

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, December 13, 1996

**The President's Radio Address**

*December 7, 1996*

Good morning. This week I had the honor of lighting both the national Christmas tree and the national menorah. Both are symbols of a time of year filled with joy, hope, and expectation, a time, too, when we reflect on what we've done and what is left to do, a time to honor our obligations to family and community.

Last summer we made a new beginning on one of our Nation's most vexing problems, the welfare system. When I signed the historic welfare reform law, we set out to honor a moral obligation for our Nation, to help many people in our national community to help themselves. This law dramatically changes the Nation's welfare system so that no longer will it fail our people, trap so many families in a cycle of dependency, but instead will now help people to move from welfare to work. It will do so by requiring work of every able-bodied person, by protecting children, by promoting parental responsibility through tougher child support enforcement.

We've worked a long time to reform welfare. Change was demanded by all the American people, especially those on welfare who bore the brunt of the system's failure. For decades now, welfare has too often been a trap, consigning generation after generation to a cycle of dependency. The children of welfare are more likely to drop out of school, to run afoul of the law, to become teen parents, to raise their own children on welfare. That's a sad legacy we have the power to prevent. And now we can.

I came to office determined to end welfare as we know it, to replace welfare checks with paychecks. Even before I signed the welfare reform bill, we were working with States to test reform strategies, giving 43 States waivers from Federal rules to experiment with reforms that required work, imposed time limits, and demanded personal responsibility.

And we were toughening child support enforcement, increasing collections by 50 percent over the last 4 years. That's about \$4 billion.

We were determined to move millions from welfare to work, and our strategy has worked. I am pleased to announce today that there are now 2.1 million fewer people on welfare than on the day I took the oath of office. That is the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in history.

Some of these reductions have been even more striking. The welfare rolls have dropped 41 percent in Wisconsin, 38 percent in Indiana—two States where we granted landmark waivers to launch welfare reform experiments.

Throughout the country we're working to make responsibility a way of life, not an option. That means millions of people are on their way to building lives with the structure, purpose, meaning, and dignity that work gives. And that is something to celebrate.

But this is just the beginning of welfare reform. We had a choice: We could have gone on as we had with a system that was failing, or start anew to create a system that could give everyone who's able-bodied a chance to work and a chance to be independent. We chose the right way: first, working over the last 4 years with the States to reform their own systems, then passing a new welfare reform law requiring even more change in every State and every community.

But there is still much to do, and it now falls to all of us to make sure this reform works. The next step is for the States to implement the new law by tailoring a reform plan that works for their communities. As required by the law, we have already certified new welfare reform plans for 14 States. Today I'm pleased to announce we're certifying welfare for four more States: California, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Alabama. All their plans will require and reward work, impose time limits, increase child care pay-

ments, and demand personal responsibility. And across the board, as we give welfare funds back to the States, we will protect the guarantees of health care, nutrition, and child care, all of which are critical to helping families move from welfare to work. And we'll continue to crack down on child support enforcement.

Welfare as we knew it was a bad deal for everyone. We're determined to create a better deal. We want to say to every American, work pays. We raised the minimum wage; we expanded the earned-income tax credit to allow the working poor to keep more of what they earn. Now we have to create a million jobs for people on welfare by giving businesses incentives to hire people off welfare and enlisting the private sector in a national effort to bring all Americans into the economic mainstream. We have to have help from the private sector.

Together we can make the permanent under class a thing of the past. But we have a moral obligation to do that through welfare reform, working together in our communities, our businesses, our churches, and our schools. Every organization which employs people should consider hiring someone off welfare, and every State ought to give those organizations the incentives to do so, so that we can help families reclaim the right to know they can take care of themselves and their own obligations.

Our future does not have to be one with so many people living trapped lives. The door has now been opened to a new era of freedom and independence. And now it's up to us, to all of us, to help all the people who need it through that door, one family at a time.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:25 p.m. on December 6 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 7.

**Remarks at the Kennedy Center  
Honors Reception**  
*December 8, 1996*

Thank you very much, and welcome to the White House. Every year Hillary and I look

forward to the Kennedy Center honorees coming here, especially because this is such a great season of celebration. Tonight we pay tribute to five performing artists whose work has transformed the landscape of American art.

America is more than the land we live on. It is even more than its people. It is an ideal. Our artists express that ideal and give voice to the common experience. They are the singers of the American soul. Their art challenges us and deepens our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. It is my privilege to welcome them, along with their families and friends, to the White House.

Edward Albee's life epitomizes the rebellious spirit of art. Maybe I ought to repeat that. [*Laughter*] From childhood, he challenged convention. He left college for the streets of New York where he worked by day and wrote by night. For 10 years he pursued his art with single-minded purpose but without recognition. Then, in only 3 weeks in 1958, he wrote a play that took the American theater by storm and changed it forever, "Zoo Story," a play about a young drifter and a well-to-do stranger who meet on a lonely park bench. It was the first of many plays by Edward Albee that dared us to look at ourselves in the same stark light he turned on our fears, our failings, and our dreams. For over 40 years, his work has defied convention and set a standard of innovation that few can match. From "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" to "Tiny Alice" to "Three Tall Women," his plays have invigorated the American theater and inspired a new generation of playwrights to do the same.

Tonight our Nation, born in rebellion, pays tribute to you, Edward Albee. In your rebellion, the American theater was reborn.

Bennett Leslie Carter was born in the tough New York neighborhood that became the site of the Lincoln Center, where eight decades later he would be cheered to the rafters. From the small clubs of the Harlem Renaissance where he began playing saxophone to world tours for the biggest of the big bands, Benny Carter redefined American jazz. From the start, his fellow musicians said the way he played the sax was amazing. They say that about me, too. [*Laughter*] But I don't

think they mean it in quite the same way. [Laughter]

Benny Carter's influence on jazz is immeasurable. Whether he played with them or not, all the great bands used his arrangements. He virtually arranged the Swing Era, and his rhythms have set feet tapping all over the world. Indeed, on our recent trip to Thailand when Hillary and I visited with the King and Queen—the King, as some of you may know, is one of the world's greatest jazz fans—and 3 minutes after I was introduced to him, he said, "Now, do you know Benny Carter? He was just here." [Laughter]

His sounds have suffused American films and television, from Busby Berkeley to the Marx Brothers, from "Stormy Weather" to "Hannah and Her Sisters." And he brought jazz to the Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall, ensuring its rightful place in our cultural pantheon. Benny's popularity is as strong as ever. He was named Jazz Artist of the Year in his eighties. And this year, at 89, he has performed from Bangkok to Boston. We are grateful that he—we're glad he was willing to take the weekend off—[laughter]—to receive our Nation's standing ovation. Thank you, Benny Carter.

Johnny Cash grew up chopping cotton in a small town in southeast Arkansas. Every Sunday in a little church, he was transported by gospel music from the hard world he knew to a far horizon. And he transformed the trouble he had known into gruff music of ache, heart, and hope, even against the odds. He was still just a kid in the Army when he wrote "Folsom Prison Blues" and just out of the service when "I Walk the Line" hit the charts. Fifty million records and 27 albums later, Johnny Cash has redefined the boundaries of country music. He is the loner, the man in black, a hard edged writer with a soft heart. With his wife, the very gifted June Carter Cash, and family often by his side, he has traveled all over the world to give a voice to the feelings of farmers and workers, prisoners and lovers.

From the heartland of America, he's sung for the people who are the heart of America. Through his music, he has proved again and again the redeeming power of struggle and faith. And he has made country music not just music for our country but for the entire

world. Johnny Cash, you have our applause, our admiration, and we have your records. [Laughter]

Jack Lemmon first appeared on the stage at the age of 4. He had just one line, "Hark! A pistol shot." [Laughter] The audience laughed then, too. [Laughter] And a star was born. Consumed with a passion for performing, the young Jack Lemmon didn't have much time for books. Even at Harvard, he spent more time writing songs than essays. But he was preparing himself for a different future, studying to become one of the most gifted actors of our time.

Once called "a clown for the age of anxiety," Jack Lemmon embodies a typically American sense of humor, fresh, irreverent, wryly optimistic, even when the chips are down. From "Mister Roberts" to "Some Like It Hot" to "Grumpy Old Men," one and two, he is at once a hilarious everyman and a complete original. And in dramatic works like "Missing" and "Glengarry Glen Ross," he has taken the kind of risks that elevate an actor's work from the unremarkable to the unforgettable.

Now, you know he is portraying a former President of the United States in a new movie, "My Fellow Americans," a President, I might add, of the other party—[laughter]—but I'd still like to have points from Jack Lemmon any day, and America thanks you, Jack Lemmon, for all the points you've given to us. God bless you.

Maria Tallchief was born in the Osage Indian Territory of Oklahoma. She was invited to dance at the Hollywood Bowl at the age of 15 and joined the famed Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo not long after that. Her talent destined her for distinction, and once she met George Balanchine, their brilliant collaboration ensured her place in dance history. At the New York City Ballet, which she helped turn into America's greatest dance company, she thrilled audiences with her performances of "Firebird" and "Swan Lake." She could spin across the stage faster than any other ballerina, but she did it with an ethereal grace that made it look effortless. Critics and fans said it was pointless to watch anyone else when she was on stage.

