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coherent teams of people and neighborhoods and all walks of life.

So let me say again, the Chicago Bulls have given America a lot of thrills. They've given Chicago a lot of pride. They've produced perhaps the greatest basketball dynasty ever and perhaps the greatest basketball individual feats ever. But more than anything else, they've given us the sense that when people do things together, a lot more is possible.

Now, I'd like to introduce now Jerry Reinsdorf so we can go on with the rest of the program. And meanwhile, I want you to know that in 6 months I'll be as good as new and available for the next draft. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

[*At this point, team owner Jerry Reinsdorf made brief remarks and presented the President with a championship watch and Bulls jacket.*]

The President. Think I'll be safe in this in Washington? [*Laughter*] Thank you.

[*Mr. Reinsdorf then introduced coach Phil Jackson and cocaptains Scottie Pippen and Michael Jordan.*]

The President. Look at those shoes.

[*Mr. Jackson made brief remarks and presented a Bulls jersey to the President.*]

The President. Do I have your permission? [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

Mr. Jackson. Thank you.

The President. You guys aren't going to speak? You got to say something. Come here, Scottie, say something. [*Laughter*] Everybody from Arkansas talks. You have to. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Pippen made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you.

[*Mr. Jordan made brief remarks.*]

The President. I want to thank again all the people from Chicago for coming. I want to say how proud—I can't help but say that all the people that I know, and I know half the town from the little community in southeast Arkansas where Scottie Pippen grew up, are still wildly proud of him. So it's okay for somebody outside Chicago to like that.

And I want to say to Michael Jordan, I like your two-tone shoes. [*Laughter*] When I was growing up, all well-bred young Southern boys learned to wear two-tone shoes in the springtime—[*laughter*]—and I'm glad you kept up the tradition.

And finally, I'd like to thank the Bulls for being so good to Hillary when she visited them at the United Center recently. And that night, she got Dennis Rodman's jersey. It is now freshly washed and hanging in the White House in a place of honor.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. at the South Portico at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal and an Exchange With Reporters

April 3, 1997

President Clinton. Let me say it's a great honor for the United States to have Prime Minister Guterres here from Portugal. We are immensely grateful to Portugal for many things and our partnerships. But I would especially mention their peacekeeping role as a nation in Bosnia and Africa, the work we've done together in the United Nations, the work we are going to discuss today regarding NATO. And we appreciate the very progressive and strong leadership the Prime Minister has given to his nation.

So I'm looking forward to this, and it's been too long coming, but I'm very glad to have you here. Would you like to say anything?

Prime Minister Guterres. Well, first of all, let me say how happy and proud I am to accept the invitation of President Clinton. Portugal, as you know, is very much in favor of a united Europe, but we want a Europe that preserves its Atlantic character. And for us, the relationship between Europe and the United States is an extremely important part of our own way of life. And this is relevant in economics, in

culture, in people-to-people contacts, and also in defense and security.

We want NATO to go on as the basic framework for European security, and we consider that the United States has an irreplaceable role in the guarantee of European security. And we are very happy with the partnership that we have been able to establish in the past, and we are looking forward to improve as much as possible our bilateral relations that have been excellent, as a matter of fact, in the past.

President Clinton's ideas have been very inspiring to our own programs, and we hope to go on doing our best to take profit of your initiatives, your ideas, your policies.

Russia and NATO Expansion

Q. And you also are in favor of expansion of NATO, and what kind of an agreement, charter are you going to have with Russia?

Prime Minister Guterres. Well, I think that the expansion of NATO is—as the expansion of the European Union, it's a basic condition for democracy, for peace and stability in Central and Eastern European countries.

And as for Portugal, it has been extremely important 10 or 15 years ago to consolidate our democracy. I think the same right must be granted to those new democracies in Eastern Europe. Of course, we understand that it is very important to preserve the very special relationship with the new Russia.

I once heard Vice President Al Gore telling me that he looked at the enlargement of NATO and relations with Russia like the coupling of two space ships and the need to put them in the same orbit. I think this is a very good idea, and I think it's what effectively is being done now with the recent contacts in Helsinki and all the preparatory work that is going on.

I hope that one day in the future NATO and Russia can be allies, defending the values of enlightenment against all the irrational behaviors in the modern world, irrational behaviors based on extreme nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and all other things that should not exist in a modern world.

