Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Remarks to the Women's Leadership Forum in Las Vegas, Nevada

November 14, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you all for being here, for being in such a good humor. [*Laughter*] You know why they're sitting down now? Because they think I'm going to talk a lot longer than previous speakers. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Senator Reid and Senator Bryan and Governor Miller, for being here, for their service, and for their remarkable friendship to me. I'd like to thank the national chair of the Women's Leadership Forum, Cynthia Friedman, who is also up here on the stage with us. And we have other people here from the National Democratic Party—I see Carol Pensky out there—I thank all of them. But I want to say a special word of thanks to Shelly Berkeley and to Cassandra Williams, and to you, Mayor Jones, all of you who made this night possible.

This is an event sponsored by the Women's Leadership Forum, but I see there are a few lucky men out here in the audience—[*laughter*]—and I thank you for showing up, too. I'd be lonely if you weren't here.

I got tickled when the mayor was telling that story about my mother, which is a true story. That's not one of those things you make up because it sounds good on the podium. My mother spent the last weekend of her life in Las Vegas. [*Laughter*] And she had been quite ill for a long time. And the night she passed away she called me, and we had a long and perfectly normal conversation. And I thought to myself that in her own mind she got to go to heaven 4 days early. She looked at it that way. [*Laughter*] So whenever I land at the airport here, I always imagine that my mother is landing with me because she loved to come here so much and had so many friends here.

Let me say very briefly to all of you, this is a very exciting, interesting, and good time for America. Congress just went home. We had a very good year. We passed an historic balanced budget agreement. It had the largest investment for children's health that your National Government has made since 1965. It has a huge effort to improve research and care in the area of diabetes, an illness that affects 16 million Americans. The diabetes foundation said it's the most important thing done in diabetes since the discovery of insulin 70 years ago.

It has a major, major investment, the largest investment in education since 1965, everything from more Pell grants to more work-study positions to more funds to put computers in every classroom in this country by the year 2000. It, for the first time, puts us on record as favoring national academic standards and a voluntary testing system to see how all our children are doing. This was a great budget, and it is going to make a huge difference in America. Yesterday I signed the last big piece of it, dealing with the health care and the education initiatives.

The Senate ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention that will make all of you young people here and your children less likely to be exposed to deadly chemicals from terrorists and organized criminals, a terribly important thing.

The Congress passed landmark reform of the Food and Drug Administration which will enable us to continue to test medicines to make sure they're safe for the American people but will move them to the market a lot quicker, so that people who have serious illnesses in America and want to know they're going to get access to the medicine that's the best in the world as quickly as possible will know that we're doing the best job in the world of both protecting their safety and getting them medicines that can save their lives. This is a huge issue.

The Senate and the House passed a landmark reform of our adoption system in America to give massive new incentives and speed

up the system by which families can adopt children, which is a terribly important issue. Just last year we passed a $5,000 adoption tax credit, and in a few days, when Hillary comes home from her trip—she worked hard on this—we're going to have a nice little signing ceremony and describe to the world what this adoption initiative does. But it is very important, and I'm proud of it, and every woman in America should be proud of it.

So this was a good year, a historic year. And it was another step along the way in trying to implement the vision that I ran for President 6 years ago to try to implement. One that, thank goodness, has received the support of a substantial majority of America's women and has helped us to build a party for the future.

But it's pretty simple. I know that we are moving into a very different time. We are dramatically changing the basis of economic activity. We are seeing dramatic changes in the way people live as well as the way they work and the way we relate to each other. Our own country is changing dramatically; we're getting more and more diverse in every conceivable way but especially in racial and ethnic and religious terms. The way we relate to the world is different. We are the world's strongest military power and have the world's strongest economy, but we are still only 4 percent of the world's population, with about 20 percent of its income, so that, increasingly, our ability to succeed in ensuring our own future depends on our willingness to get involved in issues beyond our border and our willingness to recognize that we are interdependent with others and that we have to work in partnership with others.

What are the big security problems of the future? Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, organized crime, international drug dealing, international environmental crisis, the spread of new diseases across national borders—none of these can be dealt with unless we're willing to work as partners. We can lead, but we have to lead in a world increasingly interdependent.

In Bosnia, we are there with soldiers from more than two dozen other countries, including Russian soldiers working side by side. That is a metaphor for what we'll have to do in the future.

And what I want to do is to have an America in which every person, without regard to his or her circumstances in life, has a chance to live out his or her dreams if they're responsible enough to work for it and to be a good citizen; a country in which we're coming together instead of being driven apart, as so many other societies are; and a nation still strong enough to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity. We've been working at it for 6 years now.

The economy is stronger; we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years; we have the lowest inflation rate in 30 years. We had another big drop in the crime rate last year. The murder rate in America has dropped 22 percent in just 3 years, 10 percent last year alone. We've had the biggest drop in welfare rolls in the country's history. And even though we've had two decades of immigration, lots and lots of poor people coming to our shores to work and find their way, we have the smallest percentage of our population on welfare in almost 30 years. This country is working again. We're coming together; we're moving into the future again.

And I guess what I want to say to all of you, since you invested in this to come here, is you've got to do a better job of telling people that this did not happen by accident. When I started running for President with my rather earthy friend, James Carville, from Louisiana helping me—[*laughter*]—a brilliant young man by the name of—James is from Louisiana; Paul Begala, his partner was from Texas, and I was from Arkansas—and a brilliant young man by the name of Gene Sperling, who is now my national economic counselor from Michigan, came to work for us. And he called his mother after working for us for about a week, and he said, ''Mom, if I'm going to survive down here with all these guys from the South, I'm going to have to learn a lot more animal stories''—[*laughter*]—because we would all say things like our opponents were squealing like a pig under a gate—[*laughter*]—or you never know how far a frog will jump till you punch it. [*Laughter*]

But one of the things I was taught as a child is that if you see a turtle on a fencepost, the chances are it didn't get there by accident. [*Laughter*] And so, all these things that

are going on in America didn't just happen. We had a different political philosophy—not different values for the Democratic Party, the same values—but we believe we needed a new politics for a new era.

And I must say, I've been deeply grateful for the support of both your Senators and your Governor in every critical step along the way, because it was basically what people were doing as mayors and Governors and State legislators throughout America anyway.

But I thought, on the economy, we had to bring down the deficit and invest more in education and our future. I thought we had to trade more around the world. I don't believe it's right to say we can walk away from the obligation to sell more American products around the world. This is not rocket science: If you're 4 percent of the world's population and you have 20 percent of the income and you'd like to keep it, you've got to sell something to the other 96 percent. If your markets are open and other people's markets are closed, in order to make a trade agreement with them, you have to lower your trade barriers a little bit so they'll lower theirs a lot. That's probably a pretty good deal.

On the other hand, we can't afford to say that's all we're interested in because the economy is churning so much today, most people who are dislocated from work lose their jobs because of technological changes that will occur in every country whether there's more trade or not. But because we're Democrats, we have an obligation to worry about those people, to give people a better, quicker, more comprehensive system if they are dislocated from their jobs for whatever reason to move back into the work force more quickly, and to contribute with us to our future.

I believe on welfare we should require people to go to work, but we ought to recognize that their most important work, like everybody else's, is raising their children. So when they said in the other party, ''Oh, by the way, we want to require people to go to work and take away from the children the fundamental right of nutrition and the fundamental right of health care,'' and ''by the way, we don't want to come up with any more money for child care,'' I vetoed the bill twice, because I thought it was wrong. Now, but once we got it right, I changed. I signed the bill because it was consistent with what we've been working on for 3 years. But a lot of people don't get it. I still read in the paper, some journalist will say, ''The President signed the Republicans' welfare bill.'' Bull! [*Laughter*] What planet were they—it's like in Washington. It's amazing. If an issue has a certain label on it, a lot of people in old-think say, ''Well, that label belongs to one party.'' The Democrats weren't supposed to be interested in crime and welfare and growing the economy. Don't be involved in people's lives. How many elections will you win?

In crime, I read the other day that someone said, ''Well, some people in the House of Representatives were mad at the President for adopting a Republican position on crime.'' I said, hello—[*laughter*]—what planet was this person on?

In 1994, the Democrats, over the bitterest, fiercest opposition of the Republican leaders and a bitter attempt in a last-ditch filibuster in the United States Senate by my distinguished opponent in the last election passed a crime bill that they were against and we were for. It put 100,000 police on the street and took assault weapons off the street. And I think it was right.

We were for the Brady bill; their leadership was against it. And it played a role—65,000 police officers in 3 years have been approved under the crime bill to be put out on the streets. And if you go to any community in the country where the crime rate is coming down, they'll tell you the central reason is there has been a change in the philosophy of policing in this country, to get kids and keep them out of trouble in the first place, to walk the blocks and to build ties to neighbors, and to catch people when they do commit crimes more quickly. And that, plus the generally improving circumstances in America, is plummeting the crime rate in this country. And that is a good thing. But it did not happen by accident.

I say that because we need people to understand that we still have big challenges out there. And we need the support, and we need to build an infrastructure of Americans who understand that the politics of this country have changed.

In the environment, 1995, one of the most troubling things about the new Republican majority in Congress was their contract on America said the only way we could have a good America is to grow the economy and forget about the environment. We're going to break down all these terrible regulations for clean air and clean water and it's just choking business. And I said, ''Well, if we Democrats were trying to choke business by cleaning the air, cleaning the water, and cleaning up the toxic waste, we've done a sorry job because we've had more new businesses start in every year since I've been President than in any year in American history.'' So we're not very good at killing business with environmental regulation. We're not very good at that.

We believe you have to protect the environment and grow the economy. Shelly had that little passing line about the nuclear waste disposal—I thought you'd never mention it. [*Laughter*] I hope that everyone in Nevada remembers that there's been pretty much of a partisan divide on that, too, although some of our Democrats have strayed over to the other side. But that's just because it's a big problem in their States, and they want to dump it somewhere, and they've never been here. [*Laughter*]

My position has never been to come here and pander to you; it's just to tell the truth. This is a serious issue, and we should not make a decision to do this anywhere until we're sure that it is safe and we're absolutely certain that our predecessors didn't pick a site for political reasons, because you don't have many electoral votes. That's all I've ever said.

And I can honestly say that neither of your Senators, nor your Governor, ever asked me to promise that under no circumstances ever would I say that I didn't care what the evidence was, I would never think about this. All they said was, ''Make sure that we're doing the right thing by our children and make sure that we haven't been singled out because we're a big State with still a fairly small population and not many electoral votes.'' That's all they asked. And that was the right thing to do. I thought it was right then; I think it's right now. And I appreciated it.

Again, let me say the reason this is important is not so Shelly can win an election—I'm not running anymore, so I can say all this—[*laughter*]—this is not just about an election for Congress; it's about how you're going to live.

We still have a lot of other issues. Let me just give you some issues that I think would be quite important to you. We still have to pass through Congress legislation which implements our initiative to reduce teenage smoking in America and saves lives. It's going to be a huge thing, and we have to do it in a way that improves the public health and protects our children. That's a big issue for next year.

Next year—a couple years ago we passed a bill that stopped insurance companies from kicking women out of the hospital in 48 hours after they had had a baby, whether they were ready to leave or not. And we now find that a lot of the same things are happening with mastectomies, when the women are leaving, and I think we ought to have the same standard for that. I think that's an important thing.

But in a larger sense, we believe strongly that there ought to be a patient's bill of rights for quality health care that doctors and patients have worked on. And if we're going to have more managed care and we're going to have more HMO's, people have the right to know that—that's a good thing if somebody is taking your health care money and making it go as far as possible so we don't have inflation, as long as you're not giving up quality.

Now, right before this Congress broke up, there was huge news back East about how the leaders of the other party had called the health insurance companies and others and told them to get up off their backsides and go to work to kill our attempts to protect the quality of health care for patients in this country. That's a big issue. That is a choice.

I believe we can moderate health care costs and guarantee quality. I believe it is part of the Nation's responsibility to do that. If you believe that in 1997 terms, that makes you a Democrat, because that's our party's position. And that is not their position.

You have got to help us go out and clarify these choices for people. We passed that economic program in 1993. They told me, the

people in the other party said I was going to bankrupt the country; we'd increase the deficit; and the economy would go into the tank. Well, that's what they said. They actually won a congressional race partly on that—that and telling everybody we were going to take their guns away and all the stuff they said in '94.

Well, sooner or later, people should be held accountable. Are our ideas right? Were they implemented? Have they made a difference? Were their ideas right? Were they implemented? Have they made a difference? I've done everything I could to work in a responsible, bipartisan way, but where there are still clear differences, I think the evidence is, we were right.

Today I took action again to try to deal with this assault weapons problem because, now that we've banned them in America, you've got all these foreign gun manufacturers who are trying to modify their assault weapons to get them in under the sport weapon definition. So I said, for 120 days we're not going to take any more of these weapons until we study it. I am not going to let people overseas turn our streets into battle zones where gangs are armed like they were guerrilla warriors halfway around the world if I can stop it. But you've got to decide.

So I thank you for being here. I thank you for your contributions. But let's go out and have a little debate here—1998 is an election year—and ask people to think about whether they really believe what has happened in America has happened by accident. Ask them to think about what they believe the Nation should do.

The Democrats of 1997 are not out there defending big Government and big regulations and all this. We've reduced the size of Government by 300,000—more than any previous Republican administration in modern times. We have reduced more Government regulations. We have given more authority to State and local government. We have privatized more operations than previous Republican administrations.

But we have not given up the fundamental responsibility to define the national interest when it comes to protecting families and children and communities and futures. That's what we haven't done, and that's why this country is moving forward and moving forward together.

I want you to be a part of it. I thank you for being here tonight. I hope you'll help us in all these elections. But talk to people about what is going to affect our children's lives. We're making a difference, and you can make a bigger one.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. in the New Country Club Building at the Sheraton Desert Inn. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Bob Miller of Nevada; Carol Pensky, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Shelly Berkeley, candidate for Nevada's First Congressional District, who introduced the President; Cassandra Williams, reception chair, Women's Leadership Forum; and Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Las Vegas

November 14, 1997

Thank you. Thank you very much. We've had such a nice evening, it seems a shame to spoil it with a speech—[*laughter*]—but I'd like to say a few words. First of all, I want to thank Brian and Myra for once again welcoming me into their homes and for being my friends, and for being my friends when I was the fifth-best known candidate for President in the New Hampshire primary. When the only person in America who thought I could be elected was my mother—[*laughter*]—they were my friends.

I also want to thank them because we share something else in common. In addition to the fact that Brian and I went to college together, our family and theirs, we're both parents of only daughters who are reasonably important to us. And I had Amy with me for a long time, and I miss her terribly, so I'm glad to see her here tonight. It was wonderful having her in the White House for the years that we had her.

I'd like to thank Governor and Mrs. Miller and Senator and Mrs. Bryan and Senator and Mrs. Reid for being here tonight. And I'd like to thank the people of Nevada for voting for Bill Clinton and Al Gore twice.

When we ran, I was told that there were all these States that I could never carry, among which were any between the Mississippi River and California. And that seemed to be an irrational thing to me, to give them all up. And most of them we did lose, both times—[*laughter*]—but Nevada was here for us both times. And I never will forget that, and I'm very grateful.

I would like to tonight just ask you to think about where we are as a country on our journey, what we're going through as a people, and what we should be doing about it together.

If you look at—now that I have been President for 5 years, I tend to have a little bit of detachment and see a lot of the specific struggles and contests and efforts we're making as part of the broad sweep of American history and as sort of human drama of our generation, in terms of how people work and live and relate to each other, relate to the rest of the world. And one thing I've learned from studying our history and from living it for the last 5 years, is that whenever we go through a period of real sweeping change, where our working patterns change, communications patterns change, living patterns change, and in our case, the very composition of our population is changing; we're becoming much, much more diverse with these new waves of immigration—and then our relationships after the cold war to the rest of the world is changing—whenever something like that happens and all the balls get thrown up in the air, there is not only the need that individuals feel to know what the deal is—how am I going to constitute my life; how am I going to constitute a stable family life; how are we going to keep our community together; what's our future like?—we also engage in redefining the Nation.

You know, when we started as a country, we basically defined ourselves as a bunch of people that didn't want to be under British control anymore. So then we had years where we really argued about what ought to be in our Constitution and, once we had a Constitution, what did it mean—what did it mean to be one Nation of associated States.

And we pretty well worked it out, and then things rocked along fine for a while. And then finally we had to come to grips with slavery, and whether slavery would be extended or restricted or done away with altogether; and how were we going to accommodate that within the Constitution; and could we do it and keep the country together. And half the country said no, half the country said yes, and we fought the bloodiest war in our history with each other. The casualties in the Civil War were slightly greater than the casualties in World War II with a much, much smaller population.

But we once again wound up defining the Nation. We fought a war to do it, and then we had to pass a bunch of constitutional amendments. But essentially America, by 1870, was what Abraham Lincoln said it ought to be in the Gettysburg Address.

Then we became a great industrial country, and we had to do this all over again. Wasn't it wonderful? We had all these factory jobs, but wasn't it terrible that 9-year-old kids were working 9 hours a day, 6 days a week in some of these factories? What were we going to do about that?

And so through the leadership of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, we did it all over again. We defined what the Nation was. And we found a way to get the benefits of a new era and still meet its challenges and kind of come together as one people. Then we had to do it again during the Depression and the Second World War. And we had to do it all over again for the cold war. Now we have to do it again, because we're moving into a truly global society, bound together more than anything else by shared technology and communications; where the movement of money and ideas and people is more rapid than ever before; where the security threats we will most likely face for the next 20 or 30 years are not animosities between two nations—although there may be some of that; we see that in the press today; there may be some of that—but far more likely it will be terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction into the hands of organized crime or drug dealers, shared international environmental problems or new diseases crossing national borders—new problems we share with people who are living in different countries because they cross national borders and require a much higher level of cooperation than before.

So there's a lot of change in the air. And when I ran in 1992, I attempted to address that and what I thought the Nation was. I said, ''Look, I want to build a country in the 21st century where everybody who's responsible enough to work for it has the opportunity to live out his or her dreams. I want to build a country that's still the strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity in a new world. And I want to build a country where, in spite of all of our differences, we're still coming together as one America.''

It wasn't the end of the debate; it was the beginning of the debate. In '94, the Republicans won the Congress. They said, ''We've got a different idea. We think Government is the problem, and we will be a nation if we just say we believe in the same things and we get the Government out of the way, and the international market is a wonderful thing, and so vote for us and we'll drastically diminish the role of the Government, and that's the real problem.'' And people liked it when they heard it. But then when they saw it in action in 1995 and 1996, they didn't like it so well. And we fought them over that.

But you need to see all this not just as an isolated political event. All of you are present at another moment of creation for America. We are in the process of once again redefining what it means to be an American and what we want our country to do. And my idea is that we have to be faithful to our oldest values and then be highly pragmatic and aggressive about what the challenges are.

What are the challenges we face in this country today? First of all, you can't do very well in this world unless you've got a decent education. So it's more important than ever before to give a world-class education to every child in the country.

Secondly, with more and more people in the work force, men and women, over half the children in this country under one have mothers in the work force—way over half. We have to recognize that even for upper income people and certainly for lower income working people, we have to work very hard to enable people to balance the demands of work and family, because if we have a society where you have to choose whether you're going to be a good parent or successful in the workplace, we are defeated before we begin. The most important work of any society is raising children. There is no more important job. It is the most significant work we ever do. But if people who want to be—and indeed we need to be—in the work force can't be successful parents and get the kind of supports they need and still succeed at work, we're in deep trouble.

And so that's what the—when you see a specific issue like family and medical leave, or we cut taxes more for lower income working people with a lot of kids, or we're working on trying to broaden the child care system of the country, or I wouldn't sign welfare reform until we put $4 billion in it so Governor Miller and his colleagues could figure out how to give these lower income parents who go from welfare to the workplace adequate child care for their kids—all of that is really part of a big issue, which is that a decent, good America will reconcile the conflicts of work and family. That's what Harry Reid and Dick Bryan have to deal with every week in some form or fashion.

We have to prove that we can make our streets safe, and we have to prove we can make our communities coherent. We have to have a system that brings the benefits of free enterprise to places that it hasn't reached yet. We have to prove we can grow the economy and preserve the environment—a huge issue.

A big difference between us and the Republicans in '95 and '96 was whether you could actually increase environmental protection and increase economic growth at the same time. I always believed if you did it right, you'd make more jobs with the proper kind of environmental protection, because that would be the new technology of the future and there will be more demand for it in the future. And I think the evidence is on our side. I believe that's exactly what we've done. The air and water is cleaner. We're making our food safer. We're cleaning up toxic waste dumps. And we're creating jobs like crazy in all those areas. And it's very good.

But when you strip it down, what we believe is that in order to be bound together as a nation, we must do certain things as a

nation: to create opportunity, demand responsibility, bring us together as a community, and preserve our leadership. And if it works, America will once again be, in effect, reborn as the strongest country in the world and a beacon of hope to people.

And so far the evidence is pretty encouraging. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years. The crime rate has been dropping for 5 years. We've got the lowest—biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. We're moving in the right direction. We have average incomes that are rising now. And our environment is significantly improved. We are moving in the right direction.

This year we had a good year. We passed the balanced budget law, with the biggest increase in investment in education since '65, the biggest increase in investment for children's health since '65. The American Diabetes Association says what we've done for families with diabetes is the best thing since insulin was discovered 70 years ago.

And the most important thing, I believe, over the long run is, I think with the latest tax credits, scholarships, work-study funds, we can honestly say we have now opened the doors of college to every American who is willing to work for it. This year we had the biggest increase in assistance to people to go to college since the GI bill was passed 50 years ago. This was a good year for America.

Are there problems? Of course, there are. You read about them in the paper every day. But I just want you to feel good about this because when I started this little odyssey 6 years ago, when I spent my first night at this house, I would go from place to place in America, and I would really meet a lot of people who weren't sure that we could—this country worked anymore. They didn't know if we could get the economy going again. They didn't know if we could bring the crime rate down again by working together. They didn't know if we could ever really kind of break the culture of poverty again. They weren't quite sure how we were going to relate to the rest of the world again.

We're in better shape than we were then. And all we need to do is to remember this. We just are fortunate to be living in a time of truly breathtaking change. It makes it more interesting. But it also imposes on all of us as citizens higher responsibilities because you have to figure out how you're going to make the economy work for everybody again, how are you going to keep the society together again, how are you going to help families again.

We also have a lot of new challenges, particularly in the environmental area, that no one has ever had before. And finally, we have to figure out how to relate to all these other countries around the world when we're not all divided up into Communist and non-Communist camps. And we have to figure out how to build new alliances for cooperation all the time. It's almost as if you abolish the two-party system in the world and now nations were just trying to figure out where they're going to organize themselves issue by issue. So it's fascinating; it's endlessly complex; but in the end it's pretty simple. If you're expanding opportunity, if citizens are being more responsible, and if we're pulling people together instead of driving them apart, this country is going to be fine.

And I am gratified beyond measure, but I can also tell you this: We have a lot left to do. When the baby boomers like me retire, we have to have reformed Medicare and Social Security enough so it will be there for our children and so that we're not going to bankrupt our children as they raise our grandchildren to pay for our retirement.

We still have to work through the big tobacco settlement issue next year to guarantee that we protect the health of our children. It's still the number one public health problem in America. Illegal smoking among children will lead to bigger health care bills and more problems than anything else.

We have a number of exciting issues to deal with in the environment and on climate change. But the general thing is people now believe that we get it in America. You should all have a very high level of confidence that our country can function, that it can succeed, that we can meet any challenge.

