

Sept. 27 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

policy interest of the United States to defer for 1 year the deportation of any Liberian national who is present in the United States as of September 29, 1999, except for the categories of individuals listed below.

Accordingly, I now direct you to take the necessary steps to implement for these Liberians:

1. deferral of enforced departure from the United States for 1 year from September 29, 1999; and
2. authorization for employment for 1 year from September 29, 1999.

This directive shall not apply to any Liberian national: (1) who is ineligible for Temporary Protected Status for the reasons provided in section 244(c)(2)(B) of the Immigration and Na-

tionality Act; (2) whose removal you determine is in the interest of the United States; (3) whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States; (4) who voluntarily returned or returns to Liberia or his or her country of last habitual residence outside the United States; (5) who was deported, excluded, or removed prior to the date of this memorandum; or (6) who is subject to extradition.

These measures shall be taken as of the date of this memorandum.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Angola (UNITA)

September 27, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

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, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), 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.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 27, 1999.

Remarks at a Dinner for Representative William J. Jefferson in New Orleans

September 27, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. First of all, like everyone else, I want to thank the Davises for having us in this magnificent home. And thank you for the tour through all the art and all the books and all the history of your life. It was fascinating. And I didn't steal any books or artwork. [Laughter] And I can't afford the discount price, either. [Laughter] But it's really wonderful, and we thank you for having us here.

Q. What about the golf—

The President. I'm getting there. [Laughter] I want to thank the mayor for making me so welcome in New Orleans and tell you that he

has done a truly magnificent job. New Orleans has had one of the biggest drops in violent crime of any major city in America under his leadership. And I applaud him for that.

I would like to thank Sheriff Harry Lee, who is back there, for many things, being my friend for a long time. But you should know that he came with a group of people from Louisiana to the White House and stayed 2 days this week and provided good Cajun cooking for the annual congressional picnic, with all the families there, and the annual press picnic. And while he is a strong supporter of mine, he did not taint the food of any of the Members of Congress

of the other party—[laughter]—or any of the hostile press members. [Laughter] He was totally generous to everybody.

I want to thank the people who came from out of town here, Tommy Boggs, my good friend; and my friend Mack McLarty, the former Chief of Staff and Special Envoy to the Americas. We're all glad to be in New Orleans tonight, and we only wish we didn't have to go home.

And I thank Bill for running for Governor. I didn't thank him in the beginning because I didn't want him to leave the Congress. You know, whenever you run for an office like this and you run against an incumbent and times are good, you wonder and worry. But I have seen, myself, a marked movement in the polls and enough to justify your investment here tonight.

So I just want to make some substantive points that have nothing to do with politics. First of all—they have to do with policy more and people—and incidentally, a political campaign.

First of all, my handicap on my home course is a 12. [Laughter] And that's what it is and that's what I play, even—[laughter]—unless I play a strange course from long tees, and sometimes I play to a 14. But otherwise, I normally play to a 12, and that's about what I shoot.

Secondly, I do most of my music in my music room. Hillary built me a music room on the third floor of the White House, in a little end room. And I have saxophones there from all over the world, from China, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, two magnificent horns from Germany, two from France, three from Japan, and goodness knows where else. Then I've got a bunch of American horns. And I play a 1935 Selmer, and I have a 1915 Buescher soprano saxophone. So I've been into this a long time, and that's where I play, because it's so far away I can't hurt anybody else's ears. [Laughter] So I don't take it on that plane with me when I go. And I do have one at Camp David. And if you have any other questions, I'll try to answer them. [Laughter]

But let me make some points very quickly, and I want you to know why I'm here tonight. Bill Jefferson started with me in 1991, when I was running for President, and nobody but my mother thought I could win; well, my wife did; no one else, those two. And we did it because we thought that the country couldn't go on the way it was, with this sort of gridlock

in Washington where 12 years of the previous administrations had quadrupled the national debt, and they basically had reached an accommodation with Congress where every year we would embody President Reagan's idea that if you cut revenues and increased spending, you would balance the budget. It defied basic arithmetic; it didn't work in 1981, and it didn't work in 1991. And in between we quadrupled the national debt, and we got big, big increases in interest rates and high unemployment. The unemployment rate in Louisiana when I took office was about 7½ percent, I think, and it's 4.2 percent today.

