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Editor's Note: The President was in Beijing, China, on June 26, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Interview With Chinese Journalists

June 19, 1998

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for giving us this opportunity to have this interview with you before you fly to China. We're representing Chinese media organizations in the United States. We're following your visit to China very closely. We wish you success in your visit.

The President. Thank you.

Q. May I ask you the first question?

The President. Sure.

Q. You will be the first American President in almost 10 years to visit China. What do you expect from your visit to China? And how important it is? What kind of impact will it have on both the United States and China and even the world as a whole? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, I hope that through my trip both I and the people of the United States will learn more about China—about the rich history, about the exciting events going on today, about the incredible potential for the future of the Chinese people.

Secondly, I hope through my trip that the leaders and the people of China will learn more about the United States. And specifically, I hope that through my trip we can expand the areas of cooperation between our Governments and our people. I hope we can have an open and honest and constructive discussion about the differences we have. And I hope that the trip will give energy to the positive changes going on in China and to a better partnership between our people in the future.

China-U.S. Partnership

Q. Mr. President, you and President Jiang Zemin have agreed to work together in building a constructive strategic partnership between our two great nations for the 21st century. I remember this concept, partnership, was first raised by you during a visit to Australia a few years ago.

The President. Yes.

Q. So what was your vision then, and your vision now, for this concept?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's—let's make the big statement here. China is home to one-fourth of the world's people. It has a rapidly growing economy. It has enormous contributions to make to the world of the 21st century. And if I could just give some specific examples, I think we should be partners for stability and security in Asia. The Chinese recently led our five-party talks on the situation in South Asia as a result of the nuclear testing between—by India and Pakistan. That's just one example. The work we're doing to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula is another. The work we're doing together to try to promote stability and to restore growth to the economies of Asia is another. I think they're important issues in the security relationship between our two countries that should be a part of this partnership. I think the work we're doing around the world for nonproliferation and the progress that we've made working with China on nonproliferation of dangerous weapons is important.

I think the work we can do to fight international crime and drug trafficking is important. China borders 15 nations and has to deal with this just as we do. I think the work that we do in energy and the environment is important. I think the work we do in science and technology is important. I think our economic partnership is very important; it's important that it grow and expand in ways that are good for the Chinese people and for the American people and help to stabilize the world.

And finally, I think that it is inevitable that in the 21st century, where the economy is based on ideas—that's basically what the computer revolution is all about; that's what

information technology is all about—that we in America have to face the challenge of making sure that this economy benefits all our people, because we have various levels of education and various levels of success in dealing with that.

In China, I think you have the same challenge coming from a different direction, where the country is going through a period of significant change that I believe inevitably will lead to a more open society with more freedom of expression and more acceptance of cultural and religious diversity, because that will strengthen the country in a world where ideas dominate economic progress and political influence. The only way you can get that is to get the best from all your people. And the only way that can happen, I believe, is to observe things that we hold very dear: more freedom, more human rights, more political and civil rights.

I note with great appreciation the intention of the Chinese Government to sign the Convention on Political and Civil Rights. I think that's a great step forward.

Taiwan and the "One China" Policy

Q. Mr. President, as we all are aware, the issue of Taiwan is the most important and sensitive issue in China-U.S. relations. It is essential for a sound and a stable development of China-U.S. relations that the provisions of the three Sino-U.S. joint communiques are strictly abided by and the Taiwan issue is properly handled. The U.S. Government and yourself have made explicit the commitments that the U.S. Government pursues a "one China" policy and abides by the principles enshrined in the above-mentioned three communiques, does not support the two Chinas—or one China, one Taiwan—[*inaudible*]—of Taiwan and Taiwan's entry into the United Nations and other international organizations of sovereign states.

And Secretary of State, Madame Albright, reiterated these commitments of the U.S. Government at the press conference during her visit to China last April. So will you reaffirm these commitments during your upcoming visit to China in your discussions with President Jiang and in a public statement? How will the U.S. Government implement, in earnest, these commitments?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, the answer to your question is that I will reaffirm those commitments. Our relationships are embodied in the three communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act passed by our Congress. And our long friendship with and economic relationships with the people of Taiwan clearly must be understood by them and by the people of China within the context of the three communiques and our support for the "one China" policy.

And all of our decisions going forward will be made within that framework, so I will clearly make that statement when I'm in China to the Chinese leaders.

Human Rights, Nonproliferation, and the World Trade Organization

Q. Mr. President, my question is how could the two countries work together to address the differences on such issues as human rights, nonproliferation, and China's accession to WTO and trade imbalance? Thank you.

President Clinton. Let's take them one at a time. In the human rights area, I think one of the things that we hope we'll have is a resumption of our dialog between the two countries on human rights. I hope we will have some sort of an NGO forum on human rights. We have talked a lot with—I have talked with President Jiang and our people have talked with representatives in the Chinese Government about the prospect of having a long, cooperative project on the rule of law and how it applies in commerce, how it applies to free speech and free exercise of political rights, religious rights, and things of that kind, and what relevance—how those things would work in the context of Chinese society. And I hope we will continue to work together on the rule of law and those issues.

On nonproliferation, frankly, I think it's worth pointing out that, in some ways, that's been the area where we've had the greatest success. China, in the last few years, has become a member of the Nonproliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention. China has accepted the guidelines of the Missile

Technology Control Regime. China has frozen—worked with us to freeze the North Korean nuclear program. China has agreed not to give assistance to the Iranian program or to support nonsafeguarded nuclear facilities, such as those in Pakistan.

So there are some things we can do together to take this even further in the area of proliferation, and I think we will on this visit. I hope we will. But that is an area where we understand each other, and we have a good way of working together and where we've got a lot of progress under our belt.

On the WTO, I very much would like to see China in the WTO because of its—not just the population of the country but the size of the economy and the fact that it's growing. The WTO, like any organization, has to have certain rules and conditions of membership, and we're trying to work out the details of that.

Obviously, we in the United States would like to have some greater access to the Chinese market, to have more exports. We are by far your largest importer, and we welcome that. Our economy is strong; we've been very fortunate; and we appreciate that, and we are happy to participate in supporting China's growth by purchasing many products from China. But we seek no special favors in the Chinese market. The important thing about the World Trade Organization is that countries which enter, in effect, agree not to prefer one country over another, so the United States seeks no special favors in the Chinese market, but we would hope to get some greater access.

But I think beyond that, it's important that China become a member of the WTO, and I hope that can be done.

President's Policy on China

Q. Mr. President, some people in this country keep criticizing your China policy. So under such circumstances, how will you go ahead with China policy, and what are you going to do with the bills and the resolutions against China on Capitol Hill? Thank you.

The President. Well, I think first, of all it's important for the Chinese people to understand that in our system there are some people who criticize everything I do. [*Laughter*] If I walked out of the White House and I spread my arms and I proved I could fly—[*laughter*]—some people would claim that I had done something wrong. [*Laughter*] So it's part of democracy. So a lot of this criticism is a part of it.

One of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, said a wise thing once. He said, our enemies are our friends—he said, our critics are our friends, because they show us our faults. So it's important when people criticize you to listen to their criticism, because sometimes they're right. You know, none of us are correct in every decision we make.

So, with that background, however, I have to say in this case, I think my critics are wrong. And I believe most Americans agree with me. I believe most Americans want a constructive partnership with the Government and the people of China. I believe most Americans understand that we have differences now and 100 years from now we will have some differences, because we are different people with different cultures and different systems and different backgrounds.

And I think the important thing for the Congress is to recognize that over the long run we must choose engagement with China, not isolation from China, not estrangement from China. And then once you make that decision, then the question is, how can you expand the areas of cooperation where we can agree; how shall we manage our disagreements; and how can we learn from one another so that we can build a more peaceful, more prosperous, more open world? Even my harshest critics would have to admit that President Jiang and I have had wonderful, stimulating, and very honest discussions about our differences. It seems to me that the idea that we should have less contact with China—with the Chinese Government and with the Chinese people—is just wrong.

And I think most people agree with me. So I will continue to stick up for what I believe in, and I will do my best to defeat any legislation in the Congress that would undermine the ability of the Government of the United States to pursue the interests of the United States and the interests of the American people in developing a partnership with China and the Chinese people.

Science and Technology Cooperation

Q. My question is how do you assess the 20-year old cooperations in science and technology between China and the United States? And what's the prospect for further cooperation in the years to come and what we'll do with the remaining U.S. sanctions against China?

The President. The remaining U.S. sanctions?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, first of all, let's talk about the 20-year cooperation in science and technology. This has actually been one of the most successful areas of our relationship. And I think most people in the United States don't know much about it. And I would be surprised if many people in China knew a lot about it.

But we have really had a remarkable record here. Our cooperation in science and technology, among other things, has led to discoveries which will help us to preserve the biodiversity of the planet, which is very important for the environment in the years ahead, as these economies grow. It has led to work in the area of seismology, which has increased the ability of both countries to predict and deal with extreme weather developments and other developments. China and the United States have both experienced earthquakes; we've both had other severe weather developments. Our cooperation has helped us to deal with that.

We've actually had a lot of progress in medical areas that help us to deal with cancer problems. And our joint work most recently discovered the important role of folic acid in dealing with a health condition called spina bifida, which is a profound problem for some children in the United States, which I think is very important.

So I think if you look to the future, when more and more scientific discoveries are being made every day, when very soon the mysteries of the human gene itself will be unlocked, when most experts predict that the 21st century's major breakthroughs will come in areas of biology, I think that this is something we should emphasize more and more, and because the potential benefits to all our people, and indeed to other people around the world, are enormous.

On the question of the sanctions—since 1989—the sanctions are in several categories. One category of sanctions has already been lifted on nuclear transfers because of the nuclear cooperation agreement signed between the United States and China. There are some others which have—which are dealt with on a case-by-case basis—for example, when you send up our commercial satellites on your rockets. And so all the others, I think, have to be dealt with in the context of specific negotiations within the framework of our law.

Shanghai

Q. Mr. President, almost a quarter century ago, in 1972, the well-known Sino-U.S. joint communique was issued in Shanghai. So, during your trip to Shanghai this time, what will be on your major agenda, and what important message are you going to bring to the people of Shanghai? Thank you.

The President. Well, first of all, I just want to see it—[*laughter*]—because everyone in the world—we read constantly about the explosive growth of Shanghai, the vibrant life of the city, and how it sort of represents the future of China's economy. I want to meet there with people who are making the future of China. I'm going to meet with some young entrepreneurs. I'm going to meet with some grassroots active citizens from various walks of life. I'm going to meet with the United States and Chinese business leaders. And I'm very much looking forward to that.

But my message will be that the creation of opportunity and a better life is something that both of us want—both countries want and our peoples want. And insofar as we possibly can, we should attempt to define a common future where everyone has a chance to live up to the fullest of their capacities and to live by their imagination. And I'm very excited about going and I think it will be quite successful.

Advice to Youth

Q. Mr. President, here you have a newspaper called USA Today; in China, we have a China news daily, which is China Tomorrow. So, my question is, you are one of the youngest leaders of the world, what do you have to say to the youths of China? And also,

how will your visit to China this time promote exchanges of the young peoples of two countries?

The President. The first point I want to make is that the decisions we make today will affect young people more than any other group, because they have more of their lives in front of them. The young people of China and the young people of my country will live most of their lives in a new century. If medical advances continue, some of the youngest children, the ones being born today, may well live to see the 22nd century. [*Laughter*]

And I think—therefore is very important that these young people not only educate themselves for the work they will do but also learn as much as they can about other countries—people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, people who have different faiths than they do, people who live in different systems; and that they seek to become not only responsible citizens of China, but people of the world; that they seek to understand the world—never for the purpose of, if you will, escaping their own culture and background, but to deepen their understanding.

I find the more I learn about other people in the world, the more I understand my own people, my own background. And in the world of the 21st century we will be given the opportunity to reconcile the differences among people by respecting those differences, but making common cause. And we will have the means to do it through technology, through travel, through open markets and economic endeavor, through respect for individuals' integrity and rights and freedom.

But we also see in other countries the hazards of the future, in the terrible ethnic and racial and religious conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo, in the Middle East, in Rwanda, and Africa. And what we have to do is to find a way to move toward a greater harmony in which we can preserve the coherence of families and societies and cultures, in which we can all have honest differences, but in which we find common bonds of humanity that take the world to a higher plane. That is what the young people of the world should be thinking about. How can they do better than their parents and grandparents in moving the cause of humanity forward?

And again I say, it is not necessary for any of us to reject our heritage. China has, of all the societies, perhaps the oldest and richest culture in history. It's not necessary at all to reject that. We can become more loyal to our roots, if you will, but we have to become, all of us, people of the world as well as people of our countries and cultures.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, my question is how the Sino-U.S. relations, in the light of your coming visit to China, will affect the regional and world situation, especially in the wake of the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan and in view of the evolving Asian financial crisis?

The President. Well, the first point I would make is that it should convince everyone in China and everyone in the United States that our cooperation is more important than ever before, because no form of endeavor guarantees success. And in any system there will always be crises and problems and challenges. There is no—we're all human beings; there is no perfect problem-free way of organizing people and organizing our affairs.

Therefore, if you look at what has happened in Indonesia, if you look at the challenges faced by other nations in Asia, if you look at Japan, the second largest economy in the world, struggling now with several years of low growth or stagnation and the present crisis, a financial crisis, I would say that the number one message is we have to work together on this.

If you look at the security issues, the fact that the matter on the Korean Peninsula is still unresolved, the much larger potential for difficulty on the Indian subcontinent between India and Pakistan, and, I might say, the enormous potential for positive interaction if the misunderstandings and the difficulties between India and Pakistan can be resolved, and if China and India could reach an understanding about their security concerns over the long run, the potential for benefit to the Chinese people of having over one billion people on the Indian subcontinent working with them instead of wondering whether they're in strategic conflict with them—this is enormous.

So for the United States—obviously we have no territorial ambitions in Asia whatever, but we have a great stake in the future of Asia. I can't imagine that any of these great challenges can be resolved unless the United States and China work together.

President's Trip to China

Q. Yes, sir. I am from China—[*inaudible*]—which is the largest TV network in China. We have viewers of one billion. On behalf of them, I would like to express our warm welcome to you for your state visit to China.

President Clinton. Thank you.

Q. Would you please take this opportunity to say a few words to them, and what kind of message you will bring for them. Thank you.

The President. Well, my message is that the American people wish the Chinese people well. We want to know more about the China of today and the China of yesterday, and we want to be a big part of the China of tomorrow; that we are a people that in our relatively short history of 220-plus years, have accomplished some things that we're very proud of. And we believe in our system of democracy and individual rights and liberties, from free speech to religious liberty. And we believe that the International Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations embraces, has something to give people everywhere.

But we also respect the culture and the heritage of the people of China, and we are prepared for a long-term, strategic, constructive partnership. We want to expand our areas of cooperation. We want more Americans to visit China. We want more Chinese people to visit America. We want more American students to study in China, and we want more Chinese students to study in America. We want to find ways to resolve the differences between us.

And most of all, we want to be part of constructing a world in the 21st century where nations are proud of their culture and their heritage and their history, but where the borders are more open to new ideas and new cooperation. And that's what I hope will come out of this trip.

You know, the United States at many times in our country's past has felt a special affinity to China. And we've had many Americans who have lived in China, doing religious work, doing charitable work, doing business work. We have been allies in war. We have done a lot of things together. And I think there is a greater feeling for the Chinese people in the hearts of Americans than perhaps many Chinese realize. And I hope that this trip will help us to continue to go forward in a new and better way.

And so I hope the Chinese people will be glad that I'm coming, and I hope we'll be able to have a constructive trip that, as I said, looks to the future, expands cooperation, and finds a very open and honest way of expressing our differences, and exchanges ideas about what could help both countries deal with the challenges we face.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you. I enjoyed this.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House and was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 6 p.m., June 21. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin of China. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With CBS News, Cox Newspapers, and McClatchy Newspapers

June 19, 1998

President's Trip to China

Q. We've been talking among ourselves, so we'll just jump right into it. Just real quickly—one poll question. In a CBS/New York Times poll, some data that we put together shows that 59 percent of the American public believes you should go on this trip. But 35 percent say they—only 35 say they approve of your policy toward China. What do you hope to accomplish on this trip to pull that 35 closer to the 59 or higher?

The President. Well, I think one of the things I hope to accomplish is I hope that as a result of the trip, the American people will learn more about China, and the Chinese people will learn more about America.

And I hope that what my policy actually is will be more broadly known among the American people. You know, I'm not surprised by the 35 percent because normally when there's anything written about China, it's one—something bad happens or some question's raised here. So if you never get any kind of constructive information, it's hard to know. But in specific terms, what I'll hope we'll do is to find a way to expand the areas of cooperation, to continue to discuss in an open way the areas of our differences. And I hope that by going there, I can strengthen the forces of positive change in the country.

So those are my objectives in going, and I think it's a very good thing. I think it's a tribute to the common sense of the American people and the good judgment that they understand, I think, that we have to be involved in China, that we have to try to have a constructive partnership with them.

Q. Mr. President, you've explained why you're going to the Great Hall, and you've said that the Chinese Government needs eventually to apologize to the people for what happened at Tiananmen Square 9 years ago. I'm wondering what will be on your heart and on your mind as you motorcade up to the Great Hall and gaze out across that square and ponder the pageantry and trauma that's taken place there over the past century?

The President. Well, obviously, I want to see Tiananmen Square, and I will think about what happened there 9 years ago. But I also will be thinking about the last turbulent century in Chinese history and the fact that that whole setting there has been the center of Chinese public life for probably 600 years now. There will be a lot to think about. I'm going to do my best to learn and absorb as much as I can and to increase my capacity to advance our interests and our values while I'm there. And I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. Mr. President, is it realistic that you could have a meeting along the lines of President Reagan—I believe 1988—a meeting in Moscow with refuseniks in admittedly a period of glasnost. But is it realistic in China? Is that a parallel situation, and are you satisfied that you'll be able to have a kind of contact with dissident and religious groups that you will like?

The President. Well, I'm going to meet with as many diverse people as I possibly can while I'm there. I'm going to try to meet with as many grassroots citizens who are active in all kinds of life as I can. And I'm going to make judgments about that based on what I think is most likely to promote our objectives, which include the advance of human rights and political civil rights, religious rights and, generally, that will promote more openness in China.

You know, I said to President Jiang when he was here—both in the press conference and in our private conversations—that I believe China can never obtain it's own destiny full of greatness without becoming a more open society. Because whether you believe that human rights are universal, as the covenant says and as the U.N. embraces, or whether you believe it's just a cultural preference of some kinds of people, the reality of the world is that we now have an economy which is increasingly dominated by ideas. We basically moved from a farming economy to a manufacturing economy to an idea economy. That's what information technology is.

And it is, therefore, I think almost axiomatic that you can't have an idea-based economy that reaches its fullest success until people are free to think and feel and say and do what they please. And I have tried to argue it to President Jiang that you can have a stable society. In fact, you can have a more stable society when there're outlets for dissent, and where people have avenues within which they can express their ideas, and when you prove that you can incorporate diversity within a society.

I think, for example—I do not see the dialog with the Dalai Lama, for example, as a potential weakening of the coherence of Chinese society. I think it's the biggest opportunity to strengthen China. It's out there because the Dalai Lama's made clear he doesn't want to have an independent Tibet. He wants an autonomous Tibet—if the Chinese say they recognize—but that he recognizes that Tibet is part of China. I think that's an incredible opportunity.

Here we are on the edge of the 21st century, when we see some countries torn apart

by religious and racial and ethnic differences. We've now got this great opportunity to harmonize, to reconcile something that has enormous symbolism not simply within Tibet and its sympathizers within China but all over the world.

So those are the arguments I'm going to make, and I'll keep making them. And I'm hoping that they'll be institutionalized to some extent in an ongoing human rights dialog and in NGO human rights dialog and in the areas—in the sort of cooperative law ventures that Chinese have been very interested in joining with us and legal issues relating not simply to the rule of law and commerce, but rule of law dealing with the speech issues and human rights issues and labor rights issues and other things.

So I'm looking forward to having the chance to make that case.

Religious Freedom in China

Q. Mr. President, I noticed just glancing at the schedule that you're not only going to church on Sunday, but you're scheduled to make brief remarks. What will you be saying from the heart in that church about religious freedom in China?

The President. Well, I haven't prepared my remarks yet. And I suspect that of all the speeches I give while I'm there, that's the one that's most likely to be one that I will do virtually by myself and close to the time, although obviously I welcome the help of all the people who work with me on these things.

I hope to be able to say something about the importance of faith and religious liberty and the importance of religion to the character of a country, to acknowledge the role of Confucianism and Buddhism and other Eastern faiths and the history of world religions and the importance of giving everyone the chance to search out the truth for himself or herself; and the importance of recognizing that no matter how much the modern world comes to be dominated by technology, and no matter what advances occur in science, especially in the biological sciences, and no matter what we learn about other galaxies from physics, that each person's attempt to discern the truth and then to live according to it will remain life's most important journey.

That's why, in the end, I think all this explosion of technology and communication will only intensify the pressure for openness in societies.

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, you've developed a knack for, in this country, speaking directly to the American people—getting beyond opinion makers and beyond the likes of us, quite frankly. I'm wondering how important it is to you to be able to speak directly to the Chinese people on this trip, and how, specifically, you'll be able to do that, given the state control of the media there?

The President. You know, I just did a roundtable with Chinese journalists. And one of the—the television person who was there gave me a chance to at least give an opening message to the millions of Chinese that watch that station. I think it's quite important. I think making an impression on the Chinese people is very, very important.

One of the things that we have learned—I don't mean the royal "we," I mean all of us working in this White House have learned—is that even in nondemocratic societies, in the end, the people have a big say in what happens. Popular opinion counts for something, and popular feeling and sentiment counts for something. So I hope that in many ways I'll be able to reach the Chinese people while I'm on this trip.

I also hope I'll be able to have quite a bit of contact with the citizens of China on this trip in ways that are planned, as we did in the roundtables in Africa, for example, and in ways that are unplanned. I just think that's important. It's important for me and for our whole team to get a feel of life there. I've never had the opportunity to go, so I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. This is your first trip there. You've gotten a lot of advice, solicited and otherwise, on the trip. I'm thinking now about people outside the administration. Who are you listening to, and how are you preparing personally, whether it's something you're reading or otherwise, for the trip?

The President. The truth is, I haven't done as much reading on this trip as I normally do in advance because of all the incredible time-consuming nature of this work in Congress for the tobacco bill and all the financial issues in Asia and all those things we've been doing on it. But I have solicited a significant library. I don't know if I can read all the books, but I've got—Jim Mann was just in here and gave me a copy of his book. Have you seen it? "Beijing Jeep: A Study of Western Business in China."

But I'll get Barry to give you a list of the books; I've asked for six or seven books to read. I'm going to try to begin in earnest over this weekend and then on the trip to do as much as I can, because the reading always helps me. It helps me a lot with what I see and how I do.

And we solicited, also, opinions and advice from a number of China scholars from outside the administration. But I've been with Jiang Zemin enough now that I really have quite a clear idea of what I hope we can achieve and how I want to go about doing it. I've done my best to sort of counter what I think are misconceptions about America—you know, that we had some grand design to contain China, that we didn't really want it to emerge into its rightful position of leadership and prosperity in the 21st century, that we were unmindful of the different historical experiences, that we were unmindful of our own continuing challenges in America. I've tried to knock down all those barriers to honest dialog.

And I've tried to establish enough credibility in being candid and honest over time in the things we've done together—working on the peace in the Korean Peninsula, working to contain proliferation, to working on this latest nuclear testing incident on the Indian subcontinent—to get to the point where I could be frank and open with the President and others with whom I deal. And so I'm going to do my—I'm really looking forward to this, and I'm hoping it will be effective.

Economic Sanctions

Q. Mr. President, I have a sanctions question. Do you agree with Senator Lugar that the United States has essentially become sanction-happy to its own detriment?

The President. Absolutely.

Q. And do you favor his legislation, or something like it, that would roll back in a variety of ways the sunsets—the economic analysis?

The President. Yes. Let me just say, I think sanctions can be helpful from time to time. They're most helpful, clearly, when the world community agrees. I think that the sanctions on South Africa were helpful in bringing an end to apartheid. I think the sanctions on Serbia were helpful in bringing about an agreement in Bosnia. I think the sanctions on Iraq have been helpful in preventing Saddam Hussein from rebuilding the military that could dominate its neighbors and getting back into weapons of mass destruction. So when you've got uniformed sanctions they can be helpful. Sometimes they can be effective even if the United States is doing them, if it covers a situation we can dominate economically. Sometimes they're helpful just as a gesture of disapproval.

But the way these sanctions laws are written with—they really deprive the President, any President, of the necessary flexibility in the country's foreign policy. And even if you put them on, it's hard to take them off; and the conditions for not putting them on are such that the President is put under an enormous burden of doing things that he may believe that are not in the best interest of the country.

So I just think—and it's particularly ironic that we seem to have gotten sanction-happy at a time when we are reducing our foreign assistance to the countries that agree with us, that want to build a future with us.

Now, when we refuse to contribute to the IMF and won't pay our U.N. dues, we may lose our vote in the U.N. because 20 Members of the Republican caucus in the House want us to change our policy on family planning. Now, for me, I think that's a very dangerous thing for our country. It's not in our interest because, you know, we're in danger of looking like we want to sanction everybody who disagrees with us and not help anybody who agrees with us.

Q. Should food always be off the table?

The President. Should what?

Q. Should food—foreign products always be excluded from sanctions?

The President. Well, I believe they should—I think our policy—they should be—they should always be excluded from sanctions. And then if something comes up in the future where a country seems, or a government seems so bad and they've done something so horrible that the Congress believes at that time, the President believes at that time it ought to be done, then they can do it. But I think it ought—the rule ought to be that we don't do it. And then if there's some compelling reason for an exception, it can be entertained when that exception arises. But that's why I'm supporting Senator Murray and others in their attempts to exempt food from the sanctions I imposed on India and Pakistan. I just think that on balance we're better off not doing that.

President's Trip to China

Q. Mr. President, clearly, China wants our backing to get into the WTO. Is there any chance that that could occur out of this summit?

The President. I don't know. I wouldn't raise hopes on that issue. I think they should be in the WTO. They're not only the most populous country in the world, but they have a large and they have a growing economy, and they've got a, you know, an economic future that makes their membership virtually essential for the WTO to do what it's suppose to do. You know, at some point, they'll be big enough and strong enough that if they're not in the WTO, it'll be almost—even though it would be hard to call it a world—a trade organization. They're not there yet, but they will be. So I would like to see them in as early as possible.

However, I think it's also important that they be in on commercially viable terms. We have obviously supported China's economic emergence. I mean, we buy far more of their products than any other country does. And we do it not only because we think it's in our interest, but because, I think, at least, it's good that the United States helps in that way, economically, China to emerge, to be able to feed all its people, to give more of its people a good life. I think that makes them more likely to be more open and more free and more constructive partners.

But I also believe that the Chinese, for all the work they've done in privatizing the economy and opening themselves to markets, still have too much access control and, from the point of view of American products and services, too much access denial.

So I'm not troubled by the fact that we buy a lot of Chinese products, and inevitably we're going to have a big increase this year because of the strength of our economy coupled with the weakness of Asian economies, but that would widen the trade deficit. But that widening trade deficit will sharpen the debate and will increase the focus on our market access.

Now, I would prefer and I want more market access and will argue for it on my trip. I don't want any special deals for the United States. I would prefer to see China work out an accession agreement to the WTO on commercial terms that would treat us just like everybody else and have more openness for everybody and then let the Americans compete with everyone else in the Chinese market and do as well as we can. But failing that, I will do my best to get more access for our products and services.

