

Apr. 8 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

Statement on the United States-France Civil Aviation Agreement *April 8, 1998*

I am pleased that the United States has reached an agreement with France significantly increasing air service between our countries. The U.S.-France aviation market is our third largest in Europe. Until today, it was also our largest aviation market not governed by a bilateral agreement. This agreement will eliminate all restrictions on airline operations between the United States and France in 5 years. It will allow many more flights between our two countries and give U.S. airlines extensive new rights that will enhance their capacity to serve this market. This increased competition means more choice for American business travelers and tourists alike.

This agreement continues my efforts to open the world's markets in areas where American companies are most competitive. We have already concluded important aviation agreements with Japan, Germany, Canada, and many other nations. These agreements are part of our strategy to replace restrictions with opportunities and move international aviation into a 21st century where consumers, not governments, determine how passenger and cargo needs are served.

I want to thank Secretaries Albright and Slater and the negotiators at the Departments of State and Transportation for their sustained efforts in reaching this agreement.

Remarks at the Andrew W. Mellon Dinner *April 8, 1998*

Thank you very much, Mr. Laughlin. Mr. Powell, Mr. Smith, members of the Board of Trustees, members of Congress and our administration, members of the Mellon family, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for Hillary and me to be here tonight to honor this great legacy of Andrew Mellon and to honor all of you who do so much to carry on that legacy.

I first came to the National Gallery over 30 years ago when I was a college student at Georgetown. Over the years, I've come back as often as I could. When I came here from time to time as Governor of my home State, I confess that on occasion I sneaked out of the meetings of the Governors' Association and came to the National Gallery, where there was less noise and more light. *[Laughter]* Hillary and I have been privileged to visit here in the last few years to tour the Vermeer and Picasso exhibitions, among others.

It's hard to believe now that the National Gallery is 61 years old, founded when our country was in the grip of the Great Depression and the world was slipping inexorably toward World War II. But Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon knew that our Nation's work lay, even then, not simply in our monetary strength or

our military power but in the value of our ideas, the creativity of our spirit, the power of our common culture. So he and a group of passionate men and women gave this great gift to the Nation and established the tradition of partnership that endures down to the very day.

There is no question that Paul Mellon carries on this tradition. His generosity has helped to invigorate and sustain our entire Nation's cultural and artistic institutions. Having already won the National Medal of Arts in 1985, last fall he was awarded the National Medal for the Humanities, which Robert Smith kindly accepted for him.

So tonight I want to thank him again and all the members of his family who have participated in giving other Americans, who could never have afforded these things on their own, access to this wonderful world.

When President Roosevelt dedicated the National Gallery, he said, "The dedication of this gallery to a living past and to a greater and more richly living future is the measure of the earnestness of our intention that the freedom of the human spirit shall go on."

Today, at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium, it falls to us to continue