A great cultural ambassador, Maria Tallchief brought American ballet to the

world, even in dancing in Moscow at the height of the cold war. She put an American stamp on every role she danced. Her art is preserved not only in film but in the memories of everyone who ever saw her perform. And her influence lives on now in the young dancers she teaches. Thank you, Maria Tallchief, for the radiance of your art.

Edward Albee, Benny Carter, Johnny Cash, Jack Lemmon, Maria Tallchief: five artists who have devoted their entire lives to enriching our lives. It is nearly impossible to measure the extent of their influence or the pleasure they have brought to so many millions of people. We honor them tonight for their passion, for their spirits, for the American ideal they bring to life in their work.

Thank you, thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:48 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

### **Remarks on Signing the Proclamation on Human Rights** *December 10, 1996*

**The President.** This may be one of those cases where the introduction was better than the speech. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Julie, and thank all of you for being here. I'm honored to be with this distinguished group on Human Rights Day. I want to thank all of you in attendance. I think Congresswoman Connie Morella is here. Where are you, Connie? There you are, right in front of me. [*Laughter*] Our AID Administrator, Brian Atwood; Assistant Secretary John Shattuck; Assistant Secretary Phyllis Oakley; and all of you who represent organizations who have done so much to advance the cause of freedom around the world. I want to say a special word of welcome to my good friend Gerry Ferraro. Thank you for being here.

Before I begin what I want to say about human rights, I think it is appropriate on Human Rights Day that I have just gotten a report from the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, who is meeting with our NATO foreign ministers in Brussels, that, together, they agreed to hold an historic NATO summit in July in Madrid to carry forward our goal of building a Europe that is undivided,

democratic, and at peace for the first time in history; one in which we will work to forge a partnership with Russia, adapt NATO to the demands of a new era, and invite the first aspiring members from among Europe's new democracies into NATO. My goal is to see them become full members of the alliance for NATO's 50th birthday in 1999.

It's fitting that this step comes on Human Rights Day and on Bill of Rights Day and in Human Rights Week. The prospect of NATO membership and integration into the West has been a very strong incentive for Europe's new democracies to expand their political freedoms and to promote universal human rights.

Working together with our allies and our partners, we're building a world where, as Judge Learned Hand once said, rights know no boundaries and justice no frontiers.

For the first time in history, more than half the world's people now live under governments of their own choosing. Today we dedicate ourselves to the unfinished task of extending freedom's reach. Promoting democracy and human rights reflects our ideals and reinforces our interests. It's a fundamental pillar of our foreign policy.

History shows that nations where rights are respected and governments are freely chosen are more likely to be partners in peace and prosperity. That is why we've worked hard over the last 4 years to help equality and freedom take root in South Africa, to stop the reign of terror in Haiti, to promote reform in Bosnia and Russia, to bring freedom back to Bosnia, and peace, and to enable millions of suffering people all around the world to reclaim their simple human dignity. That is why we must continue to support the world's newest democracies and to keep the pressure on its remaining repressive regimes.

The First Lady and I have just had a remarkable meeting with these six women. They are courageous in promoting human rights in different ways. They are courageous in promoting democracy and empowerment by helping women to live up to their potential. You can just look at them and see that they've put the lie to the notion that human rights is some Western cultural idea that has no place in other societies.

Julie Su, who spoke so eloquently, has played a crucial role in stopping the exploitation of Thai women immigrants in sweat shops. And I am proud of the work that Secretary Reich and the Labor Department has done in that regard, and we intend to continue to do that for the next 4 years. For the last 20 years, Dawn Calabria has fought to protect women refugees and children. Nahid Toubia is a doctor from Sudan whose organization has played a pioneering role in women's health issues. Barbara Frey has promoted corporate responsibility for human rights around the world and has also promoted education of children in her native Minnesota in human rights. Wanjiru Muigai from Kenya has helped women in her country to secure their legal rights, and she made a passionate appeal to me to focus on targeting United States aid in a way that will promote the empowerment of women in nation after nation. And since coming here from El Salvador, Lillian Perdomo has worked to protect women from domestic violence right here in the District of Columbia.

Each of these women tells a story for many others. Together their experiences underscore a shared truth. As the First Lady said in Beijing and as Julie repeated, "Human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights."

I want to tell you that I am very proud of the role that Hillary, Ambassador Albright, and all the members of the United States delegation—and thank you, Marge Mezvinsky, back here—played in issuing Beijing's call to action. That was a great moment for the United States and a great moment for women around the world.

Beijing's message was as clear as it was compelling. We cannot advance our ideals and interests unless we focus more attention on the fundamental human rights and basic needs of women and girls. We must recognize that it is a violation of human rights when girls and women are sold into prostitution, when rape becomes a weapon of war, when women are denied the right to plan their own families, including through forced abortions, when young girls are brutalized by genital mutilation, when women around the world are unsafe even in their own homes. If women are free from violence, if they're

healthy and educated, if they can live and work as full and equal partners in any society, then families will flourish. And when they do, communities and nations will thrive.

We are putting our efforts to protect and advance women's rights where they belong, in the mainstream of American foreign policy. During the last 4 years, we have worked to steer more of our assistance to women and girls, to help protect their legal rights, and to give them a greater voice in their political and economic futures. These programs are making a real difference, whether by raising female voter turnout in Bangladesh, promoting equality for women in Nepal, enabling women in Bosnia to participate fully in the rebuilding of their country. But we must do more.

Today, I call upon the Senate, again, to ratify the United Nations convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. As you know, many, many, many other nations have done this. In our country where we have worked so hard against domestic violence, where we have worked so hard to empower women, it is, to say the least, an embarrassment that the United States has not done this, and there is no excuse for this situation to continue.

I'm also pleased to announce several initiatives totaling \$4 million to protect and advance women's rights, including new efforts to help Rwandan women who have been torn from their homes and to provide women refugees around the world with access to reproductive health services. They've built on the commitment I made at last year's G-7 summit to help women in Bosnia start new businesses and will help women across Africa to do the same. They strengthen our commitment to stop the trafficking of women and children for prostitution and child labor. And they will help women's groups in Asia fight violence and discrimination.

In short, these efforts will reinforce America's global leadership on behalf of human rights and democracy in perhaps the most fundamental areas at which they are at risk. They reflect our Nation's enduring commitment to the freedoms of our Bill of Rights that safeguard our own citizens. They support the values in the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights that promote freedom, justice, and peace all around the world.

We live at a time when our most deeply held ideals are ascendant, but this hopeful trend toward freedom and democracy is neither inevitable nor irreversible, nor has it extended to the real lives of hundreds of millions of people all across the globe. While we seek to engage all nations on terms of good will, we must continue to stand up for the proposition that all people, without regard to their gender, their nationality, their race, their ethnic group or their religion, should have a chance to live up to their potential.

I want to say again how gratified I am that there are people like these six women alive and well and at work in the world, people like so many of you. It is a constant source of inspiration to me. I want to say again how grateful I am to the First Lady for going across the world to raise our concerns about this and bringing back to me the knowledge of the work that has been done and what still can be done on behalf of women and girls.

As I sign this proclamation marking International Human Rights Day, I ask you all to remember not just that women's rights or human rights but that the defense and the promotion of human rights are the responsibilities of all of us.

Thank you.

*[At this point, the President signed Proclamation 6964—Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week.]*

**The President.** Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Geraldine Ferraro, former Vice Presidential candidate, and Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, Alternate Representative to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.

## **Proclamation 6964—Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week**

*December 10, 1996*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

When America's founders crafted the Constitution and Bill of Rights more than two centuries ago, they not only created a blueprint for the conduct of American government, but they also gave expression to a vision of human dignity that inspires people to this day the world over. Our Nation's commitment to the freedoms enumerated in the Bill of Rights—among them freedom of speech, religion, and assembly, and the right to due process and a fair trial—serves as a beacon of hope to oppressed peoples everywhere.

Americans continue to work to improve our application of equality under the law for all our own citizens, as we believe that freedom and justice are the birthright of humankind. We are also working daily to foster and promote the growth of these rights in other countries. Indeed, the championing of democracy and human rights serves as a cornerstone of my Administration's foreign policy.

As we observe Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week, we can take satisfaction in our progress in advancing human rights around the world in the past decade. In fact, more than half the people in the world now live under democratic political systems. Even in countries still struggling to establish basic human rights and freedoms, we are seeing some progress. And brave reformers such as Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma continue to press their rightful demand for freedom.

It is also encouraging that, with the growth and development of the human rights movement, there has been greater awareness and appreciation that women's rights are human rights.