Nuclear Detargeting Agreement

Q. What would be the symbolism of a nuclear detargeting agreement between China and the United States? And is that something you think you might realistically be looking for?

The President. Well, I think it would be a good thing if we could get it. I can't say that we have it yet, but if we could get it, I think it would be a good thing. I think there are two things about it that would be good.

First of all, it plainly would be a confidence-building measure, as you pointed out. Secondly, it would actually reduce—it would, in fact, have the benefit of reducing the chances of an accidental launch. If you detarget, yes, you can always go retarget a missile. We all know that. But it takes some more time, and 20 minutes in a world of instantaneous communications is an eternity. So the possibility of avoiding a mistake, or

even backing down from a conflict, is dramatically increased with detargeting. It really makes a difference.

To go back to the confidence-building thing, the one reason I'd like to see it done is that, you know, we're going—we have to try to work our way out of the dilemma that India and Pakistan find themselves in. And it's obvious that China is a part of that. Think how much worse this would have been if China hadn't signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. What kind of pressure would the Chinese have been under to test if the Indians said, "Well, we really didn't do this because of Pakistan; we did it because of China"? But China had a principled reason not to test. They had signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

All these confidence-building measures are important because they increase the ability of China to play a constructive role in all the security issues in Asia, in particular, where we have a common interest.

Influence of Money in China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, Congresswomen Pelosi, in talking about human rights, keeps saying that there's one common denominator that explains U.S. policy toward China, and that's money, and that the Boeings and the Motorolas and the Westinghouses, through campaign contributions and other resources, have a disproportionate influence in being advocates for a warmer relationship with China. Given your concerns about campaign finance in general, is there some truth to the role that money is playing in the China policy?

The President. Well, in view of the votes of some of the Republican Congressmen in the last couple of weeks, she may have a weaker argument there. [*Laughter*] I don't know.

I think that the Members of the—that a lot of these companies tend to support Members of Congress who support more open trade with China and other places. But I don't think it's—you know, I think that in order for her argument to be right, the flipside would have to be true. That is, it would have to be true that if none of these companies contributed any money to any Republicans or Democrats, that every President would choose to isolate China and have no dealings with them, not give them most-favored-nation status, force them to make their way in the world without any kind of constructive commercial relations with the United States until they did exactly what we wanted on matters that we are concerned about in human rights and religious rights. And I just don't think that's true.

And I guess we're the best example. I'm sure that if you add it all up that these companies have given far more money to the Republicans than they have to the Democrats. And I'm doing this because I think it's the right thing for America. I don't think those companies should be disabled from making contributions just because they happen to do business in China, nor do I believe that most—I think contributions normally tend to flow to people who are doing things that these companies agree with, but that most of them do it on conviction and then different people on different sides support different groups. I don't think that they bought this policy, and I know they haven't bought the policy of this Government. I'm doing what I think is best for the American people and what I think is going to give our kids a safer, more prosperous world to live in in the 21st century, and one I think is most likely to lead to a freer, more open China.

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, considering the economic developments in Asia this week, specifically Japan, what will you say to the Chinese to convince them to stick to their pledge and not to devalue their currency?

The President. Well, first of all, that obviously has got to be their decision to make. But I think they deserve a lot of credit for resisting the temptation to devalue. Now, there will be a price for them in devaluation—you know it's not a free decision. But I think they deserve a lot of credit for trying to be a force for stability in Asia in this financial crisis.

I will urge them to adhere to their policy as long as they can and to work with me in trying to create conditions in Asia that restore growth, starting with Japan embracing others. Because that ultimately, the ultimate

guarantee against their devaluing their currency is the easing of the conditions which make them want to devalue, or at least force them to consider that option.

So I think the main thing—what I'm going to tell them is, "Look, I'm working hard with the Japanese; we've seen some progress this week; we've seen a clear, unambiguous commitment from the Japanese Government to undertake serious financial reform, and we're doing this—we're doing everything we know to do on this. And so, if you all hang in there with us, we think that there will come a time in the relatively near future when the conditions will begin to change, and you won't feel any pressure to devalue." I think that's the most important thing I could say to them, and I'm going to try to help create a different reality if I can.

President's Trip to China

Q. President Bush was in China in February of '89, he gave Li Peng a pair of cowboy boots. It turned out to be a somewhat unfortunate choice of gifts. Are you taking any presents to President Jiang Zemin on this trip?

The President. I am. As a matter of fact, I'm still—I sent out a note yesterday to explore two or three different options for gifts. But I don't want to give it away and destroy the secret. They're not cowboy boots. But if he gives me some, I won't be offended. I've got several pair and like them very much. [*Laughter*]

Q. We know President Jiang has a tendency to quote the Gettysburg Address. I think when he was with President Ramos of the Philippines they broke into "Love Me Tender." Do you expect something like that this time, as well?

The President. No, but I know all the verses to "Love Me Tender." [*Laughter*] I can hold my own if that's what the drill is. I can do that. He likes music, you know. He likes American music.

And he's a very interesting man, President Jiang. I remember when I first met him. You know, there were lots of articles at the time saying that he had been a mayor of Shanghai, and he was a very nice man but most people thought he was going to be a transitional figure, you know. And so I met him. We spent a couple of hours together, and it was not the warmest of meetings, you know, because we had all these differences between us and no personal chemistry to overcome it.

But after the meeting, I told all the people that were with me, I said, I believe he's in this for the long haul; I expect him to emerge. And he has. I mean, I could see he had been a man that had been underestimated by outsiders, that his sort of friendly and open demeanor, and his affinity for singing Western songs, and quoting from Lincoln and all that—that it had led people to preach false judgments about his capacity and his toughness.

Working With Congress

Q. Sir, if I might switch gears and ask a non-China question along the lines of what you said today in your comments about tobacco. The last two congressional sessions have been marked at the end by a fairly remarkable coming together of the two parties on issues like welfare reform a couple of years ago, and then the balanced budget this year, but judging by the strength of your criticism today of Congress, it sounds like your instinct is that this year could be a very good year. Is that true?

The President. It could be, but I wouldn't give up on the other. I mean, I think we still might—we might still see a lot of progress at the end. We've got, you know, we've got this Patients' Bill of Rights still out there; we've got a big child care initiative still out there; a lot of the education agenda is still out there; a lot of the environmental agenda's still out there.

And this tobacco settlement is still very much alive as far as I'm concerned. This thing—because this thing has been hashed over and debated and amended and worked up and down and sideways, people pretty much know what the parameters are now. So it's not inconceivable that we could still get an agreement on this before this is over.

So I'm still hoping that progress will triumph over partisanship at the end and that we'll see at the close, as the Congress—either now, before the August recess, or when they come back in September, and they don't want to stay very long, because they want to go home and campaign, and they've got all the appropriations bills and all this stuff

still to do. I'm hoping that a different atmosphere will take over, and we'll see just what happened before.

You're quite right; we had a lot of success in '95. We had a lot of success in '96. We had a lot success—not '95, we had success in '96 and '97—and whether we will in '98 or not, I don't know. We could repeat '95. I mean we really could get to the point where we were almost as bad off as we were in '95, or we could wind up with a replay of '96 and '97. And it's really going to be up to the Republican majority to decide. But, you know, my door is open, and they know what I want. I have been very clear, I think, about it. And I'll remain hopeful and upbeat about it.

Q. Will you be able to meet with Senator McCain before you leave for China? Do you have plans, are you trying to put——

The President. I certainly intend to talk to him. He did a good job. He did the best he could. And he deserves the thanks of the American people for this. I'm grateful to him for what he did. And it's not over. It's not over. And it won't be over for me until I get on the helicopter and ride off into the distance in 2½ years. So I'm going to keep working on this until the end.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House and was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m., June 20. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng of China; Jim Mann, journalist, Los Angeles Times; former President George Bush; and President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines. The journalists who conducted the interview were Tom Mattesky for CBS News, Bob Deans for Cox Newspapers, and David Westphal for McClatchy Newspapers. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Satellite Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the U.S. Conference of Mayors

June 19, 1998

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mayor Helmke, for all your wonderful introductions. I hope they didn't hurt you too much. This one won't cause you as much trouble as the last one did.

Seriously, I want to thank you for your fine leadership of the mayors this year. And Mayor Corradini, I look forward to working with you over the next year. I also want to say hello to your Advisory Board Chair, Mayor Webb, who joined me at the White House this week when we honored the Broncos together for winning the Super Bowl. And hello to your Executive Director, Tom Cochran, who does a great job for you day-in and day-out, here with us.

Let me also congratulate my good friend Jerry Abramson on his award for distinguished public service. Jerry, I'll always be grateful to you for a lot of things—for your friendship, your support, and especially for your leadership for the 1994 crime bill. All across America, neighborhoods are now safer because of the community police officers you helped to put on the street. You have really made a difference. I congratulate you and thank you again.

And I have some good news about one of your alumni, the former mayor of Laredo, Saul Ramirez. Last year at this meeting I announced his nomination for Assistant Secretary at HUD. Well, I'm giving him a promotion and nominating him now to be the agency's new Deputy Secretary. Congratulations to him and to you.

This is the third time we've been able to get together just this year, and I'm only sorry that I can't join you in person. I know that I'll be well represented by members of my Cabinet, including our great HUD Secretary, Andrew Cuomo. I send greetings also to you from Micky Ibarra who's with me here and who runs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and works hard for you.

His Deputy, Lynn Cutler, is stranded in an airport, but she'll soon be in Reno to represent the White House. And I'm proud that senior representatives from a total of 22 Federal agencies are attending your conference. You can tell from the breadth and depth from the team I've sent that my administration is more committed than ever to working with you to help our great cities thrive and reach their fullest potential.

Last week a number of you were able to join me here at the White House as I signed

a transportation bill that will help cities to build and modernize roads, bridges, and transit systems for the 21st century. It encourages mass transit, protects the environment, expands opportunities to disadvantaged businesses, and moves more people from welfare to work with transportation assistance. Thank you for helping me pass this law. In no small part because of the innovation, commitment, and hard work of America's mayors, our cities are revitalized, reenergized, and back in business. The second annual ''State of the Cities'' report, which Secretary Cuomo will share with you in much greater detail later, shows that unemployment, crime, poverty rates, all are down and falling in our central cities. New job growth and homeownership rates are up and climbing. Our downtowns are coming back as centers of tourism and entertainment.

The state of our cities is strong, and I thank you for leading this renaissance. America is enjoying the strongest economy in a generation, an era of sunlit prosperity and abundant opportunity, but we cannot afford to sit back and bask in the glow. Instead, we must make the most of this rare moment in our history and ensure that our economic renaissance touches every corner of every community.

As the ''State of the Cities'' report shows, cities still face critical opportunity gaps when it comes to jobs, to education, and to housing. If we're going to lift even more people out of poverty and bring more middle class families back to our cities, we must do everything we can to close these opportunity gaps. The way we will close our opportunity gaps is with the new vision of Government.

Over the past 5½ years, we've moved beyond the false debate between those who said government could solve all our problems and those who said government was the problem. Our new vision has been of government as partner with business, community groups, and individual citizens. It's been a vision of government as catalyst to bring the spark of private enterprise to our hardest-pressed neighborhoods. Whether it's putting more police officers on the streets to fight crime or offering tax incentives to lure businesses back to abandoned downtowns or providing small business loans to inner-city residents, our goal has been to empower people with the tools to make the most of their own lives.

Secretary Cuomo's new streamlined HUD, which David Osborne has called the most exciting reinvention in a decade, epitomizes this vision. Along with the Vice President, who chairs my Community Empowerment Board, I am committed to helping HUD and other Federal agencies work even better for you. And I ask you to support our expanded community empowerment agenda, that reflects our new approach to filling the opportunity gaps in, for our cities.

First, we can fill in the jobs gap and bring more businesses and credit to our central cities by launching a second round of empowerment zones, renewing community development financial institutions, and supporting HUD's Community Empowerment Fund. I ask you to tell Congress that America needs 50,000 new welfare-to-work housing vouchers to help hard-working people successfully move off welfare by moving closer to their jobs. And I hope you'll work with me to ensure all Americans get the child care assistance they need to be good parents and good workers.

Second, we can begin closing the education gap by helping school districts modernize and build 5,000 schools, hiring more teachers, reducing class sizes in the earliest grades, and creating education opportunity zones to help poorer school districts make the tough reforms they need to improve.

Third, we will bridge the housing gap by strengthening our efforts to fight housing discrimination, raising FHA loan limits, creating more section 8 housing vouchers, helping families with good rental histories turn rent checks into mortgage payments, and expanding the low income housing tax credit. This tax credit now has the support of a majority of Members in the House and the Senate. Let's call on Congress to pass the bill right away.

Finally, I ask for your help on another critical issue for cities: making sure that the 2000 census is as accurate as possible. As you know, census statistics help to determine how much Federal aid your communities receive for roads, WIC, Head Start, job training, and other services. Because of an undercount of inner-city residents in the last census, many

of you were shortchanged when it came to Federal funds. We must make sure it doesn't happen again.

The scientists agree. Statistical sampling is the most accurate and most cost-effective way to get a full and fair count of our people in the year 2000. Let's work together to ensure that we use this method in the next census. All these are tough challenges, but I know that if we work together, we can meet them.

Last year in San Francisco, we set ourselves a challenge of helping 1,000 police officers buy and move into homes in the communities they serve. Well, I'm proud to announce that the Officer Next Door program has met the challenge. Later today, Secretary Cuomo will present the program's 1,000th key to Deputy Mark Burgess, a key that will unlock the door to his new home in Salt Lake City. With citizens like Deputy Burgess who are taking active stakes in our community, and with your continued leadership, I know the best is yet to come for America's cities.

Throughout our history, our cities have always been the face America shows the world. Visitors have gotten their first taste of America—our energy, ingenuity, and promise—through our great cities. They've always been the gateway to opportunity for millions of Americans, places where new immigrants have worked hard, built thriving communities, and achieved the American dream. We can, and we will, make sure that dream thrives in our cities well into the 21st century.

Thank you for all you do, and thank you for working with me.

Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne. Thank you, Mr. President. I understand that you have time for a few questions from some of the mayors. I had a few folks I know that wanted to ask you questions.

Millennium Activities

Mayor Thomas Menino of Boston. Mr. President, the millennium is up in 2 years. A lot of cities are preparing for the millennium as we go forward. What is your vision? What do you think that this country should be doing with the new millennium when it comes in the year 2000?

President Clinton. Tom, first let me say that I'm very sorry about the floods in Boston. I know our FEMA people are there, and I hope they will all work out of it and dry out of it together.

Let me say to all of you, I think every mayor in America should be heavily involved in celebrating the millennium. And I hope that as a group you will be in close touch with Ellen Lovell, who is running this project for the First Lady and for me, so that we can coordinate what we're doing. I think our vision should be the one that Hillary has articulated: We should honor the past and imagine the future. That means to me that, at a minimum, every city should find someplace in the city important to your city's history and heritage and make sure that you have restored it or protected it or enhanced it for all future generations.

Second, I think every city should identify some great opportunity that you believe is there for your people in the new century, and elevate that opportunity, highlight it, literally enshrine it as a mission of your city for the future.

And thirdly, of course, I think there should be a great celebration on New Year's Eve 1999/2000, that all the cities in the country participate in, that is tied in with a national celebration and that involves as many Americans as humanly possible.

Education Initiatives

Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago. Mr. President, where are we on achieving your education goals, whether it's smaller classrooms or school construction or after-school programs? How can we as an organization be more helpful to you?

President Clinton. Well, you can do a lot. Let me deal with each of them in turn.

The only part of the education program that is imperiled by the present setback to the tobacco bill is the funds that we wanted to give the States which would enable them to distribute them to communities to hire the teachers necessary to reduce class size to an average of 18 in the first 3 grades.

The school construction initiative, which would allow us to build or repair 5,000 schools, is still very much alive; it's in my budget; the Congress can approve it. There is some bipartisan support for it. And so I

think if the mayors, particularly the Republicans and the Democrats together, could really press this, then when we get down to the appropriations in the month of July and in the month of September, we've got a good chance to get the construction money out. And that would make a huge difference, not only in repairing a lot of older schools that need to be repaired but in providing the needed classroom space, without which we can't have the smaller class sizes.

On the after-school funds, we have funds in both the Justice Department budget and in the Education Department budget; it's just going to be a question of fighting for those things and making sure that they're priorities in the Congress, just as they are priorities for you and for me.

And again, there shouldn't be any politics in this. The evidence is so overwhelming—as you know, in Chicago, where you have tens of thousands of kids eating three meals a day in the schools, that this increases learning and lowers juvenile crime—that I would think that the cities that have had good experiences with these programs could take the lead.

But again I say that if the Republican and Democratic mayors could do this together and say, this is a grassroots American issue, this has nothing to do with partisan politics, that this part of the President's budget should prevail, then I think we have a good chance to win.

So I'd say on two out of three we're in good shape. Whether the States get some more money that then can be used for aid to education to hire those extra teachers depends on whether we can get the tobacco legislation back on track. I'm still hopeful that we can. Anything you can do to encourage Congress not on this point, but on the larger point, to pass legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco and pass something comprehensive that will have credibility in the public health community, that we know will work, will make us closer to that goal as well.

Violence in Schools

Mayor Lee R. Clancey of Cedar Rapids. Mr. President, I have a question that's a side issue related to education concerns. In the next couple of weeks, I'm going to be hosting a meeting with city and school officials on the issue of school violence and how we can prevent it, how we can cope with it, what we can do to address it. And I know it's an issue that concerns many of us in our cities. What is being done at the Federal level, and do you have any suggestions for us to take back to our community?

President Clinton. Well, let me first of all, Mayor, say that I applaud you for doing this, all of you, and I applaud your leadership in doing it. I think the first thing I would say is, that in the last couple of years when we've had all these horrible instances of school violence and killing in our schools, we should not lose sight of the fact that, ironically, that has occurred when we've finally seen the first drop in juvenile crime in many, many years.

So I think it's important to keep pushing the larger issue of the after-school funds and the other kinds of programs that we've seen work so well in Boston and elsewhere to drive juvenile crime down.

Then I think we have to say, no matter how low we get juvenile crime, we're going to be at risk of these violent instances in schools because there will always be a small number of children who will be profoundly disturbed, where some incident at home or at school can set them off, and they live in a culture where the access to guns is too easy and where they're too exposed from their earliest years to repeated barrages of almost casual violence in the media that they see. So, too many children become numb to violence and, I think, take guns in their hands and pull the triggers, often without really feeling and knowing the consequences.

Now, there are, I believe, two things that we can do at the Federal level that we're working on. First, as I said when I was in Springfield, Oregon, I've asked the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to prepare a manual to train teachers, parents, and hopefully other students as well, on early warning signs of children in trouble, so that we'll be better at picking this up.

In every case where we've had a killing over the last year, there have been some indication that there was something wrong with the young person involved, that something

has happened, or the young person said something or friends knew something, that did not lead to preemptive action. So I think we need to really focus on this prevention.

Secondly, we're going to be working on what can be done to get some more police officers out there in and around the schools, just as we have on the streets.

Thirdly, there is a big debate going on in Springfield, Oregon, and in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and I'm sure in all the other communities about what can be done if children are found in trouble to try to do something before they go over the edge.

The two Senators from Oregon have introduced legislation which would require of any child who was sent home from school because he or she had a gun in school—and there were 6,100 children who had guns in schools and had the guns taken away and were sent home because of our zero tolerance for guns in schools just last year. The Senators think that—their legislation, I think, calls for some sort of mandatory 72-hour examination period, including a psychiatric exam.

Whether this is everything that should be done, exactly what should be done or not is something we're going to debate up here. But it's not too soon for every mayor and every school leader in the country to determine what should be done if a case occurs like the case in Springfield, Oregon, where the young man who is now charged with all these killings was sent home the day before with a gun in the school.

Now, presently that's about all that happens, because most cities and most school districts don't have a system for dealing with that. I think you should make sure that your schools do have a system. And maybe not just when a person is found with a gun and sent home, but when threats are made or when people say they're going to do something—maybe unspecific threats but give evidence of that. We need some sort of intervention that can get these kids analyzed and then get them quickly to some sort of comprehensive program if necessary, to try to give them the help they need, and to take them out of the pressure-cooker situation for a couple of days in the hope that this can be avoided.

I believe that we can do a lot more on the prevention front. And we now know just looking at the facts of all these cases that there were significant early warnings in at least several of them that might have permitted, with the right kind of intervention, circumstances to develop that would have avoided the tragedies.

So that's what I would ask you to look at. Everybody should know: What does your school district do with a child that make a threat? What does your school district do with a child that has a gun? Does the school have a system where they encourage other kids to talk to responsible adults if they hear some child making a threat? Most of these children, if they could just get 4 or 5 or 6 years down the road would look back in horror that they ever entertained such a thought—if we can avoid it happening in the first place.

So I think we can do better. We're determined to do our part. And after you have your meeting, if the mayors and the others from whom you hear have any other ideas, for goodness sakes, give them to us. This is something we've got to do more on.

Mayor Helmke. I want to thank you, Mr. President. I know your time is short, but we appreciate you taking the time this afternoon to talk to us and taking the time again this past year. You've worked collaboratively with us, consistently with us. We know you're concerned about the city issues and you're always willing to listen to us and we thank you for that.

In particular, I wanted to thank you for working closely with us this last year while I've been President of the mayors' group. It's been an experience, and we appreciate all of your efforts this past year. And you've outlined a number of things that we need to continue to work with in the future, and we plan to do that with you, too.

So again, thank you very much. We thank you or all of your efforts and for your staff members and Cabinet officers that are here, too. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you all, and I'll turn it over to Secretary Cuomo and the rest of our crowd. Have a great meeting.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 5:20 p.m. from Room 459 in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Paul Helmke of Fort Wayne, IN, conference president, Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT, conference vice president, and J. Thomas Cochran, executive director, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Mayor Jerry E. Abramson of Louisville, KY; and David Osborne, president, Public Strategies Group, Inc. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

June 19, 1998

I am very pleased that our efforts to reform the IRS took a major step forward today with a bipartisan agreement reconciling the House and Senate legislation. I have worked very hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer and more responsive to their needs. Enactment of this compromise reform will build on our initiative to give Americans a modern, customer-friendly IRS.

Our new IRS Commissioner, Charles Rossotti, has brought forceful leadership and the best management techniques from the private sector to the agency. This bipartisan compromise will give him the tools he needs to succeed, while expanding taxpayer rights. It will allow the IRS to bring in talent and expertise from the private sector, strengthen the Taxpayer Advocate's office, and expand the convenient and popular practice of filing tax returns electronically and over the phone. We are pleased that Congress incorporated the Commissioner's sweeping reorganization of the IRS along customer service lines and addressed our concerns about earlier versions of this reform by correcting provisions that would have inadvertently allowed noncompliant taxpayers to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. The Congress also made sure that the Treasury Secretary and the IRS Commissioner will serve on the board overseeing the IRS.

Under the leadership of the Vice President and Secretary Rubin, we have made great strides in our efforts to revamp customer service at the IRS. We have expanded phone and office hours, created popular new problem-solving days, and launched independent citizen advocacy panels. We cannot solve every problem at the IRS at once, but we are committed to correcting problems when they arise, and this bill will help us do that. I urge Congress to send me this compromise legislation quickly, but to make sure that it is fully and properly funded.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act

June 19, 1998

I was very pleased to sign today S. 1244, the Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act. This bill protects the religious and charitable contributions made by people who later declare bankruptcy.

As Americans, we value the important role religious and charitable institutions play in the daily life of this Nation. Indeed, we know that fiscal responsibility for these institutions is fundamental to their efforts to meet the spiritual, social and other concerns of our Nation. It is a great loss to all of our citizens for creditors to recoup their losses in bankruptcy cases from donations made in good faith by our citizens to their churches and charitable institutions.

As Americans we also know that giving, whether to one's church, temple, mosque, or other house of worship or to any charitable organization, fosters and enriches our sense of community. We need to encourage, not discourage, that sense of community. The Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act does just that.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue. S. 1244, approved June 19, was assigned Public Law No. 105–183.

Statement on Handgun Control Legislation

June 19, 1998

The Justice Department's report on background checks is further proof that the Brady

Law is working. Since its passage, law enforcement officials have stopped hundreds of thousands of felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns every year. By keeping guns out of the hands of criminals—and putting more police in our communities—we have helped cut the crime rate to its lowest point in a generation. We must now extend the Brady Law's provisions to violent juveniles and bar them from owning guns for life. I call on Congress once again to pass this needed, commonsense legislation.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m., June 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

June 20, 1998

Good morning. Tomorrow is Father's Day, the day we pay tribute to the irreplaceable role fathers play throughout our children's lives. There is no greater responsibility and no greater reward than raising a child. And for me, no job, not even the Presidency, has been more important.

I want to talk to you today about what we're doing to protect our fathers, our grandfathers, and all men from one of the greatest health threats they face: prostate cancer. This year nearly 200,000 people will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and 40,000 will die from it. In fact, every year, as many men die from prostate cancer as women die from breast cancer.

For far too long, too little was known about prostate cancer. Too little was said about it out of embarrassment and fear. Because of this, too little was done about it as precious research dollars were spent on other problems.

For 5 years now, we've worked hard to increase public awareness about prostate cancer and to find a cure. Since I first took office, we have increased funding for prostate cancer research at the National Institutes of Health by 100 percent. This year alone we're funding more than 450 critically important research projects on prostate cancer, ranging from prevention to detection to treatment. Last year scientists at the Human Genome Project and Johns Hopkins University located the first gene known to predispose men to prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is the first disease being studied by the Cancer Genome Anatomy Project, a very exciting new program we recently launched at the National Cancer Institute. We are closing in on this silent killer.

But as far as we've come, we know many questions about prostate cancer remain unanswered. We do not fully understand the role of environmental and dietary factors in prostate cancer. We do not fully understand why the disease progresses at such varying rates in different men. We do not yet know why prostate cancer disproportionately affects African-American men. And we do not yet know how to eliminate the risks of treatment for prostate cancer that discourage too many men from seeing their doctors.

The only way we will ever answer these questions and the only way we will ever beat prostate cancer is by continuing to invest in research. Today I am pleased to announce that the Department of Defense is awarding $60 million in grants to some of the most promising research projects in the country. These grants will fund innovative new studies to determine the causes of prostate cancer, to develop new methods of prevention and detection, and most of all, to discover groundbreaking new treatments that will save lives.

These grants are an important step in our fight against prostate cancer. But we must press on. This year, as part of the historic legislation to protect our children from tobacco, I proposed to make the largest commitment in history to funding cutting-edge cancer research, a two-thirds increase to the National Cancer Institute. My proposal would also allow people on Medicare to participate in cancer clinical trials. This is especially important for prostate cancer, which overwhelmingly affects men over 65. The more older men are able to participate in these trials, the more we will learn about the disease and the faster we'll be able to find a cure.

But 3 days ago a Republican minority in the Senate bowed to enormous pressure by the tobacco industry and voted to kill this

legislation. They voted against protecting our children from tobacco, against our families, and they voted against increased cancer research and against saving lives. The American people shouldn't stand for it, and I'll keep fighting to reverse it.

