjecting the attackers to prosecution in or extradition by any State that is a party to the Convention. As a result, the international community has taken a significant practical step to redress these incidents. In doing so, we recognize the fact that attacks on peacekeepers who represent the international community are violations of law and cannot be condoned.

By creating obligations and procedures that increase the likelihood of prosecution of those who attack peacekeeping personnel, this Convention fulfills an important objective under my Directive for Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations of May 1994, which directs that the United States seek additional legal protections for United States peacekeeping personnel.

The recommended legislation, necessary to implement the Convention, will be submitted to the Congress separately.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention subject to the understanding and reservation that are described in the accompanying report of the Department of State, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 3, 2001.

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

Remarks at a Swearing-In Reception for Senator Hillary Clinton

January 3, 2001

Thank you. First of all, Senator Schumer has got to go to New York, and one of the things that I did not completely solve as President was the minor congestion we sometimes have at our

airports. [*Laughter*] So let's give Senator Schumer a big hand, because he's got to go. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Well, I want to thank Walter and Thelma and Cathy. Thank you, all of you who worked on this wonderful party for Hillary tonight. I want to thank the people of New York for being so good to my wife and to me and Al Gore for 8 years.

This is a special day for Hillary's mother and her brothers and my family, but especially for Chelsea and me. We were in the Senate gallery today at noon, Chelsea and I were, holding hands, trying to keep from laughing out loud and embarrassing Senator Clinton. [*Laughter*] I resisted all temptation. I didn't take one of those little Kodak cameras in there. [*Laughter*] I did everything I could to avoid spoiling what was, for me, one of the truly wonderful moments in my life and our family's life. So, for all of you who helped Hillary over this last almost year and a half, I want you to know I am profoundly grateful to you.

You also have taken a huge load off my mind. [*Laughter*] Because, you know, for 30 years, I've been guilt-ridden that I, when Hillary came to Arkansas and married me, that I kept her out of a career in politics that she should have had. So I don't have to feel bad about it anymore. [*Laughter*] And I really thank all of you for doing that. I say it laughingly, but I'm dead serious about it. I have always felt that Hillary had the best combination of mind and heart and passion and strength about the issues that we have always cared about than anyone I ever knew.

And I also believe that the American people understand now that there really is a connection between the ideas you have and the level of commitment you have to implementing them, and what happens out there in the country. And if you have any doubt, you're about to find out. [*Laughter*] Because—[*applause*]—wait a minute—I say that in all seriousness. There were, in this election, which was so closely fought out in so many places, there are real differences between the way we view the world. And they are honest and heartfelt. But at least our ideas have been tested for 8 years, and most of them have worked pretty well.

Quite apart from the enormous personal pride I have in Hillary and the enormous gratitude I feel and the incredible—just sheer happiness that we all felt today, I am gratified to know that when my term of service as President ends, there will be one more magnificent voice sticking up for the folks that are too often forgotten and the causes that have too often been left behind.

I'll leave you with this thought. Public service, like a political campaign, is a team sport. It's not like tennis; it's not something you play by yourself. It's a team sport. And even if you get to be quarterback, no matter how good you are, you'll lose if you don't have a good team. I have been blessed to have supporters like you, people like you, all over this country. Don't ever forget it's a team sport. You stick with Hillary, and you guys will do great things for America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:43 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Walter and Thelma Kaye and their daughter, Cathy. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Clinton.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Jack McAuliffe in Syracuse, New York

January 4, 2001

Millie; John, Joe, Tom, Terry; all the family and the grandchildren; reverend clergy. I want to thank the people who came with us today: our leader, Dick Gephardt, and his wife, Jane, and Senator Dodd and Congressman Coelho.

Hillary and I are here because we really liked Jack McAuliffe. And I know most people will say, "Well, the President came because Terry did so much for him." Truth is, I came for Joe. I thought we ought to have an Irish-Protestant support group here in this church. [*Laughter*]

One wonderful nun reached over to me during communion and said, "Thank you so much

for what you did for Ireland." I said, "I had to do it. It's about time we started getting along."

I want to say just a few things. I spent quite a bit of time thinking about what I would say in my couple of minutes. Most of what I wanted to say has been said. But you know, when a great human being passes away, people search around in their minds for some part of the Scripture that captures that person. We talked about it a lot already today. Proverbs says, "A happy heart doeth good like medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bone"—that God loves a cheerful giver. That's what Jack McAuliffe was. He knew it was more blessed to give than to receive. But nothing is more distasteful than someone who's out there doing good and wants you to know it every minute of the day.

Jack McAuliffe was a cheerful giver. Whether it was in risking his life in the Pacific or leading campaigns here to build a church for his neighbors or schools for the kids or cheering and giving to Notre Dame or the Democratic Party or spending time imparting all the lessons to his children that you heard about or just buying a round at the local bar, he was a cheerful giver.

And every time I was around him, I felt better. And so did you, and that's why you're here today. He gave more to us than any of us outside his family gave to him. And we showed up to say, "You gave us a lesson in life. We loved you for it, and we're grateful."

I have to say a little something about his ties to the Democratic Party. He was the county Democratic treasurer here for decades. And he started Terry out as a political fundraiser when he was 6 years old. I've heard this story—no matter how many times, I never get tired of it.

When Terry was 6, on the night of the Onondaga County Democratic dinner, his dad sat him down at a card table outside the ballroom at the Hotel Syracuse and said, "Don't let anybody in who hasn't paid." [*Laughter*] Terry immediately found his true calling in life. [*Laughter*] And you know, when he got up here, the first words out of his mouth were that his Republican brother paid. [*Laughter*] So thanks, Jack, you did good.

I'll always be grateful because Jack showed me something about going through life and staying young by never losing your enthusiasm. You know, he didn't take—he was very proud of Terry's role in politics, but he didn't think it meant that he was now too good to do the basic work of politics. He was out there putting up yard signs for Hillary in this campaign when he was 83 years old. And I think he was pretty pleased at the way things came out.

I also like the fact that he didn't lose his spirit when it didn't all work the way he thought it should. I mean, he thought Notre Dame should never lose, and he had what in this year turned out to be a bizarre idea: He thought all votes should actually be counted. [*Laughter*] But he just kept chugging along, you know? And he made me even feel better about all of that.

Terry, of all the things you've done for me, turns out none of them was better than the chance you gave me to be your father's friend. His memory will always bring a smile to the face of all of us who knew him, and we'll always miss him. But I rejoice in the fact that Jack, the cheerful giver, is in his rightful place, where the road is always rising and the wind is always at his back, and he is always in the hollow of God's hand. Thank you, Jack.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. In his remarks, he referred to Jack McAuliffe's widow, Millie, and their children, John E., Jr., Joseph R., Thomas J., and Terence McAuliffe; and former Congressman Tony Coelho.

Remarks Celebrating the Enactment of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000

January 4, 2001

Thank you very much. Well, first, I think we all should thank Tonia again for coming all the way from Oklahoma, where it's been hazardous even to drive around, if you've been seeing—

[*laughter*]—Oklahoma and my native State of Arkansas have been one big icicle for the last several days. And she came all the way up here to try to make sure that no other woman ever has to go through what she has, and I think she did a terrific job.

I'd also like to thank Senator Clinton—God, what a kick—[*laughter*]—this is the first time I've been able to say that; I'm still getting used to saying that; I kind of like it, you know—who has been such a vital part of all the progress we've made in women and children's health here in the United States and throughout the world and who will continue to lead on these issues in the United States Senate.

I thank, as Hillary did, Secretary Shalala for all she has done, right up until the 11th hour. Just a few days ago, we were announcing our medical privacy regulations, which I think are profoundly important, and I thank her.

And as Hillary said, Janice Lachance, at the Office of Personnel Management, has kept us on the forefront of employers, in setting a good example. And she, in the 11th hour—even later—announced that we were going to have parity for mental health, something that Tipper Gore has worked so hard for and something that you have made real for the Federal employees and their families. And I thank you for that.

I'd also like to thank someone who never gets mentioned but has literally done virtually—is responsible for virtually everything I have done on health care for 8 years, Mr. Chris Jennings. Thank you, Chris, wherever you may be. Thank you.

I, too, want to thank our friends Anna Eshoo, Louise Slaughter, Sherrod Brown, Rosa DeLauro for joining us today, and for all those who worked with them on this important legislation and for all the things that they have tried to do. Hillary mentioned the genetic discrimination law. I think that's very important. And there's lots of interests arrayed against Louise and the others who are trying to pass this bill. And I won't be around to help you, but we've got a better distribution in the Congress for people who would like to pass that. And I'll say more about this at the end of my remarks.

But as I imagine, what we want people to find out about themselves and their conditions and what we can do to lengthen life and improve the quality of life, it's only going to work if we have some protection against discrimination. When you find out something that you really need to know but somebody will use against you, you wind up having more people in the same shape Tonia was in, if we permit genetic discrimination. Instead of lengthening life, we're going to cut short work lives and a lot of other problems if we don't pass it. So I urge you all to please hang in there with this vast group and try to pass a bill against genetic discrimination so that we can move on to the next chapter of this grand struggle.

Now, mostly what we're here to do today is to mark the progress that we've made in women's and children's health, thanks to the dramatic increase in funding for research and the provision of more health care options for women and children, thanks to your stand against discrimination and violence directed at women and for a woman's right to choose. So many of you, advocates for women and children, women's health, breast and cervical cancer groups, have never stopped fighting since—certainly since the day I got here. [*Laughter*] I thought I had a lot of energy until I met all of you. [*Laughter*] And you have, on occasion, worn me out. [*Laughter*]

But in the bill we come to particularly talk about today, you have proved once again that when Americans put the people of this country first, when they look at the human dimensions of a challenge, there are literally no limits to what we can achieve together. And so again, I want to thank all of you for what you've done and what we'll go on to do.

With regard to breast and cervical cancer, I just wanted to reemphasize that we know what works: early detection, prompt treatment, and a commitment to research until a cure is found. And we have to stay on all three approaches.

More than 180,000 women will be diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer this year in the United States. Too many Americans still will lose a sister, a daughter, a friend, or a mother. And too many women will be unable to pay for health care that will dramatically improve or even save their lives.

Everybody who knows anything about this disease knows this delay can be fatal, literally. And still, too many uninsured women face a curious patchwork of care or inadequate care or no care at all. We know that women who are uninsured—listen to this—are 40 percent more likely to die from breast cancer than women with insurance. I know the worst licking I took in the last 8 years was when I tried to provide health

insurance to everybody. But when I hear a statistic like that, I still think we need to keep going until everybody's got health insurance.

Now, there's more than one way to do it. The Children's Health Insurance Program—when we tried in '94, the budget was in deficit and the economy was still not fully recovered. We could neither raise the money nor require employers to come up with it. That's fundamentally what happened. We didn't have the economic circumstances to create a comprehensive network. But the Children's Health Insurance Program, alone, as it's being implemented, has led us to the first reduction in the number of people without health insurance in a dozen years, and that's good.

Now, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act, which built on the previous work we did to provide preventive screenings under Medicare and to include more women in clinical trials, both of which were also quite important for the long run issues—this allows States to extend full Medicaid benefits to women who are diagnosed with these cancers but don't have insurance. Every year it will help to get prompt and quality care to thousands who might otherwise not receive care or be bankrupted by the cost of it.

Today we're taking two new steps to help bring down these barriers earlier. First, we are releasing new guidelines for States to explain their options under the Breast and Cervical Treatment Act. I don't want to have the same kind of take-up time with this we had with the Children's Health Insurance Program. We need to move on this in a hurry, and you can help with that.

These guidelines will explain how to get Federal matching dollars to fund care. When women are diagnosed with cancer through federally funded screening programs, States may now enroll them in Medicaid right away. Doctors and hospitals may start providing care immediately, even before the paperwork is processed. It's very important. And we hope that these guidelines will free more State funds for breast cancer screening. If all this happens and it happens in a hurry, we will save a lot of lives every year.

Second, because we want the Federal Government to be a model employer, I'm directing every agency to help every employee have the time to get checked for cancer and other preventable diseases every year. This is an important step for everyone and particularly for women. To take just one example, for women ages 50 to 69, regular mammograms reduce the risk of death by breast cancer by 30 percent. From now on, every one of our 1.8 million Federal employees who need it will have up to 4 hours of leave available every year for preventive screenings. I hope this will spur other employers to take similar actions.

With these steps, as well as the Children's Health Act of 2000 that Hillary mentioned, we've built a strong foundation of research and treatment for those who suffer today, and we've done what we could to ensure that cancer and other diseases will claim fewer victims tomorrow.

But before I close, I just want to remind you, there's a lot of work ahead—a lot. And all the best stuff is still out there. We have to build on what we have accomplished, and we should not retreat from the advances we've made in reproductive health and family planning. We want to see healthy mothers and healthy fathers raising healthy children in the United States and all across the world.

We have to recognize that we have a unique situation today where we've gone from record deficits to record surpluses, where we can actually invest in health care and education and the other things we need to invest in, have an affordable tax cut, and continue to pay down the debt to keep interest rates low.

If anybody doubts the psychological and financial impact of lower interest rates, all you have to do is look what happened when the Federal Reserve acted yesterday. [*Laughter*] And the Government—those of us in political life, or those of you, now that I'm leaving—[*laughter*]—you've got to remember that. If you keep the interest rates low, it's a big old tax cut to everybody, and it keeps the budget in balance, and it provides the funds necessary to invest in these things.

But let me just say again—and this is particularly important to women, because women still have a longer life expectancy than men, and Americans who live to be 65 have the longest life expectancy of any people in the world, so we have got to modernize and upgrade Medicare and add a prescription drug benefit to it.

And another thing I think is very important, we ought to pass that tax credit for long-term care. More and more people are providing direct health care to their parents or otherwise having

to pay for it. And this is going to become a bigger issue. Anybody who lives to be 65 in America today has a life expectancy of nearly 83 years, and it's only going to go up.

I think it is profoundly important to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. If you look at the reaction you had to Tonia today and the reaction you had to sort of congratulating yourselves—as well you should have—for the passage of the law that we celebrate and then you imagine every other person in this country today who has got some other kind of cancer or some other kind of health problem or is going to have an accident that requires some kind of serious health care, we must rededicate ourselves now, when we are financially solvent, to the proposition that we're going to do more to expand health care coverage for the millions of people who still don't have it. And again, we've learned over the last 6 years that if we focus on discrete populations and build bipartisan support, we can get this done.

And I still believe the biggest numbers out there and the greatest need are the parents of the children who are in this Children's Health Insurance Program, because a lot of them are getting their kids insured now, but they don't have health insurance, and they're not insured at work; they're working for modest wages. And we can afford to do that. That would take about—if we did it right, we'd get rid of about 25 percent of the uninsured population, including those least able to pay.

Then I think we should focus on the people who quit work at 55 and can't get Medicare until 65. And with a tax credit, we can enable them to buy into Medicare without bankrupting Medicare, without taking down the Trust Fund at all—it's at a 25-year high now—and we'd really be taking some of the most generally vulnerable populations. So I hope you will continue to work on that.

And let me just say, looking ahead, we have roughly doubled spending on medical research in the last 6 years or so. We have announced this year the sequencing of the human genome. A little over a year ago, the two genetic variations that are high predictors of breast cancer were identified.

Now, what all this means is, first of all, that we're going to be able to prevent more diseases; secondly, we're going to have quicker treatment. I am convinced that the development of so-called nanotechnology, which will enable us to have, for example, computer storage capacity on things the size of a teardrop that are bigger than supercomputers today and will, within a matter of a few years, allow us to go after cancers when they are only a few cells large. Our idea today about identifying a cancer early will seem like, within 5 years, identifying a cancer in very late stages.

All this is going to change everything for the better. But I will say again, we had to put these privacy rules out that we put out. We've got to pass this antidiscrimination legislation, and we have to make sure that we continue to invest in not only the research but then the distribution of the wonders through adequate care coverage.

It won't be long before the average young mother will come home with a little gene map of their baby. [*Laughter*] And some of them will have really scary things on there, and it will be a burden for some people. But they will also have a list of things that, if the mothers and fathers will do these things, the kids will dramatically increase their chances of living a long and healthy life. And it won't be long until the average mother will bring home a baby with a life expectancy of 90 years or more. Our bodies are actually built to last more than 100 years, if we didn't have all the problems that get in our way along life's way.

But that means we have to reimagine all this. And it means that the role of citizen lobbyists and citizen activists will become more and more important, because we are literally just at the beginning of building the kind of health care system that will be adequate to the 21st century.

And I'm telling you, most of it is going to be really good. But it's going to change the practice of medicine. It's going to change the way the health care delivery system is organized. It's going to provide all kinds of new challenges. And we're going to have to figure out how to get people who need to know it all this stuff that's out there without letting somebody else take advantage of them, financially or otherwise.

I can hardly think of a more exciting time in the entire history of the health sciences. And I believe that in the lifetime of people in this room, the cure rate for breast and cervical cancer will go through the roof; the prevention rate will escalate for all kinds of major cancers; the cure rate for prostate cancer will go through the roof. And once we get the technology down, when we merge the human genome with the

microtechnology necessary to identify and zap cancers when they're just in infant stages that are presently unidentifiable, the whole world will be very different.

You can all participate in that. But these decisions do not happen by accident. People who have other things to think about have to make decisions about how to allocate public funds for research. People who are under all different kinds of pressures have to make decisions about which bills will pass and which won't, in terms of extending coverage. And you have to enter this fray with the same energy that you brought to this fight. And just remember, all the best stuff is still out there. Go get it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to breast cancer survivor Tonia Conine, who introduced the President. H.R. 4386, approved October 24, 2000, was assigned Public Law No. 106–354. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Hillary Clinton.

Memorandum on Preventive Health Services at the Federal Workplace
January 4, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Preventive Health Services at the Federal Workplace

Today, as we celebrate the enactment of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act that I signed into law in October of last year, I am heartened by the progress being made in expanding access to preventive care for cancer and other serious diseases. We know a great deal about screening procedures that can detect diseases early, and about behaviors, such as smoking cessation and sun avoidance, that can greatly reduce a person's risk of disease. The challenge that remains is to ensure that all Americans not only take advantage of the screening programs and other effective preventive measures that are available and appropriate, but that they make positive changes in their lifestyles before disease develops.

The workplace is a logical place to provide employees with health information and services to help them learn about preventive health. The Federal Government, the Nation's largest employer, has already developed many programs to encourage preventive health care for its employees. These measures, available to Federal employees through the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, cover a broad range of preventive health services, including screening for prostate, cervical, colorectal, and breast cancer, and screening for sickle cell anemia, blood lead level, and blood cholesterol level. The programs also provide for all recommended childhood immunizations, well child care, and adult preventive care visits. In addition, the Federal personnel system provides employees with considerable flexibility in scheduling their hours of work and taking time off for medical needs, including routine examinations and preventive screenings. Many agencies offer creative, effective employee health programs that provide opportunities for employees to take advantage of preventive health screenings at the worksite.

There is still room for progress. Therefore, I am today directing Federal departments and agencies to review their policies and make maximum use of existing work schedule and leave flexibilities to allow Federal employees to take advantage of screening programs and other effective preventive health measures. Each department and agency should also inform its employees of the various work schedule and leave flexibilities available to them to participate in these preventive screenings and examinations. Such flexibilities include promoting alternative work schedules (flexible and compressed work schedules), which allow for a variety of working arrangements tailored to fit the needs of individual employees, granting leave under the Federal Government's sick and annual leave programs, and granting excused absence to employees to participate in agency-sponsored preventive health activities. In the case of employees with fewer than 80 hours (two weeks) of accrued sick leave, I am directing each department and

agency to establish a policy that provides up to 4 hours of excused absence each year, without loss of pay or charge to leave, for participation in preventive health screenings.

I am also directing agencies to develop or expand programs offered at the worksite to help employees understand their risks for disease, obtain preventive health services, and make healthy lifestyle choices, and to share these initiatives with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) within 120 days. The OPM will use this information to identify agency best practices. Finally, I direct the OPM to prepare guidance to assist agencies in carrying out this directive.

Agencies will carry out this policy within available appropriations, and to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the Administration's budget priorities.

I want the Federal Government to serve as a model for the rest of the country. While Federal agencies have led the way in many instances, I want to go even further in demonstrating that preventive health care for all employees is not only desirable, but also very practical and sensible.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Statement on the Report on the National Drug Control Strategy

January 4, 2001

The 2001 Annual Report on our National Drug Control Strategy issued today by National Drug Policy Director Barry McCaffrey shows that America is making real progress in the fight against illegal drugs but that we must never give up on making our children's futures safe and drug-free. The most recent National Household Survey on Drug Abuse found that drug use by youths aged 12 to 17 has declined 21 percent since 1997.

Adolescents increasingly disapprove of illegal drugs, and a growing number are using positive peer pressure to help friends stay away from drugs. We have made similar progress combating illegal drug organizations that traffic in these poisons. Additionally, drug-related murders are down to their lowest level in over a decade.

Despite our progress, drugs continue to exact a tremendous toll on our Nation. Studies report an increase in the use of steroids and club drugs, such as ecstasy, by youths, and too many young people are still using alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances. In addition, one in four inmates in State prisons and more than 60 percent of Federal inmates are drug offenders. We need to continue to build on successful initiatives like our Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign so our children can make smart decisions and stay away from drugs. We must also make investments to improve after-school opportunities so our children are supervised during the hours when they are most vulnerable to drugs and crime. In addition, we have a responsibility to reduce the treatment gap as well as help close the revolving prison door of drug offenders by expanding drug courts and drug testing and treatment programs, which have been shown to cut recidivism by as much as 44 percent.

I urge the 107th Congress to continue working together in the bipartisan spirit of my administration so that we may tackle these important challenges and eliminate the devastating impact of drugs on our Nation's communities.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Libya
January 4, 2001

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 Libya emergency is to continue in effect beyond January 7, 2001, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration on January 7, 1986, of a national emergency has not been resolved.

Despite the United Nations Security Council's suspension of U.N. sanctions against Libya upon the Libyan government's hand over of the Pan Am 103 bombing suspects, there are still concerns about the Libyan government's support for terrorist activities and its noncompliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992), and 883 (1993).

For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the actions taken and currently in effect to apply economic pressure on the Government of Libya.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Libya
January 4, 2001

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

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 12543 of January 7, 1986.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Statement Showing Apportionment Population for Each State
January 4, 2001

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

Pursuant to title 2, United States Code, section 2a(a), I am transmitting the statement showing the apportionment population for each State as of April 1, 2000, and the number of Representatives to which each State would be entitled.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on Action To Preserve America's Forests
January 5, 2001

Thank you very much. You guys are all cheating. You're just trying to warm up. I know what's going on. [*Laughter*] I was told by an elderly conservationist from my home State of Arkansas that I had better do a good job with America's natural resources when I became President, on pain of feeling the fire of Hades. I did not realize that our reward is that we would be freezing to death here. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank my good friend Senator Gaylord Nelson for a lifetime of leadership in conservation. And I am profoundly grateful to Secretary Glickman and to Chief Dombeck, a career public servant, who said it all when he began by saying, "This is not a political issue for those of us who believe in it."

I thank Jim Lyons and the others at the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service. I want to thank our EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, who's here with us today. Just a few days ago, she announced her new rule to cut harmful emissions caused by the burning of diesel fuel. It will dramatically improve the quality of air in America, and we thank her for that.

I would like to also acknowledge the substantial contributions to this effort, particularly in fading the heat—and believe it or not, even today there was some heat involved in this. I want to thank John Podesta and George Frampton and the others at the White House for their strong support for the course we have followed.

And I'd like to thank Dr. Tom Elias for hosting us again and for showing me my bonsai tree when I came up. [*Laughter*] We came here 2 years ago to launch the lands legacy initiative, and I knew this was the place to plant the seeds of success. And I thank him. That is also another major achievement of this Congress this year, the largest increase in funding for land conservation in the history of the Republic, and I thank all those who were involved in that.

Finally, I would like to thank Congressman Mark Udall for being here with his bride, Maggie. Thank you very much for being here. As you know, he comes from a family with fairly substantial environmental credentials, and he came here, and the first thing he said was that we had done the right thing today. And we will need his voice in Congress this year, and we thank him for being here.

For the first time ever, with the lands legacy initiative, we established a dedicated continuous fund for protecting and restoring green and open spaces across America. Today we come to build on that record.

In one way or another, all of us have come here, and I now have come to know many of you in this audience. And I know we come from different backgrounds and have traveled different paths through life, but somehow or another, we have in common our view that nature is a priceless but fragile gift, an important part of the fabric of our lives, and a major part of our responsibility to our children and our children's children.

I grew up in a State where more than half the land is covered by forest. I grew up in

a town surrounded by a national park. Most of the people who enjoy our public lands are like the people I grew up with, hard-working families who very often could afford no other kind of vacation and can afford nature's bounty because our forebears made sure that it belongs to them and it belongs to us all.

I am grateful that we can stand here today because of the work done by Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, and John Muir. I am grateful for all those who have walked in their footsteps for 100 years. I am grateful that for the last 8 years I had a Vice President who spoke out strongly for these values and these policies and helped us to do what we have done to be good stewards of the land.

We have saved and restored some of our most glorious natural wonders, from Florida's Everglades to Hawaii's coral reefs, from the redwoods of California to the red rock canyons of Utah. We have helped hundreds of communities, under the Vice President's leadership, to protect parks and farms and other green spaces. We've built new partnerships with landowners to restore and preserve the natural values of our private land.

We've modernized the management of our national forests to strengthen protections for water quality, wildlife, and recreation, while ensuring a steady and sustainable supply of timber. We have greatly expanded our cooperation with other nations to protect endangered species and threatened areas, like tropical forests.

In a larger sense, I hope and believe we have helped to put to rest the old debate between economic growth and environmental protection. We have the strongest economy in a generation and the cleanest environment in a generation. And I might say, parenthetically, that as we come to grips—as inevitably we must—with the challenge of climate change, and even though it is hard to believe on this day global warming is real—[*laughter*]—those of you who are here today will have to be in the vanguard reminding people that we can break the iron chain between more greenhouse gas emissions and economic growth. It is not necessary any longer, but we have to be smarter about what we're doing.

Today we take, as Secretary Glickman said, a truly historic lead on the path of environmental progress. Throughout our National Forest System there are millions of acres of land that do not have and, in most cases, have never had roads cut through them. These areas represent some of the last, best unprotected wild lands anywhere in America. These uniquely American landscapes are sanctuaries to hike and hunt and ski and fish. They're a source of clean water for millions of our fellow citizens. They are havens for wildlife and home to about one quarter of all threatened or endangered species in our Nation.

On a beautiful fall afternoon more than a year ago now, Secretary Glickman and many of you joined me at Virginia's Washington and Jefferson National Forest to launch a process to safeguard these lands. As Secretary Glickman just described, we reached out to the American people to help us develop the plan. More than a million and a half responded. I'm told that more Americans were involved in shaping this policy than any land preservation initiative in the history of the Republic. Thanks to their extraordinary support, the process is now complete.

Sometimes progress comes by expanding frontiers, but sometimes it's measured by preserving frontiers for our children. Today we preserve the final frontiers of America's national forests for our children.

I am proud to announce that we will protect nearly 60 million acres of pristine forest land for future generations. That is an area greater in size than all our national parks combined. From the Appalachian Mountains to the Sierra Nevada, forest land in 39 States will be preserved in all its splendor, off limits to road-building and logging that would destroy its timeless beauty.

This will include protection for the last great temperate rain forest in America, Alaska's Tongass National Forest. This initiative will provide strong, long-term protection for the Tongass, while honoring our commitment to address the economic concerns of local communities. We will work with them to ensure a smooth transition and to build a sound, sustainable economic base for the future.

Indeed, our entire approach to managing our national forests has been based on striking the right balance. For example, under this rule, the Forest Service still will be able to build a road or fight a fire or thin an area in an environmentally sensitive way, if it is essential to reducing the risk of future fires. And even as we strengthen protections, the majority of our forests will continue to be responsibly managed for timber production and other activities.

Bear in mind, as has already been said, only about 4 or 5 percent of our country's timber comes from our national forests. And less than 5 percent of that is now being cut in roadless areas. Surely we can adjust the Federal program to replace 5 percent of 5 percent. But we can never replace what we might destroy if we don't protect those 58 million acres.

Ultimately, this is about preserving the land which the American people own for the American people that are not around yet, about safeguarding our magnificent open spaces, because not everyone can travel to the great palaces of the world, but everyone can enjoy the majesty of our great forests. Today we free the lands so that they will remain unspoiled by bulldozers, undisturbed by chainsaws, and untouched for our children. Preserving roadless areas puts America on the right road for the future, the responsible path of sustainable development.

The great conservationist Aldo Leopold, who pioneered the protection of wild forest roadless areas, said, "When we see the land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." If there is one thing that should always unite us as a community, across the generations, across parties, across time, it is love for the land. We keep faith with that tradition today, and we must keep faith with it in all the tomorrows to come.

This is a great day for America. I thank all of you who made it happen. It is your achievement, but it is a gift that you give to all future generations, to walk in the woods, fish in the streams, breathe the air. The beauty of our wild lands will now be there for our children, and all our children, for all time to come. And I hope you will always be very proud that you were a part of it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the courtyard at the U.S. National Arboretum. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Gaylord Nelson, founder, Earth Day, and Thomas S. Elias, Director, U.S. National Arboretum.

Remarks at an Armed Forces Tribute to the President in Arlington, Virginia

January 5, 2001

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. First, I would like to thank Secretary Cohen for his kind and generous remarks and even more for his outstanding leadership of the Department of Defense.

I must say, Bill, when I asked you to become Secretary of Defense, in an attempt to strengthen the bipartisan or, indeed, nonpartisan support for the Defense Department among the American people and the Congress, I didn't know that I was the first President in history to ask an elected official of the opposite party to hold that job. Shoot, I might not have done it if I had known that. [*Laughter*]

It's one of those occasions where ignorance was wisdom, because you brought to the challenge a sharp mind, a fierce integrity, a loving heart for the men and women in uniform. Your wife, Janet, touched people who serve in our military forces all around the world in a unique and special way. And I'm glad that you believe this is the most important service of your 31-year career. But on this, sir, you gave as good as you got, and we thank you.

And General Shelton, I want to thank you. I will never forget the day when General Shelton, in his previous command post, stepped out of the boat, into the water, onto the beach in Haiti in his boots and his beret. I think he could have gone alone and prevailed just as well as he did with the help of the others who went with him.

I'll never forget the time I came to your office, sir, in your previous job, and I looked on the wall and there was a picture of Stonewall Jackson. And I said to myself, "I wonder if Stonewall Jackson would be a Democrat or a Republican if he were alive today." I've often commented to General Shelton that we have made—he, Secretary Cohen, and I—an unpredictable but, I think, quite a successful team. And you have been a great Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sir—a great Chairman, and

we thank you. And we thank Carolyn for her leadership, as well.

I thank Deputy Secretary Rudy de Leon, for the many capacities in which he has served since the first days of this administration. Thank you, Secretary Slater, today, for what you have done as Secretary of Transportation with the Coast Guard. I thank the Service Secretaries, General Myers, the Service Chiefs, the other officers here, and enlisted personnel.

I thank especially the members of the White House, my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger, for the work that they have done with me on issues relating to the Armed Forces.

And I thank you for the medals you gave to Hillary and me. We were honored to receive them, but far more honored to spend the last 8 years in contact with the 1.4 million men and women on active duty, the more than 850,000 men and women serving in the Guard and Reserves—those who keep us secure and advance the cause of peace and freedom.

There is no greater honor in being President than to be Commander in Chief of these magnificent people, so many of them so very young. They are at the disposal of the President to defend our interests, to advance our values, to realize our vision. Most of the time, they do it with all the gusto and fervor of youth, all the discipline that long training brings. But on occasion, they do it at the cost of their all too young lives. We saw it most recently in the U.S.S. *Cole,* but every year, in ways that don't make the headlines, about 200 of these young people give their lives just doing their jobs.

No one who has not held this job can possibly understand the awesome sense of humility and honor and the sense of strength and capacity it brings to any President, to know that there are people like these who have sworn their lives and fortunes and sacred honor for the United States.

In July of 1776 our first Commander in Chief, George Washington, ordered American troops to assemble on Manhattan Island in New York, to hear the Declaration of Independence read aloud—in full view, I might add, of the British forces then landing in Staten Island. He did it because he knew how important it was that our troops understand that the survival of our new Nation depended upon their success. For over 220 years now, the survival of our Nation has depended upon the military's success, and for over 220 years, our military has succeeded.

For these last 8 years, as Secretary Cohen chronicled, in a very different time, in a world after the cold war, more interdependent than ever before, with new conflicts and old demons, the American military has again succeeded and succeeded brilliantly. Thanks to you, the world is safer, and America stands taller.

Thanks to you, working with our Korean allies, there is peace in the Korean Peninsula and new hope for reconciliation across the last dividing line in the cold war.

Thanks to you, arm-in-arm with an expanded NATO, ethnic cleansing and slaughter in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia and Kosovo, has ended. Refugees have returned to their homes. Freedom has a chance to flower. Thanks to you, we are closer than ever before to building a Europe that for the first time in history is peaceful, undivided, and democratic, a Europe where it is far less likely that young Americans will have to fight and die in this new century.

Thanks to you, Iraq has not regained the capability that threatened the world or its neighbors with weapons of mass destruction. Thanks to you, Haiti is free of dictators; East Timor free of oppression; Africa is beginning to prepare itself to solve more of its own problems; Latin America has been aided in natural disasters and against narcotraffickers; and the United States has led the world in removing more landmines than any other nation by far, without sacrificing the safety and security of our troops in battle.

And yet, those are only the headlines. On Christmas Eve, as I do or have done every Christmas Eve for the last 8 years, I telephoned a number of our men and women in uniform serving a long way from home, doing critical work unknown to most but benefiting all Americans. I thanked Navy Petty Officer Second Class Mario Solares, who serves in Bahrain, making sure we have the piers, the bridges, the towers our vessels need as they protect peace in the Persian Gulf.

I thanked Air Force Staff Sergeant Erin McKenzie, who serves with the 607th Air Support Operations Group at Osan Air Base, making sure members of the 7th Air Force get a paycheck every 2 weeks as they guard the skies over South Korea.

I thanked U.S. Army Specialist Jeremy Kidder, who serves on a very remote Pacific island,

an atoll 800 miles west of Hawaii, working to destroy our cold war stock of chemical weapons.

I thanked Marine Staff Sergeant Robert Sheridan, who guards our Embassy in Belarus. He was named Marine Security Guard of the Year in 2000, and we know how tough the competition is because, unfortunately, we have been reminded how dangerous that job can be.

I thanked Petty Officer Michael Sandwith, who serves in the Bering Seas on the Coast Guard cutter *Midgett*—and was recently forced to give chase to a vessel illegally fishing in our waters in the middle of a snowstorm with gale force winds and 24-foot swells.

There are another 1.4 million stories like this: Americans in uniform with compelling missions, serving in places and doing jobs our fellow citizens don't hear much about.

Behind the desk in the Oval Office, I have a now-famous rack of coins from the military units, commanders, and senior enlisted personnel I have visited these past 8 years. There are almost 500 of them, not counting the duplicates. Whenever I look at them, I remember the faces of the service members I've met, men and women of every race, creed, religion, who trace their ancestry to every region on Earth, yet are still bound together by the common mission of defending freedom and the common faith in the American creed, *E pluribus unum*—out of many, one. It is not only inscribed on our coins; it is inscribed in the hearts of America's service men and women, and it is the coin of America's moral authority in the world.

I can tell you, after 8 years of traveling the world and dealing with the world's problems at the dawn of a new millennium, people elsewhere marvel at it. Our ability to live and work together in the military forces in spite of all those differences is by itself a powerful force for peace and reconciliation throughout the world. You are America's finest, and America must always be prepared to give you what you need to do your job. We can never pay you enough, but we can always pay you more.

I am proud that a year ago we put in place the biggest increase in military pay and retirement in a generation, proud that we reversed a decade of decline in defense budgets, and now can point to 4 straight years of growing investment in our future security. No one should think for a moment that investing in the strength of our military is less important in times of peace. The strength of our military is a major reason for our peace. We live in peace in no small measure because your courage and strength makes peace a wiser choice than war for other adversaries.

History will record triumphs in battle, as General Shelton said. But no one can ever write a full account of the wars that were never fought, the losses that were never suffered, the tears that were never shed because the men and women of the United States military risked their lives for peace. None of us should ever forget that.

Last year I visited a refugee camp in Macedonia full of Kosovar Albanians who had been driven from their homeland. As I walked through the camp, young children picked up a chant, "U.S.A., U.S.A., U.S.A.," kids everywhere I turned, chanting "U.S.A.," children who did not speak English but knew enough, with their small voices, to thank America for giving them the chance to reclaim their land and their dreams.

I had the same response when I saw elderly people in Normandy in 1994 on the 50th anniversary of D-day. There, American veterans were approached by French citizens who told them that no matter how young they were when it happened or how old they might be then, they could never forget what America did for them.

Years from now, I hope some of our young veterans who served in the Balkans will have a chance to go back and see in person the fruits of their service. Years from now, I hope some of our veterans who served in Korea during this period of historic change, or in the Gulf when nations there were under such stress, will have a chance to return and find grateful people. I hope some of our veterans who served in Africa or Asia or Latin America or eastern Europe will be able to return to where they helped to keep the peace, to relieve suffering, to set an example for a fledgling democracy.

If they do, I think they will find people who will still be wise and kind enough to say, "God bless you. You gave us a future."

And I hope that your Nation understands whatever you have done to the rest of the world, you have done that tenfold for America. For by helping to advance the cause of peace and freedom around the world, you have made freedom more secure here at home. May it always be so.

I thank you for the honor of doing my part these last 8 years. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. in Conmy Hall at Fort Myer. In his remarks, he referred to Janet Cohen, wife of Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Carolyn Shelton, wife of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA.

Statement on John M. Shalikashvili's Report on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

January 5, 2001

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John M. Shalikashvili and I met this morning to discuss his report concerning the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The report argues persuasively that ratifying the CTBT would increase our national security and that the security benefits of the treaty outweigh any perceived disadvantages.

The report's recommendations address concerns raised during the October 1999 Senate debate over CTBT. I urge Congress and the incoming Bush administration to act on them.

I also hope the Senate will take up the treaty at an early date as a critical component of a bipartisan nonproliferation policy. CTBT is supported by our friends and allies overseas and designed to reduce existing nuclear dangers as well as those that might emerge in the future.

I commend General Shalikashvili for his thorough and rigorous report and his continued service to the Nation.

The President's Radio Address

January 6, 2001

Good morning. I want to start off with some good news. For the first time in a dozen years, the number of Americans who lack health insurance is declining. One of the main reasons is that more and more uninsured children from low- and moderate-income working families are now getting health coverage through a program called CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program. It was a part of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

Today I want to announce some more good news about CHIP and discuss new actions I'm taking to strengthen the program. In just 12 months the number of children served by the Children's Health Insurance Program has grown by 70 percent. Today, more than 3.3 million children have health insurance under CHIP. That's making a real difference in their health and in costs to the health care system. We know that when uninsured children get health coverage, they go to the doctor's office more often and to the emergency room less often, and they're less likely to be hospitalized for conditions that could have been treated earlier and less expensively outside a hospital.

The success of CHIP is particularly impressive when you consider that the program has only been up and running for 3 years. It's a testament to the diligent efforts of the Federal, State, and local officials who run the program and to the love that parents have for their children.

Yet, there are still millions of children who are eligible for CHIP but aren't signed up, and millions of others who are eligible for health coverage under Medicaid but aren't getting it there, either. In most of these cases, parents just don't know about the benefits or mistakenly think their children aren't eligible. Also, in some States the application process is simply too daunting. As a nation, we must do more to reach out to these families so that their children will get health care coverage, too. I'm pleased

to announce new rules that will make it easier to do that.

First, since our goal is to enroll more children, we have to go where the children are; that's the schools. Sixty percent of uninsured children nationwide are enrolled in school lunch programs. Under the new rules I'm announcing today, States will be able to use school lunch enrollment data in order to contact families who may be eligible for assistance with health insurance.

Second, under these new rules parents will now be able to enroll their children in CHIP or Medicaid the moment they fill out an application at child care centers, school nurse offices, and other convenient places. No longer will they have to wait weeks or even months, while their applications are being processed, before they can get health care for their children.

Third, these new rules will make it possible for more employers to provide health coverage to the children of their low-wage employees, with much of the cost picked up by CHIP.

With 3.3 million children now enrolled in CHIP, we're getting closer than ever to the goal I set 4 years ago of providing 5 million uninsured children with health coverage. With the new rules I've announced today, we've now done all we can at the Federal level to help meet that goal. It's now up to the States to do their part and to the parents, too.

So if you have a child without health insurance, call this toll-free number: 1–877–KIDS–NOW. That's 1–877–KIDS–NOW, for more information. If we all work together, we can make certain that our children get the health care they need to make the most of their lives in this wondrous new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:44 a.m. on January 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation To Implement the Jordan-United States Free Trade Agreement

January 6, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit a legislative proposal to implement the Agreement between the United States of America and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the Establishment of a Free Trade Area. Also transmitted is a section-by-section analysis.

The U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) provides critical support for a pivotal regional partner for U.S. efforts in the Middle East peace process. Jordan has taken extraordinary steps on behalf of peace and has served as a moderating and progressive force in the region. This Agreement not only sends a strong and concrete message to Jordanians and Jordan's neighbors about the economic benefits of peace, but significantly contributes to stability throughout the region. This Agreement is the capstone of our economic partnership with Jordan, which has also included U.S.-Jordanian cooperation on Jordan's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), our joint Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, and our Bilateral Investment Treaty. This Agreement is a vote of confidence in Jordan's economic reform program, which should serve as a source of growth and opportunity for Jordanians in the coming years.

The U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement achieves the highest possible commitments from Jordan on behalf of U.S. business on key trade issues, providing significant and extensive liberalization across a wide spectrum of trade issues. For example, it will eliminate all tariffs on industrial goods and agricultural products within 10 years. The FTA covers all agriculture without exception. The Agreement will also eliminate commercial barriers to bilateral trade in services originating in the United States and Jordan. Specific liberalization has been achieved in many key services sectors, including energy distribution, convention, printing and publishing, courier, audiovisual, education, environmental, financial, health, tourism, and transport services.

In the area of intellectual property rights, the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement builds on the strong commitments Jordan made in acceding to the WTO. The provisions of the FTA incorporate the most up-to-date international standards for copyright protection, as well as protection for confidential test data for pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals and stepped-up commitments on enforcement. Among other things, Jordan has undertaken to ratify and implement the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty within 2 years.

The FTA also includes, for the first time ever in the text of a trade agreement, a set of substantive provisions on electronic commerce. Both countries agreed to seek to avoid imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions, imposing unnecessary barriers to market access for digitized products, and impeding the ability to deliver services through electronic means. These provisions also tie in with commitments in the services area that, taken together, aim at encouraging investment in new technologies and stimulating the innovative uses of networks to deliver products and services.

The FTA joins free trade and open markets with civic responsibilities. In this Agreement, the United States and Jordan affirm the importance of not relaxing labor or environmental laws in order to increase trade. It is important to note that the FTA does not require either country to adopt any new laws in these areas, but rather includes commitments that each country enforce its own labor and environmental laws.

The U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement will help advance the long-term U.S. objective of fostering greater Middle East regional economic integration in support of the establishment of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace, while providing greater market access for U.S. goods, services, and investment. I urge the prompt and favorable consideration of this legislation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 6, 2001.

Remarks at the Foundry United Methodist Church

January 7, 2001

Reverend Wogaman, staff, choir, congregation of this wonderful church. I would like to thank many people in this audience, but if I might, a few by name.

My good friend Bishop May and Mrs. May, thank you for being here. My councilman, Mr. Evans, and Mrs. Evans, thank you so much for your friendship and for being here. [*Laughter*] Senator Max Cleland, my friend of many years, before either one of us were in our present positions—surprising all but our mothers by our success. [*Laughter*] I am so proud of you, sir, and I thank you for all you have done.

I think of this church when reading the words of Paul that Hillary cited earlier, speaking of his gratitude to the Thessalonians, or constantly remembering their work of faith, their labor of love, their steadfastness of hope. I thank Foundry for all that and for being a church home to my family these last 8 years.

I thank especially those of you who were so kind to Chelsea over the years, who provided her opportunities to participate in the life of the church, especially in the Appalachia Service Project, from which she learned so much. I thank those of you who have taken special care to befriend Hillary and to support her. And I thank you especially for the wonderful welcome you gave her last week, when she came back here for the first time as a Senator-to-be.

I thank you all for your prayers and your welcome to all of us in the storm and sunshine of these last 8 years. I will always have wonderful memories of every occasion where we passed the peace, for all the people, young and old, who came up to me and said a kind word of welcome, to remind me that no matter what was going on in Washington, DC, at the moment, there was a real world out there with real people and real hearts and minds reaffirming the timeless wisdom of de Tocqueville's observation so long ago, that America is great because America is good. You cannot imagine the

peace, the comfort, the strength I have drawn from my Sundays here.

I want to thank you for a few other things: for the social mission of this church, especially for your outreach to the homeless, which I have been honored to support; and for your constant support of my efforts to bring peace in the Middle East and Kosovo and Northern Ireland and the other trouble spots of the world, where there are people suffering who have no money or power, too often overlooked by great nations with great interests.

I want to thank you for making Foundry a true community church, welcoming Christians from all races and all nations with all kinds of abilities and disabilities, some seen and some not. I thank you especially for the kindness and courage of Foundry's welcome to gay and lesbian Christians, people who should not feel outside the family of God.

I thank you for your support for the city of Washington, for its economic and social revitalization, which I have done my best to speed, and for giving its citizens the political equality and statehood I have always believed that it deserved, as my license plate shows—[*laughter*]—and will for at least a couple more weeks. [*Laughter*]

Especially, I would like to thank Reverend Wogaman for being my pastor and friend, my counselor and teacher. Most of you know that for more than 2 years now, he and two other minister friends of mine have shared the burden of meeting with me on a weekly basis. It has been an immense blessing to me and to my service as President.

Two weeks from yesterday, at high noon, I will relinquish my office, doing so with a heart filled with gratitude, gratitude to the American people for the chance to serve and to leave our country with more opportunity, stronger bonds of community, and a more positive impact in the larger world, at the dawn of a new century and a whole new aspect of human affairs.

Our Nation has come a long way together these last 8 years, and I am profoundly grateful to have had the opportunity to play a part in it. In the years ahead, America may have Presidents who do this job better than I have. But I really doubt we'll ever have another one who enjoyed it more than I have. [*Laughter*]

Well, those are my reflections. I didn't know what the title of my sermon was until I picked up the program, as I walked into church. [*Laughter*]

What do I anticipate? I anticipate that my Christian bearing will be tested by a return to commercial air travel—[*laughter*]—where I will reap the rewards of not having succeeded in one of the things I tried very hard to do, which was to end all those backlogs.

I anticipate that for some several months I will be disoriented when I walk into large rooms, because no one will be playing a song anymore. [*Laughter*] I look forward to finding out whether John Quincy Adams was right when he said, "There is nothing so pathetic in life as an ex-President"—[*laughter*]—or whether, instead of his words, the life of John Quincy Adams and the life of Jimmy Carter prove exactly the reverse.

In the next chapter of my life I will do my best to use the incredible opportunities my country has given me to be a good citizen here at home and around the world, to advance the causes I believe in, and to lift the fortunes and hopes of those who deserve a better hand than they have been dealt, whether in Africa, Asia, Latin America, or Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, the inner cities, or the Native American reservations. I will try every day to remember—as apparently for the first time in my life I will be able to earn a sizable income—[*laughter*]—that Christ admonished us that our lives will be judged by how we do unto the least of our neighbors.

I will also do my best to keep working for peace and reconciliation among people across their differences, to find ways to get people to move beyond tolerance to celebration of those differences. I know it's sort of out of fashion, but I've kind of grown impatient with the word "tolerance," because tolerance implies that someone who's better than someone else is decent enough to put up with them. And I think we need to move beyond that.

We are moving into the most incredible era of human affairs the world has ever known, in terms of our interdependence, our capacity to relate to people across national and cultural and religious lines, and our ability to use these breathtaking advances in technology with advances in biomedical sciences to lengthen and improve lives in ways that previously are literally unimaginable. And yet, the biggest threat we face is the oldest problem of humankind, the fear of the other, which can so easily lead to

hatred and dehumanization and violence but, even if it doesn't go that far, limits the lives all of us might otherwise live.

And I have spent a lot of time, as you might have noticed, in a reasonably combative arena. I am not without my competitive instincts. A lot of days I thought just showing up was an act of competition. [*Laughter*] But I do believe in the end, when all is said and done, what matters most is what we did that was common to our humanity. And somehow, I will do everything I can to advance that simple but powerful idea at home and around the world.

I will also do my best to support my Senator and our daughter. And I will try to keep learning and growing, working to follow the example of the mythic Parsifal, a good man slowly wise.

Thanks to the good people of New York, as Phil said, this is not really a goodbye but the beginning of a new chapter in our lives with Foundry. But it is a new chapter. So let me thank you again for letting all of us, Hillary, Chelsea, and me, make this part of our life's journey with you, for your constant reminder in ways large and small that though we have all fallen short of the glory, we are all redeemed by faith in a loving God.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, senior minister, Foundry United Methodist Church; Bishop Felton Edwin May, Washington Episcopal Area of the Methodist Church, and his wife, Phyllis; and Washington, DC, City Councilmember Jack Evans, Ward 2, and his wife, Noel Soderberg Evans. Rev. Wogaman also serves as a spiritual counselor to the President, along with Rev. Gordon MacDonald and Rev. Tony Campolo.

Remarks at a Tribute to Senator Hillary Clinton in New York City
January 7, 2001

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. First, let me say what a wonderful thing it is for Hillary and Chelsea and me to be here with Al and Tipper and with all of you.

I want to be brief today because this is Hillary's day, and it's also a day when she very much wanted the Vice President and Mrs. Gore to come here and receive from you the kind of welcome that I knew you'd give them and that they deserved. I'm so proud of them.

You know, I'm kind of tickled about living in New York. I feel the way Garrison Keillor does about Lake Wobegon. [*Laughter*] I was up here listening to that great church choir, and then our friends Jessye Norman and Toni Morrison and Billy Joel, and how magnificent they were. Then we got the score in the ball game, and I thought, here I am in New York, where all the artists, writers, and athletic teams are above average—[*laughter*]—and all the voters get their votes counted. [*Laughter*]

So I thank you. I thank Judith Hope for her strong leadership. I thank Charlie Rangel for 8 years of wonderful partnership. I thank Chuck Schumer for taking me into his home in 1992, when I was running the first time, with his wonderful wife; and then for taking me through Queens, letting me see people and places I might never have otherwise seen, and for running in 1998, which everybody thought would be a bad year. It turned out to be a pretty good one, thanks to Chuck Schumer's guts and drive, and he is great.

I'm looking forward—I hate it that I've got to wait 2 more years, but I'm looking forward to Charlie Rangel being the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. When that happens, you mark my words, it'll be the best show in America off Broadway. [*Laughter*]

I do want to say just very briefly a serious word of appreciation to the Vice President and to Mrs. Gore. I thank her for—from the time of the first bus ride that, as Al said, we took here—keeping the rest of us in a good humor, always seeing the glass as half full, always caring about our families as well as our politics, and always sticking up for people who others had forgotten, whether they were people with mental illnesses or homeless people or others, reminding me always that I had to be their President, too. I am grateful to her.

And as I've said many times, and as has already been said here today, there's no question that in the history of the Republic, no person has had such a positive impact on the American people from the Office of Vice President that Al Gore has had. It's not even close—not even close.

I told somebody, he had more influence and did more things—whether it was manage our technology policy, our environmental policy, giving all the poor schools the opportunity to hook up to the Internet, helping to supervise our reorganization of the space program, trying to do something about all the terrible congestion at the airports, dealing with big chunks of our foreign policy—nobody ever had so much responsibility before. And I was showing up for work every day, too. [*Laughter*] I'm really proud of him in ways that you will never know.

He has shown us all, in the last 2 months, under circumstances which have never before existed in our country—and I pray to God never will again—how we should all behave as Americans and patriots. I honor him for my friendship, for his advice, for his leadership, for what he's done for America for 8 years. But in the last 8 weeks, he's shown us the strength of character that very few of us could emulate if we were in the same circumstances.

Now, I would also like to thank the people of New York who helped Hillary to win this race. She did, as Chuck Schumer said, win it the old-fashioned way: She earned it. But she wouldn't have earned it if you hadn't helped her, if you had shut her out and shut her down and turned away from her. I'd like to thank the people who helped her on Long Island, where the going was toughest. I'd like to thank the people who helped her in upstate New York and proved it wasn't so Republican, after all. I'd like to thank those of you who had me to your counties in upstate New York. I had a lot of fun being there, and I hope we all did some good together.

I want to thank the people in this magnificent city for how good you have been to Hillary and to all of us. I want to thank you for making Chelsea feel welcome. She did a pretty good job for her mother, too, up here campaigning, I think—made a lot of votes, I think.

And I want to thank you for making it possible for me to give my wife good advice about how to run in New York. Everybody said how mean it was going to be. Do you remember what you did to me in the Democratic primary here in 1992? [*Laughter*] I said, "Hillary, look, these people are really good, but they just want to see how bad you can take a beating." [*Laughter*] "And they will beat you up and beat you up and beat you up and take off your shoes and make you walk on coals"—[*laughter*]—"make you lie down on a bed of pins and needles. But if you just keep smiling, they'll know you got it, and they will come."

I'm so proud of her, because she not only laid out a vision for what she wanted to do; she did it in a way that was consistently big and generous, that didn't descend to the level of her attackers. And when New York did to her what New York does and she passed, then you came. And I told her all along—she can tell you—I told her for 16 months, I said, "Trust me. If you are just even on the weekend before the election, you're going to win big. They will come to you in droves, if you just be big and stay right." And you proved that I was right about you, and I am grateful. [*Laughter*]

But I had that awful primary experience to shore up my gratitude and know what was going to happen. [*Laughter*]

Now, the last thing I'd like to say is this: In 13 days, at high noon, I'm going to give up being President.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Wait a minute, hey. You can "boo" about the nature of the transfer, but not about me giving it up. I've had my time—[*laughter*]—and I had a very good time.

