

Internet, to the World Wide Web, to all of these networks, do you know what that means? Even if you don't understand anything about computers, here's what it means. It's simple. It means that for the first time in history, the children in the most remote districts in America, the children in the poorest school districts in America will have access to the same learning in the same time at the same level of quality as the children in the wealthiest public and private schools in the United States do. Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century? [Applause]

And finally, as Governor Brennan said, we have to make college available to all. I want to make, in 4 years—in just 4 years, we can make 2 years of education after high school as universal as a high school diploma is today by simply saying, you get a tax credit, a dollar-for-dollar reduction on your tax bill for the typical cost of a community college tuition in America. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

The second thing I propose to do is to make it easier for even more families to save money in an IRA but then to withdraw from that retirement account without a penalty if the money is used to buy a first home, to deal with a medical emergency, or to pay for a college education. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

And finally, it seems to me that this country would be much stronger if everybody got to

deduct up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of any college tuition, any cost of education after high school, and it's paid for in our balanced budget plan. Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century? [Applause]

My fellow Americans, last night was a good night for the American people because we got to hear a discussion of the fundamental choices before us: Are we on our own, or do we believe it takes a village? Are we going to build a bridge to the past or build a bridge to the future? And if we build a bridge to the future, is it going to be wide enough and strong enough for every American to walk across?

If the answer is yes, then the best days of this country are still ahead. That is my commitment to you. I hope you'll help me build that bridge for 29 more days.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. at Hadlock Field. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John F. McDonough of Portland; State Representative Elizabeth Mitchell; Victoria Murphy, chair, Maine Democratic Party; Tom Allen, candidate for Maine's First Congressional District; Comdr. Burton S. Russell, USCG, Commanding Officer, Portland Marine Safety Office; and Joseph Brennan, former Maine Governor.

Statement on Signing the Maritime Security Act of 1996

October 8, 1996

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1350, the "Maritime Security Act of 1996." This Act sets the course for America's merchant marine into the 21st century.

The American flag must always sail in the sea lanes of the world. In recent years, our country has again been reminded of the critical role played by the U.S. merchant marine in protecting our interests and the security of our allies. The enactment of this legislation is the culmination of a long, bipartisan effort. It will ensure that the United States will continue to have American flag ships crewed by loyal American citizen merchant mariners to meet our Na-

tion's economic and seafight defense requirements.

The American merchant marine is an important component of the seafight needed by the Department of Defense. By contracting with the owners and operators of U.S.-flag commercial vessels, the Government will gain access to a fleet of modern commercial ships, along with the sophisticated intermodal transportation system supporting it. The Government also assures that the seafaring men and women who crew these commercial ships in peacetime will be available to crew the Government's reserve seafight ships in times of crisis.

This Act extends to seafarers the same basic reemployment rights that apply to reserve members of our Armed Forces in time of war or national emergency. American merchant mariners have always responded to the call in times of crisis, and they deserve the assurance that their peacetime jobs will be there when they return.

The Maritime Security Act will protect American jobs and maintain a U.S. presence in international maritime trade, ensuring that vital imports and exports are delivered in both peace-

time and wartime. The Act reaffirms our Nation's resolve to maintain a strong U.S.-flag presence on the high seas for our continued national security and economic growth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 8, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 1350, approved October 8, was assigned Public Law No. 104-239.

Message on the Observance of Polish American Heritage Month *October 8, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone observing Polish American Heritage Month.

Many Americans proudly trace their roots to Poland, a land whose rich and colorful past is rivaled only by the bright promise of its future. This month, as we celebrate the many contributions that Americans of Polish heritage have made to our nation's history and culture, we also reaffirm the strong and friendly ties between the United States and Poland.

Before America became a nation, Poles came to these shores in search of liberty and opportunity, and their descendants have remained at the forefront of efforts to keep America free, strong, and prosperous. This year we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the great Polish hero Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who helped secure the independence of our fledgling republic during the Revolutionary War. Since that time, millions of other men and women of Polish descent have invested their hopes in America's bold experiment in self-government and, inspired by faith in God and a devotion to demo-

cratic ideals, have worked hard to ensure its success.

The deep cultural and familial ties between the peoples of the United States and Poland have been strengthened by our shared values and aspirations. For generations, Poles have demonstrated the same reverence for individual rights and dignity that infuses our own system of government. The United States supports Poland's democratic transition and her people's efforts to establish a pluralistic society and a free market economy. Poland and the United States are building a new security for the twenty-first century, working together to prepare for NATO's enlargement in an undivided Europe.

As we observe Polish American Heritage Month, I join all Americans in thanking our fellow citizens of Polish descent for their countless contributions to the strength and quality of our national life. Best wishes to all for a memorable celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks on Signing the Federal Aviation Reauthorization Act of 1996 *October 9, 1996*

Thank you, Doug Smith, for your very moving remarks, for your recognition of the contributions of others, and for your own constant, brave efforts to help this day come to pass. And I

thank all the family members who are here for your efforts to go beyond your own personal suffering to make something positive happen for our country in the future. Thank you, Madam