This Father's Day, as we celebrate how much our fathers mean to their children, we should also renew our commitment as fathers, as parents, and as Americans to our families by insisting that Congress join together in passing comprehensive tobacco legislation to protect our children, to give us the funds for cancer research, and give us the chance to save more fathers and to strengthen our Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Military Forces for Stabilization of the Balkan Peace Process

June 19, 1998

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

In my last 6-month report to the Congress I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

We continue to work in concert with others in the international community to encourage the parties to fulfill their commitments under the Dayton Peace Agreement and to build on the gains achieved over the last 2 years. It remains in the U.S. national interest to help bring peace to Bosnia, both for humanitarian reasons and to halt the dangers the fighting in Bosnia represented to security and stability in Europe generally. Through American leadership and in conjunction with our NATO allies and other countries, we have seen increasingly rapid progress toward sustainable peace in Bosnia. We have helped foster more cooperative pro-Dayton leadership in Bosnia-Herzegovina, resulting in much improved performance by the parties in fulfilling their responsibilities to implement the Dayton Peace Agreement.

The United Nations Security Council authorized member states to establish the follow-on force in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1088 of December 12, 1996. On June 15, 1998, the Security Council extended the authorization for the SFOR for an additional period terminating June 21, 1999. The mission of SFOR is to deter resumption of hostilities and stabilize the security environment to facilitate the civilian implementation process.

The SFOR has successfully deterred the resumption of hostilities by patrolling the Zone of Separation, inspecting and monitoring heavy weapons cantonment sites, enhancing and supervising Entity Armed Forces (EAF) demining work, and, within existing authorities and capabilities, providing support to international agencies.

The primary way SFOR supports the civilian implementation effort is by contributing to a secure environment. The SFOR works closely with the International Police Task Force (IPTF), which was established on December 21, 1995, under Security Council Resolution 1035. With SFOR support, the IPTF has successfully created indigenous public security capabilities by reforming and training the local police. Both the SFOR and the IPTF, as a result, enhance public security in ways that promote civil implementation of the Peace Agreement. This collective approach works to make the implementation process progressively more self-sustaining without exceeding the SFOR's current level of intensity and involvement.

By contributing to a secure environment, the SFOR has fostered greater progress by civilian implementers, including helping to restore road, rail, and air transportation links, reforming racist and nondemocratic media, and supporting international preparations for

supervision of the national elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina in September 1998. In addition, the SFOR has contributed to efforts to bring 31 persons indicted for war crimes into custody in The Hague.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia is approximately 7,800—roughly one-third of the number of U.S. troops deployed with IFOR at the peak of its strength. The U.S. forces participating in SFOR include U.S. Army forces that were stationed in Germany and the United States, as well as special operations forces, airfield operations support forces, air forces, and reserve component personnel. An amphibious force under U.S. control is normally available as a strategic reserve in the Mediterranean Sea, and a carrier battle group remains available to provide support for air operations.

All NATO nations and 20 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided troops or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. troops are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 3,000 U.S. troops are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. Since December 1997, U.S. forces have sustained no fatalities.

A U.S. Army contingent remains deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as part of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). This U.N. peacekeeping force, which includes some 350 U.S. soldiers, observes and monitors conditions along the borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania. The UNPREDEP continues to play a key role in preventing the spillover of ethnic conflict from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) into FYROM and the region. In doing so, it has helped FYROM become a bulwark against the southward spread of the conflict in the FRY. Several U.S. Army helicopters are also deployed to provide support to U.S. forces and may support UNPREDEP as required on a case-by-case basis. The Security Council voted December 4, 1997, to authorize an extension of the UNPREDEP mandate through August 31, 1998. We are currently exploring options regarding the extension of UNPREDEP's mandate in light of the growing violence and instability in Kosovo.

A small contingent of U.S. military personnel also served in Croatia in direct support of the Transitional Administrator of the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slovenia (UNTAES). These personnel were redeployed when the UNTAES mandate expired on January 15, 1998; a follow-on U.N. civilian police operation continues in the region.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22.

Memorandum on the Purchase of Airline Tickets to Lebanon

June 19, 1998

Presidential Determination No. 98–32

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Purchase of Airline Tickets to Lebanon

By virtue of the authority vested in me by 49 U.S.C. 40106(b), I hereby determine that the prohibition of transportation services to Lebanon established by Presidential Determination 85–14 of July 1, 1985, as amended by Presidential Determination 92–41 of August 17, 1992, is hereby further amended to permit U.S. air carriers to engage in foreign

air transportation, solely through interline arrangements, of passengers, including U.S. and non-U.S. citizens, and their accompanying baggage, to and from Lebanon and to permit U.S. and foreign air carriers to sell in the United States air transportation services for passengers, including U.S. and non-U.S. citizens, to and from Lebanon.

All other prohibitions set forth in the above-referenced Presidential Determinations, including the prohibition on direct operations to Lebanon by U.S. air carriers, remain in effect.

Presidential Determination 95–42 is hereby revoked. You are directed to implement this determination immediately and to revoke effective immediately any regulations inconsistent herewith.

You are further directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22.

Remarks on Departure for Nashville, Tennessee, and an Exchange With Reporters

June 22, 1998

Tobacco

The President. Good morning. I'm about to leave for Vice President Gore's Family Re-Union Conference in Nashville, something that he and Mrs. Gore have done now for many years, to discuss central concerns of America's families. And since we have been here in the White House, we've often used the conference as a springboard for new initiatives to strengthen our families and move our country forward.

Today we're going to be talking about health concerns of American families. Of course, one of the biggest health concerns is youth smoking, something we've been discussing a lot around here lately. We all now know that 3,000 young people start smoking every day, and that 1,000 will die earlier because of it, even though it's illegal in every State to sell cigarettes to young people.

That is why 3 years ago, through the Food and Drug Administration, my administration began to act to end the practice of tobacco companies marketing cigarettes to children and why for the past year we've been working so hard to forge an honorable and bipartisan compromise to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco.

A majority of the Senate now stands ready to join us, but last week the Republican leadership placed partisan politics and tobacco companies above our families. Their vote was not just pro-tobacco lobby; it was anti-family. The bipartisan bill they blocked would not only protect families from tobacco advertising aimed at children; it would protect children from drugs, give low and middle income families a tax cut by redressing the marriage penalty, and make substantial new investments in medical research, especially in cancer research.

The congressional leadership seems willing to walk away from its obligation to our children, but this issue is too important to walk away. We'll continue to move forward on every possible front to protect children.

By the end of year, the FDA's operation to enforce its ban on tobacco sales to minors will be active in nearly every State in America. And while we wait for Congress to heed the call of America's families, I'm instructing the Department of Health and Human Services to produce the first-ever annual survey on the brands of cigarettes teenagers smoke and which companies are most responsible for the problem. Parents, quite simply, have a right to know. Public health officials can also use this information to reduce youth smoking.

The tobacco companies' automatic and angry dismissal of this new survey shows their continued disregards for their children's health and parents' concerns. We have a right to know. For years and years and years, they had information that proved tobacco was addictive and that demonstrated they were marketing to children, and they didn't think we had a right to know that either. I believe this is very helpful information, and we'll do our best to get good, accurate, honest data.

Once this information becomes public, companies will then no longer be able to evade accountability, and neither will Congress. From now on, the new data will help

to hold tobacco companies accountable for targeting children.

Again, I urge Congress to pass bipartisan comprehensive legislation rather than a watered-down bill written by the tobacco lobby. The leadership must put families' interests above big tobacco's interests. America's children deserve that, and I'll continue to do everything I can to ensure that they get it.

Thank you.

Q. Isn't it a lost cause, Mr. President?

The President. No.

Q. Mr. President, absent any penalties, what confidence do you have that just finger pointing at the tobacco companies will have any impact on teen smoking?

The President. I think if you have an annual survey—first of all, I think it will be easier to get penalties. But if you have an annual survey that shows a substantial differential in brand preference among young people, then it will clearly demonstrate that there is something in the nature of the advertising that has something to do with this.

I mean, we basically know that the three elements involved here are advertising and access and then the general culture, so I believe that—I think that advertising is very important. If there is no advertising—excuse me, and price, the fourth thing is price. And so if advertising can be isolated and we can see that in brand preference, I think it will help us quite a lot to forge some good policies.

But you've got to understand, I still think we can get legislation, and I'm not at all ready to give up on it. I'm going to keep fighting for it. A majority wants it. The leadership of the Republican Party in Congress does not want it—desperately doesn't want it. And the tobacco companies don't want it. But the American people do.

And all of the evidence that I've seen shows that the more people know about what's in the bill, as opposed to their $40-million characterization of it, the more their support goes up. So we need to keep fighting, and we intend to continue to do that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 a.m. outside the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks to the Family Re-Union VII Conference in Nashville, Tennessee

June 22, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, Tipper, to all the leaders of the conference, Surgeon General Satcher, Governor McWherter, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, let me say that I look forward to coming here every year so much. I always learn something, and I always see people who are full of energy and idealism and a sense of purpose who remind me of what, at bottom, my efforts as President should be all about. So I always get a lot more out of being here than I can possibly give back, and I thank you for that.

All these issues have been very important to our family for a long time. I grew up in a family where my mother was a nurse and where she served people before Medicare and Medicaid. I never will forget one time when a fruit picker that she had put to sleep for surgery brought us four bushels of peaches. I was really disappointed when third-party reimbursement came in. [*Laughter*] I thought the previous system was far superior. [*Laughter*]

When Hillary and I met, she was taking an extra year in law school to work at the Yale University Hospital in the Child Studies Center to learn more about children and health and the law and how they interfaced. And when we went home to Arkansas, she started the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children, a long time before she ever wrote her now famous book, "It Takes a Village."

The Vice President and Mrs. Gore have plainly been the most influential, in a profoundly positive sense, family ever to occupy their present position. Whether it was in mental health or the V-chip in television ratings or telecommunications policy or technology policy or environmental policy or reinventing Government or our relations with Russia and South Africa and a whole raft of other places, history will record both the Vice President and Mrs. Gore as an enormous force for good in America. And I am very grateful to them.

This family conference is one of their most remarkable achievements. And as they said,

it predates by a year our partnership and what happened since 1993. But I will always be very grateful to them for this as well.

I'd like to begin with just a remark or two about the tobacco issue, since it's been raised and it was a big part of the movies that we saw. We know that it's the number one public health problem children face in America. We know that more people die every year from tobacco-related illnesses than from murders and fires and accidents and cancer—not cancer but AIDS—and many other conditions combined. We know that 3,000 children start to smoke every day even though it's illegal to sell cigarettes to kids in every State in the country, and 1,000 die early because of it. We know all these things.

We also know that in order to reduce teen smoking, you have to do something about price; you have to do something about access; you have to do something about marketing, both direct marketing, I would argue, by the tobacco companies and their indirect marketing by placing cigarettes strategically in movies, as we saw in this very compelling set of film clips. Now, we know all that.

And what I had hoped was a remarkable and surprising example of bipartisanship in spite of enormous political pressure to the contrary, the United States Senate voted out of committee 19 to one, almost unanimously, a bill that would raise the price of cigarettes, stop advertising, restrict access, put penalties on companies that violated the requirements, and use the money for medical research—especially cancer research—for reimbursements to the States for the health costs related to smoking they had incurred, which money the States would use on health care, child care, and education. And for good measure, we accepted amendments sponsored by Republicans in the Senate to spend some of the money fighting drug usage among our children and to give a tax cut to low and moderate income working families to offset the so-called marriage penalty.

Then the bill came to a vote in the Senate. The American people are now learning that, except for the budget, a minority in the Senate can require every bill to pass with 60 votes, not 51. We had 57 votes to pass that bill, but 43 Senators followed the bidding of the Republican leadership and the tobacco companies, and at least temporarily derailed that bill. It was a brazen act of putting politics over people and partisanship over progress.

I say this to you so that you understand the importance of gatherings like this in grassroots networks. No one doubts that this came about in part because of an unanswered $40-million advertising campaign by the tobacco companies which could not be matched by the cancer society, the heart association, the lung association, or most of you in this room. What you should know is, I'll bet my bottom dollar the night the news of the bill dying broke on the evening news, public opinion switched back to our side, just like it always will as long as people know the facts of what's in the bill and who's behind the opposition to it.

So I say to you this is the intersection of politics, public health, and family. And the cutting-edge issues up there right now are this bill and the Patients' Bill of Rights, about which the First Lady spoke. I don't think you should let this Congress go home, if you can stop it, without acting on these measures and taking care of our families and our future.

Let me say, on a more positive note, this time in our history—on the edge of a new century, in a new millennium, with our economy strong, many of our social problems declining, a great deal of self-confidence in the country—is a real time of decision for us. Usually free societies at good times like this take longer summer vacations, spend more time in the sun. That may be good, at least the vacation part; wear your sunscreen if you do the other. [*Laughter*] Dr. Satcher will send me a gold star. [*Laughter*] Or you can say, hey, we can do things now we couldn't do in normal times. We have confidence. We have emotional space. We have the opportunity to dream dreams about the future. We can take on the big challenges of the country. I think that's what we ought to be doing, because we know that no set of circumstances stays the same forever, and because we know that things are really changing fast, and because we need to be looking to the future.

What are these big challenges? Well, a couple related directly to the concerns of the conference: we need to make sure that Social Security and Medicare will be reformed so that they can accommodate the baby boom

generation without bankrupting our children and our grandchildren, and we shouldn't be spending the surplus that finally is about to emerge after three decades of deficit spending. We shouldn't be squandering that surplus until we have saved Social Security and we know what we're going to do with Medicare.

We have to figure out how to grow the economy and do more to preserve the environment, not just to avoid making it worse. We've got to actually recover many of our essential environmental things. And that's a health care issue.

We're here at Vanderbilt—we've got the finest system of higher education in the world. We have to develop the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, but we still have double-digit unemployment in some urban neighborhoods, on some Native American reservations, and in some poor rural communities. We have to bring the spark of enterprise to every place in America to prove that what we're doing really works. These are the things that we have to do. And we have to prove that we can all get along together across all the racial and religious and other lines that divide us, because in the world today, which is supposed to be so modern and so wonderfully revolutionized by the Internet, old-fashioned racial and religious and ethnic hatred seems to be dominating a lot of the troubles in the world. If we want to do good beyond our borders, we have to be good at home.

But on that list should be health care. Why? Because we have the finest health care in the world, but we still can't figure out how to give everybody access to it in a quality, affordable way. And in some form or fashion, every family in America just about, sooner or later, runs up against that fact.

Shirley MacLaine was in there griping about her daughter getting the shot on the movie, you know? Now, why do you suppose—nevermind the movie—why do you suppose something like that would happen in real life? Could it have something to do with the fact that not just HMO's, but the Government, tried to take steps to stop medical expenses from going up at 3 times the rate of inflation but, like everything else, if you overdo it, and the hospitals have to cut down on service personnel, that people will be late getting their pain shots? I mean, we have to come to grips with the fact that we still are alone among all the advanced societies in the world in not figuring out how to deal with this issue.

And I personally think we also—we ought to be honest—you know, it's easy to—we could all get laughs with HMO jokes, but the truth is there was a reason for managed care, and that is that it was unsustainable for the United States, with the smallest percentage of its people with health insurance of any advanced country, to keep spending a higher and higher percentage of its income and increasing that expenditure at 3 times the rate of inflation. Pretty soon it would have consumed everything else. That was an unsustainable situation.

And a lot of good has come out of better management. I don't think anyone would deny that. The problem is, if that kind—if techniques like that are not anchored to fundamental bedrock principles, then in the end, the process overcomes the substance. And you have the kind of abuses and frustrations that have been talked about. That's why the Patients' Bill of Rights is important.

Now, the second thing I want to say is, we have to figure out how to do a better job of turning laws into reality. One of the things—the Vice President, I hope, will get his just desserts—we may have to wait for 20 years of history books to be written—but the work that we have done in reinventing Government is not sexy; it doesn't rate the headlines every day; people don't scream and yell when you mention the phrase; it doesn't sort of ring on the tip of the tongue. But we've got the smallest Government we've had in 35 years, and it's doing more and doing it better than we were doing before in our core important missions.

And we've gotten rid of hundreds of programs and thousands and thousands of pages of regulation, but the Government, on balance, is performing better. And it's because of our commitment to change the way things work. The biggest challenge we've got right now is to fulfill the promise we made to the American people when we persuaded the

Congress to put in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 sufficient funds, the biggest increase in Medicare funding since 1965, to provide health insurance to at least 5 million more children. There are 10 million or more children in America without any health insurance.

We had—the latest numbers indicate that 4½ million of those kids are actually eligible for Medicaid. Now, most of you here know that when we passed this program we provided for the establishment, State-by-State, of things that are called CHIPS, child health insurance programs, to provide health insurance mostly to the children of lower and moderate income working families that don't have health insurance at work.

But if you want to get the maximum number of people insured for the money that's been allocated, obviously the first thing we need to do is to sign every child up for Medicaid who's eligible for it. And again, we're talking, most of these children live in lower income working families. They've been rendered eligible by action of the Federal Government or by action of the State legislature in Tennessee and the other 49 States in our Union.

Recent studies have shown that uninsured children are more likely to be sick as newborns, less likely to be immunized, less likely to receive treatment for every recurring illnesses like ear infections or asthma, which without treatment can have lifelong adverse consequences and ultimately impose greater cost on the health care system as they undermine the quality of life.

Now, we're working with the States to do more, but I want the Federal Government to do more as well. Four months ago I asked eight Federal agencies to find new ways to help provide health care for kids. Today, at the end of this panel, I will sign an executive memorandum which directs those agencies to implement more than 150 separate initiatives, to involve hundreds of thousands of people getting information that they can use to enroll people in schools, in child care centers and elsewhere—involve partnerships with job centers and Head Start programs.

This is what reinventing Government is all about. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that these initiatives are, quote, ''representing the best of creative government and absolutely critical to achieving our common goal of providing health insurance for all eligible children.'' So that's what we're going to try to do coming out of this conference, to do our part.

Let me again say that those of you who are here, if you believe that families are at the center of every society, if you believe they are the bedrock of our present and the hope of our future, if you think the most important job of any parent is raising a successful child, then surely—surely—we have to deal with the health care challenges, all of which have been discussed: caring for our parents and grandparents, caring for our children. Surely we have to provide our families with tools to do that if we expect America to be what it ought to be in the new century. We'll do our part, and I'm proud of you for doing yours.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in Langford Auditorium at Vanderbilt University during Family Re-Union VII: Families and Health. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Ned Ray McWherter of Tennessee; and actress Shirley MacLaine. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Gore, Tipper Gore, and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Excerpt of Remarks During the Family Re-Union VII Conference in Nashville

June 22, 1998

The President. Is there any kind of national organization of people like you, who are working for family-centered care everywhere and advocating it?

Julie Moretz. There is. There actually is—the Institute for Family-Centered Care, as matter of fact. And there are also a lot of family support programs, such as Parent To Parent, because, as anyone knows, parents need to be around other parents who have gone through similar situations. And there is a lot of support out there and I do encourage parents who have been through situations like this to get involved. And that is one way parents can get involved.

The President. Don't you believe that recovery rates are better when there's family involvement when the people are in the hospital, whether it's children or parents or siblings?

Ms. Moretz. There is no question about it. Daniel has had at least 47 doctors—that I can count—47 doctors come in and come out of his room at some given point over 7 years. And I have to recognize that we—David and I—we are the constant, and his brother and sister, we are the constant in his life, and we are the ones that can help to promote and facilitate his health care. Yes—and I have to say that his health care has been extremely wonderful. Obviously, he wouldn't be here today if it wasn't. So, thank goodness, and we are very proud of the health care that he has received.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. If I could just reinforce something Tony said—and I thank you for everything you said—you may hear this in the debate in the Congress when this comes up this year. There may be some who really don't want this to pass who say, ''Well, look, a lot of companies are embracing these principles anyway.'' If a company is willing to say all the things Tony said, if you've got to go to an emergency room, you can go; if you need a specialist, you can have it. The doctors can't be gagged; they can recommend whatever good care is. If you have a problem with your plan, you can have an appeal. If you have all those things, if he does that, why should somebody else be able to put him at a financial disadvantage in whether his plan can make money as compared to their plan by simply not following the same thing?

It would be even—it's even more unfair to the good HMO's and the good managed-care operations in this country not to have this legislation, because if they go out and do the right thing, then other people who are unscrupulous can come in and try to undercut them by appearing to offer the same service at a lower cost. So he just made a terrific argument for why this bill ought to pass this year—by doing the right thing and because he's doing the right thing.

I thank you very much.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. I would just like to thank you for what you said. I hope that this order that I'm signing today will deal with that by essentially telling all the Government agencies that, whenever possible, they have to work through people like you to do the outreach—because—well, this weekend Hillary and I spent some time with some friends of ours, and one of them commented that he'd just been to a high school graduation in northern Virginia where it was announced that the graduates, just a few hundred kids, came from 70 different national and ethnic groups. That's just one high school. We have so many communities—the Asian communities, alone, if you think—from Southeast Asia and all the different language groups, that a lot of these people are, as you pointed out, two-thirds or more, are working people; many of them, their first language is not English, and if there is not some affirmative attempt to reach them through someone they know and trust, their children will not get on this program. I don't care how many flyers we put out or PSA's we do or anything else.

This is very valuable, what you've said, and I think we need to work a little harder on it. But I thank you for being here.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. First of all, I'd like to thank you for the work you do. And I'd also like to thank Mrs. Gore for being our administration's leading person on mental health issues. If it hadn't been for her, we wouldn't have had a strong mental health component in the child health insurance program or the mental health parity legislation. And I'm very grateful for that.

I'd like to ask a question which may be a little unfair, because I know you haven't been prepared for it exactly, but I'm sure you've thought about it. I just got back from a very moving trip out West, and you may have seen it. I visited Springfield, Oregon, where they had one of the many, many school shootings we've seen. And I've been studying the facts of all these cases, and it does appear that in each case or, in most of the cases where we've had these terrible tragedies—I might add, against a background of dropping juvenile crime overall—that there was some kind of early warning. And

I wonder if you could recommend to me, because the Congress wants to do something on this, everybody is interested in this, this is—how do you think we ought to deal with children who—6,100 kids were removed from school last year for bringing a gun to school. I'd be very surprised if more than 10 percent of them got some sort of comprehensive mental health analysis as a result of it.

We have—goodness knows how many kids made threats that they had no earthly intention of doing anything about it, but in one of these school shootings there was an explicit threat made beforehand. What advice can you give us about what the role of mental health ought to be and, sort of, early warning systems, preventive care, and that sort of thing, and particularly—like I said, I don't want to put you on the spot on the Springfield thing, but it's very much on my mind because of what was told to me out there about the facts, and because the young man did have a gun in the school the day before and was sent home.

Sheila Savannah. Well, one of the responses that we have pulled together is we have a family resource center in an elementary school and so we work with the teachers. And we've had to a lot of training of teachers, of youth development workers, of child care workers, to really identify the early signs of mental health needs.

There are so many children with unmet needs. And so often those—their activities get interpreted as behavior problems, as discipline actions, and we don't ever stop and do a strong assessment of what are the needs of these children.

Children that carry guns are afraid. They really have very strong reasons for carrying them. And we work with a lot of children that have been suspended or expelled because they've been carrying weapons to school, and we've been real fortunate in Houston. But I know it's of growing concern because there are so many children that don't think that they'll live to see 20. And so those are kids that carry guns to protect themselves.

Or, we've spent a lot of time and a lot of prevention efforts that focus on children being okay. And so I've seen a lot of children who suppress their emotional disturbance. They see violence on the streets; they see violence in their homes; and rather than being emotionally disturbed, they're being trained to be okay. And so when children respond that way, their sensitivity becomes dull, and they can act out in those kinds of ways that really hurt humanity.

And I think one of the things we need to do is make sure that everyone is well aware of some of the signs of mental health needs and really work to make sure that we remove the stigmatism to receiving mental health services.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:15 p.m. in Langford Auditorium at Vanderbilt University. In his remarks, he referred to discussion participant Anthony Watson, chairman and chief executive officer, New York HIP Health Plans. Julie Moretz is chair, Family Advisory Council, Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center, and Sheila Savannah is executive director, People in Partnership, a nonprofit organization that consults recipients of mental health services.

Memorandum on Actions To Improve Children's Health Insurance Outreach

June 22, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Education, the Commissioner of Social Security

Subject: Federal Actions to Improve Children's Health Insurance Outreach

Last year, with bipartisan support from the Congress, I was pleased to sign into law the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). This new program will help millions of children of working families obtain affordable and much-needed health insurance. As of today, 20 States have had their CHIP plans approved and most States have applied for approval.

Yet, as recent studies show, rapidly implementing CHIP and ensuring that all eligible children are enrolled in this new program

or Medicaid has never been more important. This month, a major report from the Institute of Medicine confirmed that children without health insurance are more likely to be sick, less likely to be immunized, and less likely to receive medical treatment for illnesses, such as recurrent ear infections and asthma. Without treatment, these diseases can have lifelong consequences. Another study by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research concluded that there are 4.7 million uninsured children who are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid. Several million more will become eligible for CHIP as States implement their programs.

Only an intense, sustained campaign in both the public and private sectors can address the significant challenge of uninsured children. On February 18, 1998, I requested children's health outreach proposals from eight Federal agencies on how the executive branch of the United States Government can assist in children's health insurance outreach.

In response, I received the *Report to the President: The Interagency Task Force on Children's Health Insurance Outreach*, which contains proposals on how to engage the executive branch in children's health outreach. I have reviewed this report and found these proposals sound, innovative, and worth undertaking.

Therefore, I hereby direct you to take the following actions to promote children's health insurance outreach, consistent with the missions of your agencies and the content and timelines of each potential initiative described in the *Report*.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that the:

- Health Care Financing Administration, among other proposed actions, creates an on-line clearing house for outreach information and facilitates relationships between State Medicaid and CHIP agencies and community-based and private organizations to identify, educate, and enroll uninsured children in State health insurance programs;
- Health Resources and Services Administration, among other proposed actions, trains health care providers to help identify and enroll children in health insurance through its National Health Service Corps and Area Health Education Centers, which trains students and health providers and distributes information to families that use the community clinics that it funds;
- Administration for Children and Families, among other proposed actions, distributes promotional material and applications for Medicaid and CHIP to the families they serve through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Head Start sites, and subsidized child care sites;
- Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, among other proposed actions, supports investigator-initiated evaluations of outreach activities to better understand which outreach and enrollment strategies work best and to disseminate results to improve outreach performance;
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among other proposed actions, puts outreach referral information in its public health publications and pamphlets;
- Indian Health Service, among other proposed actions, integrates "train the trainer" techniques to educate select community members who can then provide information on health insurance to the rest of the community;
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, among other proposed actions, develops and implements an educational campaign for uninsured children with special needs.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall, among other proposed actions:

- Educate Regional and State directors of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and other Food and Nutrition Service programs on health care programs that are available to families with uninsured children and determine what information to give to these families; how to coordinate the application process to facilitate enrollment in CHIP and Medicaid; and how families applying for school lunch programs can receive information on health insurance;

- Provide information to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service regional and State program staff and grantees and encourage dissemination of information to families regarding the CHIP and Medicaid programs.

The Secretary of Education shall, among other proposed actions:

- Educate and assist families through its Partnership for Family Involvement program, which promotes family involvement in education, and includes employers, schools, education organizations, and community and religious groups.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall, among other proposed actions:

- Provide information on children's health outreach to applicants for competitive grants, and ask its directors of Public Housing Authorities and Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities to post or distribute this information.

The Secretary of Interior shall, among other proposed actions:

- Develop and distribute culturally relevant referral information to Native American families through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, especially focusing on tribal schools, colleges, and social services agencies.

The Secretary of Labor shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute Medicaid and CHIP outreach information through its Job Corps Centers, One-Stop Career Centers, welfare-to-work grant programs, and small businesses contacts.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall, among other proposed actions:

- Post children's health outreach information for families at IRS walk-in centers and provide this information to Voluntary Income Tax Assistance sites.

