

May 17 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

have the courage and character to do it. I pray you will also have the vision and wisdom to take your motto and truly make it your own.

Good luck. Thank you for your service, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. at Cadet Memorial Field. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. James M. Loy, USCG, Commandant of the Coast Guard; Rear Adm. Douglas Teeson, USCG, Superintendent, and Capt. Thomas J. Haas,

USCG (Ret.), Dean of Academics and Supervisory Professor, U.S. Coast Guard Academy; Capt. William P. Dillon, Chaplain Corps, USN, who delivered the invocation; Cadet First Class Christopher Burrus, who delivered the valedictorian address; and Onel de Guzman, who allegedly unleashed the “love bug” computer virus. The Executive order of May 10 on access to HIV/AIDS pharmaceuticals and medical technologies is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Environmental Protection Agency Proposal To Reduce Emissions From Trucks and Buses

May 17, 2000

The measures proposed today by the Environmental Protection Agency to reduce harmful emissions from trucks and buses represent another major milestone in this administration’s long-standing effort to ensure cleaner, healthier air for all Americans.

Air pollution has declined dramatically over the past quarter century, but stronger action is needed to protect public health and keep us on track to meeting our Nation’s air quality goals. That is why last year I announced tough new tailpipe and fuel standards to dramatically reduce emissions from cars, SUV’s, and other light-duty trucks. Today’s proposal would establish stringent new standards for heavy-duty

trucks and buses and the diesel fuel that powers them. These proposed standards would produce the cleanest trucks and buses ever, significantly reducing smog, soot, and other pollutants that contribute to asthma and other respiratory disease.

Americans today enjoy the cleanest environment in a generation and the longest economic expansion in our Nation’s history. I am confident that today’s proposal—which will be refined in the coming months with input from the public, industry, and the environmental community—will produce even greater benefits for both our economy and our environment.

Statement on Congressional Action on Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

May 17, 2000

I am encouraged that the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee have both approved legislation today authorizing the extension of permanent normal trade relations to China. Today’s approval of PNTR is a significant step toward final passage by the Congress. The strong bipartisan votes in both committees send a clear, strong message that permanent normal trade relations for China is vital to America’s prosperity at home, our

leadership in the world, and to positive change in China.

The full Congress will now consider this legislation. Members will not decide whether China will join the WTO—it will. Congress will decide whether we put American workers, farmers, and businesses at a disadvantage by denying them the access to and benefits from China’s markets that their competitors in Japan and Europe will have. A vote for PNTR will bring down China’s barriers to American exports, opening the largest

potential market in the world to our goods and services. A vote against PNTR will cost us exports and jobs and cede this massive new market to our competitors.

This is a decision of great importance and a moment of historic opportunity. In this, the

last week before the final vote, I will redouble my efforts to convince Congress and the American people to seize that opportunity to strengthen our economy, our national security, and the forces of reform and positive change in China.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on Tobacco *May 17, 2000*

New studies released by independent researchers today underscore the need for congressional action in the fight to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. New studies by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the American Legacy Foundation show that tobacco advertising in magazines read by large numbers of kids has increased over one-third since the 1998 settlement agreement between States and tobacco companies. In addition, not only have tobacco companies increased the number of magazine ads targeted to young people, they may actually be doing it more effectively. The studies show that these ads are actually being seen by more young people. Top brand advertising alone now reaches 70 percent of all teens.

I call on the attorneys general from the States who signed the agreement to take immediate and appropriate enforcement action to stop these practices. And again, I call on Congress to give the FDA meaningful authority to regu-

late the marketing, sale, and manufacturing of tobacco products. The youth-oriented advertising addressed in these studies would have been limited by the FDA rule. FDA's hands should not remain tied by congressional inaction.

In 1998 Senators Frist and McCain introduced a bill that would have given the FDA authority to regulate the marketing and sale of tobacco products. Unfortunately, a weak, watered-down bill was introduced yesterday that would allow the marketing practices revealed today to continue. Instead of protecting our children from tobacco, some in Congress are actually trying to block out efforts to hold the tobacco industry accountable for decades of deception, as a Senate appropriations committee recently passed a rider that would stop the Justice Department from proceeding with litigation to recover Federal tobacco-related health costs from tobacco manufacturers. I urge Congress to reject this blatant effort to put special interests ahead of the taxpayers.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process *May 17, 2000*

Monday, May 22, marks the second anniversary of the referenda in which the voters of Ireland and Northern Ireland overwhelmingly endorsed the Good Friday accord. Since then, Northern Ireland has made great strides toward becoming a peaceful society, following three decades of violence. Today, we are on the threshold of a major achievement—a lasting political arrangement that will allow the people of Northern Ireland and their representatives to decide their future for themselves by exclu-

sively peaceful means, on the basis of consent. This is a chance to lock in the unprecedented progress that has been attained and propel the process forward. It is an opportunity that must not be lost. I urge the parties to lift their sights, seize the possibilities that are within their grasp, and take the steps necessary to advance the cause of peace.