Webster Hubbell

Q. Mr. President, earlier this year when asked about the $100,000 Lippo payment to Webb Hubbell, you said, ''I can't imagine who could have ever arranged to do something improper like that, and no one around here knows about it.'' Were the phone calls——

President Clinton. That's not what I said.

Q. Let me ask this question——

President Clinton. I don't believe that's exactly what I said.

Q. Let me ask you this, Mr. President. Were the phone calls made by Mack McLarty and Erskine Bowles proper or improper? And if you knew about them, should you have put a stop to them?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, let's go back to what you said before. I believe what I said was that I was unaware of the Lippo contract until it became public. And I believe that's all I said. I rendered no judgment on it one way or the other.

Secondly, I do not believe they were improper. From what I know about them, they were just—they were people who were genuinely concerned that there was a man who was out of work, who had four children. And as I understand it, they were trying to help him for no other reason than just out of human compassion.

Secondly, let me remind you of the critical fact. At the time that it was done, no one had any idea about whether any—what the nature of the allegations were against Mr. Hubbell or whether they were true. Everybody thought there was some sort of billing dispute with his law firm. And that's all anybody knew about it. So, no, I do not think they did anything improper.

Campaign Documents

Q. Mr. President, Harold Ickes took a carload of documents away from the campaign. National Archives says it was your call. Did you give him permission to take all of those papers from the campaign?

President Clinton. I don't remember being asked about it one way or the other. I don't remember being asked about it.

Q. Do you care?

President Clinton. Well, I didn't know it was my call to care. I don't remember being asked about it. I'd have to know more about it before I could answer that question.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Visit of Prime Minister Guterres

President Clinton. Let me begin by saying it's a great honor for the United States and for me personally to have the Prime Minister here today. We are very proud of our friendship with Portugal. Our partnership, our alliance is very important to us. We are especially grateful for the leadership that Portugal has evidenced in peacekeeping in Bosnia, in Africa, in the United Nations, in our discussions about the role of NATO in the future and the expansion of NATO. And I have looked forward to this meeting for a long time, and I'm anxious to have it with the Prime Minister.

And I think I'd like to give the Prime Minister a chance to make a few remarks, and then if you have a question or two, we'll try to answer them.

Prime Minister Guterres. Well, first of all let me say how happy and proud I am to have been able to accept this kind invitation of President Clinton. This is a very exciting moment for the Atlantic community, and we have many things to discuss about our common interests in regards to the relations between Europe and the United States, at the level of the European Union, NATO, NATO's enlargement, relations with Russia, and also doing our best to improve the excellent bilateral relations that we have between the United States and Portugal. So it's really a very good opportunity for us also to discuss some of the very inspiring ideas that President Clinton has introduced in the world political debate.

East Timor

Q. Mr. President, do you plan to review the United States position on the incorporation of its East Timor at any stage, sir?

President Clinton. What about East Timor?

Q. At the moment, the U.S. recognizes the incorporation of East Timor without maintaining that legitimate act of self-determination took place. Do you plan to review this position once it has about, I think, about quite a couple of years?

President Clinton. Well, my main concern now is to make sure that we have done everything we can possibly do to respect the political and human rights of the people in East Timor. And the United States has been—particularly since I became President, has been very forthright on that subject. And I know that Portugal has as well and has a longer attachment than we do there. So that's one of the things I want to talk to the Prime Minister about, about what we can do to further the cause of human rights for the people of East Timor.

Q. But Mr. President, you told Senator Feingold, regarding a proposal for a referendum in East Timor for self-determination, that you would take his idea into consideration in a letter you sent him late last year. What does that mean exactly? Does that mean that a review of that position is possible? Could you explain the meaning of it?

President Clinton. It means that I think we should do whatever is most likely to give us sufficient influence to guarantee basic human rights protections for the people of East Timor. And we have to do what we think is most likely to achieve our overriding objective, which is to give those people a chance to have the lives of decency and integrity. And sometimes what seems obvious is maybe not the best course, and we're reviewing what our options are. That's what it means.

Q. Isn't self-determination the ultimate human right?

President Clinton. Well, that depends. That's a very complicated question. We fought a civil war over it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Anniversary of the Aircraft Tragedy in Croatia

April 3, 1997

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, Mrs. Gore, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Ambassador, to all the members of the Cabinet and the administration who are here, all of our