Just over a year ago, representatives from 189 countries met in Beijing at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. That historic gathering focused the attention of the world on women's rights and needs. Now, we are beginning to see some progress. In many countries, increasing numbers of women are contesting and attaining public office and playing a vital role in shaping the political agenda. In Romania, women gathered from around Central and Eastern Europe to promote the goals of the Beijing women's conference. Thailand has passed a new anti-prostitution law. Women in Namibia are now afforded equal rights with men in marriage. Chile has made a serious commitment to expanding educational opportunities for girls. And in the United States, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, that I signed into law in September of 1994, reflects our profound national commitment to ending abuse against women. These are just a few hopeful signs of improvement in global respect for women's rights, and it is fitting that we celebrate them.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 10, 1996, as Human Rights Day; December 15, 1996, as Bill of Rights Day; and the week beginning December 10, 1996, as Human Rights Week. I call upon the people of the United States to celebrate these observances with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that demonstrate our national commitment to the Constitution and the promotion of human rights for all people.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 11, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 12.

## **Remarks on the Appointment of Evelyn Lieberman as Director of the Voice of America and an Exchange With Reporters**

*December 10, 1996*

**The President.** Fifty-four years ago, just a few months after the United States entered World War II, the Voice of America went on the air with these words: "The news may be good. The news may be bad. We shall tell you the truth." VOA lit Europe's darkest night with a bright spotlight of truth and then became a key weapon in the war of ideas we waged and won against communism.

Today, VOA beams America's voices to nearly 100 million listeners in every corner of our planet every week. The news it delivers—reliable, authoritative, objective—is more important than ever. There are millions and millions and millions of people around the world who are hungry, indeed starved, for accurate information still and for the insights it gives them on how they can organize themselves to change their own lives for the better.

Under Geoff Cowan's extraordinary leadership, the VOA has developed innovative new shows that examine how institutions of democracy and free markets work. It has moved from what Director Cowan calls monolog to dialog, with call-in programs in a dozen languages. We were just talking before we came in about a call-in program that the First Lady did where she got calls from all over the world, including some surprising places. The VOA has increased coverage of human rights issues. It has used the best available technology, like satellites, to deliver better programming to more people.

I thank Geoff, who has been my friend for many years now, for so ably carrying on a family tradition. His father, Louis Cowan, was the VOA's second director. And most of all, I thank him for his service to our Nation and to the community of nations.

All around the world new democracies we have worked so hard to support are taking root. But they remain fragile, and we must nurture and defend them. The free flow of information is the lifeblood of democracy. And it is very important that the mission of the VOA continue.

I can think of no greater life force for the free flow of ideas and for VOA's future than its new director, whom I have the honor of naming today, Evelyn Lieberman. Her strong, unique voice has reverberated throughout the White House from my first day in office—[laughter]—I see from your laughter that you know I have not overstated that; “reverberated” is the operative word—first as Assistant to the First Lady's Chief of Staff, then as Deputy Press Secretary, most recently as Deputy Chief of Staff, the first woman ever to hold that job.

Evelyn has a special talent for cutting to the chase and getting to the truth, as just about every member of the press corps and the White House staff, including the President, know from first-hand experience. As Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, she did make the trains run on time. But more than that, she made them run straight and true because of her steely determination, her extraordinary integrity, and her great, good heart. We will miss her skill, her passionate personality, which could warm even the coldest room here at the White House.

Now Evelyn will bring her talent and her energy to the VOA and return, as she told me she wanted to do, to her career-long love, communications. Before her White House years, Evelyn was press secretary to Senator Joe Biden, director of public affairs for the Children's Defense Fund, communications director for the National Urban Coalition. Her extraordinary breadth of experience will help VOA continue the remarkable work Geoff Cowan has done to meet the challenge of change.

As Secretary of State-designate Albright said of Secretary Christopher, Evelyn Lieberman will be hard pressed to fill Geoff Cowan's shoes with her heels. But she does have the experience, the leadership skills, and the drive to do the job, to do it very well, and to carry on VOA's unique mission of spreading truth and hope around the world. I am very pleased that she has accepted this appointment and ask her now to say a few words.

[At this point, Evelyn Lieberman made brief remarks.]

### **California's Proposition 209**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you going to do anything about Prop 209? [Laughter]

**The President.** I thought you were going to—

**Ms. Lieberman.** My role model. [Laughter]

**The President.** I thought you were going into the radio talk show business.

**Q.** Not quite.

**The President.** Well, let me say I have not yet received the final recommendations from the Justice Department and the Counsel's Office. They're working back and forth on that. As all of you know, I opposed publicly and strongly 209. I thought it was bad policy for the people of California and a bad example for America. Whether it is unconstitutional is a different question, and our people are working very hard there to work through the legal and constitutional issues to give me a recommendation about what we should do and how we should do it.

And I am eager to get their recommendation. They're just working very hard on it and looking at all the aspects of the argument. I expect to have a recommendation soon and then to make a very speedy decision after that.

### **Second Term Transition**

**Q.** Mr. President, now that you've filled the VOA job so happily, can you tell us anything about your decision on the Attorney General's job?

**The President.** No. I'm making these appointments, you know, in an orderly fashion and making these announcements. I haven't even been able to meet with all the members of my administration yet, and we're doing it in a regular fashion. We will do it and announce them as we're ready.

**Q.** Have you met and talked with Janet Reno about this yet?

**The President.** Not about this appointment, but we'll meet soon. I expect by—oh, in the next several days I expect to have met with all the rest of the members of the Cabinet and the senior administration officials with whom I have not yet met. There are still a few, and we're working through that as we work through more announcements as well.

### **Serbia**

**Q.** Mr. President, metaphorically speaking, you are the voice of America. [Laughter] I can't help but make the link now——

**The President.** Except for a few days ago. [Laughter]

**Q.** I can't help but make the link to Eastern Europe and the Serbia situation. What would you say to Mr. Milosevic?

**The President.** That elections should be respected and that the voice of the people should be heard, and that the human, political, and civil rights of the people should be respected. The United States has made its statement and its position clear. Neither we nor anyone else would seek to interfere in the internal events in Serbia, but our sympathies are always with free people who are struggling to express their freedom and want to have the integrity of their elections respected.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:54 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia.

### **Statement Announcing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit December 10, 1996**

Today, America and its NATO allies agreed to hold a NATO summit on July 8–9, 1997, in Madrid to take the crucial next steps on the enlargement and adaptation of the North Atlantic alliance for the 21st century. This marks an important milestone on the road to an integrated, democratic, and secure Europe.

The summit will seek to advance a strong and enduring NATO-Russia partnership; to strengthen partnership with all of Europe's new democracies; to approve adaptations within NATO to prepare the alliance to meet the challenges of the coming century; and to invite the first aspiring NATO members to begin accession talks to join the alliance. My goal is to see NATO take in its first new members by 1999, the 50th anniversary of NATO's founding and the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

From the beginning of my administration, I have worked hard to end the cold war division of Europe and to create, for the first time in history, a Europe united in democracy, security, and free market prosperity. Now, we must continue to reach out to Russia, and include this great nation in the fabric of Europe's emerging community of democracies. We must open the doors of Europe's institutions that nurtured peace, prosperity, and security throughout the cold war to Europe's new democracies, excluding no nation that shares our values and is willing and able to shoulder our common responsibilities.

NATO has never threatened any other nation, nor will an enlarged NATO do so in the future. While NATO's new members will be full members of the alliance, NATO has no intention, no plan, and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members.

We have made tremendous progress over the last 4 years in realizing our vision of an undivided Europe at peace, and no one deserves more credit than Warren Christopher. Thanks to his efforts, Secretary-designate Madeleine Albright and my new national security team will have a strong foundation on which to achieve that important goal.

### **Remarks at a Democratic Leadership Council Luncheon**

*December 11, 1996*

Thank you. The last person clapping is my first new Ambassador in the new term. [Laughter]

Thank you, Bernard Schwartz, for that wonderful introduction and for your life of private and public achievement. I was hearing you say all those terrific things, and I thought to myself, I'm glad you did what you did, but I'd like you even better if you owned a newspaper. [Laughter]

I want to thank my longtime friend Senator Lieberman and Governor Romer for their work for the DLC. And I see my predecessors as chairs out there: Senator Chuck Robb and Congressman Dave McCurdy. I thank them for the work they did at the DLC.

I brought a number of people from the administration here who were early DLC members, including Mack McLarty, who started with me back in '85; Bruce Reed and Linda Moore and Elaine Kamarck and Don Baer, my Communications Director. I'd also like to say a public word of thanks to Mark Penn, who did the research that all of you I think have been given, for the fine job that he and his partner, Doug Schoen, did in our campaign.