And I just am so grateful to have been given the chance to serve and to play a role in once again proving that America will always be a young nation if at every time of challenge it can redefine what it means to

be an American. That's what you're doing. And I hope you're very proud of it. And I hope, so far, you're very pleased with the results.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Brian and Myra Greenspun, dinner hosts, and their daughter Amy; Governor Bob Miller of Nevada and wife, Sandy; Bonnie Bryan, wife of Senator Richard H. Bryan; and Landra Reid, wife of Senator Harry Reid. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Memorandum on Importation of Modified Semiautomatic Assault-Type Rifles

November 14, 1997

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury

Subject: Importation of Modified Semiautomatic Assault-Type Rifles

The Gun Control Act of 1968 restricts the importation of firearms unless they are determined to be particularly suitable for or readily adaptable to sporting purposes. In 1989, the Department of the Treasury (the Department) conducted a review of existing criteria for applying the statutory test based on changing patterns of gun use. As a result of that review, 43 assault-type rifles were specifically banned from importation. However, manufacturers have modified many of those weapons banned in 1989 to remove certain military features without changing their essential operational mechanism. Examples of such weapons are the Galil and the Uzi.

In recent weeks Members of Congress have strongly urged that it is again necessary to review the manner in which the Department is applying the sporting purposes test, in order to ensure that the agency's practice is consistent with the statute and current patterns of gun use. A letter signed by 30 Senators strongly urged that modified assault-type weapons are not properly importable under the statute and that I should use my authority to suspend temporarily their importation while the Department conducts an intensive, expedited review. A recent letter from Senator Dianne Feinstein emphasized again that weapons of this type are designed not for sporting purposes but for the commission of crime. In addition, 34 Members of the House of Representatives signed a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu requesting that he intervene to stop all sales of Galils and Uzis into the United States. These concerns have caused the Government of Israel to announce a temporary moratorium on the exportation of Galils and Uzis so that the United States can review the importability of these weapons under the Gun Control Act.

The number of weapons at issue underscores the potential threat to the public health and safety that necessitates immediate action. Firearms importers have obtained permits to import nearly 600,000 modified assault-type rifles. In addition, there are pending before the Department applications to import more than 1 million additional such weapons. The number of rifles covered by outstanding permits is comparable to that which existed in 1989 when the Bush Administration temporarily suspended import permits for assault-type rifles. The number of weapons for which permits for importation are being sought through pending applications is approximately 10 times greater than in 1989. The number of such firearms for which import applications have been filed has skyrocketed from 10,000 on October 9, 1997, to more than 1 million today.

My Administration is committed to enforcing the statutory restrictions on importation of firearms that do not meet the sporting purposes test. It is necessary that we ensure that the statute is being correctly applied and that the current use of these modified weapons is consistent with the statute's criteria for importability. This review should be conducted at once on an expedited basis. The review is directed to weapons such as the Uzi and Galil that failed to meet the sporting purposes test in 1989, but were later found importable when certain military features were removed. The results of this review should be applied to all pending and future applications.

The existence of outstanding permits for nearly 600,000 modified assault-type rifles

threatens to defeat the purpose of the expedited review unless, as in 1989, the Department temporarily suspends such permits. Importers typically obtain authorization to import firearms in far greater numbers than are actually imported into the United States. However, gun importers could effectively negate the impact of any Department determination by simply importing weapons to the maximum amount allowed by their permits. The public health and safety require that the only firearms allowed into the United States are those that meet the criteria of the statute.

Accordingly, as we discussed, you will:

1) Conduct an immediate expedited review not to exceed 120 days in length to determine whether modified semiautomatic assault-type rifles are properly importable under the statutory sporting purposes test. The results of this review will govern action on pending and future applications for import permits, which shall not be acted upon until the completion of this review.

2) Suspend outstanding permits for importation of modified semiautomatic assault-type rifles for the duration of the 120-day review period. The temporary suspension does not constitute a permanent revocation of any license. Permits will be revoked only if and to the extent that you determine that a particular weapon does not satisfy the statutory test for importation, and only after an affected importer has an opportunity to make its case to the Department.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 14 but was embargoed for release until 10:06 a.m., November 15.

The President's Radio Address

November 15, 1997

Good morning. Today I want to talk about the progress we're making in our fight against crime and the steps we're taking to build on that progress. All over our country, crime is dropping. Responsibility and respect for the law are on the rise. But the true measure of our progress is whether our children can play in their front yards, whether they can walk to school in safety, whether our parents can unlock their front doors, whether our grandparents can walk down the streets with confidence, free from the fear of violence.

To give our families that security, we've put in place a comprehensive plan to bring the crime rate down with 100,000 new community police officers, tougher punishment, stronger antigang prevention, the Brady bill. And we've led an unprecedented effort to join the forces of national, State, and local law enforcement to fight crime in every community in America.

In the 3 years since I signed the crime bill into law, we know our strategy is having a real, measurable impact. Crime has dropped now for a record 5 years in a row. Today we have even more dramatic proof of our progress, the Annual National Crime Victimization Survey. It says that in 1996, crime rates fell to their lowest recorded level in nearly 25 years. Property crime is down. Violent crime is down. Since 1993, murder has dropped by 22 percent, 10 percent in 1996 alone. This remarkable drop in the crime rate is no accident. The hard work of people from Washington to every community in the country made it happen.

Community policing is at the center of this success. In only 3 years, we've already funded 65,000 new police officers under the crime bill, and we're close to meeting our goal of putting 100,000 new police officers on our streets.

Our Nation's police officers will tell you that our ongoing effort to ban lethal assault weapons has also been critical to their ability to do a better job. We've banned these guns because you don't need an Uzi to go deer hunting, and everyone knows it.

But as effective as the assault weapons ban has been, we know that some foreign gun manufacturers are getting around the ban by making minor modifications to their weapons that amount to nothing more than cosmetic surgery. Well, we didn't fight as hard as we have to pass the assault weapons in the first place only to let a few gun manufacturers sidestep our laws and undermine our progress. Assault weapons in the hands of civilians exist for no reason but to inspire fear and wreak deadly havoc on our streets. They don't belong on our streets or in our schoolyards, and they shouldn't be aimed at our

children. That's why we banned them 3 years ago and why we're taking action today.

Effective immediately, the Secretary of the Treasury is suspending the importation of all modified assault weapons for 120 days while we study whether they can be permanently blocked from our borders and banned from our streets. We must continue to do everything we can to crack down on illegal firearms and the organized criminals, terrorists, and drug lords who seek them. Yesterday President Zedillo of Mexico and I signed an unprecedented international convention to help fight illegal gun trafficking in our own hemisphere and to strengthen law enforcement's ability to combat this deadly trade.

Working together over the last 5 years, we've proven that we can drive down the crime rate. Now we have to press on, confident that we can take our streets back from crime, take assault weapons and illegal firearms out of the hands of criminals, enact a tough but smart juvenile justice bill, and eventually give our families and our children the real security they deserve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on November 14 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 15.

Remarks on Arrival in Sacramento, California

November 15, 1997

Good morning. Two years ago, I approved a BRAC recommendation to close McClellan Air Force Base, but only after I was convinced it was feasible for McClellan to privatize and that the prospects of success were strong. Since then, I've had to fight at every turn with the Members of Congress who have resisted our efforts to give the Department of Defense the tools it needs to privatize more of its operations more easily.

This year, the so-called Depot Caucus tried to block the ongoing competition for the Kelly and McClellan workload altogether. I said if they did that, I would veto the entire defense bill. Eventually, Congress reached a compromise to allow the competitions for this important work to go forward. The Secretary of Defense has assured me that although the language in the bill is not ideal, I quote, "the Department of Defense has flexibility to proceed with the remaining public-private competitions at Kelly and McClellan bases in a way that is fair to both sides." For this reason, I have decided to sign the defense bill.

We will continue to do everything we can to help McClellan make the transition. The Vice President and I have met with business and community officials. We have listened to your concerns. Today I am pleased to announce seven steps we are taking.

First, by December 31st, the Air Force will transfer McClellan to Sacramento County at a significantly discounted price to encourage rapid economic development and job creation.

Second, the Coast Guard will remain at McClellan through at least 2004, contributing $2 million a year to support private airfield operations.

Third, the Defense Department will retain liability for the eventual shutdown of McClellan's nuclear reactor, making it possible to support scientific and commercial research here for the next 30 years.

Fourth, the Department recently announced that it will provide an additional $7.2 million to retrain 1,700 civilian workers who face layoffs over the next 2 years.

Fifth, our EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, will visit McClellan early next month to discuss with community leaders a schedule for environmental cleanup to promote redevelopment and job creation.

Sixth, the Defense Department will provide an additional $11.3 million to complete funding of the casting emission reduction program at McClellan to develop environmentally friendly technology for manufacturing.

Finally, we will give high priority to capital improvements at McClellan to promote economic development and job creation.

Today we're also announcing a series of actions we're taking to help San Antonio redevelop the Kelly Air Force Base.

This is the third base conversion challenge this community has taken on. You've done a tremendous job. Your efforts are a model for the Nation. And I will continue to work

with McClellan to make this third story a very successful one for this remarkable community.

Thank you very much. And I'm sorry for the weather inconvenience.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. at McClellan Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to BRAC, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Remarks at the Yolo Basin Wetlands in Davis, California

November 15, 1997

Thank you very much. You can't imagine how much I wanted to get out of cold, rainy, windy Washington, DC, to come to California. [*Laughter*] But after all, this is a wetlands event.

I want to, first of all, thank Sarah for her introduction. Didn't she speak well? [*Applause*] She was terrific, I thought. And listening to her recount the experiences of the last several years of her life I think was as good a statement as any as could be made about so many of you who are here and the work you have done to make this day come to pass. I want to thank all of you very much.

I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to your secretary of natural resources, Doug Wheeler, and two people who came from Washington with me, our Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Rich Rominger, who is from Yolo County, and he's already been mentioned, but our Deputy Secretary of the Interior, John Garamendi, who grew up not far from here, and they've both done a terrific job for you back there.

I thank John Walker for his statement. We were dedicating a wetland in Arkansas once, a few years ago, on a much warmer day. And I was a Governor, and he was a president, but after all, I'm term-limited and he can go on forever. [*Laughter*]

I'm very glad to be here with all of you. I want to thank Robin and Greg for showing me around the area and giving me a chance to look at some of the birds and just see what you've done here. I asked him how many ducks and geese there were going to be here and whether you had any eagles or ospreys or egrets, and I got a pretty good rundown on it.

And I have to say that I have been, as you have heard already, a big supporter of these kinds of endeavors. I thank the people here from the California Waterfowl Association, and I do want to say a special word of thanks to two groups with which I have been associated, first, the folks from the Corps of Engineers. They have not only changed their image, they've changed their reality. They're working hard not only to give us water projects but to give us the kind of environmental conservation that we need for the long run. And I thank you very much, Colonel, and I thank all the people from the Corps for what you've done.

And let me just echo what was said earlier. I'm very proud of my very long association with Ducks Unlimited. They've done a wonderful job in helping us to bring waterfowl back to our State and they do a great job in this country.

Finally, I'd like to say a word of appreciation to Vic Fazio, who is clearly one of the most outstanding Members of the United States Congress in either party. If we had a hundred more people like him, America would have no problem. He is a very good man. I want to thank Vic not only for his work here but for the general efforts he's made, along with Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein and John Garamendi, for our efforts in the Bay Delta area and the work that we are doing to try to guarantee the long-term needs of California for water supply, as well as water quality, habitat preservation, and environmental progress. And that's very, very good.

Let me say, I wanted to be here today because to me this project is the embodiment of not only what we should be doing as Americans on the edge of a new century but how we should be doing it. We worked very hard to create a country where things were working for ordinary Americans, where we were coming together across the lines that divide us, and where we can be strong enough to continue to lead the world in the right direction. And that bridge that I talked about all the time I'm trying to build to the 21st century is going pretty well. We've got the strongest economy in a generation; crime and

welfare are dropping. And our water quality, our air quality, our food safety, they're all improving. We are moving in the right direction.

One of the biggest challenges we will have to continue to face during the entire lifetime of all the children that are here is the challenge of trying to grow our economy and lift our standard of living while improving, not diminishing, our environment. That is critical. A great deal of the history of 20th century California is a story of this battle. And the truth is, for most of the 20th century, not only in California but throughout America, whenever people thought about this, they either thought, ''I'm going to develop the economy; the environment will take care of itself,'' or they felt for a long time, ''It's unfortunate that we have to give up so much of our environment, but it's a necessary price we have to pay to continue to raise our living standards.'' Now we know that is a false choice. And indeed, we understand that over the long run if we want to preserve our ability to increase our standard of living, we have to preserve our national environment and all the things that go with it.

Just for example, Greg Schmid and I were talking about this project and how the more you do these projects, the more you're going not only to have what you came here for today but what you cannot see; you will lose less water in rain runoff, and you will over time rebuild the aquifers that are below the land, that no one sees and most people don't think about. But that will enable you to sustain your population and to sustain your economic activity.

So again I say, I wanted to come here today because this is a huge success. You're doing the right thing, and you're doing it in the right way. And that's the second point I want to make. If we haven't learned anything in our country in the last few years, I hope we have learned we do not get very far when we just stand off and shout at each other and fight and argue all the time. But we can do anything if we roll up our sleeves and get down to work and honestly listen to people who have different experiences, different perspectives, and different genuine interests. That's what you've done here. You've been able to bring everybody together, and I really feel good about that.

Here we are in the shadow of Sacramento. We see the farmlands here, and I promise you, when I crossed that levee today, I thought I was back home in eastern Arkansas, and I kept waiting for somebody to give me my waders and a gun to go duck hunting. [*Laughter*]

What you have done today was based on the cooperation of State, Federal, and local governments, based on public—[*inaudible*]. That's how we ought to be dealing with all America's problems. You can't name a single problem we've got in this country that we could not make the kind of progress on we're celebrating today if we didn't approach it the way you have approached this.

And I would implore you to think about what you can do and what you can say to people in this State, and your friends and family members and neighbors all around America, to take this attitude and this approach, not only to our environmental problems but to all others.

You've been working on this since the late eighties. You ought to be very proud of it. But you ought to also draw confidence from this that there is no challenge facing this country that we cannot meet if we will just do what you have done here. I am so proud of you—I know that you believe in it or you wouldn't be standing out here in the cold and rain listening to me talk.

I've just got to make one other point that I think is very important to you here in California. Three years ago we helped to launch the historic Cal-Fed partnership to try to end the water wars and restore the environment and ensure clean and reliable water for generations to come. I just signed legislation, as Vic Fazio said, that makes $85 million in downpayments to match funds that the California voters approved to restore their rivers and marshes in the valleys. In 2 months the Cal-Fed program will recommend a blueprint for moving forward with all of our partners in the way I said. We'll be working on habitat restoration, flood protection, integrated from the beginning into all projects designed to meet the other needs of the area. We're going to do it right. And again I say I'm very grateful to Vic Fazio and to Senator

Boxer, Senator Feinstein, and of course, to John Garamendi for their work in this whole process.

And let me also say that—I want to say a word of thanks to the Corps of Engineers and others who have done all the work in rebuilding after last year's floods. Within the next few weeks, the Corps will finish all remaining repairs. It's the most extensive flood reparation ever done in this short of time and another reason we should thank the Corps of Engineers for what they've done here.

We're working hard across America on projects like this. We're making progress in reclaiming the Florida Everglades, in restoring Lake Tahoe, in saving Yellowstone. We have funds in this latest bill, in our balanced budget plan, to continue this work. But I now can go around the country and talk to other people about what you've done here and tell them you believe in it so much you all showed up and stayed in the wind and the rain in sunny California. [*Laughter*]

Well, I've seen the wetlands here today, and some of you may have seen more than you wanted to see. But I'll tell you what else I've seen: I've seen a glimpse of America's future, and I like it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Douglas P. Wheeler, California Secretary for Resources; John Walker, chairman of the board, Ducks Unlimited; Sarah Jullian, volunteer, Robin Kulakow, executive director, and Greg Schmid, farmer, Yolo Basin Foundation; and Col. Dorothy F. Klasse, USA, District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Sacramento

November 15, 1997

Thank you very much. Eleni, thank you very much for your remarks and for the hard work that you have done. Thank you, Angelo and Sophia. Congressman Matsui, when he stood up and said that he was speaking on behalf of the Tsakapoulous family, I thought we were taking ethnic diversity a little far there. [*Laughter*] But you know me; as far as I'm concerned, it should have no limits. So I liked it.

I want to thank Bob Matsui and Vic Fazio for the wonderful work that they do in Congress. I have wished on many days—privately, so I might as well say publicly—that a higher percentage of people in both parties were more like Bob Matsui and Vic Fazio. They always try to find common ground, and they're always willing to stand tough and fight if necessary. They get a lot done, and they're always looking to the future. And I'm very grateful to them.

I'm also glad to be back in Sacramento and back here with your mayor, who has been a good friend of mine and a good leader. And I thank him for that. And Phil Angeledes, good luck to you in your endeavor this year. Most people should trust you to handle the money. [*Laughter*] You've had a lot of experience at it. [*Applause*] Thank you. I'd also like to thank my good friend Dan Dutko for coming all the way from Washington, DC, to be part of the Democratic Party's efforts today. And let me thank all of you.

Congress has just gone home, and this was a remarkably good year; It's a 2-year congressional session; we have a lot to do next year; but we did pass the first balanced budget in a generation. We ratified the chemical weapons treaty, which will help to protect our children and our grandchildren and involves a lot of what is at stake in Iraq today. We made progress on expanding NATO in ways that will give us a chance to have a 21st century where Europe is a source of peace and prosperity, not a cause for war that involves Americans. We passed a wonderful adoption bill that I will sign in the next few days to facilitate adoptions in many ways in America. We passed a huge increase in medical research in all kinds of areas and the best package to help families with diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association, since the discovery of insulin 70 years ago. So it was a very good year for the American people in the Congress.

What I'd like to talk to you about a little bit today is how that year is a part of what we've been doing for the last 5 years and what I hope to be doing for the next 3, how it fits in with what we celebrated just a few moments ago when I went out, literally, to the wetlands area today—[*laughter*]—to celebrate this joint partnership to try to restore

wetlands and to preserve some of your precious environmental heritage, even as you permit the economy to grow and the uses of water to proliferate.

When I started running for President about 6 years ago, our country was not in very good shape. California was in terrible shape economically. But times come and go. In every person's life, in every country's life, there are times that are better than other times. There will never be a period where we have complete, unbounded, uninterrupted good news. I used to have a set of rules of public life I kept with me, and one of them said, "You're always most vulnerable when you think you're invulnerable. Something is always going to happen. It's endemic to the human condition."

But what a free people must always have is a vision of where they're going, a strategy to get there, and the concentration and discipline to pursue the strategy through the tough times. That's what I didn't think we had in 1991 and why I ran for President. And my goal as a Democrat was basically to take the mainstream values of our party and our country and marry them to modern ideas and policies that would move the country forward and that would take us into the 21st century with the American dream alive for everybody responsible enough to work for it. It would help us to create a country where we were coming together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America and would keep us strong enough to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity.

As you see from the events of the last week, I think it is clear that at the end of the cold war not all of the dangers of the world have gone away. And it is very important that the United States be strong enough to do what is necessary to stick up not only for our own interests and our own security but for the kind of world we are trying to create. And that's what we have been doing for the last 5 years.

And what I want you to understand that is so often overlooked is that there is a direct connection between your presence at this lunch here today and what we have been doing and what we will be able to do because, in the end, the people who make decisions are those that are put there by the American people. They are put there after elections. And if you don't have the capacity to communicate your message to be heard and to answer the charges against you in this world today, you'll be in a lot of trouble.

So every time you hear—if you've been out here helping us all these years—every time you hear of a new breakthrough, a new movement forward for the United States, you should feel that you are a part of that. And you should be under no illusion that if there were not people like you around to help us, that all these ideas, all these policies, and all these people would be around anyway; it's not so. I've seen elections conducted in an atmosphere of unilateral disarmament, and I wasn't very satisfied with the results. It doesn't work very well in politics, and it doesn't work very well in other areas of human endeavor. So I'm glad you're here.

What is it that's changed in the last 5 years? Well, the first thing we had to do was to make up our mind in Washington what the Government's job was. What's the President supposed to do every day when he gets up? What's the Congress supposed to do? What is our job? What is the role of Government, and what must our priorities be?

The old debate seemed to me to be a little bit artificial, where some people said, "Well, the Government has to try to do everything when there's a problem," and others would say, "The Government is the problem and should do nothing, and we hope everybody will come out all right." Neither one of those was consistent with the way I saw people living in my State and my hometown or everything I knew about how you build an economy or a society.

So I tried to reformulate what I believe the mission of Government is, and I think it is—and I hope it is—the philosophy of the Democratic Party on the edge of a new century. We believe the role of Government is not to do everything or to sit on the sidelines but to give people the tools and conditions they need to make the most of their own lives. If you think about it in that way, it tells you what to do and what to stop doing.

Now, that doesn't answer the question, so what should your economic policy be? We believe that there was a false choice put before the American people: Should we cut

taxes and run a huge deficit, or don't cut them and spend a little more money and run a slightly smaller deficit? Our country's debt quadrupled in the 1980's, and it was wrong. We said, ''We're going to cut the deficit. We're going to cut spending, but we're going to spend more on education, on technology, on medical research, on the things that are key to our future. We're going to make choices.''

The strategy worked. Before the balanced budget kicks in, the economic plan adopted by Democrats only, including the two Members of Congress in this room, had reduced the deficit by 92 percent—92 percent—from where it was the day I took office.

What was our crime policy? I was amazed when I got to Washington, there were people who actually wrote in newspapers and respectable journals that, if I talked about crime, I was trying to get a Republican issue. And I was not aware that Democrats were pro-crime. [*Laughter*] Nor was I aware that the Republicans had done such a great job, since the crime rate was—had gone up quite a lot.

Now, most anti-crime work is done at the community level—in the city of Sacramento, in this county. But it was obvious there were things the National Government could do that would make a difference. And I went all across the country looking at things that were working, talking to people. And I said our crime policy is not going to be caught in the old debate, lock them up and throw away the key or hope things get better, and when things get better, the crime rate will go down. Neither one was, I thought, particularly accurate. I thought we ought to be tough and smart and do what works: Put 100,000 more police on the street; take assault weapons off the street; keep handguns out of the hands of crooks; give kids something to say yes to so they don't get in trouble in the first place; and punish people who are really bad. That's what I thought our policy ought to be. And the crime rate has dropped now for 5 years in a row, and we played a role in it, and I feel good about that.

Our welfare policy—the old policy was encourage people to do better, or cut them off, and who cares. That was the old debate. Our theory was require people who can go to work to go to work, but don't ask them to give up their most important job, which is raising their kids. And we started working with States from the day I got there on moving people from welfare to work. The Republicans said, when they got a majority in Congress, they wanted to pass a welfare reform bill. I said, ''Fine, we'll work with you on it.'' They passed two bills that I vetoed. Why? Because they were more than happy to be tough in cutting people off of welfare, but they did not want to give them the tools they needed to get in the work force, and they were willing to hurt their kids by taking away the guarantee of food and medical care.

So I vetoed those two bills; they put the guarantees of food and medical care back in, gave me some money for job training and child care—we're off to the races. The result? Welfare rolls have dropped by 3 million people. And it's working; it's working.

What I want you to understand is there's a direct connection between you being here at this lunch and that happening. And I thank you for it. We are changing the nature of politics in this country.

We had a big reaction to a lot of what we did in '93 and '94, and the benefits of it weren't apparent. The Republicans won the Congress in '94. The American people got to see what they wanted to do in '95 and '96. We beat back the contract on America. It didn't happen by accident. It was a lot of hard, disciplined work, putting our message out against their message. And it's a good thing for the country that we did.

What we celebrated today at that wetlands project was people who want to grow the economy and people who want to preserve the environment working together to do something at the grassroots level. That's how we ought to be doing this. Their idea on the environment was it was a nice thing if you could get it, but it was really an irritant that shouldn't get in the way of people going about their daily lives.

