

In 1996 I signed the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act to try to have Government do more to help. It gives limited liability protection to companies that donate food and people like those who work here to process and redistribute the food. Secretary Glickman had a lot to do with the passage of that law, and I thank him. I'd also like to thank the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Labor for providing food, training, and other resources. I know the Labor Department supports the training program here. So the Government can be a good partner.

And finally, as a matter of personal pride, I want to say again, I thank the AmeriCorps members. When we started AmeriCorps, I thought it would catch on. But to be frank, there's been even more interest in it and more commitment from more different kinds of people to serve their country in more different ways than even I could have imagined. And I thank all of you for being the best of America at this Christmas season. God bless you, and thank you very much.

Now, Hillary alluded to this, but I think I can't leave the microphone without saying that in 1993 in January, D.C. Central Kitchen baked 28,000 saxophone-shaped, butter-almond cookies for my first Inaugural. [*Laughter*] And it's about time I came here to pay them back—and also

cakes for the second Inaugural. I'm grateful for that.

I hope that everyone who sees the report on the news of all of our being here today will be inspired to follow suit at this Christmas season. The most important gifts we give are those that we give to those who need it the most, who may never know our names or remember our faces but who receive the gifts in the genuine spirit of the season.

And to all of you, those of you who are trainees, those of you who are volunteers, those of you who are AmeriCorps workers, all of you, I thank you. And most of all, Mr. Egger, I thank you and the people here at D.C. Central Kitchen. And I hope that as the news of this event beams across the country tonight, in the remaining days before Christmas and then in all the days of the new year, more people will want to make the kind of contribution to our common humanity that you have.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:12 p.m. in the lunchroom. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Egger, director, Susan Callahan, executive chef, and Donna Simmons, trainee, D.C. Central Kitchen. He also referred to the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, Public Law 104-210.

Remarks at the Pan Am Flight 103 Bombing 10th Anniversary Observance in Arlington, Virginia

December 21, 1998

Lord Monro, Sir Christopher, chaplain, members of the Cabinet, Senator Kennedy, and most of all, the members of the families of Pan Am 103: I would like to begin by thanking all of you for giving Hillary and me the chance to be here today, and with a special word of appreciation to Jane Schultz for her efforts to bring us all together and to keep us all remembering and acting.

Even though it is painful today to remember what happened 10 years ago, it is necessary, necessary to remember that the people on that plane were students coming home for the holidays, tourists going on vacation in America, families looking forward to a long-awaited reunion,

business people on a routine flight. Their average age was just 27. Last week in the annual report on the condition of the health of the American people, the average life expectancy of Americans has now exceeded 76; their average age was 27. Beneath them, the people of Lockerbie were sitting down to supper on a quiet winter evening. And of course, we have already heard the names; those of you who loved them have relived their lives in that awful moment.

Now, for 10 years, you have cherished your memories, and you have lived with the thought, I'm sure, of what might have been. You have

also, for 10 years, been steadfast in your determination to stand against terrorism and to demand justice. And people all around the world have stood with you, shared your outrage, admired your fellowship with one another, and watched with awed respect your determined campaign for justice. Although 10 years or 20 or 30 or 50 may never be long enough for the sorrow to fade, we pray it will not be too long now before the wait for justice and resolution is over.

We dedicate this day of the winter solstice to the memory of all who were lost, to the families who understand its meaning as no others can. We dedicate each day that follows—as the Sun rises higher and brighter in the morning sky and the daylight hours lengthen—to our common pursuit of truth and justice and to our common efforts to ensure that what happened 10 years ago to those of you here will not occur again.

I know I speak for every American citizen when I say a simple, humble, heartfelt thank-you for all you have done to keep the memory and spirit of your loved ones alive by the memorials you have built, the scholarships you have funded, the charities you have supported. We thank you for reaching out to one another, to the people of Lockerbie, to all others who have been victims of terrorism. We thank you for helping to strengthen the resolve of nations to defeat terror, to deny safe haven to terrorists, to isolate those who sponsor them. We thank you for working to improve security for air travelers and for all the lives your work has saved. We thank you for your determination to see that things that are good and meaningful and lasting come out of your overpowering tragedy. And we thank you for not letting the world forget that it is necessary and right to pursue the perpetrators of this crime, no matter how long it takes.