You know, I went jogging with Al From this morning. And the original theme of my speech was the era of big Government is over. The new speech will be the era of big Al is over. [*Laughter*] He's lost 75 pounds in 15 months. If that's not enough to make you optimistic about America, I don't know what is. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the Members of Congress and the newly elected Members of Congress who are here. I'm hesitant to mention any names because I can't see everyone who is here, but I know that Allen Boyd and Cal Dooley and Sandy Levin and Karen McCarthy and Bill Luther and Jim Moran, Tim Roemer, Debbie Stabenow, and Ellen Tauscher are here. There may be others, but if you're here, I thank you for being here, because this organization fought for the life and the future of the Democratic Party as it fought for the life and the future of America for a very long time. And all of us need to be continually open to the new ideas which are always debated here with such vigor and such careful forethought. And so I thank the Members and the newly elected Members who are here, and I hope more of your number will be coming to these events in the future.

I thank the business and community leaders who are here. Many of you have been with us for some time; some of you are coming in. But we need the kind of fermenting dialog that we have here from locally elected officials, from community leaders, and from the truly stunning array of business leaders who are here today. I thank you.

A year ago when I spoke here, our Nation was facing a time of great decision. That day the congressional majority was pressing its budget plan upon the Nation, and I told you why I didn't like it but why I hoped we could

pass a balanced budget. That night at midnight the Government was shut down. It was a moment of fundamental decision about the direction of our Nation, the role of our Government in this age, the strength of our values. That day I said the great question before us was, can the center hold.

So, today the clamor of political conflict has subsided. A new landscape is taking shape. The answer is clear: The center can hold, the center has held, and the American people are demanding that it continue to do so.

By the stands that we have taken, the battles we've waged, the record that has been built, we've helped to forge a new American vision, a new consensus that can govern our country and move us all forward. The ground has shifted between our feet—beneath our feet—but we have clearly created a new center, not the lukewarm midpoint between overheated liberalism and chilly conservatism but instead a place where throughout our history, people of good will have tried to forge new approaches to new challenges; the vital center the DLC has been trying to forge with new ideas and mainstream values for more than a decade now; the vital center that has brought so much progress to our Nation in the last 4 years; the vital, dynamic center from which we now must finish the work of preparing America for the 21st century.

In this rare and fleeting moment of opportunity, we still have work to do, for while the era of big Government is over, the era of big challenges is not. Achieving educational excellence, finishing welfare reform and our campaign for safe streets, helping families to succeed at home and at work, balancing the budget, keeping America strong and prosperous, reforming campaign finance, and modernizing Government operations so that, together, we can meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of this remarkable time.

Our bridge to the 21st century must connect our newest challenges to our oldest values: opportunity for all Americans, responsibility from all Americans, a national community of all Americans, a national commitment to American leadership as the indispensable nation in the new world unfolding before us.

We all know how quickly this world is changing. We were smiling when Senator Lieberman was trying to describe the things that Bernard Schwartz has done in the area of technology. It's changing the way we work and live and relate to each other and to others around the globe. As in every other time of profound change, we must follow Lincoln's admonition to think anew and act anew. And as in every such time, the American people must come to a common understanding about how to proceed before we can hope to succeed.

Today I believe we have come to such an understanding. Today, a century after the Progressives, six decades after the New Deal, after half a century of cold war, we have once again been called upon to forge a new approach, to forge solutions to meet the challenges of today, not those of yesterday. That is what you and I have fought to do for several years now.

As I said before the DLC in Cleveland in 1991, our agenda isn't liberal or conservative, it's both and it's different. And we're not just out to save the Democratic Party, we're out to save the United States of America.

We said in 1991 we would offer opportunity for all, demand responsibility from all, build a stronger American community. We said that this era requires a Government that neither attempts to solve problems for people nor leaves them alone to fend for themselves. Instead, we envision a Government that gives people the tools to solve their own problems and make the most of their own lives.

When I became President, I was determined to bring this philosophy to our National Government. I didn't much care on what part of the political spectrum a minimum wage came from, or NAFTA, or family leave, or changing but not completely ending affirmative action, or banning assault weapons, or fighting to stop the advertising and sale of tobacco to our young people, or doing national service, or promoting charter schools, or promoting the reinventing Government effort, or so many other of the things we've done. They were hard to pigeon-hole, and I think that made it frustrating for those who were trying to communicate to the

larger citizenry about what it was we were about.

But the issue was not whether these things were from the right or the left of the political spectrum, but whether, instead, they were the right things to do. The issue is not what is liberal or conservative but what will move us forward together. These are ideas at the vital American center, ideas that have broken the gridlock that gripped Washington for too long. For years politicians treated our most vexing problems here, like crime and welfare and the budget deficit, as issues to be exploited, not problems to be solved. That's why they went on and on and on.

Before we passed the crime bill it had been debated in Washington for 6 years. Meanwhile, there was plainly at the grass-roots level a consensus among people in law enforcement and the community groups working with them for safe streets about what ought to be done. We tried to change all that. We worked hard at it. And we have succeeded in many areas.

After decades in which the welfare system was trapped, generation after generation in a cycle of dependency, we said we had to replace welfare checks with paychecks and make responsibility a way of life. We said we would end welfare as we know it, and we have. Last week we learned that there are 2.1 million fewer people on welfare today than on the day I took office. That is the biggest drop in history.

After decades in which criminals occupied our streets, we said we needed a new approach to fighting crime, and we have provided it: tougher punishment, better prevention, above all, more police. Crime is down all across America for 4 years now.

After decades of debate over the size and scope of Government, we've reduced the size of the Federal Government by over 10 percent; eliminated hundreds of programs, thousands of pages of regulations; privatized more operations than any previous administration; and cut the deficit by 60 percent in 4 years. We also worked very hard to devolve more responsibilities in a spirit of partnership to State and local governments and to community groups. I want to pay special tribute in that regard to two of my Cabinet members, one of whom is here today, the HUD Sec-

retary, Henry Cisneros, and the Secretary of Transportation, Federico Peña, two former mayors who brought that spirit to our National Government. Thank you very much.

Both parties now agree that we must balance the budget and both parties now agree that we can only do it in a way that reflects our deepest values and garners support from members of both parties.

In each of these areas, we simply stopped asking who's to blame and started asking, what are we going to do. As a result, America is moving forward. And now we must capture that momentum and use it to finish the work of preparing our people for the new century. Let us commit together to mobilizing that vital center. Let us spend the next 50 months to prepare America for the next 50 years.

Now, our first task is to finish the job of balancing the budget. As we've cut the deficit by over 60 percent, the corresponding drop in interest rates has powered our economy—nearly 11 million new jobs now in less than 4 years. To keep the economy growing, we must finish the job. I'm determined to work with Congress to agree to a bipartisan balanced budget plan that does reflect our values.

We can, and we must, work together to reform Medicare and Medicaid so they continue to meet the promise to our parents and our children and continue to expand health care step by step to children in working families who don't have it. We can do that and balance the budget and take advantage of the fact that new models are clearly making it possible to lower the rate of medical inflation in a way that advances the quality of health care as well as the quality of our long-term objectives in balancing the budget and investing in the future of America. I know it can be done, and I am determined to get it done.

Second, we must give our young people the best education in the world. We must dramatically reform our public schools, demanding high standards and accountability from every teacher and every student, promoting reforms like public choice, school choice, and charter schools in every State.

Let me just say a word here especially with respect to Governor Romer. We've worked hard to support local control of the schools.

We've worked hard to reduce the paperwork and the regulations that were unnecessary. Secretary Riley has done a fine job of giving more discretion to promote grassroots reform to local school districts. But we have largely local control in America. And yet, we do not have today recognized national standards in every critical area of study and a recognized measurement that can go across the Nation that can tell us how all of our children are doing. I am for local control; I am not for Federal Government national standards. But I am for national standards of excellence and a means of measuring it so we know what our children are learning.

We must open the doors of college so that the 13th and 14th years of school, at least 2 years after high school, are as universal in 4 years as high school is today.

We must modernize our system of training, collapsing overlapping and outdated training programs into a "GI bill" for America's workers, something the DLC has long advocated, so that all working people who need it have access to the skills they need in a changing workplace.

The third thing we have to do is to bring the under class into the American mainstream, breaking the cycle of dependence and poverty. Already, over 4 years, the welfare rolls have been reduced by 2.1 million, partly, of course, because of the improving economy but largely because we have worked with the States of this country to forge new approaches to move people from welfare to work, recognizing that most people on welfare want to get off and want to go to work, and recognizing that responsibility should be a way of life and welfare should be a second chance.

The welfare reform legislation I recently signed is just the next step, not the end of the road. We have a moral obligation now, all of us, particularly in the DLC who fought for welfare reform for so long, to make welfare reform work, to end the culture of isolated, permanent dependency. We have demanded responsibility of welfare recipients; indeed, we have written it into the law. And now we must meet our responsibilities by providing them the opportunity to work. We must bring the freshest ideas to bear on how we can bring the power of private business

to the inner city, where, today, there are simply not enough jobs for those who will no longer be eligible for permanent welfare.

Last year in Chicago, for example, there were six job applicants for every entry-level job opening. In St. Louis, there were nine job applicants for every entry-level job opening. These jobs we know because of the conditions of the Federal budget must come primarily from the private sector with incentives from the Government, like tax credits and wage and training subsidies.

