

Sept. 7 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement on the Conclusion of the Independent Counsel's Investigation of Henry G. Cisneros

September 7, 1999

Henry has been a dedicated public official who served the American people and this administration with distinction. He is also a good

friend. I am pleased that this matter is finally behind him, and I wish him and his family all the best.

Message on the Observance of Rosh Hashana, 1999

September 7, 1999

Warm greetings to all who are celebrating Rosh Hashana.

During this season of renewal and redemption, Jews from across the nation and around the world heed the sound of the *shofar* announcing the beginning of the High Holy Days and gather together with family and friends to celebrate the creation of the world and the beginning of the new year.

Rosh Hashana is a time for rejoicing, but it also is a time for serious prayer and reflection. Jews give thanks for their blessings and repent for their mistakes. They resolve to change what they can to make the new year better than the last.

Regrettably, this past year saw too many examples of hatred and violence inspired by igno-

rance and prejudice. We all can learn from the Jewish people's strong dedication to civil rights and tolerance, and we all must redouble our efforts to combat the forces of intolerance that still linger in our society.

As we celebrate Rosh Hashana, I urge all Americans to join the Jewish community and to come together as a nation to speak out against hate crimes and to appreciate our common humanity. Together, we can work to ensure that the tragedies of the past year are not repeated and that the coming year is filled with happiness and peace.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a meaningful observance.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks to the NBA Champion San Antonio Spurs

September 7, 1999

Thank you very much. Please be seated, everyone.

Welcome to the White House. I want to say a special word of welcome to Peter Holt, to Gregg Popovich, obviously, to the San Antonio Spurs. We're also joined today by four Members of the House of Representatives from the great State of Texas: Congressmen Gonzalez, Rodriguez, Bonilla, and Edwards. And we thank them for being here.

I want to acknowledge the team captains, Avery Johnson and David Robinson, who is the only graduate of the Naval Academy playing in the NBA. That's important, because I have to

stick up for the service academies here. It's part of my job, you know. [*Laughter*] I'd also like to offer a special word of welcome to Sean Elliott. He's had a tough few months; we're glad to see him here. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Everybody who works around here at the White House and who knows me knows that I am a basketball fanatic. You know, I live for the NCAA finals and the NBA finals, and I follow basketball very closely. And I've been fortunate enough to be good friends with two or three reasonably successful basketball coaches, who have taught me a little about the game.

And it's really—it's a lot like politics. You get ahead, and then you get behind. [Laughter] Then you try to get ahead again. And normally, you don't know whether you're going to win until right before the end of the game.

And I like this team. They started 6 and 8, and finished 46 and 7. And when we were watching the NBA, the semifinals and the finals—and I always have people come over and watch the games with us—and one night Hillary and I were watching with a bunch of our friends, one of whom was from one of the other towns you were playing, Coach. [Laughter] And he kept cheering and cheering and cheering. And finally, Hillary looked at him and said, "Now, tell the truth. Don't you think the Spurs are the best team in basketball this year?" And he said, "Well, of course." [Laughter]

And I don't think there's much more you can say. This is a team with enormous talent, enormous dedication, a steel will, and a great heart. And they won because they deserved to win. And I think all of us who love this sport, not just people from San Antonio or from Texas, were elated by their success, because they deserved it, and they earned it. And I'm glad to welcome them all to the White House today.

Thank you very much.

[At this point, Peter Holt, chairman, Gregg Popovich, coach and general manager, and team member Avery Johnson made brief remarks.]

You know, there's a thousand things I'd like to say. [Laughter] I identify with a lot of people on the scene. You know, when the commentators kept saying, every time Avery was not guarded, he scored—did you notice that? And they kept referring to one person who made

the mistake of saying he really didn't belong in the NBA and could never lead a team to a championship. You know, when I was Governor of Arkansas, that's what they said about me when I was running for President. I identify with that. [Laughter]

And then every time things were slightly in doubt, the television camera would do this close-up on Tim Duncan's eyes—[laughter]—and I knew they were going to win. I'm trying to develop that killer look. [Laughter] We're about to enter all these tough budget negotiations, and I'm trying to visualize what Duncan looked like when it got really close, you know. [Laughter] But if any of you guys want to stay around and help me through the next month, you're welcome to do it. [Laughter] Government scale's a little low for you, but it's rewarding work; it's rewarding work. [Laughter]

Let me just say one thing, seriously. I don't want to talk about the contents of it. But one of the most interesting telephone conversations I ever had in my life—with someone I had never met, especially—was with Coach Popovich, when I called to congratulate him. And I realized that he was a man with a keen understanding of human nature and the human spirit and what it really takes to make good things happen. And I want to thank you publicly for that conversation and for your remembering what we talked about as we walked in today. I'd say you've got a good chance to repeat.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to team members Sean Elliott and Tim Duncan.

Satellite Remarks Launching the NetAid Website September 8, 1999

Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General. I am delighted to share this historic moment with you, with President Mandela, with Prime Minister Blair, and all our friends supporting NetAid.

The launching of this website represents a truly important new front in the struggle against poverty. Information technology has been vital to the prosperity achieved by many nations this

decade, including ours. The people of the world have never communicated better or more easily, and that has spurred countless new ideas and opportunities.

But it's also a fact that this prosperity has been very uneven within and among countries. The democratic promise of the Internet, therefore, is not yet fulfilled, because vast populations