The Commissioner of Social Security shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute information and/or applications for children's health insurance in its SSA field office reception areas and provide to States names of families of children denied SSI so that States can send these families educational information and applications for children's health insurance programs.

I also direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to continue to work with the above mentioned agencies to assist them in fulfilling these commitments, to engage new agencies and develop other commitments, and report back to me in 1 year on agency accomplishments.

William J. Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty

June 22, 1998

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification on the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks on Signing the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters

June 23, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Carlson for your very eloquent and enlightening statement and for the work you do every day as a farmer, both with your crops and with the bison.

When Dan Glickman said you have bison, I saw a lot of people's eyebrows go up. We've come a long way since Teddy Roosevelt saved the buffalo with the national park. We went from millions of head in the West and the high plains down to only 20 known head of buffalo when Teddy Roosevelt actually established that national preserve. Now we've got enough that we know they'll be there with folks like you farming, and we appreciate that.

Thank you, Secretary Glickman, for the truly outstanding job you do as Secretary of Agriculture. I would like to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Congressmen Smith and Stenholm. And I would also like to thank Congressman Becerra, the head of the Hispanic caucus for the work he did and all the other Members of Congress who are here.

We are joined by a number of local officials who had great interest in this legislation including, but I'm sure not limited to, L.A. County Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chicago City Treasurer Miriam Santos, Virginia State Delegate Karen Darner. I would also like to thank all the representatives of our country's farmers and ranchers who are here, the religious leaders, our immigrant and antihunger advocates.

This is a very good day for me personally for two reasons. First of all, you heard Secretary Glickman give you the official population of the town in which I was born. It's about 50 percent larger than it was when I was born there, but all my mother's people came from a little town called Bodcaw, which still has only 50 people in it. And I have on my desk upstairs a picture of my grandfather with his family in 1907. Just about all of them were farmers, and when they were forced to leave the land and come into the large city of Hope, most of them kept little plots of land out in the country for decades where they kept their hand in, and they continued to grow their crops and harvest them even when they could no longer themselves make a living on the land.

And when I was a boy, it was part of the ritual of every summer that I would go out and help them work the land when I wasn't in school, and in the fall, help them to bring in everything from vegetables to watermelon. I don't know if watermelon is a fruit or vegetable. I think it's something in between.

Also, when I was Governor, I governed a State which had a lot of people who didn't have enough to eat. And I saw this remarkable coalition of people following the moral tradition of virtually every religion, which consistently admonishes us to take care of the poor and the hungry. So this is a remarkable day and something all of you can be proud of. And those of you who worked on this bill know that you can be especially proud of it because you had some very powerful opponents of what we attempted to do.

We are carrying on here a long and proud tradition of bipartisan commitment, a coalition that was first forged by Hubert Humphrey, Robert Dole, and George McGovern a generation ago. By standing together in that tradition, we have ensured that America keeps its compact with our farmers and ranchers and with people in need.

We all know that our Nation's core values in many ways have their deepest roots in rural America, in its commitment to community and mutual responsibility, to strong families, and individual initiative. Direct, trusting interaction among neighbors, so hard to find in some places in our country and throughout the world, still have very strong roots in rural towns. Every American has a stake, therefore, in making sure that rural America stays strong into the 21st century, not only because they feed us but because in many ways they feed our spirit and help us to forge our character as a nation.

This bill, as has already been said, does a lot of very good things for America. First, it rights a wrong. When I signed the welfare reform bill in 1996, I said the cuts in nutritional programs were too deep and had nothing whatever to do with welfare reform. Last year we restored Medicaid and SSI benefits to 420,000 legal immigrants. Today we reinstate food stamp benefits to 250,000 legal immigrants, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and 75,000 children. In addition, the Hmong immigrants from Laos, who heroically fought for our Nation during the Vietnam war, will again receive their full food benefits, overdue, high time, and I appreciate the fact that they were included in this bill.

None of these benefit cuts had the first thing to do with welfare reform. Reinstating them is the right thing to do and will have nothing to do with the success we've enjoyed which has brought welfare rates in America down to a 29-year low now.

Beyond that, this bill extends opportunity for all Americans, especially for farmers and ranchers. Today I think it's worth noting again, as I prepare to leave for China, American agriculture is one of our most powerful export engines. Products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. As this strong growth continues in the new century our farmers and ranchers will need to feed millions and millions of more people around the world. They will need to do their work in a more sustainable way to protect our water and fragile soil. They will need to continue improving food safety by investing in cutting-edge agricultural research, funding rural development, and bolstering crop insurance. This bill will help our farmers meet the needs of tomorrow's world.

We are channeling an additional $120 million a year over the next 5 years to vital investments in food and agriculture genome research, food safety and technology, human nutrition and agricultural biotechnology. We're allocating $60 million a year over the next 5 years to give grants and loans to underserved rural communities where people must diversify their economy on an available, attainable scale in order to preserve the fabric of life there. These grants will ensure, I hope and believe, that more and more of our rural communities can finally share in this remarkable national economic prosperity that we are enjoying.

We are also providing our farmers with peace of mind because crop insurance will be there for them should disaster strike. In certain parts of the country farmers are hurting now. And it is clear that, in addition, we need to strengthen the farm safety net for the future. The legislation that we sign today is a very good start, but there are some more things I believe we should do.

In addition to strengthening the safety net for farmers, we must protect our exports by passing the legislation, sponsored by Senators Murray and Roberts and Representative Pomeroy, to allow our farmers to continue to export wheat to Pakistan and India. It was never intended, I don't believe, to use food as a weapon in foreign policy even in this extreme circumstance. And I strongly support that legislation and believe we have big bipartisan support for doing something about it immediately. And it's important that it be done immediately because of the necessity of getting those contracts out and making sure the shipments are there if they're going to be there. I feel that we will be successful.

Congress must also give the IMF the resources it needs to help to stabilize the economies of Asia, in part because they are huge markets for United States farm products. Finally, we must protect the many advances we're making in the bill I'm just about to sign. Believe it or not, the bill I'm just about to sign already has some provisions which are in jeopardy.

There are some in Congress who are working to undo the progress embodied in this bill. The appropriations committees have taken steps to cut the funding next year for the research and rural development programs I just mentioned, limit our food safety efforts, and cut as many as 100,000 women and children from the WIC program at a time when our economy is doing well and we can clearly afford to continue these things. This bill is the example of how we should work together.

Let me just mention one other issue before I sign the bill, an example of how the country does well when we put progress ahead of partisanship. In the bipartisan balanced budget agreement I was proud to sign into law last year, we gave Medicare patients new choices, enabled them to enroll in private health plans, and extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade. Building on that new bipartisan law, I instructed our administration to implement a Patients' Bill of Rights for the one-third of Americans who receive Federal health care benefits.

Beginning this week we are putting those protections into effect. From now on, for example, Medicare patients will have the right to see a specialist in a broad range of areas. Women will have a right to see women's

health specialists. Medicare patients will have a right to privacy for their medical records.

This marks the most significant change in Medicare in three decades. It shows what we can do when we put progress over partisanship. That's why I also strongly support the bipartisan effort being launched today in the House of Representatives by Congressmen Dingell and Ganske to extend a Patients' Bill of Rights to all Americans.

Today we mark another milestone in this kind of bipartisan cooperation. We've come a long way from the days when Thomas Jefferson thought every American should be a farmer, even the farmers are glad that's not true. But what he said then is still true in many ways, and I quote, ''The cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens, the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous; they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interest by the most lasting bonds.''

Today we strengthen those bonds. And we strengthen those bonds to those whose hold on the American dream is still fragile. In so doing, we do our part to do what Mr. Jefferson wanted us to do, to always be about the business of forming a more perfect Union.

Thank you very much.

I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here while we sign the bill. Come on up.

[*At this point, Members of Congress joined the President on the stage, and the President signed the bill.*]

The President. Thank you.

Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]—VX—[*inaudible*]—despite reports by U.N. weapons inspectors that they found fragments on SCUD missiles. What do you think this says about Iraq, and what should you do?

The President. You asked me about the report about the U.N. weapons inspectors in Iraq, that there were traces of VX found in a missile head?

Well, it proves that the United—let me just say, it proves that the United States has been accurate and correct in our insistence all along that we support the U.N. inspections in Iraq. And it proves that our decision to oppose relaxing the sanctions until all the U.N. resolutions have been complied with is an accurate one.

Mr. Butler is doing his job, and we need to wait until we hear the report. There is a news report to this effect, but it just proves that—you know, our job in the world is to try to reduce the danger that our people and others in the world face from nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. And sometimes we have to do it even when our friends and neighbors don't think it is as important as we do. It is very important.

If this report is true, it will just show that our insistence over these last many years on the U.N. inspection system is the right thing to do for the safety of America and the safety of the rest of the world. And we'll stay with the position we've always had. Let the inspections go forward and don't lift the sanctions until the resolutions are complied with.

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. Sir, China has refused visas to three Radio Free Asia journalists. What would you plan to do about that, sir?

The President. Well, I am aware of the Chinese refusal. I think it is a highly objectionable decision. We will protest it. We hope they'll reconsider it. And it is actually rather ironic because this decision to deny the visa to the Radio Free Asia journalists is depriving China of the credit that it otherwise would have gotten for giving more visas to a more diverse group of journalists and allowing more different kinds of people in there than they've ever done before.

And the fact that they denied the visa for the Radio Free Asia people will actually undercut the credit which otherwise would have come their way because of that.

Thank you, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to farmer Robert Carlson, president, North Dakota Farmers Union, who introduced the President; and Richard Butler, executive chairman, United Nations Special Commission. S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Radio Remarks on the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I signed into law a new bill to help expand opportunity for America's farmers. The agricultural research act will put funding for crop insurance on a sure footing for the future and boost investment on agricultural research and rural development.

After Congress phased out Federal farm price supports, it became more essential for American farmers to sell grains, meats, fruits, and vegetables to markets around the world. And today, products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. Thanks to cutting-edge research, strong food safety standards, and innovations in biotechnology, our farmers enjoy advantages over their competitors around the world in many sectors. In fact, American farmers have become so productive and so advanced that agriculture should be considered another high-tech industry. By strengthening investment in research and technology, this bill will help our farmers retain that competitive edge so they can export more of what they grow and raise. But to secure the success of U.S. farmers in the global marketplace, we must do more.

That's why we're also fighting hard to tear down unfair trade barriers, to stabilize Asian markets for our products, and to make sure that sanctions do not unfairly penalize American farmers. I've asked the World Trade Organization to take an aggressive approach to reducing tariffs and subsidies on agricultural products and to deliver better scientific-based rules to govern that trade. We're also fighting to enforce our trade agreements and have won critical agricultural disputes, including the European Union's restrictions on hormone-grown beef and greater access to pork in the Philippines. We will continue to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that agreements made are agreements kept.

And I will push Congress to give the IMF the resources it needs to help stabilize the economies of Asia, which are such big markets for American farm products. Finally, we need to make sure that our sanctions policy furthers our foreign policy goals without hurting our farmers. That's why I support legislation that ensures that U.S. wheat will not be the unintended victim of an important nonproliferation law. Our policy has been and will be that food should not be used as a weapon. We'll resist any action that would lead to a de facto grain embargo.

American farmers can continue to compete and win the global marketplace. To make sure that they do, I'll continue to fight to make sure they're given a fair chance to build a better future for themselves and their families.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded on the morning of June 23 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast.

Statement on Signing Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1150, the "Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998." This bill is an example of the Federal Government at its best: the Congress and the Administration working together on a bipartisan basis, bringing together a broad coalition of individuals and groups to address the important needs of our citizens in a fiscally responsible manner. I want to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Representatives Smith and Stenholm, whose efforts to forge this compromise were tireless, as well as all the other Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who voted for S. 1150. Their support reflects the strong consensus in this country for the reforms and funding contained in this bill.

S. 1150 and last year's Balanced Budget Act go a long way toward fulfilling the commitment, which I made when I signed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, to reverse the unfair treatment of legal immigrants included in that legislation, which had nothing to do with welfare reform. The Food Stamp provisions of S. 1150 restore benefits to 250,000 elderly, disabled, and other needy legal immigrants, including 75,000 children who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act.

The Food Stamp provisions in S. 1150 build on our success last year in restoring Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid benefits to 420,000 legal immigrants who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act. S. 1150 also restores benefits to Hmong immigrants from Laos who aided our country during the Vietnam War and extends the period during which refugees and asylees may qualify for Food Stamps while they await citizenship. We will continue to work to ensure that those who honor our laws and contribute to our society can be free from hunger.

Similarly, when I signed the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Farm Act) that radically changed the decades-old Federal programs to balance crop supply and demand, I made a commitment to work with the Congress to strengthen the farm safety net. With the bill I am signing today, our Nation's farmers know that crop insurance will be there for them if disaster strikes, with the program fully funded for the next 5 years.

To improve farming productivity and efficiency, we must increase our investment in agricultural research. In the 1996 Farm Act deliberations, the Congress believed the agricultural research title to be so important that work on it was postponed so it could receive the time and consideration that it deserved. The research provisions in S. 1150 were worth waiting for, and I commend the Congress for its work.

The Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems in S. 1150 will channel an additional $120 million a year over the next 5 years to vital investments in food and agriculture genome research, food safety and technology, human nutrition, and agricultural biotechnology. These investments will lead to advances in new production systems for crops and livestock. This will help farmers and agricultural processors produce an abundant supply of safe food, with less impact on the environment, and meet the challenge of new, more virulent pest and disease outbreaks. In addition, the bill reforms the working arrangements between the Secretary of Agriculture and the universities that carry out important agricultural research. These changes will encourage and enable universitas to take on larger-scale challenges and enhance their integration of research, education, and extension functions while improving the accountability and management of their programs.

Rural communities cannot rely on agriculture alone to sustain their economy and quality of life. That is why, throughout my Administration, I have strongly supported increasing the investments in rural development, and pushed to find innovative solutions to unique local needs. We worked hard with the Congress in the 1996 Farm Act to create the Fund for Rural America, which provided funds for rural development and innovative agricultural research. I am pleased that S. 1150 provides $300 million for the Fund and extends it funding through FY 2003.

While signing S. 1150, I am concerned that some in the Congress are already threatening to block significant portions of its funds from being spent in FY 1999. Appropriation actions in the House and Senate would deny any funds from being used for the Fund for Rural America, and the House bill would also block any research funding in this bill from going forward next year. I strongly object to such ill-advised cuts in these vital programs. I call on the Congress to provide the needed funds for these important activities.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Statement on Signing the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1900, the ''U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998.'' This legislation is the result of the bipartisan support of the Congress, and the efforts of many people inside and outside of government who have worked to achieve its passage. It represents an important step in advancing the United States Government's efforts to bring justice to Holocaust victims, survivors, and their heirs.

The bill establishes the ''Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States.'' The Commission will focus on two key tasks: first, it will conduct original research on the collection and disposition of Holocaust-era assets that came under the control of the United States Government after Hitler came to power in 1933 (assets including gold, gems, bank accounts, financial instruments, insurance policies, and art works); and second, it will review research already conducted by public and private entities. The Commission will prepare a final report, summarizing its findings and making recommendations to me, which will be completed by December 31, 1999.

As we finish the business of the 20th century, we must examine difficult aspects of our history in order to build a better world for our children in the next millennium. Establishing a Commission to study these issues sends a strong message, both at home and abroad, that the United States Government is determined to acknowledge and address the fate of Holocaust assets domestically.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1900, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–186.

Statement on the Nomination of Kenneth Prewitt To Be Director of the Bureau of the Census

June 23, 1998

A fair and accurate census is a fundamental part of representative democracy and good government. To ensure that we conduct a sound and successful census in the Year 2000, I am pleased to nominate Dr. Kenneth Prewitt to be the next Director of the United States Census Bureau.

The decennial census is the foundation for our most important public values. It is the means by which everyone in this country is counted. It is the basis for providing equality under the law. And it is the single most important source of information about the American people.

By using the census, the Federal Government is able to designate funding for and evaluate programs across the Federal Government, in every State and every locality. It is the instrument that Congress and the executive branch use to properly allocate the more than 180 billion dollars in Federal funds every year for many programs like Head Start, programs for older Americans, the disabled, and for transportation. Conducting an accurate census truly affects every person in this country, and quality of Census 2000 will have ramifications for decades to come.

To ensure fair and accurate data, we support the plan developed by the experts at the Census Bureau which was based upon recommendations by the National Academy of Sciences. This plan developed at the explicit direction of Congress and endorsed by virtually all of the experts will enable the Census Bureau to conduct the most accurate and cost-effective census in our history. It is a plan that will correct the inaccuracies in the former census which systematically undercounted children, minorities, and rural Americans. This collaboration between Government and the Nation's scientific community will enable Census 2000 to carry out its proud mission of protecting equality before the law, one person-one vote, and sound government.

Dr. Prewitt, one of the Nation's most distinguished social scientists and experienced executives, is the ideal person to lead the Census Bureau in this effort. He currently serves as the president of the Social Science Research Council. In the past, he has been senior vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation, the director of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Corporation, chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of Chicago, and vice president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has also served on the boards of trustees of Washington University, Southern Methodist University, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, NORC, and the German American Academic Council.

Dr. Prewitt is a person of impeccable credentials and proven scientific integrity. I urge

the Senate to act promptly on his nomination.

Statement on Medicare and the Patients' Bill of Rights

June 23, 1998

I am pleased to add my voice in support of today's efforts by Representatives Ganske and Dingell to file a discharge petition enabling an up or down vote in the House of Representatives for a Patients' Bill of Rights. Since November of last year, I have been calling on Congress to pass such legislation.

It is now 7 months later and Congress has been unable to pass legislation, let alone hold even one Committee mark-up on a bill. With so many Americans' health at stake, I welcome the action taken today by Representatives Ganske and Dingell, and I believe it will help ensure an open debate on this issue that will allow for all parties, including Representative Norwood, to bring patients' rights legislation to the floor for vote.

Passing patients' rights legislation would build on the actions I have already taken to extend patient protections to Americans in Federal health plans. This Friday, we will publish a Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) regulation to implement new rules for all Medicare managed-care plans. The HCFA regulation will implement the new Medicare plan choices I signed into law last year as a part of the bipartisan balanced budget agreement. It will also include many of the patient protections I directed Medicare to implement last February, when I signed an Executive memorandum ordering all Federal health plans—which serve 85 million Americans—to come into compliance with the Patients' Bill of Rights. These regulations ensure that Medicare beneficiaries in managed-care plans have a range of important patient protections, including access to the specialists they need, access to ob-gyns, access to emergency room services, and an independent appeals process to address grievances with their health plans.

Now we need the Congress to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees all Americans these important patient protections. It is my hope and expectation that the bipartisan action being taken today in Congress will spur the House and the Senate to pass a strong, enforceable, and long-overdue bill.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Legislation

June 23, 1998

I am deeply disappointed in the action taken within the House Appropriations Committee today. Returning to the partisanship of the past, House Republicans backed a bill that would take us backwards just when we should be addressing the challenges of the next century.

Last year we made critical investments in every stage of our children's lives in a bipartisan balanced budget. From Head Start expansion to new tax credits that make college more affordable, we worked together to make smart investments in our people and our future. To build on that success, this year I proposed commonsense investments to reduce class size, modernize America's schools, and make quality child care more affordable.

Working together, we can continue to move the Nation forward. But the House Republican bill takes us in the wrong direction, short-changing critical investments in our young people—from preschool and child care to antidrug and safe after-school programs. These cuts are arbitrary, and some are extreme. This bill would completely eliminate the summer jobs program, denying more than one-half million teenagers valuable work experience. It would slow progress on our efforts to improve children's literacy and computer skills. And for poor families, the Republicans would eliminate the program that they rely on to help them heat their homes during the winter. This bill is out of step with our values and the wrong vision for America's future.

Statement on Congressional Action on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

June 23, 1998

For months now, I have urged Congress to do more to help the American taxpayer. Today I am pleased that the House and Senate have finally reached a bipartisan agreement to reform the IRS and strengthen taxpayer rights. We need an IRS that reflects American values and respects American taxpayers. This bill goes a long way toward that goal, and I look forward to signing it into law.

Statement on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the "Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act of 1998"

June 23, 1998

I have committed my administration to an unceasing effort to halt the transfer of missile technology to nations that conduct or condone terrorism and otherwise violate international norms. The stated purpose of H.R. 2709—the "Iran Missile Proliferation Act of 1998"—is to further this effort. To the contrary, if enacted, it would damage the U.S. national interest, making it harder to achieve the goals it is intended to serve. Therefore, I am vetoing this bill.

The battle against proliferation is most effective as a cooperative enterprise. It will be successful if other, like-minded governments join in enacting and enforcing the strictest possible export-control policies. As my veto message makes clear, this bill mandates the sweeping application of sanctions according to inflexible and indiscriminate criteria. It would require the imposition of sanctions based on an unworkably low standard of evidence. Sanctions could be wrongly triggered against individuals and businesses worldwide, including against companies that did not know the true end user of their products. The sanctions are also disproportionate. A minor violation would carry the same penalty as a major one. As a result, the bill would generate tensions and discourage cooperation with the very nations whose support we must enlist.

From my conversations with Members of Congress, I sense a growing awareness that the vast machinery of U.S. sanctions law has not served our interests well and is in serious need of an overhaul. Adding yet another flawed sanctions bill is not the way to start, especially since this one is redundant. Existing law provides a sufficient basis for imposing sanctions when we need them.

I am particularly concerned about the impact that the bill would have on our on-going effort to work with the Russian Government to stem the flow of technology from that country to Iran's missile program. This is a very real problem, to which this administration has accorded the highest priority over the past year and a half. As a result of my own work with President Yeltsin, reinforced by the efforts of the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and other officials, the Russian Government recently has adopted new legal and administrative measures to deal with this problem. While the hard work of implementation must continue, we have seen concrete progress, which we seek to encourage, not undercut.

This bill will make it more difficult to continue our work with the Russian Government in this area. Moreover, the imposition of unilateral American sanctions could damage our interests in working with the Russian Government in other vital areas, such as arms control, law enforcement, counternarcotics and combating transnational crime. This bill would hinder, not help, our overall national interests.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act of 1998"

June 23, 1998

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2709, the "Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act of 1998."

H.R. 2709 would require sanctions to be imposed on foreign individuals and companies if there is ''credible information indicating that'' they transferred certain items or provided certain types of assistance that contributed to Iran's missile program, or attempted more than once to transfer such items or provide such assistance. These sanctions would last at least 2 years and would prohibit sales of defense articles and services; exports of certain dual-use items; and United States Government assistance.

My Administration unequivocally supports the critical objectives of fighting terrorism and taking steps to halt the transfer of missile technology to nations whose foreign policy practices and nonproliferation policies violate international norms. This legislation, however, is indiscriminate, inflexible, and prejudical to these efforts, and would in fact undermine the national security objectives of the United States. Taken together, the flaws in H.R. 2709 risk a proliferation of indiscriminate sanctioning worldwide.

Such indiscriminate sanctioning would undermine the credibility of U.S. nonproliferation policy without furthering U.S. nonproliferation objectives. Indeed, the sweeping application of sanctions likely would cause serious friction with many governments, diminishing vital international cooperation across the range of policy areas—military, political, and economic—on which U.S. security and global leadership depend.

Specifically, H.R. 2709 would require the imposition of sanctions based on an unworkably low standard of evidence: ''credible information indicating that'' certain transfers or attempted transfers had occurred. Such a low standard of evidence could result in the erroneous imposition of sanctions on individuals and business entities worldwide—even in certain instances when they did not know the true end user of the items. The bill would also hinder U.S. efforts to enlist the support of other countries to halt the objectionable activities by imposing an unreasonable standard for waiving the bill's sanctions. In addition, the sanctions proposed by the legislation are disproportionate. A minor violation (e.g., the transfer of a few grams of aluminum powder) would carry the same penalty as a transfer of major proliferation significance. This, too, undermines U.S. credibility and increases foreign opposition to U.S. policy.

H.R. 2709 does not specifically refer to Russia, but it will affect that country. The legislation does not allow flexibility sufficient to reflect the progress made by the Russian government in formulating policies and processes whose goal is to sever links between Russian entities and Iran's ballistic missile program. At the urging of the United States, President Yeltsin, the Prime Minister, Russian security services Chief Kovalev, and Russian Defense Minister Sergeyev have all made clear that proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction is a serious threat to Russia's security. They have called for strict control of sensitive technologies and stressed the strict penalties that will be imposed for violations of Russian law. On January 22 of this year, the Russian government issued a ''catch all'' executive order providing authority to stop all transfers of dual-use goods and services for missiles and weapons of mass destruction programs, and on May 15 published detailed regulations to implement that order. They have recently developed and circulated a list of end users of concern in Iran, Libya, North Korea, and Pakistan. In the course of regular and active discussion of this issue with the Russian government, the United States has raised problem cases involving cooperation between Russian entities and the Iranian missile program. We have seen progress in this area, and a number of these cases are no longer active concerns.

Precisely because Russia needs to take effective enforcement steps to control the flow of technology, the United States needs to be able to work cooperatively with the Russian government to assure further progress. H.R. 2709 would undercut the cooperation we have worked to achieve with the Russian government without helping us solve the problem of technology transfer. The legislation's unilateral nature could also hurt our increasing cooperation with Russian government agencies in other vital areas such as law enforcement, counter-narcotics, and combating transnational crime. Furthermore, Russia would interpret this law as an infringement of its sovereignty, affecting our ability to work

with Russia on broader U.S. policy goals and on regional and global issues.

Finally, Title I of H.R. 2709 is not needed. Existing law, such as the missile technology control provisions of the Arms Export Control Act, provides a sufficient basis for imposing sanctions to prevent missile proliferation to Iran and elsewhere.

I also note that it is disappointing that the Congress attached Title II, the "Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1997," to this problematic and counterproductive bill. Because Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) implementation legislation has not been enacted, the United States has not yet fully carried out its obligations under the CWC. The CWC implementing legislation has strong bipartisan support, and should be passed by the Congress as a free-standing bill without further delay. I note, however, that sections 213(e)(2)(B)(iii), 213(e)(3)(B)(v), and 213(f) of Title II could interfere with certain of my exclusive constitutional powers, and I urge the Congress to correct these constitutional deficiencies.

For the reasons stated, I am compelled to return H.R. 2709 without my approval.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Niue-United States Treaty on the Delimitation of a Maritime Boundary With Documentation

June 23, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Niue on the Delimitation of Maritime Boundary. The Treaty was signed in Wellington May 13, 1997. The report of the Department of State is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The sole purpose of the Treaty is to establish a maritime boundary in the South Pacific Ocean between the United States territory of American Samoa and Niue. The 279-mile boundary runs in a general east-west direction, with the United States islands of American Samoa to the north, and Niue to the south. The boundary defines the limit within which the United States and Niue may exercise maritime jurisdiction, which includes fishery and other exclusive economic zone jurisdiction.

Niue is in free association with New Zealand. Although it is self-governing on internal matters, Niue conducts its foreign affairs in conjunction with New Zealand. Niue has declared, and does manage, its exclusive economic zone. Therefore, the United States requested, and received, confirmation from New Zealand that the Government of Niue had the requisite competence to enter into this agreement with the United States and to undertake the obligations contained therein.