Now, how can we do this? Can we do it? I believe we plainly can if all of you will help. And I think it is a good thing that people will not be moving from welfare to work where they'll only be working with large numbers of other people who are on welfare in large-scale public works projects, because we want, again—the rolls have been reduced by 2.1 million, so a lot of the easy work has been done. Now we have to go out and give people a chance to move from a culture of isolated dependence into the mainstream of American life.

But if you look, for example, at the Kansas City model, where they have set up a full employment council, where the business community and the service providers and the educators and welfare recipients are all represented; and where, under an agreement with our administration, the State of Missouri says to employers, "If you will hire someone off welfare, we will give you the welfare check as a wage and training subsidy for up to 4 years, and we will give you, if you don't provide health insurance for your employees, the opportunity for this person to keep the Medicaid not just for a year, but for up to 4 years. And if you want, you can have this slot for 10 years. We'll tell you right now, we want you to participate in this program; so when you move somebody from the welfare slot into a higher wage category, we'll let you have another person, and we'd like you to participate."

Now, think what this means. This means small business, medium-sized and big businesses can all participate. And it is working. I met a man who had a business with 25 people in it filling an interesting little niche—he stores data for the Federal Government. Even Washington, with all its

buildings, can't hold all the data of the Federal Government. Five of his 25 employees are former welfare recipients. Many of them fit a profile where you would say they're the least likely people we could get into the work force. They are doing well.

And you think about it—if every State will authorize—and they don't have to ask me for permission anymore, that's what the welfare bill does. The welfare bill basically says, we'll have a national guarantee of nutrition and health care for poor families and the children, but that portion of the Federal Government's money that used to go with the State government's money into a welfare check now will be given to the State and they can decide what to do with it.

So now it's up to the States. And this welfare reform movement has to shift in large measure to an argument at every State level. But if you've got a system like this one in Kansas City—and we know that's what the laboratories of democracies are supposed to do, we know this will work—then there is no excuse for every State not to do that.

Yes, I'm going to try to get Congress to pass some more tax credits to give further incentives. Yes, I'm going to try to get Congress to set aside some funds for the cities where unemployment is critically high and there are more and more and more job applicants for the jobs that are open, to give some other kinds of work to people when their welfare time limit has run. But the main answer to this is for small, medium-sized, and large businesses all across America to examine themselves and say, "If I were to get this sort of help, shouldn't I stretch and put somebody on and give them a chance to move into the American mainstream." And the DLC ought to lead the fight because you've been up here, along with me, screaming for welfare reform for a decade. You have it. Now we have to do something with it, and I challenge you to do so.

The fourth thing we have to do is to press our fight against gangs and guns and drugs and violence by finishing our community policing project, finishing the job of putting 100,000 police on the street, getting guns off the street and out of the hands of children, cracking down on violent teen gangs, and

teaching our children that drugs are wrong, illegal, and dangerous.

Fifth, we must strengthen our families and help our people to succeed at home and at work. You know, when I go across the country and I talk to people from all walks of life, this is the one theme that continually comes up: How can I do a good job raising my children and a good job at my work? We have an obligation to help parents do that, first, by supporting them as they try to pass along their values to their children in an age in which children at younger and younger ages are exposed to different kinds of values.

I think we should expand family leave in a very limited way so that parents can take some time off to go to regular parent-teacher conferences at school and to take their children to regular doctor's appointments, not just when they're desperately ill. I think we should give workers the choice of more flex-time, so that when they work overtime they ought to have the choice to take the overtime in cash or time at home with the family if they need it.

I believe we have to continue to help parents protect their children from harmful outside influences, whether they come from tobacco or television violence. I think we must fight continually, as we have, to protect the water our children drink, the air they breathe, the food they eat, and especially we must clean up two-thirds of the most dangerous toxic waste sites in the country over the next 4 years so that our children will be growing up next to parks, not poison.

Sixth, we have to renew our democracy and—you want to clap for that? I'll stop. [*Applause*] Thank you. These Embassies are going fast. [*Laughter*]

The sixth thing we have to do is to renew our democracy and restore the confidence of the American people in their Government by passing meaningful campaign finance reform legislation and modernizing Government operations. This will require consistent, disciplined, and honest effort. We know that the thing which has driven the cost of campaigns through the roof is the cost of communications, primarily television advertising, also radio advertising, direct mail, and other forms of communicating with the voters.

We know that the actual enterprise of raising the money and the burden of spending it threatens to overwhelm other aspects of our electoral system. Anyone who has been part of this system, in a moment of candor must accept some responsibility for this and agree that it needs to change. There simply is too much money in our politics; it takes too much time to raise, and inevitably, it raises too many questions.

We know from bitter experience, however, that this is one of these things that everybody's for in general but few are for in particular. We know from bitter experience that delay is the enemy of reform. Now, Senators McCain and Feingold have a plan that is real, bipartisan, and tough. Six times in recent years, just since I've been President, reasonable campaign finance reform has been killed by Senate filibusters. Now Congress should go on and pass campaign finance reform and pass it without delay. And we need a bipartisan coalition of business and community leaders to support the Congress and to demand that it be done. There are no more excuses. The people are finally focused on it; let's get the job done.

But let me also say we cannot minimize the other reform effort that must continue, and that is the reinventing Government effort that has been headed so brilliantly by Vice President Gore for the last 4 years. The DLC was one of the first organizations to focus on the possibility of actually reforming our Government so that it could be downsized and improve the quality of its operations at the same time. That has largely been achieved because of the disciplined, sustained efforts that we have made. And I thank Elaine Kamarck in particular for her leadership in that regard.

But we have more to do. We have some new tools, like the line-item veto, which can be helpful in that regard. But this is hard work. And it is not headline-grabbing work, but it makes a huge difference to whether we can balance the budget and have the funds to invest in our future and inspire confidence in the American people. So I urge the DLC to continue your emphasis on reinventing Government. It will never be a headline-grabbing issue, but it will always be an important part of what we are trying to

do to prepare our country for the 21st century and to continue to increase the confidence of the American people that they're getting their money's worth from their investment in their National Government.

Seventh, we must harness the remarkable forces of science and technology that are re-making our world. We must continue our mission to connect every classroom and library to the information superhighway by the year 2000. We must press on to develop the next generation of the Internet, to let universities send data to each other 1,000 times faster than today.

We must continue to expand the mission of our laboratories and make sure they have a strong peacetime mission that is contributing to America's future. And we must continue to invest and do more in medical and scientific research so that we can do great things that are plainly within our grasp, like finding cures for cancer and AIDS. We can make this age of science and technology a true age of possibility for all the American people, but we must invest in it and do it wisely if we expect to get a return.

Finally, we have to finish the mission of building new structures of peace and security around the world. We must complete the unfinished business of the cold war, building an undivided Europe of democracies at peace, with an expanded NATO and a strong NATO-Russian partnership; meeting the challenge of change in Asia with strength and steadiness; strengthening the hands of peace and democracy from Bosnia to the Middle East to Africa.

We must combat the new threats we face in terrorism, international drug running and organized crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. And we cannot weaken in our efforts to open more of the world's markets to our goods and services, from Asia to Latin America.

American trade is at an all-time high, with over 200 new trade agreements in the last 4 years alone—21 with Japan where our exports in those 21 areas have gone up 85 percent in 4 years—GATT, NAFTA, and many others. Our work now is no less important than the work that was done by the generation after World War II. We must create the structures of peace and security and the part-

nerships for peace and security and prosperity that will permit the American people to make the most of the 21st century.

Again, let me say the DLC can play an important role here. I think Senator Robb would admit that sometimes one of our most frustrating efforts as Democrats has been to convince our fellow Democrats that trade, if it's free and fair, is good for all the American people, and it's essential for America's future. Another frustration we have had is trying to get the public at large, that has shown so much interest and so much sophistication in economic and social issues, to understand the connections between our foreign and our domestic policies, our security policies and our economic policies.

There are no more simple dividing lines between foreign and domestic in the world we're living in. We need your help to continue to raise public awareness of these fundamental facts, so that when decisions have to be taken in the area of foreign affairs they will resonate at home in the way that so many of the DLC ideas have resonated with the American people in domestic policy. And I hope you will pay some attention to that in the next year.

Well, these are the great goals that I believe we must pursue if we are to prepare America for the 21st century. They must not only be pursued, they must be achieved. And what I want to say to you is, they can be achieved. But they can be achieved only if there is a vital American center, where there is cooperation across lines of party and philosophy.

This is an irreplaceable moment for breaking new ground in America. All our political leaders say we will work together. The public wants us to work together. And our progress demands that we work together. I stand ready to forge a coalition of the center, a broad consensus for creative and consistent and unflinching action. And I invite people of good will of all parties, or no party, to join in this endeavor. I have spoken to Majority Leader Lott and Speaker Gingrich on several occasions since the election; I believe they share this mission. All of us have heard the voters' mandate in this election; we heard it again yesterday loud and clear in Texas.