And what I want to remind you of is that politics is not about the politicians; it's about the people. And I am honored to become a citizen of New York. I will do my best to be a good one. And if you need to, call me sort of a de facto caseworker for your Senator here. [*Laughter*] I want to get around the State and go upstate and do what I can to help Hillary fulfill the commitments that she and Chuck have made to help the upstate economy and to help the neighborhoods here.

And I want to thank Senator Schumer and Congressman Rangel for passing the new markets initiative Al Gore and I worked so hard on, to build on the empowerment zone proposal that Al ran so well for nearly 8 years, to keep the economy going.

So we want to work. I want to be a good citizen to you. But I want you to remember that Hillary ran and won because of you—not

because of her—because of your children and your future and what we want to do together.

So the last thing I want to ask you to do is, I want you to keep your heart burning for 2 years to make Charlie the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. I want you to remember, not only for 4 years but for the rest of your life, what happened in the elections 2000 and what Al Gore did in the 8 weeks afterwards.

But I want most of all for you to remember that America's work and New York's work is never done. And I want you to help my wife do a good job at what she ran for, which was to give people like you, and people outside this hall who will never be in a meeting like this, the chance to make the most of their lives and their children's lives. That's what I want to ask you more. You've given her a great gift. Now help her use it for the purpose it was intended.

Last Wednesday, when Hillary was sworn into the Senate, I believe that Chelsea and I were the two happiest people on the planet: Chelsea, because she loves her mother and she's proud of her; me, for the same reasons, but also because when I met Hillary nearly 30 years ago now—2 more months, 30 years ago—I thought that she had more capacity and more heart for public service than anybody I had ever met. And I worried when we started our lives together that somehow I would limit her service.

Your giving her this chance, in my mind, has reaffirmed the wisdom she made in moving to be with me so long ago and all the many roles she's played in giving to others and never asking for anything for herself until she made this race. And I can tell you this: You will not be disappointed, because I was right about her 30 years ago.

Thank you. God bless you.

Now, Mr. Vice President, please reenact the ceremony.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. at Madison Square Garden. In his remarks, he referred to Garrison Keillor, host of "Prairie Home Companion"; soprano Jessye Norman; author Toni Morrison; musician Billy Joel; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; and Senator Schumer's wife, Iris Weinshall. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Hillary Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks at an Israel Policy Forum Dinner in New York City
January 7, 2001

Thank you very much. Thank you. I want to thank all of you for making me feel so welcome tonight and also for making Hillary and Chelsea feel welcome. I thank Michael Sonnenfeldt, who, like me, is going out after 8 years—[*laughter*]—and will doubtless find some other useful activity. But he has done a superb job, and I'm very grateful to him.

I thank my friend Jack Bendheim for his many kindnesses to me and to Hillary. Yesterday he had a birthday, and now, like me, he's 54. Unlike me, he has enough children to be elected President of the United States. [*Laughter*] And he's had a wonderful family and a wonderful life, and I'm delighted that he's so active in the Israel Policy Forum. I'd like to thank Judith Stern Peck for making me feel so welcome and for her leadership.

I thank Lesley Stahl. It's good to see you, and thank you for your kind remarks. I thank the many Members of Congress who are here and also the members of my Middle East peace team. Secretary Albright and Sandy Berger and others have been introduced, but Secretary Dan Glickman is here, and Kerry Kennedy Cuomo is here, and I thank them for being here.

I want to thank the New York officials who are here—Carl McCall, Mark Green, and any others who may be in the crowd—for your many kindnesses to me over the last 8 years. New York has been great to me and Al Gore and even greater to my wife on election day, so I thank you for that.

We just reenacted her swearing-in at Madison Square Garden. And I was reminded of one of the many advantages of living in New York: Jessye Norman sang, Toni Morrison read, and

Billy Joel sang. Meanwhile, at least at half time, the Giants were ahead. [*Laughter*] And so I said, I felt sort of like Garrison Keillor did about Lake Wobegon. I was glad to be in New York where all the writers, artists, and sports teams were above average—[*laughter*]—and all the votes were always counted. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say a word of warm welcome and profound respect to the Speaker of the Knesset, Speaker Burg, for his wonderful and kind comments to me, and to Cabinet Secretary Herzog, for his message from the Government of Israel. I want to say a little more about that in a moment.

I want to congratulate Dwayne Andreas, my good friend—I wish he were here tonight—and thank him for his many kindnesses to me. Congratulations, Louis Perlmutter; Susan Stern, who has been such a great friend to Hillary, and you gave a good talk tonight. I think you've got a real future in this business. And your mother sat by me, and she gave you a good grade, too. [*Laughter*]

And Alan Solomont, who has done as much for me as, I suppose, any American, and he and Susan and their children have been great friends, and I thank you for what you've done, sir. I thank all of you.

I'd also like to say how much I appreciated and was moved by the words of Prime Minister Barak. He was dealt the hard hand by history. And he came to office with absolute conviction that in the end, Israel could not be secure unless a just and lasting peace could be reached with its neighbors, beginning with the Palestinians; that if that turned out not to be possible, then the next best thing was to be as strong as possible and as effective in the use of that strength. But his knowledge of war has fed a passion for peace. And his understanding of the changing technology of war has made him more passionate, not because he thinks the existence of Israel is less secure—if anything, it's more secure—but because the sophisticated weapons available to terrorists today mean even though they still lose, they can exact a higher price along the way.

I've been in enough political fights in my life to know that sometimes you just have to do the right thing, and it may work out, and it may not. Most people thought I had lost my mind when we passed the economic plan to get rid of the deficit in 1993. And no one in the other party voted for it, and they just talked about how it would bring the world to an end and America's economy would be a disaster. I think the only Republican who thought it would work was Alan Greenspan. [*Laughter*] He was relieved of the burden of having to say anything about it.

But no dilemma I have ever faced approximates in difficulty or comes close to the choice that Prime Minister Barak had to make when he took office. He realized that he couldn't know for sure what the final intentions of the Palestinian leadership were without testing them. He further realized that even if the intentions were there, there was a lot of competition among the Palestinians and from outside forces, from people who are enemies of peace because they don't give a rip how the ordinary Palestinians have to live and they're pursuing a whole different agenda.

He knew nine things could go wrong and only one thing could go right. But he promised himself that he would have to try. And as long as he knew Israel in the end could defend itself and maintain its security, he would keep taking risks. And that's what he's done, down to these days. There may be those who disagree with him, but he has demonstrated as much bravery in the office of Prime Minister as he ever did on the field of battle, and no one should ever question that.

Now, I imagine this has been a tough time for those of you who have been supporting the IPF out of conviction for a long time. All the dreams we had in '93 that were revived when we had the peace with Jordan, revived again when we had the Wye River accords—that was, I think, the most interesting peace talk I was ever involved in. My strategy was the same used to break prisoners of war: I just didn't let anybody sleep for 9 days, and finally, out of exhaustion, we made a deal—just so people could go home and go to bed. [*Laughter*] I've been looking for an opportunity to employ it again, ever since.

There have been a lot of positive things, and I think it's worth remembering that there have been positive developments along the way. But this is heartbreaking, what we've been through these last few months, for all of you who have believed for 8 years in the Oslo process, all of you whose hearts soared on September 13,

1993,* when Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin signed that agreement.

For over 3 months, we have lived through a tragic cycle of violence that has cost hundreds of lives. It has shattered the confidence in the peace process. It has raised questions in some people's minds about whether Palestinians and Israelis could ever really live and work together, support each other's peace and prosperity and security. It's been a heartbreaking time for me, too. But we have done our best to work with the parties to restore calm, to end the bloodshed, and to get back to working on an agreement to address the underlying causes that continuously erupt in conflicts.

Whatever happens in the next 2 weeks I've got to serve, I think it's appropriate for me tonight, before a group of Americans and friends from the Middle East who believe profoundly in the peace process and have put their time and heart and money where their words are, to reflect on the lessons I believe we've all learned over the last 8 years and how we can achieve the long-sought peace.

From my first day as President, we have worked to advance interests in the Middle East that are long standing and historically bipartisan. I was glad to hear of Senator Hagel's recitation of President-elect Bush's commitment to peace in the Middle East. Those historic commitments include an ironclad commitment to Israel's security and a just, comprehensive, and lasting agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Along the way, since '93, through the positive agreements that have been reached between those two sides, through the peace between Israel and Jordan, through last summer's withdrawal from Lebanon in which Israel fulfilled its part of implementing U.N. Security Counsel Resolution 425—along this way we have learned some important lessons, not only because of the benchmarks of progress, because of the occasional eruption of terrorism, bombing, death, and then these months of conflict.

I think these lessons have to guide any effort, now or in the future, to reach a comprehensive peace. Here's what I think they are. Most of you probably believed in them, up to the last 3 months. I still do.

First, the Arab-Israeli conflict is not just a morality play between good and evil; it is a conflict with a complex history, whose resolution requires balancing the needs of both sides, including respect for their national identities and religious beliefs.

Second, there is no place for violence and no military solution to this conflict. The only path to a just and durable resolution is through negotiation.

Third, there will be no lasting peace or regional stability without a strong and secure Israel, secure enough to make peace, strong enough to deter the adversaries which will still be there, even if a peace is made in complete good faith. And clearly that is why the United States must maintain its commitment to preserving Israel's qualitative edge in military superiority.

Fourth, talks must be accompanied by acts—acts which show trust and partnership. For good will at the negotiating table cannot survive forever ill intent on the ground. And it is important that each side understands how the other reads actions. For example, on the one hand, the tolerance of violence and incitement of hatred in classrooms and the media in the Palestinian communities, or on the other hand, humiliating treatment on the streets or at checkpoints by Israelis, are real obstacles to even getting people to talk about building a genuine peace.

Fifth, in the resolution of remaining differences, whether they come today or after several years of heartbreak and bloodshed, the fundamental, painful, but necessary choices will almost certainly remain the same whenever the decision is made. The parties will face the same history, the same geography, the same neighbors, the same passions, the same hatreds. This is not a problem time will take care of.

And I would just like to go off the script here, because a lot of you have more personal contacts than I do with people that will be dealing with this for a long time to come, whatever happens in the next 2 weeks.

Among the really profound and difficult problems of the world that I have dealt with, I find that they tend to fall into two categories. And if I could use sort of a medical analogy, some are like old wounds with scabs on them, and some are like abscessed teeth.

What do I mean by that? Old wounds with scabs eventually will heal if you just leave them alone. And if you fool with them too much, you might open the scab and make them worse. Abscessed teeth, however, will only get worse if you leave them alone, and if you wait and

* White House correction.

wait and wait, they'll just infect the whole rest of your mouth.

Northern Ireland, I believe, is becoming more like the scab. There are very difficult things. If you followed my trip over there, you know I was trying to help them resolve some of their outstanding problems, and we didn't get it all done. But what I really wanted to do was to remind people of the benefits of peace and to keep everybody in a good frame of mind and going on so that all the politicians know that if they really let the wheel run off over there, the people will throw them out on their ears.

Now, why is that? Because the Irish Republic is now the fastest growing economy in Europe, and Northern Ireland is the fastest growing economy within the United Kingdom. So the people are benefiting from peace, and they can live with the fact that they can't quite figure out what to do about the police force and the reconciliation of the various interests and passions of the Protestants and Catholics, and the other three or four things, because the underlying reality has changed their lives. So even though I wish I could solve it all, eventually it will heal, if it just keeps going in the same direction.

The Middle East is not like that. Why? Because there are all these independent actors—that is, independent of the Palestinian Authority and not under the direct control of any international legal body—who don't want this peace to work. So that even if we can get an agreement and the Palestinian Authority works as hard as they can and the Israelis work as hard as they can, we're all going to have to pitch in, send in an international force like we did in the Sinai, and hang tough, because there are enemies of peace out there, number one.

Number two, because the enemies of peace know they can drive the Israelis to close the borders if they can blow up enough bombs. They do it periodically to make sure that the Palestinians in the street cannot enjoy the benefits of peace that have come to the people in Northern Ireland. So as long as they can keep the people miserable and they can keep the fundamental decisions from being made, they still have a hope, the enemies of peace, of derailing the whole thing. That's why it's more like an abscessed tooth.

The fundamental realities are not going to be changed by delays. And that's why I said what I did about Ehud Barak. I know that—I don't think it's appropriate for the United States to deal with anybody else's politics, but I know why—you can't expect poll ratings to be very good when the voters in the moment wonder if they're going to get peace or security and think they can no longer have both and may have to choose one. I understand that.

But I'm telling you, the reason he has continued to push ahead on this is that he has figured out, this is one of those political problems that is like the abscessed tooth. The realities are not going to change. We can wait until all these handsome young people at this table are the same age as the honorees tonight, and me. We can wait until they've got kids their age and we've got a whole lot more bodies and a lot more funerals, a lot more crying and a lot more hatred, and I'll swear the decisions will still be the same ones that will have to be made that have to be made today.

That's the fundamental deal here. And this is a speech I have given, I might add, to all my Israeli friends who question what we have done, and to the Palestinians, and in private—God forgive me, my language is sometimes somewhat more graphic than it has been tonight. But anybody that ever kneeled at the grave of a person who died in the Middle East knows that what we've been through these last 3 months is not what Yitzhak Rabin died for, and not what I went to Gaza 2 years ago to speak to the Palestinian National Council for either, for that matter.

So those are the lessons I think are still operative, and I'm a little concerned that we could draw the wrong lessons from this tragic, still relatively brief, chapter in the history of the Middle East. The violence does not demonstrate that the quest for peace has gone too far or too fast. It demonstrates what happens when you've got a problem that is profoundly difficult and you never quite get to the end, so there is no settlement, no resolution, anxiety prevailed, and at least some people never get any concrete benefits out of it.

And I believe that the last few months demonstrate the futility of force or terrorism as an ultimate solution. That's what I believe. I think the last few months show that unilateralism will exacerbate, not abate, mutual hostility. I believe that the violence confirms the need to do more to prepare both publics for the requirements of peace, not to condition people for the so-called glory of further conflict.

Now, what are we going to do now? The first priority, obviously, has got to be to drastically reduce the current cycle of violence. But beyond that, on the Palestinian side, there must be an end to the culture of violence and the culture of incitement that, since Oslo, has not gone unchecked. Young children still are being educated to believe in confrontation with Israel, and multiple militia-like groups carry and use weapons with impunity. Voices of reason in that kind of environment will be drowned out too often by voices of revenge.

Such conduct is inconsistent with the Palestinian leadership's commitment to Oslo's nonviolent path to peace, and its persistence sends the wrong message to the Israeli people and makes it much more difficult for them to support their leaders in making the compromises necessary to get a lasting agreement.

For their part, the Israeli people also must understand that they're creating a few problems, too; that the settlement enterprise and building bypass roads in the heart of what they already know will one day be part of a Palestinian state is inconsistent with the Oslo commitment that both sides negotiate a compromise.

And restoring confidence requires the Palestinians being able to lead a normal existence and not be subject to daily, often humiliating reminders that they lack basic freedom and control over their lives. These, too, make it harder for the Palestinians to believe the commitments made to them will be kept.

Can two peoples with this kind of present trouble and troubling history still conclude a genuine and lasting peace? I mean, if I gave you this as a soap opera, you would say they're going to divorce court. But they can't, because they share such a small piece of land with such a profound history of importance to more than a billion people around the world. So I believe with all my heart not only that they can, but that they must.

At Camp David I saw Israeli and Palestinian negotiators who knew how many children each other had, who knew how many grandchildren each other had, who knew how they met their spouses, who knew what their family tragedies were, who trusted each other in their word. It was almost shocking to see what could happen and how people still felt on the ground when I saw how their leaders felt about each other and the respect and the confidence they had in each other when they were talking.

The alternative to getting this peace done is being played out before our very eyes. But amidst the agony, I will say again, there are signs of hope. And let me try to put this into what I think is a realistic context.

Camp David was a transformative event, because the two sides faced the core issue of their dispute in a forum that was official for the first time. And they had to debate the tradeoffs required to resolve the issues. Just as Oslo forced Israelis and Palestinians to come to terms with each other's existence, the discussions of the past 6 months have forced them to come to terms with each other's needs and the contours of a peace that ultimately they will have to reach.

That's why Prime Minister Barak, I think, has demonstrated real courage and vision in moving toward peace in difficult circumstances while trying to find a way to continue to protect Israel's security and vital interests. So that's a fancy way of saying, we know what we have to do, and we've got a mess on our hands.

So where do we go from here? Given the impasse and the tragic deterioration on the ground a couple of weeks ago, both sides asked me to present my ideas. So I put forward parameters that I wanted to be a guide toward a comprehensive agreement, parameters based on 8 years of listening carefully to both sides and hearing them describe with increasing clarity their respective grievances and needs.

Both Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have now accepted these parameters as the basis for further efforts, though both have expressed some reservations. At their request, I am using my remaining time in office to narrow the differences between the parties to the greatest degree possible—[*applause*]—for which I deserve no applause. Believe me, it beats packing up all my old books. [*Laughter*]

The parameters I put forward contemplate a settlement in response to each side's essential needs, if not to their utmost desires; a settlement based on sovereign homelands, security, peace, and dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians. These parameters don't begin to answer every question; they just narrow the questions that have to be answered.

Here they are. First, I think there can be no genuine resolution to the conflict without a sovereign, viable, Palestinian state that accommodates Israeli's security requirements and the demographic realities. That suggests Palestinian

sovereignty over Gaza, the vast majority of the West Bank; the incorporation into Israel of settlement blocks, with the goal of maximizing the number of settlers in Israel while minimizing the land annexed. For Palestine, to be viable, must be a geographically contiguous state. Now, the land annexed into Israel into settlement blocks should include as few Palestinians as possible, consistent with the logic of two separate homelands. And to make the agreement durable, I think there will have to be some territorial swaps and other arrangements.

Second, a solution will have to be found for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered a great deal—particularly some of them—a solution that allows them to return to a Palestinian state that will provide all Palestinians with a place they can safely and proudly call home. All Palestinian refugees who wish to live in this homeland should have the right to do so. All others who want to find new homes, whether in their current locations or in third countries, should be able to do so, consistent with those countries' sovereign decisions, and that includes Israel. All refugees should receive compensation from the international community for their losses and assistance in building new lives.

Now, you all know what the rub is. That was a lot of artful language for saying that you cannot expect Israel to acknowledge an unlimited right of return to present-day Israel and, at the same time, to give up Gaza and the West Bank and have the settlement blocks as compact as possible, because of where a lot of these refugees came from. We cannot expect Israel to make a decision that would threaten the very foundations of the state of Israel and would undermine the whole logic of peace. And it shouldn't be done.

But I have made it very clear that the refugees will be a high priority, and that the United States will take a lead in raising the money necessary to relocate them in the most appropriate manner, and that if the government of Israel, or a subsequent government of Israel ever there—will be in charge of their immigration policy, just as we and the Canadians and the Europeans and others who would offer Palestinians a home would be, they would be obviously free to do that, and I think they've indicated that they would do that, to some extent. But there cannot be an unlimited language in an agreement that would undermine the very foundations of the Israeli state or the whole reason for creating the Palestinian state. So that's what we're working on.

Third, there will be no peace and no peace agreement unless the Israeli people have lasting security guarantees. These need not and should not come at the expense of Palestinian sovereignty or interfere with Palestinian territorial integrity. So my parameters rely on an international presence in Palestine to provide border security along the Jordan Valley and to monitor implementation of the final agreement. They rely on a nonmilitarized Palestine, a phased Israeli withdrawal to address Israeli security needs in the Jordan Valley, and other essential arrangements to ensure Israel's ability to defend itself.

Fourth, I come to the issue of Jerusalem, perhaps the most emotional and sensitive of all. It is a historic, cultural, and political center for both Israelis and Palestinians, a unique city sacred to all three monotheistic religions. And I believe the parameters I have established flow from four fair and logical propositions.

First, Jerusalem should be an open and undivided city with assured freedom of access and worship for all. It should encompass the internationally recognized capitals of two states, Israel and Palestine. Second, what is Arab should be Palestinian, for why would Israel want to govern in perpetuity the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians? Third, what is Jewish should be Israeli. That would give rise to a Jewish Jerusalem larger and more vibrant than any in history. Fourth, what is holy to both requires a special care to meet the needs of all. I was glad to hear what the Speaker said about that. No peace agreement will last if not premised on mutual respect for the religious beliefs and holy shrines of Jews, Muslims, and Christians.

I have offered formulations on the Haram al-Sharif and the area holy to the Jewish people, an area which for 2,000 years, as I said at Camp David, has been the focus of Jewish yearning, that I believed fairly addressed the concerns of both sides.

Fifth and finally, any agreement will have to mark the decision to end the conflict, for neither side can afford to make these painful compromises only to be subjected to further demands. They are both entitled to know that if they take the last drop of blood out of each other's turnip, that's it. It really will have to

be the end of the struggle that has pitted Palestinians and Israelis against one another for too long. And the end of the conflict must manifest itself with concrete acts that demonstrate a new attitude and a new approach by Palestinians and Israelis toward each other, and by other states in the region toward Israel, and by the entire region toward Palestine, to help it get off to a good start.

The parties' experience with interim accords has not always been happy—too many deadlines missed, too many commitments unfulfilled on both sides. So for this to signify a real end of the conflict, there must be effective mechanisms to provide guarantees of implementation.

That's a lot of stuff, isn't it? It's what I think is the outline of a fair agreement.

Let me say this. I am well aware that it will entail real pain and sacrifices for both sides. I am well aware that I don't even have to run for reelection in the United States on the basis of these ideas. I have worked for 8 years without laying such ideas down. I did it only when both sides asked me to and when it was obvious that we had come to the end of the road, and somebody had to do something to break out of the impasse.

Now, I still think the benefits of the agreement, based on these parameters, far outweigh the burdens. For the people of Israel, they are an end to conflict, secure and defensible borders, the incorporation of most of the settlers into Israel, and the Jewish capital of Yerushalayim, recognized by all, not just the United States, by everybody in the world. It's a big deal, and it needs to be done.

For the Palestinian people, it means the freedom to determine their own future on their own land, a new life for the refugees, an independent and sovereign state with Al-Quds as its capital, recognized by all.

And for America, it means that we could have new flags flying over new Embassies in both these capitals.

Now that the sides have accepted the parameters with reservations, what's going to happen? Well, each side will try to do a little better than I did. [*Laughter*] You know, that's just natural. But a peace viewed as imposed by one party upon the other, that puts one side up and the other down, rather than both ahead, contains the seeds of its own destruction.

Let me say, those who believe that my ideas can be altered to one party's exclusive benefit are mistaken. I think to press for more will produce less. There can be no peace without compromise. Now, I don't ask Israelis or Palestinians to agree with everything I said. If they can come up with a completely different agreement, it would suit me just fine. But I doubt it.

I have said what I have out of a profound lifetime commitment to and love for the state of Israel; out of a conviction that the Palestinian people have been ignored or used as political footballs by others for long enough, and they ought to have a chance to make their own life with dignity; and out of a belief that in the homeland of the world's three great religions that believe we are all the creatures of one God, we ought to be able to prove that one person's win is not by definition another's loss, that one person's dignity is not by definition another's humiliation, that one person's worship of God is not by definition another's heresy.

There has to be a way for us to find a truth we can share. There has to be a way for us to reach those young Palestinian kids who, unlike the young people in this audience, don't imagine a future in which they would ever put on clothes like this and sit at a dinner like this. There has to be a way for us to say to them, struggle and pain and destruction and self-destruction are way overrated and not the only option.

There has to be a way for us to reach those people in Israel who have paid such a high price and believe, frankly, that people who embrace the ideas I just outlined are nuts, because Israel is a little country and this agreement would make it smaller; to understand that the world in which we live and the technology of modern weaponry no longer make defense primarily a matter of geography and of politics; and the human feeling and the interdependence and the cooperation and the shared values and the shared interests are more important and worth the considered risk, especially if the United States remains committed to the military capacity of the state of Israel.

So I say to the Palestinians: There will always be those who are sitting outside in the peanut gallery of the Middle East, urging you to hold out for more or to plant one more bomb. But all the people who do that, they're not the refugees languishing in those camps; you are. They're not the ones with children growing up in poverty, whose income is lower today than

it was the day we had the signing on the White House Lawn in 1993; you are.

All the people that are saying to the Palestinian people, "Stay on the path of no," are people that have a vested interest in the failure of the peace process that has nothing to do with how those kids in Gaza and the West Bank are going to grow up and live and raise their own children.

To the citizens of Israel who have returned to an ancient homeland after 2,000 years, whose hopes and dreams almost vanished in the Holocaust, who have hardly had one day of peace and quiet since the state of Israel was created: I understand, I believe, something of the disillusionment, the anger, the frustration that so many feel when, just at the moment peace seemed within reach, all this violence broke out and raised the question of whether it is ever possible.

The fact is that the people of Israel dreamed of a homeland. The dream came through, but when they came home, the land was not all vacant. Your land is also their land. It is the homeland of two peoples. And therefore, there is no choice but to create two states and make the best of it.

If it happens today, it will be better than if it happens tomorrow, because fewer people will die. And after it happens, the motives of those who continue the violence will be clearer to all than they are today.

Today, Israel is closer than ever to ending a 100-year-long era of struggle. It could be Israel's finest hour. And I hope and pray that the people of Israel will not give up the hope of peace.

Now, I've got 13 days, and I'll do what I can. We're working with Egypt and the parties to try to end the violence. I'm sending Dennis Ross to the region this week. I met with both sides this week. I hope we can really do something. And I appreciate, more than I can say, the kind, personal things that you said about me.

But here's what I want you to think about. New York has its own high-tech corridor called Silicon Alley. The number one foreign recipient of venture capital from Silicon Alley is Israel. Palestinians who have come to the United States, to Chile, to Canada, to Europe have done fabulously well in business, in the sciences, in academia. If we could ever let a lot of this stuff go and realize that a lot of—that the enemies of peace in the Middle East are overlooking not only what the Jewish people have done beyond Israel but what has happened to the state of Israel since its birth, and how fabulously well the people of Palestinian descent have done everywhere else in the world except in their homeland, where they are in the grip of forces that have not permitted them to reconcile with one another and with the people of Israel.

Listen, if you guys ever got together, 10 years from now we would all wonder what the heck happened for 30 years before. And the center of energy and creativity and economic power and political influence in the entire region would be with the Israelis and the Palestinians because of their gifts. It could happen. But somebody has got to take the long leap, and they have to be somebodies on both sides.

All I can tell you is, whether you do it now or whether you do it later, whether I'm the President or just somebody in the peanut gallery, I'll be there, cheering and praying and working along the way. And I think America will be there. I think America will always be there for Israel's security. But Israel's lasting security rests in a just and lasting peace. I pray that the day will come sooner rather than later, where all the people of the region will see that they can share the wisdom of God in their common humanity and give up their conflict.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Michael W. Sonnenfeldt, chair, Jack Bendheim, president, and Susan Stern, vice president, Israel Policy Forum; Judith Stern Peck, former chair, United Jewish Appeal Federation of New York; dinner emcee Lesley Stahl; Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, wife of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew M. Cuomo; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; musicians Jessye Norman and Billy Joel; author Toni Morrison; Garrison Keillor, host of "Prairie Home Companion"; Speaker of the Knesset Avraham Burg, Cabinet Secretary Yitzhak Herzog, and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; dinner honorees Dwayne O. Andreas, chair, Archer Daniels Midland Co., Louis Perlmutter,

former chair, Brandeis University, and Alan D. Solomont, chair and founder, A.D.S. Group; Mr. Solomont's wife, Susan; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President-elect George W. Bush; and Ambassador David Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the Rededication of the AFL–CIO Building
January 8, 2001

The President. Thank you. What do you think, Mom? She did a good job, didn't she? I thought she was great. [*Laughter*] When Susan said they would collectively bargain for ice cream, I thought to myself, it is only in large families that even John Sweeney would be against unionizing. [*Laughter*] No parents can stand against their united children, if there are enough of them. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Susan. Thank you, John, for your friendship, your support, for bringing such incredible energy and direction to the labor movement; to all the officers of the AFL–CIO; and Maureen, thank you for your friendship; Mrs. Kirkland; Monsignor.

I would like to thank all the members of the labor movement, and I'd like to thank all the members of my administration who support labor. John said there were too many to mention, and he'd get in trouble, but I want to also say a special thank you to Secretary Alexis Herman for being labor's friend and partner. Thank you.

I think it would be interesting, you know, maybe it's just that we don't have as much to do at the White House these days—[*laughter*]—but we have the largest turnout here of senior members of the administration for any event outside the White House we have ever held. So I would like to ask Mr. Podesta and Martin Baily and Kathy Shaw, from the CEA, and Bruce Reed and Steve Ricchetti and Gene, and Janice Lachance and Aida—everybody here who is part of the administration stand up—Karen, stand up. Everybody stand up, Chuck. Thank you.

You know, John, Karen Tramontano is going with me, and we're exploring whether you can unionize a former President's office. [*Laughter*]

AFL–CIO President John J. Sweeney. Karen will do it. [*Laughter*]

The President. We're ripe for organizing here.

I have so much to thank you for. I thank you for the work you did for the Vice President, for your pivotal roles in the victories in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and so many other places—yes, and Florida, and the victory in Florida, yes. [*Laughter*] You're taking my good joke away. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank you, those of you from New York, for all you did for Hillary. I am very grateful to you for that. When she was sworn in last Wednesday, I can honestly say it was one of the happiest days of my life. I don't know when I've been that happy since Chelsea was born. And it wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for so many of you who stuck with her and supported her, and I am very, very grateful.

Senator Kennedy, I would like to thank you for your friendship and your support. In ways that will probably never be a part of the public record, you have been my true friend for a long time, and I thank you.

This is a very emotional moment for me. We're thinking about the last 8 years; that's what you're thinking about. I'm thinking about the last 26 years. In 1974 I ran for Congress in a district where, in 1972, President Nixon had defeated Senator McGovern 74–26. I ran against a Member of Congress who had an 85 percent approval rating when I started and obviously a 99 percent name recognition. I was zero-zero.

I raised in this campaign about $160,000, which was a fortune in 1974. And over $40,000 of it came from the labor movement, which was a fortune in 1974. And I was one of the top 10 recipients of all House candidates of help from labor. I was 28 years old, and nobody thought I had a chance. It turned out, I didn't. [*Laughter*] But the truth is, I nearly won the race. We made it part of an overall referendum on the policies and direction of the national Republicans. It basically made the rest of my

career possible, and it could not have happened without the labor movement.

And I was sitting here thinking that people that really helped me then, most of them aren't around anymore. A man named Dan Powell, that a lot of you knew, who was then the head of the AFL–CIO region in Memphis; the Arkansas president, Bill Becker; the guy that ran the labor movement in west Arkansas, a guy named Dale Dee Porter. One of them is still here, though, Wayne Glenn. Thank you. He was there with me 26 years ago.

And every day for 26 years, almost—well, 27 years now; I started in January of '74—I have been profoundly grateful to the working people of my native State and this country for what you represent and what you stand for and for the fact that you not only have tried to help your own members, but you've also cared about the larger society.

When Susan was talking about her family and then she kind of morphed her remarks into her union, I thought it was a beautiful thing because we all really believe that our country and our unions and our workplaces ought to work the way our families do when they work best.

All worthy endeavors, including politics, are team sports. And it doesn't matter how good the quarterback is or the best player on the team; if you don't have a team, you can't win. And I will say again, I don't even have the words to tell you how profoundly grateful I am for more than a quarter century of being able to be your teammate.

John quoted from George Meany's speech, and there were a few moments there, when he started talking about court decisions, I wondered if it was really John changing the words. [*Laughter*] Then I realized that Mr. Meany was defending a court decision, not attacking one.

The mission that was articulated by George Meany in 1955 has endured. The AFL–CIO still leads the country in its efforts to improve the lives of its members and all working Americans, as well, to bring economic, social, and political justice to the work place, but also to the Nation and, increasingly, to the world beyond our borders. Thanks to vigorous leadership, rejuvenated organizing efforts, and strong grassroots support, you are on a roll.

This building is a symbol of today's labor movement. It's on the same foundations you started, but you've modernized it for a new age. You've adapted to the new challenges and new opportunities. You're looking to the future. And I hope we can be part of that future together.

You know, I got tickled when Susan said she thought she was going to introduce Hillary. I thought, for gosh sakes, I've only got 12 days until I'm a has-been. [*Laughter*] Just 12 days to being a has-been; let me enjoy my 12 days. [*Laughter*]

The truth is that we're all going to do fine in this new century if we stick with what we've done these last 8 years, if we keep having open and honest debates, what John called differences of the head, but we focus on the basic mission: empowering workers, strengthening families and communities, embracing change, but in a way that is consistent with our values. We've been working on this for some time now. It turns out it worked pretty well.

In October 1992, when I spoke to you as a candidate for President, I said I wanted us to build an America where labor and management, business and government and education worked together to create a high-wage, high-growth society. That's the America we worked to build for 8 years now. And along the way, we disproved an idea that the other side had relentlessly promoted for a dozen years, which is that when labor is at the table, the economy is weakened, and the only way America would have a healthy business environment is if government was regularly condemned and labor was regularly weakened. It turned out not to be true.

Now, it's going to be interesting to see, now that they have a certain influence over the course of America's affairs, whether they acknowledge that in the last 8 years we proved that America is better off when labor and business and government work together for the welfare of all Americans.

Today, we have a stronger labor movement and more partnership, and if we were trying to hurt the economy, we did a poor job of it. We have 22.5 million new jobs. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment rate in history. And the difference in this recovery and so many others is that everybody was doing better. Every sector of our economy had about the same percentage increase in its income over the last 4 years, with the bottom 20 percent having a slightly higher percentage increase.

Since 1993, the yearly income of the typical family is up $6,300, hourly wages up by more than 9 percent in real terms. So this rising tide has truly lifted all boats.

We also have the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, and last year we had the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years. And it is no accident that these things have happened at a time when the labor movement was a bigger partner in the policymaking direction of the United States because you cared about not only your own members but the working poor, as well, and the family members of people who were in the American workplace.

For example, in 1993, when the deficit was high and we had to turn it around, you supported giving the tax cut that we could afford to the 15 million American families that were working 40 hours a week for the most modest wages. Nearly none of them were union members, but you wanted them to have the first tax cut because, most of all, they had children in the home and you felt that nobody should work 40 hours a week and raise their kids in poverty. And because you did that, over 2 million people have been lifted out of poverty, because of the earned-income tax credit. And you should be very, very proud of that.

We have provided now various tuition tax cuts, the HOPE scholarships and others that 10 million Americans are using to go to colleges and community colleges around this country. The direct loan program has saved $8 billion for students and $5 billion for colleges of higher education because you supported the right kind of tax relief, targeted toward education.

Family and medical leave, something that we were told would be just terrible for the economy, has now given over 20 million Americans the chance to take some time off from work when there's a sick parent or a newborn baby, and the American economy is stronger than it's ever been. And its been good for business, because you have more and more and more people who feel comfortable at work because they're not having their insides torn up worrying about their children or their parents at home.

We passed Senator Kennedy's Kennedy-Kassebaum law to let millions of Americans keep their health insurance when they change jobs. We strengthened pension protection for tens of millions of Americans. We've got 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time. The life of the Medicare Trust Fund has been extended to 2025. We have the cleanest environment we have ever had: The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We set aside more land—Secretary Babbitt says if it will get done, we'll surpass Teddy Roosevelt, and we'll have set aside more land than any administration in history. And it hasn't been bad for the economy.

But I want to say something else, too. As in every new progressive era, we sparked a pretty severe reaction from the forces that didn't like the changes we were trying to make. And when they won the Congress, they tried, among other things, to weaken the labor movement. So we defeated their attempts to repeal the prevailing wage, to bring back company unions, to weaken occupational safety laws. Instead, we cracked down on sweatshops, protected pension funds, passed tough new worker's safety rules to prevent repetitive stress injuries, and at least once, we did succeed in raising the minimum wage.

Now, we were told when we raised the minimum wage it was a terrible thing for the economy and particularly rough on small business. Well, let's look at the record. Since the last time the minimum wage was increased, America has created almost 12 million new jobs. The unemployment rate has dropped from 5.2 to 4 percent, and in every single year, we have set a record for the number of new small businesses in America.

So the next 4 years are going to be challenging for you, but at least you'll have one solace: You'll have all the evidence on your side. I must say, there have been times in the last few years when I've almost admired our opponents in the political arena, because they are never fazed by evidence. [*Laughter*] You know, "Don't bother me with the facts. I know what I think, and I know who's greasing these wheels, and the facts are absolutely irrelevant." But at least you have it, and you know most Americans care about them, so don't forget the evidence.

You've built a record that proves that America is better off when we are pro-business and pro-labor, when we all work together and everybody has a seat at the table, when everybody's concerns are heard and individuals are empowered. Don't forget it. Fall back on the evidence, and you will prevail.

What does that mean? Well, it means that you've got to keep winning new members. As the work force has changed, your membership

has gone down. Now it's going back up. You have to be geared to the future of the economy. John and Rich Trumka and our Linda Chavez-Thompson—I have all these jokes I want to tell, and my staff told me I could not tell any of them. [*Laughter*] They say that I have to assume the appropriate role for a former President, and I cannot say any of the things that I want to say, which would leave you howling in the aisle—[*laughter*]—and the only thing that could get me a headline in my increasing irrelevancy from my friends in the press. [*Laughter*] But just use your imagination. [*Laughter*]

I want to focus on the future now. And as a citizen, I want to help you build that future. You've got to get the minimum wage increase this year, number one. One of the reasons our economic team is here is that we're releasing a report today from the National Economic Council which highlights the challenges facing workers who are working full time for the lowest wages. It shows—listen to this—more than 2.6 million Americans earn at or near the minimum wage. Another 6.9 million Americans earn less than the $6.15 an hour that we would have raised the minimum wage to, so that it would affect 10 million people, almost, and all their family members.

Now, these are people who work every day to stock store shelves, wash dishes at restaurants, care for our kids. They're in every town and city and of every racial and ethnic group. They are not, as the caricatures often would have it, mostly middle class teenagers working for money to go out on the weekends. Nearly 70 percent of them are adults. More than 60 percent are women. Almost half work full time, and many are the sole breadwinners struggling to raise their kids on $10,300 a year. They need and they deserve a raise, and they have waited for it for far too long.

Senator Kennedy did everything he could to get it passed at the end of the last session of Congress, and I thought we were going to get it. But in the end, our friends on the other side decided that they could get an even bigger tax cut out of milking the minimum wage if they waited until the new session of Congress.

Now, these families should not be punished for the failure of Congress to act for the last 2 years, since I first called for an increase in the minimum wage. We ought to make up for lost time and lost wages by raising the minimum wage above what I originally proposed 2 years ago, because they've lost more time.

And I want to thank Senator Kennedy, Congressman Bonior, and the others who are working with you on this. But I would like to say something else. You've got to make it clear to the American people what you will and what you won't trade for raising the minimum wage. Raising the minimum wage should never be conditioned on taking away overtime or other labor protections that workers have. And again, you have something you didn't have 8 years ago. No serious person can say that it is necessary to take these things away to have a strong economy or to have a vibrant small business economy. It's a dog that won't hunt anymore. Use the facts as your shield and keep working.

Let me say that I hope that you will continue to swell the ranks of your members, and I hope you will continue to be on the cutting edge of change. There's a lot of other things that need to be done, and I think you'll be surprised how many of them you can get done the next 4 years if you're smart and careful.

I think it's clear that we have the money now to add a comprehensive prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program, and I hope you'll do it. It's clear that the Children's Health Insurance Program has now added over 3.3 million people to the ranks of people with health insurance, and we've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years. It's time to add the parents of those children to the ranks of those with health insurance.

It's clear that we can do more to balance work and family without hurting the economy. I hope there will be an expansion of family and medical leave. I hope there will be a strengthening of the equal-pay-for-women laws. I hope we'll pass the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," and I hope we will increase our support for child care for working families. There are many, many people, huge numbers, who are eligible by law for Federal assistance in paying their child care bills that we have never come close to funding.

I hope that you will continue to work to empower poor people in poor communities, whether in inner cities, Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, or on Native American reservations.

I hope you'll continue to work to make America the safest big country in the world. I hope you'll continue—let me be more explicit here.

In Michigan and Pennsylvania, you had to fight against a lot of your members who were NRA members who believed that Al Gore was going to take your guns away. And you did a brilliant job saying, "No, he won't take your guns away, but the other guys will take your union away if they can." And you won a ground war.

Now, let me be serious here. The truth is, most of your people who are NRA members are good, God-fearing Americans who wouldn't break the law for anything on Earth, and they get spooked by these fear campaigns. Now, we're in a—I want to make a suggestion—in a nonelection year, when there's not the kind of pressure that we saw last year. And let's don't kid ourselves, the reason that our party didn't win the Congress, in my judgment, more than anything else, is what they did in those rural districts to us again, just like they did in 1994 on guns.

Now, it didn't work at all in New York. Why? New York even has a—you have to get a license to carry a gun in New York. And there's lots of sporting clubs. Nobody has missed a day in the woods in a hunting season. Nobody has missed a single sport shooting event. So all those fear tactics didn't work in New York, because all the hunters and sportsmen could see from their own personal experience that it was not true.

But I believe that you—we've all got a big interest here in keeping America going in the right direction on crime. We've all got a big interest in keeping guns out of the hands of kids and criminals. And we don't need to wait for an election where we're all torn up and upset and you have to win a ground war against your own members just to have an election come out all right over an issue that we shouldn't be debating in the first place at election time.

So I regret that I have not been more persuasive, because I came out of that culture. But I'm telling you, you need to use this next year, when there's no election going on, to go out there and sit down and talk about where we're going, because we've got to keep working to make America a safer place, and nobody wants to end the sporting and hunting culture that has meant so much to so many of your members. And I implore you, you can do this. Maybe nobody else in America can do this, and you can do it.

But you have to do it in a nonelection year, in my opinion, where people aren't fighting against you and you don't feel like you're pushing a rock up a hill. And I'll help you if I can. This is a big deal for America. We're still not near safe enough as a country. I'm glad the crime rate has gone down for 8 years. It's a gift you can give the children of your members and the communities in which you live.

And finally, let me say, I hope you will continue on some of the things we disagreed with over the years. We've got to figure out how to put a human face on the global economy. We are becoming more interdependent. We are becoming more and more interdependent. There is going to be more trade whether we like it or not, a trillion dollars a day in pure—just money transactions across national lines.

We have got to figure out how to be on the side of making sure that the little folks in every country in the world are not trampled on by the increasing power of financial transactions and international economic transactions. Instead, we have to prove that we can lift up the fortunes of all people. We have to have good labor rights. We have to have good environmental standards. We have to have fair and open financial rules, so that people don't get ripped off. We've got to do this together, and you've got to be part of the debate. Whenever you're part of the debate, America wins, and Americans win.

And I'll tell you, I've had a great time. I said yesterday in my church, they may find somebody who can do this job better than me; they will never find anybody that had any more fun doing it than I had. I have had a great time. But America is always about tomorrow. And I will end where I began.

This building should be a metaphor for the future of the AFL and the future of America. You built a new building with new technology for new times on old foundations. You stayed with what was best about the past and embraced what was necessary and attractive about the future.

So whenever you come in the front door of this building, think about that as a roadmap for your future. And remember what Susan said about a union being like a family and a workplace being like a family and a nation being like a family. And remember that great line from George Meany's speech—we should never forget our obligation to do unto others as we would

like to be treated ourselves. We should never forget that politics, work, and life are all team sports. It's been an honor to be on your team.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the lobby. In his remarks, he referred to International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers member Susan Hagan, who introduced the President; Ms. Hagan's mother, Ada Hagan; President Sweeney's wife, Maureen; Irena Kirkland, widow of former AFL–CIO President Lane Kirkland; Monsignor George G. Higgins, former director, Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference (later known as the U.S. Catholic Conference), who attended the first dedication in 1956; Gene Sperling, Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council; Aida Alvarez, Administrator, Small Business Administration; Charles M. Brain, Assistant to the President and Director of Legislative Affairs; and Richard L. Trumka, secretary-treasurer, and Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president, AFL–CIO.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medal

January 8, 2001

Thank you, and good afternoon. I would like to thank all of you for coming and welcome you to the White House, but especially the Members of Congress who either are or have been here. Senator Cleland, welcome, sir; Senator Kennedy; Representative Gilman—Mr. Chairman Gilman; Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton; Representative Sununu. And Mr. Justice Souter, we're delighted to see you here today. We thank you for coming.

I won't have many more chances to do this, so I'd also like to thank the United States Marine Band for being here and for all their work. Yesterday Hillary and Chelsea and I went to Foundry Methodist Church, which has been our home church since we've been in Washington, and they asked me to speak on reflections and anticipations. And I said I had many anticipations. I anticipated, for example, that my religious bearing would be severely tested when I returned to commercial air travel. [*Laughter*] And I further anticipated that whenever I walked into a large room for the next 6 months, I would be lost because the Marine Band wouldn't be there to play a song anymore. [*Laughter*] So I thank them so much for all they've done this last 8 years.

One of the greatest honors I have had as President has been the opportunity to recognize and to honor, on behalf of the American people, the rich and diverse accomplishments of our fellow citizens. This ceremony marks the last time I will honor such a remarkable group at the White House, and I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity.

More than two centuries ago, our Founders staked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor on a revolutionary proposition, that people of competing ideas but common ideals could form a more perfect Union, a democracy built solely on the strength of its citizens. They felt it essential that America honor both the individual and the idea that a free people can accomplish their greatest work only by doing so together, for our common good.

Today we honor citizens whose individual contributions to the common good embody this ideal in its purest essence. We honor them with the President's Citizens Medal. Among our Nation's highest civilian honors, the Citizens Medal is a symbol of our gratitude as a people for those who have, in particular, performed exemplary deeds of service to others.

Now, let me say a few words about each of those who we honor, and I will ask my military aide to present me with a medal, and then I will present the medals.

Every baseball fan knows Hank Aaron holds more records than any other single ballplayer. Indeed, one of the truly great experiences of my Presidency was going to Atlanta for the 25th anniversary of the night Hank Aaron broke Babe Ruth's home run record. But his courage and dignity have left a lasting mark on far more than baseball.

We honor him today not only for the power of his swing but for the power of his spirit,

for breaking down barriers not just on the baseball field or in the front office but also within America's heart. In the spotlight and under pressure, he always answered bigotry and brutality with poise and purpose.

In chasing his dream, Hank Aaron gave others the inspiration to chase their own. And after he left baseball, he and his wonderful wife, Billye, have done what they could to give young people more tools to win their own chase. Hank Aaron, you are an American hero, and we salute you for your life.

[*At this point, the President presented the medal.*]

Because he could float like a butterfly and sting like a bee, Muhammad Ali became the first boxer in history to capture the heavyweight title three separate times. Along the way, he captured the world's imagination and its heart. Outside the ring, Muhammad Ali has dedicated his life to working for children, feeding the hungry, supporting his faith, and standing up for racial equality. He has always fought for a just and more humane world, breaking down barriers here in America and around the world.

There are no telling how many tens of millions of people had their hearts swell with pride and their eyes swell with tears in 1996 when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic torch, because we know, now and forever, he is the greatest.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

As a civics teacher fresh out of college, Juan Andrade showed up for the first day of class eager to teach his students the fundamentals of American democracy. Two days later, he was under arrest. What was his terrible crime? He was teaching his students in his native tongue, Spanish, which was at the time a violation of Texas law.

That early injustice helped to spark Juan's life-long crusade for Hispanic-American civil rights, including the founding of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute and nearly 1,000 registration drives that have enfranchised over one million new voters. Today we honor Juan Andrade for his courage, his commitment to both democracy and diversity, and for giving so many more Americans a voice in their own destiny.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Ruby Bridges was born in 1954, the year the Supreme Court decided *Brown* v. *Board of Education.* Six years later, when she entered the first grade, the schools in her hometown of New Orleans were still separate and unequal. Ruby was chosen to integrate William Frantz Public School, singlehandedly. So when mobs gathered and shouted around this 6-year-old girl, she knelt and prayed. She had two U.S. marshalls ahead of her and two behind, but "prayer," she later said, "was my protection."

Today, in lectures and books, Ruby is telling younger generations her story of strength and faith. And through the Ruby Bridges Foundation, she is helping schools to establish diversity programs, to achieve without the struggle and pain what she did four and a half decades ago.

Today we pay tribute to the courage of a little girl and to the commitment of a lifetime.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

One of Ron Brown's favorite Bible passages came from the 40th chapter of Isaiah, "Those who wait upon the Lord shall have their strength renewed; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not grow weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

Well, Ron walked, ran, and soared through life and, I can personally testify, never grew weary. As the chairman of my party, he inspired people to believe in our democratic system and to get involved. As Secretary of Commerce, he opened up new markets at home and abroad, so that people throughout the world and here in America might, through work, have better lives for their families.

His legacy still burns brightly, not only in the hearts of those who knew him but also in the work of his daughter, Tracey, who wrote a wonderful biography of her father; the work of his son, Michael, who runs the Ron Brown Foundation; and the living testimony of all the young people who even now walk through doors he opened and cross bridges he built.

We honor his memory today and, Alma, I am glad you could be with us to share the moment.

[*The President presented the medal to Alma Brown, Ron Brown's widow.*]

For nearly 20 years, Don Cameron has served as the executive director of the National Education Association. But his career began long before that, as a Michigan junior high school

teacher in the early sixties. His starting salary was a handsome $5,100 a year, hardly enough to support a family. So while teaching, he worked odd jobs, pumping gas, selling hardware, driving a truck, even digging graves—all for the love of teaching. Let no one say this man was not deadly serious about his job. [*Laughter*]

His enthusiasm has never wavered. During his remarkable tenure, the National Education Association grew by more than a million members; it nearly doubled in size. He has always fought for quality schools, smaller classes, making sure that teachers are meeting high professional standards, and in turn, are treated as the professionals they are. Our schools are stronger and our children's future brighter because of his decades of dedicated leadership.

Thank you, Don Cameron.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When Pope John the 23d urged Catholics to engage in the world and address the needs of the poor, Sister Carol Coston, an Adrian Dominican nun, answered the call. She left the security of her convent to live and work in a public housing project. Then she helped to create Network, a national Catholic lobby that has mobilized thousands of nuns and lay people to fight for social progress in South Africa, for women's rights, and for economic justice. She helped to win passage of the Community Reinvestment Act, which has led to billions of dollars in investment in our inner cities—I am proud to say, Sister, 95 percent of it in the last 8 years.

And she founded Partners for the Common Good, a fund that invests in housing and entrepreneurship in low income neighborhoods. For your work as an agent of change, rooted in the values of your faith, Sister Carol, a grateful nation honors you today.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

As a young Government lawyer during World War II, Archibald Cox helped to get labor unions and corporations to stop fighting each other—a work that's still going on today—and to start working together for an allied victory. That same steely resolve and sense of high purpose have marked his entire astonishing career. Fighting for labor rights in the fifties, civil rights in the sixties, and during Watergate, rising that fateful night to defend our Constitution, he has come to embody the highest ideals of integrity and courage in public life.

Archibald Cox, every American, whether he or she knows your name or not, owes you a profound debt of thanks for a lifetime of your service to your country and its Constitution.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Just as Lewis and Clark set forth to explore a continent shrouded in mysterious possibility, Charles DeLisi pioneered the exploration of a modern day frontier, the human genome. As an administrator and researcher in the Department of Energy in the mid-1980's, he worked in close partnership with Senator Pete Domenici, along with others who supported his efforts to marshal Federal resources and secure funding for this groundbreaking research.

Charles DeLisi's imagination and determination helped to ignite the revolution in sequencing that would ultimately unravel the code of human life itself. Thanks to Charles DeLisi's vision and leadership, in the year 2000 we announced the complete sequencing of the human genome. And researchers are now closer than ever to finding therapies and cures for ailments once thought untreatable.

At once scientist, entrepreneur, and teacher, Charles DeLisi is also, in the truest sense, a humanitarian, a man whose life work has been life itself. We honor you today, sir, along with the Members of the United States Congress, including your friend, Senator Domenici, who had the vision to support you when you began, before we could see this great turn in the road. Thank you.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

The spread of civil and human rights throughout America and across the globe has been one of the great dramas and triumphs of the last half century. Jack Greenberg has been at the center of the action. As a young lawyer, he helped Thurgood Marshall argue *Brown* v. *Board of Education* before the Supreme Court. As head of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund for 23 years, he, himself, argued dozens of key racial discrimination cases before the high court. Through his early involvement with organizations such as Asia Watch, he aided the expansion of human rights around the world.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said that to truly live, one must share the action and passion of one's time. If that remains the standard, Jack Greenberg has truly lived and, in the process, has lifted the lives of countless others.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When David Ho was a boy, he used puppets to act out stories about heroes who used supernatural powers to defend the weak. Everyone knew young David was uncommonly bright, but few could have imagined that one day he would harness the unimagined powers of science to defend patients whose immune systems were fatally weakened by AIDS. By demonstrating the ways HIV attacks the human body, he fundamentally changed the way we understand and treat this devastating disease. His groundbreaking work, using protease inhibitors, in combination with standard therapies, has offered a longer life to countless people living with AIDS.

And so we thank you, David Ho, for giving us new hope that AIDS can be treated and one day cured and for reminding us that a child's dream can lead to miracles for others.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

In 1988 the students at Gallaudet University rose up to demand a university president who was like them, deaf or hard of hearing. Gallaudet, the only university in the world designed entirely for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, never had had a deaf president. That is, not until I. King Jordan. His appointment was not only a triumph for the students of Gallaudet but a historic breakthrough for all people with disabilities and a powerful reminder for the rest of our Nation that deaf people like I. King Jordan can excel and lead as well as any other Americans. Moved by his example and the efforts of the entire disability community, Congress soon passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, the most important civil rights legislation in the last quarter century.

I. King Jordan has been a great teacher, a great university president, a great inspiration to millions of people around the world. Along the way, he's found time to be a not inconsiderable athlete, I might add, running great distances at more than reasonable speeds. [*Laughter*] And he has been a very good friend to this President for the last 8 years.

