

Apr. 5 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

against ethnic cleansing, fulfilling NATO's commitment, getting the refugees to be able to go back home, live in peace and security, and have some autonomy.

So that's what I believe. But I want to—Mr. Secretary Cohen?

Q. Will you come back after they answer, Mr. President?

The President. No. [*Laughter*]

Q. Can we just ask—

The President. No, no—go ahead—I want Secretary Cohen to answer the question.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Lt. Gen. John M. (Mike) McDuffie, USA, Director for Logistics (J-4), Department of Defense Joint Staff; and Pan Am 103 bombing suspects Lamén Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the closing remarks of Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen.

Statement on the Delivery of the Pan Am Flight 103 Bombing Suspects to Dutch Custody

April 5, 1999

I am gratified that the two suspects accused in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 were delivered by the United Nations to the custody of Dutch authorities. Legal proceedings will now take place in accordance with the U.S.-UK initiative for a Scottish trial before a Scottish court sitting in The Netherlands.

The terrorist bombing of Pan Am 103 provoked outrage the world over. It led to more than 10 years of effort by the United States and United Kingdom, with the support of other nations, to bring the suspects to justice.

I am especially thankful for the repeated intervention of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who worked tirelessly to implement the Security Council resolutions. I am also deeply grateful for the efforts of President Mandela,

President Mubarak, and the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar, on behalf of King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah.

But most important, today is a day to remember the men and women who lost their lives on Pan Am 103. I know their loved ones have suffered greatly. They, too, have labored hard to bring justice. Last December, on the 10th anniversary of the bombing, I renewed my pledge to the families that I would make my best efforts to bring the accused to trial. Now, at last, the road to justice has begun.

NOTE: The President referred to suspects Lamén Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Angola (UNITA)

April 5, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for

the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on Proposed Hate Crimes Prevention Legislation *April 6, 1999*

Thank you very much. Senator Leahy, Senator Specter, Congressmen Cardin and Delahunt, Secretary Riley, Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee; to our DC Police Chief, Charles Ramsey, and the other distinguished guests in the audience who are in support, broadened support, of the “Hate Crimes Prevention Act.”

Let me begin by thanking Attorney General Ketterer and Bishop Jane Holmes Dixon for being here. I want you to know that the attorney general got up at 3 o’clock this morning to drive down here from Maine. And of course, he got up that early so he could stay lawfully within the speed limit—[laughter]—coming down here. And he set a good example, and he was wide awake and very persuasive on the law.

Bishop, we thank you for your very moving remarks. Remind me never to speak behind you again. [Laughter] It was—so much of what the bishop said about the setting of this is many things that I have thought. I think you know she and I and those of us who grew up in the segregated South are perhaps more sensitive to all these various hate crimes issues, because we grew up in a culture that was dominated for too long by people who thought they only counted if they had somebody to look down on, that they could only lift themselves up if they were pushing someone else down, that their whole definition of a positive life required a negative definition of another group of people. That’s really what this is all about.

And if you—as she said, if you look at the whole history of this violence we see in Kosovo, what we went through in Bosnia, this, the fifth anniversary of the awful Rwandan genocide, that I regret so much the world was not organized enough to move quickly enough to deal with it before hundreds of thousands of lives were lost—with the oppression of women in Afghanistan, with the lingering bitterness in the Middle East—you see all these things. When you strip it all away, down deep inside there is this idea

that you cannot organize personal life or social life unless some group feels better about itself only when they are oppressing someone else. Or people at least believe that they ought to have the right to do violence against someone else solely because of who they are, not because of what they do. Now at the bottom, that’s what this is all about.

And I have said repeatedly since I have been President that one of the things I have sought to do in our country is to bridge all these divides and to get all of our people not to agree with one another, not to even like one another all the time—goodness knows, we can’t like everybody all the time—but to recognize that our common humanity is more important than these categorical differences and also to recognize that over the long run, America will not be able to be a force for good abroad unless we are good at home.

If you think about the brave men and women who are working with our NATO Allies today in Kosovo and you remember that this basically all started 12 years ago when Mr. Milosevic decided to rally the support of his ethnic Serbian group by turning their hatred against the Kosovar Albanians and later the Bosnian Muslims and the Croatian Catholics and the others, it is very important that we deal with these challenges here at home, even as we continue to support the work of our people in uniform in the Balkans.

I want to say again, the United States would never choose force as anything other than a last option. And Mr. Milosevic could end it now by withdrawing his military police and paramilitary forces, by accepting the deployment of an international security force to protect not only the Kosovar Albanians, most but not all of whom are Muslims, but also the Serbian minority in Kosovo—everybody—we’re not for anybody’s hate crimes—and by making it possible