

Oct. 16 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

the aggregate average genetic differences between Italians and Irish and Africans and Latins.” It’s important to remember. For people of faith, it reflects the wisdom of our Creator.

So I say again, I’m indebted to you for many things: your work ethic, your family ethic, your creativity, your energy, your passion. It made America a much more interesting place, and it fueled this remarkable run we have had. But your commitment to see that neither Italians nor any other human beings are subject to degradation and prejudice because of who they are, that we will learn to honestly and openly express our differences and enjoy our differences, but reaffirm our common humanity, make no mistake about it—just pick up the paper any day; look at the perils of the present day. We are in a conflict between modern possibility and primitive hatred. One America is the only answer, and you’re leading the way.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 p.m. in the ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Frank J. Guarini, chairman, Joseph R. Cerrell, president, and Geraldine Ferraro, board member, National Italian American Foundation; U.S. Ambassador to Italy Thomas M. Foglietta; U.S. Ambassador to Romania James C. Rosapepe; Italian Ambassador to the United States Ferdinando Salvo; Minister of Foreign Affairs Lamberto Dini and Prime Minister Massimo D’Alema of Italy; CNBC journalist Maria Bartiromo, event emcee; Cardinal James Hickey, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington, DC; Richard Grasso, chairman and chief executive officer, New York Stock Exchange; Joe Torre, manager, New York Yankees; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president for Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom; and Eric Lander, director, Whitehead Institute/MIT Center for Genome Research.

Statement on the 1998 Uniform Crime Report

October 17, 1999

The 1998 uniform crime report released by the FBI today shows that serious crime has continued to fall in every region of our Nation for the seventh straight year. The murder rate is at its lowest since 1967. The overall violent crime rate is down, and gun crimes, rapes, robberies, assaults, and juvenile crime have all dropped to their lowest levels in over a decade. This is good news for America’s families, and it shows we can indeed turn the tide on crime.

My administration’s strategy of 100,000 more police, fewer guns in the hands of criminals, thanks to the Brady law, and more tools for communities to combat crime is working to

make our streets safer and our communities stronger. But tragedies from Littleton to Los Angeles show that we must do more to protect our communities from gun violence. Even as crime falls, we must not let down our guard. That is why we must redouble our efforts to build on what works by fully funding our COPS program to put more police on the street and by passing commonsense gun legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands. Together we can make America the safest big nation in the world.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 6 p.m., October 17.

Remarks on Budget Negotiations and an Exchange With Reporters

October 18, 1999

The President. Good morning. I have just completed a meeting with my economic team to see what we can do to reach overall budget agreement with the congressional leadership. In

just 4 days the resolution that temporarily funds the Government will expire, and yet Congress still has not sent me a budget that maintains our fiscal discipline, pays down Social Security,