Thank you, President Jordan, for your example and your leadership.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Franklin Roosevelt once said, "We must scrupulously guard the civil rights and civil liberties of all our citizens, whatever their background." In the decades since, America has had few guardians of liberty more scrupulous or staunch than Anthony Lewis. Reporter, columnist, professor, author, Tony Lewis in every role has been a clear and courageous voice for the values at the core of our Constitution.

In books like "Gideon's Trumpet," he has deepened our understanding of freedom of speech and our continuing battle for civil rights. Twice, his reporting has won the Pulitzer Prize. Perhaps even more important, throughout a lifetime, all his writings, including his column, have shown a commitment and a passion with a civil tone and a careful, thoughtful reasoning that have been more powerful than the forces of brute power and injustice.

Thank you, Tony Lewis, for the values you have espoused, for the way you have espoused them, and for never growing weary.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

It was 1944, wartime, and African-American soldiers were fighting and dying to protect freedom around the world. Unfortunately, African-Americans were also battling an insidious enemy here at home, Jim Crow. It was then that a young mother named Irene Morgan took up that fight with dignity and determination. On her way to a doctor's appointment, she refused to give up her seat on a segregated Greyhound bus and appealed her subsequent arrest all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court's 1946 ruling banning segregation on interstate transportation was an early victory in the struggle for civil rights. It signaled the beginning of the end for Jim Crow.

Over all the decades since, Irene Morgan has never asked for accolades, but today we honor her. We acknowledge our debt to her quiet and brave fight for freedom. And we acknowledge the fact that she was there before just about anybody else, and in spite of that, she still looks like a beautiful, young woman. Irene Morgan.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When Constance Baker Motley joined the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, she set out to do nothing less than remake American law. Along the way, she herself made history. A key strategist in the civil rights movement, sheargued nine winning cases before the Supreme Court. She went on to become the first African-American woman elected to the New York State Senate, the first woman and

the first African-American to be borough president of Manhattan, the first African-American woman to be named a Federal court judge.

Once she said she sought to, "prove in everything I do that blacks and women are as capable as anyone." As advocate, lawyer, public servant, and judge, she has been far more than capable; she has been superb. And Constance Baker Motley, we are all in your debt.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

In the 1960's, Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias grew outraged at the poor quality of pediatric health care in her native Puerto Rico, so she created the island's first center for newborn babies at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Center and cut the hospital's infant death rate in half. Ever since, in New York, in California, all across America, Dr. Rodriguez-Trias has been working for better patient care, for better treatment and prevention of AIDS, for women's health rights.

For fighting the good fight and saving countless lives, mostly among poor people that are too often forgotten by others, I am proud to present this medal to Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When Edward Roybal joined the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934, he didn't know he was embarking on a lifetime of service to his country, but it turned out that way. In World War II, he served in the Army; in the 1950's, on the Los Angeles city council. In 1962 he became the first Hispanic elected to Congress from California in almost a century, paving the way for a whole generation of Latino lawmakers. During his 30 years in Congress, he championed veterans, the elderly, the mentally ill, education, health care, and minority rights.

For a lifetime of work that has improved the lives of millions and for lighting the path for other Latino office holders, we honor today Edward Roybal. He is unable to join us, but it is a particular pleasure for me to present this award to his daughter, now a Member of the United States Congress, Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Eight years ago, in a very troubled time for the American economy, I asked Bob Rubin to head my economic team and to establish for the first time a National Economic Council in the White House and involving all the economic agencies of the Government. I did it not because he had been immensely successful in making money and knew a lot about the economy but because he also understood the very real impact decisions in Washington have on the lives and livelihoods of ordinary Americans all across this Nation.

As my National Economic Adviser and later as a superb Secretary of the Treasury, Bob balanced a commitment to fiscal prudence and social progress. He understood that good economics and a generous progressive social policy could go hand in hand. He helped to balance the Nation's books and to balance the Nation's priorities. And it is no accident that his leadership in economic policy accompanied not only the longest economic expansion in history but, last year, the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years, the biggest increase in personal income among the lowest 20 percent of working Americans in a very long time, and a general growth in the equality and harmony we all seek from all our people.

He also never let me forget our special responsibilities to the inner cities of America, which is why I mentioned earlier that even though the Community Reinvestment Act has been on the books for over 20 years, 95 percent of all the investment occurred during the last 8 years.

Thank you, Bob Rubin, for helping make America a better place.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

As a combat platoon leader in the Korean war, Warren Rudman never worried about the race or background of the men with whom he fought. As a United States Senator, he never let his party affiliation keep him from speaking his mind or building alliances to fight the great legislative battles. He fought to strengthen and modernize our national defense and to put our fiscal house in order. As a private citizen, he has continued to champion those causes with bipartisan zeal. As cofounder of the Concord Coalition and as the leader of my Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, he has repeatedly, during these 8 years of my Presidency, undertaken difficult, thankless, inherently controversial tasks with an honesty and candor that showed a support for our Nation and a willingness to call them as he saw them.

For his wise counsel, and his faithful service to our Nation, I am grateful and proud to present Senator Warren Rudman with the Citizens Medal.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Soon after graduating from law school, Charles Ruff volunteered to go to Liberia to teach law. There he contracted an illness that left him in a wheelchair for life. But this obstacle, nor any other, could ever keep him from doing good. He went on to serve in the Justice Department as United States Attorney and the chief lawyer for the District of Columbia, the town he loved so well. I chose him as my White House Counsel because of his unmatched ability as a legal advocate and his even deeper devotion to the Constitution and the rule of law. Not long ago he agreed to lead the Fair Labor Association to help end sweatshops and improve the lives of the world's poorest people.

A few weeks ago, Chuck Ruff left our lives, far too soon. But his determined spirit continues to inspire us and to call on us to do more, to do right, to do good. We at the White House loved him very much, but so did countless others, far beyond the walls of this hallowed place. His secretary of 21 years, Ora Theard, will accept the medal in his memory. And we thank him for the memories.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

As a young man, Arthur Schneier fled his homeland and survived the Holocaust as a refugee. He knows, therefore, firsthand the consequences of hatred and intolerance and has devoted his life to fighting them. As founder and president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, he has encouraged interfaith dialog, intercultural understanding, and the cause of religious freedom around the world. He has served as international envoy for four administrations, including my own.

As Chairman of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad and as the long-time rabbi of Park East Synagogue in New York City, Rabbi, I thank you for all the many things you have done here with me the last 8 years to promote religious liberty around the world, and I thank you for a lifetime of good work and good examples. I look forward to seeing you in New York, where perhaps you will become my rabbi. Thank you.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Before he was 40 years old, Eli Segal had already built a string of successful businesses. He had also had a string of successful friends. In 1992, by blind accident, I wound up being one of them, and I asked my old friend, Eli Segal, to join my administration, where he built from scratch two of our most successful programs.

Eli began AmeriCorps, which has already given more than 150,000 young people a chance to serve in their communities and, in so doing, earn some money for college. Indeed, more people served in AmeriCorps in the first 5 years of its existence than in the first 25 years of the Peace Corps' existence.

After he returned briefly to private life and his great affinity for making money, I called him back, and I said we needed some more help. He then built our Welfare to Work Partnership, which enlisted in the space of about 3 years, over 20,000 businesses, in hiring more than one million people from the welfare rolls.

These efforts have both widened the circle of opportunity in America and strengthened the tradition of service to country. For this, all Americans owe Eli Segal a special debt of gratitude. If you have ever seen the faces of those young AmeriCorps kids or the pride of people who have moved from welfare to work, you know why we're in Eli's debt. Thank you very much.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

John Seiberling has worn many hats and won many accolades. As a soldier in World War II, as a lawyer for the New York Legal Aids Society, a community planner for his beloved city of Akron, a Congressman from Ohio fighting for civil rights and arms control—in all arenas he has contributed to community and country. But his greatest achievement was crafting and winning passage of the Alaska Lands Act of 1980, which doubled the size of our inventory of national parks and wildlife refugees and tripled the area of federally designated wilderness. With that legislation, John Seiberling singlehandedly saved more of our wilderness than any previous American, a legacy that will last for generations.

Unfortunately, this environmental hero is unable to join us today, but we are very glad that his son John will accept the medal on his behalf.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Few newspaper publishers in American history have been more effective crusaders for justice than the late John Sengstacke. As owner and editor of the legendary Chicago Defender for almost 60 years, he provided a national forum for African-American issues and voices that otherwise would have gone unheard. He nurtured the talents of countless black journalists, and as a confidant of Presidents, played a key roll in integrating the armed services, the Postal Service, Major League Baseball, and the White House press corps.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I offer this medal posthumously to his son, Bobby.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When bigots blew up his house with dynamite, the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth stood in front of the smoking rubble and renewed his call for an integrated Birmingham. When the city fathers had him arrested for civil disobedience, he filled the jails with so many sympathetic protesters, there was no room to hold them all. When angry authorities blasted him with a firehose, he told them they could knock him down, but they could not extinguish the torch of justice.

Fred Shuttlesworth risked his life so that every American, no matter the color of his or her skin, might live in a nation of dignity, opportunity, and equal justice under law. We thank him for a lifetime of leadership and for an unextinguished spirit.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

She was born in England, but Elizabeth Taylor became thoroughly American royalty. For more than a generation, she has reigned over the silver screen, stirring hearts and capturing imaginations. She earned two Oscars and countless other honors as an actress.

But perhaps her greatest role has been off the screen, as a relentless and very, very early crusader for AIDS research and care. She has not only raised—[*applause*]—she raised millions and millions of dollars in this fight and raised awareness about the human impact of this dreaded disease before many, many others were on the bandwagon.

Elizabeth Taylor has brought to life unforgettable characters on film, but she has brought even more hope to millions around the world. We thank her for sharing her talent and her heart. Thank you, Elizabeth Taylor.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When the Nazis marched on Vienna, a 6-year-old girl fled with her mother across Europe, only to wind up in an internment camp rife with starvation, disease, and death. Out of that searing experience, Marion Wiesel summoned the courage to commit her life to teaching others, especially children, about the human cost of hatred, intolerance, and racism.

She has written a documentary about the 1.3 million children murdered in the Holocaust and has translated the books of her husband, Elie Wiesel, so that countless more people can read and learn their lessons. With the money from his Nobel Prize, she and Elie established the Wiesel Foundation, to educate children against indifference to the suffering of others.

Marion, for your mission of hope against hate, of life against death, of good over evil, it is an honor to award you this Citizens Medal.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Patrisha Wright was training to be an orthopedic surgeon when a degenerative muscle disease left her with double vision. Instead of fixing broken bones, she set about to fix what was broken in our system and dedicated her life to ending discrimination against people with disabilities. As founder of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, she joined forces with the wider civil rights community. Her strategic brilliance and no-nonsense approach during passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act earned her the title of "The General." Now she works to empower people and families with disabilities throughout the entire world.

Ever since a visual impairment changed the path of her career, her dedication to civil rights has changed the path of America and helped more of us to see clearly. Today, we salute you, "The General," Patrisha Wright.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you for joining us to honor these remarkable people. Some of them are famous, and some were not, at least until today. Some of them had their service thrust upon them by circumstances; others chose the path. Whatever their stories, together they form a remarkable fabric of what is best about our country, what is best about its history, and what is most encouraging when we look to the future.

They remind us, once again, something that I need to remember in these days, that the greatest title any one of us can ever hold is that of citizen.

Thank you, and goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Comdr. Pat DeQuattro, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President.

Message to the Senate Transmitting a Protocol to the Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

January 8, 2001

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 Amend the 1949 Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Guayaquil, June 11, 1999, and signed by the United States, subject to ratification, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on the same date. In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol. The Protocol will not require implementing legislation.

The Protocol amends the Convention for the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Washington May 31, 1949, and entered into force March 3, 1950 (the "Convention"), to allow the European Union to become a member of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) created under the Convention. Presently, the Convention is only open to governments of states. The Protocol will, upon entry into force, allow regional economic integration organizations like the European Union to become a party to the Convention and a full member of the IATTC provided all parties to the Convention give their consent to such adherence. The Protocol also provides that the Member States of any regional economic integration organization that is allowed to adhere to the Protocol are barred from joining or continuing as a party to the Convention except with respect to the Member States' territories that are outside the territorial scope of the treaty establishing the regional economic integration organization.

Allowing the European Union to accede to the Convention is important to the United States because it would mean that the vessels operating under the jurisdiction of the European Union and its Member States would be bound by the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC for the fishery resources of the eastern Pacific Ocean.

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,
January 8, 2001.

Remarks to the Democratic National Committee Staff

January 8, 2001

Well, first of all, I want to say to all of you, I'm sorry I kept you waiting, but I promised you I was going to work until the last day, and that's what I'm doing. [*Laughter*]

I spent a little time today working on the Middle East, and a little time today rededicating the AFL–CIO building and rededicating myself to their issues and their cause and to not letting the progress they've made in the last 8 years be reversed, and a number of other things.

I have my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, and Maria Echaveste and my Political Director, Minyon Moore, Lynn Cutler—a lot of people

came over from the White House. They love you guys. They wanted to be here with me.

I want to thank my friend Ed Rendell, who even went to the point of shooting baskets with me in a neighborhood in Philadelphia in '92, to make sure I could get plenty of votes and win Pennsylvania.

For all the trips that we made together, I want to thank the indefatigable Joe Andrew for leaving his home in Indiana and coming here and working so hard. I want to thank Dennis Archer and Loretta Sanchez, who aren't here; and Senator Torricelli and Representative Kennedy, who worked with me and gave me the opportunity to do a gazillion events—[*laughter*]—Martin Frost and Paul Patton and my dear friend State Senator Mike Miller from Maryland.

Thank you, Rob; thank you to all the staff members. I also want to express my appreciation for those of you who are here day-in and day-out. I think it was Joe who said some of you go back to President Carter's administration.

One person who has been here a long time, who passed away today, is Elber Suggs, and I want to say how grateful I am. I know a lot of you knew him. He not only was a long-time employee of the DNC, but he was a long-time member of the UAW. So he was a two-fer in more ways than one. And I know that we all send our prayers and thoughts to his family, and our gratitude for all he did for the DNC and for the causes we believe in.

I wanted to come by before I left office to thank you for what you did in this election. You know, I tell everybody as I'm sort of dwindling into irrelevancy—[*laughter*]—the only way I can really get any big headlines is to say what I really think about—[*laughter*]. But I think I'll show some restraint tonight, since I'm preaching to the saved.

But I want to thank you for what you did in the year 2000. It was an election in which a lot of forces were arrayed against us and a lot of money was spent. We had to work hard to raise a lot. And all of you in these various organizations, you gave me the opportunity to do 169 different phone messages and radio spots at the end of the campaign. And on the day before and the day of the election, I did 66 radio interviews. So for all of you who were personally responsible for practically working me into an early grave—[*laughter*]—I want to thank you, because that's what we all hired on to do.

And when you're in this sort of struggle, you want to leave it all out there on the floor; you don't want to wonder, when it's all said and done, if there's just one more thing you could have done, one more phone call you could have made. I believe you've done everything you could do, and I'm proud of you and grateful to you.

One other thing I want to say is that I think that the dividing line between politics and policy is not very clear. And most people say that in a pejorative way. I say it in a proud way. This is a political system we live in. The framers of the Constitution expected it to be and didn't think politics was a bad word. They thought it was a good word, and so do I. I am proud that I have spent my life in the American political system.

So even though you have to worry about recruiting candidates and raising money and getting the talking points out there and answering the charges and doing all the things you have to do, the sort of nitty-gritty work of political life, you should never forget that it bears a direct relationship to the way the American people live.

Our friend Terry McAuliffe buried his father a few days ago, and I went to Syracuse to the funeral. He was a great friend of mine. He was the treasurer of the Onondaga Democratic Party for 27 years. And at 83, he was putting out yard signs for Hillary in this Senate race, because he knew that there was a direct connection between putting up the yard signs and the kind of economy and kind of life the people in the community in which he had spent his life would have. And you should never lose sight of that.

When you go home tonight and people ask you for the rest of your life, why did you do this—[*laughter*]—tell them, well, there are 22.5 million reasons in the people who have jobs that didn't have them when we took over 8 years ago. There are roughly 25 million reasons in the people who have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law, which was vetoed when the other party had the White House.

There are 600,000 reasons in the people who had a criminal record and couldn't get handguns—and lots of people are alive because of that—because we passed the Brady bill. There are over 10 million reasons in the people who have taken advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit and the other college tax reductions

and benefits that have been increased under this administration. There are $8 billion worth of savings to college students in the direct college loan program. Ninety percent of the kids in this country under 2 are immunized against serious diseases for the first time in history. And you did that.

The air's cleaner. The water's cleaner. The food's safer. More land has been set aside. Bruce Babbitt says by the time we finish, we'll finally eclipse Teddy Roosevelt's record, that stood for 100 years, in preserving land and natural resources for all time to come. You were a part of that. Don't ever forget that.

Why? Because if I hadn't won those two elections with Al Gore and if we hadn't had help in the Senate and the House and we hadn't had Governors and mayors and others willing to stick up for us, none of it would have happened.

Last year, we had the biggest drop in child poverty in a generation, the lowest poverty rate overall in 20 years. Last year, people in the lowest 20 percent of the working people in this country had the biggest percentage increase in their income of any group of Americans. This was a recovery that didn't just help wealthy people. It made more millionaires and more billionaires, but it also let more people work their way in the middle class, too. You did that, and you should be proud of that.

We mended affirmative action instead of throwing it away, because of politics, because of what you did, because we had enough people in the Congress who would support me to do that.

I could go on and on and on. But you just remember: Every single decision that advanced the cause of the American people for the last 8 years grew out of a political decision made by voters on election day all across this country. And this country is going to be just fine, as long as we get all the votes counted. [*Laughter*] And don't you ever forget it.

The other thing I want to tell you is that you can't be discouraged when you lose. My Chief of Staff, Mr. Podesta, celebrated his 52d birthday today. It looks good on him. He's more than 2 years younger than I am. [*Laughter*] We met in a Senate campaign in 1970, which we lost. And those of us who are about our age, we went for the longest time—we thought we'd never win anything. [*Laughter*] And we finally won the White House in 1976, and we didn't hold it.

But you know, when you look back, Jimmy Carter looks pretty good in the light of history. And the campaign for human rights and the campaign for a sensible energy policy, the things that he stood for, it looks awful good in the light of history. And the life that he's made since then, which would not have been possible if he hadn't been elected President in the first place, looks awfully good in the light of history.

So I want you to feel good about it, and I don't want you to be discouraged because we didn't win every fight we were in. And I don't want you to be cynical because of the decision of the Supreme Court. I want you to be invigorated. I want you to look ahead to the races 2 years from now, to the races next year for Governor.

And I want you to remember, in this country, nobody gets a guarantee; you just get a chance. That's what an election is; it's a chance. But there are people all over this country that wouldn't have a chance if you hadn't been here, doing what you've done, the last 8 years.

And I hope when you are as old as I am or even older, you will look back on this period and be very, very proud, and remember those numbers I gave you tonight. Those people in this country, all kinds of people of all races, all religions, all backgrounds, have a more decent, a more united, a more forward-looking country because you stood here and did your job these 8 years.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. at the Democratic National Committee headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI, and Representative Loretta Sanchez, general cochairs, and Rob Engel, executive director, Democratic National Committee; Senator Robert G. Torricelli, former chairman, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; Representatives Patrick J. Kennedy and Martin Frost, former chairmen, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Gov. Paul Patton of Kentucky, chairman, Democratic Governors' Association; Maryland State Senate President Thomas V. (Mike) Miller, Jr.; and Democratic fundraiser Terry McAuliffe, and his late father, Jack McAuliffe.

Remarks at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan
January 9, 2001

Thank you very much. Let me say, first of all, how delighted I am to be here, to be back at Michigan State. I thank President McPherson and the board of trustees for letting me come back. I think if I were to come back one more time as President, I've been here so many times I'd owe partial tuition at least. [*Laughter*] I always love coming here, and I'm delighted to be here.

I also want to thank Ed Foy for coming out to meet me in 1992 and sticking with me all the way to the end. He gave a great speech, and he was a great representative of the working people of Michigan and the United States, and I thank him. I want to thank Senator Carl Levin for being my friend and being a friend to the people of Michigan. There is no Member of the United States Senate today who is more respected than Carl Levin, and you should be very proud of him.

Now, your new Senator, Debbie Stabenow, got her start—she got her start in politics when she was still a student and was elected county commissioner. So some of the rest of you might get a few ideas from that. I am delighted to welcome her to the Senate. I'm so pleased she was elected before I left office. And she's in a class of Senators which includes some other women that I'm—[*applause*]—I told Debbie on the way in—she and Hillary and the other Senators who were elected in this last cycle were sworn in last Wednesday. And when our daughter, Chelsea, and I were just sitting up there like all the other families in the Senate gallery, being cautioned not to lean over and put our hands on the rail—[*laughter*]—I was trying to be on my best behavior. I didn't whistle, shout, or jump, but it was, for me, the happiest day of my life since the day my daughter was born. And so I'll always have a special feeling about this election.

I think that Debbie Stabenow showed a great deal of courage and character in this election, and she kept on going when a lot of people thought she couldn't win. And she'll do you proud there. I've watched her in Congress, and she'll be great.

I would like to thank so many other Members of the Michigan congressional delegation who aren't here: Congressmen Levin and Conyers and Bonior, who lost his father in the last couple of days, and especially my good friend Congressman John Dingell, who's recuperating and is still up and around. All the other members of the delegation that helped me, I'm very grateful.

I thank Attorney General Jennifer Granholm for being here, and all the people from the Michigan Legislature who are here, but especially Representative Kilpatrick, who's been such a good friend of mine. Thank you. And Mayor Archer, thank you; Mayor Hollister, thank you.

And I want to say a special word of appreciation to a man who's been one of my closest allies and best friends in political life for way over a decade now, your former Governor, and a man who served as a great Ambassador to Canada in our administration, Jim Blanchard, and his wife, Janet. Thank you very much.

I'd also like to say that when word got out I was coming here, everybody in my administration wanted to come with me. I keep telling them, we promised to work until the last day in office. I've still got some environmental initiatives I want to take—I've still got some other things I want to do. But because I came today to talk about the economy, what happened over the last 8 years and where we're going, and the relationship of the economy to education, I brought two people who have been with me every day since I became President: the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, and the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman. Give them a big hand, will you? [*Applause*] Thank you.

Believe it or not, there's one person in this audience with whom I served 24 years ago in my first elected position as attorney general of my State, your former Attorney General Frank Kelley. Thanks for being here, for 24 years of friendship. Thank you.

Now most of all, I want to thank Tom Izzo and the Michigan State Spartans for being up here with me. [*Applause*] Usually, the national championship team comes to Washington. But I'm sort of a short-termer, you know, and nothing beats recognizing the team before 14,000 cheering fans. Also, there's a lot of sense of humor and kidding in my family, and you may know that my daughter is a senior at Stanford.

So I'm going to wear that Spartan jersey tonight when I go home and see if I can provoke some conversation around the dinner table.

One of the things that I admire about this team—and I followed it very closely last year—is that there is no quit in it. I know you had a tough game last weekend, but let me tell you, if you play any game in life long enough, once in a while somebody will sink a three-point shot, falling backwards with your hand in their face. It will happen if you play any game long enough—the equivalent will happen to you. It is not fatal. The only thing that's fatal is quitting. And you've got no quit in that team back there, and that's good.

The most important thing I want to do today is to say a simple thank-you to the people of Michigan State, Lansing, and the State of Michigan for supporting me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years.

You know, my history with Michigan is profoundly important to the opportunity I have had to serve as President. It began with the primary victory here on Saint Patrick's Day in 1992. It included two general elections in which the people of Michigan were kind enough to give me their electoral votes. And thanks for making it three in a row last November.

I first visited this campus in 1992. I've come here for debates, rallies, and whistle-stop tours. I was the first President since Theodore Roosevelt to speak here while in office. I imagine I'm the only one to speak here twice. Let me tell you, every time I've come here, I've learned something. And even though 8 years is longer than it takes most of you to get a degree, my Michigan State education is just about complete.

When I came here—unbelievably, almost 9 years ago now—our economy was profoundly troubled and our society was divided. In 1992 there were riots in Los Angeles and troubling signs of social division elsewhere. I talked to college students in my home State of Arkansas who said they were dropping out of school because they couldn't afford to borrow any more money and they didn't believe they could get a good job when they got out and pay their loans back. I met college students in every State in the country, including Michigan, who were afraid they wouldn't get a job, even with their diploma.

I met union workers who thought they would either never work again, or if they did, they'd never in their lives get a job paying the same amount that they were making before they lost their previous job. Industrial production had actually declined that year, for the first time in the history of the United States. Average family income fell by $1,600 in just 2 years. The Federal deficit was $290 billion and rising. The national debt had quadrupled over the previous 12 years. Interest rates were high. Growth was low. The confidence of the American people was shaken. And just as bad, it had been 13 years since the Spartans had won a national championship. [*Laughter*] It was not the best of times.

And I asked the American people to send me to Washington for a little while, on a mission—a mission to build a 21st century America with opportunity for all, responsibility from all citizens, and a community of all Americans. I committed to do my best to build a new kind of National Government, one that would focus on the future and on providing all of our citizens with the conditions and tools necessary to build their own lives and make the most of America's future.

Well, thanks to the good people of Michigan, and people like you across this country, Al Gore and I got the precious chance to spend 8 years in Washington, putting people first, getting the economy going again, improving social and environmental conditions, advancing peace, freedom, and prosperity around the world, and building a Government ready to make the most of this new century.

Now, I want to talk just a little about what happened, because it's important, when you look to the future, to know what happened in the recent past and how it brought us to this present.

We began with a clear strategy to get the economy going that it had three elements: Get the deficit down and get rid of it; invest more in our people; sell more American goods and services around the world. The American people did the rest. We are still experiencing the longest economic expansion in our history. Our economy is 50 percent bigger than it was 8 years ago. When I took office, the national unemployment rate was 7.3 percent, 7.4 here in Michigan. Now, it is 4 percent—it's been below 5 percent for 3 years—and it's 3.7 percent in Michigan.

We have—that's the lowest overall unemployment rate in 30 years, even though we've got more of our people participating in the work

force; the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years; the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded.

And unlike some of our previous recoveries, this rising tide is lifting all boats. In the last 3 years, people at all income levels have done better, and the highest percentage increase in income has come in the lowest 20 percent of the working population of America in the last 3 years. Poverty is at a 20-year low; homeownership at an all-time high. In 1992, Michigan State graduates who found jobs had an average starting salary of just under $26,000. The average salary for last year's graduate was over $36,000.

Now, how did this happen? Well, first, we said we would get rid of the deficits and begin to attack the debt. And keep in mind—let me just say this again—in the entire history of the country, going back to 1776, the debt of America quadrupled in the 12 years before we began to work. What's happened since? We started with a $290 billion deficit. This year, we had a $240 billion surplus. We've had the biggest back-to-back surpluses in history. By the end of this fiscal year, we will have paid down more than $500 billion in our national debt. We're on track to be debt-free by the end of the decade, for the first time since 1835.

Why should you care whether your Government's out of debt? Here's why—two reasons. First, economically, if the Government is paying down its debt instead of borrowing money, that means there is more money left for you at lower interest rates for college loans, car loans, home loans, more money for business loans at lower interest rates—means more businesses more jobs, higher pay raises, and a higher stock market. The average American homeowner in America is now saving $2,000 a year in lower home mortgages because we're paying down the debt instead of running it up. It makes a huge difference to your future which way we're going.

The second reason, very important to Michigan State where you've got a lot of people who depend on student aid, where you compete for research funds from the Federal Government, we spend over 11 cents on the dollar—nearly 12, and it was headed to 15 when I took office—we spend almost 12 cents on the dollar of every tax dollar you pay to the Federal Government in interest on the debt. It is the third-biggest item in the Federal budget, behind Social Security and defense.

If we get rid of that 12 percent—12 percent on the Federal debt is a huge amount of money in the Federal budget—that's 12 cents on the tax dollar we can either give back to you in tax cuts or invest in our common future, in education, in health care, in the environment, in national defense, in biomedical research, in building a better future.

So the first thing we said we'd do is do something about the deficit, and we did. And America should keep going until we're debt-free.

The second thing we said we would do is to increase investment in the American people. Now, that's pretty hard when you're cutting spending. We had to get rid of hundreds of Government programs. We reduced the Federal work force by 300,000, to its smallest size since 1960 when Dwight Eisenhower was President. But we have, with the passing of this budget, more than doubled our investment in education and training in the last 8 years. And I'm very proud of that.

We've had the biggest increase in Head Start in history. We've helped Michigan hire more than 1,300 teachers to have smaller classes in the early grades of school. We'll have 1.6 million children in after-school programs this year. We'll have 3.3 million children in the Children's Health Insurance Program, leading to the first decline in the number of people without health insurance in a dozen years.

We'll have 13 million Americans taking advantage of the college tuition tax credits, the HOPE scholarship and the lifetime learning tax credits, expanded Pell grants and work-study programs for helping millions more, including—listen to this—more than 115,000 in Michigan, including some of you in this audience today.

I also want to thank Secretary Riley for something else, the direct student loan program. Michigan State was one of the earliest participants in the direct student loan program. It helps students get college loans more quickly, more cheaply, and gives them more options for paying it back as a percentage of their income. Since 1993, college students have saved $8 billion on their college loans because of the direct loan program, and college and universities have saved $5 billion.

We said that we believed an administration could be pro-business and pro-worker, and we've tried to do that. In the last 8 years, we defeated attempts to repeal prevailing wage laws, to bring back company unions, to weaken

occupational safety standards. We cracked down on sweat shops, protected pension funds, passed tough new worker safety rules against repetitive stress injuries, and raised the minimum wage. And every time we did that, somebody said, "This is really bad for business." Every year, for the last 8 years, the United States has set a record for new small business formations. And we have more jobs in this 8-year period than ever before in history.

We said we believed that the modern economy must be pro-work and pro-family. And that's something a lot of the students here probably haven't thought of very much. But I can tell you, one of the things that I hear all the time, and I used to hear it even more, from people at all income levels, including quite high income levels, is that they are desperately afraid that they cannot meet their responsibilities at work and their responsibilities at home. I hardly know anybody with young kids who doesn't have at least one or two searing examples every year, where they're worried about whether they've neglected their work or neglected their kids.

Now, bringing up children is the most important work of any society, in any time, by far. If we have to make a choice between work and family, our economic objectives are defeated before we start. I can tell you, I've reached the age now when I can tell you from personal experience, knowing hundreds of people my age, if your kids—if life doesn't work out for them, it doesn't make a rip how much money you have. It doesn't matter how well you've done in business. Nothing else matters.

So this is very, very important. What do we do about it? That's why we gave a tax cut, even when we were reducing the deficit, to 15 million working families at the lowest levels of income, so anybody that worked 40 hours a week could use the tax system to get out of poverty, not be driven into it. That's why we raised the minimum wage. That's why we passed the family and medical leave law, which 25 million Americans have been able to use to take some time off when there was a sick child or a sick parent or a baby was born, without losing their job. It's been good for the American economy.

Now, we said we would cut crime, and we did. We put over 100,000 police on the street, working toward 150,000. We banned assault weapons. The Brady law background checks have kept 600,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting guns. Crime is at a 25-year low, violent crime in Michigan down 21 percent.

And I know it was controversial here in Michigan, but I want to say again—I'm on the way out, and I'm not running for anything, but let me tell you something. I have in my closet an honorary jacket with a lifetime membership from the NRA which I got from working with them—listen to this—when I was Governor of Arkansas, on hunter education programs and trying to resolve disputes between retired people who retired into unincorporated areas and hunters. I did a lot of work with them.

But I think this business of trying to convince the voters of any State in our Nation that somebody who wants to keep guns away from criminals and kids is threatening their right to hunt or their right to engage in sport shooting—it's just not so. Nobody—it's not so. And I'm telling you something: It's not so. Now, you cannot—there is not a single law-abiding hunter in the State of Michigan who missed a day in the woods because of these initiatives we've taken, nor a single sport shooter that missed a single contest. But there's a lot of people alive today because those 600,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers could not get their handguns.

We believed—and it was somewhat controversial even in Michigan when I said this—that we not only could but we had to grow the economy and improve the environment. We believed we could break the iron link between putting more greenhouse gases into the air and increasing the world's temperature and growing the economy. We believed that new sources of energy and new means of energy conservation could provide a whole new future, not just for the United States but for the rest of the world.

Now, what have we done? The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. We cleaned up 42 toxic waste dumps in Michigan alone, 5 times as many as the 2 previous administrations, in 12 years. We're investing your money in research in clean technology to make homes, cars, and offices more efficient, to create thousands of new high-tech jobs.

Just last Friday, Ford unveiled an SUV that gets the equivalent of 40 miles per gallon of gas. And at the Detroit auto show right now—right now—GM is showing a family sedan that uses electric hybrid technology—that is, electricity plus fuel—to get the equivalent of 80 miles a gallon. These kinds of vehicles will be rolling off the assembly line soon. I am proud

we supported their development through the Partnership for the Next Generation of Vehicles that we established with the UAW and the automakers back in '93 that the Vice President oversaw for us for 8 years.

But it's going to get better. We are also funding research at the Department of Agriculture into biofuel, which most of you know as ethanol. But you can make fuel out of anything. You can make them out of grasses, out of rice hulls, out of any kind of waste product from farms. The real problems with it is, today, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of biofuel. But we are doing research to try to crack the chemical mystery that is the equivalent of how we made gasoline from unrefined petroleum, from oil. And when we do—and they're getting very close—you will be able to make 8 gallons of biofuel with 1 gallon of gasoline, which means everybody will be able to get the equivalent of 500 miles to the gallon of gasoline. And this environmental issue will be much less formidable than it is today. And we will guarantee the future of the auto industry in Michigan by doing what is right for the environment, not pretending there is no challenge. That's what we've got to do.

Now, let me say to all of you, I love all these statistics; it's just nice to have a good story to tell. [*Laughter*] But this is about more than the statistics. It's about more than money. I think there is a new feeling in America of possibility, that we are prepared for the 21st century, that we can meet the big challenges that are still out there, that we can seize the opportunities that are still out there. And I hope one reason is that we understand that we need each other more and we have to work together more.

One of the things that really bothered me when I ran for President in 1992 is how much politics had become a matter of subtraction and division rather than addition and multiplication. What do I mean by that? Politicians always assume that they needed wedge issues to divide people, and then they wanted their supporters to be more inflamed and madder than the other people's supporters. And they hoped that the other people's supporters, if you could attack your opponent enough, would get disillusioned and wouldn't show up for votes. So they were trying to divide and subtract.

I always thought life worked better when you were trying to add and multiply, and I still believe that. I believe that one of the fundamental facts of the modern world is that we are growing more and more interdependent within our communities, our Nation, and beyond our borders. I believe that, therefore, successful social work, including economics, is becoming more and more like winning a national basketball championship. It's a team sport. I don't care how good a star you are; if the other four walk off the court, you're whipped. [*Laughter*] I don't care how good you are; five on one, the five win.

Now, we have to think about this more. I am immensely gratified that this generation of young people, I think, understands that better than they've gotten credit for. I've never understood all this Generation X talk and how young people are selfish and self-seeking. At Michigan State alone, 150 students have participated in AmeriCorps since we've had that program, out of 150,000 nationwide. We've had more young people do community service in AmeriCorps and earn some money to go on to college in 6 years than we had in the first 30 years of the Peace Corps. The young people of this country understand that they have to build a common future together. They understand that we have to find what's common about us across all the racial and religious and other lines that divide us.

And that's the last thought I want to leave with you. I've just given you a speech mostly about economics today and about the related progress we've made in other areas. But if somebody said to me, "You've got to just leave America with one wish," believe it or not, more than wanting us to be continually successful economically, I would say, "We have to be one America. We have to reach out across all these lines that divide us. We have to celebrate our differences." And I hope you will do that.

Now, one thing I will not claim is to have solved all the problems. You've got big problems out there, or challenges. You've got to deal with the aging of America. When the baby boomers like me retire, there's going to be a bunch of us. And you can't have Social Security and Medicare and the cost of our retirement bankrupt our children's ability to raise our grandchildren. We didn't finish that work, but we made it easier by putting 25 years on Medicare and putting—we're up to 54 years with Social Security now. We did a good job. If we save

the money that we're piling up on Social Security, we can save 54 years on Social Security.

So we didn't solve global warming, but we made a good dent in it. We haven't solved all the economic problems in the inner cities, the Indian reservations, the rural communities that have been left behind, but we left America with the tools to do it.

And what I want to ask all of you to do is to think about where we are now and where we were 8 years ago. And then, imagine in your own mind—do what I did 8 years ago, especially the young people—imagine where you would like America to be 10 years from now; where would you like Michigan to be 10 years from now? What do you think it would take to get you there? I can tell you that no matter what strategy you adopt, you will have to continue to invest in people, to put education first, to care about balancing work and family, to care about balancing business and labor, to care about balancing the economy and the environment.

And if we think about the future with those sorts of basic values and never forgetting our mutual need for one another and that America wins when we treat every single endeavor like a team sport, the best days of this country are still ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Jack Breslin Student Events Center. In his remarks, he referred to Peter McPherson, president, Michigan State University; Ed Foy, assistant director, United Auto Workers Region I-C, who introduced the President; Michigan Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm; State Representative Kwame M. Kilpatrick; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit; Mayor David C. Hollister of Lansing; and Tom Izzo, basketball coach, Michigan State Spartans. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at James Ward Elementary School in Chicago, Illinois

January 9, 2001

Thank you very, very much. I want to say, first of all, I realize now that I'm in an elementary school that I should get a tardy slip today. [*Laughter*] But even in these closing days of my Presidency, I can't stop doing my job, and I was unavoidably detained. I'm sorry.

One thing I have learned in over 20 years of visiting schools is that you almost never have a good school without a great principal. And I want to thank Sharon Wilcher for her introduction and for her leadership.

I want to thank Secretary Riley, who has been my friend since the 1970's, and we go back a long way. Our families have been friends; we've shared the joys of our children and the stories of our respective governorships. And I knew he would be a good Secretary of Education, but I think after 8 years, the record will reflect that he is clearly the finest Secretary of Education this country ever had. And I'm very grateful to him.

I want to thank Secretary Alexis Herman, our Secretary of Labor, for joining us today. I brought the Deputy Attorney General, Eric Holder, all the way from Washington. He had never been on one of these trips with me, and he's been working like a dog for years, so I asked him to come. To continue our school analogy, this is recess for him today.

I want to thank Senator Dick Durbin for his friendship and his leadership over all these years. Congressman Bobby Rush, who worked in my campaign for President in 1992, I'm proud of what you have done, sir. Thank you. Treasurer Dan Hynes; the president of the Chicago Teachers' Union, Tom Reese; Gery Chico; Paul Vallas.

And let me say a special word of thanks to your mayor for the partnership that we have enjoyed for education, for economic development and housing and so many other areas. I have constantly looked to Chicago for leadership. I tell people all the time, it's probably one of the best organized big cities in the entire world. And the work that has been done by all of you in education, in reviving the system here over the last 6 years, is exhibit A. Thank you, Mayor Daley.

I came to Chicago today in the closing days of my Presidency for two reasons. First of all, as I'll say more about in a few moments in another setting, it's doubtful that I could have become President without the support I received from the people of Chicago and the State of Illinois. It began over 9 years ago, way back in 1991, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [*Laughter*] And through the elections of 1992 and 1996, starting with the Democratic primary and then the election of 2000, you've been very good to Hillary and Bill Clinton and to Al and Tipper Gore. And I thank you very much for that.

I also wanted to come because one of the primary reasons I ran for President is to do what I could in the White House to make a positive difference in the schools of America. I wanted to come to James Ward Elementary because I want people all across this country to know that there are schools like this, where teachers and parents and administrators and community leaders are succeeding, sometimes against great odds, in bringing educational excellence to our children. It is important that people know it can be done.

I came because I have so often told anyone who would listen about Chicago and the accomplishments of your school reform effort. Indeed, you have been very, very good to me today. I asked Paul Vallas when I came in, I said, "How many times since you've been in office have I been in your school system, in your school?" He said, "Six—six." So the way I figure it, I'm either entitled to a diploma or to a property tax bill. I can't figure out which. [*Laughter*]

You have raised standards and accountability and ended social promotion in the right way, by giving students in schools the tools they need to meet high standards and succeed—higher pay and better training for teachers and principals, after-school and summer school programs, better quality facilities. The results are clear. In this entire, huge, increasingly diverse school district, the test scores of third through eighth graders have risen in every single year since 1994. And you heard the results about James Ward.

What I want the members of the traveling press corps to know, who are here with me, is, every year this school gets students coming from China, Croatia, Central America. This school has a large Asian-American population and a very substantial African-American population, a very substantial Hispanic population and a very substantial white ethnic population. It is a picture of America's future. We have to make education work here if we want America's future to work.

Using almost every proven educational strategy, this school is demonstrating dramatically what we could accomplish in every school in America if every school would work together the way your people work together, based on a common conviction that all children can learn and a common devotion to the proven best practices in education.

Now, for the past 8 years, our administration has worked hard to make education our number one domestic priority. We started out early, doing more to help early childhood education, doing a lot to expand and improve the quality of Head Start. And I'm very proud that in our very last education budget, achieved after the election this year, we had the largest increase in Head Start in the entire history of the program. I think that's a very good sign.

But we have then focused on a proven strategy in schools: higher standards, more accountability, greater investment, equal opportunity. Simple ideas: higher standards, more accountability, greater investment, equal opportunity.

In 1992, believe it or not, only 14 States in this entire country had academic standards for core subjects. And not surprisingly, test scores were dropping as a result. As more and more kids came into the school, the student bodies were more and more diverse, more and more schools had children whose first language was not English, more and more kids whose parents could not speak English.

And as more and more kids came into the schools, ironically, a smaller percentage of the kids had parents who themselves were property tax payers, who were property owners, so that the tax base of many of our districts were severely stressed.

And so, we came in with a commitment to higher standards, and we passed legislation to encourage and support States in setting those standards. In 1992 there were 14 States with core academic standards. Today, there are 49 States with statewide core academic standards.

We also wanted to increase accountability. We asked the States—indeed, we required the States—to identify schools that were failing and then develop strategies to turn them around. We then gave them funds to help turn around

or shut down failing schools, this year $225 million in this year's budget alone to help schools identify, try to turn around, or shut down and put under new management schools that are not giving our children the education they deserve.

We also said, like Chicago, that we should end social promotion. But like Chicago, we said it's not fair to hold the kids accountable if the system is failing them. So for the very first time, we put the Federal Government on the side of the after-school programs and the summer school programs. I was so glad you mentioned that.

Four years ago, we had a $1 million demonstration project. This year, in this education budget, we have $850 million for after-school programs. They will serve 1.3 million kids like the children in this school, and I am very proud of that. More than half the students here participate in Federal and State funded after-school programs. And I understand there would be even more of them if you had the transportation to get them home, which is something that I would like to see addressed in the next administration.

I might also say something that won't surprise you. In every community where there are comprehensive after-school programs with real, meaningful substance, like the ones described by your principal, every community in the country where this is the case, the juvenile crime rate goes down; the juvenile delinquency rate goes down; the school attendance rate goes up; the on-time graduation rate goes up. This is a big deal.

I'm glad we've got 1.3 million kids in these programs. But there are basically 6 million kids in America who don't have anyplace to go under supervision when they get out of school. So we're barely meeting—we're right at a quarter of the national need being funded by the Federal Government. And of course, some places like Chicago are using their own funds. But we need—if I were going to be around 4 more years, one of the things I'd do is figure out how many people—[*applause*]—wait a minute; you are going to be around, so you can participate in this—one of the things we need to do is to figure out how many kids are being served with all the Federal and the State and local funds, how many still need to be served. And we need to fill the gap. We've got the money. We need to fill the gap. This is a huge, huge opportunity and responsibility.

To further support young students, another thing we did was to start the America Reads program, which now has involved 1,000 universities and colleges in sending out student mentors to help make sure kids can read by the time they get out of the third grade. And there are also countless other religious and other community organizations presenting—doing it and supporting schools.

Eight years ago only 35 percent of our schools—and listen to this—3 percent of our classrooms were connected to the Internet. I said 8; the truth is, it was 1994, 6 years ago. Today, with the help of new Federal dollars to support Internet hookups and the E-rate program, which was pioneered and supported by the Vice President—the E-rate basically guarantees that every school can afford to log on to the Internet and hook up to access it, no matter how limited their resources are—we have gone from 3 percent of our classrooms to 65 percent of our classrooms connected, from 35 percent of our schools to 95 percent of our schools connected to the Internet, including this one.

And you just heard your principal say, before you had this last remodeling, even if you had the money, you couldn't do it because the wiring wouldn't support it. You'd be amazed how many schools I've been in that can't be connected to the Internet because the wiring in the school won't support it. I was at an old school in Virginia about a year ago, and they kept laughing about how the whole place shorted out every time the classrooms tried to log on. I was in Philadelphia, where the average school building is 65 years old—the average school building—and I couldn't—I can't tell you how many school buildings I've been in just in that one city that couldn't be wired.

On the other hand, as you see in this facility, there's another thing we have in common. This building was built when Grant was President. Every night in my private office, I work on Grant's Cabinet table. It was built in 1869, and it served me quite well, but I don't have to wire it. [*Laughter*] I don't have to air-condition it. I don't have to put heating in it. All it has to do is stand up.

But as you see from this building, a lot of these old school buildings are fantastic in their construction. And things were done then that you couldn't afford to do now. But they have

to be modernized. Now, in 1995 the city of Chicago found the resources to make this school safe, warm, beautiful, and usable. That makes a big difference. But across this country, there are 3½ million students who attend schools that need extensive repairs or should be replaced. There are millions of other students going to schools in housetrailers. I've been to one elementary school in Florida, in a little community in Florida, an elementary school like this one, that had 12 trailers outside it used for classes.

Now, again I will say, we've got the biggest and most diverse student body in history, more important to educate them than ever before, but a smaller percentage of the property tax payers in most of our school districts are parents in the school than ever before. More people are renters. You know all the reasons why this is so.

I have believed for 4 years that the National Government should give both tax incentives and direct cash investment to the repair, the modernization, and the building of school facilities. I've also been in one of the mayor's new school buildings here to highlight this. We've done this—did you ever see that movie "Groundhog Day," where every day is the same thing over and over again? Every time I—Mayor Daley thought I was casting him in "Groundhog Day," I think, for a long time, because every time I'd come back here, we'd have to talk about the same thing, because we could never get anything done.

But I'm happy to report that this year, for the first time, we have finally secured $1.2 billion to help repair schools like this one across America where the need is greatest. Now, let me say to you, one of your former United States Senators, Everett Dirksen, once said in his droll way that when you mentioned a billion here and a billion there, pretty soon you're talking about real money. And that sounds like an enormous amount of money, but the truth is that the aggregate net need for school construction and school repair in the United States of America is over $100 billion.

That's why I think it is so important for the Congress to continue to try to get the tax relief that I have suggested, which would, in effect, cut the cost of school financing, so that if school districts went out and floated their own bonds, or cities floated their bonds for school construction or school repair, the cost would be dramatically reduced to the taxpayers, making it easier to sell such issues to taxpayers whose kids are not in the schools. And I think we should continue to invest direct resources from the Federal Government.

But this is a big beginning. And I predict that this program will be wildly popular throughout America, because I can see how you feel about this school building today, and I can only imagine how different it was before it was fixed 5 years ago.

Eight years ago we knew that children learn best in smaller classes, but classes were getting larger for the same reason school buildings were deteriorating: more kids, limited tax base. Today, we are in the third year of hiring 100,000 teachers for smaller classes in the early grades. If we can get them all hired, we'll be able to bring down average class size to 18 in grades K through 3 all across America.

Again, I'm really grateful to the Congress. In the last education budget, concluded after the election, we went from a budget which hired about 29,000 teachers last year to one that will hire 37,000 this coming year. So we'll be more than a third of the way home in a 6-year program. And I hope and pray that the Congress will continue to do this.

We've also funded initiatives to help recruit new teachers, retain the best teachers, train and certify more board-certified national teachers, and let every teacher keep learning on the job. And one of the things that I think Sharon Wilcher should be commended for, I understand, is giving her staff every chance to continue to learn and grow. Staff development is a big, important part of keeping the school going in the right direction.

Eight years ago there was one charter school in America, a public school which has the freedom to chart its own mission. If every school were like James Ward, we might not need them. But the truth is, it both gives more choices to parents and provides more competition when the school system is not working, without draining resources away from the public schools. There was one 8 years ago; there are 2,000 today in this budget. We're going to be well on our way to 3,000 by the end of the year.

Eight years ago we said we wanted our kids to be safe in school, and we wanted them to have an orderly, disciplined environment. Secretary Riley has used Federal funds to help build partnerships between school districts and local police departments to support things like

character education and voluntary uniform policies and zero tolerance for guns in schools. And violent crime in the schools, notwithstanding the tragic and heartbreaking incidents which have been widely reported, violent crime in our schools has fallen steadily since 1993. It is much lower today than it was 8 years ago.

Eight years ago college was priced out of reach for a lot of students. I'll never forget one night when I was Governor in the early nineties, I was in Fayetteville, Arkansas, the home of the University of Arkansas, and I went to a cafe to have a cup of coffee with a friend of mine. And I was doing what I always do; I went out and shook hands with everybody there. And there were four students there, and two of them told me they were dropping out of school. And I said, "Why?" And they said, "Well, we'll never be able to pay our student loans off—never. So we've got to drop out of school, make some money, hope we can save enough to come back, and somehow get out someday."

I also met a lot of students who thought they were going to not be able to find very good jobs if they got out. One of the things that I committed myself to do when I ran for President is to open the doors of college to all Americans. So, what have we done? With the HOPE scholarship tax credit, $1,500 a year off the tax bill directly in the first 2 years of college, and the lifetime learning credit for junior and senior year and graduate school and for adults to go back and get training, which can be worth even more, we are now helping 13 million Americans to go on to higher education.

We also have more affordable student loans. We've saved students $9 billion by directly loaning them the money from the Government—$9 billion. The average student on a $10,000 loan today is saving $1,300 in repayment costs over what they were 8 years ago. And it makes it a lot easier.

They also have the option to pay back the loans as a percentage of their income, which means if you want to be a schoolteacher and you know you'll never get rich, you can still borrow whatever you need to go to college, because you can pay your loan back as a percentage of your income. And if you strike oil in your backyard, you have the option to go out and pay it off the next year, anyway. It's a very good deal.

We also have had a big increase in work-study slots, a big increase in Pell grants, another big one this year, up to $3,700 a year now, the maximum grant. And 150,000 of our young people have earned money for college while serving in AmeriCorps. I just met one of them outside on the way in—150,000 in 6 years. It took the Peace Corps 30 years to amass 150,000 volunteers. And I might just say, to the side, so much for those who say this generation of young people is self-seeking. It is the most stunning example of community service in modern American history, and it's also helping a lot of people to go on to college.

We started a program called GEAR UP, which is now serving 1.2 million disadvantaged middle school students. We send college students out to help mentor them and convince them they can go on to college, come up with a plan for the rest of their academic career until they get out of high school, and tell them right then in middle school what kinds of financial aid they can get where, so they will know from the time they're in the sixth or seventh or eighth grade that they can actually go to college and the promise will be kept.

All told, we have doubled education funding in 8 years, more investment, provided the largest expansion of college opportunity in 50 years, since the GI bill, and gotten the results for more accountability: Test scores are up; the dropout rate is down; advanced placement courses in high school are being taken by 50 percent more kids—in the last 5 years, 50 percent more—300 percent more Hispanic kids, 500 percent more African-American kids are taking advanced placement courses.

Not surprisingly, the SAT scores are at a 30-year high in America, and the college-going rate has gone up 10 percent. This strategy works. Higher standards, great accountability, more investment, equal opportunity—it works. And we have come a long way toward an America in which every child enters school ready to learn, graduates ready to succeed, and has the opportunity to go on to college.

Of course, the lion's share of the credit belongs to people like you, to the teachers, the principals, the parents, the community leaders. But it is up to the rest of us to create a framework in which those four objectives can be pursued.

We will hear a lot of talk in the future, I'm sure, about education reform, and I applaud it.

I hope that education reform all across America will become more and more a bipartisan issue. In the last four budgets that we had, we had a bipartisan budget. We fought about it. We argued about it. I had to threaten a bunch of vetoes, but in the end we had a bipartisan majority for every single thing that I talked about here today. And we ought to give credit where credit is due. This should not be a partisan issue.

When my wife was growing up in a suburb of Chicago, I'll never forget my father-in-law and my mother-in-law talking about how it was an overwhelmingly Republican place. Goldwater carried it 4 to 1 in '64, and the other 20 percent thought he was too liberal. It was a big Republican place. They never voted down a school bond issue, ever. The difference in the Republicans and the Democrats on education was where the money ought to come from.

And we ought to go back—we need to look at the reality here. Who are the children in our schools? Who are the leaders of our future? What strategies have been proven? It's not like there's no evidence here. All we tried to do was to take what you proved worked. It is not true that we tried to rewrite every local school's education policy. Dick Riley cut Government regulation in the Department of Education by two-thirds. We just took what works.

And I hope that in the future there will continue to be a passion coming out of people in Washington and in every State capital and every community in this country of both parties. But every proposal should be measured against what we now know works, what you have proven works here. And if it works, whoever has got the idea, we ought to put it in.

But it's not like—I remember when I started this, when Hillary and I started going into classes in the late seventies, and we started trying to write new standards for our State in the early eighties, we had hunches. Educators thought they knew. There was a little evidence here and a little evidence there, but we were kind of making it up as we went along. And it was happening all over America. We've now had 15 years of solid evidence. You have given us that in schools like this one.

And so I would just say, I wanted to come here because Chicago has been good to me, and Chicago has been very good to its children these last 6 years. I wanted to come here because, as I leave office, I don't want America to let its concern for education reform and improvement abate; I want it to increase. I want more people to believe that every child can learn, and that in this global economy, every child must learn, not only for himself or herself but for the rest of us, as well.