But it is not enough to hear; now we must act.

Let me make this final point. Now that the era of big Government is over, we clearly need a new kind of national leadership, leadership that does not rely alone on Washington's answers because the changes in the economy, the changes in technology, the changes in information and communication make it possible for people to be more empowered at lower levels of government and lower levels of business, indeed, individually and in their own families. But we must also recognize that the very changes that are empowering people to move apart from each other require us to work together in teams if we are to maximize the benefits of the opportunities before us.

Therefore, our Nation's leaders must chart a new course that calls upon people to think about their own responsibilities more and what new patterns of partnership we will have. Among other things, we have got to make a decision to cherish and respect our diversity instead of using it as a wedge to divide the American people. That is killing other countries, and we cannot tolerate it here.

For all of our differences, we have to identify the challenges we face in common as Americans and find ways to go after them in common. We must mobilize people in every walk of life to meet those challenges, and we must shine a spotlight on what works anywhere in America so that it can be adopted everywhere in America. And all of our citizens must be willing to serve. The nearly 70,000 Americans who have served in AmeriCorps, the national service program so long championed by the DLC, have proven that we can do great things together.

If we are all willing to serve, we will build a new faith in ourselves and in our ability to meet our challenges and protect our values. In so doing, we will build a new faith in America. Today I pledge to you that I will do everything in my power to summon that sense of responsibility from our people. My job does not end in Washington; it only begins here. So when business and communities join together to provide jobs for welfare recipients, I will be there as I was in Kansas City to tell every American commu-

nity they must do the same. When parents and State legislators work to establish and uphold the toughest standards for our schools, I will be there. When communities band together to bring values, discipline, and hope to their children through school uniforms or imposing curfews or enforcing truancy laws, I will continue to be there.

I intend to spend the next 4 years doing everything I can to help communities to help themselves, to educate all Americans about what is working and to create, in the process, a national community of purpose. The progress we have made already should prove to all of us that when we apply our oldest values to our newest challenges, we can master this moment of change.

It will require us, however, to believe that our fellow Americans are capable of doing this. National standards and local reform requires you to believe all children can learn. Welfare reform requires you to believe that everybody is capable of being responsible and working if they have the mental and physical wherewithal to do it.

And I just want to leave you with this little story. Before I came over here this morning, I had the National Advisory Committee—that was actually started under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson—on Mental Health come in and give me two of their reports. John Kennedy, Jr., was one of the members. But the most impressive member today was a young woman from New Hampshire with Down's syndrome. And I appointed the first two people with mental retardation to the board.

So this young girl comes in, shakes my hand, tells me where she's from, gives me a letter, gives me a résumé, tells me what I need to do, and then says, "And I want you to have one of my buttons." And it said, "Down's syndrome" on it, and "Down" was marked out, and it had "Up" on it. Does that person have limits on what she can achieve? Sure, there are some. So do I. So do you. But if you spend all your time thinking about it, you won't think about what will be up instead of down. You must believe in the potential of the American people. We cannot afford to patronize each other with cynicism.

And finally, we cannot afford to continue the politics of personal destruction and divi-

sion that have taken too much of the life-blood of this country already. Shortly before he died, the late Cardinal Bernardin, who Hillary and I had the privilege to know and revere, gave a remarkable speech about reconciling the conflicts within the Catholic Church over great issues in a way that would permit people to disagree honestly to try to preserve reconciliation. And he said this, knowing that his death was imminent: "It is wrong to waste the precious gift of time given to us on acrimony and division."

My fellow Americans, for all the problems of this country, we have been given more from God than any nation in history. And at this moment in history, we have more opportunities and more responsibilities than ever before. To make this democracy work, we must create a vital and dynamic center that is a place of action. We cannot waste the precious gift of this moment.

You have worked hard to create that vital center. Anchored by our oldest convictions, strengthened by our newest successes, certain of our national purpose, let us go forward from that center to build our bridge to the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Bernard Schwartz, event chairman; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado; Al From, executive director, Democratic Leadership Council; and Mark Penn and Doug Schoen of Penn + Schoen Associates.

### **Message on the Observance of Christmas 1996**

*December 11, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Christmas.

Each year during this blessed season, the world pauses to look back across the centuries to the birth of a Child. This Child was born to poor but loving parents in the small town of Bethlehem—born into a world where few noticed His coming, except for some simple shepherds and a few wise men. He was the Son of God and the King of Kings, but He chose to come among us as servant and Savior.

Though two thousand years have passed since Jesus first walked the earth, much remains the same. Today's world is still caught up in the challenges and cares of everyday existence, and too often we crowd God into the background of our experience. Too often we still ignore His loving presence in our lives and the precious gifts of peace and hope that He so freely offers to us all. And today, as on that first Christmas morning, He still reveals himself to the loving, the wise, and the simple of heart.

As we gather with family and friends again this year to celebrate Christmas, let us welcome God wholeheartedly into our daily lives. Let us learn to recognize Him not only in the faces of our loved ones, but also in the faces of those who, like Jesus, are familiar with poverty, hardship, and rejection. And let us be inspired by His example to serve one another with generous hearts and open hands. In this way we will approach the dawn of a new century and a new millennium confident in God's abundant grace and strengthened by His timeless promise of salvation.

Hillary joins me in praying that the peace and joy of this holiday season will remain with you throughout the coming year. Merry Christmas, and God bless you.

**Bill Clinton**

### **Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 1996**

*December 11, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Kwanzaa.

The hearts of millions of men and women across America and around the world rejoice as together we enter into the spirit of this uplifting holiday. The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—teach us that when we come together to strengthen our families and communities and honor the lessons of the past, we can face the future with joy and optimism. Through prayer, song, and the exchange of gifts, Kwanzaa helps us celebrate the human experience and appreciate our many blessings.

Today, we have a renewed sense of hope in America, a hope based on the idea that our great diversity can unite—not divide—our society. As we rejoice in the rich cultural heritage of the African American community during Kwanzaa, let us work together to ensure that the meaning and energy of this inspiring festival will remain with us throughout the coming year, bringing courage, renewal, and even greater hope for the future.

Hillary joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful holiday and every happiness in the year ahead.

**Bill Clinton**

### **Remarks on the Airline Safety Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters**

*December 12, 1996*

**The President.** Thank you. Good morning. I will be very brief, but I do want to make a couple of remarks. I want to thank the Vice President, first of all, and the people who have worked with him for their unflagging efforts to improve airline safety. I want to thank Secretary Peña and Mr. Hall and Ms. Daschle and the other members of the administration who have worked on this.

I want to especially thank the airline executives who are here for announcing their plan to ensure that their U.S. carriers have smoke detectors in their cargo holds whenever they leave the ground. This is further proof of what we can achieve when we work together.

This is a critical part of our long-range plan to make Americans more secure and to make sure our skies are safer. After the TWA disaster, the Vice President's commission worked around the clock to develop an action plan for aviation safety. Just a month later, we made nearly every one of their recommendations the law of the land: state-of-the-art bomb detectors in our major airports, a dramatic increase in FBI agents assigned to counterterrorism efforts, background checks and FBI fingerprint checks for airport and airline employees, improved mail and cargo inspection, and more bomb-sniffing dogs.

I said in October that we cannot make the world risk-free, but we can reduce the risks

we face. By putting smoke detectors in every cargo hold of these carriers we take another step to make our people and our skies safer.

And again, let me say I congratulate especially the carriers who are here. I thank them for their leadership and for working with us, and I thank the members of the administration, beginning with the Vice President.

Thank you very much.

### **Director of Central Intelligence-Designate**

**Q.** Mr. President, is Tony Lake in trouble, and will you go to the mat for him?

**The President.** No, and yes. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** You don't think he has any problem in terms of the—[*inaudible*].

**The President.** No. Well, we reviewed that, and I think—I believe the essential facts of the matter have been reported in the press. And the Counsel's Office and others reviewed the facts as they have been presented—I believe they have been accurately presented in the press, although I did not personally read the story this morning, and we believe that it is not a disqualification.

### **Balanced Budget and Protecting the Poor**

**Q.** Mr. President, your embrace of the political center seems to concern many traditionally liberal Democrats who are afraid this priority of balancing the budget is going to hurt poor people. Yesterday the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Representative Donald Payne, was expressing this kind of concern. How do you guarantee that fuel for poor people, subsidies, that housing subsidies, that your determination to balance the budget is not going to come on the backs of the poor?

**The President.** Well, that's what we're working through right now. We've been working through that for the last 4 years. Every year in the last 4 years we've had to send a budget up to the Hill, and we've worked on a budget that would continue to reduce the deficit in a way that would be fair to all Americans.

And I would just say, first of all, there's some evidence here: After 4 years we've cut the deficit by 60 percent, there are 2.1 million fewer people on welfare and about a million fewer children in poverty than there

were the day I took office. Poverty had the biggest drop among children in 1995 in 20 years. We have the lowest poverty rate among elderly people and African-Americans since the statistics have been kept.