I believe this Treaty to be fully in the interest of the United States. It reflects the tradition of cooperation and close ties with Niue in this region. This boundary was never disputed.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Treaty and advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Belize-United States Treaty for the Return of Stolen Vehicles, With Documentation

June 23, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Belize for the Return of Stolen Vehicles, with Annexes and Protocol, signed at Belmopan on October 3, 1996. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of stolen vehicle treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to eliminate the difficulties faced by owners of vehicles that have been stolen and transported across international

borders. When it enters into force, it will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles that have been stolen and taken to Belize. The Treaty establishes procedures for the recovery and return of vehicles that are registered, titled, or otherwise documented in the territory of one Party, stolen in the territory of that Party or from one of its nationals, and found in the territory of the other Party.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and Protocol, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Remarks at a Dinner for Texas Gubernatorial Candidate Garry Mauro

June 23, 1998

Thank you. Thank you, Garry, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the warm welcome, and even more, thank you for being here for Garry Mauro.

I don't know what to make of that eulogy you gave me at the end of those remarks. [*Laughter*] It reminds me, the other day I was in Cleveland—this is a true story—I was in Cleveland the other day, and I went with Congressman Lou Stokes who is retiring after a long and distinguished, wonderful career in Congress on a motorcade through his Congressional District in inner city Cleveland, and we went by all these little schools, and then finally we stopped at a grade school.

And I was there because a wonderful community program called City Year which may have a chapter in Texas, I think they do, and it has a couple thousand kids around the country, they're all part of our AmeriCorp program, our national service program; they were having their national convention in Cleveland.

But I went to this elementary school where some of our young volunteers are working with the kids in the inner city. So I gave them a little talk, you know, and then I went down the line, and I was shaking hands with all the teachers and the parents and as many children as I could possibly shake hands with. And I got to the very end of the line, and there was a little kid standing there that barely came above my knees. He was probably 6, I guess he could have been 7, but I don't think so. He looked up at me, and normally when I see kids like that they say, ''I've seen you on television,'' and I say ''Thank goodness.'' [*Laughter*] This kid said, ''Are you the real President?'' I said, ''Yes, I am.'' He said, ''And you're not dead yet?'' [*Laughter*]

Then I realized that he thought Presidents were—you know, he had studied George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—he thought a part of the job description was you couldn't be living anymore. [*Laughter*] And some days I wonder whether he's right or not. [*Laughter*] But at least I died with honors from Garry's introduction.

Let me say to all of you I think you're doing a good thing here. And I think it's even more important that you're doing it because you know you have a long way to go. But I would like to tell you a story or two. In 1991 when I started running for President, only my wife and my mother thought I could win. My daughter thought I had a chance. [*Laughter*]

When I entered the New Hampshire primary I was fifth among the Democrats starting out, and the incumbent President was at a 75 percent approval rating. When I won the nomination of my party on June 2, 1992, with the victories in California, New Jersey, and Ohio, I was running third in the public opinion polls; 6 weeks later I was first in the public opinion polls—6 weeks later.

Go back a few years; I met Garry Mauro over 25 years ago when we worked in 1972 together. Two years later I ran for Congress. I ran against a Member of Congress who had 99 percent name recognition and an 85 percent approval rating in 1974. And I was zero, zero. On Labor Day I was behind 59 to 23, on Labor Day, not June the 28th, on September the whatever it was that year. And I got 48½ percent of the vote. If I had had another week to campaign, I could have won. I say that to make this point: When people are satisfied with good conditions, and they like their incumbent office holders personally, they tend always to say they are for them

and so would you if you didn't know him or you didn't happen to be in the other party.

In order to make an election in this kind of an environment it is necessary that people believe there is a reason to think about the election and that there is a choice to be made and that the choice, if it is made, would be good for them. And I think you've got what you need here. You've got a good candidate who is a wonderful human being and an exemplary public servant with a record that anyone could be proud of. You've got the right issues—and I want to say a little more about that. And you've got, if you all do your part, an adequate support base so that people in your vast, huge State will be aware that you have a good candidate, and the right issues, and there is a reason to make a choice.

You also have, in my view, the best of all possible worlds because Garry Mauro can just get out there and run as himself and run a completely positive campaign and only talk about those areas where there is an honest disagreement.

Now, then it determines—it really turns on the same thing that really will shape the elections in November here for Congress or that will shape the attitudes. How do people respond to good times? I'm very grateful—I'll just amplify what Garry said—I am very, very grateful that today in our country we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, 16.1 million new jobs, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and the surplus we believe this year in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the country. I'm grateful for that. And I think that—[*applause*]——

I also know that the American people deserve primary credit for that. But the decisions made by our administration, more than half of which were made under withering partisan criticism from the leadership of the other party, had a lot to do with creating the framework in which it became possible for the American people to do these great things. Now, having said that, the question is: When times get good, what do you do? A lot of people say, "Well, I've been working hard for years, and I'm tired of thinking about insecurity and difficult things, and you know, I would like to take it easy, and I don't want too much to change."

Well, there are two problems with that. One is nothing ever stays the same anyway, ever, not in an individual life, not in the family's life, not in a business, not in a State's life, not in a nation's life. The second is all you have to do is pick up the paper every day to know that things are changing quite a lot around the world, and there are a lot of outcomes that aren't clear.

I'm going to China tomorrow, as all of you know, against a backdrop of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan which occurred after years and years and years in which—just since I've been President we had gotten an indefinite extension of the nonproliferation treaty, we had gotten all these countries to agree to control their missile technology, we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention, we passed the comprehensive test ban treaty. We had 140 something countries around the world sign it. We and the Russians began to lower our nuclear arsenals dramatically and destroy nuclear weapons, and it seemed that we were on a constant and stable path. Now we have a new challenge.

I'm going to China at a time when we are appreciative of the discipline with which the Chinese have managed their economy and the fact that they haven't yet felt the need to devalue their currency. Why? Because of the economic difficulties in Indonesia, the challenges that Japan faces and any number of other Asian countries. It's a big deal because a huge percentage of our economic growth has come from foreign trade, about a third of it, no small measure, from Asia.

So I tell you this because it's well to be reminded that whether you're the President of the United States, the Governor of Texas, or the mayor of Seattle, Washington, you know when times like this come along, if you relax in an atmosphere of change, you'll spend the rest of your life, if you've got a conscience and a brain, kicking yourself in the behind because you didn't take advantage of them to do every single thing you could to meet the challenges of the day and prepare for tomorrow. That is the case that has to be made not just in Texas but in every community in this country.

And if you look at what Garry talked about—let's just take—what are these big challenges? Some of them have to be dealt with by us here in Washington. For example, we've got to reform Social Security and Medicare so that when the baby boomers retire, we've still got a social safety net, but it doesn't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We owe that to the next generation. That has to be done in Washington.

There are things that we need to do in other areas in improving the quality and access to healthcare, in improving public education and access to college—and we've done a great deal there—in proving we can preserve the environment while we grow the economy—if you just take those three things—in extending economic opportunity to people who still don't have it even though we've got a low unemployment rate.

Now I will mention those four things. In all those areas we have a role to play. But in none of those areas can any of those endeavors be successful unless the States are doing the right thing. Yes, we want to move more people from welfare to work. The States are basically in control of that program now.

So it matters more who the Governor is now in terms of whether initiatives are taken or not than ever before, at least in my lifetime. And because I used to be a Governor and I believe in the system, I've off-loaded a lot of responsibilities to the States. But in doing that, you know, you run the risk—you get the benefit of having people closer to the grassroots issues make the decisions—you run the risk that if you've got somebody who is relaxing when they ought to be moving that the consequences won't be so good.

Now you just take the issues Garry reeled off here. I'm trying to get the Congress to approve a budget that will help to build or repair 5,000 schools, that will help 100,000 more teachers to be hired to lower class sizes in the early grades, that will connect the classrooms and the libraries of this country to the Internet, that will help to improve teacher training and accountability and train more teachers to be master teachers, nationally certified master teachers to help all the others in their schools. But none of this will amount to much unless there is a complementary commitment at the State level where the primary constitutional responsibility for public education is lodged to do those things.

And I don't think there is a person in this room that believes—I don't care how big Texas gets; I don't care how may billionaires you have—I don't think any of you believe that your State will ever reach its full potential until you can say, ''We're proud of our university system, and now everybody who deserves it can afford to go'' number one, and number two, ''Now we're proud of our kindergarten through twelfth grade too, we've got the best system of elementary and secondary education that the world can offer.'' And no one believes that any State in the United States can make that claim today, no one.

So, I say to you I'm glad you've got these good times. I am grateful to have been given the chance to serve at a moment in history where my experience as a Governor enabled me to see what I thought our country needed to do. I am grateful that the consequences have been as they have been. I'm very grateful the American people have done all the things they have done. But I'm telling you we're living in a dynamic world where things are changing more rapidly than ever before, where we've got to learn to live together across the lines that divide us both at home and with others in the world, and where it all begins with whether we are treating individuals with the dignity that I think is embodied in this Patients' Bill of Rights that I've advocated at the national level, that you've advocated at the State level, and most importantly with the commitment to develop the capacity of every young person. There is nothing more important, nothing.

The last point I want to make in this regard is that there are a lot of things we can do at the national level to deal with what I predict to you will be one of the three biggest issues of the next 40 years, which is how to do better at preserving the environment as we grow the economy.

Now, you know that's going to be a big issue. There are a lot of things we can do at the national level but an enormous amount of environmental protection, an enormous

amount of resource conservation, an enormous amount of figuring out what kind of flexible, sensible ways you have to adopt to grow the economy while you preserve the environment, that's done at the State level. I know, I was a Governor for a dozen years. And I dealt with all kinds of national administrations that had different philosophies on the environment.

There is not a person in the State of Texas, nowhere—this is no disrespect to the current Governor—there is nobody in the State of Texas that has a better background than Garry Mauro for making the right decisions about how to protect the environment and grow the economy.

I want you to think about that. I want you to go home to Texas and talk about it. And I want you to forget about the public opinion polls. The only poll that matters right now is the one inside your heart, inside your mind. If you believe that your candidate is as good as I believe he is, if you believe that the issues are as important as I believe they are, if you believe he's on the right side of the issues, and most important of all, if you buy what I just said about the nature of this time, yes times are good, yes we are grateful—but it just imposes on those of us who have done well enough to show up at this fundraiser tonight a bigger responsibility to see that we use these good times to prepare for our children's future. You're going to have a fine election, and you're going to be proud of what you're doing.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 p.m. in the Mount Vernon Room at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Signing the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters

June 24, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, Sonia. And Jonathan and Jesse, welcome to the White House. Thank you, General Reno. Thank you, Senators Kohl and DeWine, for coming. And Congressman Hoyer, thank you for your hard work on this. I'd also like to thank Congressman Henry Hyde, who is not here, for his leadership on this legislation. Welcome Judge David Ross, the Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; United States Attorney Helen Fahey; child support advocates; and Leslie Sorkhe and Gerri Jensen, two other mothers who are here. I thank you all for being here.

I am very pleased to sign a vital new law that shows what we can achieve when we act in the national interest. For 5½ years now we have renewed our economy with a strategy that balances the budget while it invests and instills the future of our people and in the strength of our families. The key to expanding opportunity in this new century I want to say, though, is education.

I want to say a little more about child support in a minute, but these two young men behind me and all the children of our country deserve a world-class education. I have asked the Congress to help me in that, to help us to reduce class size by hiring 100,000 teachers and building or repairing 5,000 schools. I have asked them to help me institute high standards to connect all classrooms to the Internet, and I've asked them to make child care for working parents more affordable.

Yesterday the Republicans in the House of Representatives took a huge step in the opposite direction. Last night they began to dramatically cut education investments from Head Start to after-school to antidrug programs. This is out of step with our values and with America's shared vision of our future. In the coming months I'll have more to say about this, but you can be sure that I am going to keep fighting to advance education, to invest more in education, to lift education standards, to expand education opportunities. And if they continue to fight against all these things it will, I expect, be the major conflict of the coming months.

I still hope that I will not have to sign an education bill or veto one that short changes the future of our children. I don't intend to sign it. I hope a veto won't be necessary, but there is no excuse for this. We have a balanced budget. We're going to have a surplus. We have the money. We ought to give it to the children and their future.

This bill today is a gift to our children and the future. The quiet crisis of unpaid child

support is something that our country and our families shouldn't tolerate. Our first responsibility, all of us, is to our children. And today we all know that too many parents still walk away from that obligation. That threatens the education, the health of our children, and the future of our country.

One of the main reasons single mothers go on welfare is that fathers have failed to meet their responsibilities to the children. Even when a family manages to stay out of poverty, a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night, or simply to worry sick about their children either because they're away from them all the time or because they're with them but they don't have enough to support them.

When fathers neglect support of their children, it aggravates all the other problems a family faces. When I was Governor and then when I ran for President the first time in 1992, I made child support enforcement a big part of my concerns. I've always asked parents to take responsibility for their children. I've always pledged to do my best to force them to do so if they refused.

We have waged an unprecedented campaign to make deadbeat parents live up to their obligations. Thanks to tougher laws, more sophisticated tracking, powerful new collection tools we've increased child support collections by 68 percent in the last 5 years. Almost a million and a half more children are getting child support today.

There are two other signs of success that I would like to report. Last year our effort to find out the identity of fathers allowed us to establish paternity in 1.3 million cases, up from only 510,000 in 1992. Our new national database for identifying deadbeat parents across State lines has found more than 1 million delinquent parents in just the first 9 months of its operation. Before we created this database, deadbeat parents found it easy to avoid paying up by skipping from job to job or State to State. But with this database there is no where left to run.

With these and other successful child support initiatives, we believe that we've made a real difference for people like Sonia and her two fine sons. But we can and must do more. Current law is too soft on the most serious cases of neglect, the cases in which a parent flees across State lines or national borders and skips out on supporting children for a year or more. In 1996 I asked the Attorney General to draft legislation to crack down on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl and Congressman Hyde and Hoyer championed their cause, introduced versions of the legislation, and helped to secure an overwhelming bipartisan majority for the bill I am proud to sign into law today.

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with child support evaders in the most serious cases. From now on if you flee across State lines and refuse to pay child support you may be charged with a Federal offense, a felony offense, and may land in jail for up to 2 years. One way or the other people who don't support their children will pay what they must.

I thank all the Members of Congress and all the children's advocates who are here today, who contributed this major victory to our children. Now we can work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone; let me mention that, one more very important issue. Under bankruptcy reform bills now in the Senate and House some mothers could find themselves in competition with powerful banks and credit card companies to collect the child support they need. In that competition I think we all know who would lose, our children.

We are working with Congress now, and we will continue to do so to produce a bankruptcy reform bill that demands responsibility from both debtors and creditors and stems abuse. But any bill must make protecting child support payments a high priority. It would be ironic indeed, after all this work we have done, to increase child support collections—and here we are signing a bill today to make it more difficult to avoid the collections—if we turned around and passed a bankruptcy bill that put mothers and their children back in the pack along with other creditors. That's not the right thing to do. So I hope that we will see action on the bankruptcy bills and on the education bills that

will reflect the same priority for our children that this bill does today.

And again, let me thank all the advocates and all the sponsors and let me thank Sonia and her two fine sons for being here. This is a happy day for Attorney General Reno and me, and I would like to ask you all to come around now, and I'll sign the bill.

Thank you.

You guys stand on either side here. Sonia you come up here and I'll show you how I sign a bill into law. See I have all these pens because there are all these people who want one. [*Laughter*] I have to find a way to use every one of these pens when I sign this. So don't start laughing at me, all right?

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

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. Mr. President, hasn't this latest rebuff by China cast a really severe pall over your trip to China now? They've really turned you down——

The President. You mean the Radio Free Asia thing?

Q. ——on special appeal—visas.

The President. I think they made a mistake. And before I leave here, as a matter of fact in just a few minutes, I'm going to do an interview with Radio Free Asia correspondents to send a clear signal that we don't believe ideas need visas and that we support freedom of the press in our country.

I think in a way it will help to highlight some of the very important issues that we wanted to discuss. I hope that this trip will not only allow me to learn more about China and allow the American people to learn more about China but will help me to explain America and what we believe in and why to not only the Government but to the people of China and this is a good beginning here.

Q. Well, have they encouraged you to——

The President. I will do my best to do that. I think they made a mistake. And as I said, ironically, is the Chinese granted more visas to more journalists from more different media outlets than they ever have before. So they were actually showing a greater openness than they have, and because they reversed themselves on the Radio Free Asia visas, for reasons I don't understand, they have denied themselves that credit. So, I intend to press this issue by doing the interview in just a few minutes.

Q. Is this going to mean that it will be harder for you to reach agreements with the Chinese on detargeting nuclear missiles, on market access—is this disagreement going to make that a harder process?

The President. I don't know. I hope that we can deal with all these issues independently. I think the Chinese understand, as we do, we've got a big common stake in nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I expect to make some progress. We have a big stake in the Asian economic situation and the difficulties there. We have a big stake in our own bilateral economic relations and the impact that a lot of this will have in terms of integrating China into the global economy.

So I would think that they would not let this get in the way of what is in their self-interest, just as I won't let it get in the way of what is in the interest of the United States, but our values are an important part of our interest.

We don't live by money alone, or even by power alone, but also by our ideals and convictions, so I think it is important to point this up. But I also think it's important that you see it in it's proper framework.

The irony—as I said, this is an ironic situation because the Chinese granted more visas to more different media outlets apparently than ever before. They granted this visa and then reversed themselves. I think it was a mistake, and I'll do my best to make it clear why.

President's Visit to China

Q. Are you going to see dissidents now—I mean, as a retaliation?

The President. I'm going to see a number of people from different elements in Chinese society, and I'm going to do what I think is best to promote the cause of human rights.

Q. Is the White House taking any symbols of democracy, as has been suggested by some Republican lawmakers such as copies of the American flag or the Constitution?

The President. I'm sorry, I don't have anything to say about that.

Nuclear Detargeting Agreement

Q. What about detargeting? You didn't mention that specifically, and I had asked you about it. Do you see an agreement on that?

The President. I think it would be a good thing if we could reach an agreement on it. I think it does two things. It literally delays significantly the amount of time it takes to arm a missile and aim it, therefore, eliminating the possibility of accidental firing. And it also really increases, I think, the confidence between the countries that were moving to reduce the nuclear threat. So I hope we can do that, but I don't know yet. I don't have an announcement to make. But you know—I've made it very clear that I would like to do that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sonia Evans, who introduced the President, and her sons, Jonathan and Jesse.

Interview With Radio Free Asia

June 24, 1998

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for taking the time to do this with us. We know you have a busy schedule, and we appreciate the gesture.

Human Rights

Q. The first question: Dissidents in China recently issued many open letters hoping to meet you during your stay in China. Why you cannot meet them and what message do you want to send them now?

The President. Well first of all, I have determined to try to meet with as many different kinds of people as I can when I'm in China, but I also want to make decisions based on what I think will maximize the impact of my trip for all the objectives, which include the advancement of human and political rights. One of the things we have pushed very hard for is the adherence of the Chinese Government to the U.N. Convention on Civil and Political Rights, which President Jiang has said he will sign in the fall, in September or October which, as you know, will among other things require China to begin to admit on a regular basis international observers to talk to citizens, including political dissidents, on a regular basis to try to make sure that they are not abused in the practice of their civil and political rights and that they begin to be integrated into the mainstream of society.

I want this trip to advance that cause. And I will structure my meetings and also the meetings of all my staff people appropriately. But I am glad to see so many of these dissidents speaking out and feeling free to speak out. It's obvious that they have concluded, some of them probably at some risk to themselves, to do this. I do believe, as I told President Jiang when he was here, that free political speech and expression is plainly a precondition for any modern state. And over the long run, it is essential to the strength of a country. I mean, we live in an information age where people's ideas basically grow the economy.

So I think that this is a long-term battle that we're all involved in, and I believe we're on the right side of it. And I think in the end, the Chinese will agree.

Q. But Mr. President, the dissidents say that it is disheartening for them that you are not taking this opportunity to make a statement by attempting to meet with them or the families of the Tiananmen students who fell.

The President. Well, I will make a lot of statements. I worked very hard to get a lot of the dissidents out of prison, and I will continue to work very hard on that. And I will do whatever I think will increase my impact. And I won't do anything that I think will actually undermine my ability to get real results. But keep in mind, we also have some other very important objectives right now. Not objectives we will sacrifice for—our human rights agenda to—but objectives that we will pursue in addition to that.

We have very important nonproliferation concerns which have been given new urgency because of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. We have very important concerns about trying to stabilize the economic situation in Asia, which if it got out of hand could have an enormous destructive impact on hundreds of millions of people in China,

and a number of other issues that we're working on.

So, I will do my best to pursue all of our legitimate concerns and never to minimize the human rights issues, but I have to structure the way I spend my time on this trip in a way that I think is most likely to further the interests of the United States as well as the values we have that we want to—and the things we're trying to do for Chinese people.

Tiananmen Square

Q. Mr. President, when you are being welcomed in the Great Hall of the People adjacent to Tiananmen Square, will the image of the one lonely man standing in front of a tank trying to prevent it from mowing down students in Tiananmen Square flash through your mind even for a second and cause a twinge because you have accepted the invitation to be welcomed?

The President. Well, first of all, I've thought about that one man a lot. I think that's one of the—obviously one of the most vivid pictures of the last 20 years that anyone has seen. But I think it's important for me, if I'm going to go to China, to not expect that just because I'm the American President I should be greeted in any fashion different from any other world leader that would be greeted there.

And even I noticed that many people, including the Dalai Lama and Wang Dan and others have said, "You know, you should go. You should be received in the way that the Chinese have always received world leaders. That's been the center of their Government for hundreds of years now. And you should speak your mind about human rights, religious rights, political rights." I think that's the right thing to do. I don't think we should confuse ceremony with substance here.

I think that for me to say—when I invite someone to the United States, our welcoming ceremonies, unless there is some physical reason to move it, for example, the back lawn is covered, it's always at the back lawn of the White House unless it's bad weather or unless the whole lawn is covered with something else.

I couldn't very well invite someone to the United States and say, "Well, I would like for you to come see me on a state visit, but I won't let you come to the back lawn of the White House." And I think that it's important to distinguish here between hundreds of years of history that has occurred at that spot and within those walls, of which what happened at Tiananmen Square is definitely a part, but it's not the only thing that's ever occurred there. And I think that it would be wrong for me to expect the Chinese Government to change the way they welcome all world leaders.

On the other hand, it would be equally wrong for me to go there and take no notice of the continuing difficulties with human and political rights. So I expect to honor the ceremony, and I expect to advance what I believe in there and what America represents.

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. The Chinese Government has officially denied the visa of three of us. If the administration cannot negotiate successfully over such an issue, how do people expect that your Government come up successfully with the other complex issues as the human rights issue?

The President. Well, for one thing, visas are normally not negotiable by anybody. We don't negotiate with anyone else over who gets a visa to the United States. Our problem is that you were denied visas, we believe, for the wrong reasons.

I supported the establishment of Radio Free Asia. It exists because—in no small measure because it was a significant issue in the Presidential campaign of 1992. I talked about it repeatedly, and I've done my best to expand the operations of Radio Free Asia. The very purpose of Radio Free Asia was to beam honest, open debate into Asia so that, as you know, just as we do these interviews, you know, you ask me whatever questions you wish to ask and you press me on matters that you wish to press.

And I think they made a big mistake. It was especially troubling to me that they denied the visas and thereby denied themselves getting any credit for having given visas to people that they traditionally have not given visas to. They were quite broad.

The Chinese Government has always taken particular offense with my support of

creating Radio Free Asia because they believe that we did it for the purpose of undermining the Government of China. The truth is we did it for the purpose of advancing freedom of the press and freedom of debate and freedom of speech throughout Asia. And all governments that do not recognize these things should feel that, in effect, we are opposed to them, not because of particular policies—apart from the idea that we think everybody ought to have free access to ideas. So, I think they made a mistake.

But keep in mind, I wouldn't—that's not the same thing as negotiating over nonproliferation or economic issues or anything else because every nation reserves to itself the complete and unilateral right to decide its visa policies.

Q. I have a followup question. Our feed has been heavily jammed by the Chinese Government. Are you going to raise this issue when you are meeting with the Chinese leaders?

The President. Yes. Yes, I am. You know if you look at—there are now 400,000 Chinese who have access to the Internet, but we estimate there will be 20 million in the next couple of years. If you look at what happened in Europe, in Communist Europe, and how it was basically flooded with tapes and CD's, as well as with Radio Free Europe, there is no way—and if you look at the fact that as China's economy becomes more internationalized—there will be more and more ideas coming to China.

If you consider the fact that 2½ million Chinese traveled abroad last year, and many of them were not part of any government—if you will, censored government operation, it is a losing battle to try to keep ideas that are contrary to official dogma out of the public debate. It is, in the end, not in the interest of China.

China will be—you see I believe the Chinese Government missed a great opportunity, and I don't have the same attitude some people do. I don't think they did act in their long-term self interest; I think they missed a great opportunity; I think by giving you a visa and letting you come in and talk to people and emphasize the continuing human rights concerns, I think they would be showing strength because they would be showing the capacity to change. And I believe that that, in the end, is the ultimate test of any system of government. You have to have the capacity to change, to respond to legitimate human aspirations. You don't have to give up the society's dominant values or cultures.

There are many things within the whole history of Confucian thought and culture in China from which all societies could learn many positive things. But we know from just studying the landscape of the last 50 years in the world that oppressive government in the end will be resisted by people and in the end is inconsistent with developing a free economy. You can't say, "We're going to have a free economy, but we're going to try to keep controls on what people know, what they hear, what they can say."

And so I think—from my point—I had a slightly different reaction than you did, I know you're bitterly disappointed and angry, and I think you should be. But my view is that they would have shown strength and judgment by giving you the visa and letting you come in and talk to people who would criticize them. I don't think America is weakened because every day someone takes the floor of Congress and criticizes me; every day someone writes an editorial and criticizes me; every day there are—I just don't believe that. I think that—and of course all liberty, any freedom—let me say this—any freedom granted across the board is bound to be abused from time to time. It is in the nature of liberty that it is subject to abuse which is why the framers of the Constitution talked about how important it was for us to build responsibility internally into the character of our citizens.

But in the end, we're stronger when we debate and differ, and we're more likely to get the truth than if we control access to information. So that will be a big—yes, I will ask them to stop jamming Radio Free Asia.

Q. Thank you.

Tibet and the Dalai Lama

Q. Mr. President, another issue which has sort of been a losing issue is the issue of Tibet and the Chinese Government meeting with

the Dalai Lama and negotiating greater autonomy with the Dalai Lama. The U.S. Government has in the past put pressure on the Chinese Government to do that. They have so far not done that. You have assured the people in this country and in Tibet that you are taking a message to the Chinese. What is new about this message? What in this message is going to make the Chinese listen and actually sit down at the table with the Dalai Lama?

The President. Well, I think it is—first of all, let me say at this particular moment I don't feel free to say everything I'm going to say to President Jiang because of some of the sensitive work I've been doing on this issue for the last several weeks. But again I would say my general point is, not just to President Jiang but to the other influential members of the Chinese Government: Forget about our difference over what's right and wrong; we think it's wrong to deny the Dalai Lama access to his people in Tibet; we think it's wrong for the people of Tibet to be subject to any sort of religious, cultural, or economic discrimination.

We have not advocated independence for Tibet, separation, civil war, anything disruptive. We have advocated, if you will, autonomy with integrity. It's supposed to be an autonomous region anyway. It is our understanding that that is the position that the Dalai Lama has taken. So my argument to them, the larger message will be, let's lay to the side for the moment the fact that I believe what is happening is wrong, and they don't. I do not believe it is in China's interest.

China has been very—was adroit in trying to find a balance between taking back Hong Kong without destroying what was special about Hong Kong. Now, I know Hong Kong is an economic engine, but a country is made great by more than its economic engines. And the Tibetan Buddhism as a religious faith, as a culture and a way of life, the ability of the Tibetan people to be free of any kind of economic or other handicaps and the signal it would send to the rest of the world about China's attitude about human dignity and diversity and difference of religion, race, and opinion—the gains to China from doing this would far outweigh any marginal extra tension they might feel about the long-term future of Tibet in this context.