Of course, there are big challenges that remain. But your school, like so many I visited over the past 8 years, teaches us all the most important lesson: We can do it.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. in the auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Sharon R. Wilcher, principal, James Ward Elementary School; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; Illinois State Comptroller Daniel W. Hynes; and Gery Chico, president, board of directors, and Paul Vallas, chief executive officer, Chicago Public School District.

Statement on the Family and Medical Leave Act

January 9, 2001

The first legislation I signed as President was the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent; a newborn, newly adopted, or newly placed child; or for their own serious health problem, without fear of losing their jobs. This law was an important step forward in helping America's working families balance the competing demands of work and family. Since then, I am proud to say that more than 35 million working Americans have taken leave for family and medical reasons since 1993.

In 1996 the bipartisan Commission on Family and Medical Leave issued a report assessing

family and medical leave policies. The Commission found that the FMLA was working well for both workers and employers. Today the U. S. Department of Labor released the results of its new surveys, which updated the Commission's work. Once again, the data show that the Family and Medical Leave Act remains a balanced approach to meeting the needs of workers and employers. We know that when needed most, covered and eligible workers were able to take this benefit—in fact, more than 15 million have done so since January 1999, the period covered by this survey.

FMLA has given millions of workers the ability to care for their seriously ill child, spouse, or parent, or stay home with their newborn child, without worrying about whether their job will be there when they return. Our work is not done, however. We must now build on the success of FMLA by giving more workers the protections of the act and finding new ways to provide paid leave to those workers who need to take off but cannot afford to do so.

Remarks to the People of Chicago
January 9, 2001

Thank you. You know, I thought we should come over here to sort of finish the circle of my political history in Illinois, and I didn't know if anybody would show up. [*Laughter*] Apparently, the lobby's full, too. Let me say to all of you how grateful I am to the people of Chicago and Illinois. I thank the mayor for his great leadership and for giving me a chance to be a good President for Chicago; if I didn't have a great mayor, I couldn't have been.

I asked Rich, when Bill was up here talking, I said, "You get your brother to introduce you very often?" He said, "No, but I love it every time he does it." [*Laughter*] I want to thank Bill Daley for his exemplary service as Secretary of Commerce. He was brilliant. I think he did a brilliant job in leading Vice President Gore to victory myself.

Let me just remind you, when he went over there as the chairman of that campaign, we were way behind. And then we had a great convention, and we got ahead a little bit. Then they got ahead again. Daley kept them on track. We started out, they were whizzing—we were way behind when Daley took over. They thought the election was over, the Republicans did. By the time it was over, our candidate had won the popular vote, and the only way they could win the election was to stop the voting in Florida. He did a great job.

I want to thank my great friend Alexis Herman. I did not know until she started talking that her grandfather once worked here. But I appreciate it, and since she said that, in a minute I'm going to tell a family story. I want to thank Bobby Rush and your great Senator, Dick Durbin. What a great job he's done. Our treasurer, Mr. Hynes; and his daddy, Mr. Hynes, thank you for being here, Tom. Good to see you. And Secretary Riley, our Secretary of Education, and the best Secretary of Education we ever had, thank you. And if I have forgotten anybody, I apologize.

I also bring you greetings from the newest United States Senator from New York, Hillary. I told Dick, ever since Hillary won that election in New York, you should just consider that Illinois has two Democratic Senators again. She told me to tell everybody hello.

You know, this place has a special place in my heart, and I just want to briefly review the history for you. When I ran for President in 1992, I knew I had to do pretty well in New Hampshire. And when I started out, I was running fifth. But it was a small State of tough-minded but fairminded people, and I thought if I could just get up there and stir around, I could do all right. They were good to me, and I love them, and they voted for me twice. So I got out of it alive, anyway. Then I got through all the rest of that stuff.

Then we had Super Tuesday, and I won them, but I was supposed to because it was in the South. But I knew that to be nominated, I had to do well on Saint Patrick's Day in Illinois and Michigan.

And I knew some things about Illinois other people didn't know. First, I had a wife from

Chicago; that didn't hurt. [*Laughter*] Second, I knew southern Illinois was south of Richmond, and I spent a lot of time down there, which other guys didn't know, but when I was a Governor. And the third thing I knew was that half the people from Chicago had kinfolks in Arkansas, which nobody knew but me. [*Laughter*]

So I figured if I sort of sidled around here, I could do pretty good. So I showed up here in 1991, and in this very room we had a meeting of all the State Democratic chairs, and I tried to make a fairly presentable impression. And I had been thinking about what we ought to do as a country for a long time, and I put my ideas out. And then we went over to the Navy pier, and I announced that David Wilhelm of Chicago would be my national campaign manager. He did a great job, and you should be very proud of him.

And then—so we rocked along and everything went according to plan, and it was time to stand and deliver in Illinois. And on the election night and the primary—it was Saint Patrick's Day, 1992—now, I remember marching in the Saint Patrick's Day parade in Chicago. It was an interesting experience. [*Laughter*] Most people were waving all five fingers. Think about it. [*Laughter*] And on election night, a majority of the people in Illinois gave me their votes in the primary over my opponents. And I knew then it was just a matter of time. And the people in Michigan were very good to me. We won there by 10 points, but by more in Illinois. And ever since then, I have known that I could count on Illinois, that when the chips were down, Chicago and the State of Illinois would be there for the Clinton/Gore ticket. And I am profoundly grateful.

We had the party that election night downstairs in the lobby, where the overflow crowd is, and I'm going to go down there and see them in a minute. And every day for 8 years, in my little private office, right off the Oval Office, every single day for 8 years, I have looked at the picture of Hillary and me standing with the confetti, the green confetti, coming down in the lobby of this grand old hotel, on Saint Patrick's Day.

So I wanted to come here to say goodbye and to say thank you. But let me tell you what else I want you to know. I have a—look, I've got a Senator to support, that's what I've got—and I'm not really saying goodbye. I'm just saying goodbye as President.

But let me tell you, I also have another picture of this hotel, which I don't think I've ever told anybody in Illinois. I have another picture that I have seen every night for the last 4 years—for the last 8 years, excuse me. It is a picture of my mother in early 1946, and my father, who were living here, when my mother went home to Arkansas to have me and my father was killed in a car wreck driving home. And right before that happened, they were here in this hotel with another young couple having what my mother told me was one of the happiest nights of her life. And she gave me that picture when I was a young man. And I put it up on my desk in the White House in the Residence, and I looked at this hotel in that picture twice every day for 8 years—once on Saint Patrick's Day, 1992, and once when my mother and father were here before I was born. This is an important place for me, and you're important people to me. And I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Now, here's the second thing I want to say. Now, I want to say two things, seriously. Number one, this is a different, a stronger, a more united, and a better country than it was 8 years ago. The ideas we had worked. They worked. And let me just take you on a little walk down memory lane here.

Eight years ago, we had high unemployment; the deficit was $290 billion; the debt of the country had been quadrupled in the previous 12 years. Now we have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded, 22.5 million new jobs. The deficit has been turned into the biggest surpluses in history, and when this year is over, my last budget will have paid down $500 billion on the national debt. We can be out of debt in 10 years, for the first time since 1835.

Now, in addition to that, Bobby Rush said I wanted to be President for the little people; I did. I didn't know the difference in little and big people. I was so naive when my predecessor referred to me in rather derisive terms as the Governor of a small southern State—I was so naive, I thought he was paying me a compliment. [*Laughter*] And I still do. [*Laughter*]

People ask me what was my Presidency about. It was about those 22.5 million people that have jobs now that didn't, about the 25 million people that took advantage of the family and medical

leave law, about the 13 million people that took advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit and the other tax credits to go on and have family members in college, about the 90 percent of kids under 2 who are immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time, about the 3.3 million children who have been covered with health insurance for the first time under the Children's Health Insurance Program. We got the uninsured population going down for the first time in 12 years. That's what it's about—about the 1.3 million kids in after-school programs with Federal funds for the first time. And I could go on and on.

It's about people—600,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers couldn't get handguns because of the Brady bill. How many people are alive because of that, because of the 100,000 police on the street? That's what this was about. It was about trying to bring America together, to create more opportunity for every responsible citizen, to make our diversity a blessing instead of a source of division, to be a force for peace and freedom and democracy and decency around the world. And I am proud of where America is today.

I'm also proud that we did have an urban policy, an urban policy that gave 15 million families a family tax cut because the people weren't making enough money working full time to get their kids out of poverty, and now they can, because of the earned-income tax credit; an urban policy in which the Vice President ran an empowerment zone program that brought billions of dollars of new investment into cities all across America; an urban policy which cut the welfare rolls in half, which diversified public housing—and Chicago is leading the way in that—which gave people a sense that we could go forward together again.

Now, this was about people, putting them first, preparing them for a new century and a whole new era in human affairs. Look how much more diverse Chicago is now than it was 10 years ago, racially, religiously. Look how we're learning to live together across all the lines that have previously divided us. That's what I want for America: one America, going forward together, helping each other, making the most of what we can do.

You know, politics and public life is a lot like athletics. It's a team sport. I don't care how good the quarterback is or the center. If you don't have a good team, you're nowhere. You were my team and we won for America.

So whether you're old or young, white, black, or brown or whatever, straight or gay, abled or disabled—we're all disabled some way or another—I thank you, because you were my team, and we won for America. And I want you to know—the second thing I want to say is this: America is always about becoming. It's always about new beginnings. It's always about tomorrow. The reason we're still around here after over 220 years is that we've always had a focus on the future. We always thought we could do better. We always thought we had a moral obligation to do better. We always thought we could widen the circle of opportunity and deepen the meaning of freedom and strengthen the bonds of our community and be better neighbors around the world. We always thought that.

I still believe that. And you cannot let any disappointment you may feel in this last election take away any pride you feel in what Al Gore and I and our team were able to accomplish with you these last 8 years. And you cannot let—you cannot let anything deter you from your determination to be the best citizen you can be, to make Chicago and Illinois and America as great as they can be.

I'm telling you, there are still a lot of big challenges out there, but I'm leaving this country in good shape and the best is still to be. You just rear back, stay together, and keep fighting for tomorrow.

God bless you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; Illinois State Comptroller Daniel W. Hynes and his father, Thomas C. Hynes, member, Democratic State Central Committee; and David Wilhelm, former national chair, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks at a Private Party in Chicago
January 9, 2001

We had a rally upstairs. You heard them, didn't you? In the ballroom. A little loud. And I hope we didn't interrupt you. So there's an overflow crowd in the lobby, and they said, "They have to go through the edge of another ballroom." [*Laughter*] So here I am. [*Laughter*] So I've invaded your dinner. [*Laughter*] Well, thank you for the wonderful, warm welcome. I'm in Chicago today to basically say goodbye to the people of Chicago and Illinois, as President.

It's a very happy day for me in many ways. This hotel—since you're here for that, I should tell you, this hotel plays a huge role in my life. And I have two pictures of this hotel. That's what I told them upstairs, I have two pictures of this hotel which I look at every day of my life. One is of the lobby on Saint Patrick's Day of 1992. Hillary and I are standing there with green graffiti—not graffiti, what do you call it?—confetti, not graffiti, confetti—[*laughter*]—it's been a long day and a long 8 years—[*laughter*]—confetti coming down, because that's the night that we won the Democratic primary in Illinois, which basically sealed my nomination.

The second picture was my mother and my father dining here in 1946. And that's in my private office in the Residence of the White House. I look at it every night—every single night. So I've seen those two pictures of this place every day for 8 years. This is also where I basically kicked off my campaign in Illinois in December of 1991, and so I'm very happy to be here.

And I wanted to come here for my last appearance in Chicago as President. And I want to tell all of you that it's been an honor to serve. I'm glad my country is in better shape than it was 8 years ago. I thank all of you for the role that you've played in revitalizing our country. And I wish only the best for the future.

I've said many times, and I'll say again, America may find people who do this job better than I have, but you will never find anybody who loved doing it any more.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the Empire Room at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd in Chicago
January 9, 2001

Let me ask you a question. Did you hear what went on upstairs? This is troubling. Half are saying yes; half are saying no. Let me say to all of you, I'll give you a brief version of what I said there.

First, I want to thank Chicago and the State of Illinois for being so good to me. I thank Mayor Daley for his leadership and partnership and for making it possible to prove that our crime policies and our welfare policies and our economic policies would all work, because they worked here in Chicago.

I thank Bobby Rush for helping me in '92. I thank Bobby and Dick Durbin and the entire crowd in your congressional delegation who have been so good to me. But Senator Durbin, I especially thank you for all the things you've done. Thank you.

I thank Bill Daley for being a superb Secretary of Commerce and a brilliant campaign manager. What I told them upstairs was, Bill Daley ran the first Presidential campaign in history that was so clearly winning, a court had to stop the vote in order to change the outcome. It was brilliant.

Now, I want to say two other things. Upstairs, I said that this hotel was very important in my life. I spoke to the Democratic chairs here in December of '91. I had my party here on Saint Patrick's Day in 1992 when we won the primary.

Were you there? Some of you were there. And I still have a picture in my little office off the Oval Office of Hillary and me standing here in this lobby with the confetti coming down on Saint Patrick's Day. I've had it there every single day for 8 years to remind me that Chicago and Illinois made me President.

I thank you for voting for us overwhelmingly in '92, in '96. I thank you for a fabulous convention in 1996, which was a joy. And I thank you for sticking with us in the year 2000, which you did. I thank you for that.

I thought—it was really important to me to come here before I leave office to say thank you. And I also want to bring you greetings from the new Senator from the State of New York. Hillary said to tell you hello. And I told Senator Durbin that you should just sort of consider that Illinois also has two Democratic Senators again.

I am honored to have been President at a time when a lot of changes were going on in America and in the world. And as I look back, I am profoundly grateful that our country is so much stronger and more united and more successful and so much more future-oriented and self-confident today than it was 8 years ago when we started. And you had a lot to do with that.

I believe politics and public service is a team sport. And you can have a great quarterback; you can have a great captain; but if you don't have a team, you're going to lose every time. So you were my team, and we won for America together.

So when you think about the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years or the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded or 22.5 million new jobs or 25 million people taking advantage of the family leave law or 13 million more people getting college tax aid through the HOPE scholarship tax credit or over 3 million more kids with health insurance or 90 percent of our little kids with immunization against serious diseases for the first time or more land set aside for protection for all time than any time in 100 years—when you say all those things—that wasn't just me; it wasn't just us with the Democrats and the Congress; it was you, too. We did it together. We were a team, and I thank you for that.

The last thing I want to say is this. I want you to keep fighting for the future. And I'll be there with you. I'll just be a citizen, but I can serve well. I've still got a voice. I've still got a heart, and I've got a mind to spend the rest of my life trying to pay America back for all the good things the American people gave me these last 25 years.

So don't get discouraged; don't be frustrated by what happened in November. But don't be passive. Just take a breath and keep looking forward and keep doing what will come naturally, to fight for the things we believe in, to build the future we want for all of our children together.

I can honestly tell you that in 11 days at high noon, when I walk out of the White House for the last time as President, I will leave more optimistic and more idealistic about the people of this country and their potential, and especially about the young people of this country, than I was the day I took the oath of office in 1993.

I love you. Thank you. God bless you. Goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:37 p.m. in the lobby of the Palmer House Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago and Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq

January 9, 2001

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 575 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–429), enclosed is a report on plans for the provision of humanitarian assistance for the Iraqi people and for the commencement of broadcasting operations by the Iraqi National Congress.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Interview With Allison Payne of WGN–TV in Chicago
January 9, 2001

Accomplishments in the Final Days

Ms. Payne. Congratulations, sir.

The President. Thank you. Hi.

Ms. Payne. I understand you're working just as hard these last few weeks as you have been the last 8 years. What's driving you?

The President. Well, I get paid until January the 20th. I think I ought to show up for work. Also, I think there's a lot of things to do. We just had, in some ways, the best legislative year we've had, certainly in the last 4 years. We had the biggest increase in investment in education, the first time we've ever gotten any funds for school repair and construction, a big increase in funds for the after-school programs that have been so important to Chicago. We got the new markets initiative that I worked hard on here with Congressman Danny Davis and Speaker Hastert, across party lines, to get more investment into poor areas in America, and a big debt relief initiative for the poor countries. We're doing a lot of stuff here.

And I went to Vietnam. I was able to set aside some more land, preserve it. I'm still working, and I'm going to work to the very end. And of course, I'm trying one last time to make peace in the Middle East. I'm doing the best I can.

Chicago

Ms. Payne. What are you going to miss most about Chicago?

The President. Oh, the people. I love it here. But I'll still come a lot. It's still Hillary's home; a lot of her people are from here. A lot of her friends are here, and I've got the friends of a lifetime here. So I'll still come a lot. And I hope that for the rest of my life I can be a good citizen and really do some good things for America and around the world. So I'll be around. I just have—I fell in love with Chicago the first time I came here, and nothing ever changed. It just got better.

Richard and William Daley

Ms. Payne. Tell me something about your relationship with the Daley brothers we don't already know. I know it's a good one.

The President. It is good. Well, the mayor I've known for some time, and I knew Bill actually a little before then. I just think Mayor Daley is a great mayor. In addition to being a friend, he's a great mayor. He's not afraid of new ideas. He'll work with anybody. He's always trying to get something done. And he enabled me to be an effective President, because we had these—whether it was welfare reform or housing or economic development or you name it, whatever we were doing, I knew Chicago would be on the cutting edge—community policing, sensible gun safety measures, all of that stuff.

And Bill Daley, of course, and I have been very close, because he was in my Cabinet. He was an absolutely superb Secretary of Commerce. I know he's hated to leave it, but he answered Vice President Gore's call. And what I said tonight was true; we were way behind when he took over, and we won the popular vote, and when they get all the votes counted in Florida, we'll see what happened there. But Bill Daley's got a lot to be proud of, and Chicago should be very proud of him.

Administration Accomplishments

Ms. Payne. What are you most proud of, sir?

The President. I am most proud of the fact that all Americans, not just a few, are better off than they were 8 years ago and that there's a greater sense of community here. I was very worried when I took office that dividing our country was becoming a habit, and a bad one. And I think the country's more united now across racial and income lines and religious lines. And I think we understand we need each other.

So, yes, we're better off economically, but we're a stronger country, too. And I'm very proud of that.

President's Legacy

Ms. Payne. How do you hope Chicagoans and all Americans will remember William Jefferson Clinton?

The President. As a person who did what he said he'd do when he ran for President, who put the American people first, who helped to prepare us for the 21st century, and left the country a little better then he found it.

President's Future Plans

Ms. Payne. Sir, what are you going to do? Are you going to come back and watch a couple Cubs games with us?

The President. I certainly hope so. I hope so. Mr. Sosa says he'll keep inviting me, and I want to do that. I'll stay very active. I now have a United States Senator to support and a daughter to finish educating, so I'm going to go out and make a living. But I'm going to try to spend about half my time on public service, and then as soon as I can do so, I would like to spend my whole life just trying to give back what I've learned and the experiences I've had as President. I think I can do a lot of good for the country and for the world as a citizen. I'm going to do my best.

The Presidency

Ms. Payne. May I just say that I've been so inspired by your drive and your fire. Can you tell the common man a little bit what it's like, from your perspective as a common man from Hope, Arkansas, to be the man sitting inside the Oval Office?

The President. All I can tell you is, it's still the biggest thrill—it's as big a thrill for me today to land on the back lawn of the White House in the helicopter, to walk into the White House and spend the night, to walk over to the Oval Office every morning. It's as big a thrill for me today as it was on the first day I showed up as President.

I believe in the promise of this country. I believe in the American system. Politics is a rough game, and it's a contact sport, and if you can't take a hit, you shouldn't play. But if you're prepared to pay the price and try to bring people together, the American people can do anything, and we can meet any challenge. We can overcome any obstacle. We can seize any opportunity. And for me, I will leave the White House more idealistic and optimistic about America and its promise and its young people than the day I took office.

Ms. Payne. Listen, I baked you a homemade pound cake, but it's stuck with our makeup artist on the other side of the room. So I'm going to have to send you a fresh one to the White House.

The President. Would you do it? I'd be honored to have it.

Ms. Payne. Absolutely, and I want you to taste it. Everybody in Chicago has had it. Ask Mayor Daley. He gets one every year.

The President. I'm nuts about pound cake. I love it.

Ms. Payne. God bless you. God bless you, sir.

The President. Thank you.

Ms. Payne. All the best to your family.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 7:17 p.m. in Grand Ballroom at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley; and Major League Baseball player Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 10. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the Unveiling of a Statue at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial

January 10, 2001

The President. Calm down.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. You still have to do what I ask for 9 more days. Calm down. [*Laughter*]

Secretary Herman, thank you for your eloquence and your passion on this issue. I thank all the members of the administration who are here: Secretary Babbitt, thank you; Secretary Shalala; Secretary Slater; SBA Director Alvarez; Janice Lachance. I thank the other members who are here who supported this in every way.

Thank you, Max Cleland, for the power of your example and the largeness of your heart. Thank you, Tom Harkin. Every day you redeem the promise of your brother's life and your love for him in what you have done. Thank you, Senator Levin and Congressman Levin; Congressman Eliot Engel. I like your beard. [*Laughter*] I had a note that said, Eliot Engel was here, and I thought instead it was Fidel Castro for a moment. [*Laughter*] But you look very good.

Thank you, Jim Langevin, for running for Congress and for winning. Ken Apfel, our Social Security Administrator, is here. Thank you. Thank you, Justin Dart, for seeding the crowd with signs. I think you must have something to do—[*inaudible*].

I want to thank all the donors, and a special word of appreciation to two folks who did a lot of our work—one who has been acknowledged—thank you, Jonathan Young; thank you, Bill White. Thank you very much. You guys have been great. Thank you. And I, too, want to thank Larry Halprin and Bob Graham.

This whole memorial has exceeded my wildest dreams for it. It gives you a feel that is completely different from any other memorial. It is grand and beautiful, all right, but it is so accessible, in a way that I think would have pleased President Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt. And of course, this last addition is even more than the icing on the cake. But I know that for Larry and for Bob this has been a labor of love and honor. And we honor them for what they have done. Thank you very much.

I would like to also say to all of you that, as a person who has loved the history of my country and tried to learn more about it every day, it would have been under any circumstances an honor in my life to become friends with Jim Roosevelt and his wife, Anne—and Ann. But what I want you to know is they are the true heirs of their ancestors because they are exceptional and wonderful people, and I'm very glad to be here with them.

Last Saturday marked the 60th anniversary of President Roosevelt's speech on the four freedoms. It is fitting to remember it here today, for this is the story of freedom in this memorial: freedom's steady advance across the land, from the school room to the voting booth to the corridors of power; freedom's open arms embracing the tired, the poor, the huddled masses from every shore; freedom's rising tide across the globe as more people and more places secure the blessings of liberty; and freedom's march for people with disabilities here at home and around the world.

This is a monument to freedom, the power of every man and woman to transcend circumstance, to laugh in the face of fate, to make the most of what God has given. This is a statue of freedom. I, too, am glad that the statue is built at a scale not larger than life but lifelike; not raised on a pedestal but available, touchable, for people who are in wheelchairs and people who cannot see. The power of the statue is in its immediacy and in its reminder to all who touch, all who see, all who walk or wheel around that they too are free, but every person must claim freedom.

In April of 1997, when I asked for a depiction of FDR's disability here at the memorial, I, like every other American who had paid attention, knew that he went to some length to hide his disability on almost all occasions. But he lived in a different time, when people thought being disabled was being unable, though he proved them wrong every day. He was a canny fellow, and he didn't want to risk any vote loss by letting people see him in a wheelchair. [*Laughter*]

Of the more than 10,000 photos in his archives, only four show him as he is depicted in this magnificent statue today. He knew the impact of the image, and he knew, seen wrong in those days, it could have ended his political life. But he also knew he had an obligation to use it when appropriate. On rare occasion, he did so to great effect. His speech writer Sam Rosenman said he could never forget, as he put it, "the look of courage and faith and self-reliance and affection in the faces of disabled Americans who were given the privilege of seeing FDR struggle with his own disability and the joy of watching him overcome it."

For example, in the summer of 1944 President Roosevelt spent an afternoon at a naval hospital in Hawaii. The men there had been

seriously wounded, and many had lost limbs in the war. He insisted on wheeling himself into their wards. He wanted to show them that he, the President of the United States, could not walk any better than they, but he could still show courage and hope and inner strength.

He said that returning Americans with disabilities to active and productive lives was a great objective for the Nation, one of the greatest causes of humanity. It's hard to believe that that was a very unusual statement to make back then.

It was one of the basic tenets of the New Deal, the inherent worth of all Americans, our shared responsibility to empower them. That is what we have sought to do here for 8 years, to avoid any barrier that would keep the potential of any American from being fully tapped.

We have tried to reward work and give people the support they need to live their lives in freedom. Even in the last days of the administration, we are still working on efforts to increase employment of Americans with disabilities, to provide alternatives to institutions, and we're going out with a report on the progress we've made and what we still have to do.

We must always remember that in the end, the story of America is the story of freedom and interdependence. The crowd that started us off pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor to forming a more perfect Union. That's what they said.

What does that mean? It means that people can never fulfill their own lives completely unless they're working with their neighbors to help them fulfill theirs. And so we have to constantly work to push back the frontiers of our imagination, to advance the cause of both freedom and community—that interdependence which makes life richer. That means we have to encourage each other along the way, as well.

President Roosevelt once told a little girl who, like him, had been stricken with polio, that she must keep up the splendid fight. For someone else who has not suffered in that way to say it is splendid for Max Cleland to labor all those years against his horrible war injuries to become a great Member of the United States Senate, seems almost out of place. But the truth is we have to learn to talk to each other that way.

The thing I like about the disability movement today is, it has moved beyond trying to get the rest of us to do the right thing out of compassion, doing the right thing because it's the right thing and the only sensible thing to do.

I want you all to go out when you leave here not just to look at the statue but to read—in letters or Braille—the quote behind the statue, by Eleanor Roosevelt, who pointed out that before he was stricken with polio, President Roosevelt had never been forced to become a truly great man, had never been forced to develop those habits of infinite patience and persistence without which life cannot be fully lived. And I want you to think about that.

The reason this is a story of freedom is that what matters most in life is the spirit and the journey of the spirit. And we lug along that journey whatever body God gives us and whatever happens to it along the way and whatever mind we were born with. But a clever mind and a beautiful body can themselves be disabilities on the spirit journey.

And so we celebrate freedom and dignity for incredibly brave people whose lives were all embodied by that incredibly brave man, whose disability made him more free for his spirit to soar and his Nation to survive and prosper.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Jim Langevin, newly elected to Rhode Island's Second Congressional District; Justin Dart, former Chair, President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities; event organizer Jonathan Young; Bill White, White House Office of Political Liaison for Disability Outreach; landscape architect Lawrence Halprin; sculptor Robert Graham; FDR's grandson James Roosevelt, and his wife, Anne; and FDR's granddaughter Ann Roosevelt.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Senator Max Baucus

January 10, 2001

Well, Max, I thank you for what you said. But you were entirely too generous to a person who can't run for anything anymore. [*Laughter*] I thought, wow, I wish I had that on tape 4 years ago. [*Laughter*] And in terms of going to meetings without cue cards, look, when you're dealing with a guy from Montana who knows who Sisyphus was, you can't carry your cue cards, right? [*Laughter*]

I want to say, first of all, how honored I am to be here. I like Max Baucus a lot, and I respect him. And I want to say just a few words about that, but I also want to join in what you said, because this is maybe one of the last public occasions I'll have to say it in Washington, DC. I don't think there's any way for me to explain to the rest of you what having Tom Daschle as a leader of our crowd in the Senate has meant to me and to the United States of America. And I do agree that his leadership had a lot to do with the fact that we were able to pick up five seats. And I was honored to work with him, and he's been great.

And I also think you were right about my good friend Harry Reid. You know, Harry Reid never lifts his voice. He talks real soft. And pretty soon you're looking for your billfold. [*Laughter*] He is such a good man and so effective, and I am very grateful to him.

Mary Landrieu and I have been friends for many, many years, as she's from my neighboring State of Louisiana, which has been very good to me and whom I'm very grateful. And I'm thrilled that she got elected to the Senate and has done so well. And I am especially proud of Maria Cantwell, because Maria Cantwell is one of the people who gave up her seat in 1994 that turned the miserable economic condition of this country and that terrible deficit around. And she got beat because of it. And she didn't whine around. She went out and made a bunch of money and went on with her life. And then she ran for the Senate.

And they have this unusual system in Washington State—they actually count all the votes. [*Laughter*] And when they were counted, she was a Senator for Washington. And we are thrilled. And I'm very proud of her. And you mark my words, she's going to have a big impact on this country, and she has, I think, a well-deserved chance to serve.

I kind of am partial to this new crowd of Senators. It got me in the Senate spouses club, that's true, where I intend to be a very vigorous member. I may run for president of the Senate spouses club. [*Laughter*]

Some of you may have seen this in the paper, but I can't help mentioning it again, since Max said something about deregulation of the airlines. Hillary and Chelsea and I for 8 years have gone to Foundry Methodist Church here in Washington, and the minister there is a great guy. So he says, "I want you to come give a little talk on Sunday." I said, "What do you want me to say?" He said, "Just talk about whatever you want." So I said, "Well, I'm going to stand up and thank the church for everything they've done," and I had this whole long list of things they've done. It's a wonderful place. So I had this list of things.

And I walked into church, and they gave me a program, and I see that I am giving the sermon, and the sermon has a title. And the title of the sermon is "Reflections and Anticipation." So I get up and give my little talk, and I thank them all for everything I want to thank them for. And I said, "I didn't know what I was talking about until I got here and read it in the program, but do you want to know what my anticipations are? I anticipate my Christian spirit will be sorely tested by a return to commercial air travel." [*Laughter*] "I anticipate being disoriented in large rooms for several months because when I walk in, nobody will play a song anymore." [*Laughter*]

So anyway, I gave them a few anticipations. I anticipate that Terry McAuliffe will still ask me to help raise money for the Democratic Party, and I hope he will. [*Applause*] Thank you.

But to get back to the main event here, I'm here for a lot of reasons. First, I love Montana. I was a Governor for a dozen years, and former Governor of Montana Ted Schwindler was one of the best friends I ever had in the Governors Conference. And in 1985, Hillary and Chelsea and I went to Montana before the Governors met in Idaho and had what maybe was the best

family vacation we ever had. It is the most spectacularly beautiful place I believe I have ever seen anywhere in the world. In 1992, we actually carried Montana, maybe because Ross Perot got so many votes. But anyway, for whatever reason, I was proud to have those votes in the column. [*Laughter*]

Secondly, I believe that Montana is—first of all, as you saw in these last elections, we lost both the Congress and the Governor's race. It was a pretty closely divided State, and we have a real chance there, I think, to bring the Democrats back. But the key to that is Senator Baucus winning reelection. Now, the people of Montana know he's done a good job, but I'm not sure they know just how good a job he has done. And I want to talk about that, because I'm interested in the country, and I'm not running for anything anymore.

But the reason I always liked Max Baucus is, he cares about ideas; he cares about things. And he also cares about how things are going to work. He's not just a talker. He cares about whether something will work or not. He had—last summer, I think it was, he had an economic development conference in Montana and then set up an action group to implement the ideas that they came up with. That's not something Senators normally do.

But a lot of rural parts of this country and a lot of people that have depended on natural resource-based economies have not done all that well in this economy. And the farmers have been having a terrible time in the last 2 or 3 years. And the ones that get a lot of payments based on the way the old farm bill doles the money out, when we come out with the emergency appropriations, they're getting by. But it's really been tough out there.

So Max actually decided to do something about it. And I think that makes him a better legislator, because if you think about how something's going to work, you're more likely to vote for the right kind of bills and draft them in the right way. And I am particularly interested in that.

I also am interested in the fact that he wants to bring the benefits of high technology to people in rural America, to small communities, to the Native American reservations, to the schools. This is a big deal. I really believe we can skip a whole generation of economic development in places that have been badly left behind in this country if we get the technology out there in the right way and train the people to use it.

And the third thing that I want to say is, even after the 20th, he'll be the ranking member on the Senate Finance Committee. They're going to write tax legislation that will have an impact on this economy. They're going to deal with Medicare reform and the question of whether and in what form the seniors of this country will get a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. They're going to continue to deal with trade.

And you heard him say it, so I'll just say thank you back. I did my best at least to create a consensus within the Democratic Party on all the big issues and then to work with the Republicans wherever we could. And this year we actually had the best year, in some ways, we've ever had. We passed the China trade bill, the Africa/Caribbean trade bill. We passed the most massive debt relief for poor countries in the world, if they'll put the money—if, but only if, they'll put the money back into education, health care, and development in their own countries. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security. We passed the largest bill in history—thank you, Mary Landrieu and others—to buy land and preserve it for all time to come. Permanent funding has never been done before like this. And we passed the best education bill we've ever passed.

When I—4 years ago we weren't funding any kids in after-school programs. This year the Federal Government will fund 1.3 million children in after-school programs, to learn and stay off the street and out of trouble. And I was yesterday in Chicago in a school that's getting some of that money.

So we had a great, great year. But there's a lot of big questions that have to be faced about the whole issue of globalization. And I've talked *ad nauseam* about this. I went to England and gave a speech with Tony Blair about it, and I don't want to bore you with all of it again. But let me just say that the growing interdependence of people on this increasingly shrinking planet, and the explosion of population—almost 100 percent of which is supposed to be in the poorest countries of the world—and the phenomenal explosion of wealth in this country, which has helped everybody—yes, we've got more billionaires and more millionaires, but we also have people in the lower 20 percent of the population the last 3 years

had the biggest percentage increase in their income.

If you look at all that good and all those storm clouds, we've got to work out a new agreement with other wealthy countries about how we're going to continue to expand trade and how it's going to work in a way that lifts the lives of people everywhere. And if we don't, then you're going to see a lot of these countries' democracies themselves under stress.

How are we going to do it in a way that helps everybody? And when a country has a noneconomic problem and they're a big trading partner of ours, what are we supposed to do about it? That's another thing this Congress did for which I'm very grateful, the Plan Colombia program. You know, it may or may not work, but if we lose the oldest democracy in South America because the narcotraffickers and the guerrillas have teamed up, that's not a good omen for the 21st century.

These are big questions. You want somebody, to go back to Max's term, who doesn't have to look at his note cards. This guy thinks about these kinds of things all the time, and he understands how these big sort of trade issues affect people in Montana. He understands why it's important to have sustainable economies in other parts of the world so they can buy the products that people in his State want to sell. And he can connect it all to what he's trying to do to help empower people at the grassroots level to make a decent living, get a good education, and hook into the technology of the 21st century.

We need people like this in the Senate. We need people who read things and think about things. I tell people all the time, the main reason I'm for campaign finance reform is so people like Max and Harry and Mary and Maria and Tom won't have to spend quite so much time at fundraisers like this, because if you're from a little State and it costs you a lot of money to run, by the time you run all over the country—especially if you're on a crowded airplane—you're too tired to read a book or call the guy that wrote an article that struck you as interesting or meet with a bunch of people who have got a new idea.

That's why Max Baucus—and from my honest opinion now—this is all the Montana-specific issues—but when I think about America, to have somebody like him in the most important position our party can have on the Senate Finance Committee, who has read and thought about these issues and tried to make some sense out of them and who thinks about how the big things translate into the practical daily lives of ordinary citizens, that's a big deal for a democracy. And the more complicated the world gets and the more we'll have to process all this information and make decisions in a hurry without knowing everything, the more you're going to need people like Max Baucus in positions of responsibility.

So I thank you for helping him today, and I hope you'll help him all the way through to the election next year.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at the Caucus Room Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. J. Philip Wogaman, senior minister, Foundry United Methodist Church; Democratic fundraiser Terence McAuliffe; former Reform Party Presidential candidate Ross Perot; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks Honoring Dorothy I. Height at the National Council of Negro Women

January 10, 2001

You know, Dorothy, Hillary and I have had a statue of Mary McLeod Bethune in our Residence at the White House almost the whole 8 years we've been there. I admire her, as does my wife, so greatly, and I will treasure this. I can't think of anything I'd rather have. I'll put it in the Oval Office, and I've got a bust of Martin Luther King there, so there'll be two African-American busts in the Oval Office—not for a long time, but they'll be there for while I'm there.

I want to thank—somebody told me yesterday I could promise anybody anything because I couldn't do that much harm in 9 days, so I guess you don't—I want to thank Bill McSweeney and Frank Fountain and all the others who have sponsored this event today. I want to thank Secretary Slater and Secretary Herman for coming with me and for their service, and our Representative, Eleanor Holmes Norton. I was thinking it's been over 8 years now since we jogged down Pennsylvania Avenue together in the rain. Do you remember that? Well, when I fell, you picked me up, so we're even now.

I'd like to thank Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, and Donald Payne from New Jersey, and our neighbor, Elijah Cummings, thank you for being here. I've actually known Dorothy Height for several years. Before I became President I knew her, thanks to my wife. They were on the board of the Children's Defense Fund 25 years ago, when I was still a child. [*Laughter*]

And I was just looking at her speak today, how she was just up here speaking, and how fluid and eloquent she was, and I thought, she has more energy at 88 than most people have at 22.

I wanted to come here to help you with your Dorothy Height's legacy initiative, to pay off the mortgage of this magnificent old building. It's an extra added treat to see the chair where Mr. Lincoln posed for Mathew Brady. I love those old photographs. And I have two myself, Dorothy, that I've collected over the years—two that Abraham Lincoln sat for in 1861 and 1862, as well as a copy from the original plate of the photograph he took in June of 1860, 2 weeks before he became the nominee of the Republican Party for President.

So I'm honored to be here with that memory and that legacy, but mostly with your legacy. And I think you belong in this building, and you belong midway between the Capitol and the White House, so you can keep an eye on both parties. [*Laughter*]

You know, Dorothy said that the National Council of Negro Women has been in business since 1935. You just think about what America was like in 1935 and think about all the hills we've climbed since then. And as generous as you were to me, frankly, all I did was what was self-evident and what I believed in my heart. What you have had to do was to change the laws and the heart of America, and you did it in a magnificent fashion, and I thank you.

You mentioned our efforts to build one America. Ben Johnson has done a great job heading our one America effort in our offices there. I hope that in the future this will be a nonpartisan effort, because America is growing so much more racially and ethnically and religiously diverse.

I was in a grade school in Chicago yesterday, where half the kids were Asian, 18 percent were African-American, 17.5 percent were Hispanic, the rest were white ethnic, mostly Croatian. And that's where we're going, folks, and it's going to be a great ride if we get it right. But whatever is still there we need to give up, we're going to have to shed it, because we don't have a lot of time to waste now.

And I think that if you look all over the world, all the trouble spots of the world, most countries and most people get in trouble when they try to organize folks around hatred or disdain or disregard for people or groups who are different from them. They either look different than they do, they worship God in a different way, or they're just different. And it's hard to get to the point in life where you can have an honest disagreement with somebody and still acknowledge that their humanity is just as valid as yours and that life's a lot more interesting because they're not just like you are.

If everybody were just like us, then life wouldn't be nearly as interesting as it is. Sometimes, life in America is a little too interesting to suit me, but—[*laughter*]—but still, it's good. You know, it keeps us flourishing, and it keeps the country forever young.

I honestly believe that Dorothy is so young after all these years of effort because she has given herself to a larger and higher cause. If you get up every day and do good, it eventually will show on your face; it will be heard in your voice. It just is unavoidable. And her beauty and youth is a testament to the timelessness of her cause. And I'm just glad to be one of her foot soldiers here today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the lobby of the National Council of Negro Women Headquarters Building.

Remarks to the Community in Dover, New Hampshire
January 11, 2001

Thank you all so much. Governor, thank you very much for being here and for your leadership and your friendship. And I agree, that 4 more years sounded good to me, too—for you.

I want to thank my good friend Ron Machos and his wonderful wife, Rhonda, and my buddy Ronnie and his brothers for being here—don't cry, Ronnie; I'm just not going to be President; I'm still going to be around—[*laughter*]—for being to me the symbol of what my efforts in 1992 were all about.

I want to thank the mayor for welcoming me to Dover and giving me the key to the city. I told him—he said, "You don't have to carry this if it's too bulky." He gave me a little ribbon. I said, "I might wear it around my neck." [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the Green Wave Band. Weren't they great? [*Applause*] I thought they were terrific, and they did a great job.

On the way in, George Maglaras was reminding me of all the times I've been to Dover, and he said, "Now, when you get up here, you're going to have my mother and my first grade teacher." I met her in the bingo center in Dover in 1992. [*Laughter*] And I would say, ma'am, I've aged a lot more than you have in the last 8 years. [*Laughter*]

I can't tell you what a great trip this is. Some of my friends in New Hampshire actually came up here from Washington with me, and a lot of the—all the people who worked in the campaign wanted to come. Nick Baldick is here. Of course, he's practically been here since I left. And David Neslin came with me, who worked in that campaign.

And every day for 8 years, by the way, every single day I have been reminded of New Hampshire because I had in my private office off the Oval Office a painting done by my friend Cindy Sexton Lewis—she and her husband, John, helped me so much—of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, right before the primary, with David Neslin and me. We're walking across the street together. And Cindy gave me the painting, but right before I was inaugurated. Because it was 10 days before the primary and everybody said I was dead as a doornail—[*laughter*]—and she said, "I looked at your expression in the paper, and you had your fist clenched and your jaw clenched, and I thought you would win anyway. So I painted this, and I decided I would wait, and if you won I would give it to you." [*Laughter*] So I thought that was a pretty good reminder. And all the tough days I'd go back and look at that picture, and I would remind myself of why I ran for President and what we were doing.

It was a tough time 8 years ago for our country when I came here. You've just heard a little bit about it. It was also a fairly tough time for me. I was taking a whipping in the press, and I was dropping in the polls. But I said then, and I would like to say again, that was nothing compared to the punishment that the people of this State and this Nation were enduring. As I said to—you heard Ron talking about it.

I remember walking down Elm Street in Manchester with now-Judge Broderick. I'm glad I'm not here on a political trip so you can come to my meetings for a change. It's nice to see you, John; Patty, thank you. Half the stores were vacant. Nobody could find a job. I remember a man in Merrimack who told me he had lost his job 30 days—30 days—before his pension vested. I remember a little girl telling me that she could hardly bear to go to dinner anymore, when I was in a high school in Manchester, because her father had lost his job, and he wept at the dinner table because he felt he had let his family down.

These and so many other New Hampshire stories became the lifeblood of my campaign. Across America, 10 million of our fellow citizens were out of work; most with jobs were working harder for less; interest rates were high. The Government deficit was $290 billion a year and rising. Our debt had quadrupled in the previous 12 years. There was a crushing burden on our economy and on our kids.

We were also in trouble as a society. Welfare rolls, crime, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, income inequality—all of these things were rising. And some people said they didn't think we could do anything about it, but I didn't believe that for a minute, because as I traveled around this State, as I traveled around my own home State

where I had been Governor for a dozen years, I went across this country, I saw a lot of determination and hope, good people with good ideas for solving problems. I knew the American people could turn the country around if we had some good ideas and we acted on them. That means—to me, that meant that we had to have, first, a Government that was on the side of the people, that put the American people first, changed to meet the challenges of a new era.

And so I set out, as Governor Shaheen said, 9 years ago in New Hampshire with this simple conviction, that the American people were hungry for ideas and sick of the politics of personal destruction and paralysis.

I put out this little book, which I bet some of you still have copies of, called the "Plan for America's Future." And people made fun of me. They said, "What's this guy doing running for President with all this—look at this single-spaced type. Who's going to read that stuff?" And we went to Keene one night, early in the primary, and the people helping me up there said, "Now look, here's the way New Hampshire works. If we get 50 people at this town meeting"—I was running fifth in the polls here, by the way, at the time—"if we get 50 people at this town meeting, you won't be embarrassed. They won't write in the newspaper that you're an abject failure." [*Laughter*] "If we get 150, it will be a triumph." Four hundred people showed up, when I was running fifth in the polls, and they had—the fire marshal wouldn't let them all in. And I said, "Holy Moses, something's going on here. It turns out people really do care."

And I remember talking to Hillary and saying, "You know, we actually have a chance here." When 400 people showed up in Keene, I knew we had a chance. [*Laughter*] And by the way, my wife said to tell you hello and thank you. And when you really need it, you might have a third United States Senator now.

So, we were getting toward the end of the primary, and I came to Dover. And as I was reminded on the way in, we were at the Elks Club, I think. There were tons of people there; the place was packed. And I didn't have any notes, and all the experts said I was dead. But I said what we really needed was to think about what we were going to do as a people, that we needed a new Government, less bureaucratic but more active, a new kind of politics that treated issues not as a way of dividing people but as a way of solving problems together; a new set of commonsense ideas for the economy, for education, for crime, for welfare, for the environment, tied together by a simple philosophy: opportunity for every responsible American.

I said, "You know, if you elected me President, we might not solve all the problems, but at least you would know if you supported me, when you got up in the morning, you wouldn't have to worry about whether your President cared if your business is failing, if you were losing your home, if you couldn't get an education for your kids." And I promised in that now-famous line that I would work my heart out for you until the last dog dies. After 8 years, and with almost exactly 9 days to go, the last dog is still barking.

I've worked hard for 8 years to make good on the commitments I made to you. Here in Dover, the unemployment rate then was nearly 8 percent; today, it is 1.7 percent. Across the Nation, the unemployment rate has dropped from 7½ percent to 4 percent, the lowest in 40 years. We have the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic- and African-American unemployment rate ever recorded, the highest homeownership in history.

We've gone from record deficits to record surpluses. At the end of this budget year, which is the last one for which I am responsible, we will have paid off over $500 billion of the national debt. Since 1993, after inflation, the yearly income of the typical family is up $6,300, hourly wages up by more than 9 percent. This economy has created—I'm proud to say—yes, more billionaires and more millionaires, but unlike some previous recoveries, this rising tide has lifted all boats. All income groups have had their income increase, and in the last 3 years the biggest percentage increase has come in the 20 percent of our workers that are earning the lowest wages. We are moving forward together.

But I want to talk today about some of the other issues, too, because one of the things that really touched me in New Hampshire was that people were not just interested in the economy, as miserable as it was. People cared about health care here. They cared about the environment. They cared about education. They cared about crime policy. They cared about welfare policy.

In the closing weeks of my administration, I've been trying to give a few speeches recapping where we were, how we've gotten where

we are, and where I hope we will go. I went to the University of Nebraska at Kearney, the only State I had not visited as President. I told them, just because they never voted for me didn't mean they weren't better off, and I thought I ought to come and say I was glad. [*Laughter*] And I talked about the world challenges we faced, the foreign policy challenges.

I was in Chicago talking about the education record and where I hope we'll go there. And so I want to try to talk about these social issues today, where we're going as a people, because we're not just better off; we're a stronger, more united country. Crime is down; welfare down nearly 60 percent; teen pregnancy is the lowest rate it's been in decades; we are growing more diverse, but we're also growing more united.

And so I came here one last time as President to New Hampshire to thank you for making me the Comeback Kid but more, and far more important, to thank you for making America the Comeback Country. Through all the ups and downs of the last 8 years, I never forgot the lesson I learned from you here in those amazing weeks in the winter of 1991 and 1992: What's important is not who is up or down in Washington; what's important is who is up or down in Dover.

So let's talk a little bit about that booklet I had and what it's meant. We abandoned a lot of the false choices that had paralyzed Washington: You had to be liberal or conservative; you had to be left or right; you had to be this or that. And we replaced them with a new set of ideas that have now come to be called the Third Way, because they've been embraced not just here in America but increasingly all across the world by people who were trying to break out of outmoded political and economic and social arrangements to deal with the real challenges of the 21st century.

Let's just go through a few of them. Number one, in the past, people believed you either had to cut the deficit or increase investment, but nobody thought you could do it at the same time. I thought that was a false choice. I thought we had to do both if we were going to move forward as a nation, which meant we had to get rid of a lot of inessential spending, eliminate a lot of Government programs that weren't necessary anymore, get the deficit down. And we even asked the people who had been most fortunate in the 1980's to pay more taxes, but we promised to use it to get their interest rates down, and we said they'd be better off.

So we cut the deficit, and we got lower interest rates. That meant more business investment, lower home mortgage rates, lower car loans, lower college loans. It meant more jobs, higher incomes, and a rising stock market. At the same time, we doubled our investment—more than doubled our investment in education and increased our commitments in health care, the environment, research and technology, the things that are necessary to build the capacity of America for this new age and all these young people who are in this audience.

On welfare, in the past, all the debate was our compassionate obligation to help the poor, on the one hand, or other people saying, "No, everybody ought to just go to work." We thought that was a false choice. And we replaced yesterday's welfare system with one in which work is both required of those who can work but rewarded and one in which the children are not punished for the challenges facing the parents.

So we cut the welfare rolls by 60 percent nationwide. Millions of people have moved from welfare to work. We insisted, however, that if people are required to work, they should have job training and child care and transportation and that the parents should not lose their children's rights, if they're low income workers, to Medicaid and to food support, so that you can succeed at home and at work, even if you're a poor worker. I think that's very, very important.

And we raised the minimum wage, and we doubled the earned-income tax credit. That earned-income tax credit goes to the lowest earning workers in our society, especially those with children, because I don't believe anybody who works 40 hours a week ought to raise a kid in poverty. I don't think that's right. If somebody's out there doing what they're supposed to do, they ought to do that.

Now, what is the result? We have the lowest poverty rate we've had in 20 years, and last year we had the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years. This is working. You can reward work.

We also tried to do some important things in health care. We made sure people with disabilities could go to work without losing their health care coverage. We provided coverage in Medicare for screenings for breast and prostate

cancer. We provided health care coverage for women with breast cancer or cervical cancer. We did dramatic things in diabetes research and health care coverage and sped the delivery of drugs to people who needed it, with HIV and AIDS, which has changed the entire landscape from 1992 in the length and quality of life.

And we made sure that people who lose their jobs or who switch jobs can do so without losing their health insurance. And we limited the ability of people to be dropped for preexisting conditions. We created the Children's Health Insurance Program, which has enabled States to insure the children of lower income working families, so that now 3.3 million more kids have health insurance. And for the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down in America.

Now, I remember at these town meetings we've talked a lot about crime. And I had been attorney general of my State and Governor, and I spent a lot of time on this. And one thing a politician knows, running for office, you will never get in trouble as long as you sound like you're the toughest person on the block about crime.

So nobody has to think. You just say, "Somebody commits a crime—put them in jail and throw the key away." But if you look at the facts where crime is going up and crime is going down, it is more complicated. Yes, serious offenders should be punished and punished severely. But it was clear that we had to do more to change the environment.

We had had a tripling of violent crime in America in the previous 30 years, the number of police on the beat had only gone up by 10 percent. And so, we said, "We need to do more to put more police on the beat. We need to do more to help keep kids off the street and out of trouble. We need to do more with commonsense measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. And we can do that without interfering with the legitimate rights of hunters and sportsmen." And that's exactly what we did.

We put 100,000-plus—we're now to about 130,000 police on the street. We passed a lot of measures to keep kids out of trouble and give them positive things to do. Six hundred thousand people who were felons, fugitives, or stalkers were not able to get handguns because of the Brady law. And notwithstanding all the recent election-season rhetoric, not a single hunter missed an hour in the deer woods, not a single sports person missed a sporting event, but we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years.

One of the things that really impressed me about being in New Hampshire in '92 and late '91 was, as terrible as the economy was, there were still people who cared passionately about the environment and who understood the beauty that you have been graced with in this gorgeous State and who did not believe that we had to sacrifice a clean environment for a strong economy. But that was the prevailing view, not only in America but in a lot of the world, that you couldn't have—if you wanted to continue to have economic growth, you just had to put up with a certain amount of environmental degradation. It just was inevitable.

But the truth is, in the new economy of the 21st century, which is based more on ideas and information and technology than on using more energy in ways that are destructive to the environment, that is not true anymore. So what do we do? We had new standards to clean the air, and the air is cleaner. The water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer. We've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps, twice as many in our 8 years as in the previous 12 years.

We've set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt. It includes not only the big, famous places like protecting Yellowstone, the California redwoods, the Florida Everglades, the great roadless tracks of our national forests, but green spaces in communities all across America. And it turned out it worked. It hasn't hurt the economy one bit, and we should do more of it, not less.

Now, in education, the debate in the past was, I thought, a horribly false choice: raise standards or spend money. The people that wanted to raise standards said, if you just throw more money into the education system, it won't improve the schools. People that wanted to spend more money said, if you raise standards without spending more money, you're just going to punish innocent children. I thought to myself, having spent enormous amounts of time in schools, that that was the nuttiest debate I ever heard. [*Laughter*]

So we said, look, here's a simple strategy based on what principals, teachers, and parents say; based on the fact that we had schools, even then, all across America, including in New Hampshire, that were succeeding against enormous odds; that we needed a strategy which

said, higher standards, more accountability, more investment, and equal opportunity. And we set about doing that.

I asked Dick Riley, the Governor of South Carolina, who had a superb record in education, to be the Education Secretary. He is the longest serving and the finest one in our history, I believe. And here's what happened.

In 1992 there were only 14 States that had core academic standards for what all kids should learn. Today, there are 49. We more than doubled our investment in schools. We've expanded and improved Head Start. The last budget had the biggest Head Start increase in history. We're now providing Federal support for the very first time for summer school and after-school programs. This year, we'll cover 1.3 million children. We've helped schools across America to hire 37,000 new teachers to lower class size in the early grades, well on our way to meeting our goal of 100,000 new teachers, which will give us an average class size of 18 throughout America up to grade three.

This year, for the very first time, we got Federal support—since World War II, the very first time since right after World War II, when my generation was in school, the baby boomers—we got Federal support to help to repair the most severely distressed schools, over a billion dollars. It's a huge problem. We've got schools that are so old and so overcrowded, they literally—I've been in school buildings where all the power went out when they tried to hook up to the Internet. They literally can't do it.

The Vice President supervised a program that—we did an event in a school here in New Hampshire to highlight this—to try to hook up all of our schools and classrooms to the Internet. In 1994, when we started, 3 percent of the classrooms and 35 percent of the schools had an Internet connection. Then we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that had the E-rate, to make sure that even the poorest schools could afford to hook up. We got the private sector involved. Today, 2000, we've gone from 3 percent of the classrooms to 65 percent, from 35 percent of the schools to 95 percent of the schools connected to the Internet. And SAT scores are at a 30-year high, in no small measure because there's been a 50 percent increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement courses.