I think that's wrong. I think we have proved conclusively—you have cleaner air today, cleaner water, more toxic waste dumps cleaned up, a safer food supply, all through major initiatives of this administration, and a stronger economy. We have got to do it in the right way. We don't want to do things

that are stupid. We don't want to shoot ourselves in the foot, but we know we have got to preserve public health and the environment and grow the economy. That is the policy of our party. And we are determined to do it, and we are making progress on it, and your presence here today contributes to the triumph of that idea. And you should be proud of that, and you should talk about it, and you should help us to refine it.

I don't mean there aren't tough decisions out there. This climate change issue, for example, is a very difficult, challenging issue that will occupy us for the rest of my term in office. But I know that the technology, the know-how, the creativity is out there in the American people to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and grow the economy. We've already done it in two other areas—you know these chlorofluorocarbons and CFC's that were in all the spray cans—they said, ''Oh, they'll do terrible damage to the economy if we get rid of them.'' Well, we got rid of them, and the American economy is doing just fine. They say we do terrible damage to the economy if we took sulfur dioxide out of the atmosphere. We found a pro-business, market-oriented way to do it; we're getting it out of the atmosphere at less than half the cost I was told it would cost, and we're doing just fine.

And we'll solve this problem, and we'll do just fine if we'll all work together and realize that we cannot be forced into a position where somebody says, ''If you want to save the environment, you have to tank the economy,'' or, ''If you want a good economy, you just have to turn your back on the environment.'' That is wrong. And it's one of two big choices that I think we can't afford to make.

The other one, and the last issue I want to emphasize domestically, is the choice that I alluded to earlier, welfare. That's the choice between work and family. When I signed the family leave law, a lot of people said, ''You're going to hurt a lot of small businesses,'' even though we exempted people with under 50 employees. For 5 years we've had a record number of new small businesses formed in every single year. It is a good thing to allow people who go to work every day not to have to worry themselves sick about their children at home or at school. It is a decent thing to do that.

I will say again, every society's most important job is raising healthy, good, strong children with good values. There is no more important work. More than half of the children in this country under the age of one have mothers in the work force. And since I have had a wife, a mother, and a grandmother in the work force—as long as I have been alive, that is what I have known—I do not think that is a bad thing. But I think it is a very bad thing when people who are working are worried sick about their children.

And so as we look ahead to the future, our party has to find a way to provide more affordable child care. Our party has to find a way to provide health insurance for these children, all of them—we're going to cover half of them with this balanced budget this year—all these children who live in families where their parents are working in lower income jobs and they can't afford health insurance. Our party has to find a way to help the American people balance the demands of raising their kids and going to work every day. And if we have the same approach that we've had for the last 5 years, we can do that as well.

Lastly, let me just say very briefly, because I think you can understand that I don't want to talk about this in any detail, we've got all kinds of other challenges. We've got to make sure that Medicare and Social Security are there for the baby boom generation and for their children and their children's children. And we have to do it in a way that doesn't—where people my age, of the baby boom generation, don't ask the smaller generation of our children to bankrupt themselves and not take care of their kids to preserve these institutions. We can do all that.

We also, though, have to have a framework in our mind for what it means for America to be secure in the 21st century. National security during the cold war was pretty straightforward. We wanted to keep a big strong military and plenty of nuclear weapons, and we wanted to have a system that existed between ourselves and the Soviet Union so that either side thought that, if they launched nuclear weapons, the other side would be destroyed, so no one would ever

do it. And then we'd fight around the edges in various places around the world, to try to keep them from getting much of a toehold.

With the decline of the cold war, with the Russians becoming our partners and our soldiers standing side by side in Bosnia, we now know that national security has to be defined somewhat in different terms. To be sure, there's a lot of problems still with nuclear weapons. We're doing our best to continue to work with the Russians to get rid of more and more nuclear weapons and actually destroy them and make sure that the nuclear materials don't fall into the wrong hands. And we've gotten a wonderful amount of support around the world for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty.

We're working hard to deal with the aftereffects of these civil wars, the worst of which is landmines. And while I do not agree with all the terms of the Ottawa convention on landmines, it is encouraging that over 100 nations are willing to say that they will never build, buy, or use any kind of landmines. The United States has destroyed a million and a half such mines; we're going to destroy another million and a half while I'm President. And this year we'll spend slightly more than half the money spent in the entire world to go get those landmines out of the ground so kids don't walk on them and blow their lives away in the years ahead. This is a good thing.

But the most likely problems—there are a couple little babies in this audience, or there were today, and some children—the most likely problems these children will face when they come of age will be problems that cross national borders: terrorism, organized crime and drug running, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological weapons, and maybe small-scale nuclear weapons—this much nuclear cake put in a bomb would do 10 times as much damage as the Oklahoma City bomb did—the spread of environmental problems or diseases across national lines. We are going to have to, in other words, find ways to cooperate, to keep the organized forces of destruction that are taking advantage of the Internet, the technological revolution, the freedom of travel and the freedom of movement, access to computers, and moving money around and all that—there will always be organized forces of destruction.

That is fundamentally what is at stake in the standoff we're having in Iraq today. I don't want you to look at this backward through the prism of the Gulf war and think it's a replay. I want you to look at it forward and think about it in terms of the innocent Japanese people that died in the subway when the sarin gas was released; and how important it is for every responsible government in the world to do everything that can possibly be done not to let big stores of chemical or biological weapons fall into the wrong hands, not to let irresponsible people develop the capacity to put them in warheads on missiles or put them in briefcases that could be exploded in small rooms.

And I say this not to frighten you. The world will always have challenges. I think the chances are quite good that we can organize ourselves for this challenge and deal with it very effectively. I personally believe that the next 50 years will be far more peaceful and less dangerous for our children and our grandchildren than the last 50 years were. I also believe they will be the most prosperous and interesting time in all of human history but only if we do the right things.

And so I say again to you, this is an exciting time to be alive. There have only been maybe four periods like this in American history over our 220-year history, where we are really being called upon to rethink what we want of our Government, rethink what we want of our Nation, meet a whole set of new challenges and, in effect, recreate the American dream. It can only happen once every generation, sometimes once every two or three generations. You are living in that kind of America. In that kind of time, political participation is more important; the integrity and validity and strength of your ideas are more important; and your passionate willingness to stand up and defend what you believe in is more important.

So I thank you for being here today because I believe that what you are doing is helping to build an America that your children and your grandchildren will be very proud of and will thank you for.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. at the Sacramento Capital Club. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon organizer Eleni Tsakapoulous and her parents, Angelo and Sophia; Mayor Joseph Serna, Jr., of Sacramento; Phil Angeledes, candidate for State treasurer; and Dan Dutko, chair, Victory Fund.

Remarks at a Rock the Vote Reception in Beverly Hills, California

November 16, 1997

Thank you very much. I love Rock the Vote. [*Laughter*] I liked it the first time I heard about it. I pledged to support the motor voter bill when I ran for President in 1992, and I was thrilled when it passed. And we had a great signing ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, a real tribute to the efforts of all those who started Rock the Vote and were so involved in it.

And I want to thank Dan for those fine remarks. I want to thank Dan and Jenna and Jeff and Hilary and my great friend Ricki Seidman, for all the work they've done for Rock the Vote over the years. Good luck, Donna. You gave a good speech up here; that's a good start.

Let me say that—oh, I also want to thank Wolfgang and Barbara for having us here at this wonderful place. We should probably be sitting down and eating instead of standing up and talking, but I'm delighted to be here.

Let me say to all of you, when I ran for President, I did so out of an urge, a compassion, almost a compulsion to try to change this country, to give it back to the people and to make it work again, to basically reclaim the future for your generation and for the young children who are here. And I've tried to continue to always think every day about how whatever I do will affect not just the moment, not just a month or a year from now, but what will be the impact 10 or 20 or 30 years from now.

Most of what we do today will become only clear in its impact when I'm long out of the White House. Part of that is a function of the time in which we're living when things are changing so dramatically. But I've tried to stay in touch with young people and their concerns throughout my Presidency. As a matter of fact, the last meeting I had before I left for the west coast, at the White House, was one of my regular roundtables. We don't call them coffees anymore—[*laughter*]—although we can—now I insist that we have a reporter in every one; I wish we'd had one in all the others—but anyway, with a lot of young people. And these young people came, and they talked to me about a number of different things. And then a young man who used to work for me—now works for MTV—reported on a survey that had been done by MTV about the attitudes of young people and how basically optimistic they were about their prospects and how well things were going in the country. And they had some concerns, and they were the ones you would expect.

But there was one sort of dark spot in this survey I want to bring up, because it seems to me to undercut everything that Rock the Vote stands for, and I say it to throw it down as a challenge tonight and to thank the people who have organized this event and to thank all of you who have come here. Basically, young people were upbeat about the country, skeptical about the political system, skeptical about whether it was really working for them, skeptical about whether they could make a difference. And what I would like to say to you is, no serious student of the last 5 years could possibly believe that. Therefore, we have a lot of work to do if you expect your generation to completely fulfill its promise and if you expect to have this democracy work for you.

Just consider where we started in '92. I said that I wanted to be President because I wanted to reverse trickle-down economics; it wasn't working for America. I wanted to go to a strategy I called invest-and-grow. I said that I wanted to replace welfare dependency with a system that emphasized work and childrearing. I said that I wanted to change our crime policies away from hot air and tough talk toward a strategy based on police, prevention, and punishment. I said that I wanted to try to find a way so that we could support families both in raising their children and in succeeding at work, because nearly every family I know, even upper income people, find conflicts repeatedly between their

obligations they feel to their children and the obligations they feel at work.

I said that we ought to have a world-class education system for all Americans; we ought to reform health care to expand coverage and quality, to control costs. I said that we had to do more for poor people in isolated communities in our urban and rural areas. I said that I thought we had to build one America out of all of our diversity, across the racial and religious, the gender, the sexual orientation, even the political divides. We had to find some way to define ourselves by what we had in common, because we were growing ever more diverse, and if we didn't find a way to do that, then our efforts would be undermined. And finally, I said, I thought it was terribly important that America not withdraw from the world at the end of the cold war. We had to continue to push for the world to enjoy more peace and prosperity and freedom.

Now, some people said, including me on occasion, that that was a new Democratic approach. For me, it was our oldest ideals with new ideas for a new era. But you be the judge. Is it different now than it was 5 years ago? We have the best economy in a generation. We have the lowest crime rate in 24 years. We have the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, fewer toxic waste dumps, and safer food. All of that has happened, and it is directly related to the work the American people have done, most of all, but also to the changed direction of this country in the last 5 years. And it happened because people participated in the political process and it got a result they were seeking and the result changed the lives and the framework within which we live in America. That is terribly important.

We have the family leave law. We have the law that says you can't lose your health insurance if you change jobs or somebody in your family gets sick. We're about to cover 5 million more children in poor working families who don't have health insurance today. We passed tax credits to open the doors of college to all Americans and to give families credits for their kids and credits when they adopt children who need homes. This has made a difference. And I believe we're moving closer to one America.

In 1994, we had an election, and the Republicans won the majority in Congress, and they had a contract on America and that election had consequences, too. We know it was a very low turnout election, and we know that more than anything else, it was younger voters and single women workers who stayed home. And I spent a year contrasting my vision of America with theirs and telling them that if we could work together for positive change, but that I was determined to beat back a vision of this country that said that Government is always the problem, there were no responsibilities we had in common, and who cares if we became more unequal and more unfair. And I'm proud that we defeated that vision. And that, too, had consequences as a direct result of the electoral process, and I think you have to acknowledge that.

Now, more importantly, there are a lot of things to do. Can we grow the economy and clean up the environment? Can we meet America's responsibilities to avoid global warming and reduce greenhouse gas emissions? I think we can. How are we going to continue to create this vision of one America? We still have problems. A distinguished Chinese-American who grew up in New York City can't get voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee because he believes in what his President believes in on affirmative action, even though he has promised to faithfully enforce the law, whatever it is—in the Civil Rights Division. Bill Lee ought to be confirmed. That is wrong. That is wrong.

But how did it happen? A whole bunch of people voted and a whole bunch of other people stayed home and certain people got elected. There are consequences to active citizenship and consequences to sitting on the sidelines. That's why I love Rock the Vote. Yes, it's been fun. Yes, the events are exuberant. Yes, they feature young people. But I think the work of citizenship can be fun, too.

We have 800 colleges, tens of thousands of young college students going all across America today, every week, going into inner-city schools to teach children to read, to give them a chance because that was one of the

things that I promised in the campaign of '96, and that's one of the things that we started since then in 1997. These efforts have consequences. Citizens matter.

And I just want you to think about that. Whatever the headlines in the daily paper are—"The President is Trying to Contain the Spread of Biological and Chemical Weapons Today"—a very important issue—whatever the consequences are, remember, in a democracy the people making the decisions were elected by people who voted and by people who stayed home. That's why Rock the Vote is important. Remember, almost everybody in this room has a lot more future ahead of you than I do. Most of what we're doing, you will live with the consequences of; you will reap the benefits of; you will bear the burdens of.

And this country is in good shape today, in no small measure, because our Constitution has permitted us to recreate America based on our oldest values in every new time of challenge and change. That's what we're doing now. You should be glad you're alive now. If we do it right, the next 50 years will be the most exciting and yet peaceful time in all human history if we do it right. But it requires that people neither be lackadaisical or cynical.

If you believe, as I do, that every person can make a difference and that every person is obliged to make a difference, then it necessarily follows that anyone who doesn't try is shirking his or her duty as a citizen. That's really what Rock the Vote is all about.

I'll just close with—I had an interesting meeting at the White House with Senator Dole after that election. And we were sitting around, relaxing, talking like old friends, forgetting about all the things that were said that probably shouldn't have been. [*Laughter*] And I said, "You know, you've been in Washington a lot longer than I have." He said, "That's what I tried to convince the voters of at the election." [*Laughter*] And I said, "Now, do you think that public life is more honest or less honest today than it was 30 years ago or 35 years ago." He said, "It's not even close, not even remotely close. It is much, much more honest today than 30 or 35 years ago."

Now, if young Americans don't believe that, if they don't believe that their vote makes a difference, and if they don't believe there are consequences to what they do after the titanic struggles of the last 2 years, we have, all of us who believe that, have somehow failed in our responsibilities as citizens, and we have to redouble our effort to do better. That's why I always try to do a lot of town meetings. That's why I've insisted in the two Presidential elections that we have one debate each election that involved ordinary citizens who could ask the candidates directly what their concerns are.

But we have to do more. There is more for Rock the Vote to do. There is more to do to involve ordinary citizens. We have now tried for 5 years in a row, so far unsuccessfully, to reform the campaign finance laws. But I will remind you, we have not only to control the cost of campaigns, we have to increase the access of the people to the candidates through free or reduced air time so that we can have more positive, constructive interactions so that people will get excited by the debates at election and participate.

But whether that happens or not, no one has an excuse to sit on the sidelines. You have only to look at the differences in America now compared to 5 years ago to say, yes, it makes a difference. Yes, we made a difference in Rock the Vote. Yes, motor voter made a difference. Yes, every time we tell young people they have to take some time to be good citizens, it make a difference.

I will always try to be here for Rock the Vote, even when I am in a rocking chair and out of office. [*Laughter*] But I want you to remember that. And those of us who have done well in this country and in our lives have a special responsibility to reach out to try to help those who have not done so well and to tell them that at election time their vote counts just as much as ours and can make the kind of America we want to leave to our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. at Spago's Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to the following Rock the Vote officials: Dan Adler, chairperson and reception host, and his wife, Jenna; Jeff Ayeroff, founder; Hilary Rosen, board member; Ricki Seidman, former executive director;

and Donna Frisbee, acting executive director. He also referred to Wolfgang and Barbara Puck, owners of the restaurant.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Los Angeles, California

November 16, 1997

Well, thank you—*chaver*. [*Laughter*] Actually, I learned how to do that—you know, that's just the way we say it in Arkansas. What can I say? [*Laughter*] Walk into any redneck bar on the weekend—[*laughter*]—that's the way we talk.

Thank you, Haim. Thank you, Cheryl. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for being here. I'm, first of all, delighted to see you all, and I want to thank you for your presence here and for your support. And I want to thank you for having us in your beautiful home and your beautiful tent. [*Laughter*] I used to say, when I was on the stump running for President, I wanted to create a big tent in America that we could keep everybody in. I think we've almost achieved it tonight. [*Laughter*]

You mentioned Yitzhak Rabin, who was my great friend, and we sadly observed the second anniversary of his death just a few days ago. And I've only been through this twice—two anniversaries of his death that I have observed—both times I remember exactly where I was and exactly what I was doing when I heard that he had been shot. And I remember exactly what I did waiting for the news of whether he lived or not. So I've thought a lot about what it was to me that made him so special, because we had a relationship that was one of the most important things that ever happened to me in my life. The thing I liked about Rabin was that he was tough as nails, but he had a great heart and a great imagination. And he understood that the status quo would not work for Israel, and therefore he was prepared to make changes, even though they carried risks.

In a less dire way entirely, that is the general choice that has faced America for the last few years, because when things begin to change in a society, if you want to hold on to your basic values—you can't hold on to your basic values by holding on to old conditions. In order to hold on to your basic values, you have to change conditions; you have to change your approach; you have to be open to new things and even open to taking risks.

Six years ago, when I decided to run for President, I did it basically because I thought that we were not changing fast enough and that we didn't have a strategy about how we were going to get into the 21st century. We were talking about the revolution in telecommunications and software and other things around the table tonight—they are really metaphors for the breathtaking changes that are going on in the way Americans work and live and relate to the rest of the world. And if we want to preserve what is best about America, therefore, we have to be the most aggressive change agents in the world. That is the premise on which I began to seek the Presidency 6 years ago.

I thought the only way to restore opportunity and responsibility and a sense of community in this country was to basically have new ideas that were relevant to a new time. And so we set about doing that. And the people of California were kind enough to vote for Vice President Gore and me and to give us a chance to serve, and we changed the economic policy of the country. We went from trickle-down economics to invest-and-grow economics. We changed the National Government's approach to crime and focused on police, prevention, as well as punishment. We changed our approach to welfare and focused on requiring work but also supporting children. We aggressively embraced the environmental policy designed to facilitate economic growth by improving the environment.

And we did a lot of other things. We tried to take on what I think is a central challenge for almost every family in America today, even quite well-to-do families, even though it's tougher for poor families, and that is, nearly every person I know with young children can cite at least one example where they have felt a conflict between their obligations at work and their obligations to their children. And our society is not sufficiently organized to enable people to succeed at work and at what is everybody's most important job, which is raising good children. It is still

the most important work of every society, and we have given no thought, really, or very little thought as a country to what our national approach ought to be to making sure that no one had to give up being a good parent in order to be successful at work.

So these were some of the challenges we tried to take on. I also have been concerned all my life, but particularly in the last few years, about how we could bridge our old divides of race and deal with all the incredible manifold new diversity coming into our society, respecting that diversity, even celebrating it, but still saying, these are the things which unite us as Americans. We can have one America, no matter how kaleidoscopic we get. As a matter of fact, the richer, the more diverse we get, we can even be stronger as one country.

And finally, I was quite concerned that the temptation would be very great at the end of the cold war for the United States to lay down the responsibilities of world leadership, and I was worried that there would be a vacuum at the very time when we had enormous opportunities in terms of trade and the economy to bring people together and to reinforce democracy, and we had enormous new responsibility. Just because there is no cold war and the threat of two great countries annihilating each other and half the rest of the world with nuclear bombs is receding, we see a whole new set of threats from terrorists and weapons of mass destruction, from international criminal cartels and drug traffickers, and potentially over the next few decades, from more international diseases, infections traversing national borders. Particularly, it will become more pronounced if we have dramatic changes in the global environment. So we needed a new approach there, and so we set about trying to change all these things and a number of others I haven't mentioned.

Five years later, thanks largely to the work of the American people but not unrelated to these changes, we've got the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare in history, the air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, there are fewer toxic waste dumps, and our food is safer.

We have made a beginning on trying to deal with the conflicts of work and family by passing the family leave law and by providing special tax breaks for people to finance college education, for parents with young children, and for adoption, which is a very important issue to a number of you in this room and also to me.

We're about to expand health care coverage to 5 million more children in working families who don't have it. We're moving the country forward. We have fought back our worst impulses to divide the country over immigrants and over race, and I hope we'll be able to take on a whole range of other issues as I continue this initiative of racial dialog that I started here in California a few months ago.

The nuclear threat has been reduced. We've been a positive force for peace in Bosnia and Haiti and Northern Ireland and in the Middle East, troubled though the peace process is today. And we have begun to bring the world together, I think, around a shared approach not only to our common opportunities through trade and economic cooperation and dealing with common concerns over human rights but also in dealing with these terrorist problems and other related problems.

So I think it's a very different country today than it was 5 years ago, and I am very gratified for all the people who have helped. So the first and most important thing I'd like to say tonight to all of you is thank you. I think it is very important that you understand there is a direct connection between the decisions people make in elections, the policies that are put in, and the consequences that flow. And the system we have today requires us to be able to raise funds so that we can communicate.

I would very much like to see campaign finance reform passed. I've worked hard on it. We've tried for 5 years. The forces that benefit from the present system keep trying to keep it, but I will say this, too—and a lot of you—I'm sure that Lew Wasserman has probably been contributing to campaigns as long as anybody in this room—would say the escalating costs of campaigns is like the escalating costs of making movies or the escalating costs of anything else. You don't raise the

money and then look for something to throw it at. The costs go up, and you raise the money to meet them.

So if we're going to have meaningful campaign finance reform, we also have to have a meaningful way to lower the cost of candidates communicating with the electorate, through free or reduced air time for people who accept spending limits and other things like that.

But you ought to be proud tonight that you have played a role in moving your country to a better place over the last 5 years. You also ought to know that we are nowhere near done, for two reasons. One is that a lot of things still need to be done. The second is that the American people are almost evenly divided, or they go first one way and then another, between what I think are the two dominant governing philosophies today, represented by the two parties.

My philosophy is that the Government should be smaller and less bureaucratic but should be strong enough to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and that there are things that are very important for us to do as one America. Even though we often agree on things, the Republican philosophy is that Government is basically the source of our problems, and it would be better if there were less of it, even if there is more inequality and more unfairness. And I don't agree with that. I've done everything I could to lift the burdens of Government from the American people but to bring the benefits of our common endeavors to moving the country forward. And as you see in all these elections that are genuinely contested, it's a near-run thing. The American people are still trying to work this through as we define what it means to be an American and what America means as we move into a new era.

I can only say this, in addition to thank you, you should all be very excited to be alive now, and grateful, because we have the chance—the chance—to give not just our country but the world the 50 best years in all of human history, in terms of freedom from genuine fear of extinction, elevation in material conditions, resolution of a lot of our most difficult problems if we work together, and we really work at it.

And in terms of the difficulties, they always attend this level of change. And every time this country has gone through a change, we've had a big debate about what America means. We had a big debate in the beginning about what America means. A lot of people in the beginning thought America meant a bunch of States that basically had to put up with a National Government so we could have a common currency and some trade rules and we could raise an army if anybody ever threatened us, otherwise, go away and leave us alone.

Then, because our Constitution said all people were created equal, but slaves were three-fifths people, we had another debate about what America means that led to the great Civil War. And we said, no, America means all people are created equal. And it changed the politics of America for another 40 or 50 years.

Then the industrial revolution came on. We had another debate about it, and Theodore Roosevelt, first, then Woodrow Wilson, said, ''This can't be American to say, yes, we want to have these great factories rising up, but we don't want 9-year-olds working 12-hour days and 6 days a week in factories. That's wrong. It's a good thing to get all the resources we can out of the land, but we ought to save our national parks, we ought to save our natural resources. We owe something to our grandchildren and to their grandchildren.''

When Franklin Roosevelt came in and one in four Americans was out of work and he had to face the threat of Hitler, we had to redefine again what the role of America was. The same thing happened in the civil rights crisis. That's what's going on today, and you should be very excited to be a part of it.

