

June 16 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

that, we must. It is a gift to our children worthy of the millennium.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the Assembly Hall at the United Nations Building. In his remarks, he referred to Juan Somavia, director general, Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni, conference

president, International Labor Organization; and Vladimir Petrovsky, director general, United Nations Office at Geneva. The President also referred to IPEC, the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor. The Executive order of June 12 on child labor is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Senate Action on Work Incentives Legislation

June 16, 1999

Nearly a year ago, I committed to working with Senators Jeffords and Kennedy to pass the "Work Incentives Improvement Act." In January, in my State of the Union Address, I urged the Congress make this historic, bipartisan legislation a top priority and fully funded it in the budget I sent to Congress. And on June 4th I challenged the Congress to send the work incentives bill to me by July 26th, so I could sign this legislation into law on the ninth anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Today, in an overwhelming 99 to 0 vote, the Senate passed the work incentives bill. This impressive vote sends a strong signal that all Americans, including people with disabilities, should have the opportunity to work. Americans with disabilities can and do bring tremendous energy and talent to the American work force, but the unemployment rate for all working-age adults with disabilities is nearly 75 percent. One of

the most glaring problems is that people with disabilities frequently become ineligible for Medicaid or Medicare if they go back to work. This puts people with disabilities in the untenable position of choosing between health care coverage and work. The "Work Incentives Improvement Act" would improve job opportunities for people with disabilities by increasing access to health care and employment services.

Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, Roth, and Moynihan deserve special recognition for their leadership on this historic legislation. I urge the House to follow their lead. Under the leadership of Congressmen Bliley, Dingell, Waxman, and Lazio, I am confident that it will. I also hope and expect the Senate and House to find offsets for this bill that are acceptable to all parties. This bill will provide critical work opportunities to people with disabilities, and I look forward to signing this groundbreaking legislation.

Statement on Proposed Legislation on Immigrant Children's Health Improvement

June 16, 1999

I am pleased that today a bipartisan group of Senators, led by Senators Chafee and McCain and including Senators Graham, Mack, Moynihan, and Jeffords, have taken an important step in ensuring health care coverage for children by introducing the "Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act of 1999."

When I signed the 1996 welfare reform law, I pledged to work toward reversing the unneces-

sary cuts in benefits to legal immigrants that had nothing to do with the goal of moving people from welfare to work. As part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Agricultural Research Act of 1998, my administration worked with Congress to restore vital health, nutritional, and disability benefits to hundreds of thousands of vulnerable legal immigrants. Recognizing that more needs to be done, my budget includes

a \$1.3 billion proposal to restore health care benefits to children and pregnant women, nutritional assistance to elderly individuals, and disability and health assistance to legal immigrants who become disabled after they arrive in the United States.

The proposal introduced today, which is similar to the one in my budget, would provide health care coverage for over 55,000 children,

allowing States to use Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for pregnant women and children who are legal immigrants, regardless of when they came to the U.S. I look forward to working with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to enact this legislation to help many children lead healthier and more productive lives.

The President's News Conference With President Jacques Chirac of France in Paris

June 17, 1999

President Chirac. We wanted to have the Sun shine for President Clinton's visit, and I would like to welcome him most warmly for the meeting this year, in the framework of frequent contact and very pleasant contacts—always very pleasant contacts—whether it's over the phone or whether it's a friendly meeting such as today's. And I'm very pleased that President and Mrs. Clinton were able to take some time to come through Paris on the occasion of the President's trip to Cologne for the G-7/G-8.

Yesterday evening we had a very pleasant dinner. I can't say that we worked a great deal yesterday evening, to tell you the truth. But however, we did spend time which personally I very much enjoyed. So a bit yesterday evening and much more this morning, we first of all drew the lessons from the crisis in Kosovo, and we noted that our victory in Kosovo will be a complete victory only once all refugees have been able to come back to their homes and when all the communities living in Kosovo are able to live in safety, namely, thanks to the vigilance of the military security force which is at present deploying in the region.

We also discussed a number of other problems: the European defense system, in particular, concerning recent events which have occurred in the Balkans, but also following positions taken at the Washington summit; the re-launching of the peace process in the Middle East, such as we very much hope for following the forthcoming appointment of the government of Israel, and the role which Europe and France might play and the help we might contribute

to those efforts made to ensure an effective launching of the peace process.

We also considered various problems on the agenda of our Cologne meeting, summit: the very important initiatives that we're taking on the eve of the next century concerning the debt owed by poor countries; the reinforcement and adjustment of the international financial system; the social dimension, which you know I'm very deeply attached to, of globalization and the consequence to be drawn from this.

And I also suggested to President Clinton that the G-8 Summit consider the possibility of taking initiative in an area which is of great concern, namely to Europeans at present, and which is that of food security, safety of food-stuffs. Our people are increasingly concerned, worried, and I would like to suggest that the setting up of a global higher scientific council for food safety. I shan't go into the details, but I have proposed this to the heads of state/government of the G-8, and I shall have an opportunity to develop this point in Cologne. But my wish is to have this considered by heads of state and government of the G-8, and that we see whether it might be possible to find a solution able to better guarantee the health of Europeans—of all of the inhabitants of the world, of course.

And before giving the floor to President Clinton, I should like to say in concluding how very much I welcome the very good quality of Franco-American relations. Everybody knows, and it's obvious, occasionally we have differences of views. But we know how to deal with them, and have done so for some time, and to resolve