

Department of Defense programs could provide on-the-job training, work experience, and an understanding of best prac-

tices for the delivery of child development services.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on the Death of Chaim Herzog

April 17, 1997

I was informed this morning that former Israeli President Chaim Herzog had died after a long illness. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family and to the people of Israel. Chaim Herzog not only served the Israeli people with distinction as their President for 10 years, he

was a courageous soldier in the liberation of Europe and a distinguished leader in the Israeli armed forces. He will long be remembered for his years as a statesman and scholar—he personified a vibrant, emerging Israel, taking its place in the community of nations.

Statement on the Senate Decision To Bring the Chemical Weapons Convention to a Vote

April 17, 1997

I welcome today's unanimous agreement by the Senate to bring the Chemical Weapons Convention to a vote next week. This treaty—initiated by the Reagan administration, completed and signed by the Bush administration, submitted to the Senate by my administration—has been bipartisan from the beginning. Now, thanks to the good-faith efforts of Majority Leader Lott and Minority Leader Daschle—working closely with my national security team and key members of the Senate from both sides of the aisle—the Senate will be able to vote on the treaty before it goes into effect on April 29.

Over the past 2½ months, we have all gone the extra mile to work through outstanding concerns about the treaty. As a result of negotiations Senator Lott and I established and discussions led by Senators Biden and Helms, we now have agreement on 28 conditions that will be included in the treaty's resolution of ratification when it goes to a vote, resolving virtually all of the issues that have been raised about the CWC.

Just today, our negotiators reached agreement concerning the use of riot control agents like tear gas and to require warrants for any involuntary searches of an American business or facility under the treaty's inspection provisions. We still have five issues on which we fundamentally dis-

agree, but we are now assured, thanks to today's agreement, that they will be decided by votes of the full Senate.

These important developments reflect widespread, bipartisan, and growing support for the Chemical Weapons Convention. Yesterday, former Presidents Bush and Ford joined Secretary of State Albright in making a special appeal for ratification. Today at a congressional hearing, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell strongly reiterated his endorsement of the treaty, which also has the support of every other Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the past two decades. And three former Secretaries of Defense—Harold Brown, Elliot Richardson, and Bill Perry—released a joint statement calling for the Senate to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention.

All of these distinguished American leaders agree that by requiring countries around the world to destroy their chemical weapons stockpiles—as the United States already has decided to do—and to renounce developing or trading in chemical weapons in the future, the Chemical Weapons Convention will help make our troops safer while making it harder for rogue states and terrorists to acquire chemical weapons.

Apr. 17 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

This treaty literally was “made in America,” and it also is right for America. I urge every Member of the Senate to support the Chemical Weapons Convention when it comes to a vote next week.

Teleconference Remarks on the Opening of the Newseum

April 18, 1997

The President. Thank you, Al and Charles and Peter. Thanks a lot for asking me an easy question that can only get me in trouble. Whatever I say, I’ll be behind the curve ball, which is, of course, where all of you try to keep me. [Laughter] Nonetheless, I’m glad to be with you today. And I am glad the Vice President was able to officially open the Newseum, and I’m glad he told you the stories that I hear about once a week about his days as a reporter. [Laughter] He says he was always accurate, vigorous, and totally fair. [Laughter]

Thanks to the technological wizardry that you’ve built into this wonderful Newseum, I’m able to join you on your video news wall for the grand opening. It’s amazing to me that this is happening. You know, when I was growing up, I got my news from my local paper or watching the 6 o’clock news on my family’s black and white TV, and I suppose I never imagined the incredible array of ways people would someday get their news and their information, from all-news radio and TV to the Internet and all the sort of “near-news” programs.

And I think that’s why this Newseum is so important, because it will remind us that we’ve come a long way, but no matter how it’s packaged or delivered, news has always fulfilled mankind’s most basic need to know. And it also reminds us that democracy’s survival depends upon that need to know and the free flow of ideas and information.

I congratulate you on giving our children and their parents an opportunity to learn about the role news media has in protecting our freedoms and helping us to build the most robust and open society in human history.

This Newseum is not only a tribute to the news profession, it’s also a tribute to the men and women who have dedicated their lives to it, who know that, always, there are going to be people who will work hard to struggle, sometimes at real personal risks to themselves, to

get the news and hopefully to be fair, honest, and critical in their reporting of it. America is stronger and freer because of them, and I thank them. This Newseum is really a great addition to the Washington area. And I know it will attract a lot of visitors, not only from every State but also from all around the world.

Now, the question you asked me is a fair one and a good one. I think that the fundamental role of the news media and the reporting today is what it has always been—is to give people information in a fair and accurate way. But the context is far different. There are, first of all, more sources of news. There is more information that people have to process, and people get their news in more different ways. And as I said, there are all these sort of “near-news” forces bearing down on you and offering competition.

I sometimes wonder what it’s like to put together an evening news program or a morning newspaper when the main story has been playing every 5 minutes on CNN for 6 hours, and whether you really—whether that affects what you do or not. I would say that from my perspective, the most important thing is that while we’re being inundated with this glut of information, that we try to make sure that people have a proper context within which to understand the information. I think that the fact that we can have more facts than ever before is important, but if you don’t have any framework within which to understand those facts, it seems to me it poses an enormous challenge.

The other thing that I think we have to do is to be careful when we report the stories about things that might be true, not to say that they are, particularly if to say that they are or to imply that they are could cause real damage to people in their reputations and, indeed, in their own lives.

But I think that the competition to which you’re subject makes it more difficult both to