You know, when I became President, the Internet was still the province of physicists. It is now the fastest growing human organism in all of history. While we've been having dinner, there are probably a million new sites on the Net. Things are happening at a pace and in a way, in dimensions we could never imagine before. This is good. It's basically a good time.

But there are challenges we have to face. I'll just mention a few of them. We've got

the budget balanced. We've reformed Medicare for the next 10 or 12 years; it's going to be fine. We have not fully come to grips with the implications of the retirement of the baby boomers on Social Security and Medicare. How are we going to do that? I personally think it's very important to preserve them because of the large number of Americans who would be in a world of hurt if they weren't there. But we have to do it in a way that does not bankrupt our own children as they attempt to raise their children. Can we do it? Of course we can. But we have to do it.

In the area of criminal justice, the crime rate has been coming down for 5 years, but it's not coming down so much among children between the ages of 12 and 18. Most crime by juveniles is committed between 3 in the afternoon and 7 at night, when the parents are still at work or coming home. We haven't thought about how our schools, our community centers, and other things—how should they be organized? If we know that this is when it occurs and we don't really want to jail a lot more kids and we'd like to keep them out of trouble in the first place, we need a national commitment to give these kids the future they need.

We finally got a vote out of Congress for the first time to establish national academic standards and voluntary exams to see whether kids were meeting them, but we still haven't implemented it, and I'll have to fight it every step of the way for the next 3 years. But I'm telling you, it is wrong to let children get out of school without the basic educational skills they need to do well in this modern economy, and we will never overcome our economic and racial problems until we do it.

If you look at the economic changes that are going on and the big argument we had over fast track—which I still think will be resolved in a positive way, for my position, some time next year—when a plant closes, you see it. When trade adds jobs, it's one here, 10 there, 50 the other place. People are traumatized by the churning of the economy even when the unemployment rate is low. Does that mean that we should run away from trade? It's ridiculous. You know, we could try, and it would still happen; we just wouldn't benefit from it. But it is true that no society, no wealthy country in the world has figured out how to get all the benefits of all this economic change and still help the people that are temporarily dislocated to start their lives anew, to be on an equal or better footing and to do it in a hurry.

So the answer is trade more. Get rid of more trade barriers, but do more and do it more quickly to help people that aren't very well suited for this modern economy, in terms of their skills, move into the mainstream again. And we don't have a system to do that. No other country has a very good system either. But we ought to have the best, and we're nowhere near the best. And we can do better, and we must.

In 1994, a lot of people didn't like what I proposed in health care. But I said if we didn't do something, the percentage of uninsured people would go up and, sure enough, it has. So here we are with the world's best medical care and more and more people without any health insurance. We've got to find a way to make health insurance affordable and to emphasize quality care at the same time. Can we do it? Of course we can. But we can't do it by having bogus debates about the things that don't have anything to do with this. We have to have a practical as well as passionate and compassionate approach to this.

And let me just mention one or two other things. I'm convinced this challenge of climate change is real. I have reviewed every document I can get my hands on. I am convinced the climate of the Earth is warming at a rapid rate that is unsustainable. I am also absolutely convinced that the technology is there, or right over the horizon, to enable us to continue to grow like crazy and drastically change the basis of energy consumption in this country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Every one of us should be concerned about that. That's something we owe to our children and our grandchildren.

Most of us in this room won't live to see a terrible adverse circumstance, in all probability. But turning 6 billion people around cannot be done on a dime. It's going to take 20 or 30 years of hard work. It's the sort of thing democracies aren't very well suited to do. But we've got to be visionary enough and

disciplined enough to say, this is a gift we're going to give our grandchildren, and we're going to start now.

The last point I want to make—I don't want to get into the details on this so much—but it is very important that we recognize that our security problems in the future, in all probability, will not be the United States against some other big country. I hope to goodness we can reach a constructive accommodation and partnership with all the major nations of the world. I hope we can build a trading network in the Americas and one with the Asia-Pacific and that we can continue to advance democracy and human rights throughout the world. But there will always be organized forces of destruction that will seek to profit from opportunities in whatever situation exists. The more society becomes integrated around the globe, the more open our borders are; the more we move money and technology and people around rapidly, the more vulnerable we will be to organized crime, to drug syndicates, to terrorists, and to people who can take advantage of small-scale weapons of mass destruction.

That's why I'm working so hard on this biological and chemical issue. We have got to be firm in making sure that we've done everything we possibly can to set up a system which protects the world from the worst aspects of the new security threats in the same way we worked hard during the cold war to keep the world from being blown up. It is the same sort of challenge; it just will happen in a lot of different places. Can we do it? Of course we can, if we have the vision and the determination to do it.

So I guess what I want to say to you is this is a great time to be alive, and it is a great time to be a citizen of the United States. It is a great time to be involved in the political process, but don't ever think it doesn't matter. It has serious consequences what you do or don't do, what you're committed to or what you withdraw from. And your presence here tonight I hope at least gives you the satisfaction that you've helped to make America a better, stronger, more unified country than it otherwise would have been. And I hope it will redouble your determination to make sure that when we finish our business here, that this country will be in great shape for the best 50 years in all of human history.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:34 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Haim Saban, chairman and chief executive officer of Saban Entertainment, and his wife, Cheryl; and Lew Wasserman, chairman emeritus, MCA, Inc.

Remarks to Cessna Employees in Wichita, Kansas

November 17, 1997

I think we should give them another hand. They were fabulous, weren't they? [*Applause*] Thank you, Tanya and Jodee. Thank you, Russ Meyer. Thank my friend Eli Segal for doing such a great job in getting other companies into this endeavor. Thank you, Michael Starnes, for the incredible support that the United States Chamber of Commerce is giving to this effort.

I thank Secretary Glickman and Secretary Herman and Secretary Cuomo, who is not here, for the work they have done in supporting this endeavor and others like it around America. I'd also like to thank the large number, the unusually large number of public officials who are here today, proving that we come to celebrate a victory for America, a victory of people, not party or politics but an old-fashioned victory for American dignity and possibility, for people succeeding at work and succeeding in raising their children, an old-fashioned reaffirmation that our American dream is still very much alive and well if we all pitch in and do our part. So thank you, Governor Graves, and thank you, Senator Roberts and Senator Brownback, Congressman Tiahrt, Congressman Ryan, Mayor Knight, and the other State officials and legislative leaders and council members who are here. I am very grateful to all of you for being here.

The sign says it's all about people, and I would like to suggest that you consider renaming the 21st Street Campus to the 21st Century Campus, because you really are an embodiment of the future America has to make.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I make the few remarks I'd like to make on this issue, I think it is appropriate, since it's my first appearance of the week, to just give you a brief update on the situation in Iraq. Even when I was walking through here, a number of people asked me about it.

First, it's important that you understand what is at stake here. Since the end of the Gulf war, for 6 years, inspectors, under the authority of the United Nations, have been trying to find and destroy Saddam Hussein's capacity to threaten his neighbors and potentially others around the world with nuclear or biological or chemical weapons. They have found and destroyed more weapons of mass destruction potential in the last 6 years—these quiet inspectors whom no one knows—they have destroyed more of this potential than was destroyed in the entire Gulf war with all of the air attacks.

What they are doing matters. It matters to you, to your children, and to the future, because this is a challenge we must face not just in Iraq but throughout the world. We must not allow the 21st century to go forward under a cloud of fear that terrorists, organized criminals, drug traffickers will terrorize people with chemical and biological weapons the way the nuclear threat hung over the heads of the whole world through the last half of this century. That is what is at issue.

In his defiance of the international community, Saddam Hussein has forced the withdrawal of the inspectors. Now, I am trying to settle this issue peacefully, but our diplomatic efforts must be backed by our strong military capability. We cannot rule out any options. But the bottom line is, we have to understand this, it is essential that those inspectors go back to work. The safety of the children of the world depends upon it. And I ask for your support.

I told Russ Meyer this morning that before I got my present job, I spent a lot of time flying around the farmland and the mountains of Arkansas in Cessna airplanes. And it occurs to me that for a long time now, Cessna has helped a lot of people take to the air in your planes. Today we come to celebrate Cessna's efforts to help people fly higher all by themselves, and it is a truly remarkable thing.

This program, the partnership between Cessna and HUD, the Labor Department, the city of Wichita, the State of Kansas, provides training because people need it to get good jobs, provides child care—and by the way, I got to visit the child care facility today, so in addition to my model airplane, I have a Lego-constructed giraffe. [*Laughter*] And I think if it's all the same to you, I'll put them both up in the Oval Office so people can see what's going on here. It provides temporary housing, recognizing that a lot of people who have been poor and who have children and don't have transportation to go a long way to work. And most important, it provides a job. Every company in America ought to take notice of what Cessna is doing. It's a model for the Nation. It proves once again that the best social program ever devised is a job, a good job with dignity that allows people to support their children.

Six years ago when I ran for President, I wanted to restore what I always thought was the basic bargain in America that everybody had a right to an opportunity in life if they exercised the personal responsibility that goes along with it. That is the only way we can keep the American dream alive in the 21st century for everyone, and it's the only way we can continue to lead the world for peace and freedom. In the end, it's the only way we can come together across all the differences in our increasingly diverse Nation.

In the last 5 years, as Secretary Glickman said, the American people have made a lot of progress toward restoring that basic bargain. Unemployment is the lowest in 24 years. The deficit has been cut by 92 percent, and now that the balanced budget law is triggering in, it will be even-balanced soon, for the first time in a generation. We see the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare rolls ever, incomes rising and poverty dropping, the environment improving as the economy advances, something a lot of people didn't think was possible. And families are getting more support not only in work but in raising their children and educating them and in meeting all their obligations.

So there is a sense of confidence in this country that you can feel in this room today that we really can make America work for

everybody again. You have earned that confidence—you and all the American people—through hard work, a vision for the future, and a willingness to embrace new ideas for new times.

But I will say again, as many on the program have said before, if we're going to make America everything that we want it to be, everybody has got to have the chance at the brass ring in life. And we know that if our free enterprise system is going to work, we're going to have to be able to train people for the areas where there are job shortages, which, by and large, there are areas that pay more.

You already heard our chamber president talk about the shortage of truck drivers. Whatever it's worth, when I was Governor, I paid to train a bunch of them, and I'm proud of it. And we're going to get on that and see what we can do.

We have literally hundreds of thousands of openings in computer-related jobs in America—literally. You've got people out here dying to go to work and jobs over here and a mix-match between them because they haven't done what Cessna has done. Either the training is not there or the child care is not there or the transportation is not there. There's something keeping people, who are dying to do their part, from getting there.

So that's why we're here to celebrate. The main reason I showed up, apart from the sheer satisfaction of it and the joy, is that sometimes when I show up it gets enough publicity that people find out what you're doing. I don't care if they hear what I say; I want them to see what you're doing so other people will do it.

Now, when I took office I had already been involved with this whole issue of welfare reform for a long time. I became seriously concerned about this in 1980 when I realized what a problem it was. And over the years I served as Governor of my State, I spent quite a bit of time in welfare offices. I spent a lot of time talking to people who had been on public assistance. I spent a lot of time talking to employers who tried to hire people, and when it didn't work out, to try to find out why it didn't work out. And I think that I have learned a fair amount about it, and every good thing I've learned was confirmed here today.

It was obvious to me that if we were going to ever break the cycle of dependence in America, we had to change our approach and we had to change our idea about what the role of Government is. Some people thought that it was inevitable that a certain number of people are always going to be poor and in difficult circumstances. That may be true. Misfortune happens to a certain number of people, and nearly for all of us misfortune will happen to us in some way or another over the course of our lives. But that doesn't mean that the answer was just to keep the status quo, because the status quo wasn't working; giving people a check that didn't even keep up with inflation was not working, neither was neglect an option. So our governing philosophy has been to try to create the conditions for good economy and then give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and, whenever possible, to work in partnership with the private sector.

In the first couple of years I was in office, we did that by giving over 40 States permission to try their own hand at moving people from welfare to work. Eventually, we were able to agree—the Republicans and the Democrats together by an overwhelming majority in the Congress—to reform the present welfare system, saying that everybody who can work, must work, but also providing support for employers who are willing to hire welfare recipients, maintaining Government support for children's health care and nutrition where necessary, providing extra help to communities with very high unemployment rates, and I think probably most important of all, giving the States some more help to provide adequate child care when people are working for employers that are much smaller than Cessna and perhaps not able to provide that on their own.

The budget I signed into law last summer includes $3 billion for welfare-to-work programs, increased tax incentives for businesses to hire people off welfare. So we changed the role of Government. But that's only the first step. We also have to change the role of the private sector. And again, I cannot say enough about your CEO and all the leaders of this company, all up and down, everybody

who has been involved in this program, because you have shown what has to be done.

We know that almost all the jobs in America are in the private sector. I'm very proud of the fact that way over 90 percent of the new jobs created in America in the last 5 years have been in the private sector. The capacity to train people for the jobs that are needed in a given place is in the private sector. But most of all, the necessary vision, mind, and heart to do the job are here. That's why we started the Welfare to Work Partnership. And I asked my friend Eli Segal, who left a very successful business career, first of all, to help us start our national service program, AmeriCorps, to head up this Welfare to Work Partnership.

Last May, we started with 105 companies at the White House who said they would be a part of this. They pledged to enlist a thousand companies between May and November. It's November. Now, how have they done? In 6 months, more than 2,500 companies in America have pledged to hire welfare recipients. These companies have over 5 million employees. Some of them are big, like Cessna; 100 of them—or, excuse are, 24 of them are in the biggest 100 companies in America. But 75 percent of them are small businesses. We need all of these companies.

In addition to that, Eli's got an advisory board of Governors which includes 10 Democratic Governors, 10 Republican Governors. Again, this is not about politics or party; this is about people. This has to be an American crusade. More and more businesses are realizing that this can be a good thing not only for our families and our country but for businesses as well.

And again, let me say, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce launching a campaign to convince every chamber in the country to join the effort is the big next step, because you heard Russ say, we've got 2,500 companies; when we get 10,000, we'll really be talking turkey, and we'll be doing something that will make a big dent in this nationwide.

I am delighted that we've had almost 2 million people move off the welfare rolls since the welfare reform law passed, almost 4 million people in the last 5 years. But, you know, there are a lot more folks out there, and we have to do it. We are going to strengthen the work requirements of welfare reform, but we need to strengthen the support we give to people to meet those work requirements.

Let me just say in closing that I think it was obvious to anybody who was here today that the most popular speakers were Tanya and Jodee. What I want to say to you is, I've been all over the country, and I've met a lot of people who had a setback in life, many of them have terribly abusive situations at home, almost every one of them passionately devoted to the welfare of their children, who thought they would be stuck on welfare forever, and somehow they made it out. And the real idea behind all of this is, if some people can make it but everybody wants to make it, it's up to those of us who have made it, as Russ said, to create a system where everybody who wants to has a shot. Because it's important that we understand, while Tanya and Jodee are remarkable people—and I might add, such good speakers that they might consider public office as a career option in the future—[*laughter*]—they are not alone. Their stories are mirrored by—there is a story in every one of these graduates who stood up here today. When they all stood up and we clapped, every one of them has got a story like their two stories. And what you have to know is, every person out there in America who is in a difficult situation has also got a story and a heart and a mind. And most of them aren't in a program like this now and aren't even close to it.

That's why we're here. If you liked what you saw when they spoke, you would love it if everybody with that story could be standing before a microphone in the community in which they live making the same speech. That is what we're here to ensure. And thanks to Cessna, we've got a lot better chance than we had before.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. at the Cessna Campus Building. In his remarks, he referred to Tanya Oden and Jodee Bradley, graduates of the Cessna welfare to work program; Russ Meyer, chief executive officer, Cessna; Eli Segal, president and chief executive officer, Welfare to Work Partnership; Michael Starnes, president, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Gov. William

Graves of Kansas; and Mayor Bob Knight of Wichita.

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Luxor, Egypt

November 17, 1997

Earlier today, I called President Mubarak of Egypt to offer our Nation's condolences to the families of those killed in the terrorist assault at Luxor this morning. The United States deplores and condemns this attack against innocent tourists. Once again, we are reminded of a painful truth: Terrorism is a global threat. No nation is immune. That is why all nations must redouble our commitment to fight this scourge together.

Statement on Representative Ron Dellums' Decision Not To Seek Reelection

November 17, 1997

Representative Ron Dellums has been an indefatigable advocate in the Congress for the interests of ordinary Americans, in Oakland, and throughout the Nation. He has worked hard to secure policies and programs that respond to the needs of poor and middle income families. I have appreciated his strong voice and his effective work for justice and reconciliation, not only here but around the world. He has been a highly forceful leader for our national security, making sure that the vital work of national defense is conducted with a watchful eye on taxpayer dollars.

I thank Ron for his long and effective years of commitment and service to America. The people of Oakland and the Nation owe him a debt of gratitude.

Statement on Representative Vic Fazio's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

November 17, 1997

Representative Vic Fazio has been a strong leader for the American people, a strong advocate for his district, and a good friend to me and my administration. He has served with an unswerving devotion to the national interest. He has been a champion for the environment, for our national defense, for fiscal discipline, and for ensuring that changes in our defense structure after the cold war take into consideration the interest of the communities, like his own Sacramento, that have supported our military. I especially appreciate the work he has done to make sure that America seizes the opportunities of trade and to make sure that the growing global economy benefits all Americans.

Vic Fazio has also been a tireless leader of the Democratic Party in Congress, and a tireless advocate of our party's beliefs. On a personal note, I have greatly benefited from his warmth, his idealism, and his honesty. On behalf of the Nation, I thank him for his dedicated service.

Memorandum on the Kazakhstan-United States Agreement on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

November 17, 1997

Presidential Determination No. 98–5

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Energy

Subject: Presidential Determination on the Proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

I have considered the proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, along with the views, recommendations, and statements of the interested agencies.

I have determined that the performance of the agreement will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Pursuant to section 123 b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b)), I hereby approve the proposed agreement and authorize you to arrange for its execution.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Jay Nixon in St. Louis, Missouri

November 17, 1997

Thank you very, very much. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Thank you for letting me listen to Team Eleven—weren't they great? [*Applause*] I wonder if they could come to Washington tomorrow? If they could cheer me up once a day, I'd stay in a better frame of mind as President. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Mayor Harmon for the fine job he's doing and the leadership he's showing and for making me feel so welcome. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Wilson, for being here; and Missouri Democratic Party Chair Joe Carmichael; St. Louis County Executive Buzz Westfall; all the other officials who are here. And I want to thank Jay Nixon for running for the United States Senate.

I want to thank the people of Missouri for voting for Bill Clinton and Al Gore in 1992 and in 1996. And I want to thank Jay Nixon for getting such a big vote; I could kind of ride in on his coattails. [*Laughter*] I enjoyed that.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a very important election for you. And you should know it's also a very important election for the United States, because policies that are good for the people of Missouri are also good for the people of America. And when I ran for President—just remember what it was like—unemployment was high; the country was becoming more divided; we seemed to be sort of drifting and stumbling into the future. And I ran to reclaim the basic American values of opportunity and responsibility and community and to reclaim the future for the young people here and throughout our country.

And almost every step of the way, the changes that I wanted to make—new policies and new ideas for new times—were fought bitterly by the members of the opposition party. Even when we finally wound up reaching agreement, it was only after a fight. In 1993, I had an economic plan that I said would bring the deficit down and get the economy going again. They said it would bring a recession, and they all voted against it, every single one of them. And then in '94, they went out and told the country that we'd raised everybody's taxes unconscionably. It wasn't true, but a lot of people didn't know it, and a lot of people hadn't felt the benefits of the economy, so they got a bunch of gains in the Congress. But in 1997, we see that under that plan, before the balanced budget takes effect, the deficit is 92 percent lower than it was when I took office, and we've got the best economy in a generation. Our approach was right, and they were wrong.

You heard Jay Nixon say that he supported us on putting 100,000 police on the street and banning assault weapons and establishing gun-free school zones. Now in 1994, we had a bitter debate in the United States Senate—bitter—on the crime bill. And I was ridiculed by the Republicans because I had signed the Brady bill, because I wanted to ban assault weapons—they said it would do no good; because I wanted to put 100,000 police on the street—they said it would do no good; because I thought we ought to have more prevention programs in our neighborhoods to keep more kids out of trouble in the first place—they said it would do no good. And we had to work and work to break a filibuster led by the members of the opposition party. All I did was listen to police chiefs and prosecutors around the country. The crime bill was a reflection of what people on the street in law enforcement said they wanted. That's all I did.

Oh, in '94, they went all around the country telling people we were going to take their guns "away, and they picked up a few seats in Congress for telling people that. We lost a Congressman in New Hampshire; I'll never forget it. In '96, I went back running for President in New Hampshire and I faced all these people. Every one of them, just like my folks in Arkansas, had a hunting license. And I said, "You beat a guy in Congress here in '94 because they told you that we were going to take your guns away, and you voted against him." And I said, "Everybody that lost their guns, I want you to vote against

me, too. But if you didn't, you know all we did was try to keep them out of the hands of criminals. They didn't tell you the truth, and you ought to vote for us and send them a message.'' That's what you ought to do for Jay Nixon, too. They were wrong, and we were right.

And you just take all the other fights. On welfare reform, I wanted to require people who could work to work. Missouri has been a leader in welfare reform. What I did not want to do is to ask people who are poor to go into the work force and do something I don't want you to have to do, which is to sacrifice being good parents. Don't forget, our first and most important job in this country is taking care of our kids. If we all did a better job of that, we wouldn't have half the problems we've got in America today.

So twice I had to veto their welfare reform bill because they wouldn't guarantee health care and nutrition to children, wouldn't put enough money in to give to mayors like your mayor for the very high unemployment areas where there may not be jobs for people, and wouldn't put enough money in for child care. We finally got it right.

Now, what is the result of all this? You now have 5 years—you don't have to vote for this guy blind—you know what his record is, and you know what he's advocating, and you know what his opponent has done. And you just make a simple judgment about what you think is right.

But consider the evidence: They opposed our economic philosophy, and we've got the best economy and the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. They opposed our crime policy; we've got the lowest crime rate in 24 years. They opposed what we were trying to do in welfare, and I said we would still be able to dramatically lower welfare rolls and put people to work if we took care of children. We've had the biggest drop in welfare rolls—3.8 million since I took office—in the history of the United States. And we had to fight to preserve the environmental protections in this country. The air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, the food is safer, and there are fewer toxic waste dumps than there were 5 years ago, but we have had to fight to preserve an approach that says we can grow the economy and improve the environment. And that's what we owe our children. We cannot abandon our commitment to clean up the environment. You have a clear choice.

So I'm asking you to help Jay Nixon—not just tonight with your funds but tomorrow with your voice and for another year. I think it's a pretty gutsy thing for a guy to give a year to run a campaign to try to unseat an incumbent, when we know historically our party has been badly outspent in these kinds of races. You can give him your contributions. You can give him your voice. You can give him a year in which every time you walk into a coffee shop, every time you've got a break at work, every time you're sitting around talking with your friends, you can ask people: What do you want for this State? What do you want for this country? What are the real consequences? What difference does it make who the Senator is? I can tell you, it makes a big difference. He's a good man. I'm glad you're here for him tonight.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the lobby of the Fox Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Clarence Harmon of St. Louis; Lt. Gov. Roger Wilson of Missouri; and St. Louis County Executive George (Buzz) Westfall.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in St. Louis

November 17, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Jay. Thank you for running. Thank you for being a good attorney general. Thanks for inviting me to dinner. [*Laughter*] Maybe I will come back next Monday. [*Laughter*] I'd also like to thank the owners of this magnificent theater for allowing us to be here tonight and for doing such a wonderful job in restoring it.

I think that when we come here and you see all this beauty and—sort of—your eyes normally just sort of go up, don't they?—and you feel elevated, that's the way you ought to feel about your country. That's the way you ought to feel about your political system. That's the way you ought to feel about your choices as citizens to support people in campaigns.