We've got more people than ever going on to college, thanks in large measure to the biggest increase in college aid since the GI bill passed 50 years ago. We passed the HOPE scholarship tax credit to make the first 2 years of college affordable to all Americans. We passed a lifetime tax credit for junior-senior years, for adults going back to school, for graduate schools—13 million American families are taking advantage of this. We raised the maximum Pell grant. It will be about $3,700, a little more actually, this year. And with the Direct Student Loan Program, we cut the cost of college loans by $9 billion over the last 7 years to our students. It's worth about a $1,300 savings on every $10,000 a student borrows to go to college. We've opened the doors of college to all Americans, and I'm very proud of that, and I think you should be.

In the past, there was this big debate about the cities. Some people thought if we just poured a lot more money into the cities, we could solve all those problems. Other people thought they were a lost cause, and more money wouldn't help. I thought both sides were wrong. So what we said is, we need to drive crime out, empower people to take responsibility for their own lives, and get more private sector investment in, because we know that Government programs alone can't do the job.

So we brought in more money through the Vice President's empowerment zone program, through community development banks, through strengthening a law called the Community Reinvestment Act, which had been on the books for over 20 years but had never really been enforced. Over 95 percent of the investment by private banks in poor areas in America has occurred since we've been in office. And it's worked. It's paid off. Bank profits are up. There are jobs up. Businesses are up.

That street in Manchester I mentioned, where half the storefronts were vacant in 1993, is filled with businesses today, from banks to Internet cafes. And that kind of turnaround is going on all over the country. Poverty in the inner cities down 23 percent since 1993. And late last year our bipartisan new markets initiative passed, which will get even more money into the inner cities, into small rural communities, into Native American reservations across America that have been left out and left behind by this recovery.

Now, one other thing I would like to mention, because in some ways it's the most important of all to me in this whole litany of social issues, is embodied by Ron Machos up there talking

about his family. In the past, every time there was an initiative to make a workplace more family-friendly, to do more child care, to pass family leave legislation and things like that, the other side said, "Well, we would like to do that. That seems like a very nice thing, but it would be too burdensome to the business economy, and so we can't." But one thing I learned, traveling here and then going across the country, is that I hardly met any people who were working and had children, even people with very good incomes, who hadn't had experiences in their work life where they felt they were letting their kids down. I hardly met anybody who hadn't had moments of tension where they were afraid that they couldn't do right by their kids or by their job; they were having to choose. And it seemed to me to be a terrible dilemma, not only for families but for the society, because the most important work of any society is raising children.

Anybody who has ever had kids can tell you that if things aren't going right for your kids, it doesn't matter what else is going right in your life. You know, it just doesn't. It doesn't matter how much money you've got. It doesn't matter—nothing else matters.

And so we set about trying to change that. I am very proud of the fact the first bill I signed as President was the family and medical leave law. It had previously been rejected. It had previously been rejected on the grounds that it was a perfectly nice idea, but if we gave some people time off from work when their kids were sick or their babies were born or the parents were sick, it would be so burdensome to the economy. Well, 22.5 million jobs later, 35 million people have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law. We have to be pro-work and pro-family.

The work we've done in child care, all this work has been good for America. The last point I want to make is this. When I spoke here in Dover back in '92, I said that throughout our country's history we've always gotten in trouble when we were divided, and when we were united, there was nothing we couldn't do; that we were becoming a much more diverse country—racially, religiously. I was in a school in Chicago a couple of days ago where half the—the grade school—half the student body was Asian, 18 percent African-American, 17½ percent Hispanic. The rest were white ethnics, almost all of them Croatian-Americans. And that's the future toward which we're moving.

And I said I would do what I could to build one America, to have us not tolerate each other but celebrate our differences. Life's more interesting when you can argue around a coffee table or in a school or at a civic club or something, about your differences, and celebrate them, but you know that you are bound together by shared values and common humanity and that those things are more fundamental.

One of the things I always tell people is that when it comes to anything that's social, whether it's your family, your school, your community, your business, or your country, winning is a team sport. It's like basketball. You can take—Michael Jordan may be the greatest basketball player that ever lived, but if he'd gone out alone against five guys, he'd have lost every game.

And this is a team sport. And I'm so glad these young people from City Year are back here, because the embodiment to me—I first visited City Year in Boston in 1991, and it became the basis for my proposal for national service, for the creation of AmeriCorps, which is the embodiment of my idea of one America. AmeriCorps, since we established it in '93 and it came into effect in '94, has given 150,000 young people a chance to serve in communities all across this country and earn a little money for college. In 6 years, more people have served in AmeriCorps than served in the Peace Corps in the first 30 years of its existence. We are building one America together.

That's my report to you. The stuff that was in this little book people made fun of me about is now real in the lives of the American people. The ideas have taken hold, and America is at the top of its game. And I just hope that we will continue the progress and prosperity of the last 8 years.

If we continue our policy of fiscal responsibility and investing in our people, we can keep the prosperity going and be debt-free for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President. If we continue to put more police on the street, keep guns out of the hands of criminals, and give our kids something to say yes to as well as something to say no to, we can make this country the safest big nation on Earth.

If we continue to support important environmental initiatives and a strong economy, we can meet the challenge of climate change and any other thing that comes down the pike. If we continue to add people to the rolls of health

insurance—and we ought to start by including the parents of all the kids we're insuring with the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the Federal Government has the money to help the States do that now—we can achieve that cherished goal that we talked so much about in New Hampshire in 1992 in providing health insurance to all American families.

If we keep investing more in our schools and demanding more from them, we can make sure every child gets a 21st century education. If we continue to require work, reward work, and support working families, we can expand the circle of prosperity and still strengthen the fabric of our society. We've got 8 years of evidence to know that these ideas were good for America, and this direction is the right path.

The American people chose a vital, commonsense center 8 years ago. It seemed very foreign back then to Washington. I can remember political writers who spent the previous umpty-ump years in Washington saying, "I don't know what this guy believes. Does he believe anything? I mean, you've either got to be a conservative or a liberal. You can't be for—I mean you know, you've got to be in these little boxes we've been thinking in all these years in Washington." And they were so good for America, these little boxes, right? [*Laughter*]

Guess what? That's now the new consensus in Washington. People now believe that this is the right direction. It's even basically the landscape against whence the last election was fought in such a close fashion. There is a consensus that we have to find ways to continue to change, consistent with our basic values and our common community and humanity.

Now, as you look ahead, let me just say, because conflict is always more interesting than consensus, I expect most of the press coverage will continue to be about the politics and the division. But let's just look at what happened last year in Congress, an election year for Congress and for the Presidency that was very closely fought in the Senate, the House, and for the White House.

Last year, while all this was going on—and you'd have thought nobody ever agreed on anything—here's what happened. We had the biggest and best education budget in history. We passed for the very first time in history a lands legacy initiative to give a stable source of funding to continue to set aside public lands, from big tracts to local green spaces—never happened before. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security. We provided health care coverage for people suffering from breast and cervical cancer that couldn't get it elsewhere. We passed this new markets initiative, which is the biggest thing we've ever done, to try to get private investment into poor areas. We had truly historic trade agreements with Africa, the Caribbean nations—our neighbors—with China, with Vietnam, and one with Jordan which has groundbreaking language that I've always wanted in all our trade agreement to include basic labor and environmental standards. And we passed something that I think is profoundly important, that everybody from the Pope to international entertainers have asked us to pass—a debt relief package for the poorest nations in the world that they can get but only if they invest 100 percent of the money in education, health care, and economic development for their people.

Now, that's what happened last year when everybody told you how divided we were. There is a new consensus here in this country for moving forward. And I just want to ask you—you're going to continue to be first in the Nation. You're going to continue to be, in some ways, the guardians of America's politics. Don't you ever forget that in the end, our future is tied to people, that it's more about ideas than a tax. The New Hampshire town meetings proved that in '92, and New Hampshire's success these last 8 years proved that.

Thank you for lifting me up in 1992. Thank you for voting for me and Al Gore in 1992 and in 1996. Thank you. And don't forget, even though I won't be President, I'll always be with you until the last dog dies.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. in the gymnasium at Dover High School. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire; Ron Machos, Jr., father of three who in 1991 was jobless and without health insurance for his family; Mr. Machos' wife, Rhonda, and son Ronnie; Mayor Wil Boc and former Mayor George Maglaras of Dover; Nick Baldick, who headed Vice President Gore's New Hampshire campaign; and New Hampshire State Supreme Court Justice John Broderick and his wife, Patty.

Statement on the Korean War Incident at No Gun Ri
January 11, 2001

On behalf of the United States of America, I deeply regret that Korean civilians lost their lives at No Gun Ri in late July 1950. The intensive, yearlong investigation into this incident has served as a painful reminder of the tragedies of war and the scars they leave behind on people and on nations.

Although we have been unable to determine precisely the events that occurred at No Gun Ri, the U.S. and South Korean Governments have concluded in the Statement of Mutual Understanding that an unconfirmed number of innocent Korean refugees were killed or injured there. To those Koreans who lost loved ones at No Gun Ri, I offer my condolences. Many Americans have experienced the anguish of innocent casualties of war. We understand and sympathize with the sense of loss and sorrow that remains even after a half a century has passed. I sincerely hope that the memorial the United States will construct to these and all other innocent Korean civilians killed during the war will bring a measure of solace and closure. The commemorative scholarship fund that we will launch will serve as a living tribute to their memory.

As we honor those civilians who fell victim to this conflict, let us not forget that pain is not the only legacy of the Korean war. American and Korean veterans fought shoulder to shoulder in the harshest of conditions for the cause of freedom, and they prevailed. The vibrancy of democracy in the Republic of Korea, the strong alliance between our two countries, and the closeness of our two peoples today is a testament to the sacrifices made by both of our nations 50 years ago.

Remarks at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts
January 11, 2001

Thank you. Those are the AmeriCorps rowdies over there. Thank you very much.

Well, President Freeland, let me begin by saying I'm delighted to be back at Northeastern. I remember so well when I spoke here to your commencement early in my term. I remember the honorary degree I got. Now that I have to make a living, maybe I can put it to some use. [*Laughter*] I remember the young man who spoke there, representing the students, all the students whose hands I shook and whose stories I heard. This is a great American urban institution of opportunity, and I am honored to be back. I thank you for that.

Mayor Menino, Mr. Mayor, I thank you for being my friend and for proving that the ideas that Al Gore and I brought to the American people in 1992 and 1996 would work anywhere because you made them work in Boston. Whether it was the economy, crime, welfare, education, you did it.

You might be interested to know, Mr. Mayor, we're still borrowing from Boston. Just last week we announced that we're going to give Federal employees the same benefit you have given to Boston city workers, time off for medical screenings to catch cancer and other problems early on. Thank you again, Mr. Mayor.

And to your Representative, Mr. Capuano, I have never heard you give such a vigorous public speech in my life. [*Laughter*] And you even talked about things I'd forgotten I'd done. [*Laughter*] But your congressional district and this State have been wonderful to me. And you have been great, and I thank you. And I thank you for what you've done for them in Congress. And I want to thank Bill Delahunt, who has been so great on many issues but who's been particularly helpful in pushing our criminal justice agenda in the United States Congress, giving us the lowest crime rate in America in 25 years.

And I want to thank Jim McGovern for many things, but I think everyone in Massachusetts should know that Congressman McGovern was the number one advocate in Congress for one

of the most recent initiatives we announced, which is that the United States of America is going to provide a free, hot, nutritious meal to 9 million children in poor countries throughout the world if they will come to school in their countries. Thank you, Jim McGovern.

Now finally, let me say, I don't know what to say about Senator Kennedy. I met—Ted Kennedy I met in 1978 in Memphis, Tennessee, at the midterm convention of the Democratic Party. I was the Governor-elect of my State, 32 years old, looked like I was about 20. [*Laughter*] You all, in the last 8 years, have taken care of that. [*Laughter*] And they said to me that President Carter's administration called, and they said, "Governor, we want you to moderate this panel in Memphis on health care." And I had been a big supporter of President Carter, you know. They said that "We think that you can keep everything in a good humor. And on our side, we're going to have Joe Califano," who was the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. He was a very great fellow, by the way, and the number one advocate in America for doing something about the dangers of tobacco and a lot of other things. He had done a lot of great things. "And on the other side, we're going to have Senator Kennedy, who thinks that we're too weak on health care." I said, "You want me to bridle Ted Kennedy?" [*Laughter*] And I'm 32 years old, and I—so I said, "Okay, I'll do it." [*Laughter*] I just wanted to be on the program and see if I could keep up, you know?

So we had this incredible meeting on health care. And I don't even know if I've ever said this to him, but he got up and he talked about his beloved son and the health problems he had had, how he had managed to survive, and survives to this day, had a magnificent life, and how wrong it was that his son had done well because of the good fortunes of his family but that other families didn't.

And he made an impression on me that day that has lasted over these 22-plus years. And I promised myself that day that if I ever got a chance to give health care to more Americans and keep more young children like his son alive, I would do it. I owe him that, for 22 years.

And I have not had a better friend or stronger advocate in the United States Senate these last 8 years. And I can tell you that no Member of the Senate is more respected, even by the Republicans. They hate to admit it in public, but you get them in private, and they'll tell you the same thing. He is the best and most effective Member of the United States Senate.

Now, in these last 8 years, Ted and Vicki and our families have become—we've become much closer. And he's taken a lot of risks for his friendship for me. I know what you're thinking, but that's not the risk you took. [*Laughter*] He let me sail his boat into the Menemsha Harbor. [*Laughter*] I come from a landlocked State, and he still let me sail his boat into Menemsha Harbor. I will never forget that. And all I could do in return was help send Hillary to the Senate to give him a little support, and I've done the best I could. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Three former Presidents have spoken in this hall, three Presidents in whose tradition and footsteps I have tried to follow: Theodore Roosevelt, the last great progressive Republican President; Franklin Roosevelt; and your John Kennedy. When Franklin Roosevelt spoke here in 1932 in the campaign, his first, he said, "We are through with delay. We are through with despair. We are ready for better things." That's exactly how I felt when I came here in 1992. And Massachusetts and the city of Boston, as you have heard, more than any other State in the Union, gave me a chance to work hard to bring better things to the United States. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I am here, more than anything else, just to say thank you. There are a few places I felt I had to go in the closing days of my term just to thank people. A couple of days ago I went back to Chicago, which is my wife's hometown, and to East Lansing, Michigan, where they have a basketball team you may have noticed. They come over here sometimes. I went there because those two States voted for me on Saint Patrick's Day in 1992 and sealed my nomination.

I went back to New Hampshire today because—anybody here from New Hampshire?—because that's where it all started and because I was pronounced dead by all the pundits, and the people of New Hampshire decided they would lift me up. And since they raised me up, I wanted to go back and thank them.

But as you have heard repeatedly, in election after election and in good times and bad, the one place that I knew would always be there to stick with Bill Clinton, Al Gore, and the direction we were taking America, was Boston

and the State of Massachusetts. And I could not leave office without coming here to say thank you. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now, I mostly want you to think about the future, because most of the people in this audience are young and because America is always about the future. But I want to take a minute to walk down memory lane.

Eight years ago, when I came here, 10 million Americans were out of work. The deficit was $290 billion and rising. The debt of the country had quadrupled in the previous 12 years, imposing a crushing burden on our children. Welfare rolls, crime rates, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, income inequality all were going up. What a difference 8 years can make.

The one thing that hasn't been said tonight that I want to say again is, I believe politics should be about uniting people, not dividing them, should be about ideas, not insults. We had ideas in 1992 that we believed could put the American people first and build our bridge to a new century and a whole new aspect of human affairs.

All of you who are students here will live in a time where people look, work, live, and relate to one another in ways that are profoundly different than the America in which I grew up. And it is important that we hold fast to the basic values of this country: opportunity for every responsible citizen; a community of all Americans; and that we then have the courage to implement ideas that will meet the challenges of this era. That's what I tried to do. I tried to make politics in Washington about you, not about the politicians and the pundits in Washington; about ideas, not about insults; about how you were doing, not how we were doing.

In Boston, when I took the oath of office, unemployment was 6.9 percent. Today, it's 1.9 percent. Poverty is down. Average income is up nearly 20 percent. Crime has dropped, as the mayor said, by more than a third, and we've been there to help.

The same thing has happened in the Nation. Unemployment is at a 30-year low. We have 22½ million new jobs, the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years.

Now, because we turned those record deficits into record surpluses in this last budget year—it's the last one for which I am responsible—when it's over, we will have paid down $500 billion on the national debt, meaning lower interest rates for college loans, home mortgages, car payments, business loans, more jobs, higher incomes, a brighter future for all Americans.

But there were ideas behind this. There were ideas behind getting the crime rate down, ideas practiced in Boston. You know, before I became President, I noticed out there in the country, looking at Washington, that most politicians thought the only way to be safe on crime was just to talk tough. And if you were just for catching whoever you could catch and putting them in jail and throwing the key away, you would never get in trouble on crime. On the other hand, you'd never lower the crime rate either.

So we said, "No, let's put 100,000 police on the street. Let's do more to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals." The Brady bill kept 600,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting hand guns. We put 130,000 police on the street.

On welfare, the Democrats defended the programs that supported the poor, as we should. Many in the other party said, "Oh, they don't want to work. We ought to cut them off." I thought that was nuts. I had spent enough time in welfare offices to know that people did want to work, but you couldn't expect people to go to work if they were going to have to hurt their kids. So we said, "Okay, require able-bodied people to work but train them. Give them child care, give them transportation, and don't take the food and the medicine away from the kids and the parents if they go to work." And it worked.

There were people who said, "Well, the cities are economic basket cases, and nobody wants to put their money there." I thought that was not true. And we revitalized the Community Reinvestment Act, a law that basically says banks have to put money back into their communities. It seems reasonable, but it had been on the books since the 1970's, and hardly any money had been put back into poor communities. In the 8 years we've been in—now, this law's been on the books for over 22 years—95 percent of all the money, $15 billion or more has been put back into communities under the Community Reinvestment Act.

We created this empowerment zone program that the Vice President ran. We created community development banks solely to loan money

to people who couldn't get money otherwise. We did a lot of other things to put more housing in, to let poor people who were working have houses in different kinds of neighborhoods. The economic justice issue that your Congressman mentioned was very important, the environmental justice, because we found that we couldn't get people to invest unless we cleaned up urban brownfields, for example, and we stopped people from being exposed to various kinds of pollution just because they happened to be poor. All over the country, poverty in the inner cities has fallen by 23 percent, and wages have grown even faster than in the country as a whole.

In education, with the leadership of Senator Kennedy, we have reduced the size of the Federal Government to its smallest size since his brother was President. We got rid of the deficit and turned surpluses, but we more than doubled our investment in education in these last 8 years. Thank you, Ted Kennedy, for that.

Just this year—when we took office, only 3 percent of the classrooms and 35 percent of the schools in this country had an Internet connection. Today, 65 percent of the classrooms and 95 percent of the schools are connected to the Internet, and thanks to the Vice President's E-rate program, they can afford to log on and to use it for their students.

We never gave any money to cities for after-school and summer school programs. Thanks to the leadership of Senator Kennedy, this year in the budget we just signed, there's money to keep 1.3 million kids in the United States of America in after-school programs so they don't get in trouble, and they do learn their lessons.

President Freeland talked about the college aid program. The Pell grant this year will be $3,750, a huge increase. Thirteen million families are taking advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit and the lifetime learning tax credit. The direct loan program has saved students $9 billion in college loan costs. If your school is in it anywhere in America, the average $10,000 loan is $1,300 cheaper for an American student to pay off than it was when we took office. We are moving this country toward a more educated society and a more united one.

The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. The drinking water is safer. The food is safer. We've cleaned up twice as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as the previous two administrations did in 12. And we've set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And all the way, people said, "This is bad for the economy." It turned out not to be so.

We also have tried to help people balance work and family, raising the minimum wage, raising the earned-income tax credit for lower wage workers. One of the things I'm proudest of about this economic recovery is that, yes, we made more billionaires and millionaires, and that's good, but we also had everybody doing better. And in the last 3 years, working families in the lowest 20 percent of the income group had the highest percentage increase in income. This program is raising all of those.

I remember when Senator Kennedy and Senator Dodd and some others were pushing the family and medical leave law. It had already been vetoed once, before I became President, because everybody said, "This is bad for business. You know, it's a nice idea, letting somebody off from work when a baby's born or a baby's sick or the parent's sick or the wheels have totally run off in the family, but it just is something we can't possibly afford." I thought that was crazy, because I can tell you, once you become a parent—everything else in life can be going right for you, and if your kid's having trouble, nothing works. Nothing else matters. Nothing in the world matters if something's wrong with your family, all the success in the world, all the wealth in the world—nothing matters.

And I don't know anybody my age or younger that hasn't had some conflict between work and parenting, even upper income people. This is a big challenge for all of you, by the way, in the future. So the first law I signed was the family and medical leave law. And I heard all that going on about how terrible it was going to be. Well, let me tell you something. We've had the law on the books now for 7½ years. You know what's happened? Thirty-five million people have taken advantage of it, and 22½ million new jobs have been created. We were right, and they were wrong about that. You have to balance work and family.

The most important thing I worked on is embodied by the kids in AmeriCorps, our national service program. Senator Kennedy and I were together when we signed the bill on the South Lawn, and I signed it with the same pen John Kennedy used to sign the bill creating the Peace

Corps. In the last 6½ years we've had over 150,000 young people working in community service and earning some money to go to college.

It's not all we did. We also fought for stronger civil rights enforcement. We sought to reduce discrimination against gays in the Federal workplace and throughout the country. And I hope, by the way, Senator, now that we've got a little bit better Congress, I hope we will pass the hate crimes bill and the employment nondiscrimination bill and the equal pay laws in this session of Congress.

But in just the last year of my service, at a time when most people say we couldn't get anything done because it was my last year, and besides, they were having a Presidential race and the congressional races, and everything seemed so divided in Congress, thanks to the support of the people on this platform and people like them throughout the country, we've passed the biggest and best education budget ever, the biggest increase in Head Start ever.

We set aside for the first time, in the lands legacy program, a permanent fund to buy precious lands and green spaces in cities from now on, all over America, to protect land—never happened before. We got the first money ever from the Federal Government since World War II to help repair schools that are in trouble, because we've got so many kids in schools that are so old, they're falling down or so overcrowded, half the kids are in trailers. We passed legislation designed to get new investment in the cities, the new markets initiative, a completely bipartisan initiative.

We did what I said. With Congressman McGovern's plan, we're going to provide over the next several years—if we keep working at it, we'll be able to offer every poor child in every poor country in the world a good, nutritious meal if they come to school. Sixty percent of the kids in this world who are not in school are girls. This is a huge problem all over the world, and just by feeding them we'll be able to get them to school. That will change the whole future of the world the young people will be able to live in.

And that's just part of what we did. What's the point of all this? Here's the point I want to make for you, for you young people here. Eight and a half days from now, when I walk out of the White House at high noon on January 20th, I want you to know something: I will leave more optimistic than I entered. I will be more idealistic than I was the day I first took the oath of office as President.

This country can do whatever we have to do. We can meet any challenge. We can seize any opportunity. But we have to remember basic things. You really do have to put people first, and you really do have to believe that we all are part of one community. Politics is about addition and multiplication, not subtraction and division. It's about teamwork. It's about working together. And there are so many things out there for you. The best days in this country are still out there, but there are some big challenges out there. And I hope you will never forget these 8 years. I hope you will always be proud of the support you gave to me and to Al Gore and what we did.

But believe me, the greatest gift you could ever give me is to never lose the fervor I sense in this room tonight. Never lose your belief in your country. Never lose your belief in your capacity to change it for the better. And never get tired when you don't win every election. Bear down. Look forward. The best is still out there.

I will always love Massachusetts. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. in Matthews Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Richard M. Freeland, president, Northeastern University; Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston; and Vicki Kennedy, wife of Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

Interview With Steve Holland and Debbie Charles of Reuters
January 11, 2001

Korean War Incident at No Gun Ri

Q. We understand you made a foreign policy-related call shortly——

The President. Yes, I just talked to President Kim about the No Gun Ri incident and personally expressed my regret to him. And I thanked him for the work that we had done together in developing our mutual statement. We also set up this scholarship fund and did some other things that we hope will be a genuine gesture of our regret. It was a very—you know, I had a good talk with him.

Q. Any particular reason why you used the word "regret" instead of "apology" in your statement?

The President. I think the findings were—I think he knows that "regret" and "apology" both mean the same thing, in terms of being profoundly sorry for what happened. But I believe that the people who looked into it could not conclude that there was a deliberate act, decided at a high enough level in the military hierarchy, to acknowledge that, in effect, the Government had participated in something that was terrible.

So I don't think there's any difference in the two words, on a human level, because we are profoundly sorry that it happened and sorry that any Americans were involved in it. But I think that in terms of the kind of responsibility the institution of the military that the facts were sufficiently unclear after all this time that the people who were reviewing it thought it was the appropriate language. And we worked it out with the Koreans and obviously shared whatever we could find with them.

These people have been our friends for 50 years. We didn't have—I told our guys to play it straight, that we didn't have an interest in trying to cover anything up or sugar-coat anything; we needed to try to get to the bottom of this. I think that we've done about the best we can do. And I hope that the people of Korea will accept our statement as genuine, and I hope it will bring some solace to the family members and the few people that still survived who were involved in it, who will never get over it.

California Electricity Shortages

Q. Let me ask you another topical question. California is on the verge of blackouts. Is there anything you can do in your remaining time in office?

The President. Well, I'm working at it. We have done some things. Secretary Richardson has worked very hard to make sure that the wholesalers kept selling the power to the utilities. But essentially, what happened was before—without any involvement from the Federal Government and before the previous administration in California, the deregulation was done in a way that made them vulnerable not to—in essence, to very high prices, maybe prices that aren't justified by market conditions on occasion.

They need to get all they can get from out-of-State generators and in-State generators, because they've grown so much. And they still have a regulation of prices to the ultimate consumer. So we've got a situation here which it seems to me might have been predictable at the time the deregulation legislation was done. But I, frankly, until this happened, I didn't know what the nature of the California deregulation law was. I didn't even know when it had been done, until this whole thing arose.

So we're dealing with the situation the best we can. But I also think we need to talk to some of the producers, see whether more power can be brought on line at economical rates more quickly. I actually talked to one of them myself just in the last 2 or 3 days. So I'm trying to get all of our options out there, and if there's anything else I can do, I will. I saw Governor Davis about a week ago, and I told him that.

But I do believe that the Governor and the people of California know that, through the Energy Department, we've done everything we can so far.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Let me turn you to the election very quickly. You seemed to surprise everybody when you said that the Republicans only—that when they stopped the counting, that's the only way that George W. won. What point were you trying to make there?

The President. I was actually just having fun with Bill Daley in Chicago. We were home and his brother—he had introduced his brother. I think Bill did a very fine job running the Vice President's campaign. I was just having a good time, trying to put them all in a good humor. I wasn't trying to be sarcastic or hateful or even make any kind of deliberate point. I was basically having fun with what I think are the undisputed facts. I don't think there's much dispute about the facts. They didn't finish the vote count. There's really no—everybody knows that.

Q. Do you have any hard feelings about the election outcome and the way the Court, the conservative majority stepped in to stop the counting?

The President. Well, I don't have much to add to what I said. I think the Vice President said it all for us. We accept the principle of judicial review. It's a very important one. It has been since John Marshall wrote the opinion in *Marbury* v. *Madison* in the early 19th century. And it has helped us to have some finality in our law.

But yes, I disagree with the decision, and I think most constitutional scholars do. I saw a quote in the paper the other day from a man who was a law professor in the Middle West—I'm sorry, I don't remember his name—but he identified himself as a conservative, pro-life Republican. But he said, "I am a constitutional law professor, and I disagree with this decision."

But the country has had, periodically—thankfully not often, but periodically—there's a handful of Supreme Court decisions that I think were unfortunate. But we nearly always straighten it out with time. And in the meanwhile, the election was very close. It was fought nearly to a draw, and the political forces in Florida, the legislature might have done the same thing, and it might have been upheld. I just hated to see the Court involved in this way when there was, you know, 6 days less to count the votes.

But I didn't mean to make any big point. I didn't say anything that I and the Vice President and other Democrats had said tons of times. I was just having fun, trying to say something nice, to make people laugh about Bill Daley. It's pretty tough on him, you know, because he really did do a good job. I think they were about 10 points behind or something, and Bill took over, and he really did, I think, a very good job.

Q. Can I switch to the Middle East? Everything that's going on right now. Today they had some talks——

The President. Let me just say one other—you shouldn't read anything about—that has nothing to do with—we have tried to be very supportive of the President-elect and his team and the transition. I haven't tried to politicize this. I was strictly having fun with my friends in Chicago and bucking up Bill Daley. That's all.

Anyway, go ahead.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. The Middle East, there were some talks in the Gaza today between Israelis and Palestinians. But Sharon has already said the Oslo deal is dead, basically. What are your thoughts about the next 8 days? Is there any hope for anything to happen or will you——

The President. I think there is. It depends on what the agreement is and then how the Israeli electorate responds to it. General Sharon has, I think, never liked the Oslo agreement and has been very honest about it. But he did come to Wye River; he participated fully. Then Prime Minister Netanyahu had been very critical of Oslo. But they negotiated that agreement at Wye River, and previously to that, I think he was in when they finalized the Hebron agreement.

So you have to hope that this process keeps going. The reason we went—let me just back up and say, the reason we went to Camp David in the first place is that it was obvious to everybody that just as the Hebron and then especially the Wye River agreement was absolutely essential to keep the peace process alive, because the previous understandings had come to the end of their rope and they had to stay on the process, it was obvious to me that we had come to the end of our capacity to stay in the peace process with just the Wye River agreement. It worked very well for a couple of years, but there had to be some continued movement.

Because what happens is, when you reach a stall, then the people that really don't want this to happen, particularly rejectionist elements within the Palestinian community, they can have incidents; then they provoke reactions; then the borders get closed; then the incomes of the Palestinians drop again, and you get in a downward spiral. So I was trying to head off just what we've been through these last 3 months.

So I think that they will have to reach some sort of accommodation, unless they really want the thing to spin out of control. And I really don't believe either side wants that, so we'll just have to see. But you know, whatever happens will be the responsibility of the next administration and the winner of the Israeli election, whoever that may be.

Q. Do you think it's important for you to set out a list of, maybe, points that have been agreed to so far, so that they don't start from scratch again, that you don't lose what you've already gotten?

The President. Well, I think it was quite significant, actually, even though it came 6 days later than I wanted it to, that the Palestinians have now agreed in principle with the parameters. So at least that Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority have agreed—this Israeli government, excuse me—and the Palestinian Authority have agreed to the parameters. Both sides have some concerns and some questions which are, frankly, quite well known to either side. So I think we have narrowed the debate and moved it forward.

Now obviously, unless there is an agreement, the United States Government is not bound by the position I took. Any incoming Israeli government would not be bound. For example, when I felt that I had to continue a number of President Bush's policies—I didn't particularly disagree with them, either, by the way, in Somalia and one or two other places—but I didn't really believe it was an option to reverse them, because our Government was committed. And I think it's very important that we—except in the most extreme circumstances—maintain some continuity in foreign policy and in our commitments to other countries.

But President-elect Bush is in no way, shape, or form bound by the positions I've taken on this Middle East agreement, unless there is some agreement.

Q. Do you think that'll happen?

The President. I just don't know. You know, it's a very difficult-to-predict situation. All the odds say no, but there are reasons why they are both working to get this done. In all my 8 years of service as President, I've never seen a situation quite like this, where the circumstances, including my short time in office, seemed unfavorable, but the determination of the main players seems strong, in fact, maybe even intensified. So we'll just have to see what happens.

I'm trying to keep myself free of expectation one way or the other, and to do whatever I can to try to help end the violence—and we had a good day today—and just create the conditions in which, if they're willing, they can do as much as they can do. And we'll just have to see what happens. I don't think we can predict it.

Q. Do you think the incoming Bush people will be as interested in pursuing this as you have been?

The President. Well, I think they will be very interested in stability and peace in the Middle East. Their orientation has been a little more toward, you know, the Gulf, the oil-producing states, honoring our historic commitments to Israel to maintain their qualitative military capacity.

But to be fair, the previous Bush administration took a pretty strong line on expanded settlements after the Madrid talks started in the hope that they could help to create the conditions in which the Palestinians and the Israelis could move toward peace.

So I think that there may be differences in approach and priorities that the President and the Vice President and Secretary Powell will have to work through. But my guess is that their general direction will be the same, because in the end, what happens is—let's assume—and I'm not saying this, because I don't believe this—but listen, even if you had an administration that didn't really care about the Palestinian problem on its own merits and said, "Well, our real interests are in the geopolitics of the oil-producing states and the problems created by the lack of an agreement with Syria."

And by the way, I'm fairly optimistic that there will be an agreement between Israel and Syria sometime in the not-too-distant future, and I don't think there would be much difference in the policy positions taken by Likud or a Labor government on Syria, or by my administration or the incoming administration. We worked this hard, I mean, for years. And I think if the late President Asad hadn't kind of felt he was not in the best of health and was not—that they wanted to freeze things in place, and if he can secure his son's accession, we might well have been able to do a peace agreement when I met with him in Switzerland shortly

before his death. So I expect that I don't think there will be much difference there.

So even if it's not a priority for you because it looks like a morass that can't be solved in a small place with people that don't have a state, don't have nuclear arms, don't have an air force, don't have an army, inevitably what we always get back to is that the absence of an agreement with the Palestinians and the absence of a stable situation between Israel and the Palestinians infects the other countries and their capacity to relate to us over the long run.

And particularly as these other countries have more and more young people who are more and more drawn to the sympathetic—drawn with a sympathetic ear to the claims of the Palestinians, and they have more demonstrations in these other countries and more unrest in these other countries, I think that our concern for stability in our relations with the Saudis, with the Kuwaitis, with not letting Saddam Hussein develop weapons of mass destruction again, the whole range of concerns that any American administration would have to have leads you back down to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and trying to get to the end of the road there. I mean, I just think you do.

I think that that's why I made the speech I did to the Israeli Policy Forum the other night. I waited until the very end, and until, essentially, I had put these parameters out before saying that, because I don't believe an American President should try to impose or create a peace between these two parties. The questions go too much to the heart of their respective sense of national identities, their cultural identity, their whole set of religious convictions.

So all I said in these parameters and all I meant to say in the Israel Policy Forum speech is, "Look, I've been listening to these people for 8 years, and I've studied these issues as closely, I believe, as any American President ever has, down to the maps, the settlement locations, the maps of the city of Jerusalem, the whole thing. My best judgment is if there ever is going to be a comprehensive agreement, it will have to look something like this." And you know, that's not the only option. In other words, they could do what they did at Wye River. They could say, "Okay, here's the next chapter, and this is what we're going to do."

But the real problem with the sort of sequencing of interim steps is that, at least so far, because of all the other very complex forces going on there, these steps have not brought sufficient stability to the relationship and to the climate within the Palestinian areas or within Israel that there can be a long-term sort of set of nonpolitical measures that lead to progress—which is exactly the reverse of the Irish situation.

And you may have heard me say this before, but the difference is, in Ireland—I may have said this in the Israel Policy Forum speech, I can't remember—but my physical analogy is, some unsolved problems are like scabs on a wound. If you leave them alone, they'll heal. Some are like an abscessed tooth. If you leave it alone, it will get lots worse.

In Ireland, because the underlying economic circumstances are dramatically improved and because there has been a dramatic increase in interpersonal contact which is positive, and because while there is a small terrorist group that is still trying to upset the Irish thing, it's much more contained, the absence of final resolution of the thorny political issues is unlikely to crater the situation.

In the Middle East, the per capita income of most Palestinians is the same or lower than it was when we signed the agreement on the White House Lawn, because there are so many different groups that can paralyze the process with acts of terror or violence that close the borders, that stop everything, that wreck the economy, and that kind of burn the bridges of trust that get built up when things are going okay for a year or so. I think it's more like an abscessed tooth. So that's why I decided to make the speech I gave at the Israel Policy Forum.

But they don't have to do that. They could reach another accommodation. They could say, "Okay, we can't do this whole thing, but we can't just rest on Oslo plus Wye River, so we have to do this," whatever this is. And they could do that.

But I think any Israeli leader would have to see that, and I think in the end, any American government will come back to a concern for it, if for no other reason than a desire to have stability in the region.

Tax Cut/National Economy

Q. Let me turn you quickly to the economy. The Republicans are talking about a retroactive

tax cut. You've got an economic statement tomorrow. Are the factors there, is the evidence there strong enough that there's a downturn going on and we need this retroactive tax cut?

The President. Well, first of all, the blue chip forecast, I think, is for 2.6 percent growth, which is enough growth to keep the unemployment rate at about 4 percent. And that really doesn't surprise me. When I saw the initial estimates, which were about 3.4 percent, I thought they were a tad high because we've been growing for a couple of years at nearly 5 percent, which is, for an advanced economy of our size, it's just virtually unprecedented. You simply couldn't sustain it at that rate. So I think that the expansion can be continued.

On the other hand, there's been a fairly sharp drop in stock values, and that takes a lot of wealth out of the economy, and eventually, that backs down into lower consumption and orders and things like that. So you see, for example, real problems in the steel industry today at a time when steel imports are also dropping. So it's not like the '97 crisis where—the crisis in Asia and Russia led people to try to flood the market in America with bargain basement prices. Here, you've got an overall problem.

So I think I've always believed that a tax cut should be part of the next budget. I thought it should have been part of the last budget. It can be a little bigger than the one that I proposed, because the surplus has been written up some—the estimated surplus. Although I think it's very important that they go back and subtract from the estimated surplus the 10-year costs of the budget we just adopted, because it's the best education budget, for example, that we've had in my 8 years. There's about a 15 percent increase in education. But you have to prorate that out, and President-elect Bush has said he's very interested in continuing to support education, even though he wants to kind of rearrange the deck chairs on how we allocated it—which is, you know, that's up to him and the Congress. They'll have to work that out.

So I think the question is not so much whether one is warranted but what kind of tax cut should it be, and how big should it be? My concern—what I have believed in—I said this back during the campaign period so I can reiterate it—my view is that it should not be so large as to preclude our continued ability to pay down the debt and to stay more or less on the track we're on to get the debt down over the next 10 years, because if the markets perceive that we're going back into deficits, that would lead to an increase in interest rates, which would wipe out the impact of a tax cut for most Americans—even wealthy Americans, because it could have a depressing impact on the market, and it certainly would increase the cost of business borrowing and tend to slow down the growth of the economy.

So the trick is—that also, by the way, would foreclose—this is what happened to me when I got in. I didn't have the option to do what Americans would normally—the Government would normally do in a recession, which is to have a substantial tax cut and pump the thing back up, because the deficit was so big, it would just have caused interest rates to skyrocket.

So the trick for the incoming administration—they have lots of options here. They can spend money; they can cut taxes; they can do more of one or less of the other—and less of the other. But the real—what I would be thinking about if I were in that position is, what is the aggregate amount we're going to commit here, particularly on the tax cut side, because it's not like—you don't have to repeat spending in years 2, 3, and 4. You can cut spending if times are tough. We've proved that. But once the tax money—once you cut the taxes, that's normally gone. It's hard to raise taxes when times are tough.

So what I hope is, I think they ought to have a tax cut of some magnitude, but I think they ought to save back enough to keep on the track of paying down the debt, which also gives you the protection down the road. Someday, surely, the expansion will come to an end, but I don't think it has to come any time soon. And when it does, the more we pay the debt down, the more free we will be then to have a substantial tax cut to help the country in a recession—when that happens sometime in the future—without having an adverse impact on interest rates.

So I don't think there's any question that they can have a tax cut. It could be fairly sizable. I think it's appropriate. But I just think you don't want it so big that it takes you off the path of getting us out of debt, because the mental knowledge that that's the path we're on keeps interest rates low.

The average American family now is saving $2,000 a year on a home mortgage, as compared

to where we were back in '93. Long-term interest rates are 2 percent lower than when I took office, even though we've had an 8-year expansion, which is unheard of. You normally wouldn't have that. And paying down the debt has a huge impact on that, because it frees up more and more money every year to borrow in the private sector, and interest rates are lower than they would be if the Government were competing.

And let me also say there's something else that we should keep in mind. The more you pay down the debt, the lower your interest bill is. I think this year we've got interest payments on the debt down under 12 cents on the dollar. But they were at 13 or something, headed north, when I took office.

Let's say we went—I'm making this up, of course—let's say we went 4 or 5 more years on the same tack, and we got interest on the debt down to 6 cents on the dollar. That's a huge amount of money that is freed up every year for either investment in our future or for tax cuts. And you have more and more and more flexibility.

Anyway, that's kind of a long-winded answer, but it's a very, very important subject, and I've thought about it a lot.

Q. Can I just—another foreign policy question—one more question.

The President. Go ahead.

National Missile Defense

Q. On NMD, which has become topical now with the Bush administration and Rumsfeld's hearings today, do you regret at all making it a commitment of the United States, since some diplomacy efforts, like with Korea, are working out? And is it just going to create more problems with China, Russia in the future?

The President. Well, I think I made the right decision not to deploy. And I think that I made the right decision to continue the research program. And I hope that's what they will do.

It's not clear to me exactly how they're going to operationalize their commitment. That is, because in the campaign, the President-elect said that he would do this if it could be developed, whether anybody else liked it or not, which bothered some people. But he also—the "it" that he was trying to develop was a system that was, in effect, more comprehensive than the more limited one that could have been deployed in the timeframes we were talking about during my tenure. So it may be that what he will decide to do is to intensify research.

Look, if we actually knew we had the technology to take missiles out of the sky, even assuming that we get this agreement with North Korea—which I think we will get, on freezing the missile production, not selling missiles. I think that will come. That's teed up, and I believe the Bush administration will see it as a great opportunity. And I think it will be one seized within the first few months of the incoming administration. I think it will be one of their first achievements, because it's set, and I think it will happen.

But even if that happens, with the proliferation of technology around the world, we can't possibly know who might have missiles in the future. So I think we're almost morally obligated to continue to try to develop this kind of system. However, if we deploy the system in a way that leads to more proliferation and more insecurity, that's very problematic. And it's one of the things that I had to consider, that if we just set it up, even if we were worried about North Korea and the Middle East, if the Chinese interpreted it as a move to try to contain them, even though there's no way we could—even if they have just 50 missiles, that's more than—or two dozen, whatever they've got—two dozen I guess, more or less—they might decide that now they need 300.

If they did that, the Indians would decide that they needed more, under the present state of play between the two countries. If they did that, the Pakistanis would certainly build more. And circumstances that exist on the Indian Subcontinent are not as stable as those which existed between the United States and the Soviet Union during the cold war, or that exists today between the United States and Russia. And by the way, I expect that there will be a further reduction in nuclear warheads by both countries. That's one thing I think the Bush administration will be in a position to do, because of the development of our relationships, I'll be—I expect that President Putin and then-President Bush will be successful in continuing to reduce the nuclear arsenals. But you don't want to have all this sort of uncontrolled instability in some other part of the world.

But there's a way to continue to work the missile defense issue, and then there would be a way to put it at the service of all countries, the technology, which is what President Reagan

used to talk about when he was talking about the Star Wars in the sky and all of that. Philosophically, he had an idea of making it available to all countries so that no one would be any more at risk, including from us.

But that technology is not out there now. We're talking about technology to stop the accidental launch or a terrorist or a country with two or three missiles that could lob them at you. Two or three missiles could do a world of damage on the United States or someone else.

So I just think—I think that I left it with a maximum number of options for the next administration. I've tried to leave the economy with maximum number of options in good shape, and I think this program gives them the maximum number of options.

And I think—again, you know, we all say things in campaigns, and then you get to be President and it looks a little different. Presidents pretty much do what they promise to do in campaigns, but sometimes when you turn an idea into an operation, when you operationalize your views, the world looks different when you're sitting behind the desk in the Oval Office than it did when you were running for the job. It just does. And that's no criticism of him. They're the same things that looked different to me when I got there.

And so I just—it's a big issue, but it will be closely covered and widely debated, and I hope it will be resolved in an appropriate way. But I do think that the research should continue.

President's Future Plans

Q. How are you going to feel on January 21st? You wake up Sunday morning, you won't be President.

Q. In Chappaqua.

The President. I'm not sure. But I'll say this, right now, I just feel very at peace and very grateful. And I'm going to start thinking about the rest of my life. Every stage of my life has been rewarding and good. And I've been so fortunate, and it's a real challenge. I'm just going to try to imagine how I can make the most of it. I'm kind of looking forward to it. I don't expect that I'll have sort of prolonged periods of semi-depression because I'm not President anymore.

Q. Withdrawal pains?

The President. Yes. I was only halfway kidding when I told the church the other day that I expected to be disoriented when I go into big rooms and nobody plays a song anymore. [*Laughter*] I mean, I'm sure there will be somehow some kind of things that will be tough, and I'll have to learn how to be a real citizen all over again, but that's good.

The Presidency is what was so well taken care of, and a lot of the cares of normal daily life that I never had to think about when I was in office. It's probably healthy for a person not to have that kind of support for too many years in life. So I'm kind of looking forward to it.

President's Pets

Q. What about Socks? What's going to happen to Socks?

The President. Well, I don't know. You know, I made more progress in the Middle East than I did between Socks and Buddy. [*Laughter*] And I don't know that I've got enough space and enough help when I'm gone to keep them both away from one another and keep them both happy. But I still haven't quite resolved what to do. I love that old cat. You know, we picked him up as sort of a half stray in Arkansas, and I hate to give him up. But Betty loves him. Half the White House loves the cat, and the other half loves the dog.

Q. You can't break them up into that many pieces.

The President. No, no. I'm sure going to take—I know I'll take Buddy, because I slept with him for 16 months all during the Senate campaign. He was with me all the time. [*Laughter*] I can't live without him.

But I really—I've even talked to some of the guys, a couple of the guys at the White House are quite good at training pets, and we've all kind of tried to work at this. None of us have been able to figure out how to actually get them in peaceful coexistence. I feel, of all the skills I learned as President in bringing these people together, I didn't do very well with that. [*Laughter*]

Q. It's been a pleasure, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Thanks, Steve.

Q. Thank you very much, sir.

The President. You guys have been great.

NOTE: The interview began at 11:37 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, the President referred to President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Governor Gray Davis of California; Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley and his brother, Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ariel Sharon and former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; President-elect George W. Bush; Vice President-elect Dick Cheney; Secretary of State-designate Colin L. Powell; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria, son of the late President Hafiz al-Asad; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and Betty Currie, the President's personal secretary. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Security Strategy of the United States
January 11, 2001

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

As required by section 603 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, I am transmitting a report on the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 12.

Remarks on the 2001 Economic Report and an Exchange With Reporters
January 12, 2001

The President. Good morning. Today I'm sending my eighth and final economic report prepared by the Council of Economic Advisers. I want to thank Dr. Martin Baily, Kathryn Shaw, Robert Lawrence, and the CEA staff for their fine work in analyzing America's new economy.

I also want to thank Secretary Summers, Gene Sperling, Jack Lew, Sylvia Mathews, my entire economic team for all they have done these last 8 years to turn our country around and move us forward together.

Over the last 8 years, these annual economic reports have helped to tell America's story—a story of prosperity and progress, of the hard work of our people, and the results of policies rooted in common values and common sense. The message of this final report is clear: The economy remains strong, on a sound foundation, with a bright future.

Eight years ago it was a very different story, with 10 million of our fellow citizens out of work, high interest rates, low confidence, a deficit that was $290 billion and rising, a debt that had quadrupled in the previous 12 years. The new course we charted to eliminate the deficit, invest in education and the American people's future, and open overseas markets for America's products has worked. Year-in and year-out, we have resisted politically attractive but economically unwise temptations to veer from the path of fiscal discipline.

We have in the course of this effort turned the record deficits into record surpluses and produced the longest economic expansion in history. We have not only had 22½ million new jobs and the lowest unemployment in 30 years; we've been able to add to the life of both Medicare and Social Security to help ease the burden on future generations, and make the long-term solutions less difficult in the present. And we're on track to do something that was unimaginable

8 years ago when I first came here, to get America out of debt at the end of this decade.

The evidence in this report shows that maintaining the path of fiscal discipline is critical to keeping America on the path of economic progress. Fiscal discipline has allowed the energy and entrepreneurship of the American people to increase investment, productivity, and living standards. Fiscal responsibility has given us lower interest rates, which by the end of the year will be—excuse me—has given us not only lower interest rates; it's given us surpluses that by the end of the year will have permitted us to pay down about $560 billion off the national debt. And I think all of us are very proud that we can leave that legacy to the incoming administration and to the children of this country.

More important in an economic sense, perhaps, is that it has lowered interest rates. By having the Government pay back debt instead of borrow more money, you have lower interest rates for business loans, college loans, home loans, car loans. It amounts, on the average, to $2,000 in mortgage payment savings a year for the average family, $200 in car payments, $200 in college loan payments. It has also given us higher growth.

Now, over the last couple of years, the economy was growing at a blistering pace. Everyone knew that the rate of growth would ease off. But that is not to say that the evidence suggests anything other than that the expansion will and should continue.

So that's the context in which we have tried to work for 8 years and the options that we leave to our successors. And there are many options. I have repeatedly said America can afford a tax cut. But I do not believe that the tax cut plus whatever spending plans there will be should be so large as to take us off the path of fiscal discipline, for a simple reason—paying down the debt keeps interest rates lower. That means stronger businesses, higher incomes, more jobs, a stronger market. Keeping those long-term rates down is profoundly important.

So what I would hope for the future when the Congress deliberates this and the President makes his proposal—the details are up to them; I'm moving out of the policy business in just a few days here—but I would hope that the combined total of the tax cut and the spending plans would not be so large as to call our commitment to fiscal discipline into question in a way that would run the risk of returning to on-budget deficits, higher interest rates, and in the process, would drain away the savings that will be needed to deal with the Social Security and Medicare challenges the retirement of the baby boomers will present.

Eight years of responsible budgets and fiscal responsibility have put our country in a position to take advantage of our long-term opportunities and to meet our long-term challenges. It's a path that I hope we'll be able to stay on. I would like it very much if our country were debt-free by the end of this decade, for the first time since 1835.

Even more, I would like it if we were able to free up 11 cents on the dollar of the Federal budget to deal with Social Security, Medicare, invest in education, and provide further tax cuts in the future.

So I think we're in good shape. I think I'm leaving with all options open. And the only cautionary point I want to make is, I think that the combined impact of spending and tax cuts, I would hope, would not be such as to prevent us from continuing to pay down this debt, so we can keep interest rates low and the economy strong over the long run.

Thank you.

Korean War Incident at No Gun Ri

Q. Mr. President, survivors of the No Gun Ri killing say that the U.S. report is a whitewash and that your statement of regret does not offer a sincere apology. How do you respond to that criticism? And did you intend your statement of regret to be an apology?

The President. Well, I think on a personal basis, as I said yesterday, I don't think there is any difference in the two words. They both mean that we are profoundly sorry for what happened and that things happened which were wrong.

I think the word which was agreed on, working with the Koreans, pursuing the investigations, was thought to be appropriate in a, if you will, a legal and a political sense, because the evidence was not clear that there was responsibility for wrongdoing high enough in the chain of command in the Army to say that, in effect, the Government was responsible. I think that was the real issue.

But I don't think—from a purely human point of view, I don't think there's any difference in the fact that we know things happened which should not have happened. Things were done

which should not have been done. Innocent people died, and others were wounded. Their families were wounded and remain wounded to the present day, and we are profoundly sorry about that.

So I don't think in terms of the human impact and the acknowledgement that things that happened that shouldn't have happened that were wrong, I don't think there is any difference.

And I certainly told the investigators I didn't want the investigation whitewashed. We did our best to find out what happened and to determine the facts as best we could. And we issued a joint statement and sort of path of proceeding with the Korean Government—I talked to President Kim last night about it—and we've done our best to do the right thing.

National Economy

Q. Do you believe that President-elect Bush's comments about the economy, slowing economy, and the Vice President's comments about that the economy is possibly heading towards recession is actually a self-fulfilling prophecy and perhaps potentially dangerous talk?

The President. Well, I don't want to get into characterizing that. I think it's not wise for me to do that, and not appropriate. I can only tell you what I've tried to do for 8 years. What I've tried to do for 8 years is to level with the American people based on the evidence and to be conservative in my estimates when it came to the tax cuts I advocated and the spending I advocated.

The evidence is, the blue chip consensus is for growth of about 2.6 percent next year, slightly slower in the first half of the year and more robust in the second half. And they have written that down from a previous projection of something over 3 percent.

If we grow at 2.6 percent, then the unemployment rate should stay around where it is now and we will continue to create new jobs. So that's what the evidence is today. And if the evidence changes, then everyone should look at what the facts are and act in an appropriate way. But the experts who make a living doing this believe the economy will grow at 2.6 percent next year, slightly slower in the first 6 months, slightly more robust in the second 6 months.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. On the Middle East, can you say, having heard from what the Israelis and Palestinians discussed at Erez, that it's now—there's no hope of an agreement on your watch between the two? Have you given up hope on that?

The President. No, but I've not tried to raise hopes, either. They are—they have a surprising amount of agreement and a few intense points of controversy. And I think that there are all kinds of reasons why an agreement on the big issues has always been kind of against the odds. But they have continued to try, and they're trying now in a climate which is much less negative than just a few days ago and the preceding weeks.

So this is really up to them. I'm working hard on it, and I'm spending time on it every day. But they have to decide. And I think the United States will be very supportive of them if they do decide to do it. And I'll do whatever I can to help.

James Riady

Q. Sir, can you tell us what your relationship was with James Riady, and are you concerned at all by his decision to plead guilty to a campaign finance offense and pay a large fine?

The President. Well, I knew him when he was in Arkansas and when he owned—his family owned part of a bank there, and I've kept up with him since. And I have—no, I'm not at all concerned about it. I think that—I think people should know what our campaign finance laws are and should obey them.