So my argument is going to be, you know, from the point of view of the pure self-interest of the Chinese Government: This is an easy issue; this is not a difficult issue; doing the right thing here is plainly in the interests of China. That's the argument I'm going to make.

Q. But they don't see it that way, Mr. President. This argument has been made in the past. They obviously don't——

The President. They don't see it that way because they continue to believe that the only—that it's just one step to losing part of China. I think it's important for Americans to understand that—this is something that I've learned not just in dealing with China but in dealing with all other countries. Countries are like people; they have a collective memory. And in order to deal with nations effectively when you have differences with them, it's important to understand what their worst nightmare is. Because if we're dominated by our nightmares, we make decisions that are not rational in the eyes of other people.

For example, when dealing with Russia in trying to expand NATO, we had to remember that the Russians were invaded by Hitler and by Napoleon. And that even though no one is now alive who was alive when Napoleon invaded Russia, it is something that is deeply embedded in the psyche, in the consciousness of the Russian people. So that if territorial changes are made along the border of Russia, you have to be sensitive to that and work it out.

China is—the Government of China, the leaders of China, their worst nightmare is disintegration, you know, because they have these memories of when China was weakened and vulnerable to foreign attack, vulnerable to government by warlords, vulnerable to the opium trade, vulnerable to everything because of the disintegration of the central authority. Therefore, to an outsider who knows nothing of China's history, the importance to China, which is so large and so big, of the ''one China'' policy vis-a-vis Taiwan, of getting back Hong Kong, of making sure that nothing could ever happen and Tibet—to promote any separatism. To us, we

see only the downsides of those things. To them, a lot of the things they do which to us are unacceptable, they do, I believe, because they're too much in the grip of the historic memory of disintegration.

And one of the things I have to do is to not lose my patience or my determination, to work until I help to create for them a new and different historic reality so that they feel more confident in doing what I believe is the morally right thing to do, as well as what is in their own self-interest.

But I think it's important to recognize that—you can't assume that—none of these people would be in positions of influence in the largest country in the world if they were without intellectual ability, without sensitivity, without the capacity to be effective. So when they do things that the rest of us think are completely irrational, we have to try to understand what it is that makes them do that.

I just think they could get more goodwill in the rest of the world, for less effort, by doing the right thing on Tibet than nearly any other issue. And I think that getting them to the point where they will see it that way depends upon their having a clear understanding of what a resumed dialog with the Dalai Lama would lead to, not just in a year or 2 years but in 10 or 20 or 30 years.

And I'm not sure the United States has ever had the kind of systematic effort on this that I have been expending for the last few years and that I will continue to expend as long as I am in office with the fond hope of being successful. I intend to continue to work on this very, very hard.

It's obvious that we have no power to compel them to do this. There is no tool, no incentive, no anything because nothing is as important to the Chinese as the territorial integrity of their country—nothing—because of their history. So I have to find a way to argue my case and prevail, and I will keep doing this. I care very, very much about this, and I have been working on this hard for the last couple of years, and I will continue to do it as long as I'm President.

Q. How high is it on the agenda for this trip?

The President. Well, for me it's a big thing. It's a big thing because I think countries—I think all countries—I think the United States has done this, too. None of us are—you know, we all make our mistakes, and we all have our memories, but I think when a great country, because of an inaccurate reading of the facts of a situation or being in the grip of a historical nightmare, makes an error, the consequences can be quite severe.

For example, it took us 2 years and a few months to get the American public to the point, and our allies to the point, that we could go in and end the Bosnian war. Now, a lot of people looking from the outside in said, "Look at this terrible situation in Bosnia. Why don't they just go and do something about it? Why are they taking 2 years?"

Well, the people who say that didn't live through the experience that our military and our people did in Vietnam. Bosnia was not Vietnam for a lot of different reasons. An outsider could say to all of us, "America, why don't you understand this is not Vietnam?" But it took us a while to work through, as a people, and with our allies, why it wasn't, what it was, and what we had to do, what our clear moral responsibility was, what was in our national interest. We did the right thing. And in the lifetime of a country, 2 years is not very long to take to do that but it took—it was a lot of hard work.

And you would be amazed in the debates and the discussions, if you just go back and read things that were in the public in the beginning there were a lot of people who were afraid, "Oh, this is Vietnam all over again."

So I am—I've developed some patience in working on this. I'm impatient to get the results, but I understand what it's like to try to change the mindset of a nation, the psychology of a nation, when it has deeply embedded historical experiences that become a part of the way the leaders of a nation look at everything that happens thereafter.

Korean Peninsula

Q. So, from Tibet to the Korean Peninsula, what do you expect to accomplish from this trip over the Korean issue? Are you going to appoint a special envoy to the Korean—North Korea?

The President. Well, right now I think the—what I would like to do is two things. First of all, I want to get a reaffirmation of the partnership we have with China in the four-party talks. I want to send a clear signal to North Korea and to South Korea that we're prepared to do our part, but I also want us to clearly support the bilateral efforts that are now going on. Since President Kim Dae-jung was inaugurated in South Korea, I have been quite encouraged at the attitude he has taken toward, you know, reaching out directly to the North.

It appears to me, based on the work we did to end—the work that we did with China together to end North Korea's dangerous nuclear program, which had a lot of involvement from Japan and Russia and other countries all supported us. It appears to me that there are some of these matters that divide the North from the South that will have to be resolved directly between the two Koreas. And then there are other things that they will actually need the framework of the four-party talks to work through and the active involvement of China and the United States.

We will be talking about that. But again, this whole matter has acquired greater urgency because of the nuclear tests on the Indian subcontinent. You know, we have to keep the commitment of North Korea in place not to have a nuclear program, particularly since they have such facility in building missiles. It's a very, very big issue.

And I think this is one issue that the pace of the resolution of this depends a lot on the calculations of the people in North Korea and South Korea. We actually could move rather quickly on this, or they could drag it out the way they have been. But for the United States and China, what we have to do is to keep the lid on it, if you will, and keep it moving in the right direction. And I think we're committed to do that. I think we will be successful there.

Q. What about the special envoy? Are you considering a special envoy?

The President. Not at this time because of the level of direct involvement between the North and the South and because right now it wouldn't be consistent at this moment, at least with the nature of the four-party relationship, where it's a partnership with the United States and China working with the Koreas. If there came a time when I thought it was the right thing to do, I would obviously discuss it with the Chinese and with the South Koreans and decide.

Goals of the Visit to China

Q. Mr. President, I know we are running out of time here so what—critics of this trip you're going to make to China in a short while have said that this is going to be more about symbolism than about substance—what exactly substantially do you hope to achieve on this trip, and are you planning to make some strong speeches on the issue of human rights and freedoms when you are in China, including at the welcoming ceremony at Tiananmen?

The President. Well it's interesting, a lot of the critics who say that then turn around when you ask them what they want me to do, what they want me to do is to make it even more symbolic and give up any substance.

So all my critics who say this is about more symbolism than substance when you ask them what they want me to do they want me to make it even more symbolic and give up the substance.

I believe we will make some progress in a number of areas. I think we'll make some progress in nonproliferation. I think we'll make some progress in dealing with the Asian financial challenges; I hope we will. It's a very big issue that could directly affect the lives of Americans. I think we'll make some progress in dealing with energy and environment issues which are very, very important. You know the pollution in China has now made respiratory problems the number one health problem of children there. And it's a huge issue.

I think we'll make some progress in our scientific cooperation, which has already yielded some significant benefits. And I hope, whether it's obvious or not at the end of the trip, that we will advance the human rights dialog. In a structural way, let me say I think it's important that we advance the rule of law cooperation that we have developed—we have begun with the Chinese. And let me explain why.

If you can get a country like China to change its legal system, even if the leading edge issue is commercial, it's in the system of law that protecting commercial rights and protecting rights of free speech and citizenship tend to merge. And one of the things that I would like to see over the long run is that I would like to see us move to the next step where China moves from reassessing its position on this or that or the other political dissident from time-to-time and releases them, to the point where we have a systematic change in the way people are treated. I think that should be our long-term goal.

Those things won't make as many headlines, but they will change more lives. So I would expect there to be some advances in this whole rule of law cooperation we've been doing. And if we show progress in all these areas, I think the trip will be very much worthwhile. What I'm trying to do is to have—I don't mean to say—I think symbols are important, actually, but I think it's important that in the end what matters is results. Are lives changed for the better? Is the direction of the country better over the long run?

This is a difficult trip because of the differences between us, but it's also an important trip because of our common interests and because so much is at stake. It seems to me that the chances of doing good for the American people and for the stability of the world far outweigh the dealing with the difficulties presented by the trip.

I've seen the Chinese work with us, for example, with great reliability—I could just mention a few things—on the non-proliferation treaty, the comprehensive test ban, the chemical weapons treaty, the observing most of the Missile Technology Control Regime's requirements, stopping cooperation with Pakistan and Iran on a lot of their nuclear programs, other programs. It's not—they've been very good allies in many of these areas.

They gave great leadership to our meeting the other day on the Permanent Five statement on the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. And I think if you look at the areas where we've made progress, they make the argument for a continued, disciplined engagement where we try to advance our interests, but we never pretend that our interests are only security issues or our issues are only economic issues where we merge our human rights and our political concerns with these other matters. And we just pursue the whole agenda, and we do the best we can. I think it will produce more results than any available alternative.

Q. A strong speech at Tiananmen? A strong speech at Peking University?

The President. There is no speech at——

Q. Oh, there is no speech at Tiananmen?

The President. At the arrival ceremony, which is—well, you know where it is, right off Tiananmen Square. There is no speech, it is just—you know, and by the way, the United States is the only country that I'm aware of where we have little remarks at the arrival ceremony.

Every country I go to, it is the same thing. I get out; you go through the ritual; and then you go in and begin your meetings. But I will say what I have to say in other forums.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We appreciate your time.

The President. I enjoyed it.

Q. And we hope you will wear this hat.

The President. I love this hat. It's quite pretty.

Q. Hey, you look good in it.

The President. Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at approximately 10:20 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast and was embargoed by the Office of the Press Secretary until 3 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin of China; and freed Chinese dissident Wang Dan. The journalists who conducted the interview were Arin Basu, Feng Xiao Ming, and Patricia Hindman. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement Announcing the Benchmarking Process in Federal Procurement

June 24, 1998

Today I am pleased to announce policies that continue my commitment to expand economic opportunity for all Americans. These new guidelines for Federal procurement are designed to remedy discrimination

in a carefully targeted way. These reforms, which continue my promise to mend, not end affirmative action, expand opportunities for small disadvantaged businesses.

These new guidelines allow small disadvantaged businesses to receive a price credit of up to 10 percent in bidding for Federal contracts. The credits will be available only in industries that show the ongoing effects of discrimination. The Department of Commerce identified these industries through a process called benchmarking, which compares the actual share of Federal procurement by small disadvantaged firms to the share that would be expected in the absence of discrimination. Limiting credits to these industries satisfies constitutional requirements while targeting our efforts in areas where disparities still exist.

This program is based on authority given the administration by Congress in 1994. These credits will help level the playing field for firms that have suffered from discrimination. However, they do not ensure that any firm will win a contract. Small disadvantaged businesses must compete with all other businesses to win Federal contracts.

The steps we are taking today comply with legal requirements and preserve competition, while serving to remedy discrimination.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Proposed "Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998"

June 24, 1998

Dear _____:

I am writing to urge the Senate (House) to act quickly this year to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998. This crucial legislation would expand the ability of the Justice Department to prosecute hate crimes by removing needless jurisdictional requirements for existing crimes and by giving Federal prosecutors the power to prosecute hate crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

As you know, there have been a number of recent tragedies across our country that involve hate crimes. I know you were as troubled as I was by the vicious murder in Jasper, Texas, just two weeks ago. This shocking event focused America's attention on the problem of hate crimes. I hope we can join together to reaffirm that no American should be subjected to violence on account of his or her race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

Whether it is a gay American murdered as he walks home from work or a Jewish American whose synagogue is desecrated by swastikas, such acts are not only examples of bias and bigotry—they are crimes. They strike at the heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that define us as a Nation. That is why I believe now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to fight hate crimes.

There is nothing more important to the future of this country than our standing together against intolerance, prejudice, and violent bigotry. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act will lead the way in making all Americans more safe and secure. I implore you to move this vital piece of legislation through the Senate (House) without delay.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the contents of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping Operations

June 24, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 1997 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping. The report is required by section 407(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236).

The report provides an account of how the United States used peacekeeping last year to promote regional stability and to advance U.S. interests. Our support for United Nations and other peacekeeping operations allowed us to protect our interests before they

were directly threatened and ensured that other nations shared with us the risks and costs of maintaining stability in the post-Cold War world.

Working together, we brought greater discipline to decisionmaking in national capitals and at the United Nations regarding multilateral peace operations. Tough questions about mandate, size, cost, duration, and exit strategy for proposed missions were answered before operations were approved. Careful attention was also given to ensuring that those responsible for leading peacekeeping missions—the United Nations, NATO, or a coalition of concerned states—were capable of successfully achieving the intended objective.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts of interest to the United States.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Floyd Spence, chairman, House Committee on National Security; Robert L. Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Strom Thurmond, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; and Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

June 24, 1998

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

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from April 3 to the present.

Introduction

During the 60-day period covered by this report, Iraq continued to provide access to U.N. weapons inspectors as required under the terms of the February 23 Annan-Aziz MOU and UNSC Resolution 1154. Travel restrictions on Iraq imposed under UNSC Resolution 1137 of November 12, 1997 expired by their terms after UNSCOM Executive Chairman Butler reported that Iraq was complying with access requirements. In accordance with UNSC Resolution 1134, regular sanctions reviews have resumed. However, Iraq's continued failure to meet its obligations under UNSC Resolution 687 and other relevant resolutions led the Security Council to conclude on April 27 that Iraq still had not met the conditions necessary to enable the Council to lift sanctions. Ongoing UNSCOM and IAEA inspections continue to test Iraq's long-term intentions with regard to providing full access and full disclosure to U.N. weapons inspectors.

We continue to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the "oil-for-food" program and other humanitarian efforts. Resolution 1153, which was adopted by the UNSC on February 20, expands the "oil-for-food" program considerably by raising the ceiling of permitted Iraqi oil exports to $5.2 billion every 180 days and by authorizing repairs to Iraq's degraded petroleum, health, education, and sanitation infrastructure under strict U.N. supervision in accordance with a prioritized distribution plan.

During the period covered by this report, the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people were addressed through Phase Three of the original "oil-for-food" plan in accordance with UNSCRs 986 and 1143. The Iraqi government only recently produced an acceptable distribution plan to implement UNSCR 1153.

On May 1, I signed into law the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act. This legislation provides funding for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to initiate a surrogate broadcast service for the Iraqi people. It also provides funding for efforts to support the democratic Iraqi opposition in presenting a credible alternative to the

present Iraqi regime and compiling information to support the indictment of Iraqi officials for war crimes. These new programs will enable us to redouble our work with the Iraqi opposition to support their efforts to build a pluralistic, peaceful Iraq that observes the international rule of law and respects basic human rights. Such an Iraq would have little trouble regaining it rightful place in the region and in the international community.

The United States will keep a significant military presence in the region to provide the full range of military options necessary to deter Iraqi aggression, to ensure that UNSC resolutions are enforced, and to deal with other contingencies that may arise.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

In view of Saddam's record of brutality and unreliability, it is prudent to retain a significant force presence in the region to deter Iraq. United States and allied forces now in the region are prepared to deal with contingencies. This gives us the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors. As we make the force adjustments mentioned below, we are strengthening a rapid redeployment capability to supplement our forces in the Gulf. Our cruise missile force will be twice the pre-crisis level. In addition, we will be able to double again our cruise missile force in days. Once these moves are completed, this capability will allow for a swift, powerful strike.

The aircraft carrier USS JOHN C. STENNIS and her accompanying battle group combatant ships and combat aircraft remain in the region as United States force levels are being reduced. The aircraft carriers USS INDEPENDENCE and USS GEORGE WASHINGTON and their accompanying battle group combatant ships left the region, as scheduled. Once force level adjustments are completed, U.S. forces will include land and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine amphibious task force, Patriot missile battalions, a mechanized battalion task force and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of USCINCCENT operations. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed. During the crisis, U.S. forces were augmented by HMS ILLUSTRIOUS and accompanying ships from the United Kingdom.

During our successful effort to compel Iraq's compliance with relevant UNSC resolutions earlier this year, the United Kingdom and a number of other nations pledged forces. Although all of the members of this international effort sought a peaceful diplomatic resolution of the crisis, all showed their resolve to achieve our common objective by military force if that becomes necessary.

Twenty nations deployed forces to the region or readied their forces for contingency deployment. Another 12 nations offered important access, basing, overflight, and other assistance essential for the multinational effort. Still others identified force contributions that were held in reserve for deployment should the need arise. For those nations with forces deployed during the crisis, most of these governments redeployed their forces back home after the crisis in keeping with our own force adjustments. These nations have made clear their willingness to repeat this deployment should Iraq again challenge the international community.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq under Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. In response to a series of Iraqi no-fly zone violations in October and November 1997, we increased the number of aircraft participating in these operations. Since then, there have been no observed no-fly zone violations. In early April, we restored the preexisting level of aircraft deployed to Northern Watch. We have made clear to the Government of Iraq and to all other relevant parties that the United States and coalition partners will continue to enforce both no-fly zones.

The Maritime Interception Force

The Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating under the authority of UNSCR 665, vigorously enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of this multinational force, but

it is frequently augmented by ships and aircraft from Australia, Canada, Belgium, The Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Today in the Gulf, ships from Canada, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom have joined with us in maritime patrols. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council support the MIF by providing logistical support and shipriders and by accepting vessels diverted for violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq.

Since my last report, the MIF has intercepted several vessels involved in illegal smuggling from Iraq. Although petroleum products comprise most of the prohibited traffic, the MIF has recently diverted vessels engaged in date smuggling as well. Ships involved in smuggling have often utilized the territorial seas of Iran to avoid MIF inspections. We have provided detailed reports of these illegal activities to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in New York.

The level of petroleum smuggling from Iraq appears to be in a state of flux. For several weeks, Iran ceased allowing gasoil smugglers to use its territorial seas to avoid the MIF inspections, causing a dramatic decrease in the level of gasoil smuggling. In recent weeks, however, we have noted ships once again using Iranian waters with the apparent aid of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces that operate in small boats near the mouth of the Shatt Al Arab waterway. It is too early to tell what the long-term policy of Iran will be in this matter, although we are hopeful that it will take the necessary steps to curb U.N. sanctions violations occurring within its territorial seas.

Our forces continue to benefit from recent actions by the United Arab Emirates that make it difficult for sanctions violators to operate in UAE territory. We will continue to work with the Emirates to find ways to thwart the significant sanctions-busting trade which has historically been bound for UAE ports. As noted in my last report, the UAE has significantly increased its level of cooperation with the MIF. These efforts have resulted in an increase in the number of ships caught with illegal cargoes. In addition, the UAE has prohibited the use of tankers, barges, and other vessel types to transport petroleum products to UAE ports and through its waters or to store such products there. While it is still too early to determine the full effect of these measures, we are hopeful that these actions will deal a significant blow to sanctions-busting activity in the region.

Biological and Chemical Weapons

Iraqi biological and chemical weapons remain the most troubling issues for UNSCOM. This is due to the innate dual-use nature of the technology; it can easily be hidden within civilian industries, such as the pharmaceutical industry for biological agents and the pesticide industry for chemical agents. Iraq continues to resist making a full and complete declaration of its biological weapons programs, as required by UNSCR 707.

Following its March technical evaluation meetings, UNSCOM concluded that Iraq has not provided a clear statement of the current status of the programs. Iraq's declaration still contains major mistakes, inconsistencies, and gaps. It may substantially understate Iraq's production of bulk biological weapons agents. UNSCOM is still unable to verify that all of Iraq's SCUD missile warheads filled with biological agents—anthrax, botulinum toxin, and aflatoxin—have been destroyed. UNSCOM also suspects Iraq may be concealing additional, as-yet undisclosed, biological weapons research or development programs.

Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Systems

On May 14, the UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement on the most recent UNSCOM and IAEA reports about Iraq's nuclear program. The Statement notes that the IAEA's investigations over the past several years have yielded a technically coherent picture of Iraq's clandestine nuclear program, but that all outstanding unanswered technical and substantive questions must be answered before the UNSC will authorize the IAEA to move from inspections to ongoing monitoring and verification in the nuclear field. While the bulk of its resources are now devoted to monitoring, the IAEA will continue to exercise its right to investigate any aspect of Iraq's nuclear program. The IAEA, in a recent report, points out that Iraq still has not provided information requested

about certain sites, that concerns remain as to the completeness, accuracy, and internal consistency of Iraq's nuclear declaration and that Iraq has failed to enact laws prohibiting certain activities.

Iraq's Concealment Mechanisms

From March 26 to April 2 UNSCOM conducted inspections of the so-called ''Presidential Sites.'' The inspectors reported that the sites appeared to have been ''sanitized'' prior to their visits, and, as anticipated, they discovered no materials related to Iraq's WMD programs during these inspections. In accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions, UNSCOM and the IAEA must be allowed to continue to investigate all aspects of Iraq's prohibited programs until they can verify that all relevant components have been destroyed under international supervision, and that all remaining capabilities have been eliminated. Without such verification, Iraq could develop the ability to strike at any city in the region—and beyond the region—with devastating biological, chemical, and possibly even nuclear weapons.

Dual-Use Imports

Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq's imports of allowed dual-use items. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports specific items which can be used in both weapons of mass destruction and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of such dual-use items.

We continue to be concerned that Iraq's land borders are extremely porous. Iraq continues substantial trade with its neighbors. There is significant potential for evasion of sanctions by land routes, giving additional weight to our position that UNSCOM must have full and unconditional access to all locations, and be allowed to inspect and monitor Iraqi compliance over time.

The U.N.'s ''Oil-for-Food'' Program

On February 20, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1153, which raises from $2.0 billion to $5.2 billion the amount of oil Iraq is authorized to sell every 180 days. Resolution 1153 provides that the nutritional and health requirements of the Iraqi people are the top priority. My Administration's support for Resolution 1153 is fully consistent with long-standing U.S. policy. Since 1990, at the height of the Gulf War, the United States has held that the international community's dispute is with Iraq's leadership, not its people. The Security Council proposed an ''oil-for-food'' program in 1991 (UNSCR 706/712), which Iraq rejected. A similar program (UNSCR 986) was eventually accepted by Iraq in 1996. We supported the expansion of the ''oil-for-food'' program under UNSCR 1153 because it will provide additional humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, under strict U.N. supervision, without benefiting the regime.

Since the beginning of the ''oil-for-food'' program, we have consistently worked with the U.N. and other U.N. member states to find ways to improve the program's effectiveness to better meet the humanitarian needs of Iraq's civilian population. Iraq, however, has frequently failed to provide the full cooperation necessary to ensure that the program functions smoothly. For example, during calendar year 1997, the Government of Iraq refused to pump oil under UNSCR 986 for more than three months, all the while blaming the U.N. and the United States for disruptions in the flow of food and medicine which it had caused. The Iraqi government, after much prodding by the U.N. Secretary General's office, finally submitted a satisfactory distribution plan to the U.N. as called for by UNSCR 1153.

Resolution 1153 calls for an independent assessment of Iraq's oil infrastructure to determine whether it can export $5.2 billion in oil in a 180-day period, as provided for in the resolution. This report, which was submitted to the UNSC on April 15, recommended that the Sanctions Committee approve up to $300 million worth of repairs to Iraq's oil infrastructure during the period covered by UNSCR 1153. The United States has expressed its intention to support those oil infrastructure repairs needed to fund the expanded humanitarian program, provided these repairs can be carried out in a manner fully consistent with the humanitarian objectives of UNSCR 1153, and that the U.N. is able to properly monitor all aspects of the

repair process. We are continuing to work with members of the Security Council to resolve these concerns.

Resolution 1153 also maintains the separate program for northern Iraq, administered directly by the U.N. in consultation with the local population. This program receives 13 to 15 percent of the funds generated under the ''oil-for-food'' program. The United States strongly supports this provision. The separate northern program was established because of the Baghdad regime's proven disregard for the humanitarian condition of the Kurdish, Assyrian, and Turkomen minorities of northern Iraq and its readiness to apply the most brutal forms of repression against them. The well-documented series of chemical weapons attacks a decade ago by the government against civilians in the north is only one example of this brutality. In northern Iraq, where Baghdad does not exercise control, the ''oil-for-food'' program has been able to operate unhindered. The Kurdish factions are seeking to set aside their differences to work together so that UNSCR 1153 is implemented as efficiently as possible. As a result, the contrast between the north and the rest of the country is striking.

The U.N. must carefully monitor implementation of Resolution 1153. The Iraqi government continues to insist on the need for rapid lifting of the sanctions regime, despite its clear record of noncompliance with its obligations under relevant U.N. resolutions—a record which was unanimously acknowledged during the Security Council's 38th sanctions review on April 27. We will continue to work with the U.N. Secretariat, the Security Council, and others in the international community to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people are met while denying any political or economic benefits to the Baghdad regime.

The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be a cause for grave concern. Summary, arbitrary, and extrajudicial executions remain a primary concern. On March 10, U.N. Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoel, reported that his ongoing investigation had revealed that ''there is strong evidence that hundreds of prisoners have been executed in Abu Gharaib and Radwaniyah prisons since August 1997.'' According to credible reports, many of those killed were serving sentences of 15–20 years for such crimes as insulting the regime or being members of an opposition political party. Families in Iraq reportedly received the bodies of the executed which bore, in some cases, clear signs of torture. In April, the U.N. Human Rights Commission issued a strong condemnatory resolution describing these and other ongoing Iraqi human rights violations. The resolution extended the Special Rapporteur's mandate and condemned the ''all-pervasive repression and oppression'' perpetrated by the Government of Iraq.

In southern Iraq, the government continues to repress the Shi'a population, destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. In the north, outside the Kurdish-controlled areas, the government continues the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Kurds and Turkomans from Kirkuk and other cities. The government continues to stall and obfuscate attempts to account for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared at the hands of Iraqi authorities during or after the occupation of Kuwait. In the course of recent prisoner exchanges brokered by the ICRC, Iraq has released more than 300 Iranian prisoners of war taken during the Iran-Iraq war in exchange for 5,600 Iraqi POWs. Yet the Government of Iraq shows no sign of complying with UNSCR 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people.

Northern Iraq: PUK–KDP Relations

In northern Iraq, the cease-fire between the Kurdish parties, established in November 1997 as the result of U.S. efforts, continues to hold. Both Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have made positive, forward-looking statements on political reconciliation, and talks between the two groups are now entering their sixth round. We will continue our efforts to reach a permanent reconciliation through mediation in order to

help the people of northern Iraq find the permanent, stable settlement which they deserve, and to minimize the opportunities for Baghdad and Tehran to insert themselves into the conflict and threaten Iraqi citizens in this region. Baghdad continues to pressure the two groups to enter into negotiations.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to UNSCRs 687 and 692, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued almost 1.3 million awards worth $6 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by UNSCRs 986, 1111, and 1143 have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. To the extent that money is available in the Compensation Fund, initial payments to each claimant are authorized for awards in the order in which the UNCC has approved them, in installments of $2,500. To date, 757 U.S. claimants have received an initial installment payment, and payment is still in process for approximately another 58 U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under UNSC resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

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

Remarks to the Community at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska

June 24, 1998

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking all of you for your service and for giving Hillary and me and our entire delegation—including Secretaries Albright, Rubin and Daley, and my Chief of Staff, Mr. Bowles, and National Security Advisor, Mr. Berger, all of us feel so welcome—and for welcoming this very distinguished delegation of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives as we embark on this trip to China.