So the first thing I want to do is just to thank you for being here, tonight and for being proud to have the freedom to come here, to contribute to this man's campaign and to what he's trying to do for our country, to take a stand, and to be a part. I hope that when you think about it over the next year you will be constant in trying to help him get elected and that you will go beyond financial support, to talking to your friends and neighbors and doing whatever you can to help prevail. And I hope you will always try to remember how you felt when you walked into this theater tonight. If you can create that kind of spirit among the people of Missouri, I think you'll win the election. And I think you can do it.

Let me say that, as all of you know just from reading the press, this is a rather challenging time for our country, and I don't have anything else to add about what I'm trying to deal with in Iraq than what I've already said. But it has made me a little more reflective even than normal, and I'd like to try to put this race for the Senate in some sort of larger context for you so you can see how I see it and why I came here.

When I ran for President, when I decided to run for President about 6 years ago and I was the Governor of your neighboring State to the south, I was really concerned about the country—not because I was worried about Americans or I didn't think that we could deal with any problem but because we were going through this period of sweeping change with no unifying vision about how we were going to go into the 21st century together, and because we had been dealing with the impacts of the global economy and increasing technology and changes in the way we work and live for 20 years. Even by the time I ran for President, it had been nearly 20 years since it had become apparent to everyone that there were big changes going on. The average wages of Americans had been stagnant for 20 years. Unemployment was going up, and we were beginning to see tensions, racial tensions, rekindled in America. The economic anxieties, I'm convinced, were the primary driving force in the movements that I faced—that we all faced as Americans to try to restrict opportunity to minorities and to immigrants. And it seemed to me that Washington was making it worse by having the same old debates over and over and over again.

What I wanted to do was to take the values that I was raised with, which I think are the values of the Democratic Party and I hope are the values of America, and tie them to new ideas and new policies for new times, so that we could not just reclaim the White House but reclaim the future for our children; so that we could challenge every American to be responsible and give opportunity to every responsible American; so that we could bring this country together, across all the lines that divide us, into one community; and so that we could continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity.

Now, when I went to Washington, thanks to the votes of the people in Missouri and a number of other places, I encountered an atmosphere very different than any I had ever seen as a Governor. I had always had opposition, and we had fought hard, and I welcomed my opposition to the debate. We fought hard over issues. I had never been to a place where they said no before they heard what you were for, a place so dominated by partisanship and old categories and old thoughts and old behavior that I could see that breaking the paralysis was not going to be easy.

But I ask you to consider the decisions that we have made in the last 5 years and the consequences of those decisions and the decisions that still have to be made, and think about how it's going to affect you and your children and your grandchildren, and then you can decide how hard you want to work on this Senate race.

The first thing we had to do was to scrap trickle-down economics. It was a failure. It quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years. The country was drifting apart. And we put in a new economic policy that I called invest-and-grow. I said, give me a shot; I believe I can reduce the deficit and still have more money to invest in education and technology and our future. And we got our shot by one vote in both Houses. It was the Vice President's incentive; as Al Gore never tires of saying, whenever he votes, I win—[*laughter*]—by the narrowest of margins. Why? Not because the Democrats didn't support me;

I received more support from my party than my three previous Democratic predecessors because every single member of the other party voted against my economic program and railed to high heaven and talked about how it was going to bring a recession, how it was going to be a total failure, told all the American people we were putting these huge tax burdens on them, when they knew that 98.5 percent of the American people were not going to have an increase in their income tax. They knew that we were cutting taxes for more people than we were raising taxes for—mostly hard-working people. Now a family of four with an income of under $30,000 is paying $1,000 less income tax than they would have paid under the system that existed before our economic plan passed.

They knew all that, but they hoped that the people couldn't figure it out by 1994's election and that they wouldn't feel a better economic climate. And they were right about that, and they won a lot of seats in Congress over it.

But now it's 5 years later, and we're in a position to make a judgment. Every single one of them, including Mr. Nixon's opponent, voted no on our '93 economic plan. What did it do? Well, before one dollar kicks in from this balanced budget amendment, we've reduced the deficit by 92 percent, produced 13½ million jobs—a record for this period of time—and we now have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. So you have a clear choice there, and you should bring that choice to bear on this race.

On the area of crime, Jay Nixon, as attorney general, supported our efforts to put 100,000 police on the street, to have gun-free school zones, to ban assault weapons. Now, consider what happened: In 1994, I brought the crime bill up. I was an attorney general; I have been working on criminal justice matters for 20 years now. That crime bill was not written by me or by bureaucrats in Washington; it was written by police officers and prosecutors and community workers who work with young people in trouble all across this country. And all I did was reflect what was already working in many communities to bring the crime rate down.

So I said, "You know, violent crime has tripled, but we only have 10 percent more police officers. Let's put 100,000 police on the street." Our friends on the other side said, "Oh, if you do that, it won't make a lick of difference; it's just a waste of Federal money." I suggested that it was time to pass the Brady bill and not let people who had criminal histories buy handguns. They said, "Oh, it's unenforceable, and it won't do any good." I said, "You know, I come from a big hunting State, but I just don't think the NRA is right on these assault weapons. I never saw a single deer killed with an assault weapon." [*Laughter*] And they said when we passed that, we were going to go out and take everybody's guns away.

We had this bitter fight over this crime bill—pure politics. The whole law enforcement community in the country was on our side. But they were good politicians, and they did everything they could do in the Senate to beat it, everything they could do. A bitter, bitter, bitter filibuster—the awfullest things said you ever heard. And we broke the filibuster, finally, because there were five brave Republicans who stood up and said, "Enough is enough, we're going to go out and vote with the Democrats and try to give our kids a better, safer life."

And so we put 100,000 police on the street. That's what we're doing. We're 3 years ahead—we're 3 years into it; we're two-thirds of the way done; we're ahead of schedule and under budget. And we banned the assault weapons, and we kept over a quarter of a million people with criminal histories or mental health histories or people who were stalkers from buying handguns, who shouldn't have done it. And the crime rate is the lowest it's been in 24 years.

Now, he took one position; his opponent took another position. You have evidence; you know. Make a judgment, and tell the people who live in Missouri to make a judgment. But don't pretend that there are no consequences to this vote. There are consequences. And we could have used another vote or two in 1994 when we were trying to save the lives of the children in this country. This is a safer, better country today because we won that fight and they lost it. And I'd like to have some more help when we deal with the issues that are still ahead of us.

Juvenile crime hasn't dropped as much as crime among adults. Most juveniles commit crime between 3 and 7 in the afternoon. We have to do some creative things to keep those kids out of trouble in the first place, and we don't need any more speeches on the floor of the Congress about how it's a waste of money to try to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. I'd rather keep a kid out of trouble than send another kid to jail, if we can do that. And I think we ought to do it. So we were right, and they were wrong.

In 1994, they picked up a lot of seats in the Congress. They went out there and told people in rural areas and all over America, "You know, President Clinton and the Democrats are coming to get your guns." I told the group earlier, I said, I went back to New Hampshire where I won in '92—unusual for a Democrat—and I went to this crowd of people, and every one of them had a hunting license, and they were looking at me kind of funny. [*Laughter*] And I said, "You know, in 1994 you people beat a Congressman up here because he voted to ban assault weapons. And they told you that you were going to lose your gun. And now it's 1996, and if you lost your gun I want you to vote against me, too. But if you didn't lose your gun, they didn't tell you the truth, and you need to get even." [*Laughter*] My vote in New Hampshire in 1996 was 12 percent higher than it was in 1992. [*Laughter*] And they got even.

I say that not for personal reasons but because there are consequences to this. There are a lot of voters out there that think, oh, it's all politics; it doesn't make any difference. That's bull. It does make a difference, and it makes a huge difference.

If we had lost that economic fight in 1993, the deficit would not have gone down by over 90 percent and the economy wouldn't have produced 13½ million jobs and interest rates wouldn't have gone down. If we had lost that crime bill in 1994, we would not have as much success with crime as we've had today—the lowest crime rate in 24 years.

Or look at an area where we've worked together on. We got a big bipartisan majority for welfare reform finally, and I'm grateful for that and I appreciate the fact that the members of the other party worked with us on it. I tried every time I could to get a bipartisan resolution. But I had to veto two bills first because they said, "If you want to require people on welfare to work, we also want you to take away from their children the guarantee that you want to leave them with, of nutrition and health care. And we don't want to give you a lot more money for child care, even though these women are going to get minimum-wage jobs and they can't afford child care. And we're not going to give you very much money to help people in big cities, where there aren't any private sector jobs, find jobs." So I vetoed the bill twice. Finally, we got it. But it would have been a tragedy if we hadn't passed the right kind of welfare reform.

We've now seen the welfare rolls drop by 3.8 million in America, the biggest drop in American history. But I think our side was right on that. The Democratic position was, yes, require able-bodied people to work, but do not require them to abandon their children. The most important job anybody ever has is being a good parent. And if everybody did a better job of that, we wouldn't have half the problems we've got in this country. You can't ask people to go to work and forget about their responsibilities at home. The trick is to allow people to fulfill both those responsibilities. And the parties had different positions on that.

There are huge differences in our attitude toward the environment. Look, we have gotten rid of more regulations than the two previous Republican Presidents have. We have given more authority to the States and local governments. We've even privatized more Government operations. I do not like Federal bureaucracies. The Federal Government is 300,000 people smaller than it was the day I took the oath of office. It's the size it was when John Kennedy was President.

But the air is cleaner; the water is purer; the food is safer; there are fewer toxic waste dumps. And I think we have established the fact that on the environment, our philosophy is right and theirs is wrong. Their philosophy is, we hope somebody will clean up the environment, but nothing should be allowed to get in the way of short-term economic gain. My philosophy is, we owe it to our children

and our grandchildren to keep the environment and improve it. And we have proved that you can grow the economy faster with new technologies if you're committed to cleaning up the environment. It's a clear choice, and let's not pretend that there is no choice there. There is a choice there.

So I've enjoyed these fights enormously. [*Laughter*] I like to debate; I like to argue. But I am impatient with those who think it doesn't make a difference. It makes a difference. And when I think about how far this country has come in the last 5 years and what we still have to do to build our bridge to the 21st century, when I think about the honest differences—I don't want to get into condemnation here, I'm talking about the honest differences in the parties—I know that a person like Jay Nixon could make a positive contribution to the people of Missouri and the people of this country. And I know that it would help in the fights we've still got ahead of us.

We finally—finally—succeeded, against intense opposition, in convincing a bipartisan majority of the Congress to embrace the elemental notions that it's high time in America we had some national standards of academic excellence and we quit putting kids out of school that can't read, write, and count; and instead, we give the schools of our country the trained teachers, the technology, the support they need, but there has to be, first, high expectations, high standards, and high measurements to see if they're being met. Every child in this country is capable of learning, but I'll guarantee you, a child in difficult circumstances with low expectations won't. And it's to the poorest children that we have the highest obligation to give a world-class education.

Now, I'm not trying to have the Federal Government take over education. Their argument was that the Federal Government should keep its mouth shut about education—maybe write a check. My argument is, we put more money into education in this last budget than any Presidency and any administration in 35 years. But it's not a question of money. It's money plus standards. It's a big issue. And I could give you—if we had all night, I could talk to you all night about the differences between our parties. It makes a difference. A Senator's vote makes a difference.

Last year they held all these judges hostage, in an election year, hoping against hope I'd get beat and they wouldn't have to appoint them at all. This year, I had a 4-year term, they still only confirmed 35 judges—slow walk and everything. It's like pulling teeth.

One of the finest people you ever met, this man, Bill Lee, that I've nominated to head the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, a Chinese immigrant raised in Harlem, devoted his entire life to the civil rights of people of all colors in this country. The Senate Judiciary Committee says they don't really think they should confirm him, even though he has sworn to uphold the letter of the law, even though he is unquestionably qualified—intellectually, in terms of experience and moral character—because he agrees with me that we shouldn't just throw out all affirmative action.

This is an unusual position they're taking: The President must appoint someone to the Civil Rights Division who is not committed to civil rights in the way the President is. Now, if the Democrats had felt that way, you wouldn't have half the people on the Supreme Court that are on there today. If the Democratic majority in the Senate had done a Republican President that way, you wouldn't have that.

There are differences in terms of what we do and how we do it. That's why I'm here tonight. I'm telling you, the next 50 years can be the best years this country ever had. If I told you 5 years ago, come back in 5 years and we'll have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare in history, and the environment will be improving even though the economy is growing, you would have said, ''I'll take that bet.'' And you'd be darn proud of it. And if I said, ''Oh, and by the way, we'll have passed the family and medical leave law, we'll give families tax cuts for their children and for their children's education, and if they'll adopt other children that need a home, we'll cut their taxes,'' you would like that.

All that has happened because of choices that have been made. And I believe the direction that our party has taken has led the way toward building an American future where we can go forward together.

That's the last thing I'll say. Just look around the theater on your way out. How do you want to feel about America? How do want to feel about American politics? Do you want to make it lift your eyes and you feel big and you want to take a deep breath? Or do you want it to be a mean-spirited, divisive, demeaning, diminishing experience? I have tried to give this country a unifying vision. I have tried to heal the divisions of the country. I have tried to minimize the sharpness of the partisan debate. But I am prouder tonight to be a Democrat than I was 5 years ago. And I am prouder tonight because I know things I could never have known before I became President about the importance of every single solitary vote in the United States Senate.

He is a good man, and if you will work for a year, you'll make him a Senator.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. on the stage at the Fox Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Leon and Mary Strauss, owners of the theater.

Joint Statement on U.S.-Kazakhstan Relations

November 18, 1997

During their November 18, 1997 meeting in Washington, D.C., Presidents Clinton and Nazarbayev underscored the special importance they attach to the close and productive relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan.

Deepening this partnership is key to promoting Kazakhstan's security, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic development, as well as the stability and economic prosperity of the region as a whole.

The two Presidents restated their strong commitment to the goals set forth in the "Charter on Democratic Partnership Between the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan," signed by the two Presidents in February 1994. Recognizing the growing economic and commercial ties between the two nations, the two Presidents expressed their strong support for the "Action Program on Economic Partnership," signed in Washington, November 18, 1997, by President Nazarbayev and Vice President Gore, in their capacity as co-chairmen of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Joint Commission. Kazakhstan's commitment to accelerate reform, as outlined in the Action Program, will advance the development of a free market economy and underscores the great potential benefits of investment in the country's natural resources and industrial infrastructure. The United States is committed to support economic reform in Kazakhstan through a robust program of technical assistance and cooperation.

The two Presidents noted the important role played by U.S. commercial firms in Kazakhstan's economy since 1991. Extensive U.S. investment in the development and transport of Kazakhstan's energy resources has particularly contributed to the mutual goal of rapid energy development in the Caspian region.

Presidents Clinton and Nazarbayev agreed on the need to adopt a Caspian Sea legal regime that establishes a clear division of property rights based on the division of seabed resources. The construction of multiple pipeline routes to export hydrocarbons to world markets, including pipelines across the Caspian Sea, will advance economic development in Kazakhstan and promote regional stability and security.

The two Presidents agreed on the need to strengthen regional cooperation, including through the establishment of an east-west Eurasian transport corridor and stronger efforts to resolve the environmental crisis in the Aral Sea basin.

President Clinton welcomed Kazakhstan's efforts to integrate itself into the global economy and pledged continued U.S. support for Kazakhstani accession to the World Trade Organization, on commercial terms generally applied to newly acceding members.

The two Presidents reviewed Kazakhstan's progress towards creating a society based on democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. President Clinton expressed strong support for the holding of free and

fair parliamentary elections in 1999 and presidential elections in 2000, which will serve as a demonstration of Kazakhstan's commitment to democratic principles.

Presidents Clinton and Nazarbayev noted the positive evolution of defense cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan, as well as the continuing progress in Kazakhstan's integration into emerging European security structures, including NATO's Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The successful CENTRASBAT–97 peacekeeping exercise that took place in September 1997 is a concrete example of cooperation aimed at promoting regional stability. The two Presidents renewed their commitment to regional security cooperation, including enhanced bilateral military-to-military cooperation, as reflected in the Defense Cooperation and Military Contact Plans for 1998, signed during President Nazarbayev's visit.

The two Presidents praised the extensive U.S.-Kazakhstani cooperation on issues related to non-proliferation of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons. During President Nazarbayev's visit to Washington, agreements were signed on Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation, Defense Cooperation on Counter-Proliferation, and Long-term Disposition of Aktau BN–350 Nuclear Material, among other agreements.

President Clinton welcomed President Nazarbayev's firm commitment to prevent the transfer of technology and materials associated with weapons of mass destruction, and sophisticated military technologies, to countries that pose a threat to regional and global security. The United States and Kazakhstan agreed to establish a regular experts' dialogue on non-proliferation issues.

The two Presidents also discussed the serious threats posed by international terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and international criminal activity and committed their governments to expand cooperation in combating them.

Statement on Signing the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998

November 18, 1997

I am pleased to have signed into law today H.R. 2160, the ''Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998.''

The Act provides $13.6 billion in discretionary budget authority for programs of the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. These programs include the Special Supplemental Feeding Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); food safety programs; efforts to reduce children's access to tobacco products; and various programs to protect and support rural communities.

The Act provides a total of $35.3 billion for the Food Stamp program, the Child Nutrition program, the Commodity Credit Corporation, and other mandatory programs.

I am disappointed that the Congress failed to provide the full amount of my requested increase for the WIC program in order to reach a full participation level of 7.5 million women, infants, and children. Full participation in WIC is one of my highest priorities, and the funding level that this Act provides does not assure that we can achieve this goal in FY 1998.

I am concerned about the provision of this bill that alters the administration and funding for research on nutrition programs serving the poor and disadvantaged. The research needs of these important programs should continue to be addressed in the context of the programs' administration. I am asking the Secretary of Agriculture to look into this matter and to work with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget on the most effective approach to address my concerns.

I am pleased, however, that the Act includes nearly all of my request for the Food Safety and Inspection Service. The funding

provided for meat and poultry inspection will ensure adequate inspection coverage and allow the agency to further implement the modernization of the inspection system that I announced on July 6, 1996. I am also pleased that the Act provides almost all of the requested level for my Administration's food safety initiative and the requested level for our efforts to reduce children's access to tobacco products.

In addition, the Act provides significant increases in rural development programs to improve the quality of life in rural America and help diversify the rural economy. The Act also includes a portion of my proposal to create a Rural Development Performance Partnership, which will provide greater flexibility to tailor Federal assistance to local needs, reflecting my Administration's belief that there is no ''one-size-fits-all'' solution to the economic challenges facing rural areas. I will continue to seek authority to utilize the full flexibility that was authorized for these programs in the 1996 Farm Bill.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 18, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2160, approved November 18, was assigned Public Law 105–86.

Teleconference Remarks to the Council of Jewish Federations

November 18, 1997

Thank you. And, ladies and gentlemen, I have been told that because I was a few moments late, that Dore Gold filled in for me, and that's a pretty good substitute. I want to thank him as well.

It's an honor for me to be able to speak to the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly and to all of you who are watching your local federations over the CJF satellite network. I'm pleased to know that Connie Giles, Joel Tauber, Billie Gold have convened this general assembly to further the proud tradition of the Jewish federation system, and I trust that my good friend Jeff Smulyan is being a gracious host in his home town of Indianapolis.

Six years ago, when I announced my candidacy for President, I said that I had a vision for America in the 21st century—a vision that would put us on a mission to keep the American dream alive for every person who is responsible enough to work for it, to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, and to bring our own people together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America.

We've worked hard to advance this vision here at home, thanks in great measure to the volunteer efforts of groups like CJF and Jewish federations all across our Nation. I share with you the deep belief that the strength of our society is the product of our active commitment to one another. Volunteer organizations are the glue that hold our communities together, and I've worked hard to make sure the National Government sticks by you as your steadfast partner.

If not for Government support, Jewish federations and other groups would have to drastically scale back their health and human service efforts. We must never let this happen.

We also know we can't allow Congress to deny charities and other not-for-profit groups the right to take a stand on public issues. It would lessen our democracy if you were deprived of your voice, for your voice has given strength and support to millions of other Americans. For example, as we worked to enact a balanced budget, you made sure we did it in the right way. You spoke out on behalf of legal immigrants; together, we restored critical health and disability benefits that had been taken from these groups unfairly. You spoke out on behalf of older Americans, and together we protected and strengthened Medicare and Medicaid. And I'm very grateful for your voice and your support.

I would also like to thank you for your support of our administration's effort to expand peace and stability in the Middle East and around the world. We must never give in to the forces of destruction and terror. We must never give up on promoting peace. Our law enforcement officials went halfway around the world to bring to justice the man responsible for the cold-blooded murder of Americans outside the CIA Headquarters. The

World Trade Center bombers are going to jail for a long, long time. Saddam Hussein cannot be allowed to expel international weapons inspectors because we cannot accept another dictator with weapons of mass destruction.

And I want to reiterate to you my solemn and personal commitment that we will continue to press forward on all fronts to redeem the promise of the peace process in the Middle East. The road to peace is never easy, but with confidence and determination and patience, let us continue to travel that road.

Let us also work together to expand religious freedom around the world. Hillary, just a few minutes ago, returned to the White House from her trip to Central Asia, Ukraine, and Russia, where she visited several centuries-old synagogues and met with members of Jewish communities that have reemerged after years of oppression under Soviet rule. These visits highlighted our strong conviction that the transition of peaceful democracy requires a deep commitment to religious, cultural, and ethnic tolerance.

And I know all of you believe that tolerance of difference is no less important here at home. We've overcome many of the challenges that our grandparents and great-grandparents faced when they arrived on these shores, but we still have a lot of work to do to bring all of us together into one America.

So in addition to what you do day in and day out to help America seize the opportunity inherent in our diversity, I ask for your help in two other important priorities. First of all, let me urge you to stand up for Bill Lann Lee, my nominee to head the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. He is the son of immigrants who has dedicated his entire life to fighting discrimination in all its forms. I've nominated him because I think he's the best person in the country to do the job, and no one—no one—has questioned his ability, his experience, or his integrity. He is being held up for political reasons on the dubious proposition that he shouldn't head the Civil Rights Division because he agrees with the President on the issue of affirmative action.

Second, I ask you to participate in our historic race initiative. For many decades, members of the Jewish community have marched side by side with Americans of other faiths and races, fighting for civil rights and racial reconciliation. So I ask you to urge your member federation and coalition partners to convene town hall meetings and find other ways of bringing people together across racial lines to address common concerns. Please help to promote the interaction that allows us to celebrate our differences and still recognize the over-arching values that unite us all.

Ninety years ago, Israel Zangwill coined the term "melting pot" in his play about a young Jewish composer in New York. In that play, he beautifully summed up the promise of our Nation. He said, and I quote, "The palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and the cross. Here shall all races and nations unite. Here shall they come to labor and look forward."

I thank you for what you have done over this past century to unite us and to keep us looking forward. And at the threshold of a new century, I look forward to working with you to keep our beacon shining brightly for all the world to see.

Congratulations on your successful general assembly. Again, thank you for all the support that you have given to our efforts and, most especially, thank you for what you do every day to reflect the best in our country and the best hope of the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:21 p.m. by satellite from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Dore Gold, Policy Advisor to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Conrad Giles, president, Council of Jewish Federations; Joel Tauber and Billie Gold, cochairs, 1997 Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly Planning Committee; and Jeffrey H. Smulyan, chairman and chief executive officer, Emmis Broadcasting.

Remarks to the Democratic Business Council

November 18, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Tom. Steve Grossman, Alan Solomont, and all the people who worked on this dinner tonight, thank you very much for being here.

I have just returned from a great trip to California. I stopped yesterday in Wichita, Kansas, at the Cessna plant, and I saw there a picture of why I got into public life. So, I thought I would start by telling you what I did. We wanted to go to Wichita, to the Cessna plant, because they have what I believe is the best corporate welfare-to-work program I have ever seen in America, and because they have support from any number of Federal agencies who are helping them to do what they're trying to do.