Lt. Comdr. Michael S. Speicher

Q. Mr. President, how is the United States going to get Iraq to give up information about Lt. Commander Speicher?

The President. Well, we're working on that. Let me just say to all of you, I agreed with the decision to take his name off the killed in action list and put it on the missing in action list. I think it was the right decision. But I do not want to raise false hopes here. We do not have hard evidence that he is alive.

We have some evidence that what had been assumed to be the evidence that he was lost in action is not so. And we're going to do our best to find out if he is alive, and if he is, to get him out—because as a uniformed service person, he should have been released by now if he is alive.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, were you trying to call into question the legitimacy of the Bush Presidency with your remarks the other night?

The President. In Chicago? No, I was trying to have a little fun with Bill Daley. I mean, we were there in Chicago, he had just introduced his brother, a bunch of his family members were there, all of his friends were there, he'd been out of Chicago for sometime, and I was trying to say what a good job he had done running the campaign. And we were all just having a good time. It was all in good fun, and everybody laughed about it, and most everybody agreed with what I said who was there, because it was all a bunch of Democrats, as you would expect.

But there was no—I intended to have no impact on that. Let me go back—I have nothing to add on that question to what I said after the Vice President made his statement. We accept the decision of the Supreme Court. It is the way our system works. And it's not the first time or probably the last time the Supreme Court will make a decision with which I do not agree, but I did not call into question his legitimacy. I was having a good, old-fashioned little bit of fun with Bill Daley and his brother and his friends and my friends in Chicago. We were just having a good time, and I was trying to say that I thought he did a fine job running the Vice President's campaign, and I do think that. And I think he did a fine job.

President's Future Plans

Q. Mr. President, after the Inauguration, you're going to Chappaqua, is that correct?

The President. Absolutely.

Q. Are you coming back to Washington or going to Arkansas or staying in New York?

The President. I'm going to live in New York. But I will come—and Hillary and I will spend weekends in New York, and every now and then I hope I can come down here and see her in the week. But if I get in the newspapers, I probably won't come anymore. I'd like to keep an appropriate low profile for some time. I think it's important. And I want to take a couple of months to rest. I've been working for 27 years now, pretty hard, and I want to rest a little while and really think about the rest of my life and how I can serve best. And that's what I want to do.

So I'll be mostly in New York. I'll be going to Arkansas to get my library project up and going and trying to think through exactly how I'm going to do my foundation work, my service work. And we'll have a transition office here for 6 months, as all former Presidents do, and then I'll have an office in New York City after that and maybe before 6 months is up.

Thank you very much.

President's Pets

Q. Are you really giving Socks away?

The President. Oh, I don't know. I did better with the Arabs—the Palestinians and the Israelis than I've done with Socks and Buddy. [*Laughter*] And I won't have as much space or as much help in managing them, so I'm trying to figure out whether I can do it. Because I've had that cat a long time. You know, we took him in as a stray back in Arkansas, and I hate to give him up, although Betty and a lot of other people here in the White House really love him. It's just another one of those places where I haven't yet made peace. But I've got 8 days. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley and his brother, Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; and Betty Currie, the President's personal secretary.

Exchange With Reporters Following a Medical Checkup in Bethesda, Maryland

January 12, 2001

President's Health

Q. How did it go, Mr. President?

The President. Very well. My eyes are still dilated, so I have to be a little careful. They're a little foggy out here.

But before I leave, I would just like to thank the Bethesda Naval Hospital for the wonderful care they have given to me and to members of my family over these last 8 years. This is a terrific place, and these people have been great to me, not only in all my physicals but when I was so badly injured and on other occasions when I or someone in my family needed it. I'm very, very grateful to them.

Q. How is the knee?

The President. Oh, my knee is great. My knee is great. You'll get a report. My cholesterol is a little too high because I haven't exercised, and I ate all that Christmas dessert. But in 6 months it will be back to normal. [*Laughter*] I knew I was doing it, but what the heck. It was my last time, and I wanted to enjoy it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 3:30 p.m. at the Bethesda Naval Hospital. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's Radio Address

January 13, 2001

Good morning. As I enter the final week of my Presidency, I'm extraordinarily grateful for all the progress we've made together these last 8 years building the strongest economy in a generation, renewing our ethic of responsibility, and strengthening the bonds of community and family all across America. Today I want to talk about our progress in reducing youth violence and new steps we're taking to make our communities even safer.

Over the past few years, terrible tragedies at Columbine and other schools have forced us to take a hard look at youth violence and an even harder look at what each of us can do and must do to ensure that such tragedies do not happen again.

Although there are no simple solutions, recent evidence suggests we are moving in the right direction. According to the latest data, violent crime by young people has been cut nearly in half since 1993; schoolyard deaths have dropped dramatically. These are both important declines that reflect the lowest national crime rate in 25 years. But still, we have more to do.

At my direction, the White House Council on Youth Violence has developed a new website and toll-free information line to help parents and educators get the facts they need to reduce youth violence. The website address is www.safeyouth.org. And the toll-free number is 1–866–SAFE–YOUTH. That's www.safeyouth.org and 1–866–SAFE–YOUTH.

I'm also pleased to release another important resource, a guide for parents on communicating better with teenagers. It incorporates the latest research as well as the best ideas from the White House Conference on Teenagers, which Hillary and I sponsored last year. We'll distribute this publication nationwide through the website, the toll-free line, and with the assistance of school principals, school nurses, and pediatricians.

Like all parents, Hillary and I know it's not always easy to talk with your children about sensitive subjects. That's why this new guide is so very valuable, because it teaches parents how to listen more carefully to their children and nurture relationships built on trust, love, discipline, and respect.

America has made a lot of progress in renewing these enduring values and strengthening our sense of national community. A record number of young people now volunteer for community service. So together, we've built a country that's

not only better off but a better, safer place for all of us.

We passed the Brady law, which has kept guns out of the hands of over 600,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers. We've secured funding for more than 100,000 new police officers on the beat. We created the COPS in Schools program to help local law enforcement hire police officers to work in our schools.

We established after-school and summer school programs that are helping now 1.3 million children a year stay out of trouble and succeed in the classroom, and we've launched a national program to foster local partnerships that make our schools safer, identify children at risk, and get them the help they need.

Working closely with the private sector and community groups, we also expanded the GEAR UP initiative to give young people mentors and encouragement to seek a college education. And now a record number of young people are going on to college.

We need to build on this remarkable success. Here in Washington, Congress should now move swiftly to close the gun show loophole and require background checks for all gun buyers. In the private sector, Hollywood should own up to its responsibilities and stop marketing violence to America's young people.

There is nothing more precious to a parent than a child and nothing more important to our future than the safety of all our children. So let's do all we can to protect them from harm and teach them to walk away from violence. In the end, all of us have a responsibility to help our youth succeed and to help end youth violence. If we do this mission successfully, America will always be a great and peaceful Nation for generations to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:20 p.m. on January 12 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Former President Ronald Reagan's Hip Surgery

January 14, 2001

Hillary and I are relieved that President Reagan's treatment for his injury appears to have been successful. Our thoughts and prayers are with the President, his wife, Nancy, and the entire Reagan family during this difficult period. We join all Americans in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Interview With Mark Knoller of CBS Radio in Dover, New Hampshire

January 11, 2001

Korean War Incident at No Gun Ri

Mr. Knoller. Mr. President, let me start by thanking you very much for granting this interview. I'm very grateful.

I wonder if we could start with a little bit of the news of the day. Today you issued a written statement expressing deep regret for the deaths at No Gun Ri. But the word "apologize" didn't appear in that statement. Is there a reason for that, that you drew a distinction between expressing regret and apologizing?

The President. Well, for me, now, other than that—I told them to try to draw the statement up based on what we actually knew about the facts. And I worked very closely with—or our people have—with the Government of South Korea. We want to be responsive to the people there. And I hope the statement will be taken well by the people of South Korea as a genuine expression of regret about what happened.

Lieutenant Commander Michael Speicher

Mr. Knoller. On another issue, there's a story now that a Navy pilot may have been shot down and may be held in Iraq. Do you have any information that leads you to believe that there are Americans held POW in Iraq?

The President. Well, I think the most I should say about this now is that in this particular case, and in this case only, I reviewed the evidence that we had, and we concluded that we should take him off the killed-in-action list and put him on the missing list, which means, obviously, that we have some information that leads us to believe that he might be alive. And we hope and pray that he is.

Mr. Knoller. What does the United States do about it?

The President. Well, now that we have some information, we'll begin—well, we've already begun working to try to determine whether, in fact, he's alive; if he is, where he is; and how we can get him out. Because, since he was a uniformed service person, he's clearly entitled to be released, and we're going to do everything we can to get him out.

Mr. Knoller. If Iraq was holding an American, they couldn't use it as an issue with the United States unless they let us know they had somebody. Why would they hold somebody and not let us know about it? Would that be to their advantage?

The President. I wouldn't think so. That's why we did what we did on the classification. We have enough information that makes us believe that at least he survived his crash, at least that that's a possibility, and that he might be alive. And I thought, in fairness to his family and everyone else involved, based on a review of the information and the Defense Department's recommendation, we should change the status. But that's all we know, and I don't want to raise false hopes to either.

U.S.S. Cole

Mr. Knoller. Along the same lines, do we now know for certain that Usama bin Ladin was behind the attack on the U.S.S. *Cole*?

The President. I can't say that. I can—we do believe he was behind some other attacks on our people and that people affiliated with him have been involved in other attacks. But we're investigating this. We're still running down some of the leads. We're still doing some of the work. I think that we will know, and I think that the United States will take appropriate action.

And I believe this will be a completely nonpolitical issue. That is, I have absolutely no doubt that President-elect Bush will continue to pursue the investigation and, when the evidence is in, will take appropriate action. And when that happens, I will support him in doing so.

Attorney-General-Designate John Ashcroft

Mr. Knoller. And lastly, on a bit of domestic politics, do you think that Senators would have a good reason not to vote for John Ashcroft for Attorney General because he blocked your nomination of Ronnie White?

The President. Well, first, I think that it was a terrible mistake by the Senate to do it, to do it on a strict party-line vote, which required them to get some Republicans to change their position, including the other Senator from Missouri, who had introduced Judge White to the Judiciary Committee, and the Senators on the Judiciary Committee who had voted his nomination out positively to the floor. So I think it was a very, very bad mistake.

I'm going to follow my policy here. You know, I'll be an ex-President when this is done, and I do not believe I should be commenting for some period of time on public affairs, plus which my wife is a Senator. She has to vote on it. So I'm going to let—she can speak for herself, and the other Democrats and Republicans will speak for themselves. I don't think I should say more.

I do think it was a bad mistake. I've known Senator Ashcroft a long time. I know he is genuinely very, very conservative, and that's what's in his heart. But I didn't think this was about that, and it surprised and profoundly disappointed me.

Mr. Knoller. I thought that with just 9 days left, you might speak out with a little more reckless abandon than usual. [*Laughter*]

The President. Look, I need my Miranda warnings when I talk to you guys, you know. [*Laughter*] I can't even make a joke in Chicago without having it blown out of proportion. So I'm having to—I have to still be careful. [*Laughter*]

2000 Presidential Election

Mr. Knoller. Well, as long as you raised that issue, were you trying to say that you question the legitimacy of George Bush's election?

The President. No. No. I have said clearly that I agree with exactly what Vice President Gore said, that in this country we observe the principle of judicial review. The Supreme Court has ruled, and the rest of us have to accept it. And that confers, in a legal sense, a literal legal sense, that confers legitimacy. But I didn't say anything different than I've always said; all the Democrats were disappointed that the votes weren't counted. And that's all I'm saying.

And I was trying to pay a little homage to Bill Daley in his hometown of Chicago, with a lot of his family and friends there, by saying—you know, he did, I think, did a very good job running the Vice President's campaign. They did win the popular vote. And that's all I was saying. We were having a good time. [*Laughter*]

Early Years of the Administration

Mr. Knoller. Again, let's look back at your 8 years in office, Mr. President. After you were inaugurated in January of 1993, how long do you think it took you to get up to speed as President?

The President. Well, I would say there has—there's a different answer to that depending on what the issue—the question is. For example, I think that the issues that I talked about today when I reviewed our domestic record on social policy, I think we were ready from day one. I think we were—and I think part of that was the fact that I'd been a Governor for a dozen years, that I'd been through a tough economic period, had a clear economic philosophy, had worked on education and welfare reform and crime and the environment. Part of it was the fact that I'd had the opportunity to represent the Governors with the White House and the Congress on many issues. So we were ready to go.

On foreign policy, I think I was up to speed on some things and had to learn a lot on others, and I tried to be a quick study. On the ways of Washington, I think it took us probably, you know, even as much as a year, a year and a half, before we really had a good feel for some of the rather different ways in which the town works and the ways in which what a President does and says communicates itself to the other decisionmakers and to the larger American public in a way that was quite different than had been my experience as Governor.

So I did have a lot to learn about that, and I worked hard at it, and I think—it's interesting; I was laughing the other day with Mack McLarty, to illustrate the point—we had our roughest political problems in the first 2 years, but if you look back on the last 8 years, some of the most important and, I believe, most fundamentally sound decisions were made in those same 2 years.

We passed the first big—first we passed the economic plan, which included, among other things, the empowerment zones and the earned-income tax credit and all the things that got rid of the deficit, as well. And then we passed the family medical law. We passed the Brady law. We passed the crime bill. We passed NAFTA. You know, we did a phenomenal number of things in those first 2 years, substantively. But because of the whole sort of contentious atmosphere, some of the problems that we had with health care and other issues, I think that it was not as successful politically—and I say that in the best sense—politically, meaning we didn't communicate as well to the American people or the other decisionmakers in Washington in a way that people could see exactly what was happening and that we were underway here.

So I think it took me longer to get the politics right. I think it took a little while for me to get entirely comfortable with all the foreign policy and national security issues I had to deal with—not too long. And I think we were ready on the substance of domestic policy from day one.

President-Elect George W. Bush

Mr. Knoller. As we're about to inaugurate a new President, can the American people believe that its new President will be ready for the job on day one, or do we have to give them a period for on-the-job training?

The President. Well, I think he is like any new President. I think he has certain strengths and will be ready in some ways, and I don't think any human being can be ready in every way on day one. I think that's why, traditionally, Presidents have had a little bit of a honeymoon to get going. But it is a job, like other jobs, and people of good will who work at it can do it.

I think he's obviously got all these people around him who—going back to the Ford administration, heavily involving the Reagan and Bush administrations—people that have worlds of experience and will help him avoid some of the pitfalls which otherwise might come his way—or anybody's way, going into that job. And so I think the dealing with Washington part of it, and through the players in Washington, with the press, I think he will be better prepared on that score than I was.

I think on national security, he's got a very, very experienced team, so I think that he will get up to speed there in fairly short order. And on domestic policies, we have different views, and that's where the points of greatest conflict were in the campaign between our two sides. But I think on some things, like education, he's had the opportunity to really work in Texas on, and I think his concern is genuine. And on other things, we'll just have to see what happens.

I mean, I was a Governor for a dozen years, in good times and bad times. There's a world of difference between a Governor in a good time and a Governor in a bad time. So I think that he will need some time to get kind of just the—kind of feel the rhythm of some of these domestic issues, because they weren't part of his experience. But I think that the American people shouldn't particularly worry about that because he's got a very experienced team, because he has been a Governor, and because the country is in real good shape right now. And I think he'll get right up there to speed on the issues as quickly as possible. I'm not too worried about that.

Health Care

Mr. Knoller. As you look back over your years in office, are there things, big things, that you wish you could do over or do differently?

The President. Oh, a few. If I had it to do again, in the first 2 years I might try to pass welfare reform first, and then do health care. Or I would tell the American people that we had to do the deficit reduction first, and there were only two ways to have universal health coverage.

Let me just back up and say, a lot of people believe that if the health care plan had been differently designed or something, it could have passed. That's just not true. The truth is that because of the combined effect of the condition of the economy and the inability to raise taxes, we could have neither an employer mandate or a Government-funded program sufficient to insure 100 percent of health care coverage. It wasn't in the cards.

And I think—that's one of the things I talked about. I got a lot done. I mentioned at the end of this speech all the things that have happened this year—unheard of in the eighth year of a Presidency for all these things to happen. But I have a much greater sense now of the pace of things and how much you can jam through a system. And so, if I had it to do again, I think I would either try to flip the order and do welfare reform and then health care, or I would go before the American people and say, "Look, I know I told you that I wanted 100 percent coverage, and I do, but here's the condition of the budget; here is the condition of the country. I can't pass either an employer mandate or a tax increase, and you can't get 100 percent coverage without either one. So we're going to take these five steps now."

If I had it to do over again. I think in a policy sense, that was the place where the wheel kind of ran off the tracks and we got a little out of position with the American people, and we took that terrible licking in the '94 campaign. But since then, I think we've been doing better both substantively and politically.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Knoller. When you leave office at noon on January 20th, are you fearful that as you approach the next stage in your life, that the best part of your life is over?

The President. Oh, no. You know, in some ways this is the best part of my life because being President is the greatest honor any American could have and the greatest job any American could have. But I've given a lot of thought to this. I have enjoyed every phase of my life, from being a little boy to going off to college, to living in England, to being a teacher, to being a young attorney general. There's never been a part of my life in which I have not been absorbed, interested, and found something useful to do.

And I think that I owe it to my country and to the people around the world who share the values and concerns I do, to try to be a good citizen-servant for the rest of my life. And if I do it right, it's a whole new challenge trying to figure out, how are you going to organize

your life, how are you going to organize your day? I mean, for 27 years, most days since I entered public life, I have just been on a relentless schedule. And I have the opportunity now to kind of reimagine what I want my life to be like.

I want to do what I can to support Hillary—I'm thrilled and—I'm more than thrilled; I'm just ecstatic that she won that Senate race, and I'm happy for her and happy for the people of New York—and help Chelsea as she works her way in her life. So I have some financial support responsibilities. But beyond that, I just want to try to imagine how I can be of the most service in the most effective but appropriate way.

Just because I'm working until the last day here, which I'm definitely doing, doesn't mean that I don't understand that after noontime on January 20th I'm not President anymore. And I know what I'm supposed to do there, too, and I'm going to go home to New York and get on with my life. But I don't know exactly how I'm going to do it yet, but I've given quite a bit of thought to it.

Mr. Knoller. And when you said 4 years ago, as you were campaigning for reelection, that that was your last election ever unless you ran for school board, are you going to stick to that?

The President. Yes, I can't imagine I would run for office again. And you know, if I'm fortunate enough to live a long life and I stay healthy, maybe some day, somewhere down the road, somebody will say, "Why don't you run for this, that, or the other thing," and I would think about it. But that's not really where I see my public service going. I do believe I owe it to myself and to my country to continue to be a servant, a public servant. But I think there are a lot of ways you can do that as a private citizen.

And there's a whole new generation of young people coming up. This country will never have a shortage of good, gifted people willing to serve in public life. And I think that's something I should leave to others.

Surviving Politics in Washington

Mr. Knoller. During your Presidency, sir, you have survived travails that would have sent other politicians either running for cover or killed them, and yet you have survived them. To what do you owe this ability to survive bad situations?

The President. Well, I'd say a couple of things. I think, first of all, I had an indomitable mother, and I was raised to believe that every person should live on Churchill's edict, "Never quit."

And I had a high pain threshold. I remember once I was in an accident in a car in high school, and my jaw hit the steering wheel real hard, and it was the steering wheel that broke, not my jaw. I have a high pain threshold. That's pretty important. And since modern American politics, certainly for the last 20 years, have been a pretty brutal contact sport, that's important.

But I think by far the most important thing is what I talked about here today. I mean, I never thought the political office was primarily about personal attainment or ego or validation or even being thought well of. I always thought it was a job designed to achieve larger purposes for the people you were representing. And that's why I came to New Hampshire to give this speech. Apart from my sentimental attachment to the State, we proved here in '92 that if you have good ideas and they relate to people and their lives and their future, that you can survive personal adversity, because people understood this was about a common, larger endeavor.

And I think that's another thing. I never, in the darkest days, I never lost sight of the fact that however many days I had left as President, every one was a privilege and a pleasure, and I should be working for the people. And I think they sensed that. I think that, more than anything else, answers the question you asked.

Presidential Security

Mr. Knoller. During your Presidency, sir, were there any security close calls that we didn't know about?

The President. I'm just thinking. I'm not sure. You remember when the guy shot up the White House with the assault weapon, although you guys were in more danger than me. The bullets were directed toward the press room, but he didn't know that. But I don't think so. There were periods when I had an unusually large number of threats, but the Secret Service handled them and did well. As far as I know, there was nothing significant you don't know about.

Farewell Address

Mr. Knoller. Are you going to do a farewell address?

The President. I'm thinking about it. I have tried to—as I mentioned today in my speech

here, I tried to structure a series of speeches, in one of which I spoke to the larger world when I went to Great Britain and spoke at Warwick University after—about the global challenge of the 21st century. Then I made many of the same points at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

And then I made the education speech in Chicago and this speech here today. And I'm going home to Arkansas to speak to the Arkansas Legislature, where I spoke on my inaugural the five times I was Governor, and I'll talk a little more about substantive domestic issues. So I will have laid out my case for what I hope America will do in the future pretty much by the end of my term in these last few weeks in these speeches.

I may do another farewell address just so I can thank the country as a whole and say a few specific things. But it will be—if I do, it would be much briefer and less indepth on the policy stuff.

Use of Polling Data

Mr. Knoller. Bum rap or not, sir, you, more than any other President, used polling data during your term in office to guide you.

The President. Well, but let me just say, so did Roosevelt. Roosevelt was the first President to be almost obsessive about polls. But I never was controlled by them because I always believed if you were right, you could find a way to change public opinion.

Only a fool, I think, ignores research data on a constant basis. I mean, that's like television ratings or anything else. You look at research data. But I did—I believe that you'd be hard pressed to find any President in the last several decades who's done a larger number of things which were not popular at the moment.

And one of the things that I used polls for was to understand how aware the public was of given issues or, if they disagree with me on an issue, what was the most effective argument I could make to try to persuade them. But I didn't—especially on issues affecting America's future, I never let the polls control me. But the economic plan was not popular. It passed by one vote, and I knew it was the right thing to do. The decision to help Mexico was opposed 81–15. Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, those things were not popular. But I thought they were right, and I thought they could be made popular.

And let me give you some other things. By contrast, if you took polls in the beginning, it would appear that the public overwhelmingly agreed with me on all the gun safety issues, but there's no question that one of the reasons we lost seats in the Congress in '94 was because of the efforts of the NRA. If you took polls on the health care issue in '94, they all looked to be popular, but it turned out not to be.

And the reason for that is—but I was not unaware of that; I knew that—you have to understand how to read polls. I mean, you could be on a popular issue, but if the people who are against you are more intense than the people who are for you, it will still be a net loss at voting time.

So I was never paralyzed by polls. I always saw polls as sort of snapshots of what the American people knew, what they were thinking. And I used them to try to figure out what the best possible arguments I could make were to move the country where I thought we ought to go.

So I would expect any politician to use polls, but anybody who is imprisoned by a poll will in the end be defeated, because they're not good guideposts; they're pictures of horse races that are in progress.

Media Coverage

Mr. Knoller. I've got one last question that I think you'll find irresistible. In recent days, I've noticed you've accused us in the media of treating you with increasing irrelevancy. I'd like to ask you as you near the end of your Presidency, sir, what do you think of the news media coverage that you've been subjected to?

The President. Well, first of all, that's also been in just a good-natured jest. It is true that I'm on the way out. I mean, you can't—and so I've had a good time. But actually, you've given me unusually heavy coverage for this late in my term. But that's because we're continuing to do things; we're taking these actions like the environmental actions and the other things.

I think, on balance, the coverage has been—over an 8-year period, on balance—has been intense and fair in the sense that I have always had the chance to put my side out. I think that there are unusual pressures on the media today because there are more competitive outlets, and I think that the net effect of that is that sometimes a herd mentality takes over, and one person gets the story wrong, then everybody gets it wrong.

I think that the pressure for market share has aggravated the tendency which already exists, not only in our Capital but in every capital in the world, to elevate politics over policy and discord over working together.

So I think that—I also think that as the first post-baby-boomer President, and given the fact that I was involved in my youth in the controversies over Vietnam and a lot of other things, I think I became kind of a lightning rod—and Hillary did—for a lot of things that the system kind of had to work its way through. But I'd be at a poor position to have any profound complaints since I'm leaving office with pretty good approval ratings from the American people, and none of that would be possible if it hadn't been for the media through which I communicated my views and my side of all the controversies.

But I think that—I do think it's harder to get stories right, to avoid jumping the gun, to avoid kind of contributing to things that have a lot of heat and may not have much light, given the pressures that all of you are under today.

The last point I'd like to make, and I'm not pandering to you because you can't cover me much longer, is—[*laughter*]—but I believe this—I think it is a real mistake for people to generalize about the media. Very often there will be a big story in the national news, and ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, and CNN will all cover it differently.

So I think that you have to—I always had the feeling that you were more interested in policy than a lot of the people that covered me, but I think it's more because you've been here so long. I mean, I think you couldn't have hung around the way you have and done this if you weren't fascinated by politics. But in the end, you'd run dry if you didn't also care about what the consequences to the country are. And like I said, you can't cover me much longer, so I'm not pandering to you, but I think—on the other hand, if you were here now—consider, suppose you were a 30-year-old, or however young you can be, 35-year-old television anchor, and you got the White House assignment, and you wanted to go further in life, and you were going to be judged partly by how hot you were on the screen and what your market share was, and you had to put this story together, and you had an hour to do it, you'd be under a whole different set of pressures, both in your work environment and in your head.

So I think that I would—that's one thing I would counsel any President to do, is not—fight paranoia about the press, and don't generalize about it.

I think both I and my wife's alleged aversion to the press has been way overblown. We've always been far more discriminating about the things with which we disagreed and the things with which we agreed.

Mr. Knoller. Mr. President, thank you so much, sir. It's been fascinating.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 2:35 p.m. in Dover High School for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Usama bin Ladin, who allegedly sponsored the 1998 bombing attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; Senator Christopher S. Bond; Ronnie L. White, whose nomination to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri was defeated in October 1999; Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley; and former White House Chief of Staff Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Exchange With Reporters at the Greenleaf Senior Center
January 15, 2001

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

Voters' Rights Legislation

The President. ——problems that are still out there that have to be—I believe should be addressed, and I hope they will be. But I think—looking at this in a positive frame of mind and hope to goodness that there will be a real common commitment that goes way beyond party interest.

Q. Are you encouraged, sir, by what you've seen so far?

The President. Now you guys know I'm not going to get into that. I'm on my way out the door, man; I shouldn't be talking about that. [*Laughter*] I just want to focus on the things that I said today and the message I sent to Congress. I think that there are a lot of problems. I hope that the President-elect will appoint a high-level election commission—I think it would be good to have former Presidents share it—to deal with all the voting rights issues that are out there. I hope that there will be something done on—some more done on the criminal justice system to give people of color, all racial and ethnic backgrounds, a sense that the system is more fair—and to make it more fair. And I gave some specific recommendations there. I'd really like to see some—I hope there will be some action on that.

President's Agenda for the Final Days

Q. Sir, more generally, going into your last week as President, what are your thoughts?

The President. That we've still got a few things to do.

Q. What are those things?

The President. We're working on—obviously, we're still involved in the talks on the Middle East. And we're working with Secretary Babbitt to try to finalize some more resource preservation action. And I have, as always happens at the end of a President's term, to see hundreds and hundreds and hundreds, literally, of requests for consideration for executive clemency of some kind or another for people who have been incarcerated or who are out and asked for pardons so they can get their voting rights back.

That's one thing I'd really like to see the Congress do. There's some legislation in Congress which would restore people's voting rights after they serve their sentences, and I think it would be a very good thing to pass.

We did that in Arkansas 24 years ago, so that now when someone serves their sentence, including the probation, they automatically get the right to vote back. It's a very cumbersome process. A lot of people, particularly less well-educated people, without much money, they have no idea how to get a Federal pardon or that they can get it. And the system often takes years and years and years. And I think—it would seem to me that most Americans would agree, when someone serves their sentence and pays their debt to society, we all, the rest of us, have a vested interest in their becoming law-abiding and contributing citizens.

And I think that there may be other reasons people want to or need to apply for a Federal pardon, but I don't think the right to vote is one of them. So that's one thing I would really like to see done. As I said, we amended the Voting Rights Act in Arkansas—or constitutional amendment—when I was attorney general in 1977, to do that.

And I regret that we couldn't pass the legislation this year. But I think that there's a lot of bipartisan interest in it, especially among people who have thought about it and have personal contacts. If you look at this whole Federal pardon process, part of—a big reason people do it is to get the right to vote back. And they understand that the pardon is not really a pardon saying it's okay what you did. That's not what this is about. It's about basically saying this person has lived a good enough life that they ought to be given a chance to be a full citizen.

So, when it comes to voting, I don't think they ought to have to get a pardon. I think they ought to just change the law—completed their sentence, including the parole period, they automatically get their right to vote back. And I think most Americans would support that. I've never had a word of criticism in my home State about it in 20-some years.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 10:45 a.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President-elect George W. Bush. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of the President. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Celebration
January 15, 2001

The President. Thank you very much. Normally, I don't think Presidents should get awards. But I believe I'll accept these, if it's all the same to you.

I want to begin by saying that I am delighted to be here at this university, in this great hall, with all the people who are here on the stage. I brought something to Mayor Williams and to Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton. He mentioned that we signed the—that we passed the Southeast Federal Center bill to spur community development with a public/private partnership on Federal property. At the time it passed, we weren't able to do a formal signing ceremony, so I brought Mayor Williams and Eleanor Holmes Norton a copy of the bill and the pens I used to sign it, and I'd like to give it to them now.

I want to thank the DC City Council Chair, Linda Cropp; Kathy Patterson and the other councilmembers who are here who helped to make my stay in Washington, along with my family's, so wonderful. I want to thank Robie Beatty and Shirley Rivens Smith from the King Holiday Commission.

I'd like to thank the people who are here from my administration, present and former. I want to thank Frank Raines, former Director of OMB, and Jack Lew, our present Director, for all the work they did, along with the indomitable Alice Rivlin, to make sure that the Federal Government became a better partner for the District of Columbia in the allocation of our money.

On this Martin Luther King Holiday, I want to thank my friend of almost 20 years, the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater, who is always serving. And I want to thank the present head of the Corporation of National Service and the person who started our national service program, first Senator Harris Wofford, then Eli Segal. Thank you for bring AmeriCorps to life.

And I know we have AmeriCorps award winners and their families here and members and alumni. Thank you for your service. And thank you, Nancy Rubin, for your support. I also am proud to announce on Eli Segal's birthday that under the leadership of Nancy Rubin, a group of people are creating a new Eli Segal AmeriCorps Award for Entrepreneurial Leadership, and I thank you for that.

And I want to thank the members of the new DC Commission on National and Community Service. I just came from the kickoff, and I swore in the first community service volunteers—swore in, not swore at—[*laughter*]—the first community service volunteers. And we did some painting, and I can prove it because I've got paint on my pants and shoes to show it—[*laughter*]—not the ones I'm wearing now.

I want to thank Mayor Williams for this award and for what he said about our common efforts to make this great city even greater. It has been a real honor for me to live and work in Washington these last 8 years. I went to college here, and I worked here when I was a young man. And I love this city. I loved all of its neighborhoods. Even when I was in college, I spent a lot of time in all the neighborhoods. I was a community service volunteer in Northeast Washington when I was a student at Georgetown. And one of the first things I did after I got elected was to take a walk down Georgia Avenue. It looks better today than it did 8 years ago, I might add.

And I'm very proud of the work that we have done. I'm also—you might be interested to know that when Hillary was elected to the Senate and we had to find a place for her to live, she absolutely insisted on living in the District of Columbia. She wanted to be here. So I'll be back from time to time. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Don't go! [*Laughter*]

The President. Don't say that. [*Laughter*] I want you to know that while I think we have done a reasonably good job these last few years of relocating government functions and getting more funds to the District of Columbia and getting some of the burdens off your back that should be lifted, I believe that you should still have your votes in Congress and the Senate. I think that, maybe even more important, you should have the rights and powers and responsibilities that statehood carries.

[*At this point, reveille was played on a bugle.*]

The President. We practiced that for an hour yesterday. How did we do? [*Laughter*] We did great. It's okay. It's all right. It was good. I

mean, it—[*laughter*]—you know, look, I've only got 5 days left; it's hard to hold your interest. So we did the best we could. [*Laughter*]

And I want you to know that the Secret Service delivered to me this morning, so I get to ride around in it for 5 days, the newest Presidential limousine, which, I might add, is an enormous improvement in terms of the workability of the inner space. But we still have the license plates on it that calls for DC statehood. So I hope you'll keep working on that and keep making the case.

Meanwhile, we have worked together to use Federal resources to help spark economic growth, housing development, and job creation: over a billion dollars in new tax incentives for businesses and homeowners; $25 million to build the New York Avenue Metro station; $110 million for new and better public housing in Anacostia; $17 million for the DC College Access Act—3,000 young people now taking advantage of that in its very first year. Congratulations. I want to thank all of you who worked in the vineyards to make all these things happen.

This is a day we celebrate not only the life but the service of Martin Luther King, and not only the service of the famous but the service of those who are not known, embodied in the famous statement of Dr. King that everybody can be great because everybody can serve. You forget the rest of it: "You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

In 1992 when I ran for President, and Eleanor and I actually jogged up Pennsylvania Avenue in the rain together, some people thought that America had become so divided and cynical that somehow the spirit of service was gone, especially among our young people. I never believed that. Then I read all these articles about young people, this so-called Generation X group, and how self-absorbed and selfish they were. I never believed that. I saw people serving together everywhere and yearning to be part of a higher calling.

In 1993 in my Inaugural Address, I challenged the American people to a new season of service. And I proposed national service legislation to give young people in America the chance to serve in their own communities or other communities across the country and earn some money for college while doing it. Well, I think that what these young people have done in the last 7 years, since we had the first AmeriCorps class of 1994, has proved that what I saw 8 years ago was right. I'll say more about that in a moment.

In 1994 I signed the King Holiday and Service Act, sponsored by then Senator Harris Wofford and Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta, who worked with Dr. King. They wanted to make this holiday a day on, not a day off. Today, as a result of what they did, hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens are serving in their communities today, including over 1,000 here in Washington.

I've just come from the Greenleaf Senior Center with some very dedicated young people from four AmeriCorps projects, including City Year, a program that I found in Boston in 1991 that helped to inspire the creation of the national service program we have today. Today I swore in the first new members of City Year here in Washington, DC. When I became President, there were 100 of them around the country—100 members; today there are over 1,000 in 13 cities.

But listen to this. When we created the AmeriCorps program in 1994, we wanted to give young people the chance to serve. Obviously, we didn't know how many people would do it. The pay is modest. The scholarship benefits are not inconsiderable, but they're not enormous. But listen to this. Since the first class of volunteers in 1994, almost 200,000 men and women have participated, more than have served in the Peace Corps in the 40 years since it was created.

I say that not to diminish the Peace Corps; I'm a huge supporter of the Peace Corps. We've dramatically increased enrollment there, and I'd like to see the Congress continue to do so. But I just want to make the point that people do want to serve in our communities; they do want to make a difference.

And today, the young people that I painted the columns with over at the Greenleaf Community Center, three of them were from the DC area, but one was a young woman from Seattle. And the other young AmeriCorps volunteers I swore in, they were from all over America. And that's the great thing about it. You get all kinds of people, all different races and ethnic groups and backgrounds and income groups, coming together in all kinds of communities, dealing with all kinds of other people. And pretty soon, before you know it, you've got America at its best just happening there at the grassroots level. This is a big deal. And these 200,000 people

have not only changed their own lives but the lives of millions and millions of other Americans. We must continue to do this.

So far there have been 677 DC residents in AmeriCorps. They've earned a total—listen to this—of $2½ million for college education. And I want to thank, by the way, since we're here, the University of the District of Columbia, along with seven other of Washington's colleges and universities, for their participation in the AmeriCorps Heads Up program. AmeriCorps volunteers who are students here work as reading and math tutors at Davis Elementary School in Benning Heights, gaining valuable teaching experience. And the young people they are tutoring are gaining a head start on learning that will last a lifetime.

Citizen service changes people for the better. I don't know how many times I've heard volunteers in the classroom say they have learned more than their students have. And that makes every one of our young volunteers a winner. But today I want to congratulate some very special ones, those who won this year's All-AmeriCorps Award, 10 men and women selected for outstanding service to AmeriCorps.

And I want to talk about it a little bit to try to illustrate that this is not just about numbers. Yes, we've got 200,000 people in AmeriCorps in 7 years of classes, more than 40 years in the Peace Corps. Yes, they've gone all across this country and had a transforming effect. But that's the key. It's not the numbers; it's the impact. The adult literacy programs, the community learning centers, the volunteer programs—that these award winners are getting today—are still going strong, in some cases, years after their service has ended.

One young woman is a former migrant worker who used the skills she learned in AmeriCorps to teach 2,400 farm workers about pesticide safety. One man has been elected mayor of the community in which he served. Shoot, I wish we would have had this around when I was a kid. [*Laughter*]

Right here in Washington, Carey Hartin started a diversity club to help the many cultures at Roosevelt High School understand one another better. The kids in that club were so inspired, they went out and got a grant to expand Carey's program to other DC schools. Carey is now studying for her master's in education and student teaching at Cardozo High School. Where are you, Carey? Stand up there. Give her a hand. [*Applause*] Good for you.

She also has with her today another success story, the young woman who was the first president of Roosevelt High's Diversity Club, and is now in college studying music education. Stand up—where are you? [*Applause*] Give her a hand.

Now I want all the award winners to stand up. Let's give them all a big hand. [*Applause*] Thank you all, and bless you.

Let me say, when you see their numbers, you should multiply in your head times 12, because studies show that every full-time AmeriCorps volunteer generates on average a dozen more volunteers.

Now, all across America, you should also know that one million students are doing public service as a part of their school curriculum. And I might say, I would like to see every State in America follow the lead of the State of Maryland, under Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, and require, as a course, community service as a condition of graduation from high school. I think it would be a very good thing.

The United Nations has named 2001 the International Year of Volunteers. Americans have a lot to be proud of on that score. Our citizens are volunteering more and giving more to charitable causes than ever before. And the most generous donors by percentage are families with incomes of less than $10,000 a year.

I came here today, on Martin Luther King's Holiday, to talk about citizen service and AmeriCorps because it is the embodiment of my dreams of one America, an America in which we not only tolerate but respect and even celebrate our differences, but in which we work together and live together knowing that our common humanity is even more important.

Part of Martin Luther King's dream was somehow we would learn to "work together, pray together, struggle together, go to jail together, stand up for freedom together." If I could leave America with one wish as I depart office, it would be that we become more the one America that we know we ought to be.

Today I'm sending a message to Congress—you can read about it in the papers; I won't go through it all—but it follows up on the work I have done on this One America initiative over the last several years. And I wanted to basically

inform the Congress and the incoming administration about where we are in dealing with our racial issues, our opportunities and our continuing difficulties, about what progress we have made in the last 8 years and what still needs to be done to build one America.

I advocated some things that will doubtless be somewhat controversial, but I have been working on them: improvements in the criminal justice system; restoring voting rights to people when they complete their sentences, so they don't have to get a Presidential pardon; a national election commission headed by Presidents Ford and Carter to look into why some Americans have so much difficulty voting and how we can ever avoid—always avoid having another election like the last one, with all the controversies that we had there; and new steps forward in closing the disparities in health and education and economic development.

But what I want to say to you is that building one America is like life. It's a journey, not a destination. And the main thing will always be whether we're still making the trip.

Did any of you see the jazz series on TV this week? It was fabulous, wasn't it? My favorite line in the whole thing—my favorite line was uttered by that great Washington, DC, native Duke Ellington. When he was asked, "What's your favorite jazz tune," he said, "The one coming up." [*Laughter*] Well, believe me, that's what I believe about our country.

I see these young people, I see these volunteers, and it's been an honor for me to serve. It's been an honor for me to help make Washington stronger and better. But when somebody asks you what the best day is, think about these young folks and say, "The one coming up."

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. in the Building 46 Auditorium at the University of the District of Columbia. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams, Council Chair Linda Cropp, and Ward 3 Councilmember Kathy Patterson of Washington, DC; Alice Rivlin, chair, DC Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority; Chief Executive Officer Harris Wofford and former Chief Executive Officer Eli Segal, Corporation for National Service; Nancy Rubin, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Commission; and All-AmeriCorps Award winners Angela Campos, Mayor Cleveland L. Rippons of Cambridge, MD, and Carey Hartin. H.R. 3069, the Southeast Federal Center Public-Private Development Act of 2000, approved November 1, 2000, was assigned Public Law No. 106–407. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday proclamation of January 12 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Memorandum on Delegation of Authority Under Sections of the Immigration and Nationality Act

January 15, 2001

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Delegation of Authority Under Sections 212(f) and 215(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 212(f) and 215(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended (8 U.S.C. 1182(f) and 1185(a)(1)), and in light of Proclamation 4865 of September 29, 1981, I hereby delegate to the Attorney General the authority to:

(a) maintain custody, at any location she deems appropriate, and conduct any screening she deems appropriate in her unreviewable discretion, of any undocumented person she has reason to believe is seeking to enter the United States and who is encountered in a vessel interdicted on the high seas through December 31, 2001; and,

(b) any other appropriate actions with respect to such aliens permitted by law.

This memorandum is not intended to create, and should not be construed to create, any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, legally enforceable by any party against the United States,

its agencies or instrumentalities, officers, employees, or any other person, or to require any procedures to determine whether a person is a refugee.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum, which was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Funding for Trade and Development Agency Activities With Respect to China
January 13, 2001

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

I hereby transmit a report including my reasons for determining, pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 902 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101–246), that it is in the national interest of the United States to terminate the suspension on the obligation of funds for any new activities of the Trade and Development Agency with respect to the People's Republic of China.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 16.

Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor
January 16, 2001

The President. Good morning, and please be seated. I would like to first thank Chaplain General Hicks for his invocation and welcome the distinguished delegation from the Pentagon who are here—Secretary Cohen, General Shelton, Deputy Secretary de Leon. I thank the Members of Congress who are here: Senator Dorgan, Senator Durbin, Representatives Buyer, King, Skelton, Weller, and Whitfield; former Representatives Lazio and McHale; members of the Smith and Roosevelt families.

In 1782 George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit. It was the first medal awarded by our Nation's Armed Forces. But soon it fell into oblivion, and for decades no new medals were established. It was thought that a medal was too much like a European aristocratic title, while to fight for one's country in America was simply doing your democratic duty.

So when the Medal of Honor was instituted during the Civil War, it was agreed it would be given only for gallantry, at the risk of one's life above and beyond the call of duty. That's an extraordinarily high standard, one that precious few ever meet. The Medal of Honor is our highest military decoration, and we are here today to honor two American heroes who met that mark.

The first is Andrew Jackson Smith, United States Army. Then Corporal Smith served as a part of the 55th Massachusetts Voluntary Infantry, a black regiment that fought in the Civil War. In late 1864, they were part of a Union effort to cut off the Savannah-Charleston railroad link and keep Confederate forces from interfering with Sherman's march to the sea.

On November 30th, the 55th was one of several units that tried to take a 25-foot rise called Honey Hill, close to Boyd's Landing in South

Carolina. The Confederate troops had an elevated position, the advantage of surprise, and fortified entrenchments. So, as the 5,000 Union troops advanced through the 300 yards of swamp to get to the road leading up Honey Hill, they found themselves walking into a slaughter.

The commanding officer, Colonel Alfred Hartwell, wrote, "The leading brigade had been driven back when I was ordered in with mine. I was hit first in the hand, just before making a charge. Then my horse was killed under me, and I was hit afterward several times. One of my aides was killed, and another was blown from his horse. During the furious fight the color bearer was shot and killed, and it was Corporal Andrew Jackson Smith who would retrieve and save both the State and Federal flags."

Now, to understand what Corporal Smith did that day you have to know that in the Civil War the color bearer was kept in front of advancing troops and was a known, conspicuous target for the other side. The enemy fought hard for your colors, and units that lost them suffered serious loss of morale. Having them held high gave a unit the courage to carry on. Eighty Medals of Honor have been awarded to soldiers who saved their unit's colors during the Civil War.

Local legend says that the sandy soil of Honey Hill was literally soaked in Union blood on November 30, 1864, that, "one could walk on the dead for over a mile without touching the road." In one 5-minute span, the 55th alone is said to have lost over 100 men. But they never lost their colors, because Corporal Smith carried them through the battle, exposing himself as the lead target.

Like so many African-Americans who served in the Civil War, the soldiers of the 55th were only reluctantly accepted by their own Union army. Their units were segregated. They were paid less than white soldiers. They were commanded by white officers who mostly wanted to use them as garrison and labor battalions. So their first battle was the fight just to see battle. But given the opportunity, they fought with intensity that only high purpose and conviction can sustain. And they did it knowing they risked almost certain death or enslavement if captured by Confederate forces.

After the war, Andrew Jackson Smith lived out the rest of his days near Grand Rivers, Kentucky, where he was a leader in the community until his death in 1932. He was first nominated for the Medal of Honor—listen to this—in 1916. But the Army claimed, erroneously, that there were no official records to prove his story and his extraordinary acts of courage. It's taken America 137 years to honor his heroism.

We are immensely honored to have with us today eight of his family members, including Andrew Bowman, here to receive the Medal of Honor on behalf of his grandfather, and Mrs. Caruth Smith Washington, Andrew Jackson Smith's daughter, and a very young 93.

I want to say to all the members of the Smith family, sometimes it takes this country a while, but we nearly always get it right in the end. I am proud that we finally got the facts and that, for you and your brave forebear, we're finally making things right.

Major, please read the citation.

[*At this point, Maj. William Mullen III, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. The second Medal of Honor I award today is for the bravery of Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt on July 1, 1898. That was the day he led his volunteer troops, the Rough Riders, in taking San Juan Hill, which changed the course of the battle and the Spanish-American War.

We are greatly honored to be joined today by members of the Roosevelt family, including Tweed Roosevelt, here to accept the Medal of Honor on behalf of his great-grandfather.

This is the 37th Medal of Honor I have presented, but the first I presented in the recipient's old office—[*laughter*]—in front of a portrait of him in full battle gear. It is a tradition in the Roosevelt Room that when a Democrat is in the White House, a portrait of Franklin Roosevelt hangs above the mantle, and when a Republican is here, Teddy Roosevelt occupies the hallowed spot. I chose to break with the tradition these last 8 years because I figured if we could have even half the luck and skill leading America into the 21st century that Theodore Roosevelt did in leading America into the 20th century, our Nation would do just fine.

TR was a larger-than-life figure who gave our Nation a larger-than-life vision of our place in the world. Part of that vision was formed on San Juan Hill. His Rough Riders were made up of all kinds of Americans from all walks

of life. They were considered unpolished and undisciplined, but they were true citizen soldiers. By taking San Juan Hill, eventually they forced the enemy fleet into the Battle of Santiago Bay, where it was routed. This led to the Spanish surrender and opened the era of America as a global power.

Twenty-two people won the Medal of Honor for actions that day. Two high-ranking military officers who had won the Medal of Honor in earlier wars and who saw Theodore Roosevelt's bravery recommended him for the medal, too. For some reason, the War Department never acted on the recommendation. Some say he didn't get it because of the bias the War Department had against volunteers. Others say it was because he ran afoul of the Secretary of War, who, after the war, was reluctant to allow the return of a number of American servicemen afflicted with yellow fever. Roosevelt publicly called for America to bring its heroes home, where they had a far better chance to recover. The administration had to reverse course, and it proved embarrassing to the Secretary.

But while opinions about why he didn't receive the medal are mixed, opinion that he should have received it long ago is unanimous. So here in this room will stand two great bookends to his wide-ranging life: the Medal of Honor, America's highest honor for warriors; and the Nobel Peace Prize, the world's highest honor for peacemakers, which he won for his role in settling the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.

This is a remarkable day. And I can't help but noting that, for historical buffs, Theodore Roosevelt's son was the oldest man who landed on the beaches at Normandy on D-day, where he also won the Medal of Honor. Tragically, he died shortly after that, in his uniform, doing his duty.

We are profoundly grateful, as Americans, for this remarkable family. And I am honored that I had the chance before I left office to correct what I think is a significant historical error. I'd also like to thank all these people from New York who are in the Congress and other people from other States who did their part to see that it was done. And I thank all of you, too.

Nearly 100 years ago, standing in this place—I suppose I should also say this—the reason this was Theodore Roosevelt's office is that all the offices of the President were in the old White House until Teddy Roosevelt became President. But the country was bustling and growing and so was his family. He had five kids and no place to work over there. His children were rambunctious like him. They even let goats and other animals run through the White House during regular time. And so they built the West Wing in 1902, believe it or not, as a temporary structure, but no one ever had the courage to go back to Congress again and ask for money to do it right. So it's held up pretty well for the last 99 years. And that's why this was President Theodore Roosevelt's office.

Here's what he said, way back then, "We know there are dangers ahead, as we know there are evils to fight and overcome. But stout of heart, we see across the dangers the great future that lies beyond, and we rejoice." Let these words continue to guide us, as we go forth into a new century. May we continue to live up to the ideals for which both Andrew Jackson Smith and Theodore Roosevelt risked their lives.

Major, please read the citation.

[*Major Mullen read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. Well, thank you all very much for being here today. This has been a very moving ceremony. Again, I want to thank the large delegation from the Congress and former Members who have come, and families and folks in the Pentagon who worked hard to get this done. This is a good day for America.

I'll just leave you with this one thought. I said this yesterday, but I may say it every day in the last week of my Presidency. In the case of a black soldier in the long-ago Civil War, it sometimes takes a long time to get things right. But Theodore Roosevelt reminded us that the only way we do that is by constantly focusing on the future. And that's really what we're celebrating here today, two people who changed America in more ways than one by their personal courage, from very different vantage points.

PBS has been showing Geoffrey Ward's magnificent series on jazz—I don't know if any of you have seen it. But there's a great section on Duke Ellington, who was a native of Washington, DC. And he was asked what his favorite jazz tune was, and he said, "The one coming up." [*Laughter*] There's always a new one coming up. That's why we're all still here after more than 200 years.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. David Hicks, USA, Deputy Chief of Chaplains; and Geoffrey C. Ward, writer of the PBS television documentary series "Jazz."

Remarks to the United States Conference of Mayors
January 16, 2001

Mayor Coles, thank you very much. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank Secretary Cuomo and Mickey Ibarra for the wonderful job they have done. And I thank Secretary Herman and Director Aida Alvarez. Secretary Riley, thank you for being here. We have the Acting Director of our Office of National Drug Control Policy, Ed Jurith; Zina Pierre and others here who have worked with you. I thank Lynn Cutler, I see out there. And I thank Ellen Lovell, the head of the First Lady's millennial effort, who brought a lot of projects to a lot of communities across this country. And all the others who have worked with you.

I also want to say a special word of thanks to Mayor Coles. We always hear a lot of talk in Washington about bipartisanship, but if we look to America's mayors, we actually see it. Maybe because Fiorello LaGuardia was right when he said, "There was no Republican or Democratic way to pick up the garbage. You either pick it up, or you don't." [*Laughter*] I thank you, Mayor Coles.

I also want to thank some of the other officials of the various organizations who are here. Mayor Morial, thank you; Mayor Menino, thank you. Executive Director Tom Cochran, thank you. Thank you, Wellington Webb, for the award, for all the good times we had in Denver over the last several years.

It's been a real joy for me to welcome the U.S. Conference of Mayors here, and I am very proud of the partnership that we have formed. The record has already been established, in terms of the rebound of America's cities.

I would like to make today a different point, one that I rarely read in the retrospectives now being written about the last 8 years, whether they're favorable or critical; even the favorable ones sometimes, I rarely read it. They say, "Oh, this was"—let's take the best case ones—"You know, Clinton got rid of the deficit, and he's paying the debt down, and we've got a healthy economy again." Or, "There was one big idea, America would be connected to the world through networks of trade in an interdependent world, and we would stay ahead of the curve." Or the critical ones, "Oh, they just read the polls that came out for little things like school uniforms." I might say, parenthetically, that school districts that have them don't think they're little things.

But they miss the whole point, which is that for 8 years, we have had a partnership that focused on working together and that took policy seriously. That is, the thing that made all this work was beyond party and beyond the vast gulf between the White House and your house—is we actually believed there is a real connection in people's lives between the ideas you adopt, how you put them into practice, and then how people wind up living.

And one of the things that really has always bothered me about Washington, and I must say, I live without—I mean, I leave without having changed that very much, is that I think the public enterprise matters. I'm proud to have been in public life for over 25 years. And I believe that people of good will who are more interested in the impact of their actions on other people's lives than whether they are increasing their own power and position, whether they're Republicans or Democrats, liberals or conservatives, those people can work together. If what drives you is, "What is the impact of what you do on other people for the better," everybody that's motivated by that, without regard to party or philosophy, can work together.

But to get that done, we have to first of all, accept the fact that ideas matter and that how you turn ideas into policies matter, and then you've got to keep score. People are either better off or they're not. And the reason I loved working with the mayors—apart from the fact that I thought it was fun to visit your communities, and I always liked getting out there where

I got to see so-called real people—is that I knew you felt that. I knew you were out there thinking ideas mattered. I knew you were out there keeping score on yourselves.

And there's hardly a mayor here who's community I haven't visited at one time or another. And I just want to tell you how profoundly grateful I am for what you did. Because I think if we hadn't had the partnership we had, it is quite doubtful that we would have the 22½ million more jobs, 35 million people now taking advantage of the family leave law. Interestingly enough, it didn't hurt the economy like the people who were against it said it would.

The other thing I'm quite proud of is that the poverty rate has gone down to a 20-year low. And the last 3 years, the lowest 20 percent of working people have had the highest percentage increase in their income. I figured if we could get the economy going again, that we'd create more millionaires. It turned out the economy created a lot more billionaires too. But the real test, it seems to me, is whether all the people that are working get a fair reward for their efforts. And while I think a lot more needs to be done in that regard, it is good to see, for the first time in 30 years, the rising tide lifting all boats again.