So we said—we had been involved with this sort of New Democratic movement. And we thought the Democratic Party had to prove that you could be pro-business and pro-labor; that you could be for equality and education and for high standards; that you could be for growing the economy and improving the environment; that you could be for respecting individuals and people of all different races and ethnic groups and religious groups, and still believe that what binds us together as Americans is more important than what divides us.

In other words, we felt that American politics had fallen into this sort of liberal/conservative, right/left, business/labor, environment/economy. Everything was one way or the other, and nobody was ever getting anything done, and the country was getting deeper in the ditch. And our social divisions were deepening.

And I know that the previous President, with whom I had a very cordial, personal relationship, vetoed the Brady bill to do background checks because the NRA wasn't for it, and the Republicans had to be with them; and then vetoed the family and medical leave law because some people in the business community said, "Well, that's an antibusiness measure," even though, clearly, one of the biggest challenges that we have is to balance work and family.

So I really believed—and I had some of the same arguments with my friends in our party. If this whole business is about having to make choices between these two things, we're going to leave America the loser. And the evidence was pretty compelling in 1991; we had high unemployment, stagnant wages, terrible recession, and increasing social division. And so I asked Bill and a number of other people in Louisiana to help me run for President, when I was, in the words of my predecessor, just

a Governor from a small southern State. And the people gave us a chance. They gave Al Gore and me a chance. And they basically listened to our argument about putting people first, and they said, "We'll try it." But it was just an argument; they didn't know.

By 1996, we were reelected, and with a much bigger margin of victory in Louisiana—thank you very much—because it wasn't an argument anymore; it was an established fact. You didn't have to argue anymore; you knew whether this was working or not, and it was.

Now we're nearly 7 years into it, 6²/₃ years, and the facts make the case. We have almost 19½ million new jobs, the longest peacetime expansion in history, the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the lowest welfare rates in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 26 years. This year we announced that this year's budget surplus was going to be \$115 billion, and it's the first time in 42 years we've had 2 years of budget surpluses in a row.

Now, those are facts. And while the economy has been growing, I signed the family and medical leave law, and millions of people have taken advantage of it. Every year we've had a record number of new small businesses. I signed the Brady bill, and 400,000 people with criminal backgrounds or mental health histories haven't gotten handguns. And not a single hunter or sports person has been inconvenienced, but a lot of lives have been saved.

The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We've tripled the number of toxic waste dump cleanups. And the economy has grown, not been hurt, by strengthening our commitment to the environment. Ninety percent of our kids are immunized against serious childhood diseases. And the HOPE scholarship gives virtually a universal tax credit that opens the doors of college to anybody who will work hard enough to go.

This country is moving in the right direction because of the ideas that we shared. And one of the reasons that I would go anywhere for him is that none of this would have happened, in my judgment, if we hadn't enacted the economic plan of 1993, which helped to cost us the Congress in '94 because people knew that it was controversial. We cut spending and raised taxes both, and everybody was mad, and nobody felt the benefits yet. And it passed by one vote.

So if he hadn't been there to vote for it, or if he had said, "You know, I come from

Louisiana; it's a conservative State," and he'd taken a dive, none of us would be here tonight, because I wouldn't have been reelected; the economy wouldn't be in good shape; and we'd all be singing another tune. But he was there because he knew it was the right thing to do. And he supported our crime package and all the other initiatives.

So I think his philosophy is right, and I know he's got the courage of his convictions. That's the first thing.