And thank you for our service here, and thank you for bringing all the children. I always look forward to these stops at Elmendorf. You know, I couldn't go to China without stopping at Elmendorf—literally, of course. [*Laughter*] But I don't want to anymore.

Of all the times I've been here, I've seen so many people I've had a chance to express personal thanks—I've never come here a single time and met with our service families that I haven't met at least one person, and usually more than one, whom I knew in my previous life, when I was Governor of Arkansas, or whom I had met traveling around the country in their previous service at another base. So for all of that, I thank you.

I'd like to thank Colonel Gration and you, General McCloud, for your distinguished remarks here and your service. General Simpson, thank you. I thank the members of the 3rd Wing, the men and women of the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Coast Guard, and the National Guard, all of whom make up the Alaska Command.

Tomorrow Hillary and I and our party will a arrive in Xi'an for the first state visit to China, as Congressman Hamilton said, by an American President this decade. The American people are taking a special interest in this trip, just as they did when President Nixon first went to China a quarter century ago. I thought it would be important for me to spend a few moments speaking to you, who give so much to the security of our country every day, about why I am going.

Let's start with some basic facts. China is the world's most populous nation. It is growing by the size of our total population every 20 years. It borders more than one dozen countries in one of the most challenging regions on Earth. Its economy has grown an average of 10 percent every year for the past 20 years. It has a large military, a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, sophisticated industrial and technological capabilities.

Soon, it will overtake the United States as the world's largest emitter of the greenhouse gases that are doing so much to warm our planet. Clearly, the policies China chooses to pursue and the relationship between the United States and China will have a huge impact on your lives and the lives of your children and your grandchildren in the 21st century.

Of course, our engagement with China does not mean we embrace everything that China does; nor does it mean, parenthetically, that they agree with everything we do. We have chosen a course that is both pragmatic and principled, expanding cooperation while dealing directly with our differences, especially over human rights. This policy is the best way to advance our national interests, as results clearly show.

Just consider two areas vital to our security: promoting stability in Asia and stemming the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Better than anyone, you know how important the Asia-Pacific region is to our country's future. We've fought three wars in Asia in this century. Even in a recession, its economies still are major exports for our products. Five of our States touch the Pacific. Millions of Americans trace their roots to the Asia-Pacific region. We are an Asia-Pacific nation.

We keep about 100,000 troops in Asia, not directed against any adversary but to maintain and enhance stability in a region that is going through very profound change. Now, I ask you to ask yourselves: How can we better maintain stability in Asia, by working with China or without it? On the Korean Peninsula, where nearly 40,000 United States soldiers patrol the cold war's last militarized fault line, China has worked with us to advance peace talks and to support our successful effort to freeze North Korea's nuclear program.

When India and Pakistan bucked the tide of history and tested nuclear explosives recently, China helped to forge a common strategy, working with us, designed to move India and Pakistan away from a dangerous arms race. And China's economy today serves as a firebreak in the Asian financial crisis. That's good for Wall Street, but it's good for Main Street America, too.

You all know how important our efforts are to stop the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. China will either be part of the problem or part of the solution. In the past, China has been a major exporter of sophisticated technologies. But over the last decade, China has joined and complied with most of the major arms control regimes, including the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and it has agreed to abide by most of the provisions of the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Over the past few years, it has also pledged to stop assistance to Iran for its nuclear program, to terminate its assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities such as those in Pakistan, to sell no more antiship missiles to Iran. Each of these steps makes the world safer and makes America safer. It was in no small measure the product of our engagement.

In many other areas that matter to the American people, working with China is making a difference, too, fighting international crime and drug trafficking, protecting the environment, working on scientific research. And if we keep doing it, we can accomplish a great deal more.

When dealing with our differences, also, I believe, dealing face-to-face is the best way to advance our ideals and our values. Over time, the more we bring China into the world, the more the world will bring freedom to China. When it comes to human rights, we should deal respectfully but directly with the Chinese. That's more effective than trying to push them in a corner. I will press ahead on human rights in China with one goal in mind, and only one: making a difference.

That's what all of you here in the Alaska Command are doing for America, making a difference. The reach of this Command is truly remarkable, flying missions far and wide in your F–15's, AWACS, C–130 airlifters, patrolling the skies below the Korean DMZ, facing threats in the Persian Gulf, helping democracy make a new start in Haiti, running counternarcotics operations out of Panama, training with Canadian forces in the Arctic, conducting oil spill exercises with Russia and Japan. And of course, working with the Chinese through the military-to-military exchange program you host. And I understand another group of Chinese officers will be here just next month.

Wherever your country calls, you are there. Whenever your country needs you, you deliver. So again let me say to all of you, to those of you in uniform and to your families, your country thanks you, and I thank you.

Last week, the summer solstice touched Elendorf and you had 20 hours of daylight. Hillary said she was glad to be here in the middle of the afternoon. We could have come in the middle of the night and still had daylight at this time of year. [*Laugher*] By December you'll be all the way down to 6 hours of light a day. But in every season, day and night, thanks to you the bright light of freedom burns here. It illuminates every corner of our planet. So no matter how cold or dark it gets, never forget that your fellow Americans know you are burning freedom's flame, and we are very, very grateful.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:09 p.m. in Hangar One. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Jonathan Scott Gration, USAF, Commander, 3d Wing; Lt. Gen. David J. McCloud, USAF, Commander, Alaskan Command and 11th Air Force; and Maj. Gen. Kenneth W. Simpson, USA, Commander, U.S. Army Alaskan Command.

Interview With the Los Angeles Times, Bloomberg Business News, and Business Week

June 19, 1998

Intervention To Support the Yen

Q. I wanted to talk to you a little bit, to start with, about the different reasoning between the 1995 intervention for the dollar and the 1998 intervention for the yen. In '95 the thought was that the dollar was out of line with the economic fundamentals and, therefore, needed to be supported. In this particular case we have the yen, which doesn't really seem to be out of sync with the fundamentals in the Japanese economy. And yet, we went in to intervene. Can you explain to me what the different reasoning is?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the yen would be out of line if you look at the fundamental productive capacity and the strength of the Japanese economy and the prospect of genuine reform of the financial institutions and appropriate economic policy. So that when the Prime Minister had agreed to put out the statement being clearer and more specific than before about the kinds of things that the Japanese Government was prepared to do in those areas, particularly around the institutional reform, we thought it was the appropriate thing to do, especially since a continued movement in the other direction in our view would have been unnecessarily destabilizing and out of line with what we think is the reality of the Japanese economic capacity.

Q. Let me just follow up this way if I could. Obviously, what needs to happen in order for Japan to have a recovery would be that the Japanese people need to open their wallets and start spending. Is there anything that you can do to help Hashimoto inspire them to do that?

The President. I don't know. But I think that in order to get them to change their well known habits for incredible savings, even when it's not the right thing to do, they have

to first of all have confidence in the long-term security and stability of the Japanese economy.

And so I think, you know, the reform of the financial institutions, the sense that the world believes the Japanese policy is moving in the right direction I think will at least inspire a greater degree of confidence in the Japanese people to do that. Part of what has caused the recent difficulties was the movement of money out of Japan by Japanese citizens. In these other countries it's normally what foreign investors do or don't do. And so we hope that this will contribute to that.

Now, in terms of changing the normal habits of Japanese consumers that have built up over decades and that were forged at a time when they did need an extremely high savings rate, that is something that will probably have to take place more within their border than as a result of discussion among the Japanese themselves. But first things first, you have to get the right framework before people could be asked to do that.

Devaluation of the Yuan

Q. Bringing the currency question around to China, China has been making noises that it might not be able to hold the line on devaluation. I was wondering how worried you are about that and what you might be able to do in the upcoming summit to ease their concerns or to help solve that?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's clear to everyone that they don't want to devalue, and they've been taking extraordinary actions to avoid devaluation. And I think in so doing they have helped to contain and to stabilize the situation in Asia. And they deserve credit for that. And I personally appreciate it.

I think the most important thing is to try to alter the conditions, which if they continue to worsen would make them feel compelled to devalue. And I think from our point of view that they have to make the policy call. The best thing we can do is to work with them, with Japan, and with others to try to change the conditions so that they will—that the pressure to devalue will decrease, rather than increase.

U.S. China Policy

Q. Mr. President, if I could ask broadly about your China policy. How—at this point, as it's evolved, how does your policy now differ from the policy followed by the Bush administration? And how do the Republican criticisms of it—do they differ from the ways in which the Democratic Party and you in the '92 campaign criticized the Bush administration's policy?

The President. Well, first of all, I never felt that it was wrong to engage China. I never criticized any President for going to China. I always think you're better off talking whenever there's a possibility of advancing the ball, if you will.

I thought it was important after Tiananmen Square that the United States be clear, unambiguous, and firm, and to the extent I thought the signals were not as clear or unambiguous as they should have been, I tried to make that plain. Some people I think concluded from that that I thought we ought to, in effect, launch a policy of isolation and try to contain and isolate the Chinese and that that would be the best way to get change. I never believed that.

And the reason I'm going to China now is that I think there have been a lot of positive changes in the last 6 years. No, we don't have all the problems solved, we still have differences with them over human rights, over religious rights, over economic issues. In some ways we've made the most progress in the nonproliferation area.

But if you look at what's happened in the 5½ years I've been President, at the work the—you know, the Chinese agreeing to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, accepting the missile technology control guidelines, agreeing not to cooperate in nuclear matters with India and with unsafeguarded facilities, including those that are in Pakistan; they're a member of the NPT. I think we've made significant progress, even in the area of human rights. We've seen the release of Wang Dan, Wei Jingsheng, Bishop Jingmu.

And I hope there we will get a real resumption of our dialog. I hope this whole legal systems cooperation will continue where I think we can have a big impact in

a positive way, in the way China evolves legally and the way it deals with not just commercial matters but also with matters of personal freedom. We've clearly had a lot of security cooperation on the Korean Peninsula, and China has led these five-party talks in the aftermath of the nuclear tests on the Indian subcontinent.

So I think that this trip is coming at a time when there have been substantive changes which justify the kind of measured, principled engagement strategy we've followed, and I think it's more than justified. And if you ask me how it compares with the previous policy, I would say that it may just be the passage of time, but I think there are more elements to our policy. We're about to open a DEA office in Beijing. And as I said, I hope very much that as a result of this trip we'll wind up with a genuinely invigorated human rights dialog and perhaps an NGO forum on human rights.

I don't think there's any ambiguity here about the extent to which we have tried to put all the elements of our engagement in China into our policy and pursue them all in the way we feel would be most effective.

Q. And the Republican criticisms?

The President. Well, I think some of them are consistent, some of them—some of the Members of the House, for example, in the Republican Party, have had a consistent posture on China. Some of it may just be election year politics. But to whatever extent it exists, I think that I should listen to whatever the critics say and see whether or not they're right about any specific things they say.

But on the larger issue of our engagement in China, I think most Americans agree with me. And the most important thing is I'm convinced it's in the interest of the United States, and I'm going to pursue it as clearly and effectively as I can.

Trade With China

Q. One of the things that the critics always point to, however, is the trade deficit with China; particularly that our exports to China dropped below $1 billion in April. Do you have a strategy? Obviously there's going to be a yawning trade gap as things happen in Asia. Do you have a strategy to sort of combat the isolationists who say that this is bad for our country?

The President. Well, if you take the economic issues—first of all, the volume of imports into our country is the function of the strength of our economy combined with the weakness of the other Asian economies which would normally be markets for China's products. And our people have chosen to buy those products, and it has not weakened our economy. After all, we had the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years. So that is not, for me, the source of the problem. And we knew that the trade deficit would worsen this year because of the weakness in Asia.

But I am concerned about the fact, even though our exports overall, notwithstanding the April figures, our exports were up 7 percent in '97 over '98, and they're running about 17 percent—excuse me, '97 over '96; they're running about 17 percent higher in '98 over '97. I do think that the United States should have greater market access. And I think if we had greater market access, then our exports would be increasing at least proportionately to our imports.

However, my preference would be for China to take those steps that would enable it to come into the WTO, not to give America any special deals or special preference but to simply adopt a rigorous plan for opening new markets. I think Americans would do just fine in a fair and free and open market, competing with all other people who would like to sell to China. And that's what I hope we can achieve. And I hope we'll make some progress on that.

But in the meanwhile, I have to continue to press for more access for American products, and I do have a strategy on it. But we will be more vulnerable to those criticisms in this year for the simple reason that our economy is especially strong and the problems in Asia are especially acute. And the intersection of those things mean we're taking on a lot more imports than we ordinarily would.

Asian Economic and Nuclear Crises

Q. How have the problems, the economic crisis in East Asia, the nuclear crisis in South Asia, and ongoing congressional hearings affected the agenda for the summit? Has it

changed since what you would have conceived of at your meeting last year?

The President. Well, I think the first two matters have made the importance of the summit, the importance of the trip even greater because I think they illustrate in graphic terms that relate to the security and the welfare of the American people why a constructive partnership with China is important if we can achieve it.

If you just look at the economic issues—you asked the question about Chinese devaluation. The Chinese have tried to be constructive in working with us on the whole Asian economic crisis. If you look at the Indian subcontinent, just imagine how much more tension there would have been after the India and Pakistan tests if China hadn't signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and then responded with a test of its own since India asserted that it was really doing this because of China and not because of Pakistan.

And now, you know, the Chinese headed the five-party talks we had with the Permanent Five, and they adhered to every statement we made. And I think that's important. And it's really—you can't imagine any scenario in which we can unravel the difficulties between India and Pakistan without China playing a major role. So I think that's very important.

Now, as to the congressional hearings, I think you have to—or investigations—the only one that I think has any bearing on the trip—it won't have any bearing on the trip, but it has a bearing on our relationships with China—is all the inquiries into the question of whether any elements of the Chinese Government attempted to influence the last election by channeling money into either my campaign or the campaign of various Members of Congress.

As I have always said, that is a serious issue. I have raised it with the Chinese, from the President on down. They have vigorously denied it. And I have asked them to, please to cooperate in every way with the investigation that we have to conduct into this—that is, "we" the executive branch, and "we" the United States through the Congress. And we will continue to express that view on this trip. But that will not—that doesn't in any way undermine the importance of the trip or the need for this kind of partnership against the background of the economic and security issues you mentioned.

China's Political System

Q. Mr. President, would you like to see the end of communism in China, and is that a goal of American policy?

The President. Well, of course I would like to see China adopt a more open, freer political system in which basic political and civil rights would be recognized. The Chinese have expressed their intention to sign the covenant. I think that's very important. And I believe that the Chinese people will, over time, understand and will come to embrace the notion that they can only achieve their full greatness in the world of the 21st century if they allow the widest possible latitude for personal imagination and personal freedom, and that there is a way to do that and still preserve the coherence and stability of their society.

And so I think there will be a process of evolution here as China becomes a more involved and constructive partner with the rest of the world, has a bigger say in regional affairs, and also comes to grips with the basic elements of what it takes to succeed in the modern world. I believe that. And I believe that we can further that by pushing in that direction and by actually having a dialog in which the Chinese leaders really have to imagine the future and what it's going to be like and understand what life is like. You know, they're going to have—what do they have, 400,000 people on the Internet now, they're going to 20 million before you know it. So I would like to see a China that is more open and more free, and I believe—and also that is more accommodating to difference.

I think this—if you look at the question of Tibet, I see this as a great opportunity for China, not some great problem that threatens instability. I think the symbolic importance of the Dalai Lama saying that Tibet just seeks to be genuinely autonomous region but not separate from China, and then having a President of China agree to meet with the Dalai Lama—I think the benefits to China

would be sweeping, enormous, and worldwide. And I don't think it would lead to greater instability.

And that relates to, you know, you've got—China has a substantial Muslim population. China has a not insubstantial and growing Christian population. I think, you know, this—the religious leaders who went to China at my request, after President Jiang and I worked out the opportunity for them to go, came back and made their report to me and their recommendations yesterday. And we had an announcement about that here.

I think all this is going to be a big part of China's future. And I think that—I think they will—let me just say this. Any society in change has to find a way to reconcile the realities it faces, its highest hopes for the future, with its biggest nightmare. And every country with any kind of history at all has a nightmare. When we worked out with the Russians—I'll give you something in a different context—when we worked out with the Russians how we were going to relate Russia to NATO and what the terms of NATO expansion would be, I kept telling people over and over again, "You've got to understand what their nightmare is. We were never invaded by Hitler and all that. And you could say there's nobody alive in Russia today that remembers Napoleon and not all that many remember Hitler, but that's not true. Those things, they seep into the psyche of a people. And you have to understand that."

For the Chinese—the word instability to us may mean a bad day on the stock market, you know, demonstrations out here on The Mall or the Ellipse, because we're a very long way from our Civil War, and we think that such a thing is unthinkable. But to them, instability in the context of their history is something that was just around the corner, only yesterday. And it becomes a significant problem.

So what we have to do is to figure out a way to press our convictions about not only what we think is right, morally right, for the people now living in China but what we believe with all of our hearts is right for the future of China and the greatness of China in terms of openness and freedom. And we have to find a way to do it so that they can accommodate it to their psyche, which is very much seared with past instabilities.

Trade, National Security, and Human Rights

Q. Your administration, since you've been in office, has aggressively pushed U.S. exports, U.S. companies, and products in the global marketplace. Some have argued that there's a danger and an emphasis on commercialism that could cloud national security or human rights interests. What's your view on the matter and how do you deal with that, both in China and in a broader sense?

The President. Well, I think they are two different issues. I think on the human rights issue, I think it only undermines human rights if you basically just do it with a wink and a nod and it's obvious that you don't care about human rights or other issues of liberty or human decency. This is not just with China, but generally.

I think on balance the evidence is that greater economic prosperity and greater economic openness leads to more open societies and to greater freedom and to a higher quality of life across the board. So I think that—I don't see them as fundamentally in conflict. I just think that as long as you recognize that there is—as long as we in the United States and the Government recognize that we have an obligation to pursue a coherent and full policy, that everything we do to open a country economically and to bring in new ideas, new information, and new people, and to bring people from those countries out of their own environs, that that's a good thing, and it advances the cause of human rights and liberty over the long run—and sometimes over the very short run.

Now, on the national security issues, very often these questions require a lot of careful judgment by people who know all the facts, and even there it's not always clear what should be done because technology is becoming more universally available in so many areas. I think we have very clear rules and guidelines on nonproliferation, and we've made a lot of progress with the Chinese on nonproliferation.

On the question of the satellites—if you just want to take the satellites. The issue there, we have a system now where in every

decision all the relevant agencies, including the national security agencies, are all involved; if the satellites are purely commercial, the initiative comes out of the State Department, the initial approval, but everybody else gets a say in almost a de facto veto. If there can be some interconnection between the satellite and rocket that goes up, then it initiates out of State, but everybody else gets a say. And I think the system has worked quite well for the United States and has advanced our interests without undermining our security. I've not seen any evidence of any case where there's been a national security interest that's been compromised.

Q. What about Sikorsky helicopters? The new ones can be sold, but the parts and the services cannot. Do you see that sanction—it's a leftover, I guess, '89 sanction—do you see that being lifted anytime soon?

The President. Well, first of all, as you know, in the Tiananmen sanctions there are five categories of sanctions. The only one we've actually lifted outright is the one on nuclear cooperation in exchange for the comprehensive agreement we made with the Chinese on nuclear cooperation. And I think that's been quite a good thing.

On the satellite issues, that's a case-by-case thing, initiated in 1988 and then implemented by President Bush and by me. On the others, most of them have to be reasoned on a case-by-case basis. And we'll have to look at it, and we'll do the right kind of national security review and make the best judgment we can on it.

Q. What's the reason behind not lifting the sanctions on the Sikorsky's?

The President. Well, I can't—I don't want to talk about it now. I mean, I'll be glad to get some sort of answer to you, but I think what—all I can say is that we have to—we deal with these things on a case-by-case basis, and we do the best we can with them.

Japan

Q. Mr. President, I wanted to ask about Japan. Why aren't you visiting Japan on this trip, and can you respond to the criticism that, based on that, that in some way American policy is tilting towards China and is giving a lower priority to its allies in Asia?

The President. Well, I think—first of all, I think that would be a huge mistake to say that. I have been to Japan on more than one occasion since I've been President. I intend to go to Japan again before I leave office. I have had the Japanese Prime Ministers here. And Prime Minister Hashimoto is coming here very soon after I get back from China. We talk to each other all the time on the telephone, and we had a conversation just the other day.

It's interesting, I think sometimes we can read too much into this. I'm going to China because I think—we moved the trip up, you remember, at the recommendation of Ambassador Sasser, after the national security team looked at it and said they thought he was right because there's so much going on in Asia and because President Jiang had a good constructive trip here. And we wanted to try to build on our relationship with China.

We have made clear to the Japanese that it will in no way undermine the importance of our relationship with Japan, which, as you know, has got long security, economic, and political components to it. And I think it would be really a stretch to try to interpret the fact that I'm going to China and not to Japan at this particular time as having any significance other than the fact that I've been President nearly—well, 5½ years, now—and I think it's time to go to China. And I think it's important to devote a significant amount of time to it and for it to be a trip that stands on its own, just as President Jiang's trip here stood on its own. But it is in no way a derogation of the Japanese relationship. And we've—we certainly, as you know, spent a lot of time working on U.S-Japanese issues and Japanese economic issues in the last few weeks, and we're going to spend a lot more.

China's Financial Markets

Q. How important do you think it is for the U.S. to help China develop its own financial markets, whether it be bond markets or housing or Fannie Mae? And what are you going to do during this trip to help them do that?

The President. The answer to the first question is, I think it's quite important. I think that developing these kinds of markets and giving international capital access to

them I think is quite important and will continue the process bringing China into the global economy in a way that I think is good. The Chinese may be a little reluctant now because they think, you know, they see what's happened in some other countries.

But as long as they've got good, stable financial policies and significant cash reserves and follow a prudent course, I think they'd be very much advantaged by having more sophisticated and various markets. I haven't decided exactly what, if anything else, I can do on that. I'm going to Shanghai. And while there, I expect to have a lot of discussions about the financial markets, how they're structured, and where we're going from here. But I don't have anything specific to say about that.

China-U.S. Business Meeting

Q. Often there are CEO delegations that accompany trips of this kind, and it doesn't appear that there will be this time. Is there a particular reason for that?

The President. Well, we are going to have a U.S.-China business meeting in Shanghai, and a lot of American CEO's are going to be there. And I have—some who have mentioned to me their interest in this trip, just in passing, I've encouraged, if they've got an interest in China, to participate in that.

But frankly, since this is the first trip an American President has made in quite a long while and since there are issues other than economic issues that also have to be front and center, I thought it was better this time just to take our delegation. There is another practical problem; it would probably be impolitic for me to admit it, but there is a practical problem here, which is that there are now so many American businesses involved in China, you'd have a hard time figuring out who to take and who to leave if we did it. [*Laughter*]

So we decided since we had this big event planned in Shanghai, we would just tell everyone to please come and try to do the trip with a smaller delegation.

Most-Favored-Nation Status for China

Q. Mr. President, is it your goal to at some point grant China permanent most-favored-nation status?

The President. I think it would be a good thing if we didn't have to have this debate every year, yes. I don't think—I think that even a lot of the people that feel for whatever reason they have to vote against it, recognize that we're better off having normal trading relations with China and that we don't need to have this debate every year. And if some future, terrible problem arose between the two of us which would call into question whether we should continue that, then there certainly would be—Congress would have the option to debate and to legislate in that area.

But I don't think this debate every year serves a particularly useful purpose. It might actually have for a few years after Tiananmen Square when there was uncertainty about what our policy was going to be and where there was no systematic way of dealing with human rights and other concerns. But I think now that there is and there will continue to be a systematic way of dealing with that, and I hope that there are other ways for Congress to be involved in China and to make their views known. I think it would be better if we didn't have to have this debate every year.

Q. Will you propose legislation or legislative action to——

The President. I would want to have consultations with Congress. We discussed this last year. I discussed this with a number of leaders in Congress last year, and the consensus was that it wasn't the right time to propose it because the Congress wasn't ready to deal with it. But let's see how the trip goes and, when I get back, see how people are feeling about it.

International Monetary Fund

Q. Another issue that's languishing on Capitol Hill is the IMF. And the Senate passed it months ago and overwhelmingly, but the House has been holding it up. Some of the social conservatives want to add abortion language. Dick Armey wants strict conditions before there would be approval. Newt Gingrich has even suggested that unless the administration is more cooperative in his mind on some of their hearings, that he would hold it up.

How important do you think it is to do this, do it quickly? And how has the economic trouble of Asia made it more important if you believe it is?

The President. I think the economic trouble in Asia has made it more important in two ways, one symbolic and one practical. Symbolically it's more important because the United States needs to be seen as doing everything possible to be a responsible player in the international economy and because we have a huge stake in what happens in Asia. A big percentage of our exports go to Asia; a significant percentage of our own economic growth has been fueled by that export market. There is a practical reason that's important, which is so many countries got in trouble at the same time, the IMF is going to need the money pretty soon. And we can't expect to lead the world when all these huge interests are at stake and then say, but I'm sorry, there are 15 or 20 members of the Republican majority in the House of Representatives who have said that if this administration won't change its family planning policy, that they're prepared to see us lose our vote in the United Nations and have no influence over the International Monetary Fund and not do our part there.

I think this is part of a dangerous move toward kind of both unilateralism and isolationism that you can also see in some of the budget proposals for foreign assistance. Some Members of the House appear to want to sanction everybody in the world who doesn't agree with us on anything and not invest in anybody in the world who does agree with us and can be our partner in the future and can build a better 21st century for their children.

I just completely disagree with this whole approach, and I'm hoping we can find a way out of it. The Speaker's is in a little bit of a political bind because of the way his caucus works, and I feel badly about it. But he knows good and well we ought to pay our way to the IMF and the U.N.

Tobacco Legislation

Q. I just wanted to ask you a question actually about tobacco. At a press conference about a month ago, I asked you—and this was before tobacco had actually blown up—I asked you if you thought you could convene a tobacco summit of some sort to bring the companies back into the fold at the time the companies were saying they couldn't accept the McCain bill.

Have you discussed with anybody bringing up some sort of tobacco summit to try and get everybody back at the table and try and work out a compromise? And if so, when would something like that happen?

The President. Let me tell you, what we're doing now is we're exploring every conceivable alternative for how we could come up with a bill that can actually pass the Congress that would do the job of reducing teen smoking. The only thing I have ruled out, which I did earlier today in my press conference, was just taking some slimmed-down bill that would make a mockery of the process so that Congress could say it did something.

I believe that the central reason the tobacco companies pulled out was not so much the money but was the uncertainty as to whether there would be some liability cap. And there was an unusual coalition of liberals and conservatives, for an unusual set of reasons, who voted against that, which is why, after consultation with Senator Lott, I came out and clearly said that I would be prepared to accept one, and I thought they ought to vote for it. And I still believe that.

And the reason is clear. Whether you're philosophically opposed to a liability cap or not as part of the settlement, under prevailing Supreme Court decisions, I think it's clear that if we want the tobacco companies to limit their advertising and marketing, in order to do that they're going to have to understand to some extent what their financial exposure is in the future.