I think it's worth pointing out here that the cities did lead the way. Incomes have risen faster in the cities than in the suburbs. Nationally, poverty is down 20 percent since 1993; it's down 23 percent in America's cities. So all of you can be very proud of what you have done. And I want to thank you for what you have done.

I want to thank you for the work you did in crime and urge you to try to maintain that partnership. You know, we wrote a crime bill in 1994 based on what mayors, police chiefs, police on the street, and prosecutors at the local level told us would work. They said, "Do this; this will work." And we put 100,000 police on the street, did those other things, passed the Brady law, and 611,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers have not been able to get handguns, and the crime rate is at a 25-year low. In many urban areas, it's even lower than that.

And now we're in the process of putting the second group of 50,000 more police on the street, concentrated in the areas of highest crime and greatest difficulty. So it worked. You proved it worked.

You worked with the Vice President to make sure the empowerment zone program worked, the program to clean up brownfields in urban areas, and I thank you for that. And I thank you for the input you had on the new markets initiative, and how we expanded the empowerment zones more, and then had some general tax incentives to invest in urban areas so that you didn't have to compete to get an empowerment zone or an enterprise community to get some of the benefits that I think ought to flow to anybody in the country not fully participating in our Nation's economic recovery now. So I thank you for all that.

I thank you for the work you did with us on welfare and housing. I thank you for the work you have done with us on health care. We had the number of people without health insurance going down in our country for the first time in a dozen years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, which is flowing money into a lot of urban areas in a way that is absolutely critical to your hospitals and your public health clinics.

I thank you for the work you have done with us on education, for the support you've given us to try to hire 100,000 more teachers to lower the classes in early grades, and for the support you've given—many of you very vocally—for funds to repair or modernize schools.

For the first time since World War II, this Congress gave us over a billion dollars to provide emergency repairs in schools all across the country. And in many, many of our cities, the average school building is over 50 years old. So this is something that you're going to be able to take advantage of. And I urge you to keep going with that and keep pushing it until we have more money, because, believe me, a billion dollars—I remember when I was a boy, Everett Dirksen said, "You can take a billion dollars here and a billion dollars there, and pretty soon you're talking about real money." And it is real money, but it's nowhere nearly enough for what we should do for our schools.

I thank you—and Mayor Webb mentioned this earlier today—for the support you gave us to continue Federal funding for the arts. One of the things that I was totally mystified by, when we had 5 years ago this sort of war on Federal funding for the arts that came out, is that it seemed to me that the people that were conducting the war may have had some poster project or another that they thought they could inflame public opinion about, but they had no idea how many community art centers out there

were running educational programs for kids in their own schools, that the cities could not possibly afford to run on their own without this supporting help. You helped us put the real face of NEA and our funding in the minds of the people doing it. And this year, of course, we actually got an increase.

So I feel that two of our major initiatives here were validated. I felt that what the Vice President did—and thank you, Alvin Brown—on the empowerment zones and the enterprise communities was also ratified when we adopted this big new markets initiative. So I thank you for that. And thank you for what you've done.

Now, let's just look ahead for a minute here. One of the things that I think is most important about our cities, and I see it everywhere, is the way people who come into vibrant cities basically naturally incline toward an attitude of interdependence, and they have a high comfort level, much higher comfort level, living with people who are different from them. And since I believe that's the biggest challenge facing people all over the world today, I think that the cities that succeed actually have something profoundly important to show the rest of our Nation and the world.

And I think when you just live close to one another and you have to share a lot of things, like whether it's a subway ride or waiting at a bus stop or some other more basic facility, you just naturally develop a different attitude toward your fellow human beings, and politics becomes a matter of practical cooperation. And I think that's what we need to continue to work on. So I think the cities are very, very important in that regard.

And on the Martin Luther King Holiday, yesterday, I released a report to the Congress, the last report I will issue on race, under our One America initiative. And I had some very specific recommendations in there that I hope the next administration and the next Congress will embrace—this Congress now; they're already meeting. And I would urge you to look at that, and if you agree, I hope you will help to get it done.

Because I really believe we've got a lot more work to do in education, particularly in modernizing these facilities and making sure all these urban schools are hooked up to the Internet. I think we've got a lot more work to do in terms of economic empowerment of people and places that are left behind. And it offers an enormous opportunity for the cities of our Nation to have an alliance with rural areas and Native American communities, so that you can't be pitted one against another.

I think there are still a lot of things that have to be done in the way of dealing fairly with immigrant populations coming to our country—so that we have the capacity to have laws and enforce them so that we don't wind up rewarding one group of immigrants over another, and the people that get the shaft are those that loyally waited in line for their time to be able to come to the United States and do what should be done. But on the other hand, I don't think we can afford to be treating some groups of immigrants different than others under the law either. That's why I've supported the "Latino Fairness Act" in the Congress last time. I'm real sorry we didn't pass it. It's about the only thing we wanted to pass we didn't. So I hope you will help with that.

I think we've got a real—we need to really give a lot more thought than we have to our imprisonment policies: how long people are in jail, what are they going to jail for, and what do they do when they get out. Nearly everybody that goes to jail gets out. I think it is time that we change, as a matter of national policy, the idea that you have to have a Presidential pardon or a Governor's pardon before you can get your vote back. I think if you pay a price, you go to jail, you get out, then you're on probation a while, then your sentence is discharged—why shouldn't you get your vote back? You think about it.

One of the big controversies in the recent election in Florida was the review of people to see if they had criminal records, which disabled them from voting. And then you had a lot of other people agitated because they were apparently—maybe not intentionally, just accidentally—purged from the rolls because they had the same names or similar names as those people who did.

But if—look, I've been doing this for 25 years now, since I was attorney general in my home State. Nearly everybody that goes to prison gets out. And when they get out, all the rest of us want them to do well, go to work, pay taxes, and not commit another crime, right? Why should we make them go through the incredible gyration of trying to figure out how to get a pardon? And all the systems are different.

And I can tell you, I'm sitting here—I've got just a few days left, and I'm trying to go over all these request for clemency, and it's almost impossible to deal with them all in a fair way, to give due concern to the attention of law enforcement as well as the people who are pleading their case. And I just don't see what that's got to do with this.

It seems to me—we changed the law in Arkansas 24 years ago—if you finish your sentence, you go sign up to vote; nobody has to get a pardon anymore. But I dare say, most people in Arkansas don't know that, because in most States they haven't done it, and we haven't done it at the national level.

These are just things I want you to think about, because I think the cities have got to continue to be the focus of building one America. And we've got to try to figure out how we're going to deal with the outstanding issues we've got.

Let me just mention, finally, that I am very grateful for the environmental support I've had from the mayors and the funding that we got last time, for the first time in history, under this lands legacy initiative, to have a permanent source of funding to set aside precious lands. And I just want to reemphasize to all of you, it is not just to protect the watershed around the Grand Canyon; it may be to protect the little square block park in some neighborhood, where that's the only green space your kids will ever see.

So I urge you, as I leave office, to make full use of this legislation that was passed last year to provide a permanent funding screen, to help you set aside green spaces in your communities. And understand, it is not just about the big open spaces or the big places or some big project, like the Everglades; it's about what's in your neighborhoods. We want this bill, this whole bill. The whole idea of this was to balance our concern for the big chunks of land and resources that had to be preserved and the need to provide some environmental balance and access to nature to all of our kids and families in urban America, as well. So I urge you, when you work in this coming year, to make sure that your cities are a part of that initiative.

Well, I've already said more than I meant to. I thank you for the award. I thank you for the work we've done to put this country in good shape. The 8 years passed in a flash, but I enjoyed it very much. And I particularly enjoyed working with the mayors. All of you who have welcomed me to your communities, I thank you for that. And I hope that you will do what you can to keep America on a positive track. Together we proved that good economics was good social policy, that you could be fiscally responsible and reduce poverty, that you could have an urban policy that actually helped the rest of the country, too. You did that. You should be very proud.

But I think that the biggest rewards of our efforts of the last 8 years are still out there. And if ever I can help any of you to do what's right by your people in the future, I will certainly do it. I thank you, and I feel better about my country knowing that you're staying behind to keep up the fight.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:24 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, ID, president, Mayor Wellington Webb of Denver, CO, past president, and J. Thomas Cochran, executive director, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mayors Marc Morial of New Orleans, LA, and Thomas Menino of Boston, MA; and Alvin Brown, Senior Adviser to the Vice President for Urban Affairs. Prior to his remarks, the President was presented with the U.S. Conference of Mayors Distinguished Public Service Award.

Statement on Action To Eliminate Sweatshops and Abusive Child Labor Practices

January 16, 2001

Today I am pleased to announce new initiatives that build on our efforts to put a more human face on the global economy by protecting workers, children, and families from abusive and

unfair labor practices. Around the world, tens of millions of children are deprived of their childhood and subjected to the worst forms of child labor, slavery, forced or compulsory labor, prostitution, pornography, and other kinds of harmful and unsafe work. At the same time, many millions of workers toil under conditions that are deplorable and unacceptable. These antisweatshop grants and the customs advisory on forced and indentured child labor represent additional tools to help eliminate sweatshops and abusive child labor across the globe.

Over the last 8 years, we have made the U.S. a leader in the global fight to stamp out abusive labor practices and open the door to education and opportunity. I am proud that the U.S. was among the first nations to ratify the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 182 for Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. With the support of Senator Tom Harkin, we have increased our contributions to the ILO's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor fifteenfold from $3 million in 1993 to $45 million today. We have doubled to $10 million Customs Service resources to enforce the ban on the importation of goods made with forced or indentured child labor. And last year, we passed a new $37 million Department of Labor School Works program to strengthen educational systems in developing countries, targeted to areas where abusive child labor is prevalent.

I would like to make a special note that one of the antisweatshop grants being announced today is being awarded to the Fair Labor Association (FLA), a diverse coalition of manufacturers, consumer groups, labor and human rights organizations, and universities dedicated to ensuring that products purchased by American consumers were not made in sweatshops overseas. The FLA grew out of the Apparel Industry Partnership, a coalition we first brought together at the White House in 1996 to combat sweatshop labor. This pathbreaking partnership was given new energy and vitality when Chuck Ruff agreed to be its first chairman. Chuck used his unique leadership and coalition-building skills to give the FLA a successful start. While Chuck recently passed away, the significant accomplishments of the FLA under his leadership will live on as one of his many contributions to a better, fairer world.

Statement on the Final Report of the E-Commerce Working Group

January 16, 2001

Today I am pleased to announce the release of the final report of my administration's E-commerce Working Group, "Leadership for the New Millennium, Delivering on Digital Progress and Prosperity." During my administration, America's economy and society have been transformed by new information and communications technologies. The information technology sector has accounted for almost one-third of U.S. economic growth and has helped spark an increase in U.S. productivity and global competitiveness.

Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to help Americans make the most of these new possibilities. We created a market-led approach to E-commerce that won acceptance around the world, promoted competition in the telecommunications industry, and increased our investment in the technologies of the 21st century. We strengthened the protection of personal information, especially sensitive medical and financial records. We helped to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that every child had the opportunity to become technologically literate. Thanks to the leadership of the Vice President, our Government is using the Internet to become more open, user-friendly, and efficient.

But we are still at the dawn of the information age, and much more remains to be done to grasp its potential. We should use technology to advance our oldest and deepest values—dramatically increasing the number of people with disabilities who can work, lifting more families out of poverty, and putting access to a world-class education and cutting-edge skills at the fingertips of every American. These are challenges that are worthy of our great Nation.

Statement on Reforms in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

January 16, 2001

I welcome the significant reforms in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) over the past several years, beginning with the distinguished tenure of Federico Mayor of Spain. Mr. Mayor helped to revitalize and refocus the organization on its core missions of promoting education for all, preserving our cultural heritage, and upholding freedom of the press. I also welcome the continued emphasis on these issues under UNESCO's current Director-General, Koïchiro Matsuura, who has also taken significant steps to reform the organization.

For several years, we have indicated our willingness to consider rejoining UNESCO subject to reform efforts and the availability of funding. UNESCO's substantial progress on reform and the U.N. General Assembly's agreement on modification of assessments present the United States with a new opportunity to move forward on this issue.

Our participation in UNESCO would strengthen the organization's ability to deal with such issues as the digital divide, education for all, and international cooperation on scientific issues. It would also better enable us to ensure that the organization sustains the progress made in recent years.

For all of these reasons, I would encourage the incoming administration to include a request to fund UNESCO in its FY 2002 budget and thereby pave the way for reentry into this important organization.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

January 16, 2001

Dear _____*:*

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, 2001, 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 Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, and Jesse Helms, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Robert C. Byrd, chairman, and Ted Stevens, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 17.

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

January 17, 2001

I am notifying the Congress that I have decided to suspend for an additional 6 months implementation of provisions of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act,

which allow legal actions to be brought against firms trafficking in confiscated properties in Cuba. I believe this action will enhance efforts by the United States to strengthen international cooperation aimed at promoting peaceful democratic change in Cuba.

For the past 5 years, the United States has pursued a strategy, coordinated by the Department of State, to increase international pressure on the Cuban Government to respect human rights and to begin political and economic reforms. Our friends and allies have joined us by taking concrete actions to try to hasten the day when Cuba will join the community of democratic nations. Encouraged by the results of our efforts to elicit the aid of our friends, I said in January 1997 that I expected to continue suspending this provision of Title III so long as our partners' stepped up pro-democracy efforts continued.

Over the past 6 months, the international community has continued to send a clear message to the Cuban Government on the need for greater respect for human rights and democratic reforms. For the second consecutive year, the Cuban Government experienced diplomatic isolation at the Ibero-American Summit, as other heads of state criticized Cuba's undemocratic government and abysmal human rights record. In the same vein, the Government of Canada has made clear that Cuba will not be invited to the 2001 Summit of the Americas, as the summit is for democratic nations only. The Cuban Government is hearing a consistent, firm message that it is time for peaceful, democratic change in Cuba.

I encourage our friends and allies to continue taking effective steps to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

Remarks on the Designation of New National Monuments

January 17, 2001

Thank you very much, and good morning. I want to welcome you all here, but especially I would like to acknowledge Secretary Mineta; Senator Conrad Burns of Montana; all the descendants of Lewis and Clark; representatives of Sacagawea and York; Stephen Ambrose, from whom you will hear in a moment. And I also want to recognize my friends Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan, who did such a wonderful job on the Lewis and Clark film; and members of the Millennium Council who have supported this project with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and Trails groups. I thank you all for coming here.

And I would like to especially acknowledge and thank our administration's environmental team, including Secretary Babbitt; EPA Administrator Carol Browner, who is here; Chief of Staff John Podesta; George Frampton, the head of the Council for Environmental Quality; and Bob Stanton, who has led our Park Service so ably. Thank you all for your good work.

I am especially grateful to these people today, obviously, but every day because, thanks to their work, our air and water are cleaner; our food is safer; we've cleaned up twice as many toxic waste sites in these 8 years as in the previous 12. We've protected more land in the lower 48 States than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt, and have supported research, development, and deployment of energy conservation, technologies, and clean energy sources, demonstrating, I believe convincingly, that we can have environmental protection and economic growth hand in hand.

We believe that our future and our land, air, and water are one; that we must preserve not only our historical treasures but our natural treasures, as well.

Today's ceremony is the last I will host as President here in the historic East Room, where First Lady Abigail Adams hung up the laundry to dry—[*laughter*]—where Union soldiers lived during the early days of the Civil War, and where a young idealist named Meriwether Lewis, summoned by President Jefferson to serve as his secretary, first unpacked his traveler's trunk and set up quarters in 1801.

The room looked quite different back then—no chandeliers, no parquet floors, no silk drapes, just the rough siding of walls awaiting plaster,

and two stone hearths to ward off the winter chill.

But what the East Room then lacked in grandeur was more than atoned for by the ideas that filled it. For it was here that Jefferson and Lewis first unfurled an unfinished map of a great continent and planned a bold expedition of discovery.

So it is fitting that we meet once more in this room, at the dawn of a new century and a new age of discovery, where a few months ago we announced the very first complete mapping of the human genome. We gather here to honor pathfinders of our past and protect their precious legacy.

Most of the landscape Lewis and Clark traversed nearly two centuries ago is changed beyond recognition—forests cut, prairies plowed, rivers dammed, cities built. That is the march of time. But still there are a few wild places left, rugged reminders of our rich history and nature's enduring majesty. Because they are more important than ever, after careful review and extensive public input, we protect them today by establishing them as national monuments.

The first of these monuments covers a remote stretch of the Missouri River in central Montana, now known as the Upper Missouri River Breaks. If you canoe these magical waters or hike their weathered cliffs, you may still encounter elk or bear, wolves, mountain lions, even bighorn sheep, just as Lewis and Clark did in 1805.

The second monument we designate is also in Montana. It is Pompeys Pillar, the sandstone outcrop named after the newborn son of Sacagawea, the expedition's Shoshone guide. Archeologists say this monolith has been a religious site and natural lookout for nearly 12,000 years. It bears the markings of many ancient travelers. Clark, himself, carved his name into the rock, and it's still there today.

Some years ago, Wallace Stegner observed that America has a fundamental interest in preserving wilderness because the challenge of wilderness forged our national character. He wrote that the wild places give us a "geography of hope" that sustains us in our busy lives, even in the largest cities.

Today we protect this geography of hope not just along the Lewis and Clark Trail but across our Nation in six other national monuments which Secretary Babbitt will discuss shortly. We have another purpose here today, as well, righting some wrongs that have lingered about Lewis and Clark for 200 years now.

The first concerns William Clark. When Lewis recruited Clark to help lead the Corps of Discovery, he promised him the rank of captain. Unfortunately, issues of budget and bureaucracy intervened—some things never change—[*laughter*]—and Clark never received his commission. A natural leader, great frontiersman, Lieutenant Clark risked his life across a continent and back, all for the good of this Nation. Today we honor his service by presenting his great-great-great-grandsons, Bud and John Clark, with the late William Clark Certificate of Appointment to the rank of captain in the United States Army.

[*At this point, the President presented the certificate.*]

We also have descendants of Meriwether Lewis here today, Jane Henley and Elizabeth Henley Label. I'd like to ask them to stand, as well. Thank you, and welcome.

The journals of Lewis and Clark record that the expedition's success also hinged on the courage and commitment of Sacagawea, an extraordinary 15-year-old Shoshone guide who made most of the trip with a baby on her back. Time and again her language skills, geographic knowledge, and tribal connections saved Lewis and Clark from disaster, even death. Despite her quite heroics, Sacagawea received no formal recognition after the expedition ended.

Last year we put her likeness on our new dollar coin. Today I am proud to announce her honorary promotion to the rank of sergeant in the United States Army, so that all Americans might recognize her critical role in Lewis and Clark's journey to the sea. Accepting her citation is Amy Mossett, a leader of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation, and Rose Ann Abrahamson, a leader of the Shoshone Nation. I'd like to ask them to come up.

[*The President presented the citation.*]

Finally, I want to recognize York, the slave who accompanied Lewis and Clark to the Pacific and back. Like Sacagawea, he shared all the risks but none of the reward. And while the rigors of the wilderness fostered a certain equality, camaraderie, and respect among York and his fellow explorers, that did not translate into freedom upon his return. Only years later did

he finally gain his liberty before fading into history.

Today, in recognition of York's selfless contributions to the Corps of Discovery and to his service to our country, he also receives an honorary promotion to the rank of sergeant in the United States Army. Accepting the citation on his behalf are York scholar Jim Holmberg and York sculptor Ed Hamilton. I'd like to ask them to come up and receive the citation.

[*The President presented the citation.*]

As we finally right these wrongs and celebrate the legacy of Lewis and Clark, we recognize the irony inherent in their expedition. Their historic journey of discovery opened up the American West, a mythic frontier that even today endures in the American mind as a symbol of freedom. But York was anything but free, and Sacagawea's people, like her neighbors, would eventually be swept away by a flood of American settlers determined to claim the Great Plains and the land beyond.

These hard truths do not fit comfortably within the narrow rhetorical boundaries of Manifest Destiny or square with modern notions of democracy and diversity. But as our Nation has grown physically, so we have grown as a people, and I believe the capacity for growth as a people, for deepening the bonds of community and broadening our vision of liberty and equality, has been just as important a voyage of discovery as the physical one Lewis and Clark took so long ago.

Nearly two centuries ago, Lewis and Clark used this compass—this very one—to navigate a continent of possibility. Now America is setting out to navigate a century of possibility, determined to explore the far frontiers of space, the ocean depths, the tiniest of genetic structures. But we must not forget our obligations to live in harmony with the Earth.

In the years to come, more areas will doubtless require our common protection. I'd like to mention just two, for example. First, the Owyhee Canyonlands in Idaho. This fractured maze of ancient canyons is a rugged paradise of leaping bighorn sheep and soaring birds of prey.

Second, we must continue, I believe, to safeguard the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, one of the last truly wild places on Earth—the Serengeti of the Americas. Some of you and others around the country have urged that I declare this a monument as well. I have declined because current law actually provides legislative protection for this refuge, identical to that which an Executive order would provide. But I still believe that those who propose, and who would now have to get legislative authorization to do so, to drill in the refuge are in error. In 1995 I vetoed a bill that would have permitted such drilling, and I believe we should continue to work together to meet the Nation's energy needs while we protect this environmental Eden.

I hope in the years ahead we can reach agreement on a policy of environmental protection and sustainable development appropriate to this new age in which we live and to the real condition of our natural resources. I hope it will unite Republicans and Democrats. Even more difficult, perhaps, I hope it will unite Westerners and Easterners—[*laughter*]—people who live in the North and the South, people who make a living from the land and those who feel more alive when they're on it.

Senator Burns, I'm glad to see you here today in support of this. We are making some progress. After years of squabbles, this year by a huge bipartisan majority, the Congress for the first time set aside a committed, dedicated stream of funding, year-in and year-out, to preserve the natural legacy of America, from vast open spaces to small urban green spaces. It is a very hopeful beginning and perhaps the most important congressional conservation move in many decades.

So I hope, as I leave, that we will be able to continue to build on this and return to the point where the environment is not a point of either partisan or geographic explosion but a point of shared values and shared vision.

For 8 years I have done my best to prepare America for the 21st century. I have been, critics and supporters alike have acknowledged, virtually obsessed with all things modern, with trying to make sure America was at the center of all new trading networks, trying to modernize our economic and social policies, trying to alter the framework of global financial institutions so that everyone had a chance to participate in the best of what the future holds, trying to make sure that we stayed on the cutting edge in all areas of science and technology. This has occupied much of my time and attention.

But I grew up in a national park, and I have never forgotten that progress uprooted from harmony with nature is a fool's errand. The more perfect Union of our Founders' dreams will always include the Earth that sustains us in body and spirit. Today we have honored three who made it so. Thank you very much.

Now I would like to ask Stephen Ambrose to come to the podium. But as I do, I would like to thank him for many things: for teaching America about World War II; for, most recently, making sure we know how the railroad was built across the country; and for all the works in between. But I rather suspect, having heard him talk about it, that nothing has quite captured his personal passion and the story of his family life like the odyssey of Lewis and Clark and the beauties that they found—that he and his family later discovered for themselves.

Steve.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to historian and author Stephen E. Ambrose; Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan, who wrote and produced the documentary "Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery"; and Amy Mossett and James J. Holmberg, board members, National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council. The proclamations on the Buck Island Reef National Monument, Carrizo Plain National Monument, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument, Minidoka Internment National Monument, Pompeys Pillar National Monument, Sonoran Desert National Monument, Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to a Joint Session of the Arkansas State Legislature in Little Rock, Arkansas

January 17, 2001

Thank you very, very much, and good afternoon. This is the first time in over 20 years I've been here when I don't have to get asked for a racing pass. [*Laughter*] And I heard somebody utter that hated phrase, and I understand that, for a variety of reasons, you've all gotten rid of that burden. So progress continues. [*Laughter*]

Governor Huckabee, Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller, Senator Beebe, Speaker Broadway, General Pryor, Secretary Priest, Jimmie Lou, Charlie, Gus, my friends. I'm delighted to be joined by Senator Pryor, about whom I would like to say more in a moment; Congressman Snyder, Congressman Ross, and a large number of people who came here with me from Washington.

I want to say that I am honored that the last trip of my Presidency is to come home to Arkansas and home to the legislature where I spent so many happy days. [*Applause*] Thank you.

There are a lot of people in this body who got their start in politics, working with me, a few who got their start in politics working against me—[*laughter*]—and some who got their start doing both—[*laughter*]—depending on the issue and the time.

I brought with me a large number of people from Arkansas today. And I would like to mention them and a few others because I would like to begin by telling you that in these last 8 years, over 460 people from our home State worked in this administration and helped to make America a stronger country, and I am very grateful to all of them.

Mack McLarty, my first Chief of Staff, my first Envoy to the Americas, is here today. When he led the White House, we made four of the most important decisions we made during the entire 8 years: The historic balanced budget agreement where Senator Pryor cast the tie-breaking vote—so did everybody else; it passed by one vote in both Houses—the NAFTA agreement, which joined us with Mexico and Canada; the family and medical leave bill, the Brady law, and many others. He did a superb job.

I want to thank the three Arkansans who have served in my Cabinet: Rodney Slater, who is here today, our Secretary of Transportation; Hershel Gober, who is Secretary of Veterans Affairs and started out helping me with veterans

in Arkansas and in New Hampshire and has been absolutely superb; and James Lee Witt, who could not be here today because disasters don't only occur in Arkansas, there are other places as well, although I know you've been through a doozy lately. I want to thank Buddy Young, who worked with him as our regional official in Texas, who is here today.

Two other former legislators, in addition to Mack, have been part of this administration: Gloria Cabe, who served with many if not most of you here; her daughter also works in the White House, in the White House Counsel's Office, and she's here today; and Carl Whillock, who, after he was a legislator, became the president of Arkansas State University, head of the Co-ops. But he's most important to me because the first trip I took out of Fayetteville, in the first race I ever made in 1974, was across the hills of north Arkansas with Carl Whillock, when only my mother thought I had any business in that race. And I thank them for being here.

I'd also like to just acknowledge a few people. As I said, some of them are here, and some of them aren't. Bob Nash, who's been with me for 21 years, and his wonderful wife, Janis Kearney, my diarist, who's here. Nancy Hernreich, who's not here, who's been with me since I first ran for attorney general and has worked for me for 15 years, just got married to the brother of Montine McNulty, from Pine Bluff, and is about to move with him to Hong Kong; Stephanie Streett, my wonderful scheduler, who's going to be working with me here in Arkansas; Craig Smith, who did a great job in handling appointments here and was my political director, came home to actually work this trip, to go out at the grassroots where he began. I want to thank Mike Gaines, who ran the Parole Commission, still is; Ken Smith; Mike Gauldin; Jana Prewitt; Jim Bob Baker, who's done a great job in the Agriculture Department; Maria Haley; Robyn Dickey; young Debra Wood, who's been with me the whole 8 years, just working like a beaver in the White House; Mel French, our protocol chief and, for many years, her deputy, David Pryor, Jr.; and Marsha Scott, who has kept in touch with so many of you for me over these last 8 years.

I want to thank Wilbur Peer and Harold Gist. I want to thank Caroll Willis, who's been at the Democratic Committee this whole time, who's been wonderful beyond my words to say; and Lottie Shackelford, thank you. Debbie Willhite and Ada Hollingsworth came home, and they helped us in a lot of ways, even though they weren't strictly on the payroll.

There are also tons of young people who have come to Washington and worked, just out of college or just out of law school. And I used to see them around and be so grateful that they could have an opportunity to have this experience, and I thank all of them for their work.

Three of my high school classmates are here today, who live in the Washington area and flew home with me: Dr. Jim French, who is a surgeon in Washington; Carolyn Staley, who runs the Adult Literacy Foundation; and my good friend Phil Jamison, who was the president of our class in high school, who retired from the Navy and stayed on to work in the Pentagon on nuclear weapons issues and did a lot of the pivotal work we have done with Russia over the last 8 years, which gave me an enormous amount of pride to know that a guy from my home town knew all about that and made me look like I knew what I was talking about from time to time.

I remember the first time I spoke here. It was in 1974, when I was permitted to come in here and ask for House members to help me in my very first race. I lost the election. If I hadn't, I probably never would have become President. Every time I see Congressman Hammerschmidt, I thank him for beating me.

I didn't lose my passion for public service, and it's been with me ever since. In the last 25 years I have stood in the well of this chamber many times. I have lobbied in the halls and the committee room back there as attorney general, when David Pryor was my Governor. I stood here five times to take the oath of office as Governor of my State. Two months out of every 2 years, with the help of a number of my legislative aides who are here today, Bill Clark and Hal Honeycutt and Bill Bowen, who was briefly my chief of staff, when even I was intimidated, we would argue and argue and work and work until we hammered into law our dreams for the future of this State.

I'd like to thank some people who aren't here, some of whom are no longer living: the late Judge Frank Holt, who gave me my first chance to work in a campaign in 1966; my great friend Senator Bill Fulbright, who lived long enough to see me become President and to receive the Medal of Freedom, who gave me a job when

I was flat broke, just so I could finish college, and I'll never forget it.

I would like to thank the Members of the congressional delegation, present and past, who stood with me in these last 8 years, in the tough times and the good times, especially David Pryor and Dale Bumpers, without whom I can't imagine how this last 8 years would have been possible. I thank you, my friends.

I'd like to thank Hillary. If she hadn't moved to Arkansas and married me, I doubt the rest of this trip would have happened. She was a great first lady for this State. She did an amazing job in Washington and did things that no one has ever done that will benefit this country for decades to come. And I am so proud of her, I could pop today. I want you to remember when she does great things in the United States Senate, she learned all of her politics wrestling with you. [*Laughter*]

I am delighted that my mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham, is here, and my stepfather, Dick Kelley—I thank them for being here; Lynda Dixon, who was my secretary as Governor and has run our office here in Little Rock, along with Representative Mary Anne Salmon.

And I am delighted that Chelsea could come home with me. As it happens, on the way home, on the way here from the airport, we passed two of her schools, Mann and Booker Arts Magnet School, where she spent so many happy years and learned a great deal about her lessons and about life. And the friends, the schools, the churches, the associations she had here had a lot to do with the person she is today, and I'm very grateful for that.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of this State who elected me five times, for sending me to Washington to carry the lessons that I learned from you and the progress that we tried to make here to the rest of the country.

Everything that I have been able to do as President is, in no small measure, a result of the life I lived and the jobs I had in Arkansas. My conviction that politics requires a vision and a strategy based on sound ideas and a belief that you can make a difference—from education reform to economic policy, to welfare and health care, to building one America, those things were formed here.

I know that when a person gets ready to check out of an office, there's always a lot of retrospectives. And I have followed them in the local press: Did this administration make a difference for Arkansas? Did it make a difference for America? So I am going to do an unconventional thing; I think I will start with the facts.

First of all, when I came in, I think a lot of people thought, well, you know, we'd just move the whole Federal Government down here. But the problem is, we had a $290 billion deficit, and then the price of getting rid of the deficit turned out to be losing the Congress for our party. And so then the people that were in control had other ideas about where the money ought to go from time to time, when we finally had a little.

Notwithstanding that, look what happened this year. We funded the Delta Regional Authority, $20 million the first year. We got funds for the Great River Bridge and for the Highway 82 Bridge. We had 500—Rodney said—Rodney said in this year's transportation budget there's $592 million for Arkansas. That's more than your per capita share.

We worked very hard, especially with Senator Lincoln and Congressman Snyder, to save the mission of the Little Rock Air Force Base and to get the C-130J there. There is $25 million in the budget this year for a simulator and millions more for an operations and maintenance center. I think you're okay.

We got $18 million for a quality evaluation center at the Pine Bluff arsenal. And as we try to reduce the dangers of chemical and biological warfare, I think that arsenal can have a very important mission in America's future. I've talked to Representative Ross about it, and I hope, after I come down here, I can work with you to think about what it should be doing in the 21st century.

There were $38 million for seven water projects, an expansion of the Forrest City prisons, $5 million for research for the Arkansas Children's Hospital. We funded the Dale Bumpers Rice Research Center and the Agriculture Research Center. The Little Rock VA got some money for a research annex. I am very happy that we got $2½ million for the Diane Blair Center at the University of Arkansas. And we finally got the upper payment limit for the medical center okayed, and that's worth $35 million, and I think it saved the medical center. At least that's what Dale Bumpers tells me it did.

Earlier, of course, there was over $40 million for the airport in northwest Arkansas. And when my library and center get built here, I expect it will be a project on the order of $200 million,

something that I believe will make a big difference, not only to central Arkansas but to the whole State.

But what's really important, it seems to me, is that Arkansas shared in what happened to the country. So when people ask you if it made a difference, here are a few numbers you might want to keep in mind: 35 million people have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law, which I signed after it was vetoed by people who said that it would hurt the economy. If I was trying to hurt the economy, I did a poor job.

We have 22½ million new jobs, a 30-year low in unemployment, a 40-year low in women's unemployment, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment ever recorded. Thirteen million more people get some form of college aid, thanks to the HOPE scholarship, the lifetime learning tax credit, the Pell grant, which will go to $3,750 this year. Seven million people have moved off welfare—a 60-percent drop in the welfare rolls; 3.3 million children now have health insurance under the Children's Health Insurance Program. And Governor, I want to thank you for your interest, and Mrs. Huckabee, in getting our kids health insurance. It's the first time in a dozen years the number of people without health insurance is going down.

Two million children have moved out of poverty; 1.3 million children are in after-school programs or summer school programs as the result of Federal funds that did not exist on the day I became President. In 4 years we've gone from an experimental program at $1 million to one of over $1.5 billion, serving 1.3 million children. There are 4 million latch-key kids in this country, a lot of them in Arkansas, and I think we ought to keep working until every child has a wholesome school to stay in after school rather than going back on the street, something to say yes to, rather than getting in trouble.

Six hundred and eleven thousand felons, fugitives, and stalkers were unable to buy handguns because of the Brady law, and yet, not a single Arkansas hunter missed an hour in the deer woods; no sport shooter missed a single contest. Two hundred thousand young Americans have served in AmeriCorps, a lot of them right here in Arkansas. When the tornado hit the capital neighborhoods—and I saw all the trees blown down in the backyard of the Governor's mansion, and I went over to the grocery store that was flattened—I saw young AmeriCorps kids from all over this country, working here in Arkansas to try to help fix things and clean things up, and I am grateful for that. And I might say, I learned a couple of days ago that those 200,000 people in 6 years are more people than have served in the Peace Corps in the entire 40 years of its existence. [*Applause*] Thank you.

One hundred and twenty-five thousand community police officers on the street; crime at a 25-year low; 37,000 teachers hired all over America in the early grades, on our way to 100,000 and a class size average of 18 in the first three grades; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of the country. We had Betty Bumpers and Rosalynn Carter over at the White House the other day to celebrate that. The largest increase in Head Start in history; the highest homeownership in history—the first time we've ever had more than two-thirds of the American people in their own homes.

We have a $500-a-child tax credit; we have 200,000 more people getting child care assistance. The student loan program costs $9 billion less than it did when I started, to people who are borrowing. The direct loan program saves the average college student $1,300 on a $10,000 loan. Interest rates, long-term, are lower today than they were when I took office, even though we've had an 8-year expansion. Average interest rates, because of turning deficits to surplus, saves people $2,000 a year on $100,000 home mortgage.

We've had over 300 trade agreements in the last year alone, agreements with China, with Africa and the Caribbean Basin, with Vietnam, and with Jordan. We have the smallest Government in 40 years, since Dwight Eisenhower was President of the United States, since 1960. Two-thirds of the regulations under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act have been eliminated. Hundreds of programs are gone, and I'll give anybody $5 that can mention five of them. I take it back. I'll give you $100 if you can mention five of them. [*Laughter*]

When we started, the deficit was $290 billion. Now we have a $240 billion surplus. In our last three budgets, we will pay down—pay down—about $600 billion of the Nation's debt, putting us on track, if we stay there, to be out of debt by the end of the decade, for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President, in 1835.

This has allowed us, among other things, to pass pension protection legislation that has strengthened the pension protection for 40 million Americans, to put 25 years on the life of Medicare for the first time in 25 years. And if the interest savings from paying down the debt as a result of Social Security taxes are put against Social Security—which is something I've been trying to do for 2 years—if they do that next year, it will extend the life of Social Security 54 years, to 2054, almost long enough to get us beyond the lifespan of all the baby boomers, when the demographics of America will begin to right themselves again.

We have cleaner air, cleaner water, cleaner drinking water, safer food, twice as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up as in the previous 12 years. And today we announced that we were setting aside eight more national monuments, which means this administration has now protected more land than any administration in the history of the country, except that of Theodore Roosevelt.

Per capita income after inflation is up an average of $6,300. Median income is over $40,000 for the first time in the history of the country, and wages have gone up 9 percent, as poverty has dropped 20 percent. So for the first time in decades, this was an economic recovery that I'm proud to say did produce more billionaires and millionaires, but also helped people in the lowest 20 percent of the wage earning bracket with the highest percentage gains in the last 3 years.

So that's what happened. And what I want to say to you is, one of the things that I tried to remember every day was that being President is a job, like being Governor was a job. And it matters how hard you work, but it also matters whether you've got the right ideas. And a lot of the ideas that I had came out of the experiences we shared together during the 1980's, when times were tough in Arkansas. We did not have an unemployment rate below the national average in the last 10 years I was Governor a single time, until 1992, when we ranked second in the country in job growth.

But I learned a lot as we worked, day-in and day-out, together, across party lines, across regional lines, to try to actually do the people's business. And I've said before and I'll say again, one of the biggest hazards of any national capital is—America is no different from others; I followed this pretty closely in other countries—is when you set up a Government so far away from the people, it is easy, when you realize maybe you get your 15 seconds on the evening news, to believe that politics is all about rhetoric and positioning. But it's not. It's a job. It really matters what you do, whether your ideas work, and whether you have a team of people who can translate those ideas into reality.

I tell everybody who listens to me that it's a team sport, that I may be the captain of the team, but if you don't have a team, you're going to lose every time. And so just once more, I would like to ask all the people who came here with me today from Arkansas, who have been part of this last 8 years, to stand, because they were a big part of our team. You all stand up. [*Applause*]

Now, I'd like to just mention three or four specific areas where I think your relationship to the National Government is important and where I hope our country will continue to move forward. The strategy we followed in education, which is still key to everything else, was very, very important, basically, higher standards, more accountability, greater investment, and equal opportunity—a simple strategy, but it's working.

We provided, for the first time, funds for States to identify failing schools and help local districts to turn them around or put them under new management or start charter schools. There was one in the country when we started; there are over 2,000 now. Reading and math scores are up in the country; SAT scores are at a 30-year high, even though more people from more disadvantaged backgrounds are taking them; a 50-percent increase in the number of kids in America taking advanced placement tests; 300 percent increase in Hispanic students over the last 7 years; 500 percent increase in African-American students. The African-American high school graduation rate is virtually equal to the white high school graduation rate in the country, for the first time in the history of America.

And more and more people are going on to college. But we have some significant challenges out there. We have the largest and most diverse group of students in our schools in history. Arkansas is now in the top three States in the percentage growth of its Hispanic population, as all of you doubtless know better than I.

I just hope that you will continue to work and to urge the Federal Government to work with you in making progress in these areas. We

got a billion dollars-plus, a little more than a billion dollars this year, for the first time, to try to just give funds to States and school districts to help repair old schools or grievously overcrowded schools. And I think that's very important.

There is a limit to how much we can ever expect local property tax payers to pay, and very often—you have two things going on now—very often the places where the need is the greatest, the property tax base is the smallest, which we know a lot about in Arkansas. And secondly, ironically, even though we've got the biggest school population in history, we have a smaller percentage of those students—excuse me, a smaller percentage of property tax owners with kids in the schools—property tax payers with kids in the schools.

So we've got to work this out. Now, when we started this, there were a lot of people who had genuine reservations—and this is not a political deal in the traditional sense in Washington. There were a lot of people who honestly thought that the Federal Government should not be giving money to States and the local school districts to help with school construction or repair because it wasn't something we did. And I agree that normally we shouldn't do that. Normally, we should either give you the money to spend as you need it or target it on the poorest people or the areas of greatest need, like the need to hook up all our classrooms to the Internet.

But this is an unusual time. This is the first time—the last 3 years—the first time that we've ever had more school students than we had in the baby boom years right after World War II. And the student population is much more diverse. And after World War II, the National Government did help States and school districts to deal with the school facilities problem.

So I hope that you will help us with that, because I think the unmet need is somewhere over $100 billion for adequate school facilities for our kids. We also are putting more funds than ever before, with total bipartisan agreement in Congress, into teacher training, continuing development, and funding the master teacher program to try to certify board-certified master teachers all across the country, until we get up to 100,000 of them, which will be enough for one in every school in the country. I think that's very, very important. But I would urge you to continue to do that.

The second thing I'd like to say is, I think that it's very important that we keep trying to refine the partnership between the National Government and the States in the area of economic development. Except for education, I guess I worked harder on just trying to get and keep jobs when I was here than anything else, and a lot of you worked very closely with me. I'm very grateful for the progress that has been made, and I'm especially grateful that we have got a focus now on the people and places that have been left behind. Because, in spite of this long recovery, there are still places in mountain counties in Appalachia and in north Arkansas, there are places in the Mississippi Delta and other rural areas, there are inner-city neighborhoods, and worst of all, a lot of our Native American reservations, where you can't tell there has been an 8-year recovery. I was on the Pine Ridge Reservation a little over a year ago in South Dakota, which is near Mount Rushmore, and one of the most historic places in all American Indian culture. The unemployment rate there is 72 percent. And as a result, all the social indicators are terrible. There are a lot of problems there. But intelligence is evenly distributed. I was taken around there by a young girl who had to move out of her home, was taken in by friends, living in the back of a trailer where there were, like, 11 people living. She was one of the most intelligent young people I met in the whole 8 years I was President. She deserves the same future everybody else does.

That's why we passed the empowerment zone program that Vice President Gore ran for 8 years, and did a brilliant job, I think, where we had these zones. But I thought we ought to do something to try to essentially make every area in America that was insufficiently developed eligible for the same investment incentives that we presently give American investors to invest in poor communities in Africa or Latin America or poor countries in Asia.

That's essentially what this new markets legislation is all about. We did it in partnership with the Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, a Republican from Illinois, and I'm very grateful to him for the work we did together, and any number of other legislators who are active in it—J.C. Watts from Oklahoma, a lot of you know; Danny Davis, from Illinois, who is from Arkansas, the Congressman from Chicago.

So I hope that you and, Governor, the economic development agencies of the State, will look for ways to maximize the usage of this new markets legislation, because, essentially, we've got one more piece that I think will pass early in this new session of Congress, but what we're trying to do is to give people the incentives to put money into places of high unemployment, where people are willing to work, and to spread the risk.

So essentially, what it does, it sets up the system where you can get about a 25 percent tax credit for investing in areas with very high unemployment, which means your risk is only 75 percent of what it would otherwise be, and if you have to borrow money, that up to two-thirds of an investment could be guaranteed by a Government mechanism, which would give you about 2 percent lower interest rates, which would further reduce the risk, which is essentially what we do when we try to set up trade and investment agreements all around the world in developing countries, where we have an interest in building the trading partners for the future and helping democracy. I could never understand why we wouldn't do it for people here in America. And I believe we have a unique opportunity here to bring free enterprise to people who have been left behind.

I know Arkansas is small enough, you all know each other well enough, you've had enough experience with this, we went through all that nightmare of the eighties, that it seems to me that this State is in a position maybe to take more advantage of that and also to identify what still needs to be done, what the National Government can do, than any place else.

I should also tell you that we're now going to have 40 of the empowerment zones that we had—not that many, but we had 20 to 30—and we're going to have 40 other communities, enterprise communities, designed by the Republican Members of Congress. We said, "Look, why don't we just test this? You guys design 40 communities that will get the special tax treatment the way you want it. We'll have 40 that work the way we think would work best. We'll identify 80 places that will get extra help. And then we'll just see what works, and then we'll do what works. If your idea works better than ours, we'll do yours. If ours works better, we'll do ours. And if some of each works best, we'll do that."

So there will be approximately 50 or more new community designations coming out next year, and I would like to see some of those come to Arkansas, as well. And you know, you'll have to go through the application process and all of that. But I really would urge you to make sure that Arkansas gets a substantial share of those new community opportunities because they get extra help to get investment there. And I think that will work.

A third thing I would like to say a little something about is welfare reform. We had a huge debate, you remember, back in '96, on welfare, but we passed a bipartisan bill that had a majority of both parties in both Houses. And you know how it works, and it has worked very well. Arkansas's rolls are down 60 percent, and I applaud you for that.

Now, what I would like to suggest is that we won't know how well this really works until the economy slows down, which is bound to happen someday, but I don't think it's imminent. I don't believe we've repealed the laws of the business cycle, but the truth is, because our markets are open, it's a great, great hedge against inflation. And because of the technology sector, we continue to increase productivity. And if we keep driving down interest rates by paying the debt down, which is the main thing the Government can do, the aggregate economy will continue, I think, to do very well.

But it seems to me that we need to really kind of—it's time now. This will be the fifth year since the welfare reform bill was passed. And we need to look and see where it's working and what the problems are. And what about people that are hard to place? Are we doing enough on job training? Have we done enough on transportation? Are people so concentrated that are still on the rolls or people that keep dropping out and go back in a hurry, that those are the places that need the new markets designation and help? These are the kinds of things that I think ought to be done.

But one of the great stories of the last 8 years is that all of us who thought poor people would rather work than draw a Government check for not working were right, but that people still have to be able, even on modest wages, to succeed at work and at home, which is one of the reasons I am disappointed we didn't raise the minimum wage again last year. I think it will go up fairly soon in this new session of Congress.

But we've got to make sure that people who are working, particularly if they're single parents, can do a good job with their kids, because raising children is still the most important job of any society. So again, our State is—ironically, it's small enough but also diverse enough, that you can really kind of do a mid-course check here, see what's working, what's not, what should the Congress do, what should the new administration do to help you make this work.

But this is an enormous story, to see these rolls cut 60 percent, and people, just like we always knew, preferring work to idleness as long as they can take care of their kids.

Now, one other thing I'd like to mention, and I alluded to it earlier. I know you've had some vigorous debates here in the legislature about how best to cover children and what should be done on health care. But let me just get to the bottom line. I'll state it again.

This Children's Health Insurance Program, which is the biggest expansion of health care since Medicaid was passed in '65, was a part of the Balanced Budget Act in '97. Then it took about a year for the States to get their programs up. So essentially, in 2 years, 3.3 million kids have gotten health insurance. And it's the first thing that's been done in a dozen years to get the number of people without health insurance going down. And we all know why it went up. Insurance rates went up; it was harder and harder for small businesses to cover their employees. And when they couldn't cover their employees, the employees themselves weren't making enough money to buy insurance. So we've got the numbers going down now.

There is enough money here in the Congress—they have enough money in the projected 10-year budget to afford a substantial tax cut, to keep paying the debt down, to meet our investment commitments at the national level, and still expand health care coverage. I believe the best way to do it is to work with the States to add the parents of the children who have been insured under the CHIP program.

Now, some of those parents, a few of them, have insurance at work where they can get insurance, but they can't insure their kids. But most of them don't have anything. And if you did that, if you did just that, that would cover over 25 percent of all the people left in America who don't have health insurance—just that one thing. And the money is there to do it.

The other thing that I've been trying to get the Congress to do that is—really there's nothing for you to do, but I think we ought to do it—is to give a tax credit to people who are over 55 and have either dropped out or retired early and lost their health insurance on the job, or who lost their jobs or who work in jobs without health insurance. They're not old enough to get into Medicare. Without in any way weakening Medicare, if we gave them a 25-percent tax credit, we could let them buy into Medicare at cost when they're over 55.

This is a big deal. And that's 300,000 or 400,000 people. And that's another big chunk of folks. But the thing I would like you to focus on—there will be a debate in this coming Congress, and I think there will be bipartisan interest now that the CHIP program is working so well, in adding people to the ranks of health insurance. And back in '94, when we had this big fight about it, we had a big fight because the economy was bad, and there was no way to cover everybody except with an employer mandate, which couldn't pass because the economy was bad, or with more money, which we didn't have unless we raised taxes, and we couldn't do it because we just raised taxes to get the deficit down.

Now, we are in a position to fund this. And it's very important that it be done in the right way. And the States, I think, have experience about how this might be done. So I would hope that this is one of the things that you would be working very closely with your congressional delegation on, because it really is the opportunity of a lifetime. I mean, for 50 years American Presidents and Congresses and people around the country have been trying to figure out how to get health care coverage to everybody. And Hawaii, Minnesota, and North Dakota are about the only people that have done it—that is, that are substantially over 90 percent. So I hope you will do that.

Another thing I think that might be very valuable to Arkansas is that in the previous campaign, President-elect Bush said that he would put more money into public health centers if he were elected. And I guess it's the same as it was, but when I left office, we were, for example, giving—85 percent of all the immunizations in the State of Arkansas were being given by the county health departments. Even upper-income people were taking their kids to county health departments because doctors

didn't want to buy the liability insurance, and so they'd just go and do that.

But I think that if there is going to be funding for health units, which I think would be a very good thing, then the States ought to have some significant input into how it's going to be done, so the money will be spent in a way that the States—and the Southern States, by the way, in general, have historic—for historic reasons, have relied on county health units, public health units, more than the rest of the country. So that's something else I think you ought to be looking for in this coming session of Congress. Are they going to do this? If so, how's the money going to be spent? What do you have to say about it? How can it help the health of the people of Arkansas, especially the children of Arkansas, in the most effective way?

Let me just make one final comment. I think one of the most important contributions that our administration made to life in Washington in the last 8 years was arguing that we had to find a way to be at peace with each other and to work together across all of our differences. If you follow American politics as closely as all of you do, you know that a lot of our differences are almost cultural: race, religion, the people who live in the West as opposed to people who live in the East, and their attitude about protection of public lands. Is it gun control or gun safety? All these things that keep—politicians just stay away from a lot of these issues because you're afraid, no matter which way you move and what you say, it will all blow up on you, and you can't get much done, but you lose votes no matter what you do.

But the truth is, in a highly diverse society, where we're growing more and more interdependent both within our country and around the world, with the rest of the world, we have no choice but to confront a lot of these things. So the work that we've done with this Office of One America, I think, is very, very important, with our race report and all of that.

On Martin Luther King's Holiday, Monday, I sent a report to Congress on where we are, what progress we've made in building one America in the last 8 years, and what I thought the unmet challenges were, from dealing with the challenge of racial profiling and law enforcement to closing disparities in health and education, to giving back the right to vote to ex-offenders once their sentence is discharged, something that the Arkansas Legislature did without a word of criticism in 1977—1977. This is a big deal. Six hundred thousand people every year get out of the penitentiary. You all want me to give more money every year for that prison over in Forrest City; people here in the room have lobbied for it. Most people who go in, get out. And we have a huge collective interest as a people in seeing that when people get out of prison, they obey the law.

You know, you don't want to dog people to the end of their days. If you say, "Here's your penalty; serve it," they serve it. And then they get out and say, "And now we want you to be a good, successful, law-abiding citizen, and by the way, here's a 50-pound weight we want you to wear around your neck for the rest of your life. But you've got to do as well as we do." I just think it's a mistake. And we have got to find a way to figure out how, once people pay and they get out—600,000 a year, that's a lot of people—we can bring them back into America. I mean, the whole purpose of defined punishment is to say when it's over, "You did it, but it's over."

And I can tell you, I'm going through this now—Meredith Cabe is one of my pardon attorneys—just dealing with the mechanics of this, I just don't—most people who apply for a Presidential pardon do it because they want to vote again. But a lot of people don't even know how to do it.

I'm not going to be President in 3 days. We're still getting applications in the mail, and it's crazy. Most of these people should just be able to vote and be full citizens, because they've paid. I think it's an important issue. And as I said, we did it here in 1977, but I'll bet you most people in Arkansas don't know that's the law, because only about 14 States have done it. So people just assume it's not there.

The other thing that I recommended and I think is very important is not that we re-litigate the last election but that we make sure that in every future election in every State in the country, voting is clear, simple, unquestionable, and people's votes get counted. And I asked the incoming administration to appoint a commission headed probably by President Ford and President Carter, but something totally bipartisan, just to look at this. Because we all know—I know the history of voting, and voting machines are good in a lot of ways because you can't vote twice in the same race on a voting

machine because you can't pull two levers now. But they're expensive. They're hard to maintain. When the ones you bought don't work anymore, they're hard to get parts to repair, and so that's how people got into these punch card systems.

I personally think that the pencil system I use on my absentee ballot here from Pulaski County is a lot better, a lot less subject to messing up, and can also be counted by machine, so it can be counted more quickly. But this is something that every State needs to be sure of.

The States in this country have done, I think, a very good job of making it easier for people to vote. One reason it took so long to count these votes in Washington State is—it took 2 weeks or 3 weeks to count the votes because over a third of the votes were cast by paper ballots in advance of election day.

By the way, it's going to change everything for all the politicians. There is a congressional seat in New Mexico that was won twice by the candidate of one party on election day, and both times the other candidate was elected because she got so many votes in the 3 weeks leading up to election.

So it is going to change the nature of politics. But the main thing is it's voter friendly. So the idea of making it easier for people to vote is taking hold in America. But until the recent election, I don't think any of us—I know I hadn't—we hadn't paid enough attention to the mechanics of voting. For example, the biggest reject State in the country—that is where people vote, but their votes are not counted—I think was Idaho last year. But because Idaho is overwhelmingly a Republican State, the races aren't close, so if 5 percent of the votes don't get counted, it never makes any difference. So nobody gets upset. They never think about it.

But now we know that this is not just a problem in Florida; it's a problem in other places. And we need to look at everywhere the mechanics of voting. Because, you just think about it, in Washington, DC, across the river, in the Alexandria public school system, there are people from 180 different national and ethnic groups in one school system. Their parents speak over 100 different languages as their native language. And as I said, I know Arkansas is one of the top three States in the country in the growth of Hispanic students. As this country gets more and more diverse and more and more commingled, it will be more and more important for people to believe, not only when their candidates win but especially when their candidates lose, that the whole thing was done in the best possible way.