A big part of that is a strong economy. If you want to reduce poverty, you've got to have more jobs being created, you've got to have the economy being stronger.

But secondly, we have to be exceedingly sensitive—I don't want to play games here—we have to be exceedingly sensitive to what policy judgments are made so that we don't do the rest of the work of balancing the budget on the backs of poor children especially, who are essentially defenseless in protecting themselves. We have to be very, very sensitive from here on in. And I assure you we're working on that.

And Congressman Payne, whom I know well and respect very much, I'm sure will be vigorously pressing the interests that he discussed yesterday in all of our budget talks together. But we're working hard on this budget to avoid that.

#### **Airline Safety**

**Q.** Mr. President, with the fire detection systems that you're going to have in these planes, is it not far enough? Don't you need suppression as well, to put out fires when you're at 10,000 feet, simply knowing about—

**The President.** Would you like to answer that?

**The Vice President.** I would. There are fire suppression systems installed on all new airlines. And it is true that the original NTSB recommendation was for both detectors and suppression equipment. The difficulties in implementing the retrofit for suppression systems is significantly greater than the difficulty with detector systems. But the industry has agreed to work with us vigorously to find solutions for this challenge, and we're pressing forward on it.

**Q.** How much will it cost the industry?

**The Vice President.** A lot. [Laughter] About \$400 million. And it is a significant commitment that they're making. No one should misunderstand the fact that it was not easy for these companies to make the decision that they are announcing here today.

This is a significant step forward. In the absence of a rule, they're doing it voluntarily, and every company here has joined together. And so it's an important step.

**Q.** Are airline tickets up?

**The Vice President.** Not because of this.

**The President.** Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

#### **Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Drug Policy Council and an Exchange With Reporters December 12, 1996**

**The President.** Good Morning. First, I'd like to thank Director McCaffrey and the other Cabinet and agency officials who are here for the second meeting of the President's Drug Policy Council.

Before we begin the meeting I'd like to make two brief announcements: First, an important step we are taking to break the cycle of crime and drugs in the revolving door between prisons and drug use.

In the last Congress, we pushed for and passed legislation which requires States to drug-test prisoners and parolees as a condition for receiving prison grants from the Federal Government. Today I'm pleased to announce that the Justice Department has developed drug test guidelines for the States that will help them to meet the requirements of the legislation. This law says to inmates, if you want out of jail you must get off drugs. And it says to parolees, if you want to stay out of jail you must stay off drugs. If you go back on drugs, then you have to go back to jail.

The new guidelines call for every State to submit a plan for drug testing, for interventions, for sanctions to the Attorney General within 14 months as a condition of receiving Federal prison funds.

We know this effort will work. A recent report shows that in Delaware, prisoners who got treatment in prison and during work release were 75 percent drug-free and 70 percent arrest-free after 18 months. But 80 percent of the prisoners who did not receive treatment went back on drugs, and two out of three were arrested again. There is a huge

connection between crime and prison population and drug use which we are now strongly determined to break.

Also let me say, in light of the recent initiatives in Arizona and California, I have instructed General McCaffrey and the other members of the Cabinet and the Drug Policy Council to review what our options are to make sure that we do not do anything that will increase drug use and that instead we do whatever we can to decrease drug use. And we will look at what our options are under Federal law to proceed there.

I am confident we can make real progress here, but I am not unmindful of how difficult the challenge is. And you can see by the people around the table and by the work that General McCaffrey has done that we're going to work together, and we're very hopeful.

General, thank you.

**General McCaffrey.** Thank you, Mr. President.

Well, we could proceed with the press out of the room. It probably would be helpful. [Laughter]

### **Second Term Transition**

**Q.** Before we go, can we just ask if you've had a chance to discuss with Attorney General Reno her future, because that seems to be up in the air right now?

**The President.** No, I've got about—there are four or five of my Cabinet members I haven't yet met with, but I'm going to try to get it all done by the end of the week.

**Q.** Do you think tomorrow at the press conference you'll have some Cabinet announcements?

**The President.** I don't know—oh, I might, I might.

**Q.** Could you give us a sneak preview? [Laughter]

**The President.** You know how this is, you all—we're partners in this deal, and you've got to have something every day. And so you've already had a good day today. I've got to give you something tomorrow now. [Laughter]

### **District of Columbia**

**Q.** Do you think it's appropriate to spend \$1 billion on the District of Columbia, as the control board is suggesting?

**The President.** Well, I don't want to comment on the specific recommendation. Let me say this: I believe that every American has a stake in seeing the District of Columbia succeed. And the kind of netherworld, almost, relationship it has with the Federal Government has been a mixed blessing. And we have tried over the last 4 years to intensify our efforts—I know Secretary Cisneros, for example, has done a lot of work to try to reduce homelessness here.

But I believe that one of the things I should be doing in the next 4 years is to make a more disciplined, organized effort and try to forge a partnership with the Congress—I know Speaker Gingrich, at various times, has expressed an interest in this—to try to do more to help the District of Columbia to be the kind of city it ought to be. And I intend to put a real priority on it. But I don't want to get into a dollar discussion now because I don't know enough about it to have an informed opinion.

Thank you. I can't wait to see you tomorrow. [Laughter]

**Q.** Might see you tonight.

**The President.** Did you get your crossword puzzle, Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio]? [Laughter] You were in the crossword puzzle yesterday, and I worked the whole puzzle. I gave it to McCurry. He's got a copy of it. Yesterday's USA Today crossword puzzle stars you. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

### **Executive Order 13030— Administration of Foreign Assistance and Related Functions and Arms Export Controls**

*December 12, 1996*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order

to delegate certain authority to the Secretary of State, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1.** Section 1–201(a)(13) of Executive Order 12163, as amended, is further amended by

(a) inserting “, and sections 620G(b) and 620H(b) as added by the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, (Public Law 104–132)” before “of”; and

(b) inserting “, as well as section 573 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1994 (Public Law 103–87), section 563 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1995 (Public Law 103–306), section 552 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–107), and similar provisions of law” after “Act”.

**Sec. 2.** Section 1 of Executive Order 11958, as amended, is further amended by

(a) redesignating subsections (n) through (r) as subsections (o) through (s), respectively; and

(b) inserting the following after subsection (m): “(n) Those under Section 40A of the Act, as added by the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–132), to the Secretary of State.”.

**Sec. 3.** Section 1(a)(2) of Executive Order 12884 is amended by

(a) deleting “and” before “(3)”; and

(b) inserting “, and (5)” after “(3)”.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
December 12, 1996

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
8:45 a.m., December 16, 1996]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 17.

## **The President’s News Conference**

*December 13, 1996*

### **Second Term Transition**

**The President.** Good afternoon. Please be seated.

As President, I have worked to keep the American dream alive for all those who are

willing to work for it, to restore economic growth, and to put our Nation on the path to long-term prosperity. One of the accomplishments I’m proudest of since 1992 is the way our economic advisers have worked as a team to advance America’s interests at home and abroad.

Working together, this team has helped to cut our deficit by 60 percent; increase our investments in education, the environment, and technology; expand America’s exports to record levels; and to help our economy create nearly 11 million new jobs.

Today we see new results of that kind of teamwork. American negotiators have agreed with the other members of the World Trade Organization on a landmark information technology agreement, the pact that I worked so hard on at the APEC meeting in Manila recently. I am pleased that it will eliminate by the year 2000 all tariffs on computers, semiconductors, and telecommunications equipment. That’s a \$5 billion cut in tariffs on the American products exported to other nations.

America leads the world in these industries, and this agreement means that there will be extraordinary new opportunities for American businesses and workers, so the American people can reap the rewards of the global economy as we move into the 21st century.

Today I’m pleased to introduce most of the members of the team that will build on our work:

The Treasury Department has never been in better hands. Bob Rubin has been the captain of our economic team for 4 years, first as Director of the National Economic Council, and now as Secretary of the Treasury. And I am pleased that he will stay on.

Larry Summers will continue as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, and we’ll be calling upon his unique policy and analytic skills in an enhanced capacity. Today I am also naming him as a principal on the National Economic Council, which will benefit greatly from his expertise in domestic and international economic policy.

As we work toward a balanced budget, the Office of Management and Budget will play a critical role, because we have to do it in a way that reflects our values and the other

policy objectives of this administration. Frank Raines has been on the job there for several months now, working hard to reach a bipartisan agreement on a balanced budget plan. I am happy to say that after 4 months he has agreed to stay on the job, in a job that is often the biggest headache in town.

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must maintain a strong Commerce Department. In the last 4 years, two exceptionally gifted leaders, my friends the late Ron Brown and Mickey Kantor, have headed that Department and turned it into an economic powerhouse for the American people. It has promoted American business, created American jobs through exports and innovative technologies. I understand Mickey Kantor's desire to return to private life after 4 grueling years, but I regret it very much. He is a great talent, a great citizen, and I will miss him.