Cessna has about 10,000, 11,000 employees in Wichita, and they have this program called the 21st Street Program, where they built a training center for people who have been on public assistance. First, if you want to come there, you go through their training program; that's 3 months. Then if you like it, you go through a sort of prework program; that's 3 more months. If you survive them both, they guarantee you a job with good income and good benefits.

And they take the most difficult to place people on welfare—people who have almost no education, no skills, people who have been subject to terrible cases of domestic abuse. And not only that, if you don't have a car or if you've been beat up in your own home, they'll give you an apartment across the street from the training center for yourself and your kids.

I went there, and two of these women got up and talked who had graduated from this program. And there were over 200 there who had. And there were all the local officials, all the State officials in this incredible celebration of this partnership, doing basically what we all ought to do, anyway—trying to make sure that everybody has a chance in life. Once you set up a system where people are required to be responsible, you've got to give them an opportunity, and recognizing that our destinies are dependent upon one another in very profound ways. It was wonderful.

And when I walked out of that place, the two women that spoke to introduce me were by far the most popular speakers there, I can tell you that. And they just basically told their life stories. And this lady came up to me and she—on the way out, I shook hands with all of the people who were graduates of the program. She said, ''You can read about me in the morning paper today, and I'm really glad you came.''

So I pick up the paper, and this woman is a single mother with three kids of her own and two twins she took in, trying to raise five kids—a high school dropout, abandoned by her husband, desperate. All of sudden, she finds this program; she's got a place to live; she's got a training program; she's got a future.

That's why I got into public life, to do things like that. And I say that because there is a direct connection between your presence here and what we're able to do in the lives of people in the country. And it often gets lost. And I think it's a real shame.

Most of you who come to a Democratic fundraiser do so not in the hope of getting a tax cut, you probably—when you help the Democrats, you just hope you don't get a tax increase. [*Laughter*] Most of you who come to help us come here because you believe that we are obligated to one another, that we have a sense of mutual responsibility for the future. And you have kind of a large and expansive hope for what people can achieve if they work together to bring out the best in each other. That's probably the driving distinction between us.

But I want you to understand that there is a connection between your sitting here and what I'll be doing tomorrow, and then how somebody will be affected by it out in the country within a week or a month or a year or sometime down the road.

I was thinking about it sitting at dinner tonight. You know, when I became President I said, ''Look, I've got a simple strategy here. I want to create opportunity for everybody who is responsible enough to work it. I want us to come together, across the lines that divide us, into one America. I want us to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom. I want a government that is less bureaucratic but gives people the tools and the conditions they need to make the most of their own lives. That's what I want to do.''

We started with an economic program that not a single member of the other party voted for. Instead, they sounded like Chicken Little. They said, ''If you pass the President's economic program, the sky will fall; the end

will come; the deficit will explode; unemployment will increase.''

Well, 5 years later, they're out there able to brag that they voted for a balanced budget. The only reason they could do it is that we had reduced the deficit by 92 percent before the balanced budget law ever triggered in, because of what we did in 1993 with our Democrats. And it was the right thing to do for America.

Five years later, we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. Look at the crime issue—same thing. I couldn't ever figure out what was going on in Washington on the crime issue when I lived out there in the country. It appeared to me that what happened was, when crime got high and things got hot and heavy, that Congress just passed a bill and increased penalties for everything in sight. But it had been a very long time since anybody had done anything to help people on the streets; either catch criminals or keep people out of trouble in the first place.

So I gave the Congress a crime bill that was essentially written by police officers, community leaders, and prosecutors: 100,000 more police, prevention programs for kids, punish people who are truly bad actors, take the assault weapons off the street, don't let people with criminal and mental health histories buy a handgun. That's what we did. It was pretty simple. It was a police officer's bill.

We had a bitter, bitter fight in Congress. The leaders of the other party fought us. We got a few Republican votes for the crime bill, unlike the economic bill, but they were precious few. And we had to break an angry, angry filibuster in the Senate. All these, you know, omnibus things—we were throwing money away, these police would make no difference, the Brady bill would make no difference, the assault weapons ban would make no difference.

All I know is we've now put 65,000 of those 100,000 police out, the Brady law kept over a quarter of a million weapons out of the hands of people with criminal and mental health histories, the assault weapons ban is good—nobody needs an assault weapon to go deer hunting, and I ought to know; I'm from a place where people do a lot of it. And I just moved last weekend to try to stop people from running through a loophole that's so big you could drive a truck through it in sending assault weapons back into the United States from foreign places of manufacture disguised as sport weapons.

But anyway, you know, they'd say it wouldn't make a lick of difference. All I know is the crime rate has gone down every year for 5 years, and we have the lowest crime rate in 24 years. And if you talk to the police officers of the country, they believe it's because of the ideas advanced by the Democratic Party and supported by the Democratic Party.

There are people alive today because we did not cave in one more time to the people who didn't want the Brady bill, who didn't want the assault weapons ban, who didn't want to do anything different on crime. They wanted to talk tough; they liked to do that. But when it came time to step up and do something that the police and the prosecutors and the community leaders said would work, the Democrats were there.

Look at the welfare bill. I get sick and tired—I get so tired of hearing our friends in the Republican Party and some of our friends in the press say, ''Oh, the President caved in and signed the Republicans' welfare bill.'' It's a load of bull. And no one could say it and mean it and be honest unless they just didn't understand how the welfare system works.

The bills that they passed, I vetoed. And they passed another bill, and I vetoed it again. They passed a third bill, and I signed it. Why? Because I believe we ought to require able-bodied people to go to work. It didn't particularly bother me that we were ending the national guarantee of a monthly welfare check and letting the States set the guarantee, for the following reason: We have in effect had a State-set guarantee for 25 years, something I never read in any article.

Before the welfare law passed, the most generous State in the Union paid a welfare family of three $655 a month; the most tight-fisted State paid the same family $187 a month, under the so-called ''uniform Federal law.'' There was no uniform Federal law on the check.

But I'll tell you what was uniform: food and medicine for the kids. So I said, ''If you want me to sign a law requiring people who can work to go to work, leave the kids with food and medicine. You try to take that away, I'll veto it.'' They did, and I did. And I said, ''If you want to make these people go to work, don't make them be bad parents; give me some money for child care. Give me some money to create jobs for people in the high unemployment areas.''

And we worked it out, and I signed the bill. It was a great bipartisan bill, it had overwhelming bipartisan support, but the only reason I could get that bill and that I didn't get overridden on my veto was that the Democrats said, ''Require people who are able-bodied to go to work, but don't make them give up on their kids. Don't do anything to their kids.'' We stood for that, we made it stick, and we made a difference.

And when we did it, there were people on the other side who said, ''Well, it won't be as effective now.'' All I know is that there are 3.8 million fewer people on welfare than there were the day I took office—the biggest drop in welfare in history—largely due to the fact that we have a good economy and the right kind of welfare reform system.

I could give you lots of other examples. The first bill I signed was the family and medical leave law—vetoed twice by my predecessor. The leaders of the other party thought it was an undue burden on business to say that, even for larger employers, that a person ought to be able to take a little time off when a child was sick or a parent was dying. But I've had more ordinary citizens come up to me personally all over this country and thank me for the family and medical leave law than any other thing that I've been involved with as President.

And I personally believe it ought to be expanded to cover regular trips to the doctor and a couple of trips to school a year, because one of the biggest challenges we face as a nation is balancing the demands of work and family. Nobody should have to choose between being a good parent and successful at work, because the most important work of any nation is raising children. And if we do that right, most everything else takes care of itself.

So I say that there's a direct connection between your presence here and the 12 million people that have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law; the 8.5 million people whose pensions we saved; the 13.5 million people who have jobs; the 10 million people who got an increase in their minimum wage; the 5 million children who are going to get health insurance coverage for the first time now under the new balanced budget law; the countless number of people who will now have a real tax cut to help them pay for the cost of college tuition; all the children that are going to get computers and software and better instruction in their schools because we said we're going to hook up every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000. There's a connection between your support and that happening.

These things do not happen by accident. They happen because parties with philosophies and choices have the power to make those choices and bring them to the American people and get them done. And I must—you know, I've been criticized by some in my own party—I like to work in a bipartisan fashion. I'm always happy to reach agreement. But when the tough work had to be done on the deficit, our party did it alone, and 92 percent of the deficit was gone by the time the balanced budget law passed.

When the tough work had to be done on crime and someone had to stand up to the special interest groups that have kept us from doing things we should have done years ago, our party did it almost alone. And when someone had to remind people that welfare was not just a way to punish poor people, it was a way to support work and family, it was the people in our party who supported me, saying, yes, require people to go to work but, no, don't hurt their kids. They gave us the right kind of law.

When there was a wholesale assault on the environment, when people in the other party—they honestly believed this. I'm not attacking their character, I'm attacking their judgment here. They honestly believed that most of these environment laws and rules and regulations caused a lot more trouble than they were worth, and that they were a terrible impediment to the economy. I honestly believe the right sort of environmental

laws grow the economy because they accelerate the movement into new technologies, into new fields and dealing with new challenges. That's what I believe; I've always believed that. And I think that we permit the degradation of our environment at our peril. I think it's an obligation we owe our children.

Well, 5 years later, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food supply is safer. We have more to do, but it's safer. We have fewer toxic waste dumps, and the economy is the best it's been in a generation. I think our idea that you can grow the economy and preserve the environment was the right idea. I think the assault they waged on the environment that we stopped them from raising was ill-advised and unnecessary. And I think now we have 5 years of evidence.

So when you go home tonight, I want you to think about those folks I talked to you about in Wichita. I want you to think about all of the millions of people whose lives have been changed for the better by the policies that we've implemented, and I want you to realize there's a direct connection between the fact that you were willing to stand up and put your voice on our side, put your contributions into our efforts, and give our side a chance to be heard. You made that all happen. That's what the public system we have in America is. That's what it means to be a citizen.

And as you look ahead, I really believe that our country has the 50 best years facing it that any society has ever known if we do the right things—if we do the right things. We've still got a lot of challenges out there—economic, educational, entitlement reform, environmental challenges—a lot of things. But we have to keep our eye on the ball. We should do those things which create opportunity and reinforce responsibility. We should do those things which bring us together as one community—celebrating our differences, but identifying those values that are even more important that bind us together.

We should do those things that reinforce our role as a beacon of freedom and hope and prosperity and security in the world. That's what we should do. That's what the Democratic Party stands for. And that's what you have stood for. I am very grateful and I hope you will always be very proud, not only that you were here tonight but that you have contributed to changing the face and the future of this country.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. in the Ballroom at the ITT Sheraton Luxury Connection Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council; Steve Grossman, national chair, and Alan D. Solomont, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

November 18, 1997

Thank you. Thank you very much for being here tonight. I won't take a lot of time because I want to just sit and visit. But I would like to just begin with a story.

Yesterday I was in Wichita, Kansas, coming back from California, and I visited the Cessna airplane manufacturing facility—not the plane facility but their training facility for people they're trying to move from welfare to work. And we went there for a number of reasons. One was to announce that we now have 2,500 businesses who have committed to be part of our partnership to hire people from welfare and put them into the workplace. These 2,500 businesses are small, medium, and large. Seventy-five percent of them are small businesses, but combined they have over 5 million employees.

The other reason I went there is because the way this Cessna project works is the way I'd like to see America work not only in this issue but a lot of others. They receive support for a number of the things they've done from the Labor Department and from the Housing and Urban Development Department, and of course they have the framework of the welfare reform bill.

But here's what they do: They go out and take people—many of them the hardest to place people on welfare—and they put them through a 3-month training program. And then if they go through that, they put them through a 3-month sort of pre-job program. And if they get through both, they get an

automatic guaranteed job at Cessna at high wages and good benefits.

And some of these people have very, very difficult home circumstances. They're not just—they're not taking the most well-educated people who just temporarily hit a bad patch and get on welfare. A lot of these folks are high school dropouts. Many of them are women who have been abused in a domestic setting. And they actually have a housing development across the street from the training center to give temporary housing to anybody who either doesn't have a car or has been kicked out of their house because of a violent situation.

And I'm telling you, it was the most exhilarating thing. I was introduced by two women who graduated from this program, and then I met their children. And when it was all over, I looked at the man who was with me and I said, ''This is why I got into public life: to be a part of things like this, to change lives in this way, to do something that works.''

And of course, having a good economy has helped. They have 1,000 more employees than they had 4 or 5 years ago. But the main thing is, it's fresh evidence that we can make the country work if we do something that makes sense and we do it together and it's consistent with our values.

So for all of you who have made any contribution to the fact that we have the lowest unemployment rate and the lowest crime rate in 24 years and the biggest drop in welfare in history, and we've grown the economy while making the air and water cleaner and the food supply safer and having fewer toxic waste dumps, that we've built more jobs but tried to help families with the family and medical leave law and tax cuts to raise their kids or adopt children or send their kids to college—I hope you'll take a lot of pride in that.

We've got a lot of challenges up the road, but at least no one in America could doubt today that we can make this country work and that when we make it work for everybody, you see the kind of profoundly humbling and awesome stories I saw in Wichita yesterday.

I'd also like to remind you that elections are contests of ideas and perceptions. And I think in a rational world, where everybody had equal access to the voters, our party would be in better shape than it is today, because in '93 we had a big fight over the economic direction of the country, and I think the evidence says we were right and they were wrong. But they profited from it.

In '94 we had a big fight over our crime policy, and we stood up to the people who said I was going to take their guns away if we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. And I think the evidence is we were right and they were wrong.

I think the evidence is our environmental policy, our education policy, our family leave policy—all these things, I think, our party has been on the right side of history and on the right side of the basic values of America. And I think the more people like you help us to get our message out and make our points, the more you'll change America and the more, parenthetically, people will know who did what, when, and why.

So there is a direct connection between what I saw in Wichita yesterday and your presence here tonight. And we have to make a lot more of those stories in the future. And I'm very grateful to you for your role in doing that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:44 p.m. in the Chesapeake Room at the City Club of Washington.

Statement on Signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998

November 18, 1997

I have signed into law H.R. 1119, the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998.'' This Act authorizes fiscal year 1998 appropriations for military activities of the Department of Defense, military construction, and defense activities of the Department of Energy. Although I have reservations about some provisions in this Act, it supports a large number of my Administration's defense program and policy priorities. Moreover, the conferees' revision of the bill satisfactorily addresses several onerous provisions that were included in previous versions that my Administration opposed.

This Act provides for a strong national defense, maintains high military readiness, supports our commitments to a better quality of life for our Armed Forces and their families, and authorizes investment programs necessary to modernize the equipment that our forces use. By providing the necessary support for our forces, it ensures continuing American global leadership.

The Act demonstrates that we can maintain a robust defense while achieving a balanced Federal budget. It supports a wide range of quality of life initiatives, including a 2.8 percent military pay raise, an increase in aviation officer career incentive pay, a doubling of the aviation officer career retention bonus, and increases in hazardous duty pay and the family separation allowance. I am also pleased that this Act provides resources to support most of the recommendations of the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review. In particular, it supports major procurement programs, such as the F–22 and V–22 aircraft, central to modernizing our forces for the 21st century.

The Act also provides strong support for the Chemical Demilitarization Program, crucial for implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention for which the Senate provided advice and consent to ratification earlier this year. It also provides the President new authority to call up 30,000 volunteers from the Individual Ready Reserve for active duty. This gives the Secretary of Defense greater flexibility in tailoring reserve call-ups and enables him to make greater use of the unique skills found in the Individual Ready Reserve.

I am very disappointed, however, that H.R. 1119 imposes restrictions on the Department of Defense's ability to contract with the private sector for the maintenance of weapon systems and components. Both the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Defense Reform Task Force recommended relief from current laws that constrain the Department's efforts to competitively outsource depot maintenance workload. By further restricting, rather than facilitating, such competitive outsourcing, the Act will limit the Department's flexibility to increase efficiency, preserve readiness, and save taxpayer dollars. The Act also changes the terms under which public-private competitions for work at closing maintenance depots can be conducted. Some of these changes should prove helpful, but other changes will likely make the Department's job more difficult. Nevertheless, the Secretary of Defense has indicated that the Department has flexibility to proceed with the remaining public-private competitions in a way that is fair to both sides. The Secretary has pledged to implement the Act so as to encourage all bidders, public and private, and to do everything possible to ensure that the competitions occur on a level playing field. Such an approach will achieve my Administration's goals of strongly supporting our military forces while providing savings that can be applied to the modernization of our forces.

The Act also attempts to severely limit the President's flexibility to conduct foreign policy by mandating permanent controls on the export of certain high-performance computers to specific countries, including Israel, Russia, and China. It would limit the President's ability to adapt computer export controls to changing security needs and technology trends. The Act would impose unrealistic congressional notification, licensing, and post-shipment requirements that would have the unintended effect of decreasing our ability to identify and prevent exports affecting national security. My Administration intends to work with the Congress to pass legislation that would restore the President's flexibility on computer export controls and allow us to concentrate on preventing exports of real national security concern.

Other provisions of H.R. 1119 raise serious constitutional issues. Because of the President's constitutional role, the Congress may not prevent the President from controlling the disclosure of classified and other sensitive information by subordinate officials of the executive branch (section 1305). Because the Constitution vests the conduct of foreign affairs in the President, the Congress may not dictate the President's negotiations with foreign governments (section 1221). Nor may the Congress place in its own officers, such as the Comptroller General, the power to execute the law (section 217). These provisions will be construed and carried out in keeping with the President's constitutional responsibilities.

Finally, I am disappointed that the Act did not authorize the additional two Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) rounds that the Secretary of Defense requested. The Quadrennial Defense Review and the Secretary's Defense Reform Task Force both concluded that the Department of Defense is burdened by the excessive cost of maintaining a base infrastructure much larger than is required to support our Armed Forces. The money spent maintaining that infrastructure is badly needed for modernization of aging weapons and equipment so that our forces remain the world's best in the 21st century. I call on the Congress to support the Department of Defense request for additional BRAC rounds.

In summary, though the Act raises some concerns, it strengthens our national security by supporting my Administration's plans to modernize and prepare our Armed Forces, advances the quality of life for our forces, and helps assure continued American leadership.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 18, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 1119, approved November 18, was assigned Public Law No. 105–85. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 19.

Remarks on Signing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997

November 19, 1997

Thank you, Sue Ann. Thank you, Aaron. And I want to thank the Badeau family for showing up. I think it's fair to say it was a greater effort for them than for anyone else here. [*Laughter*] I appreciate the rest of your presence. It was easier for me than anybody; I just had to come downstairs. [*Laughter*] But I'm grateful that they're here.

Secretary Shalala, I thank you and your staff for your remarkable work on this. And I thank the members of the White House staff, all the Members of Congress who are present here. And especially I thank Senators Rockefeller and Chafee and Congressman Camp and Kennelly for their work and for what they said here.

Congratulations to the Adoption 2002 Excellence Award winners. I thank all the advocates who are here. And I say a special word of thanks, along with all the others who have said it, to the First Lady, who has been passionately committed to this issue for at least 25 years now that I know. Thank you, Govenor Romer, for coming. And thank you, Dave Thomas, for what you've done.

Again let me say to all the Members of Congress who are here, Republicans and Democrats alike, I am very grateful for what you've done. This, after all is what we got in public life for, isn't it? [*Applause*]

Before I make my brief remarks, if you'll forgive me and understand, I have to make one public statement today about the situation in Iraq.

As I have said before, I prefer to resolve this situation peacefully, with our friends and allies, and I am working hard to do just that. But I want to be clear again about the necessary objective of any diplomacy now underway. Iraq must comply with the unanimous will of the international community and let the weapons inspectors resume their work to prevent Iraq from developing an arsenal of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. The inspectors must be able to do so without interference. That's our top line; that's our bottom line. I want to achieve it diplomatically. But we're taking every step to make sure we are prepared to pursue whatever options are necessary.

I do not want these children we are trying to put in stable homes to grow up into a world where they are threatened by terrorists with biological and chemical weapons. It is not right.

It's hard to believe now, but it was just a little less than a year ago when I directed our administration to develop a plan to double the number of children we move from foster care to adoptive homes by the year 2002. We know that foster parents provide safe and caring families for children. But the children should not be trapped in them forever, especially when there are open arms waiting to welcome them into permanent homes.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act, which I am about to sign, is consistent with the work of the 2002 report and our goals. It fundamentally alters our Nation's approach to foster care and adoption. And fundamentally, it will improve the well-being of hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable children. The new legislation makes it clear that children's health and safety are the paramount concerns of our public child welfare system. It makes it clear that good foster care provides important safe havens for our children, but it is by definition a temporary, not a permanent, setting.

The new law will help us to speed children out of foster care into permanent families by setting meaningful time limits for child welfare decisions, by clarifying which family situations call for reasonable reunification efforts and which simply do not. It will provide States with financial incentives to increase the number of children adopted each year. It will ensure that adopted children with special needs never lose their health coverage—a big issue. Thank you, Congress, for doing that. It will reauthorize Federal funding for timely services to alleviate crisis before they become serious, that aid the reunification of families that help to meet post-adoption needs.

With these measures we help families stay together where reunification is possible and help find safe homes for children much more quickly when it is not. We've come together in an extraordinary example of bipartisan cooperation to meet the urgent needs of children at risk. We put our differences aside and put our children first.

This landmark legislation builds on other action taken in the last few years by Congress: the adoption tax credit I signed into law last August to make adopting children more affordable for families, especially those who adopt children with special needs; the Multiethnic Placement Act, enacted 2 years ago, ensuring that adoption is free from discrimination and delay, based on race, culture, or ethnicity; and the very first law I signed as President, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or their health insurance.

We have put in place here the building blocks of giving all of our children what should be their fundamental right—a chance at a decent, safe home; an honorable, orderly, positive upbringing; a chance to live out their dreams and fulfill their God-given capacities.

Now as we approach Thanksgiving, when families all across our country come together to give thanks for their blessings, I would like to encourage more families to consider opening their homes and their hearts to children who need loving homes. You may not want to go as far as the Badeaus have—[*laughter*]—but they are a shining example of how we grow—they are a shining example of how we grow when we give, how we can be blessed in return many times over. We thank them and all—all of the adoptive parents in the country.

For those who are now or have been foster or adoptive parents, I'd like to say thank you on behalf of a grateful Nation, and again say at Thanksgiving, let us thank God for our blessings and resolve to give more of our children the blessings they deserve.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:53 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sue Ann Badeau and her adopted son, Aaron; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado; Dave Thomas, founder and senior chairman of the board of directors, Wendy's International, Inc. H.R. 867, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–89.

Statement on Signing the Veterans' Compensation Rate Amendments of 1997

November 19, 1997

Today I was pleased to sign into law H.R. 2367, the ''Veterans' Compensation Rate Amendments of 1997.''

Our Nation provides compensation payments to veterans who were disabled in service and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits to the survivors of those who died in military service. By maintaining the real value of these payments, we honor their sacrifices.

This Act provides a 2.1 percent increase in compensation and DIC benefits, effective

December 1, 1997. This increase is the same percentage increase that Social Security beneficiaries and veterans' pension recipients will receive in January. Approximately 2.3 million veterans and over 300,000 surviving spouses and children will benefit from this increase.

Time will never erode the supreme value of our veterans' and servicmembers' efforts in defending the Nation's freedom. We also must not allow it to erode the value of our commitments to them. This legislation ensures that the worth of their richly deserved benefits keeps pace with consumer prices. As such, it maintains our obligation to those individuals whose sacrifices we will always remember.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 19, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2367, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–98.

Statement on Signing District of Columbia Appropriations Legislation

November 19, 1997

Today I am pleased to have signed into law H.R. 2607, the ''District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 1998.''