So that's another thing that I would like to see not only this State and this State legislature weigh in but every State in the country. This is something we can do as a people that there ought to be no difference of opinion on. Just—we can figure out the most cost-effective way to get the mechanics right. But in this case, the whole integrity of our democracy, over the long run, depends upon it.

Let me just say one other thing. I went back and read my first inaugural address in 1979. I got a little plaque from the Arkansas Gazette when I gave it, that I put on the wall in the White House, and I had it up there every day I was President. And I had a line in it that said, "The people of Arkansas have two emotions in great abundance, hope and pride. Without them, there is no such thing as quality of life. With them, there is nothing we cannot achieve."

I will leave office at noon on the 20th, amazingly grateful that somehow the mystery of this great democracy gave me the chance to go from a little boy on South Hervey Street in Hope, Arkansas, to the White House. I am quite sure there was more than a little luck in that and good fortune. I am absolutely positive that I may be the only person ever elected President who owes his election purely to his personal friends, without whom I would never have won. But I know this: If we have the right vision, if we have good ideas, and if we always believe, if we are proud of our country and its history and our future is absolutely filled with hope, then the best days of this country will always be ahead.

After I became President, I went back and read all the founding documents again, to make sure that I knew them as nearly by heart as I could. And when the Founders kicked our country off with the Declaration of Independence, they said they pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor to the enterprise of forming a more perfect Union—not a perfect Union but a more perfect Union. And they were smart people. What they said is, if we get this right, then all the people who come after us will always be able to do better. There will always be new challenges, that as long as we are on this Earth and finite human beings, God

meant us to have new problems. But we will always be able to form a more perfect Union.

I will leave that office at noon on January 20th more idealistic than I was the day I took the oath of office 8 years before, largely because it worked out the way I thought it would based on what I learned and how I lived here.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in the House Chamber at the Arkansas State Capitol Building. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, and his wife, Janet; Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller of Arkansas; State Senator Mike Beebe, president pro tempore of the senate; State Representatives Shane Broadway, speaker of the house, and Mary Anne Salmon; State Attorney General Mark Pryor; Arkansas Secretary of State Sharon Priest; State Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher; Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands Charlie Daniels; State Auditor Gus Wingfield; former Senator David H. Pryor; Raymond Lloyd (Buddy) Young, Region VI Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Carl Whillock, Special Assistant to the President, Department of Agriculture; Montine McNulty, executive director, Arkansas Hospitality Association; Jana Prewitt, Director of External Affairs, Department of the Interior; Robyn Dickey, former White House Office Deputy Social Secretary; Debra Wood, White House Office Director of Student Correspondence; Wilbur Peer, Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Department of Agriculture; Harold Gist, Associate Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Transportation; Caroll Willis, director, and Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, Democratic National Committee; Debbie Willhite, co-executive director, 1997 Presidential Inaugural Committee; Ada Hollingsworth, owner, A&A Travel Services; Carolyn Staley, deputy director, National Institute for Literacy; former Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt; former Arkansas State Highway Commissioner L.W. (Bill) Clark; Hal Honeycutt, former director, Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission; Bill Bowen, former chief of staff to the Governor of Arkansas; former Senator Dale Bumpers, and his wife, Betty; and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to the Community in Little Rock

January 17, 2001

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. I want to——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. That's what I want to say, too. I want to thank you for coming, and I want to thank you for waiting. We had a wonderful moment in the Arkansas Legislature. I got to speak to the legislature and see a lot of my old friends. And you know, with term limits there's been a lot of turnover, and about a third of the legislature, as nearly as I can tell, got their start working in one of my campaigns. [*Laughter*] So I had a wonderful time.

Thank you, Mayor. I want to thank Rodney Slater and Hershel Gober. for doing a great job in the President's Cabinet and being part of this vast array of Arkansans who came down here with me today. Thank you, Vic Snyder, for your friendship and support. Thank you, Mike Ross, for making the campaign and going to Congress. We're proud of you.

Thank you, Senator Pryor, for coming home today so we could be together on my last trip to Arkansas. Maybe by the time I get around to writing a book, I'll be able to do some justice to the absolutely essential personal and political role David Pryor played in the success of this administration in the last 8 years. And I'm very grateful to him.

I want to thank all the State officials who came out. Thank you, Sharon Priest. Thank you, Jimmie Lou and Charlie, Gus, Mark Pryor. I want to thank Little Joe and the BK's. It's just like being home. And I want to thank the Trumpet and Zion Church choir.

You know, Jim Dailey said about everything I could think of to say. And he gave a terrific speech, and I hope somebody for me still got it on tape. I'm going to play that some day

when I'm feeling down, you know? [*Laughter*] I want to thank him for his friendship.

Chelsea and I are delighted to be here today. I wish Hillary could be here but, you know, she's otherwise occupied. And I could tell you one thing. She won that thing because she worked harder, and she learned to do that here. And I was very proud of her. I think the day she was sworn into the United States Senate, I honestly believe, was the happiest day of my life since Chelsea was born. It was an amazing thing and a real tribute to her and to all of you who have helped her along life's way.

I was thinking that it was about 8 years ago that I had my farewell rally to Arkansas when I left to become President in this very place. And I was looking out across this sea of faces, thinking how many of you were there then and how many of you were there 10 years ago and 20 years ago and, in some cases, 27 years ago, when I first started.

I got tickled when I was walking out of the legislature tonight. I ran into a guy named Red Milligan from Marion County, and in 1974, early '74, I went up and hunted him up because somebody told me he could get me some votes. And I asked him to be for me. And he got a guy named Carnie Carlton, and he said, "Well, we're going to drive you out in the country." He said, "You need to know our county has more dirt roads than any other county in Arkansas. And we're going down to Leon Swaford's store"—I still remember this, 1974—which is just about at the four corners of Marion and Searcy and Boone and Newton Counties. You can't get there from here, even today. [*Laughter*]

I got in the truck. We're driving down the road. He drives me about 20 minutes. We hadn't seen another living soul. They stomp on the brakes; the cab of the truck fills with dust. He whips out this bag of Redman—[*laughter*]—it's a true story—he said, "Son, I don't know if you can make it or not. You know, you're a university teacher and all that." He said, "I'll tell you what. If you'll chew this Redman, I'll be for you." [*Laughter*] "And if you don't, I'm going to kick you out and see if you can find your way back home." [*Laughter*] And I looked at him, and I said, "Open the door." [*Laughter*] True story.

And he told it again today, and he started laughing. He said, "Well, if that's the way you feel about it, I guess I'll be for you, anyway." [*Laughter*] It was those kind of encounters that helped me learn a little bit about human nature and public life and politics, the kind of thing that's hard to learn if you start out in a big place, where you don't have time to listen to people and see how they live and go down every little backroad. I made a lot of backroads with a lot of you in this audience today, and I just want to thank you.

I also want to say that if anybody had told me when I left here 8 years ago that I could come home with my country having the longest economic expansion in history and the largest number of new jobs in this period of time; where we'd actually be paying down $600 billion of the national debt in the last three budgets of my administration; that we'd have all-time high homeownership, minority business ownership, college-going rate, welfare rolls cut by 60 percent, the lowest crime rate in 25 years—I could go on—if anybody told me that all these ideas that I talked so passionately about in the campaign of '92, that I thought would work because they were beginning to work in Arkansas, I would have said, "I'll take that right now. For my country and our future, I'll take it right now." I never would have dreamed that it would have worked out as well as it has.

And I just want you to know that I know perfectly well I never would have been President if it hadn't been for the people of Arkansas. I told somebody yesterday that I know a little bit about American history and a lot about how a lot of people got to be President, and of all the ones that I know at least, I'm the only one that I can honestly say got to be President because he had personal friends who stood up, traveled the country, fought, spoke up, and determined to make the campaign go.

And because of you, I was able to make some other friends and see some other people and learn some things about this country of ours. It's quite an interesting place, America, growing more diverse every day; we're growing more independent every day; we're growing more connected to the rest of the world every day. And I did my best to prepare this country for this new century and this whole new way of living and working and relating to each other.

And when I leave office at noon on Saturday, I will leave with a heart filled with gratitude, happy and pleased that all the options are open for the American people; that choices still have to be made, but we actually have it within our

grasp to make America debt-free this decade, for the first time since 1835; to give every child in this country a world-class education; to bring free enterprise and opportunity to people and places that have been left behind, something that's very important to us here in Arkansas, because we have people, and we still today have people who haven't been part of this prosperity; to give the working families of this country that don't have health insurance access to health coverage for the first time in our country's history; to secure Medicare and Social Security for the baby boomers' retirement; and to continue to be a huge force for peace and freedom throughout the world. I couldn't have asked for more.

I'd also like to say that I'm well aware that I've just been the captain of this team, and without a team, you don't win in public life. It really is a team sport, public service. Jim Dailey mentioned some of the Arkansans that have served with me, and I mentioned some more when I was over at the legislature, because a number came down today. But I want you to know that over 460 of your fellow citizens from this State have worked in our administration in these last 8 years, and America is better because of what they did.

And finally, let me say I'm looking forward to being here and building my library and center. I believe it will be the most important educational institution as a library, a museum, a tourist destination, a learning site, of any that have been built, just because I have the benefit of coming into my own as a former President and building this library when all this wonderful technology is out there. I hope you like the building design. I worked hard on it, myself, for a year. It will be like a bridge out into the Arkansas River, and I think it will be a real beacon for people all around the country, and I expect people from all around the world to come here. I'll get it up quick as I can.

We'll have an educational program and offer a graduate degree in public service, which I hope will inspire other young people to spend at least some of their life in public service, which has been so good to me and which I have found so richly rewarding. So I'll be around quite a bit.

I want to say, too, when I came in from the airport, we passed two of Chelsea's schools, Mann and the Booker Arts Magnet School. And I'd like to thank, since she came home with me, all the people here in Little Rock and throughout the State who were so good to her during her growing up, and her teachers and all the others. It means a lot to me.

I've got a daughter about to graduate from college and a wife going into the Senate. It seems to me that one of the things I'll have to do is go to work—[*laughter*]—which won't do me any harm. But between my larger public service and doing what I can to support my Senator and my daughter, I will be here a lot, and we'll have a chance to do a lot of things together, to reminisce over old times.

But the main thing I want to say to all of you is, I want you to be proud that we proved that national politics and National Government and the direction of this Nation is not the private province of some elite somewhere in some big, distant place; that people with common sense, with basic American roots anywhere in the country, who have the right vision and the right ideas and are willing to work in good faith with all different kinds of people, can move this country forward.

And I want you to know, too, for all the storms and all the sunshine—I said this to the legislature, and I want to say it again because it's absolutely true—there has never been a day—and tonight will be the same way when I get home—that I haven't landed on that helicopter on the back of the White House lawn and not felt a thrill, not felt like a 17-year-old boy looking at the White House for the first time.

And when I walk out of the White House for the last time and I sit at the Inauguration of my successor and I leave this office, I will leave more idealistic and more hopeful about my country than the day I took the oath of office 8 years ago. And that's the way you ought to feel. That's the way you ought to feel. And none of it would have been possible without you. I love you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:28 p.m. in hanger 1 at Adams Field Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jim Dailey of Little Rock; former Senator David H. Pryor; Arkansas Secretary of State Sharon Priest; State Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher; Commissioner of State Lands Charlie Daniels; Auditor of State Gus Wingfield; and State Attorney General Mark Pryor.

Statement on Strengthening the Drinking Water Standard for Arsenic
January 17, 2001

When we turn on our taps, Americans expect the water that comes out to be clean and safe. Access to clean, safe water is fundamental to our quality of life. That is why my administration has made providing clean, safe tap water to all communities a top priority. As a result, since 1993, the number of Americans receiving tap water that meets tough Federal health standards has increased by 23 million.

Today I am pleased that this administration is taking further action to improve the quality of our drinking water by strengthening the drinking water standard for arsenic. This new drinking water standard will provide additional public health protections for 13 million Americans, including protections from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and other health problems.

My administration has worked hard to ensure that Americans enjoy the safest drinking water in the world. I proposed and, in 1996, signed amendments to significantly strengthen the Safe Drinking Water Act. In implementing this new law, my administration has already provided added protections for consumers from dangerous, disease-causing microbes such as *Cryptosporidium*, preventing as many as 460,000 cases of illness a year. We have ensured that Americans have the information they need to make important public health decisions for themselves and their families by requiring that 55,000 water systems provide new annual reports to their customers on the quality of their drinking water. And recognizing that good water quality comes at a cost, we have established the first-ever fund for drinking water system improvements, providing States with $3.6 billion, to date, in low interest loans for treatment system construction and upgrades.

Together with the new action we are taking today, these steps will ensure that our families continue to enjoy safe, clean drinking water.

Statement on Child Support Enforcement Efforts
January 17, 2001

Today the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released new data showing that our administration's tough child support enforcement efforts have been effective and are paying off for our children. Child support collections broke new records in 2000, collecting $18 billion, an increase of $10 billion since 1992. The new data today also shows that in 2000 alone, nearly 700,000 delinquent noncustodial parents were matched to more than one million financial records and that through withholding tax refunds, a record $1.4 billion in overdue child support was collected, twice the amount collected when I took office.

Our administration's commitment to work with States to efficiently and effectively hold noncustodial parents accountable for their child support obligations has demonstrated significant improvement over the last 8 years. Today, parents who owe child support have their wages garnished, their Federal loans and passports denied, their bank accounts seized, and their tax refunds withheld. Last year alone, nearly 3.5 million delinquent noncustodial parents were located through the National Directory of New Hires posting.

In addition, Welfare to Work grants have helped States, tribes, and communities nationwide have created programs that help low income, noncustodial fathers get and keep jobs that will allow them to pay child support and provide their children emotional support. Congress just enacted my proposal to extend these grants for an additional 2 years.

Despite these tremendous gains, there is still more to do. In my FY 2001 budget, I proposed the fathers work/families win initiative to help low income fathers and families work and support their children, along with needed reforms to the child support system. I urge the next

administration and the 107th Congress to take action this year to promote responsible fatherhood and ensure that more child support goes directly to families.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting a Certification Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention

January 17, 2001

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

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 applications; 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.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 of January 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Required by the Ratification Resolution of the Chemical Weapons Convention

January 17, 2001

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

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.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Estonia-United States Fishery Agreement
January 17, 2001

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

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 United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Estonia extending the Agreement of June 1, 1992, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States, with annex, as extended (the 1992 Agreement). The present Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Tallinn on September 7 and September 12, 2000, extends the 1992 Agreement to June 30, 2003.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Estonia, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
January 17, 2001

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–November 30, 2000. The previous submission covered events during August and September 2000.

The United Nations continued its efforts to bring about a comprehensive settlement between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots with the fifth session of proximity talks in Geneva from November 1 to 10. Special Presidential Emissary Alfred Moses, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald Bandler continued to provide diplomatic support to the process. The United Nations Secretary General invited both parties to continue talks in Geneva in late January. The United States remains committed to the United Nations process and efforts to bring about a solution based upon a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Haiti
January 17, 2001

Pursuant to section 559(b) of Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, I hereby transmit to you a report concerning the status of Haiti's progress.

The report contains eight subsections, which provide information required by section 559(b)

of the Act, to the extent that such information is available. These subsections address:

- Governmental Institutions Envisioned in the 1987 Haitian Constitution.
- Privatization of Haiti's Major Public Entities.
- Efforts to Re-sign the Lapsed Bilateral Repatriation Agreement, and Cooperation in Halting Illegal Migration.
- Investigations and Prosecution of Extrajudicial and Political Killings, and Cooperation With the United States In Such Investigation.
- Removal and Maintenance of Separation of Human Rights Violators from Haitian Public Security Entities or Units.
- Ratification of the 1997 Maritime Counter-Narcotics Agreement.
- Development of Haiti's Domestic Capacity to Conduct Free, Fair, Democratic, and Administratively Sound Elections.
- Demonstrated Commitment of Haiti's Minister of Justice to the Professionalism of the Judiciary, and Progress Toward Judicial Branch Independence.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, and Jesse Helms, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Robert C. Byrd, chairman, and Ted Stevens, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 18. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Russian Federation

January 17, 2001

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation that was declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status for Certain Former Eastern Bloc States

January 17, 2001

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

On September 21, 1994, I determined and reported to the Congress that the Russian Federation was not in violation of paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 402(a) of the Trade Act of 1974, or paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 409(a) of that Act. On June 3, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine were not in violation of the same

provisions, and I made an identical determination on December 5, 1997, with respect to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. These actions allowed for the continuation of normal trade relations for these countries and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver.

Pursuant to section 302(b) of Public Law 106–200, on June 29, 2000, I determined that title IV of the 1974 Trade Act should no longer apply to Kyrgyzstan.

As required by law, I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The report indicates continued compliance of these countries with international standards concerning freedom of emigration.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Prevention of Nuclear Proliferation

January 17, 2001

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

As required by section 601(a) of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–242, 22 U.S.C. 3281(a)), I transmit herewith a report on the activities of the United States Government departments and agencies relating to the prevention of nuclear proliferation. The report covers activities between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 1999.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Taliban

January 17, 2001

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Taliban in Afghanistan that was declared in Executive Order 13129 of July 4, 1999.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 18.

Statement on New Energy Efficiency Standards for Appliances
January 18, 2001

I am pleased that the Department of Energy is today establishing four new energy efficiency standards for appliances that will save consumers and businesses more than $19 billion over the next 30 years. These standards once again demonstrate that environmental protection and economic growth go hand in hand. By reducing electricity use, the standards will not only make our electricity system more reliable but also will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollutants. I applaud the leadership and hard work of Energy Secretary Bill Richardson and his staff for bringing these consumer savings and environmental benefits to the American public.

These new standards for clothes washers, water heaters, residential heat pumps and central air conditioners, and commercial heating and cooling equipment are a critical part of our broader effort to address the greatest environmental challenge of the 21st century: global warming. The world's leading scientists have established that our climate is changing, that the rate of change is increasing, that human activities are a significant factor in climate change, and that climate change is likely to have many negative impacts on our environment and society.

As part of our effort to combat global warming, this administration has launched more than 50 major initiatives to improve energy efficiency and develop clean energy sources. Along with the new standards announced today, higher energy efficiency standards for appliances established by this administration will save consumers more than $10 billion and avoid carbon dioxide emissions of more than 225 million metric tons by 2010. We also made the Federal Government more efficient—in 1999 alone, we reduced our annual energy bill by $800 million. By 2010, these Federal energy savings will reduce annual emissions by an amount equal to taking 1.7 million cars off the road.

I am proud of the progress we have made and am confident that it will serve as a foundation upon which our Nation can continue to meet the profound challenge of climate change.

Memorandum on the Inter-Agency Task Force for Preparation for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance
January 18, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Inter-Agency Task Force for Preparation for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

The United Nations has held two world conferences on racism, one in 1978, and another in 1983. These two conferences focused on the world's obligation to victims of racial discrimination and the importance of national legislative, judicial, and administrative action in addressing the problem of racism.

In recognition of the fact that the objective of eliminating racial discrimination has not yet been attained, the United Nations in a 1997 resolution called for a Third World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Conference). The Conference will be held in South Africa in September 2001.

This Administration has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to issues of race and race relations and believes that the United States will play an important role in this international event. Our effective participation in the Conference requires the continued involvement and coordination of many executive departments and agencies, as well as input from nongovernmental organizations. This Administration is

strongly committed to the success of the Conference and, to that end, I direct as follows:

(1) There is established an "Inter-Agency Task Force for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance" (Task Force).

(2) The Task Force shall be comprised of representatives from the Departments of Justice, State, the Interior, the Small Business Administration, and such other agencies as the Chair deems appropriate. The Chair of the Task Force shall be the representative from the Justice Department. The Task Force shall report to the President, through the White House Chief of Staff.

(3) The Task Force shall coordinate all planning efforts related to the United States' participation in the Conference. This coordination shall include such matters as outreach to nongovernmental organizations, participation in national and international discussions concerning the Conference's agenda, its objectives and scope, and government-wide preparations for participation in the Conference.

(4) The Department of State shall provide the funding for the Task Force and bear all administrative costs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Farewell Address to the Nation
January 18, 2001

My fellow citizens, tonight is my last opportunity to speak to you from the Oval Office as your President. I am profoundly grateful to you for twice giving me the honor to serve, to work for you and with you to prepare our Nation for the 21st century.

And I'm grateful to Vice President Gore, to my Cabinet Secretaries, and to all those who have served with me for the last 8 years.

This has been a time of dramatic transformation, and you have risen to every new challenge. You have made our social fabric stronger, our families healthier and safer, our people more prosperous. You, the American people, have made our passage into the global information age an era of great American renewal.

In all the work I have done as President—every decision I have made, every executive action I have taken, every bill I have proposed and signed—I've tried to give all Americans the tools and conditions to build the future of our dreams in a good society with a strong economy, a cleaner environment, and a freer, safer, more prosperous world.

I have steered my course by our enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans. I have sought to give America a new kind of Government, smaller, more modern, more effective, full of ideas and policies appropriate to this new time, always putting people first, always focusing on the future.

Working together, America has done well. Our economy is breaking records with more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the highest homeownership ever, the longest expansion in history. Our families and communities are stronger. Thirty-five million Americans have used the family leave law; 8 million have moved off welfare. Crime is at a 25-year low. Over 10 million Americans receive more college aid, and more people than ever are going to college. Our schools are better. Higher standards, greater accountability, and larger investments have brought higher test scores and higher graduation rates. More than 3 million children have health insurance now, and more than 7 million Americans have been lifted out of poverty. Incomes are rising across the board. Our air and water are cleaner. Our food and drinking water are safer. And more of our precious land has been preserved in the continental United States than at any time in a 100 years.

America has been a force for peace and prosperity in every corner of the globe. I'm very grateful to be able to turn over the reins of leadership to a new President with America in

such a strong position to meet the challenges of the future.

Tonight I want to leave you with three thoughts about our future.

First, America must maintain our record of fiscal responsibility. Through our last four budgets we've turned record deficits to record surpluses, and we've been able to pay down $600 billion of our national debt—on track to be debt-free by the end of the decade for the first time since 1835. Staying on that course will bring lower interest rates, greater prosperity, and the opportunity to meet our big challenges. If we choose wisely, we can pay down the debt, deal with the retirement of the baby boomers, invest more in our future, and provide tax relief.

Second, because the world is more connected every day, in every way, America's security and prosperity require us to continue to lead in the world. At this remarkable moment in history, more people live in freedom than ever before. Our alliances are stronger than ever. People all around the world look to America to be a force for peace and prosperity, freedom and security. The global economy is giving more of our own people and billions around the world the chance to work and live and raise their families with dignity. But the forces of integration that have created these good opportunities also make us more subject to global forces of destruction, to terrorism, organized crime and narcotrafficking, the spread of deadly weapons and disease, the degradation of the global environment.

The expansion of trade hasn't fully closed the gap between those of us who live on the cutting edge of the global economy and the billions around the world who live on the knife's edge of survival. This global gap requires more than compassion; it requires action. Global poverty is a powder keg that could be ignited by our indifference.

In his first Inaugural Address, Thomas Jefferson warned of entangling alliances. But in our times, America cannot and must not disentangle itself from the world. If we want the world to embody our shared values, then we must assume a shared responsibility.

If the wars of the 20th century, especially the recent ones in Kosovo and Bosnia, have taught us anything, it is that we achieve our aims by defending our values and leading the forces of freedom and peace. We must embrace boldly and resolutely that duty to lead—to stand with our allies in word and deed and to put a human face on the global economy, so that expanded trade benefits all peoples in all nations, lifting lives and hopes all across the world.

Third, we must remember that America cannot lead in the world unless here at home we weave the threads of our coat of many colors into the fabric of one America. As we become ever more diverse, we must work harder to unite around our common values and our common humanity. We must work harder to overcome our differences, in our hearts and in our laws. We must treat all our people with fairness and dignity, regardless of their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, and regardless of when they arrived in our country—always moving toward the more perfect Union of our Founders' dreams.

Hillary, Chelsea, and I join all Americans in wishing our very best to the next President, George W. Bush, to his family and his administration, in meeting these challenges, and in leading freedom's march in this new century.

As for me, I'll leave the Presidency more idealistic, more full of hope than the day I arrived, and more confident than ever that America's best days lie ahead.

My days in this office are nearly through, but my days of service, I hope, are not. In the years ahead, I will never hold a position higher or a covenant more sacred than that of President of the United States. But there is no title I will wear more proudly than that of citizen.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Actions Concerning Digital Computer Exports
January 18, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1211(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105–85), I hereby notify you of my decision to establish a new level for the notification procedure for digital computers set forth in section 1211(a) of Public Law 105–85. The new level will be 85,000 millions of theoretical operations per second (MTOPS). In accordance with the provisions of section 1211(e), I hereby notify you of my decision to remove Lithuania from the list of countries covered under section 1211(b). The attached report provides the rationale supporting these decisions and fulfills the requirements of Public Law 105–85, sections 1211(d) and (e).

I have also directed the Secretary of Commerce to adjust the licensing requirements for Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries. The countries in Tier 2 will be added to Tier 1, and Tier 2 will be abolished. In addition, the new level above which an individual license will be required for exports to Tier 3 countries is 85,000 MTOPS. The aforementioned licensing adjustments will take place immediately.

I have made all of these changes based on the recommendation of the Departments of Defense, Commerce, State, and Energy.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Carl Levin, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Paul S. Sarbanes, chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 19.

Statement on Resolution of Legal Issues
January 19, 2001

Today I signed a consent order in the lawsuit brought by the Arkansas Committee on Professional Conduct, which brings to an end that proceeding. I have accepted a 5-year suspension of my law license, agreed to pay a $25,000 fine to cover counsel fees, and acknowledged a violation of one of the Arkansas Model Rules of Professional Conduct because of testimony in my Paula Jones case deposition. The disbarment suit will now be dismissed.

I have taken every step I can to end this matter. I have already settled the Paula Jones case, even after it was dismissed as being completely without legal and factual merit. I have also paid court and counsel fees in restitution and been held in civil contempt for my deposition testimony regarding Ms. Lewinsky, which Judge Wright agreed had no bearing on Ms. Jones' case, even though I disagreed with the findings in the judge's order. I will not seek any legal fees incurred as a result of the Lewinsky investigation to which I might otherwise become entitled under the Independent Counsel Act.

I have had occasion frequently to reflect on the Jones case. In this consent order, I acknowledge having knowingly violated Judge Wright's discovery orders in my deposition in that case. I tried to walk a line between acting lawfully and testifying falsely, but I now recognize that I did not fully accomplish this goal and that certain of my responses to questions about Ms. Lewinsky were false.

I have apologized for my conduct, and I have done my best to atone for it with my family, my administration, and the American people. I have paid a high price for it, which I accept because it caused so much pain to so many

people. I hope my actions today will help bring closure and finality to these matters.

NOTE: The statement referred to former White House intern Monica Lewinsky and U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright.

Statement on Landmines
January 19, 2001

Every year, landmines still active from wars past kill or maim thousands of innocent men, women, and children who simply find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. That is why, since I called for the worldwide elimination of anti-personnel landmines in 1994, the United States has taken the lead both at home and abroad to rid the globe of these hidden killers.

Five years ago, I ordered a ban on producing the most dangerous types of anti-personnel landmines, those that remain active and dangerous long after conflicts have ended. These are the kind of mines that have taken the lives of innocent children from Angola to Bosnia to Kosovo. The United States has since destroyed more than 3.3 million of these landmines, most of our stockpile. We have also budgeted $970 million in a vigorous effort to find sensible alternatives. Our goal has been to end the use of all anti-personnel landmines outside of Korea by 2003, and we have aimed to sign the Ottawa Convention by 2006 if suitable options can be found that will allow us to maintain the warfighting capability and safety of our men and women in uniform.

America has also led the world in the effort to remove existing landmines. Since 1993, we have devoted more than $500 million to this cause, working to remove mines from 35 nations. Our experts have helped train and equip more than one-quarter of all the people who are working to eliminate mines around the world. We have led the effort to bring higher safety standards to demining techniques and equipment. Through partnerships with everyone from the Government of Vietnam to DC Comics, we have worked to raise awareness of the dangers of landmines and to share information that could lead to the disposal of even more. Our efforts are saving lives. In Cambodia, for example, the casualty rate for landmines has fallen by 90 percent since 1992. In some African nations, death from landmines has been nearly eliminated. I call upon the new administration to continue the Demining 2010 initiative.

While I am proud that we have made substantial progress toward eliminating the threat that landmines pose to innocent civilians around the world, there is work yet to be done. I urge the next administration to build on our progress and take the steps necessary to allow the United States to eventually sign the Ottawa Convention, while still meeting our security needs and protecting our men and women in uniform. The Defense Department has worked aggressively to find alternatives to anti-personnel landmines, and those efforts must continue if we are going to meet the Ottawa goals. As part of this effort, two decisions are pending. The first is whether to begin production of the Remote Area Denial Artillery Munition (RADAM). The second is whether to begin engineering and manufacturing development of the so-called "Man-in-the-Loop" system. Since more work must be done before we can reach our overall policy goals, I am deferring decision on these two programs. We halted the production of anti-personnel landmines in 1993 because there was no longer a need for additional mines, and I urge the new administration to continue this policy.

The principal reason that the United States needs to retain some anti-personnel landmines today is to protect our troops and allies. As the need for anti-personnel landmines is reduced, it is my hope that my successor will lead us closer to the day when we can rid the world of these weapons once and for all.

Statement on United States Policy To Protect Sunken State Craft
January 19, 2001

Thousands of United States Government vessels, aircraft, and spacecraft ("State craft"), as well as similar State craft of foreign nations, lie within, and in waters beyond, the territorial sea and contiguous zone. Because of recent advances in science and technology, many of these sunken Government vessels, aircraft, and spacecraft have become accessible to salvors, treasure hunters, and others. The unauthorized disturbance or recovery of these sunken State craft and any remains of their crews and passengers is a growing concern both within the United States and internationally. In addition to deserving treatment as gravesites, these sunken State craft may contain objects of a sensitive national security, archeological, or historical nature. They often also contain unexploded ordnance that could pose a danger to human health and the marine environment if disturbed, or other substances, including fuel oil and other hazardous liquids, that likewise pose a serious threat to human health and the marine environment if released.

I believe that United States policy should be clearly stated to meet this growing concern.

Pursuant to the property clause of Article IV of the Constitution, the United States retains title indefinitely to its sunken State craft unless title has been abandoned or transferred in the manner Congress authorized or directed. The United States recognizes the rule of international law that title to foreign sunken State craft may be transferred or abandoned only in accordance with the law of the foreign flag State.

Further, the United States recognizes that title to a United States or foreign sunken State craft, wherever located, is not extinguished by passage of time, regardless of when such sunken State craft was lost at sea.

International law encourages nations to preserve objects of maritime heritage wherever located for the benefit of the public.

Those who would engage in unauthorized activities directed at sunken State craft are advised that disturbance or recovery of such craft should not occur without the express permission of the sovereign and should only be conducted in accordance with professional scientific standards and with the utmost respect for any human remains.

The United States will use its authority to protect and preserve sunken State craft of the United States and other nations, whether located in the waters of the United States, a foreign nation, or in international waters.

Statement on Efforts To Promote Responsible Fatherhood
January 19, 2001

Over the past 8 years, Vice President Al Gore and I have worked hard to promote responsible and engaged fatherhood. On Father's Day 2000, I asked six agencies to jointly produce Federal guidance that would help States and communities strengthen the role of fathers in families. Today I am pleased to announce the release of this guidance, entitled "Meeting the Challenge: What the Federal Government Can Do To Support Responsible Fatherhood Efforts," which provides valuable information about Federal resources and policies.

This guidance represents a critical step in the ongoing Federal efforts to promote responsible fatherhood. Vice President Gore's 1994 Family Reunion conference on the role of men in families significantly raised the visibility of fathers, and in 1995 I issued an Executive memorandum calling on Federal agencies to review every program, policy, and initiative to ensure that meaningful efforts were being made to strengthen fathers' involvement with their children. Since then, many agencies throughout the Federal Government have developed fatherhood initiatives, and collaboration—among agencies and with private partners—has been the cornerstone of these efforts.

Today, this interagency work is bearing fruit, not only in the form of the guidance being released today but also through the many innovative projects that are highlighted within the report. For example, the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (HHS) worked together on the Fathers Matter initiative, producing a CD-ROM to help teachers, early childhood educators, and social service and health providers engage fathers in their children's learning. The Departments of Labor (DOL) and HHS, with the Departments of Justice (DOJ), Education, and Housing and Urban Development, have worked together to improve employment and training opportunities for fathers through the implementation of the welfare-to-work program, which I fought to fund in 1997 and extended this year. And through the reentry initiative that I proposed and Congress funded in the fiscal year 2001 budget, DOJ, DOL, and HHS are working together to address the needs of ex-offenders, many of whom are fathers, as they rejoin their families and communities.

I want to applaud the leadership of HHS on this project and commend the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor for their valuable contributions. I encourage States, tribes, communities, and nonprofit organizations to use this new resource to explore the exciting possibilities for strengthening the role of fathers in the lives of their children.

Statement on the American Heritage Rivers Initiative

January 19, 2001

Today my administration transmitted to the Congress the "Progress Report of the American Heritage Rivers Interagency Committee and Task Force." The successes of the American Heritage Rivers initiative, detailed in this report, are a tribute to the efforts of thousands of citizens all across America who committed themselves to proving that what is good for the environment is also good for the economy, and to making their communities better places in which to live, work, and do business.

When I traveled to North Carolina in July 1998 to designate 14 rivers across the country as American Heritage Rivers, I was optimistic about the prospects for restoring these waterways and reinvigorating the communities they help sustain. Since that time, this initiative has helped steer hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal assistance to these communities to revitalize riverfronts, restore precious habitat, preserve cultural and historic resources, save open space, create recreational opportunities, and spur economic growth.

At the same time, this initiative has helped forge new partnerships between citizens, businesses, grassroots organizations, and local, State, and Federal agencies. And it has helped demonstrate how the Federal Government can work as a good neighbor in support of local communities, helping them realize their own visions for their rivers and their future.

I want to thank the many Members of Congress who supported this initiative, including the late Senator John Chafee; his son, Senator Lincoln Chafee; Senators Mary Landrieu, Carl Levin, and John Kerry; and Representatives Paul Kanjorski, Sue Kelly, Corrine Brown and William Jefferson. Three years after I announced it, the American Heritage Rivers initiative is a strong community-driven effort with broad and increasingly bipartisan support.

I urge Congress and the incoming administration to build upon the great strides made in just the last few years by acting on several recommendations contained in this report. Building on this record of progress will enable communities across the country to continue their efforts to bring new vitality to rivers that are truly the lifeblood of our Nation.

Statement Announcing the Chief of Staff of the Post-Presidency Transition Office
January 19, 2001

I am pleased to announce that Karen Tramontano will be serving as my Chief of Staff in my Post-Presidency Transition Office. Following that, Karen will direct my staff, work with me to develop a foundation, and manage my other public service activities. She will also serve an integral role in the development of my Presidential Library.

Karen Tramontano has spent the past two decades bringing more opportunity to working Americans. From her work at the Service Employees International Union to her days on the U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, Karen brought issues such as minimum wage, health and child care, and workers' and civil rights to the political forefront. She continued that effort at the White House, first as Counsel to my then Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles and then as Counselor to my Chief of Staff John Podesta. In that capacity, she also worked tirelessly on the census, global trade, and issues important to the Washington, DC, community. I know that in this new role she will continue to fight for these and other important causes.

Time and again, Karen has demonstrated keen insight and shrewd political judgment. Her energy is infectious, her skill and leadership unparalleled. I know she will bring that same level of commitment and enthusiasm to her work with me in the years ahead. I am grateful that she has agreed to take on one more assignment.

Open Letter to the People of Israel
January 19, 2001

Open Letter to the People of Israel:

On Saturday, January 20th, at the stroke of noon, I will step down as President of the United States. This will bring to a close eight eventful years during which I have dealt with problems large and small, domestic and foreign, full of pain and full of joy. Of all, none has meant more to me than the future of your region and of your country.

You live in a dangerous world, and every day brings reminders of that reality. I have expanded our special strategic relationship and helped protect and enhance your security. As part of that continuing effort, I am recommending that when our most advanced fighter aircraft, the F–22, becomes available for sale, Israel, if it so chooses, will be among the first, if not the first, foreign customer. And we have just concluded a memorandum of understanding regarding bilateral security assistance to give practical expression to our long-term commitment to modernize the IDF.

I also have done my best to pursue the path of peace, for I am convinced there is no better route to securing Israel's existence. For eight years, from Yitzhak Rabin to Ehud Barak, I have worked with your leaders as they took calculated risks for peace. We have journeyed together through times of great triumph—like that unforgettable handshake between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat on the White House lawn—and times of dark tragedy—like the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the untimely death of King Hussein, and today's violence. Together, we experienced moments of doubt, as terror and violence stalked us every step of the way. But we also achieved historic successes—agreements with the Palestinians in which both sides took steps toward mutual recognition, a peace treaty with Jordan, and, last summer, your withdrawal from Lebanon in fulfillment of United Nations Security Council 425.

I know that the violence of the past three months has brought you great pain, that it has shattered your confidence in the peace process and raised questions about whether you and the Palestinians ever could coexist peacefully side-by-side. But do not draw the wrong lessons from this tragic chapter. The violence does not demonstrate that the quest for peace has gone too

far—but that it has not gone far enough. And it points not to the failure of negotiations—but to the futility of violence and force. The alternative to a peaceful settlement never has been clearer; it is being played out before our very eyes.

For my part, I remain convinced of this simple truth: whenever you and your Arab neighbors seek to resolve your remaining differences—today or several years hence; before or after more heartbreak and bloodshed—the fundamental issues will be the same. You will face the same history, the same geography, the same demography, the same passions and hatreds and the same difficult decisions that are required for a comprehensive peace. Compromise is often difficult and always painful. But the people and leaders of the region must understand that to seek a peace without compromise is not to seek peace at all.

Ahead of you are difficult days and heart-wrenching nights. I do not envy the difficult decisions you will be called upon to make to reach a lasting peace—and you alone should make them. All anyone can ask is that as you make them with a heavy heart, you do so as well with wide-open eyes that look to a better future for your children.

To you who have returned to an ancient homeland after 2,000 years, whose hopes and dreams almost vanished in the Holocaust, who have hardly had one day of peace and quiet since the state of Israel was created, allow me this parting thought: You are closer today than ever before to ending your 100 year long struggle for peace and normalcy. Don't give up on the pursuit of peace. Not now when it is almost within reach. For that day will surely come, and when it does, though I no longer will be President, I will be standing with you as strong and faithful a friend as I am today. And it will be Israel's finest hour yet.

Shalom al Yisrael.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Open Letter to the Palestinian People
January 19, 2001

Open Letter to the Palestinian People:

On Saturday, January 20th at the stroke of noon, I will step down as President of the United States. As I look back upon my eight years in office, the experiences I have had and the lessons I have learned, one will stand out: my visit to Gaza, the first ever by a U.S. President. I will never forget what it taught me about your suffering, your history of dispossession and dispersal, but also about your resilience and courage. I said at the time that the Palestinian people should be able to determine their own future on their own land and I believe that as strongly now as I did then.

These past eight years have not been easy ones for you. You face daily humiliations; you must struggle simply to find a job; worst of all, you continue to see too many children grow up in poverty. Peace, it is true, has not yet born its fruits. And so I understand the disillusionment, the frustration, even the anger.

But do not lose sight of what you have achieved: The ability to govern yourselves, to elect your leaders, to build your institutions. As one who has seen you and Chairman Arafat work so hard to achieve your goals, allow me to say this: now is not the time to heed the voices of revenge and desperation, for they produce only bloodshed and death. Nothing you have accomplished has been accomplished through violence and nothing will be. It will only be accomplished through peace and negotiations. Now, more than ever, is the time for courageous leadership.

For courage is not only, or even mainly, measured in struggle. It is measured in the ability to seize historic opportunities. Today, it is that other form of courage that is being tested. Never have you been as close to achieving your goals—regaining your land, establishing a state, building a prosperous future for your children. There will always be those sitting comfortably on the outside urging you to hold out for the

impossible more. But they are not the ones whose refugees will continue to languish in crowded camps. You are. They are not the ones whose children will grow up in poverty. You are. They are not the ones who will pay the price of missing a historic opportunity. You are. At Oslo, your leaders—and principally Chairman Arafat—demonstrated the courage needed to take the first historic step toward peace. By taking the final one, you will be able to fully realize your God-given potential and to pass on even brighter possibilities to your children.

For my part, I remain convinced that despite these difficult and often tragic days, both you and your Israeli partners will find a way to move from the logic of war and confrontation to the logic of peace and cooperation. And that, together, you will bring peace to this Holy land, sacred to Moslems, Jews, and Christians alike.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Lifting and Modifying Measures With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

January 19, 2001

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

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA) and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to take additional actions with respect to the national emergency described and declared in Executive Order 13088 of June 9, 1998, and related to the actions and policies of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (the "FRY (S&M)") and the Republic of Serbia with respect to Kosovo. I have issued a new Executive Order to lift, with respect to future transactions, the economic sanctions imposed pursuant to Executive Order 13088 and expanded by Executive Order 13121 of April 30, 1999, except for those sanctions targeted against members and supporters of the former Milosevic regime. These actions are also taken in furtherance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 827 of May 25, 1993, and subsequent resolutions.

The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to issue regulations in exercise of my authorities under IEEPA and the United Nations Participation Act, 22 U.S.C. 287c, to implement measures lifting and modifying the economic sanctions imposed pursuant to Executive Order 13088. Property blocked pursuant to Executive Order 13088 before the effective date of the new Executive Order will continue to be blocked pending the resolution of successor state and other issues. All Federal agencies are also directed to take actions within their statutory authority to carry out the provisions of the new Executive Order. In addition to the persons I have identified in the annex to the new Executive Order, the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is to identify certain other persons whose property and interests in property will be blocked pursuant to the order and with respect to whose property interests certain transactions or dealings by U.S. persons will be prohibited. The Secretary of the Treasury, again in consultation with the Secretary of State, is also authorized to remove any person from the annex to the order. In order to ensure the fullest implementation of the Executive Order, the Secretary of State will take steps to identify for appropriate consideration by the Secretary of the Treasury persons potentially covered by the criteria set forth in the order, which includes individuals who may have sought or may be seeking, through repressive measures or otherwise, to exercise illegitimate control over FRY (S&M) political institutions or economic resources.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued. The order was effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on January 19, 2001.

I have authorized these measures in response to the recent positive developments in the FRY (S&M) and, notwithstanding those developments, the unusual and extraordinary threat that

remains to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. I found in Executive Order 13088 that the actions and policies of the Governments of the FRY (S&M) and the Republic of Serbia with respect to Kosovo, by promoting ethnic conflict and human suffering, threatened to destabilize the countries of the region and to disrupt progress in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in implementing the Dayton peace agreement, and therefore constituted an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. I declared a national emergency to deal with that threat and ordered that economic sanctions be imposed with respect to those governments. I issued Executive Order 13121 in response to the continuing human rights and humanitarian crises in Kosovo. That order revised and substantially expanded the sanctions imposed pursuant to Executive Order 13088.

On September 24, 2000, the people of the FRY (S&M) displayed extraordinary courage and principle when they elected Vojislav Kostunica to be their president. The peaceful democratic transition begun by President Kostunica and the people of the FRY (S&M) opens the prospect of the FRY (S&M)'s rejoining fully the international community and merits lifting, with respect to future transactions, the economic sanctions imposed pursuant to Executive Orders 13088 and 13121. Notwithstanding these positive developments, steps must still be taken to support the ongoing efforts of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and to continue to counter the threat that remains with respect to stability in the Balkan region and the full implementation of the Dayton peace agreement.

In resolution 827 and subsequent resolutions, the United Nations Security Council has called upon all states to cooperate fully with the ICTY. In this connection, the ICTY has issued an order that states determine whether Slobodan Milosevic and four other indicted persons have assets located in their territories and, if any such assets are found, adopt provisional measures to freeze those assets.

Additionally, Slobodan Milosevic and other persons currently or subsequently under open indictment by the ICTY must be held fully accountable for the violence and atrocities they unleashed in the Balkans over the past decade, and they must be denied access to the economic and other means that would support their further repressing democracy or promoting or perpetrating further human rights abuses. The same holds true for those persons assisting the indictees and other blocked persons in their illicit activities and those persons who, through repressive measures or otherwise, illegitimately exercise control over FRY (S&M) political institutions and economic resources and enterprises under the sponsorship of Slobodan Milosevic and his close associates.

We heartily applaud the peaceful democratic transition that is underway in the FRY (S&M) and we pledge to support President Kostunica and other newly elected leaders as they work to build a truly democratic society. Unfortunately, however, we must recognize the past and present capacity of Slobodan Milosevic and other indicted war criminals and their close associates or other persons to foment ethnic conflict, repress democracy, and promote or perpetrate further human rights abuses. This capacity continues to threaten the stability of the Balkan region and the full implementation of the Dayton peace agreement and, therefore, still constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The actions we are taking will assist the FRY (S&M) in ending its isolation and returning fully to the international community. They also express our condemnation of the violence and atrocities that have plagued the Balkan region for the past decade and will help prevent human rights abuses in the future.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter. The Executive order of January 17 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Prohibition of Importation of Rough Diamonds From Sierra Leone

January 19, 2001

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

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to declare a national emergency in response to the unusual and extraordinary threat posed to the foreign policy of the United States by Sierra Leone's insurgent Revolutionary United Front's (RUF's) illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone to fund its operations and procurement of weapons and by the RUF's flagrant violation of the Lome Peace Agreement of July 7, 1999, between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. I also have exercised my statutory authority to issue an Executive Order that prohibits the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone except for those importations of rough diamonds that are accompanied by a Certificate of Origin or other satisfactory documentation demonstrating that the rough diamonds were legally exported from Sierra Leone with the approval of the Government of Sierra Leone. These actions are mandated in part by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1306 of July 5, 2000.

The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to issue regulations in exercise of my authorities under IEEPA and the United Nations Participation Act, 22 U.S.C. 287c, to implement this prohibition. All Federal agencies are also directed to take actions within their authority to carry out the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive order I have issued. The order was effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on January 19, 2001.

I have authorized these measures in response to the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone to fund its operations and procurement of weapons and in response to the actions and policies of the RUF in failing to fully abide by the terms of the Lome Peace Agreement of July 7, 1999. The people of Sierra Leone have suffered the ravages of a brutal civil war for nearly a decade. The world's conscience has been shocked by the horrific actions of the RUF in Sierra Leone during this conflict. The widespread crimes against humanity perpetrated by RUF forces include mass amputations, rape, summary execution, and forced labor.

In late May 2000, United Nations Secretary General Annan encouraged the U.N. Security Council to consider taking measures to prevent the RUF from reaping the benefits of its illicit trade in diamonds that had been plundered from Sierra Leone. On July 5, 2000, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1306. The resolution determines that the situation in Sierra Leone continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region, expresses concern at the role played by the illicit trade in diamonds in fueling the conflict in Sierra Leone, and decides that all states shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect importation of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone to their territory. The resolution, in recognition of the economic importance of the legitimate diamond trade to Sierra Leone, further decides that rough diamonds controlled by the Government of Sierra Leone through a Certificate of Origin regime shall be exempt from the trade embargo.

Military forces of the Government of Sierra Leone and Military Observer Group forces provided by the Economic Community of West African States were engaged in military operations' in Sierra Leone against the RUF until mid-1999. At that time, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF signed the Lome Peace Agreement, which provides for an end to hostilities and the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of the insurgent RUF forces. The United Nations Security Council in U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1270 and 1289 established the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to facilitate implementation of the Lome Peace Agreement and to provide security at key locations and government buildings and at all sites of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs, among other tasks. The Lome Peace Agreement brought an end, sadly only temporarily, to the

killings and the atrocities perpetrated by the RUF.

RUF forces have repeatedly violated the terms of the Lome Peace Agreement throughout this spring, when they engaged in deliberate and unprovoked armed attacks on U.N. peacekeepers and committed serious abuses against civilians and international and national aid workers. In May 2000, as UNAMSIL expanded its efforts to establish monitoring and disarmament sites in or near RUF-controlled territory, RUF forces initiated military activity in those areas, killing U.N. peacekeepers and capturing or isolating hundreds of UNAMSIL personnel. These actions brought the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes agreed to in the Lome Peace Agreement to a virtual standstill and represent a direct hostile challenge to U.S. foreign policy objectives in the region, which include restoration of peace in Sierra Leone and promotion of democracy and the rule of law throughout the region. Failure to respond to this challenge would encourage other potential rogue organizations to transgress the rule-based international order, which is crucial to the peace and prosperity of the United States.

For the reasons discussed above, the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone and its flagrant violation of the Lome Peace Agreement constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. The measures we are taking will serve to bring an end to the illicit arms-for-diamonds trade through which the RUF perpetuates the tragic conflict in Sierra Leone. They also reflect our outrage at the RUF's repeated, widespread, and serious violations of the Lome Peace Agreement and the RUF's continuing hostilities against the people of Sierra Leone and UNAMSIL personnel.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter. The Executive order of January 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 19, 2001

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

As required by 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), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on 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.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 19, 2001

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, 2001, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 21, 2000.

The crisis with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration on January 23, 1995, of a national emergency has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. On August 20, 1998, I identified four additional persons, including Usama bin Ladin, who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. 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 who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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.

The President's Radio Address

January 20, 2001

Good morning. Every Saturday for the past 8 years, I've had the privilege of speaking with you by way of this radio address. Most often, I've talked about meeting our common challenges with commonsense solutions, practical, progressive steps to build an America with opportunity for every responsible citizen, a community of all Americans, and a more peaceful, prosperous world.

We've had more than 400 of these Saturday conversations now, so it's fitting that this last one comes on my final day in office. This is, of course, Inaugural Day, an extraordinary day for freedom when the magic, the mystery, the miracle of American democracy is on full display.

The peaceful transfer of power from one administration to the next, from one party to another, may confound others around the globe. But it reflects the underlying strength of our Constitution and rule of law.

As my time in office comes to an end, the most important thing I can say is a simple, heartfelt thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President and as Commander in Chief to our fine men and women in uniform. Thank you for the honor of working with you to build our bridge to the 21st century. Thank you for the prayers, love, and support you've extended to Hillary, Chelsea, and me every single day.

I also want to thank all the men and women at the White House who have worked so hard to help me do my job, from the Secret Service to the Residence staff, to those who keep the people's house open for all to enjoy. And I am forever grateful to Vice President Gore for his extraordinary leadership and service, to my Cabinet, and to all others who have served with me.

For 8 years, we've done everything in our power to reach beyond party and beyond Washington to put the American people first, overcoming obstacles, seizing opportunities. That's what these radio addresses have been all about. These Saturday talks have often marked action taken to make our schools stronger, our environment cleaner, our food safer, our health care more secure. Some have been big steps and some smaller. But every step has moved us forward, and taken all together, they have made an enormous difference in the lives of our people. And we're not done yet.

I pledged that I would work until the last hour of the last day. Well, here we are. So, this morning we're building on our commitment to make our streets safer by awarding more than $100 million to fund 1,400 more police officers in communities throughout our land. Back in 1992 I promised that we would fund 100,000 police officers across America. With this announcement, we will have funded 110,000. That's 110 percent of our goal. And I thank our police officers for giving 110 percent to the job. That's a big reason crime is down to a 25-year low.

Now my job as your President draws to a close, and the work of our new President begins. I want to wish President-elect Bush, Vice President-elect Cheney, their families and entire administration the very best. I know you do, too. Thanks to your work, he takes the reins of a nation renewed, ready to move into a new century and a whole new era in human affairs. I join every American in wishing him Godspeed.

In my first radio address, almost exactly 8 years ago now, I spoke about the challenges we faced at that time but also about my abiding faith in the American people. Back then I said, "We're going up or down together, and I'm convinced we're going up." The progress of the last 8 years, the strong values, can-do spirit, and basic goodness of the American people leave me more convinced than ever we're still going up.

If we keep working together to widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the reach of freedom, strengthen the bonds of community, America will always be going up.

Thank you for listening each and every week. Thank you again for the honor of serving as your President these past 8 years.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:50 p.m. on January 19 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 20. The transcript was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Efforts To Redress Wrongs Against African-American Farmers

January 20, 2001

For too many decades, African-American farmers have labored in America's fields without a true share of this Nation's agricultural prosperity. And for too long, governmental neglect has contributed to the impoverished condition of the African-American farmer.

But the Government can right an old wrong. In December of 1997 Vice President Gore and I met with a number of people and organizations concerned with the plight of the black farmer in this country, including the National Black Farmers Association, the Southern Cooperative, and the Congressional Black Caucus. The Vice President and I learned at that meeting that since the early 1980's, thousands of black farmers had filed complaints of discrimination against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), but their complaints were ignored.

My administration has worked hard to improve the condition of the black farmer and to mend the relationship between black farmers and the USDA, and Secretary Dan Glickman and his staff have demonstrated unprecedented leadership in accomplishing that goal. After a group of African-American farmers brought suit in 1997 to seek recovery for years of discrimination, we worked with the African-American farming community to pass legislation allowing farmers to pursue those claims and then entered into a historic settlement. With the agreement nearing full implementation, almost $500 million in individual payments have been awarded to nearly 12,000 African-American farmers. In the process, we revitalized USDA's Office of Civil Rights, which was effectively dismantled in the early 1980's. We have also increased farm loans to minorities and women—a 50 percent increase between 1997 and 1999 alone.

The agreement between the black farmers and the USDA also calls for technical assistance and outreach. I am proud of the USDA and the Village Foundation for working in partnership to create the African-American Family Farm Preservation Fund, which will provide grants, loans, and training to African-American farm families to maintain their farms, establish a market system using products produced by African-American farms, and keep the public informed on issues related to African-American family farmers. In addition, USDA has cooperated with the National Black Farmers Association and its president, John Boyd, to increase outreach activities to limited-resource farmers. Together, these endeavors will ensure that a new generation of African-American farmers can pursue their livelihood without discrimination and with equal access to the assistance they deserve.

Redressing the wrongs against African-American farmers has been key to my efforts to building one America. I hope the next administration will continue in this path so that African-American farmers can fully participate in today's dynamic global economy.

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