The second thing that I would like to say is that every election is about where you're going, not where you've been. I love to tell this story, but when I was Governor I used to go out to the State Fair every year and have Governor's day. And I'd just sit there in some little booth in one of the big pavilions. Anybody that wanted to come up could come up and say whatever they wanted. In 1990 I had been Governor for 10 years, and we had an election coming up. So this old boy in overalls, who was about 75 years old, comes up to me, and he says, "Well," he said, "Bill, are you going to run for Governor again?" I said, "I don't know; if I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yeah, I guess so. I always have." And I said "Well, aren't you sick of me after all this time?" He said, "No, I'm not, but," he said, "nearly everybody else I know is." [Laughter] And I got kind of hurt, and I said, "Well, don't you think I've done a good job?" He said, "Sure, but you drew a paycheck every 2 weeks, didn't you? That's what we hired you to do." And it was a stunning insight.

So every election is not about yesterday; it's about tomorrow. Yesterday is important because it's evidence of what you'll do tomorrow.

So what are we going to do with all this prosperity? And what's still out there? And what does that got to do with this Governor's race? Number one, I believe with all my heart we need to use this time to deal with the long-term challenges of this country.

What are they? The aging of America: the baby boomers like me—I'm the oldest of the baby boomers; people between the ages of 35 and 53 are in the baby boom generation; we retire—we're much bigger than any other group our age except until these kids that are in school today. Thirty years from now there will be twice as many people over 65—twice as many; two people working for every one person drawing Social Security.

Now, with the surpluses, now is the time to deal with the challenge of Social Security and Medicare, to add a prescription drug coverage to the Medicare program—we'd never start Medicare without prescription drugs today—to lengthen the life of the Social Security Trust Fund until 2050, anyway, to get through the lifetimes of the baby boom generation. That's what we've got to do. It's the first thing we ought to do.

The second thing we need to do is to recognize that not everybody has been a part of this economic recovery. And we need to keep working to get more investment to people and places that haven't had it yet, and to keep this expansion going.

So I want to do two things. Number one, I want to give the same tax incentives to investors to invest in America we give them to invest in the Caribbean or Latin America or Africa or any other place in the world. I like those incentives to invest overseas in poor countries, but we ought to give the same incentives to people to invest in poor neighborhoods, poor communities, the Mississippi Delta, the Indian reservations, the inner cities in the United States of America. That's very important. If we can't bring investment and jobs to these places now, we will never get around to doing it. This country has never had greater prosperity.

And the other thing that we have to do, in my judgment, is not to squander this surplus. We need to save enough of this surplus to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare and to pay down the debt. Do you realize that this country could be out of debt in 15 years for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President? Just think about—here in New Orleans, you think about how long ago that is. A guy that got to be President because he won the Battle of New Orleans in 1814, a guy that got to be President because of a battle he won in 1814 was the last person to have this country out of debt.

But in a global economy, it's a good deal. Why should liberals be for a debt-free America? Because money moves around the world in a hurry. That's what happened to Asia. You remember a couple years ago when they all went belly up at once. And if a government is not borrowing money, that means you get to borrow money for lower cost, your interest rates are lower. Lower business rates means more jobs and higher incomes. Lower personal rates means

lower house loans, lower car loans, lower college loans, lower credit card payments, a longer, more protracted, more prosperous future for America. That's important. And all that could be done entirely by the Federal Government.

But the third big challenge cannot be. The third big challenge is doing right by the children of this country, and, specifically, giving them all a world-class education. Do you believe all kids can learn? I do. Do you believe we need to challenge them to do better? I do. Do you believe we need to identify failing schools and require them to turn around and do better, or shut them down and let the kids go to other schools? I do.

I'm not for vouchers because we don't put enough money in the schools in the first place. So if you give vouchers, you take a relatively large amount of money away from the school budget for a relatively small number of people. That's why I'm not for it. But on the other hand, I think to just justify the status quo is wrong.