So for me, I have no problem with that, and I think if you talked to anybody who really wants a bill, they will tell you that in the end, if we're going to get a bill, it will have to have some kind of liability cap on it. So it ought not to be too generous to tobacco companies. It ought to be something they still feel, if they continue to do the wrong thing.

But if you look at—there are three elements. All the studies show there are three elements which has led to a very high rate

of teen smoking, even though it's illegal in every State to sell cigarettes to teenagers. One is the price. If the price were higher, kids wouldn't be as likely to buy them. Two is the advertising. And three is the access.

So we've got to try to deal with all three of those things. Then we need the bill to deal with the public health issues. And we need something for the tobacco farmers. And everything else, as far as I'm concerned, can be subject to negotiations.

So I'm looking at—we've discussed three or four or five different ways that we can get this thing back on track. But the Senate knows what the parameters are. They could—we could send them up a bill tomorrow that would pass the Senate if they decided they were going to do it.

Q. Do you have a bill? I mean, a White House bill.

The President. No, we don't, because we thought it was better—in consultation with the Republicans, we thought it was better to let them have a committee bill. So they voted this bill out 19 to one, and some of the people who voted for the bill voted against it on the floor yesterday—the day before yesterday.

Q. So you can't see a scenario, giving them political cover, of having a White House bill?

The President. Oh, I don't mind giving them political cover. Don't misunderstand me. I don't mind—to me, this is about the kids. If there is an agreement and there are members—there are Democrats who are worried about being attacked because they gave a liability cap or Republicans who are worried about being attacked because they voted for a bill that would increase the price of cigarettes a buck a pack or however much it is in the bill, or they want to have some differences in the particulars as it's implemented, I don't mind doing that.

I think that this administration, I think because of the stand that I have taken and the stand the Vice President has taken, I think that our credibility on this is pretty strong. People know we really believe in this, and we really believe it ought to be done. And I think everyone understands that any complicated piece of legislation has to represent a series of compromises.

So I'm more than happy to do all that, but I just—I'm not prepared to adopt a bill that I don't think will do the job and that no reputable public health authority believes will do the job. That's my only bottom line.

I don't—I'm not interested in gaining any political benefit from this except insofar as it's necessary to induce people to ultimately pass the right kind of bill. That's my only objective here. I think this is a public health opportunity of a generation for the United States, and to squander it because there was $40 million in unanswered advertising by the tobacco companies, to which there are very good answers, is a great—it would be a great pity. And I think in the end it's a misreading of the political opinions and character of the American people for the Republican majority to think that they've gotten some big victory here. I just don't agree with that, and I hope we can work it out.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. One quick last China question. Did China's help for Pakistan's nuclear program—was that a contributing factor in these tests, as the Indians claim?

The President. Well, of course that has its roots in the war that China fought with India over 35 years ago. And so China quite rationally, from its point of view, developed a security relationship with Pakistan.

But the important thing is that the Chinese have agreed now not to give assistance to non-safeguarded nuclear facilities, which would include the ones in Pakistan. They're in the comprehensive test ban regime. And equally important, since deliverability of missiles is a big issue, deliverability of nuclear weapons is a big issue, they've agreed to abide by the guidelines of the missile technology control regime and to work with us in improving both of our abilities to deal with those issues.

So China—India can blame China or say that this is a Chinese issue, but the truth is, we need to find a way out of this which leaves the Indians more secure, not less, leaves the Pakistanis more secure, not less, and puts the India-China relationship back on the path it was on before this last change of government and the testing occurred.

We got to start from where we are, but I think the Chinese commitment on that

going forward was the important thing, and we have it, and I think they will honor it.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:44 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan; and President Jiang Zemin of China. The journalists who conducted the interview were Jim Mann for the Los Angeles Times, Dina Temple-Raston for Bloomberg Business News, and Rick Dunham for Business Week. This interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 25. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Efforts To Cut Teen Drug Use

June 25, 1998

Last week's PRIDE survey showed that we are beginning to change the attitudes and behavior of our children, and that is a step in the right direction. Today's Pulse Check shows that the work of America's parents, teachers, and public officials is far from done. America's young people need to hear a single, unambiguous message: Drugs are wrong and dangerous, and they can kill you. This survey also indicates that we must continue our efforts to toughen drug enforcement and to get hardened drug users off the street and into mandatory testing and treatment.

Statement on the Solar Energy Systems Partnership

June 25, 1998

I would like to applaud the announcement today of a new partnership to help meet the challenge of global warming by making it easier for homeowners to tap clean energy from the Sun.

Last June, I announced an initiative with the goal of placing solar energy panels on one million roofs around the Nation by 2010. Just a year later, the Department of Energy already has received commitments for more than half a million installations. This new partnership between the General Motors Acceptance Corporation and the Solar Energy Industries Association will make low-cost loans for solar energy systems available nationwide, helping us to meet our goal even faster.

This agreement demonstrates that through partnerships and the power of the marketplace, we can reduce greenhouse gas pollution while saving consumers money and creating new economic opportunities. I encourage other businesses to seek creative ways to meet the challenge of climate change. And I urge Congress to help speed this effort by funding my proposals for a solar energy tax credit and other tax and research incentives for energy efficiency and clean power.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on the Line Item Veto

June 25, 1998

I am deeply disappointed with today's Supreme Court decision striking down the line item veto. The decision is a defeat for all Americans—it deprives the President of a valuable tool for eliminating waste in the Federal budget and for enlivening the public debate over how to make the best use of public funds.

By permitting the President to cancel discretionary spending, new entitlement authority, and certain types of tax provisions that benefit special interests at the expense of the public interest, the line item veto would enable Presidents to ensure that the Federal Government is spending public resources as wisely as possible. For 5½ years, I have worked hard to renew our economy by putting America's fiscal house in order. In 1993 the budget deficit was projected to be $290 billion; today, we have balanced the budget, and it is running a surplus. Continued fiscal responsibility is as vital now as the day I took office. I am determined to do everything in my power to continue to cut wasteful spending, maintain fiscal discipline, and create opportunity through continued economic growth.

Remarks at the Arrival Ceremony in Xi'an, China

June 25, 1998

Mayor Feng, Governor Cheng, Secretary Li, *nim men hao.* Thank you for the key to your city and for this magnificent welcome.

Here in this ancient capital, China seems very young to me tonight, blessed with both a proud history and the promise of tomorrow. I am delighted to begin my journey in Xi'an, once the capital of China, still the heartland of the Chinese people. I was raised in the heartland of my country. I know that the character of a nation is determined by the hard-working people who live here.

Over 1,000 years ago, during the Tang Dynasty, which I have seen recreated tonight, Xi'an was perhaps the most open and culturally advanced city in the entire world. From this place, trade routes extended through Asia to Europe and Africa. And to this place, great thinkers came, spreading philosophy and new ideas that have contributed to the greatness of China.

Tomorrow, I look forward to seeing the Terra Cotta Warriors, the Old City walls, the Muslim quarter. I look forward to learning more about China's great contributions to the store of human knowledge, from medicine and printing to mathematics and astronomy, discoveries on which so much of the whole world's progress is based. And I want to see more of the new nation you are building on a scale even the emperors could not have foreseen.

The China that gave us printing now boasts fax machines, computers, and cell phones. Xi'an is home to filmmakers, Internet explorers, businesspeople of every description. Here in this city, famous for calligraphy, a new chapter in China's story is being written.

We Americans admire your accomplishments, your economy, your hard work, creativity and vision, your efforts against hunger and poverty, your work with us on peace and stability in Korea and South Asia. A new day is dawning for the Chinese people, for China's greatness lies, as always, with its people.

Our own history has convinced Americans that the greatness of any country is measured in its people, in their shared reverence for family and community, for work and learning, and in their individual thoughts, beliefs, and creativity.

Respect for the worth, the dignity, the potential, and the freedom of every citizen is a vital source of America's strength and success. In this global information age, where both economic growth and individual opportunity are based on ideas, a commitment to providing all human beings the opportunity to develop their full potential is vital to the strength and success of the new China, as well.

As I travel across China, I hope to learn as much as I can about the Chinese people, your history, and your dreams for the future. And I hope to help the Chinese people understand more of America's history, the lessons the American people have drawn from it, and the dreams we hold for the 21st century.

I believe both Chinese and Americans aspire to many of the same things, to provide for our families, to teach our children, to build our communities, to protect our Earth, to shape our own futures, and pass brighter possibilities on to our children.

There may be those here and back in America who wonder whether closer ties and deeper friendship between America and China are good. Clearly, the answer is yes. We have a powerful ability to help each other grow. We can learn much from each other. And as two great nations, we have a special responsibility to the future of the world. The steps we take over the next week can lead to far greater strides for our people in the years ahead.

Here in this city of your magnificent history, we must always remember that we, too, are ancestors. Someday our children and their children will ask if we did all we could to build just societies and a more peaceful world. Let our monument be their judgment that we did that. Let our progress include all people, with all their differences, moving toward a common destiny.

Let us give new meaning to the words written in the ancient "Book of Rites," what you call the "Li Shi": "When the great way is followed, all under heaven will be equal."

Xie xie. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 p.m. at the South Gate of the Old City. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Feng Xuchu of Xi'an; Governor Cheng Andong of Shaanxi Province.

Memorandum on Refugee Admissions Consultations

June 25, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 1999 Refugee Admissions Consultations

In accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning refugee admissions as follows:

1. The authorization of 78,000 refugee admissions during FY 1999, which would be allocated by specific region as follows: 12,000 for Africa; 9,000 for East Asia (including Amerasians); 3,000 for Latin America and the Caribbean; 4,000 for the Near East and South Asia; 48,000 for Europe; and 2,000 for the Unallocated Reserve. The recommended level of funded admissions is equal to the level assumed in the FY 1999 budget request.

2. The authorization of an additional 10,000 refugee admission numbers to be made available for the adjustment to permanent resident status of persons who have been granted asylum in the United States.

3. The designation, pursuant to section 101(a)(42)(B) of the INA, of persons in Cuba, Vietnam, and the former Soviet Union, who if they otherwise qualify for admission as refugees, may be considered refugees under the INA even though they are still within their country of nationality or habitual residence.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 26.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the National Science Board

June 26, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by 42 U.S.C. 1863(j)(1), I am pleased to submit to the Congress a report of the National Science Board entitled *Science and Engineering Indicators—1998.* This report represents the thirteenth in a series examining key aspects of the status of American science and engineering in a global environment.

Investments in science and engineering research and education have enjoyed bipartisan support. They are critical to America's ability to maintain world leadership and fulfill our potential as a Nation as we begin the transition into the 21st century.

This report provides a broad base of quantitative information about U.S. science, engineering, and technology in an international context. I commend *Science and Engineering Indicators—1998* to the attention of the Congress and those in the scientific and technology communities. It will assist us in better understanding the new developments and trends in what is rapidly becoming a global knowledge-based economy.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 25, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 26.

Exchange With Reporters in the Village of Xiahe, China

June 26, 1998

Q. Good morning, sir.

Human Rights

Q. Mr. President, the Chinese arrested a couple of dissidents, one apparently for intending to do an interview with an American journalist. I wonder, does such action make it more difficult for you to make the case

to the American people that your policy of engagement is improving the lot of the Chinese people, is improving the human rights situation?

The President. No. I found the reports disturbing, and I've asked Ambassador Sasser to raise it with the Chinese authorities. And if true, they represent not China at its best and not China looking forward but looking backward.

One of the reasons that I came here was to discuss both privately and publicly issues of personal freedom. So I think it's very important for me to do that. But I think it makes the case—it makes it all the more important that we continue to work with the Chinese and to engage them.

Taiwan

Q. There have been some suggestions that you're going to sort of accept the Chinese insistence, that during the press conference you're going to sort of declare the United States decision not supporting Taiwan independence, not supporting Taiwan's bid for the United Nations, and not supporting one China/one Taiwan, but two Chinas. Is it going to happen?

The President. Well, first of all, you should come to the press conference to see what happens. But our position with regard to Taiwan is embodied in the three communiques and in the Taiwan Relations Act and in the facts of our relationship over the years. So I think it's obvious that there will be no change in our position one way or the other on this trip.

Susan McDougal

Q. Mr. President, on a domestic matter, Mr. President, are you happy with the Susan McDougal—Mr. President, are you happy for Susan McDougal? Do you feel——

The President. Well, I'm concerned about her health, and I hope that she gets better now. I think it's a—I hope that it puts her in a position where she can get over her pain and her difficulty.

Supreme Court Decision on the Line Item Veto

Q. Sir, the line item veto, sir, was struck down. What do you think about that?

The President. I'm disappointed. I think that having it has made it much easier to control spending, and I think that—and control special interest tax breaks. And so I hope very much that Congress will not use this decision to move away from the path of fiscal discipline that we have followed the last 5 years that has gotten us to our present state of economic prosperity. I think it would be a mistake.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:35 a.m. In his remarks, the President referred to Susan McDougal, Whitewater investigation figure. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Xiahe Area Residents

June 26, 1998

The President. Let me begin by thanking all of you for spending a little time with my wife and me today, and by thanking everyone in Xiahe for making us feel so welcomed.

I'm sorry that I had to take a little time to answer some questions from our news media, but as you know, there's 12 hours time difference, and so, they're running out of time to file their stories, and thank you for your patience.

In America, there is a lot of respect for and interest in Chinese history and culture but also in the remarkable transformation which has occurred here over the last 25 years. For example, many Americans are very interested in the fact that over half a million Chinese villages now have local elections, including this one.

They are interested in knowing more about the changes which have led to rising incomes and giving more people the ability to own their own homes and to make decisions about jobs. And they're interested in how small entrepreneurs start their own businesses and how villages like this have their own investments.

So we really have no set program today. I would like to just hear from each of you about what you are doing and how you personally have seen things change in China in the last few years.

Who would like to go first?

Participant. Maybe it would be interesting in hearing about some of the changes that have taken place at the school.

The President. Yes, very much.

Participant. I think that education in China has achieved great progress during the past few years. And the economy and development of China has benefited education. I've been educated from elementary school through high school. The life in university is very rich now, and we're learning a great deal now. It is very helpful for our future development.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Participant. I am from the Xiahe village. I work in the local village clinic, and this is the lowest level clinic in China. We work according to the regulations from the Government, and we try to—one of our jobs is to prevent the common diseases in the countryside and report our work to the higher level Government. Another responsibility of the lower level clinic is to treat common diseases in the countryside. That's all for now.

Hillary Clinton. Doctor, have you noticed improvements in the health of the people here in the countryside during your time as a doctor?

Participant. There has been great improvement in the health quality in the countryside people, especially now we have more money and they do less physical work.

Participant. My name is Yao Linua, and I am the manager of the Terra Cotta Warrior. I own a little factory. I am the manager there, and I also manage old people's home. I am just a country woman, but ever since the reform, I now rent a factory and an old people home, and basically, the factory also supports the old people home.

Now the Chinese have become rich, but we shouldn't forget about old people. In the 20th century we have in China more older people. We really should do more for them, and that's my goal in my life. That's what I want to do.

Mrs. Clinton. May I ask, how did you start your factory? Where did you get the funds to start the factory and get the equipment and materials that you needed?

Participant. I used my own money and got some loan from Government and actually, several of us work together, so I also collect some funds from my partners.

The President. The older people who stay in your home, how do they get the funds to pay to be in the home?

Participant. We get our funds—some of them get money from the Government, and the factory would pay for their expenses for their living in the old people home.

The President. And what is the average age of the people in the home?

Participant. Sixty-five years old is the average age. The oldest one is 89 years old.

The President. This is going to be a big issue in the future for every country. In our country, the fastest growing group of Americans are people over 85. There are still not many of them, but they're growing fast. And every society will have to figure out an honorable way to take care of such people. So I appreciate the work you're doing.

Participant. My name is Yang Dongyi, and I am from Xiahe village. I grew up in this village. First I was a farmer, and now I rent a little company. Ever since the liberation in 1949, there are three big changes I experienced myself in this village. The first change I experienced was the life in the village after the liberation was better than before. Our life since 1982, the reform began, our life has improved compared to before the liberation. In 1992, our life experienced another improvement. Before 1989, the average income in the village was about—a little bit more than 100 yuan, and then in 1992, the average income in the village was more than 1,000 yuan. And now the average income in the village is over 3,000 yuan.

Before 1982, my whole family would only get about 100 yuan income per year. Now I and my wife and one daughter, the three of us, we have more than 30,000 yuan income per year. I want to tell the President that the changes in my village and the change in my own family is also the change in the country.

My personal change, compared to some people in China, is still relatively small, and this place and Xi'an, compared to the coastal cities in China, is still a little backwards. But of course, compared to the U.S., this village

is a lot more—even more backward, but we would be willing to work very hard.

The President. Let me say, first of all, that it's very impressive how much economic progress has been made in such a short time.

What specific change do you think has been most important in helping you and your family to earn so much more money through your hard work?

Participant. The most important thing is we have a good policy in our country now. In the past, no matter what your abilities are, you are told to do what you are supposed to do. But after the reform, everyone can have the space to show their own talent and to work very hard.

The reason now the production improved so much is everybody can do what they're good at. Some people begin to do business; some people stay in the farmland; and some people begin to have their own company. They're all doing what they're good at. They are also paying more attention to learning the new technology, so their ability to work has greatly improved.

Another thing is they also learn from the foreign countries now. They borrow and they learn the advanced technology from the foreign country and use on their own production. And that's the main reason where they are now today.

The President. Thank you.

Participant. I am a primary school teacher. I feel that the whole society now respects a teacher a lot more. All children who are school age now go to enroll in the primary school, and they have 9 years of Government-sponsored education. The issues associated with young kids have attracted a lot of attention from all aspects of the society.

The President. What percentage of the teachers are women and what percentage are men?

Participant. In primary school, female teachers are more. They're about 70 percent. I feel that it might be females are more suitable for this job.

The President. And after the children complete 9 years of school, how is it determined who goes on to more school? Like this young woman here is a university student. How is it determined who gets to go beyond?

Participant. In China, for the college entrance—there is a college entrance exam, so everybody has to pass the exam to go to the college. And others who didn't pass, then they might go to technical school to learn some special technique for their use.

Participant. My name is Xie Liming. I have benefited the most ever since—my kind of people benefit the most ever since the reform. I served in the Air Force for 15 years and worked another 8 years in the Government. In 1992, I opened a small restaurant with 80 seats. Now I have extended my restaurant to 500 seats.

My restaurant is among the best in Xi'an and very influential. I really wish to invite both of you to go to my restaurant and enjoy my food. If you don't have the chance this time, you are still welcome after you finish your duty as President to come back. [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you.

Participant. And I also want to ask what is your favorite Chinese dish? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, now I understand how you fill a restaurant with 500 seats every night. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Clinton. I would wonder whether any of you might have any questions for us, because one of the reasons that my husband made this trip is so that the Chinese people and the American people can learn more about each other and about our lives.

Participant. I want to ask the President why do you want to hold this roundtable discussion with ordinary Chinese people?

The President. For two reasons. First of all, I think it's important that people who are in positions like mine, in the United States and in China, in every country, understand how people live at what we call the grassroots level, and understand how the policies we make affect the lives that people live, because that's actually the purpose of leadership, to try to make a positive difference in the lives of ordinary citizens.

And secondly, because the American people are very interested in learning more about Chinese people as the result of my trip. So, when we do this, there will be pictures and reports of this meeting in America so people just like you in America will have a feeling for what it's like to own a restaurant

or teach a school or be a business person or be a student or a doctor or run a home for older people. They will feel these things in a different way because of this event we're doing here.

Participant. I believe a President who is looking to the facts of people's life must be a President who is supported by his people.

The President. Thank you.

Mrs. Clinton. Could I ask the student, what are you studying at the university?

Participant. I am now taking the basic college courses, but I want to major in electronics.

The President. And what do you want to do when you finish your degree?

Participant. I want to further my study after graduating from college, and then I want to have my own fields of interest in working.

The President. Do you believe that in China today young women have the same opportunities that young men do to do whatever they want with their lives?

Participant. I believe the answer is yes, even though they might have different choices, but the final answer is yes.

The President. We have to stop in a moment, but I'd like to ask the doctor one more question. What do you believe the biggest challenge is for improving the health care of the Chinese people now at the village level? What is the largest remaining challenge that would—any change that could be made that would improve health much more?

Participant. First of all, from my past experience, I believe the biggest challenge is to improve the environmental situation. Prevention is also very important.

The President. This is a very important point which has been made—important for China and important for the United States. When a country grows economically, you use more energy and you have more activity, and it leads to strains on the environment, especially air pollution, which can really affect people's health. So one of China's big challenges, and a continuing challenge for America, is to grow the economy but to clean up the environment at the same time. And we can do both, but we have to work at it, and we should work at it together.

Participant. I want to make one comment. All the business people in Xi'an really want to improve the trade between the U.S. and China, and they would like to see that China become America's first biggest business partner. And I would, for myself, want to make more U.S. dollars. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I'll work on that, and I will also work on accepting your invitation to come to your restaurant when I'm not in office anymore. This is very nice, you know. Most people in my position wonder if anyone will want us to eat with them when we're not in office anymore. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all very much. Thank you. [*Applause*] Good luck to you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the People of Xiahe

June 26, 1998

Nin men hao, Xiahe.

Thank you, Yunlong, for your welcome. I thank all of the students for the greeting and for the wonderful music, and I thank all the rest of you for making all of us in the American delegation feel so welcome here.

My wife and I are delighted to be joined by our daughter, my mother-in-law, and Secretary Albright, Secretary Daley, Ambassador and Mrs. Sasser, and six Members of the United States Congress, Senator Rockefeller, Senator Baucus, Senator Akaka, and Representatives Dingell and Hamilton and Markey, along with a number of people who work with me in the White House. We are all very honored to be here. Thank you.

I understand that soon, like nearly half a million other villages across China, you will be voting to choose your local leaders. I know what it is like to run for office. I have won elections, and I have also lost two. I like winning better than losing, but whenever there is an election and the people decide, everyone wins.

I have come to China to strengthen the ties between our two nations. Over the past 25 years, your country has launched a remarkable period of change, and today, most

Chinese, including the members of this village, enjoy a higher standard of living than at any time in China's history.

Here, by using better farming techniques, you have freed up time and money for other projects, like your brick factory, your construction crews, your handicrafts. Your village has sponsored language classes in English and Japanese to help you in dealing with foreign tourists. Today, your village committee owns a dozen businesses, with 300 hard-working people now able to provide for their families. Many of you have opened your own businesses, and in only 15 years, average income here has grown 17 times. I congratulate you.

I also appreciate the fact that you have invested money back into your community in better schools, in better roads, in installing cable television to bring the world into your homes. Your achievements are a window for all the world to see what local democracy has brought to China and what a brighter future you are building for the children here with us today.

We Americans respect your devotion to family, to education, to work, your respect for the land and for your heritage. And we hope you will reap the fruits of your labor for many years to come.

Thank you again for making us all feel so welcome here in Xiahe. Thank you. *Xie xie.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. In his remarks, the referred to Yang Yunlong, chief, Xiahe Village Committee, and Mary Sasser, wife of U.S. Ambassador James M. Sasser. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision in *Bragdon* v. *Abbott*

June 26, 1998

I am pleased with today's Supreme Court decision in *Bragdon* v. *Abbott*. This decision reinforces the protections offered by the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act for Americans living with HIV and AIDS. The ADA was enacted with strong bipartisan support to protect Americans with disabilities from discrimination. My administration argued successfully in this case that people with HIV are disabled whether or not they have developed the symptoms of AIDS.

I am firmly committed to protecting all Americans, including those living with HIV and AIDS, from discrimination, and ensuring that each of us can benefit from all America has to offer. Today's decision will help in fulfilling that commitment.

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.

June 20

In the afternoon, the President went to Camp David, MD.

June 21

The President returned to Washington, DC.

June 22

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Nashville, TN, and in the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

June 23

In the morning, the President met with President Mary McAleese of Ireland in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jane E. Henney to be Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomasina Rogers to serve as a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paul Steven Miller to serve as a Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marcia D. Greenberger as a member of the National Skill Standards Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Donald D. Runnells as a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jerry L. Sinn as Federal member of the Delaware River Basin Commission and the Susquehanna River Basin Commission.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, straightline winds, and tornadoes on May 15–30.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area threatened by extreme fire hazards on June 4 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Massachusetts and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by heavy rains and flooding beginning June 13 and continuing.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Atlanta, GA, and Miami, FL, on July 9.

The White House announced that President Emil Constantinescu of Romania will visit Washington, DC, on July 15–17.

The White House announced that Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek of Poland will visit Washington, DC, on July 10.

June 24

In the morning, the President traveled to Elmendorf Air Force Base, AK, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Xi'an, China, arriving the following evening.

June 25

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard E. Hecklinger to be Ambassador to Thailand.

The President announced his intention to nominate Theodore H. Kattouf to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

June 26

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Xiahe village. In the afternoon, they were given a tour of the Terra Cotta Warriors exhibit at the Xianyang Museum, where they later had tea with Governor Cheng Andong of Shaanxi Province in the museum's VIP Room. Later in the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton visited the Shaanxi Historical Museum.

In the late afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Xi'an, and in the evening, they traveled to Beijing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph H. Melrose, Jr., to be Ambassador to Sierra Leone.

The President announced his intention to nominate Susan G. Esserman to be Deputy United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to appoint E.R. Chamberlin, Frank Pugliese, and Timothy Beyland to serve as members of the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

The President announced his intention to appoint Senator J. James Exon as a member of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted June 22

Lynn Jeanne Bush,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims for a term of 15 years, vice Wilkes C. Robinson, retired.

Submitted June 23

Jane E. Henney,
of New Mexico, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, vice David A. Kessler, resigned.

Barbara Pedersen Holum,
of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for

the term expiring April 13, 2002 (reappointment).

Kenneth Prewitt,
of New York, to be Director of the Census, vice Martha F. Riche, resigned.

Submitted June 24

Barry P. Goode,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice Charles E. Wiggins, retired.

Robert Bruce King,
of West Virginia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, vice Kenneth K. Hall, resigned.

Thomasina V. Rogers,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 27, 2001, vice Daniel Guttman.

Withdrawn June 24

Daniel Guttman,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2001, vice Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., term expired, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 1997.

Submitted June 25

David O. Carter,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California, vice William J. Rea, retired.

Submitted June 26

Susan G. Esserman,
of Maryland, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, vice Jeffery M. Lang, resigned.

Richard E. Hecklinger,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Theodore H. Kattouf,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates.

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 June 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Dean of the Elliott School of International Affairs Harry Harding and Brookings Institute Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies Nicholas Lardy on the President's visit to China

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Constantinescu of Romania

Announcement of nomination for a U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge

Released June 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Care Policy Chris Jennings, OMB Associate Director Barbara Chow, OMB Associate Director T.J. Glauthier, and OMB Agriculture Branch Chairman Mark Weatherly on the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

Statement by the Press Secretary: Signing of the Telemarketing Fraud Prevention Act

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Polish Prime Minister Buzek

Announcement: Official Delegation to China

Released June 24

Announcement of nominations for U.S. Court of Appeals Judges for the Fourth Circuit and the Ninth Circuit

Released June 25

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Gayle E. Smith as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council

Released June 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry and National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's visit to China

Announcement of nomination of a U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California

Acts Approved by the President

Approved June 19 [1]

S. 423 / Public Law 105–182
To extend the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to honor George Mason

S. 1244 / Public Law 105–183
Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act of 1998

Approved June 23

H.R. 1847 / Public Law 105–184
Telemarketing Fraud Prevention Act of 1998

S. 1150 / Public Law 105–185
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

S. 1900 / Public Law 105–186
U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998

Approved June 24

H.R. 3811 / Public Law 105–187
Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998

[1] These Public Laws were not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.