

level, it almost looks like two kids daring each other to go first.

But if you look beneath that, the IRA say, “Well, it’s our people that voted for the peace. We wanted to render our arms to them, not to the other side and have them claim that they got some victory over us; this is a victory that the people together voted for.” So this argument goes on endlessly.

Now, let me tell you, the good news is that everybody on all sides agrees to all parts of the Good Friday accords; everybody on all sides agrees that it all has to be done by next May. Nobody wants to get rid of anything else about the agreement, and the only problem we’ve got left is the sequencing of standing up the executive branch and decommissioning. That is all that will be discussed when Senator Mitchell reconvenes the group on September 6th. And when the Good Friday agreements were reached, it was anticipated that roadblocks might develop, and so they set this up.

So all I would say to all of you is that part of this problem is trust, and at some point, they’re going to have to figure out a way that they’re both trusting each other at the same time. So you get out of this “you go first.” You know, it’s like two kids standing on a big old diving board holding hands and looking down into a deep pool.

Part of it is that, unlike the women that Hillary deals with in Vital Voices, some of these folks have been doing this for so long that their whole identity is caught up in the continuation of the conflict. I say this in all respect. I’m not attacking them, but it’s true.

So what we have to do is to find ways to help them let go. And that’s why the work of

the American Ireland Fund is still important. Even though the economy is going like crazy—I’ve talked to Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern about this repeatedly—we have got to target those critical decisionmakers and give them an image of a life they can have that will be meaningful and rich. I don’t mean materially rich; I mean it’ll have a lot of texture and meaning and standing in the community if they let go.

So thank you for what you’ve done. Thank you for supporting Vital Voices. The women are doing better than the men now in promoting peace, for the reasons I’ve said. [*Laughter*] But this deal in September may be our last chance for a generation, and we cannot blow it. It’s too late to turn back now, as Mr. Morrison sang. [*Laughter*] It is too late. And so we need the voices. I can look at people in this room that—I know I’ve been working on this now with many of you for a long time. We have got to help them let go. And you can do it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Bob and Mia Matthews; event cochairs Jack Manning and Lyle Howland; Tim Russert, Washington bureau chief, NBC News; Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Gen. John de Chastelain, Canadian Defense Forces, member and chair, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Ireland; and the late Jim Morrison, singer of The Doors.

The President’s Radio Address

August 21, 1999

Good morning. Like many Americans, Hillary and I are fortunate to be spending part of our summer vacation enjoying the splendors of nature—strolling clean, beautiful beaches, breathing the fresh ocean air, watching the stunning sunset—reminding us that we must do everything we can to preserve this glorious land of ours for generations yet to come.

President Theodore Roosevelt once committed our Nation to leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us. Vice President Gore and I have tried hard to fulfill his vision. We protected the Yellowstone Park from the threat of mining, preserved the red rock canyons of Utah, saved age-old redwoods in California’s Headwaters Forest. We

Aug. 21 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

launched the most ambitious restoration effort ever in the magnificent Florida Everglades. And we're acting to restore healthy air and pristine skies to our national parks so that future generations can see and enjoy them, just as the first explorers did.

Last year, at my request, Congress approved new funding to protect other precious lands. Today I'm pleased to announce our latest efforts. We've just reach a landmark agreement to protect more than 9,000 acres of critical land next to Yellowstone, another milestone in our effort to preserve the matchless wonders of America's first national park.

Permanently protecting these lands will help to ensure the survival of the bison and other herds that roam the wilds of Yellowstone. And by removing a threat to the underground springs that feed Yellowstone's geysers, we'll ensure that Old Faithful remains faithful for years to come. A hundred years from now, families still will be able to experience the magnificent glory of Yellowstone.

We're also protecting several other natural and historic sites across our country, from ancient ruins in Bandelier National Monument, to the birthplace of Martin Luther King, Jr., to California's spectacular Big Sur coast. We can all be proud of these latest additions to our Nation's endowment. Yet, with more Americans visiting our national parks and forests than ever before, we must do more. Every child deserves a chance to hike in an old-growth forest or wade in a clear, cool stream. And our land is more than a haven for wildlife or a vacation spot; it embodies our very history and our culture.

In too many places, vital pieces of this heritage are disappearing. Once lost, they can't be replaced. That is why I proposed an historic lands legacy initiative to open the new century with an unprecedented commitment to preserving our most precious lands for all time. First, as part of our balanced budget for the

coming year, I proposed a record \$1 billion to protect natural treasures and provide new resources to States and communities to preserve farms, urban parks, wetlands, coastlands, and working forests.

Second, I asked for permanent funding of at least a billion dollars a year to continue these efforts through the coming century. My priorities for the new year include new protections for Civil War battlefields, the Lewis and Clark trail, the Cape Cod National Seashore, and the Pelican Island refuge in Florida, America's first wildlife refuge.

But these priorities are at risk because Congress has approved only a fraction of my request. And while we're taking action to protect our environment and the public health, the Republican leadership's risky tax plan would actually roll back our progress. It would cut funding to our national parks, even threaten to shut some of them down.

Now, throughout this century the stewardship of our lands has not been a partisan issue; it's been a bipartisan cause. In that spirit, I urge Congress to approve my full request for the coming year for the lands legacy initiative, to work with me to create a permanent fund to preserving our lands.

We're indebted to those who safeguarded our natural treasures so that we might enjoy them today, and we owe that same debt to the future. It is our sacred obligation to leave this land a better land for our children and for generations yet to come. Theodore Roosevelt was right, and it's time we all heeded him.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:50 p.m. on August 20 at a private residence in Nantucket, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Earthquake in Turkey

August 21, 1999

On behalf of all Americans, Hillary and I offer our deepest condolences to the loved ones of

those who have lost their lives in this week's devastating earthquake in Turkey. Our thoughts