I am particularly pleased that the Act provides sufficient funding to implement the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 (Revitalization Act), which includes the main elements of the plan for the District of Columbia that I proposed in my 1998 budget in February. That plan, which was the most comprehensive plan that any Administration had ever proposed for the District, was designed to achieve two goals: to revitalize Washington, D.C., as the Nation's capital and to improve prospects for ''home rule'' to succeed. The Congress adopted the Revitalization Act as part of the historic balanced budget agreement that I signed into law last summer. Now, with this 1998 appropriations bill, the Congress has provided the funds to implement it.

The Act also drops several of the objectionable micro-management and other provisions in the original House-passed version of the bill such as Federal funding for private school vouchers, the requirement to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, the limitation on public assistance payments, the prohibition on Treasury borrowing authority for the District, and restrictions on the District's authority to make improvements in its financial management system.

The Act continues to contain abortion language that would prohibit the use of Federal and District funds to pay for abortions except in cases in which the life of the mother is endangered or in situations involving rape or incest. The continued prohibition on the use of local funds is an unwarranted intrusion into the affairs of the District.

In addition, the Act makes important changes to last year's immigration bill by offering more generous treatment to Central Americans than was available under that bill. These changes make good on the pledge I made during my trip to Central America last spring. Nevertheless, I have several concerns. First, I am troubled by the differences in relief offered to similarly situated persons. I believe, however, that these differences can be minimized in the implementation process. I therefore am asking the Attorney General to consider the ameliorative purposes of this legislation and the unique history and circumstances of the people covered by it in giving effect to its provisions. Second, I believe that similar relief should be made available to Haitians and will seek a legislative solution for this group. Finally, I ask the Congress to revisit its decision to continue to apply some of the harsher rules under last year's immigration bill to other persons with pending immigration cases who are not covered by H.R. 2607. I commend to the public my statement of November 14 for a further discussion of these issues.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 19, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2607, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–100.

Remarks at the Ecumenical Breakfast

November 20, 1997

Thank you very much and welcome to the White House. I am delighted to see you all. Let me say that we do want to talk about the obligation imposed on all of us to secure a future in which all of us are a part.

But in light of developments in the last day in Iraq, I would like to say just a word about that. The meeting of the foreign ministers last night in Geneva strongly reaffirmed our unanimous position: Saddam Hussein must comply unconditionally with the will of the international community and allow all the weapons inspectors back to Iraq so they can get on with doing their jobs without interference. After that meeting, he said he would do that. In the coming days we will wait and see whether he does, in fact, comply with the will of the international community.

I just want to reiterate that the United States must remain and will remain resolute in our determination to prevent him from threatening his neighbors of the world with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. This is an issue that I hope will become even more important to all Americans and a greater subject of discussion. We must do that. That is the duty we have to our children.

Now, let me say I look forward to these meetings every year. I have done, I think, one or two breakfasts like this every year I've been President. And even though we're discussing a kind of public issue today, I get a lot of personal solace out of this, and it always helps me sort of to put things back in perspective. And to give you an idea of how badly we in Washington need things put in perspective here, I got a cartoon out of the New Yorker Magazine that is a doctor talking to a patient. You might imagine that the patient is anyone who spends 60 hours a week or more working in this city. The doctor is talking to the patient and he said, ''Before we try assisted suicide, Mrs. Rose, let's give the aspirin a chance.'' [*Laughter*] I wouldn't say that you're the aspirin—[*laughter*]—you will alleviate even that, I think.

I'd also like to thank so many of you for the work you've done with us on public issues: on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and after the Supreme Court struck it down, on the Federal Executive order I issued, going as far as I could with my executive authority to apply the principles of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to Federal employees. I thank those of you who worked with Secretary Riley and the Justice Department on the very important work we did to try to clarify the lines of religious expression for students and teachers in our public schools. That, I think, did a great deal of good, and I know that Secretary Riley recently had a summit of religious and education leaders in St. Petersburg to talk about what can be done within the schools to promote racial harmony and to raise performance.

I thank you for the work that many of you have done with us to support the cause of religious freedom around the world. That has become, I think, a very significant issue for many of you in this room and many Americans. And of course, it's still a very important issue—regrettably, it's an important issue in many nations around the world and one that we have to keep working away at.

I also would like to thank you for some of your—some of you have been involved in the America Reads program. I know that the church Hillary and I attend here in Washington regularly has 45 volunteers. I got the newsletter just the other day and the pastor noted that I was not yet one of them. [*Laughter*]

Many of our religious groups are working on the Welfare to Work Partnership. We have 2,500 private companies now in that effort who have pledged to hire people from welfare to work and they're doing a marvelous job. But very often the houses of worship provide incredibly important services for families and children in transition efforts. This is working. We have 3.8 million fewer people on welfare than we did the day I became President—about almost 2 million fewer people since I signed the welfare reform bill a couple of years ago. And because of the way the system works, our States have even more money now to spend on education and child care and job placement and other supports, which makes the opportunity for people who care about the poor in our society

who today are disabled from entering the mainstream of American life that much greater, to make sure that even the people that we thought hardest to place could succeed.

Today, I do want to talk about our racial initiatives. When I started this, a lot of people said, ''Why are you doing this. There's not any riot in the cities.'' There are some examples of racial discord; we know a fair number of the church bombings—or burnings appear to have been racially motivated. But people said, ''Well, why are you doing this?'' I think that it is a sign of strength if a society can examine its problems before they become a festering sore that people who are otherwise uninvolved have to face. I also believe that one of our obligations in this administration, as we bring this century to a close and begin a whole new millennium, is to think about those things which we will be dealing with for the next generation, those things which, if we respond properly, can change the whole texture of life in America for the better.

And also, just because there's not any civil discord that's apparent, doesn't mean we don't have a lot of serious problems. If you look at the fact that juvenile crime has not gone down nearly as much as crime among adults, if you look at what's happening to the exploding prison population in America and the racial implications of that, if you look at the fact that we still have disparities among our various racial groups in the credit practices of banks and the access to higher education and the earnings in the workplace and the increasing relationship of that to success as young people in education, it is clear that our attempt to keep making progress toward the American dream requires us to make progress on the issues of race and all those that are related.

And if you look back over the entire history of America, we started with a Constitution that we couldn't live up to—just like none of us live up perfectly to the holy scriptures that we profess to believe in. And our whole life as a nation has been an effort punctuated by crisis after crisis after crisis, to move our collective life closer to what we said we believed in over 200 years ago. And that kind of change always requires spiritual depth, spiritual resources, spiritual conviction. After all, we said all men are created equal, but you can't vote unless you're a white male landowner. I mean, that's where we started. We're a long way from that today. And we saw all the efforts to move beyond all those barriers very often in spiritual terms.

So where are we today? Well, first of all, America has become markedly more diverse racially. And that means we're becoming markedly more diverse culturally and in religious terms, as well. Today, Hawaii is the only State in which no racial group is in a majority. But within a few years, our largest State, California, with 13 percent of our population, will not have—even Americans of European descent will not be in the majority there. Within probably 50 years, but perhaps sooner, there will be no single racial group in a majority in the entire United States.

Now, the scholars have said for 200 years that America was not about a race or a place, it was about an idea. We're about to find out. [*Laughter*] And we had best be ready. Across the river here in Fairfax County, Virginia, is one of the five school districts in America with children from over 100 different racial or ethnic or national groups—180 different national and ethnic groups in the Fairfax County School District. Their native languages number 100. We want them all to learn to speak and to read and to function in English and to be able to do very well in school and to be able to make a contribution to our American way of life.

And as I said, it has religious implications. I attended—right before I was inaugurated this last time I went to a Southern Baptist church service, early service on Sunday, where the minister was a man from Arkansas who had been a friend of mine there. And he said, ''This is a little different from the church I had in Arkansas.'' He said, ''I've got a Korean ministry here. I have so many Korean members. And I have to run an English as a second language course in the church every night.'' And of course, most of the people who come here from Asia are not Southern Baptists. [*Laughter*] I mean, some may think that's—Reverend Dunn says, thank God. [*Laughter*] I'm sure he's the only one of you not seeking to increase his flock. [*Laughter*]

But this changes things. This changes things. Things that are deeply inbred in the culture, for example, of the African-American Church. The elemental aspects of American culture that in some ways made African-Americans, even in the midst of their oppression, the most socially cohesive of Americans, thanks to the African-American Church, will be foreign to a lot of the new Americans that are coming in here, not part of that tradition, not being caught up in it.

How will they react if they're subject to systematic discrimination? How will they react if they can't get a loan at a bank, even though they're honest and have a record of honesty and success? How will we deal with all these things, and how can we avoid it? And most of all—and a lot of you are involved in these things—how we can get our children, early, to know that they can live in a different way, and in so doing, to teach their parents—which we see over and over and over again can have a very valuable impact.

Well, these are just some of the things that I wanted to mention, and we'll talk about it after breakfast. But the fundamental issue is, we know what we're going to look like; the demographers can tell us that. But they can't tell us what we're going to be like. That's a decision we have to make. And I am persuaded that we will be an infinitely better, stronger nation if that decision is informed by, driven by, embraced by, and advanced by people of faith in our country. And so that's why I asked you here today, and I thank you very much.

Now I would like to invite Dr. Thomas White Wolf Fassett to give the invocation. Then I would like for you to enjoy breakfast, and we'll have a discussion after breakfast.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:23 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Remarks Announcing the Health Care "Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities"

November 20, 1997

Thank you very much, first of all, Peter, for your outstanding remarks and the power of your example. And I accept your offer to play golf. [*Laughter*]

I thank all the Commission members and the members of the staff for a truly remarkable piece of work. And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary Shalala and Secretary Herman, who cochaired the Commission and who, I believe, did a remarkable job, and I thank you very much. I thank the Vice President for his work in overseeing this effort and for his concern.

This whole health care issue is very personal to me and to our family, to the First Lady. When I was running for President, I met person after person after person who had a cost, a quality, or an accessibility issue with the health care system. But long before that, as a Governor in what my opponents used to call a small southern State, I had the great gift that representing a small population gives you, of knowing a high percentage of the people who hired me, from all walks of life and all social strata, from all different circumstances.

And I just kept—I had such ambivalent feelings. I could see in my own State that we had the finest health care system in the world. I saw miracle after miracle after miracle; I saw person after person given a chance to reconstitute his or her life, and then all these terrible problems arising from the cost or the quality or the accessibility issues.

So we've worked very hard on them. The Vice President mentioned the quality issues. I would also like to say, this has been a very good year across the board for American health care. In the balanced budget bill we have $24 billion to provide health insurance to another 5 million children, about half of those who don't have health insurance—something that has become very important because the number of uninsured Americans has continued to rise since 1993. Ironically, even as the percentage of people in the work force eligible to purchase health insurance with the involvement of their employers has gone up, because of prices the coverage has gone down.

We had a significant step in reforming the Medicare program to add many years of life to the Trust Fund and provide more choices, including preventive care to Medicare recipients and earlier tests for mammographies for younger Medicare-eligible women. We had what the American Diabetes Association

called the most significant advance in the care of diabetes since the discovery of insulin 70 years ago, in this bill. We will—in a day or so, I'm going to sign the bill reforming the Food and Drug Administration and its procedures. The FDA, I might point out, has already won an award for its groundbreaking work in accelerating the approval of drugs while continuing to meet safety standards to try to increase the availability of possibly life-saving medication more quickly.

So a lot of good things happen. Yesterday I signed an adoption bill which was the product of an overwhelming bipartisan consensus in Congress which will revolutionize adoptions, including adoptions of children with special needs, which also will have a terrific health impact on some of the most vulnerable children in this country. So I want you to see this Commission's work against that backdrop. There is an emerging consensus in America that while people may not have wanted to bite the whole apple at once in 1994, almost the whole populace wants to keep nibbling away at the apple until we actually have solved the problems of cost, accessibility, and quality for all responsible American citizens.

What this Commission has done today with their health care consumer bill of rights is a truly extraordinary thing—all the more extraordinary because the Commission actually represents all walks of life and all the different financial equities in the health care debate in America. And again, let me say, I thank you very much. We will be much closer to making these rights reality for every American because of the courage of the Commission and because of the composition and the broad experience of the different Commission members.

Throughout our whole history, our strength has come from our families, from our individual citizens, from our continuing commitment to redefine and expand the parameters of opportunity and freedom, and at the same time, to do it in a way that brought us closer together as a society instead of dividing us further. Those values were in America's Bill of Rights, and they are certainly in this health care consumer bill of rights.

Today, our families face so much change and, of course, the changes in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other and the rest of the world are quite profound. I think, in a major way the mission of our administration here must be to try to help America prepare for these changes so that we can expand the opportunities they present and adequately meet the challenges they present, and so that we can go forward together.

Health care is changing dramatically, as we all know. The Vice President detailed some of those things. And we have worked hard to help people deal with these changes. Now, there are still particular problems that plainly require specific solutions. Millions of Americans have seen their health plans convert to HMO's and new kinds of health insurance. In many cases, managed care does bring lower costs and improved preventive care, and the health care industry, I believe, as a whole truly shares our goals of improving quality. And I have never been one who believed that improving efficiency involved the sacrifice of quality and, often, not even a sacrifice of quantity.

Our administration has reduced the size of the Federal Government by 300,000, eliminated a few hundred programs and several thousand pieces of legislation, and I have yet to have a single American citizen come up to me and say, why did you get rid of this or that. So we believe that you can have efficiency and improve quality and often improve the sheer volume of service as well. That's one of the things that technology makes it possible for us to do.

Still, I think it's fair to say that almost every family feels some insecurity at the scope and pace of change in the world, including the scope and pace of change in the health care industry. And very often people feel actually lost because they have come up against this change in a way that is, to be charitable, not positive.

There are so many people in this country that because of these changes feel like they're always going to be on the losing end of cost-cutting and quality issues in every sector of life, maybe even where they work, and they certainly are most frightened of it when it comes to health care, even more frightened

than when it comes to their own job, I think, because with the unemployment rate being low and real flexibility in American labor markets, Americans have proved that they are incredibly resilient at getting new jobs, and increasingly, those new jobs are as good or better than the ones they lost, something that was not true just a few years ago. But when it comes to health care, you can't be sure of that kind of recovery, and no matter how much confidence you have in your own resilience, somebody else has got to help you.

So even if we are trying to give Americans more job security in a changing environment by keeping unemployment low and intensifying our efforts to help people if they do lose their jobs to get better skills and find a job that is as good or better, we have got to recognize that the elemental insecurity that a loss of confidence in the quality, the accessibility, or the affordability of health care can breed in our society is staggering. The flip side of that is that if we can address those concerns, the increased confidence people have in the stability of the society as it affects their family and their lives will make them immeasurably more able to deal with the challenges of technology and globalization and change that no one can repeal.

So I don't think it is possible to minimize the peripheral impacts, positive impacts of having the right kind of consumer bill of rights in health care and how much it will do to the sense of stability people feel on the job; how much it will do to increase employee productivity when they're not worried about their husband or their wife who got cancer 3 years ago, or if they're not worried about what's going to happen if their kid is in a car accident, like Peter was. If they know that at least they're going to have the best chance they can get, it will have a terrific impact to stabilize and sort of harmonize our society in ways that I think will be immensely positive for the economy. And obviously, the business leaders on this Commission agree.

Now, consider the consumer protection issue in the larger context. Today, Americans receive consumer protection when they purchase cars, use credit cards, buy toys for their children. All this Commission is recommending is that we extend that kind of protection when a person visits a doctor, checks into a hospital, or buys into a health plan. Whether it's traditional health care or managed care, we have to make sure it's not inferior care. There are basic standards that I believe every American should be able to count on wherever they live, whatever their needs. Those standards ought to be the right of every citizen.

Here is what the health care consumer bill of rights says: You have the right to be informed about your health plan in plain English. You have the right to choose the right doctor for the right type of care; the right to medical services in an emergency wherever and whenever the emergency arises; the right to know all your medical options, no matter how much they cost; the right to respectful care and equal treatment at every health care facility by every health care provider; the right to know your medical records are confidential and only used for legitimate purposes; the right to express your concerns about the quality of care you receive and to take action when that care is inadequate.

This consumer bill of rights, as has already been said, is the product of a broad consensus from a broad group of business leaders and health insurers, working people and health advocates, doctors and nurses. There are still those who oppose it and that is their right. But this is a case where the national interest must prevail over the narrow interest, where the family's interest must prevail over the fear of change.

I ask those who are afraid, on the other side, to balance in their equation the fear that has been in the hearts of all the Americans who have confronted the health care system without this consumer bill of rights. We all have to bear our fair share of the uncertainty of change if we are all going to feel secure in the face of the future. And that seems to me to be the best argument that we can take to those who do not yet agree that this is the right thing to do.

These protections, in fact, are long overdue, and now we have to act to make them real for all Americans. Some will require Federal standards to be implemented. Where they do, I challenge Congress to make them the law of the land. There will be no more important tests in the coming months

of our commitment to strengthen our families. And I look forward to working with Congress.

You heard the Vice President say there's broad bipartisan support for moving forward here. But we shouldn't wait for Congress to act, especially when it's not necessary. So today I am acting within my power as President to implement the rights to the extent that I legally can. I'm directing every Federal agency that administers or manages health plans to adopt the protections of the consumer bill of rights, and to report back to the Vice President about where they need legislation to do so. With this step we can ensure better quality health care for tens of millions of Americans, including all Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and all Federal employees. And I challenge all private health plans to adopt the consumer bill of rights voluntarily, to give their members greater confidence and security.

In that connection, I want to thank GTE and one of our Commission members, an officer of GTE, Randy McDonald. They are the first large company to guarantee the consumer bill of rights to all the 400,000 people on their health plan, employees and their family members. It's an extraordinary step. And if they can do it, others can follow. I don't know if Randy is here today, but if he is, will you stand up? Thank you very much. God bless you.

Finally, it would be wrong for us to end this without acknowledging that there can be no rights without responsibilities; that our community can only go forward when there is a corresponding responsibility for every opportunity and every right.

The new world of health care offers greater choice and more fundamental opportunities for health than ever before. And today we outlined the rights that every American should have in dealing with that health care system. But every American also has an enhanced obligation to take an active role in his or her own health care and to take responsibility for his or her own health. We spend a lot of money in this country every year that we wouldn't spend if we'd just go through the day in a sensible way every day. And we have to acknowledge that, and we cannot blame the health insurance industry or the health care providers or anybody else in the wide world for the burdens we impose on ourselves for the extra cost, the lower income, the reduced productivity that are the direct result of daily choices made by individual citizens that they do not have to make in the way they live their lives, and we ought to be honest about that.

And we should never point the finger at other people when we have problems until we have first examined ourselves and what we have to do. And I know a lot of companies are looking at ways to reward responsible behavior and ask that some payment be made for that behavior that imposes costs on society as a whole. That's a large part of what we're attempting to do in settling this issue of the marketing and selling of tobacco to young people in America in ways that violate our laws. So I think that has to be a part of this; we can never lose sight of it.

When President Kennedy proposed a consumer bill of rights over 30 years ago, he said, ''Under our economic as well as our political form of democracy, we share an obligation to protect the common interest in every decision we make.'' I am convinced, as I have said repeatedly, that the coming years will be a time of remarkable breakthroughs in science and medicine, remarkable breakthroughs in the space and in the ocean, remarkable breakthroughs in the structure of human genes. There will also be a time of remarkable opportunity to relate to other people around the world, economically and culturally. They can be, this next 50 years, the best half-century human society has ever known. But we have to look after the common interest. No matter how individualized our computers, our telephones, our fax machines, our self-employment—no matter what happens, we will still have to protect the common interest if we want to have safe streets, good education, good health care, a clean environment, and a healthy economy.

Today, by standing up for individual rights, this Commission has advanced the common interest, and America will be much better for it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:11 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his

remarks, he referred to Peter Thomas, Chair, Subcommittee on Consumer Rights, Protections, and Responsibilities, who introduced the President. The Office of the Press Secretary made available the report of the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry, entitled, ''Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.'' A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Memorandum on the Health Care "Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities"

November 20, 1997

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Subject: The Health Care Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

Last spring, when I appointed the members of the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry, I specifically charged them to develop a consumer bill of rights. This period of rapid change and experimentation in the way Americans receive and pay for their medical care holds the promise for improved quality, greater choice, and lower expense. At the same time, we must identify and protect certain fundamental rights of patients and their families so that, whatever health care delivery system they choose, they can obtain the information and care they need when necessary.

Health care consumers also need to understand their responsibilities in a changing health care environment to ensure that they get the best possible care. Confirming such rights and responsibilities is critical to ensuring that the quality of medical care does not suffer as we seek to expand access and improve efficiency of delivery.

The Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities in Health Care, issued today by the Commission, fully lives up to my high expectations. The members of the Commission have brought to bear their own considerable abilities and have obtained information from a wide range of sources. This Bill of Rights and Responsibilities is a comprehensive and thoughtful document that will be an excellent guide as we move through this transition in health care delivery. We must take steps to see that the rights contained in this document become a reality for all Americans.

Therefore, I hereby direct you to take the following actions consistent with the mission of your agency.

First, I direct you to determine the extent of your current compliance with the recommendations of the Commission.

Second, I direct you to use your administrative authorities, including existing regulations, advisories, and other guidance regarding health plans under their respective jurisdictions to initiate appropriate administrative actions consistent with the recommendations of the Commission.

Third, I direct you to identify the statutory impediments to compliance with the recommendations of the Commission.

Finally, I direct you to report back to me, through the Vice President, by February 19, 1998, with your findings and the administrative actions you have already undertaken and will undertake to effect the Commission's recommendations.

William J. Clinton

Proclamation 7051—National Great American Smokeout Day, 1997

November 20, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For 21 years, this special day has been devoted to communicating a simple message: if you smoke, you need to quit—for life. Smoking is the largest cause of preventable death in this country, eventually killing one of every two people who continue to smoke. Every day, 3,000 adolescents in America smoke their first cigarette, taking the first step to becoming regular smokers, and one-third of these new smokers will eventually die of tobacco-related diseases. Each of these devastating statistics represents a personal tragedy, needless suffering, and irreparable loss.

Because most smokers—more than 80 percent of them—begin smoking before their 18th birthday, my Administration is working hard to reach children before they decide to start. Last year, I announced tough measures to limit children's access to tobacco products and to reduce their appeal to young people. Now we are working with the Congress, the public health community, State attorneys general across the country, and other interested organizations to develop and pass comprehensive national legislation to reduce teen smoking significantly.

Such legislation must set ambitious targets to cut teen smoking rates and stiff financial penalties to help ensure that tobacco companies meet those targets. To counteract the pervasive influence of cigarette and smokeless tobacco advertising and promotion, we must mount a nationwide effort to strip tobacco of its allure, warning our young people of its addictive nature and deadly consequences and helping parents discourage their children from ever taking up the habit. The Food and Drug Administration must have full authority to see to it that industry develops less addictive, reduced-risk products. And we must strengthen and expand our current efforts to limit the advertising of tobacco to children and restrict young people's access to tobacco products.

The Great American Smokeout offers all Americans, smokers and nonsmokers alike, an invaluable opportunity to show our young people how much we care about them and how much their good health means to us. I urge the almost 48 million adult Americans and 4 million of our young people who still smoke to set an example of strength and determination by quitting for the day and, ultimately, for life. I encourage students across the Nation to participate in Smokeout activities designed to teach them about the dangers of smoking. I ask all Americans to renew their commitment to a smoke-free environment for themselves and for our children. If we can accomplish these goals today, we can do so every day, creating a better, healthier future for us all.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 20, 1997, as National Great American Smokeout Day. I call upon all Americans to join together in an effort to educate our children about the dangers of tobacco use, and I urge both smokers and nonsmokers to take this opportunity to begin healthier lifestyles that set a positive example for young people.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:41 a.m., November 21, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 24.

Statement on Signing the Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997

November 20, 1997

I am pleased to have signed into law H.R. 1377, the "Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997," (SAVER Act). This Act will address the important issue of retirement savings through a public-private sector partnership. It is an important step, taken in a bipartisan manner, to increase awareness of the need for pension and individual savings so American workers may enjoy a secure and comfortable retirement. I want to thank all the members of both parties who worked with us to produce strong bipartisan legislation.