I thank you for what you have done to drive me to work harder on your behalf, not just the imperative of fighting terror but the passion and commitment and conviction of the families who have spoken to me and to the members of my administration, who all remind us this cannot be considered a mere misfortune; this was deliberate murder. And while all of us have to strive for reconciliation in our hearts, we must also pursue justice and accountability.

You know better than anyone else it is beyond your power to alter the past. There is no such

thing as perfect justice. No trial or penalty or illumination of the facts can compensate you for the profound loss you have suffered. But as long as we can bring those responsible before the bar of justice and have a real trial, you have a right—and society has a need—to see that done.

We owe this not only to you but to all Americans who seek justice; for this was a tragedy felt by every American and, indeed, every man and woman of good will around the world. And none of us want to live in a world where such violence goes unpunished and people can kill with impunity. And none of us will be safe as long as there is a single place on our planet where terrorists can find sanctuary.

That is why our Nation has never given up the search for justice. For 10 years we have ensured that Libya cannot be a member of the international community until it turns over suspects in this case. That is why, in late August, after speaking with many of you, we put forward the initiative which has already been referred to: try the two suspects before a Scottish court sitting in The Netherlands.

Since then the Libyan leader, Mr. Qadhafi, has given us mixed signals. We believe there is still some possibility he will accept our offer. That would be the best outcome, for it would mean that finally there would be a trial. But let me be absolutely clear to all of you: Our policy is not to trust Mr. Qadhafi's claims; it is to test them. This is a take-it-or-leave-it offer. We will not negotiate its terms. If the suspects are convicted, they will serve their time in Scotland. And if the suspects are not turned over by the time of the next sanctions review, we will work at the United Nations with our allies and friends to seek yet stronger measures against Libya. In doing so, we will count on the support of all nations that counseled us to make this proposal in the first place. If the proposal fails, all should make clear that the responsibility falls on Mr. Qadhafi alone.

I make that commitment here, amidst the silent white rows and the heroes that rest beneath, at this place of remembrance where we come to pay tribute to those who lived bravely and often died too young for our Nation. This is a place where Americans come to gather the strength of memory to carry on into tomorrow. It is altogether fitting that this cairn was placed here in memory of your loved ones, for we have a duty to them no less profound than our

duty to those who are buried here. Each stone in this monument is a memory, and each memory, a call to action.

The poet William Blake wrote: "To see a world in a grain of sand, and heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour." That poem is inscribed at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Ten years ago it was copied down by a young American who carried it on her final flight home, Pan Am 103. It reminds us of the dreams that terrible day left unfulfilled, but also of this eternal significance of all those lives that were lived fully, though too briefly, and of the infinite importance of each act of charity and faith committed in their memory.

Like the stones of this cairn, our memories of those we lost remain strong. And so must our determination be to complete on their behalf the unfinished business ahead. To that solemn task, I pledge you my best efforts. And I ask for your continued commitment, your con-

tinued involvement, your continued education of your fellow Americans, and your continued loving memories acted out to benefit those you may never know—for you are making a safer, fairer, more just world.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:23 p.m. at the Memorial Cairn to the victims of Pan Am 103 in Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Lord Monro of Langholm (Hector Monro), who represented the Lockerbie area in the British House of Commons in 1988; British Ambassador to the U.S. Sir Christopher Meyer; Lt. Col. Ronald Wunsch, USA, chaplain, Fort McNair; Jane Schultz, mother of one of the victims and chief organizer of the memorial, who introduced the President; Pan Am 103 bombing suspects Lamem Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi; and Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qadhafi.

Statement on Pay Raises for Armed Forces Personnel

December 21, 1998

In consultation with my Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I have decided to make significant improvements in pay and other compensation for our men and women in uniform. The defense budget I will submit to Congress for next year will include a pay raise of 4.4 percent for 2000, a restructuring of pay to reward performance as well as length of service, and an increase in retirement benefits.

These improvements will enhance the quality of life for our men and women in uniform, will encourage long-term service by the most talented service men and women, and will increase the Armed Forces' military readiness to engage fully, at any time, in order to protect the security and interests of the United States.

The sacrifices of our men and women in the Armed Forces are most vivid during the holidays while those of us at home are celebrating a time of peace with loved ones and family. As events in the Gulf showed us only days ago, our service men and women are asked by their Nation to travel far from home and to put their lives on the line to defend our interests.

I am proud of the men and women of our military, and I am pleased that they will receive the pay and retirement increases they richly deserve. Coupled with recent quality-of-life initiatives in housing, child care, and other areas, these improvements will continue to enhance the quality of life for American service men and women.