So I've offered the Congress a plan which would say you can have your Federal money for education, but if you want it, you've got to have a plan to hold schools accountable for the performance of their students, to turn around failing schools or shut them down, but we're not going to blame the kids for the failures of the system. We're going to give you some money to turn these schools around, and we're going to triple the money we give for after-school programs, which will help you keep the crime rate coming down. Won't it?

Now, this is where we come to the Governor's race. No matter what I do, under the American system and the constitution of every State, the primary responsibility for education is vested in the State. And most of the money for education is paid by taxpayers to the State or to the local government. Today, in a global economy, with modern technology, more education is critical. And yet, it is more difficult than ever in America because our student bodies are more and more diverse. I mean, today I saw people from at least four different ethnic groups in that little group of school children you had gathered up for me today—just looking at the faces of those kids.

Believe it or not, in the Alexandria School District, across the river from the White House, in Virginia, there are kids from 180 different racial and ethnic groups whose parents speak

a hundred different languages, in one school district.

Now, that means we have work to do. And there is no more important responsibility for the Governor. If I were a citizen of Louisiana, if I were back home just voting in Arkansas—I hate to ever be a single-issue voter, but I would be almost completely a single-issue voter in a Governor's race, based on the person I thought was most likely to do the most for the schools of my State, because if these kids don't have the education they need, nothing else the rest of us do will matter for their future. It is the most important thing.

Last point—I'm the only person here who has been a Governor, and I did it for 12 years, and I loved it every day. And I did not get tired of it. I didn't get bored with it. And when I left to go be President, I was having more fun being Governor before I started running for President than I had ever had in my whole life. It's a wonderful job.

And if you like it, if you like people, if you like to work hard, if you believe in good schools and good jobs, and if it thrills you to get things done for your State, it's a wonderful job. But to be really good at it, you need to be passionate about your convictions, and you need to have a real vision you'll fight for. But you can't be too partisan and mean-spirited. You've got to be someone who can get people together, work with all kinds of different people, and convince people that your vision is the right one. And when other people have a good idea, then do that, too.

That's the kind of person Bill is. That's why he was voted the "Best Legislator" in the State

legislature two different times when he was a State legislator. And I can tell you as someone who has done this job for 12 years, he has the right temperament. He has plenty of sense. He has a magnificent wife to keep his head balanced and to help remind him that education is his first priority—[laughter]—and he has years and years and years of knowledge and skill in getting things done, including in the Congress, that money can't buy and that you can only get by living the way he has lived.

So I think what you ought to do is go out there and say, listen, to everybody—he hasn't asked anybody to vote for him because of his race. All he has asked is that nobody votes against him because of his race. All he said is he wants to treat everybody the same and give every child the chance to live up to his or her God-given capacities.

But I'm telling you, if you look at a man's life, his record, his personal skills, and what the State needs at this time, and how it fits with what we're doing to move America into the 21st century, I can hardly think of anybody who is as well qualified, remotely, as he would be to be the Governor not only of this State but any State. You're lucky to have him running, and I hope you'll keep helping him.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Arthur Q. and Mary Wineman Davis; Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; Jefferson Parish Sheriff Harry Lee; lobbyist Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr.; and Representative Jefferson's wife, Andrea.

Remarks at a Breakfast With Religious Leaders

September 28, 1999

Thank you very much, and good morning. I, first of all, would like to thank you for the invocation and let you know that, as with many other Americans, we have been thinking about you and your people in your church.

Hillary and I welcome you here today. As you know, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore are normally here, but he is often otherwise occupied these days. [Laughter] And I hope you

will forgive their absence. They really wanted to be here.

I would like to thank Secretary Shalala, Secretary Riley, Jack Lew for being here. I would also like to thank Barry McCaffrey, the Director of our Office of National Drug Control Policy. And to those of you who come nearly every year, welcome back. To those of you who are