Under the SAVER Act, I will convene the first national summit on retirement income savings in 1998 to foster increased awareness of the importance of saving for retirement. Currently, only two-thirds of workers with the opportunity to participate in a 401(k) plan do so. Although this represents an increase from less than 40 percent in 1983, two-thirds is simply not good enough. We have to do better, particularly because more and more Americans are relying on these

types of plans for retirement savings. Subsequent summits on savings will take place in 2001 and 2005.

My Administration will work to make sure that the summits help educate employers about the types of plans that are available, including traditional defined benefit pension plans, as well as a relatively new defined contribution plan that is especially designed for small businesses. The summits will also identify problems workers have setting aside money for retirement, and that employers have in assisting their workers to do so. Recommendations will be produced by the summits as to what the private and public sectors can do to promote pension and individual savings. I am particularly concerned about the savings of women, minority, and low- and moderate-income workers, for whom putting away money for retirement is often particularly difficult.

The SAVER Act calls for the public and private sectors to work together in planning and conducting the national summits on retirement income savings, which I will co-host with the congressional leadership of both parties. The Act also affirms the ongoing efforts of my Administration to promote retirement savings through public outreach by directing the Secretary of Labor to maintain and expand the Department's program of retirement savings education.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 20, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 1377, approved November 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–92.

Statement on Signing the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998

November 20, 1997

Today I have signed into law S. 858, the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998." The Act authorizes appropriations for the intelligence-related activities of the United States during fiscal year 1998.

This Act results from the hard work of many people in the Administration and in the Congress who are dedicated to both a strong national intelligence capability and effective congressional oversight.

I strongly endorse section 307, the basic objective of which is to ensure that, insofar as possible, the U.S. Government provides all relevant information to U.S. citizens (and their family members, as appropriate) who are the victims of violent crimes committed abroad. So that this provision cannot be construed to detract from my constitutional authority and responsibility to protect national security and other privileged information as I determine necessary, and so that the provision does not require the release of information that is properly classified, I direct that it be interpreted consistent with my constitutional authority and with applicable laws and executive orders.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 20, 1997.

NOTE: S. 858, approved November 20, was assigned Public Law No. 105–107.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Line Item Vetoes of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998

November 20, 1997

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

In accordance with the Line Item Veto Act, I hereby cancel the dollar amounts of discretionary budget authority, as specified in the attached reports, contained in the "Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998" (H.R. 2107). I have determined that the cancellation of these amounts will reduce the Federal budget deficit, will not impair any essential Government functions, and will not harm the national interest. This letter, together with its attachments, constitutes a special message under section 1022 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, as amended.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The reports detailing the cancellation were published in the *Federal Register* on November 24.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Line Item Vetoes of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998

November 20, 1997

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

In accordance with the Line Item Veto Act, I hereby cancel the dollar amounts of discretionary budget authority, as specified in the attached reports, contained in the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998" (H.R. 2160). I have determined that the cancellation of these amounts will reduce the Federal budget deficit, will not impair any essential Government functions, and will not harm the national interest. This letter, together with its attachments, constitutes a special message under section 1022 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, as amended.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The reports detailing the cancellation were published in the *Federal Register* on November 21.

Remarks on Signing the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997

November 21, 1997

Thank you very much. After Secretary Shalala made you all laugh, she reminded me that she has to go catch a plane. She's going on a trip to Asia, and she's winding up in Butung. She said, "You know, some people think Butung is the most beautiful place in the world, and the King is there, and he's got four wives, and they're all sisters." And she said, "I wonder if he'd like four and a half." [*Laughter*] I thought the private joke was even better than the public one, so I thought I'd give credit.

Let me, first of all, thank the Vice President and his reinventing Government staff for the work that they have done on the FDA and Secretary Shalala and all the people at HHS and Sally Katzen and the people at OMB and folks in the White House, the industry leaders who are here. But let me especially thank the Members of Congress, all those who are here and at least two who are not, Congressman Bliley and Congressman Dingell, for the work that—this really astonishing work.

It was a 2-year process. This bill passed by a voice vote in both Houses. And yet it is a very significant overhaul in the work of the Food and Drug Administration. It also, it seems to me, is symbolic of what we should be doing as a country.

The FDA, which was created under Theodore Roosevelt, as the Vice President said, is really, I think, one of the signal achievements of the Progressive Era. Why was it necessary? Because more and more people were moving from the farm to the city and making a living in factories, and instead of consuming the food that they raised on their own farms, they had to go down and buy the food from somebody else. And more and more people had access to doctors, and doctors had access to medicine that was being discovered that they couldn't know everything about. So somebody needed to say, "Hey, this medicine is okay. We've tested it. It's okay. You can give it to your patients in Iowa or Oregon or Arizona or Alabama."

And so a whole new world of possibility opened when people could move from farm to factory and when people could have access to a doctor when they couldn't see one before. But there needed to be someone who said, here's the public interest in trying to make sure the food is safe and the drugs are safe, and they do what they're supposed to do.

And it's worked stunningly well, really. Throughout the entire industrial era of the 20th century, our country has continued to see its life expectancy increase and its economy grow and diversify. But when I was out there—the Vice President is right—I brought this up in our transition back in '92, because when I went across the country in 1992, everywhere I went people were complaining, on the one hand, that they were beginning to be concerned about some food safety issues and, on the other hand, that the health and welfare of the American people was actually being undermined by a system in the FDA that, at least the people who were involved in it thought, was too slow and somewhat arbitrary and not giving the American people the drug approvals and the medical device approvals in a timely fashion.

So we set to work on it and we found there was an enormous amount of interest in the Congress. The Vice President's right, the FDA deserves, I think, a great deal of credit for the internal changes that have been made, that have been recognized, and particularly on the drug approvals, the speed of them.

But this legislation, I think, is very, very important. And again I say, it is also symbolic of a larger mission we should be about. We're maintaining and redefining the public interest at a time when there are new challenges to food safety, which we've tried to meet, partly in the Department of Agriculture and partly with some important bipartisan legislation the Congress passed about a year ago, and when we have new possibilities in both medicine and medical devices. And what we want to do is get those to people as quickly as possible and still protect the public interest.

And we know now we have new options for that because of the change, again, in the underlying nature of the society, moving from the industrial age to a technology/computer information dominated age in which we have a lot more opportunities to do things that will speed this approval process, and on the other hand, in the food area, we know because we've now gone from seeing people get their food from their neighbors who were farmers while they lived in the cities, that food has become more and more and more an international commodity. And we have an even higher responsibility not only through the FDA but generally through the government to secure the safety of our food supply.

So I think the changes we are making are very important not only on their own merits but because what you have done is a model for what America has to do in area after area after area, clearly define the public interest and then change the way we pursue it consistent with the tools and the responsibilities and the opportunities available in this time. And all of you should be very, very proud of that.

Let me say that, as everybody knows, this bill is the product of 3 years of hard work that involves all the people I have already mentioned. I just think it's worth pointing out that at the beginning of the process, the sides stood worlds apart. I think that is an understatement. [*Laughter*] And the fact that there was a process by which you could think through differences and build a true consensus that is bipartisan and involves all the stakeholders, resulting in a bill—if somebody told me 2 years ago, ''Two years from now you'll be standing over at the Old EOB; and you'll be about to sign a bill that passed the Congress by a voice vote, and it will have more than two words in it, so it won't be an empty bill; it will, in fact, be a sweeping reform of FDA,'' I would have taken odds against that. And I think you should all be very, very proud of yourselves.

Let me just highlight a few of the bill's provisions. First, we continue working with the business community to get more drugs approved faster. We've reauthorized the Prescription Drug User Fee Act for 5 more years. It ensures that the cost of reviewing and approving drugs is shared between industry and Government. Since 1992, these additional revenues have helped FDA hire some 600 more employees, cutting drug approval time in half already, and we want to do better.

Second, the bill writes into law many of the reinventing Government measures introduced by FDA a few years ago, reducing the requirements and simplifying the review process for new drugs and medical devices

without compromising safety. And I congratulate the Vice President for all his work particularly on this effort.

Third, we will offer new hope to critically ill Americans by expanding access to drugs and therapies whose FDA approvals are still pending. Anybody who's ever had a family in this situation knows what an important part of the legislation this is. We know that for many patients, experimental treatments represent their best, perhaps their only, chance for recovery. That's why this bill writes into law current FDA policies that allow doctors and patients to use new drugs before they are formally approved. Already, thousands of AIDS, cancer, and Alzheimer's patients have found new hope, even new life, with these experimental therapies. We will also expand the database on clinical trials of drugs that fight serious illnesses so that patients can keep track of their progress.

It's been said that while the century we are about to leave has been an age of physics, the 21st century will be an age of biology, perhaps yielding cures to diseases we thought incurable. We are already witnessing the medical possibilities of the future, as the Vice President said. This fall alone, the FDA has approved new drugs and treatments for everything from HIV to breast cancer, cardiovascular disease to cystic fibrosis, Parkinson's to epilepsy.

The FDA has served America well. Today, with a bill I'm about to sign into law, we can ensure that it will serve America well into the 21 century, and I hope serve as a model again for how we can maintain our goals of pursuing the public interest and adjust our means to the possibilities and the challenges of a dramatically new era. The FDA has always set the gold standard for consumer safety. Today it wins a gold medal for leading the way into the future. And thank you all.

I'd like to ask the Congressmen now to join me up here so we can sign the bill.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Remarks on Receiving the Man of Peace Award

November 21, 1997

Dalia, Michelle, Members of Congress, members of the administration, General and Mrs. Shelton, Secretary Christopher, Secretary Vance, General Powell, thank you all for coming. To the Ambassadors of Israel and Jordan and Egypt, we thank you for being here today. Shimon and Leah, thank you for your friendship, for your remarks, and for your continued profound and eloquent striving for peace.

I am delighted that this prize will fund scholarships for young Americans to study in Israel, further strengthening the bonds between our nations and deepening the friendship between our people. And I am profoundly honored to be the first recipient of the Man of Peace Award. But actually, as we all know, I can accept this only on behalf of all people in our administration and previous administrations and, indeed, citizens in this country who have devoted themselves to helping to bring peace in the Middle East. There can be no greater recognition than this award founded by the family of Yitzhak Rabin and by Shimon Peres, two men who helped to give the world one of its greatest gifts, the hope of a new era of peace in the land of light and revelation.

You know, I was sitting here thinking when Shimon and Leah were talking of all the times that Hillary and I and Al and Tipper with one or all of them—and it's so hard to say now, but actually, from time to time, we had a lot of fun doing this.

There were times when I thought that my role in the Middle East peace process was to bring to bear the wealth and power of the United States to work in a positive way and to work things through with Arab States, and all of that. A lot of times I thought I was Prime Minister Rabin's fashion adviser—[*laughter*]—which shows you just how much trouble he was in. [*Laughter*]

Upstairs in my office, which is actually almost exactly right above this room, I have on a little table in a silver tray, that I believe Shimon gave me, the yarmulke that I wore at the Prime Minister's funeral, a little pin I had to wear to go to the graveside, and

a small stone I took from the grave. But above it I have the picture of us together the last time I ever saw him, where I'm straightening the bow tie I had to get for him because he didn't bring a bow tie to take to this black-tie dinner that we attended.

I say that to remind you that the real purpose of peace is to allow people to laugh, to return to ordinary life, to appreciate the little things in life, and to appreciate it with people with whom they have previously been at odds and that it is not something we can be discouraged about, it has to be done little by little.

I remember the day we were in here and we were fixing to go out, in September, and sign the peace agreement. And the Prime Minister was of two minds: First, you know, people were grinding on him, ''How can you do this? You can't trust the Palestinians,'' and all this, and he had this great one-liner, ''Well, you can't make peace with your friends.'' But then when I said when we went out there it was going to be quite an extravaganza, and Mr. Arafat was an emotional person, and there was going to have to be a handshake—well, now, the handshake was another thing altogether. [*Laughter*]

He said, ''I have been fighting him for decades.'' I said, ''You just told me you can't make peace with your friends. There is going to be a billion people watching. What are you going to do?'' He said, ''All right, but no kissing.'' [*Laughter*] And so I'm glad the press didn't know that because there's always this question, is the glass half empty or half full? So the whole world was electrified by this picture of these two men shaking hands. If the whole story had been known, someone would have written the story, why didn't they kiss? [*Laughter*]

We have to remember what the purpose of this is. Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin rose to the height of Israeli politics by being concerned with the security of the State of Israel. And after a lifetime devoted to its security, based on their experience and their understanding not only of the particular situation but of human nature, they reached a unique partnership premised on a commitment to peace as ultimately the only guarantor of security. They found the sort of courage that we saw when Sadat and Begin signed the Camp David accords.

And I will never forget that great day here in September of '93, when Yitzhak Rabin said, ''Enough of blood and tears.'' Leah mentioned the things which happened afterward, and we have seen a great deal of progress, the interim accords, the peace with Jordan in the Araba, growing diplomatic ties with neighbors.

Shimon said in his Nobel Address that Israel had proved, and I quote, ''that aggressors do not necessarily emerge as the victors.'' But also, he had learned that the victors do not necessarily win peace. To win peace these two leaders, on behalf of the Israeli people, stepped beyond the bounds of convention, put aside old habits of suspicion and mistrust. And after an assassin's bullet took Yitzhak's life, Shimon stayed true to the path they had chosen, even when the enemies of peace waged terror against the people of Israel.

We know from experience both before and since that progress is possible and progress is difficult, that barriers fall only if people show a consistent and constant will to go forward, guided by and bound to several principles. I think it's worth repeating them here today. Israelis and Palestinians must embrace the spirit at the heart of the Oslo accords, not jockeying for advantage but working together for the benefit of both sides. Both sides must dedicate themselves to building confidence, step by step, through a series of agreements on issues affecting both Palestinians and Israelis. Both sides must refrain from actions that undermine the joint pledge they have made to strengthen security. Both sides must approach each other as partners, joined by the prospect of peace and security. And both sides must live up to the letter and the spirit of their obligations.

In recent months, you have to acknowledge at least that the pace of change has slowed and that the bonds of trust have eroded on both sides. The answer is not to bemoan the present condition but to renew our resolve to move forward.

During recent negotiations here in Washington and in the region, Israelis and Palestinians worked together seriously in an atmosphere of genuine respect. They faced the essential task of building cooperation and

preventing terrorism. They moved closer to agreement on concrete steps to benefit the Palestinian people. They worked to advance the discussion on more difficult issues they will face in permanent status negotiations.

Now both sides have got to realize the need for urgency. The window of progress will become smaller with time. The frustration of ordinary people, both Israelis and Palestinians, will grow in the absence of progress. That is why we want the parties to work intensively on the matters that Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat have undertaken to discuss: security cooperation, redeployment of Israeli forces, a time-out on provocative actions, the acceleration of permanent status talks. By addressing these issues, we can establish for Israelis and Palestinians that peace will bring tangible benefits. By speeding the progress on this track, we can move closer to invigorating negotiations between Israel and Lebanon and Israel and Syria to establish a lasting and comprehensive peace.

In recent weeks, as Iraq has challenged the United Nations, we have been reminded again of how vital it is to continue forging a community of shared values throughout the region to strengthen the bonds among all people who oppose intimidation and terror and how we will never, ever do that until there is peace between Israel and her neighbors and that the absence of that peace makes the other difficulties, tensions, and frustrations all the more troubling because it compounds them and undermines our ability to seek a unified solution.

I think I should say just a few words about Iraq before closing. Early this morning, the international weapons inspectors arrived back in Baghdad, including the Americans assigned to the team. Their unconditional return is an important achievement for the international community. It shows once again that determined diplomacy backed by the potential of force is the only way to deal with Saddam Hussein. We must make sure that inspectors are able to resume their mission unimpeded. The inspector team has a clear mission and a clear responsibility. They must be able to proceed with their work without interference, to find, to destroy, to prevent Iraq from rebuilding nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to carry them.

Let there be no mistake: We must be constantly vigilant and resolute, and with our friends and partners, we must be especially determined to prevent Saddam's ability to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction program. Our children and our grandchildren will not forgive us unless we honor the work of the UNSCOM professionals. We must not let our children be exposed to the indiscriminate availability and potential of use and actual use of the biological and chemical and smaller scale nuclear weapons which could terrorize the 21st century.

The UNSCOM team of dedicated professionals have labored quietly and effectively for 6 years. The past 2 weeks have made them famous people in the world. Let us not so much cherish their fame as value their mission. And let us be determined to see that it can go forward.

Leah and Shimon, it was not 5 years go that I promised Yitzhak, as President Carter had promised Menachem Begin, that the United States would be there every step of the way with Israel as it walks the path of peace. Today I renew that pledge, for myself, our administration and indeed for the American people. I am deeply honored by this award. But the only prize in the end that really matters is the prize of peace we must give to the children of the Middle East.

For as long as I live, I will be grateful for the profound honor I had to work with you, Shimon, and with Yitzhak, to get to know your families, your co-workers, your friends, to see one of those magic moments that the Nobel Prize-winning Irish poet, Shamus Heaney, spoke of when he said that sometimes people just leave aside their cynicism and their bitterness, and hope and history rhyme. That is what you made happen. The only way we can truly honor the memory of our friend and the continuing work of our friend, Shimon Peres, is not to let it go but to bear down and see it through.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dalia Filosof, daughter, and Leah Rabin, wife of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin; Michelle Waldin, granddaughter of

former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres; Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his wife, Carolyn; former Secretary of State Warren Christopher; former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance; former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.); Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel. The Rabin Foundation and the Peres Foundation jointly established the Man of Peace Award. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Korean Peninsula Peace Process

November 21, 1997

I am pleased with the agreement reached today in New York to begin plenary talks on December 9 in Geneva to achieve a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. It carries forward the four-party peace initiative President Kim Yong-sam and I launched in April 1996. In Geneva, the four parties—the United States, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the People's Republic of China—will together discuss how we can secure a stable and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. There is a lot of hard work ahead. But this is an important first step and the United States is prepared to be a full partner in helping the Korean people build a future of peace.

Proclamation 7052—Thanksgiving Day, 1997

November 21, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Another year has passed on our American journey. The seasons have completed another cycle, and it is harvest time in America. Once again, millions of us will gather with family and friends to give thanks to God for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon us.

This Thanksgiving Day, as every day, we are grateful for the gift of freedom, for the vision made real by our Nation's founders and preserved by the courage, vigilance, and sacrifice of generations of Americans. We are thankful for the bounty and beauty of this great land, which has welcomed so many to its shores across the years. We cherish the love of our families and friends. We value the opportunity to provide for our children's future with the fruits of our honest labor. And, like the Pilgrims who celebrated Thanksgiving more than 300 years ago, we thank God for bringing us safely to the threshold of a new world, full of exhilarating challenge and promise.

In this new world, our children are growing up free from the shadows of the Cold War and the threat of nuclear holocaust. Nations once held captive by communism are learning the lessons of liberty and democracy. A revolution in technology has brought the world closer together and holds the prospect of greater knowledge and prosperity for people across the globe.

More than three centuries of change and growth separate us from the Pilgrims and their Native American friends who sat down together for their Thanksgiving meal. But the example and experience of those early Americans still hold great meaning for us today. They remind us that God's love strengthens and sustains us, both as individuals and as a Nation. They remind us that everyone has something to contribute, and that we are all richer when we learn to share. They teach us a simple but powerful lesson that each new generation of Americans must learn and pass on: we need one another. Like the Pilgrims, if we are to flourish in our new world, we must do so not as isolated individuals, but as members of a family, one America, sharing our gifts and leaving no one behind.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 1997, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt thanks to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us; and to reach out in true friendship to our brothers and sisters across

this land who, together, comprise our great American family.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 24, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 25.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

November 15

In the morning, the President traveled to Sacramento, CA. While en route, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom concerning the situation in Iraq. In the afternoon, the President traveled to Malibu, CA.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with President Jacques Chirac of France, who was traveling in Vietnam, concerning the new U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam and the situation in Iraq.

November 16

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Beverly Hills, and later, he traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

November 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Wichita, KS, arriving in the afternoon. While en route, he had telephone conversations with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, to express condolences for the victims of the terrorist attack in Luxor, and with United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan concerning the situation in Iraq.

Later, he traveled to St. Louis, MO, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Susan L. Graham as a member of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

November 18

In the evening, the President met with President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in the Oval Office.

November 19

In the morning, the President met with President Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali in the Oval Office.

November 20

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm October 26–28.

November 21

The President announced his intention to appoint Joseph B. Day as Commissioner of the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released November 16

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on China's decision to release Wei Jingsheng

Released November 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the situation in Iraq

Released November 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Jennifer Klein on the President's signing of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry: Meeting Between President Clinton and Malian President Konare

Released November 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the situation in Iraq

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Labor Secretary Alexis Herman on the "Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities"

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant to the President for International Economic Policy Daniel Tarullo and Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the upcoming APEC summit

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry: Telemarketing Fraud Report

Released November 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Acts Approved by the President

Approved November 18

H.R. 1119 / Public Law 105–85
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998

H.R. 2160 / Public Law 105–86
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998

Approved November 19

H.R. 282 / Public Law 105–87
To designate the United States Post Office building located at 153 East 110th Street, New York, New York, as the "Oscar Garcia Rivera Post Office Building"

H.R. 681 / Public Law 105–88
To designate the United States Post Office building located at 313 East Broadway in Glendale, California, as the "Carlos J. Moorehead Post Office Building"

H.R. 867 / Public Law 105–89
Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997

H.R. 1057 / Public Law 105–90
To designate the building in Indianapolis, Indiana, which houses the operations of the Indianapolis Main Post Office as the "Andrew Jacobs, Jr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 1058 / Public Law 105–91
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service under construction at 150 West Margaret Drive in Terre Haute, Indiana, as the "John T. Myers Post Office Building"

H.R. 1377 / Public Law 105–92
Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997

H.R. 1479 / Public Law 105–93
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 300 Northeast First Avenue in Miami, Florida, as the "David W. Dyer Federal Building and United States Courthouse"

H.R. 1484 / Public Law 105–94
To redesignate the United States courthouse located at 100 Franklin Street in Dublin, Georgia, as the "J. Roy Rowland United States Courthouse"

H.R. 1747 / Public Law 105–95
John F. Kennedy Center Parking Improvement Act of 1997

H.R. 1787 / Public Law 105–96
Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997

H.R. 2129 / Public Law 105–97
To designate the United States Post Office located at 150 North 3rd Street in Steubenville, Ohio, as the ''Douglas Applegate Post Office''

H.R. 2367 / Public Law 105–98
Veterans' Compensation Rate Amendments of 1997

H.R. 2564 / Public Law 105–99
To designate the United States Post Office located at 450 North Centre Street in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Peter J. McCloskey Postal Facility''

H.R. 2607 / Public Law 105–100
Making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes

S. 813 / Public Law 105–101
Veterans' Cemetery Protection Act of 1997

Approved November 20

H.R. 1086 / Public Law 105–102
To codify without substantive change laws related to transportation and to improve the United States Code

H.R. 2813 / Public Law 105–103
To waive time limitations specified by law in order to allow the Medal of Honor to be awarded to Robert R. Ingram of Jacksonville, Florida, for acts of valor while a Navy Hospital Corpsman in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam conflict

H.J. Res. 91 / Public Law 105–104
Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin Compact

H.J. Res. 92 / Public Law 105–105
Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoossa River Basin Compact

S. 669 / Public Law 105–106
To provide for the acquisition of the Plains Railroad Depot at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

S. 858 / Public Law 105–107
Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998

S. 1231 / Public Law 105–108
United States Fire Administration Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999

S. 1347 / Public Law 105–109
To permit the city of Cleveland, Ohio, to convey certain lands that the United States conveyed to the city

S. 1377 / Public Law 105–110
To amend the Act incorporating the American Legion to make a technical correction