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partners means to compel Iraq to cooperate on humanitarian and human rights issues.

Security Council Resolution 687 affirmed that Iraq is liable under international law for compensating the victims of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The U.N. Compensation Commission (UNCC) has received about 2.6 million claims worldwide, with an asserted value of approximately $176 billion. The United States has submitted approximately 3,300 claims, with an asserted value of about $1.8 billion.

To date, the UNCC Governing Council has approved some 220,000 individual awards, worth about $870 million. About 580 awards totaling almost $11.7 million have been issued to U.S. claimants.

The UNCC has been able to pay only the first small awards for serious personal injury or death ($2.7 million). Unfortunately, the remainder of the awards cannot be paid at this time, because the U.N. Compensation Fund lacks sufficient funding. The awards are supposed to be financed by a deduction from the proceeds of future Iraqi oil sales, once such sales are permitted to resume. However, Iraq's refusal to meet the Security Council's terms for a resumption of oil sales has left the UNCC without adequate financial resources to pay the awards. Iraq's intransigence means that the victims of its aggression remain uncompensated for their losses four years after the end of the Gulf War.

In sum, Iraq is still a threat to regional peace and security. Thus, I continue to be determined to see Iraq comply fully with all its obligations under the UNSC resolutions. I will oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates its overall compliance with the relevant resolutions.

As I have made clear before, Iraq may rejoin the community of civilized nations by adopting democratic processes, respecting human rights, treating its people equitably, and adhering to basic norms of international behavior. The umbrella opposition organization Iraqi National Congress espouses these goals, the fulfillment of which would make Iraq a stabilizing force in the Gulf region.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts, and will continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks on WETA's "Women of Country: In Performance at the White House"

May 17, 1995

The President. Thank you very much. Where I was raised we didn't know it was country; we thought it was the only music there was. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, country music vividly demonstrates America's fundamental ability to adapt and to change, to innovate, while never forgetting the best of our past in the mountains of Appalachia, in the hills and fields of the South, in the plains and deserts of the cowboy West. We took ancient folk ballads, we mixed in blues and gospel and came up with a whole new kind of song. As an American and as a southerner, I take special pride in seeing our country music now spreading all across the planet. And I'm very proud that our theme this evening is the women of country.

Our host has a well-earned reputation for nurturing and encouraging country talent, and for a little country homespun wisdom. He's worked with everybody from Hank Williams, Dottie West, and Elvis, to Dolly Parton and Paul McCartney. He's probably the best known guitarist in the world. Please welcome Mr. Chet Atkins.

[*At this point, the performance began.*]

The President. Thank you so much. I want to thank Suzy Bogguss, Alison Krauss, Kathy Mattea. Thank you all, and thank all the wonderful musicians who played with you. Thank you, Kathy, for singing the song for me and the Secretary of Education that we love so much.

Thank you, Chet Atkins, for bringing so much alive to all of us. Thank you for bringing my old friend, Randy Goodrun back. He's

playing with a lot higher class musicians than he did 30 years ago when we started. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, in country music we truly hear America singing. It's the honest sound of our day-to-day triumphs and our heartbreaks, our joy, our sorrow, our love, and our hope. These women of country are using their power and their skill and their heart to make this music even richer and more compassionate and more wonderful.

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:44 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

May 18, 1995

Budget Proposals

The President. I want to say something about the discussions now going on about the rescission bill. First of all, for me, this is not a partisan issue at all. This is about pork. And in this pork battle, Democrats aren't blameless either. This is about pork over people.

Now, let's look at what happened. I worked hard with the Senate to get a big deficit reduction bill that would protect people and education and our efforts to raise the incomes of the American people as much as possible. Then they went into conference behind closed doors and took out a lot of the people programs that will raise incomes and increase security to put in pork.

There's one congressional district with nine road projects in it; one courthouse cost over $100 million. And those two things alone will take over $200 million away from our efforts to make sure our children go to safe schools, to make sure that we can fund our national service program to let young people do community service work and earn money to go to college. There is even a project in there that gives a million dollars to a city street. Now, what's the Federal Government got to do in that?

You know, if we're going to bring this budget into balance, we're going to have to make a lot of tough decisions. We're going to have to have a lot of serious cuts. And we have to change the way we do things here, and we have to be very careful about how we spend the money we do spend. We've got to spend it on things that matter like education and training and building up the American people.

So, that's my position. If they'll get rid of the pork, we can have a bill.

Q. Mr. President, your administration isn't blameless, either, though, is it? These aren't programs that were just put in. These are programs that were put in the budget that you signed off on and Democrats approved. If it's pork, wasn't it pork then? Why did you approve it?

The President. Because we're going to cut $16 billion out. Because a $100 million courthouse is not as important to raising incomes as the School-to-Work program to give young people who don't go to 4-year universities a chance to get good training or as a program for women and infants to make sure they're properly nourished or as a program to let our young people work in their communities and earn money to go to college. It just doesn't compute.

There's nowhere near—you know, special interest road projects, nine in one congressional district, are not as important as giving our teachers the training they need to make sure our students reach world-class standards in education. The judgments are wrong. If we're going to get serious about continuing the spending cuts and continuing the cuts in the deficit, moving this thing to balance, we cannot afford to choose pork over people.

It is a very simple choice, and it has nothing to do with partisan politics. And if they will fix it, we can have a bill.

Q. If they will put the AmeriCorps program back in and fully fund that, would that be enough for you? Would you then let the rescission bill go through?

The President. For one thing, on AmeriCorps, I didn't ask for AmeriCorps to be fully funded at the level that we funded it in our budget. I only asked that it be funded at the level that the Senate—the United States Senate passed a rescission bill with a bipartisan vote. And all I asked the conference to do was to leave the people programs, the education programs in at the Senate level. I asked the conference also to take