Today I am pleased to nominate Bill Daley of Chicago as the new Secretary of Commerce, a man of rare effectiveness, a long-time civic leader, a prominent attorney and business leader. As Special Counsel to the President for the North American Free Trade Agreement, he coordinated our administration's efforts to forge a broad, bipartisan coalition to pass that landmark trade agreement. He embodies the values of hard work and fair play, faith and family that will serve him in a very good stead as the Secretary of Commerce.

Second, I am pleased to announce my intention to nominate Charlene Barshefsky to be our United States Trade Representative, a job she has held on an acting basis for 8 months. She's a tough and determined representative for our country, fighting to open markets to the goods and services produced by American workers and businesses. Her skill is demonstrated by the information technology agreement I just announced. She has been negotiating it around the clock in Singapore for the last week. Indeed, I'm not sure she's had any sleep in the last week, but this is a remarkable achievement. I'm sorry she could not be here, but her husband, Ed Cohen, and her daughters are with us. I spoke to her last night in Singapore to congratulate her on this remarkable achievement. I know she wishes she could be here,

and I'm very glad she'll be on the job for America.

Finally, when I took office 4 years ago, I established for the first time a National Economic Council, to coordinate economic policy, to make sure we get the best advice and a range of options as well as new ideas. Today, I am pleased to appoint Gene Sperling to be the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council. Gene was my chief economic policy adviser in the 1992 campaign. He's been Deputy Director of the NEC since its creation. He has been central to the development of our budget, our tax, our education, our training policies. I rely on him heavily, on his knowledge and skill, his mind and his heart. As all of you know, he certainly shows that the work ethic is still alive and well in America. Indeed, I made him promise as a condition of getting this appointment that he would adopt a dramatic new idea in the next few years: sleep. [*Laughter*] I suppose if we were giving MVP awards for our economic team, Gene would have been there in each one of the last 4 years. And I'm very proud of his service and excited about his promotion.

We know that our economic future is increasingly dependent upon mastering the challenges of the global economy. Today I am pleased to announce that I am appointing Dan Tarullo to be Assistant to the President for International Economic Policy. In his job, Dan will report to the heads of both the NEC and the NSC bringing, thus, even closer coordination between our foreign and our economic teams. He's represented the United States around the world as we have negotiated trade agreements as Assistant Secretary of State and Deputy Director of the NEC.

I'm also pleased to announce the completion of our foreign policy team. Our Ambassador to the United Nations must be someone who can give voice to America's interests and ideals around the world, someone who can work to reform the United Nations so that it costs less and is prepared to meet its new challenges, someone who can not only talk but who can also act effectively.

All Americans have watched admiringly as Bill Richardson has undertaken the toughest

and most delicate diplomatic efforts around the world, from North Korea to Iraq. Just this week, Congressman Richardson was huddled in a rebel chieftain's hut in Sudan, eating barbecued goat and negotiating the freedom of three hostages. Today I am proud to nominate him to be our next Ambassador to the United Nations, to serve in my Cabinet and as a principal on our foreign policy team.

In addition to his already long list of foreign policy achievements, he has represented the people of northern New Mexico for 14 years now as a member of the House Democratic leadership, and as one of our Nation's most prominent and proud Hispanic leaders. He told me last night how much he loved the people of his district. He and Al Gore used to compete for who held the most town meetings in the entire Congress. I know he will serve those constituents and all the American people exceedingly well as the United Nations Ambassador.

I'm very proud of this team. We're making good progress in putting our new people in place, and in resolving all the other outstanding questions. I hope the Senate now will move as quickly as possible to confirm them. I was very pleased that in 1993, with only one exception, all the members of my Cabinet were confirmed the day after the inauguration, and I hope we can continue to push through that process.

Finally, before our new appointees have a chance to say a few words, I know you're all interested in a couple of other matters. I have been having talks with a number of other Cabinet members, as all of you know. I have not yet finished my conversations, but in the last several days I have spoken with Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, Attorney General Janet Reno, and just this morning, our EPA Administrator Carol Browner. I have asked all of them to stay on in their current jobs. We will make those and some other announcements formally soon, when I finish my round of interviews, so that we can announce the rest of our domestic economic team.

And the last matter I want to mention is, as all of you know, Jack Quinn has announced that he will have to leave the White House as White House Counsel because of family obligations. Jack and I have known each

other a long time. He and the Vice President have known each other a long time. I just want to say a word of thanks for the integral and invaluable work he has done as a White House staff member, the fine job he has done as Counsel to the President. He has really been a superb Counsel. I will miss him very much. We had a long talk about the reasons—I think the good reasons, indeed the best reasons anyone can ever have for leaving public service. I will regret that, but I wish him well, and I look forward to making an expeditious appointment of a replacement.

Now I would like to ask Bill Daley, Bill Richardson, Gene Sperling, and Dan Tarullo to make brief statements, and we will proceed to questions.

[At this point, Secretary of Commerce-designate Bill Daley and United Nations Ambassador Bill Richardson made brief remarks. As Ambassador Richardson began his remarks, Secretary-designate Daley fainted.]

**The President.** Where is my doctor?

I think he's fine. He fainted. I think he fainted. I think he's fine. We'll give you a report in a minute.

Go ahead.

[Ambassador-designate Richardson concluded his remarks, and National Economic Adviser Gene Sperling and Assistant to the President for International Economic Policy Dan Tarullo made brief remarks. Secretary-designate Daley returned to the stage.]

**The President.** Welcome back.

**Secretary-designate Daley.** Thanks.

**The President.** Mr. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

### **President's Accomplishments and the First Lady's Role**

**Q.** Mr. President, looking beyond today's announcement to your second term, can you tell us how you hope history will judge your 8 years in office? What single accomplishment would you like to be remembered for? And along those lines, could you share your thinking with us on the specific roles, the specific roles, the First Lady will play in the next 4 years?

**The President.** That's enough for an hour. [Laughter]

You've heard me say that I believe this time is most closely paralleled in our history to about a hundred years ago when then we moved from the farm to the factory, from the rural areas to the city; we became primarily an urban manufacturing country. We are now a global leader and the basis of all economic activity is increasingly knowledge and information and technology.

I would like to be remembered as the President who prepared America for that future, who prepared America for the 21st century where we had opportunity available to all Americans who were responsible enough to exercise it; where we lived with the diversity of this country and the diversity of the world on terms of respect and honor, giving everyone a chance to live up to the fullest of his or her own ability in building a stronger sense of community, instead of becoming more divided, as so many countries are; and where we continue to be the indispensable nation in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity. That is my vision of America in the 21st century. And when I'm finished, I hope people will add up all of the things we did and say, that is what they achieved.

I have nothing to add to what I've already said about the First Lady, except that the State Department has asked her to undertake more efforts around the world, following up on the Beijing Conference, like the one she did in Northern Thailand recently, speaking out on behalf of human rights dimensions of women and young girls around the world. And I expect she will do more of that, and I expect she will continue her interests in children and families and related issues here at home. But I have nothing else to say beyond that.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

### ***Balancing the Budget and Protecting the Poor***

**Q.** Mr. President, what is your response to the perception that you are willing to sacrifice the needy and compassion at the altar of a balanced budget and bipartisanship? I refer to the fact that you have not mentioned any remedy for the punitive parts of the welfare law recently, but you're reviewing children with disabilities with an eye to dropping

them from benefits; that you may wipe out fuel—heating oil subsidy; that you may slash by \$1 billion low-cost housing budgets; and a few other things.

**The President.** Well, first of all, let me say I have no intention of slashing the home heating oil budget as we come to the winter. That's one budget item I know something about.

We have—in the drive to balance the budget we have to make some tough decisions, and some of the housing issues will be brought before me, I'm sure, in the last round of appeals. But we've not made final budget decisions there.

If you look at the record of this administration, I think it would be very hard to make a case that we have been callous toward the poor. I mean, look what we did: We doubted the earned-income tax credit, raised the minimum wage, increased the availability of immunizations to poor children, dramatically expanded the number of poor children in Head Start, vetoed two welfare reform bills which revoked the guarantees of health care and nutrition to poor children because they did. And as a result, there are about a million fewer children living in poverty today. We had the biggest drop in poverty among children in 20 years, the biggest drop among poverty—among working single women in 30 years, the lowest poverty rate ever recorded in 1995 for African-Americans. That is the record of this administration. I think it is very hard to make a case that an administration with that record and those policies is insensitive to the problems of the poor.

Now, in welfare reform, there are two great issues before us in the welfare reform. Issue number one is, there are not enough jobs available, particularly in a lot of urban areas, for all the able-bodied people on welfare when they run out of their 2-year time limit under the new law. I said that all along. That's why a big part of my campaign for the Presidency this time was the commitment to present to Congress and to challenge the States to do things like provide special tax incentives and wage subsidies and training subsidies to employers to help hire people off welfare and to help the cities with a lot of welfare caseload. That's the big welfare reform problem.

Number two, there are problems in the welfare reform bill, as I have repeatedly said, that have nothing to do with welfare that will hurt a lot of innocent people, principally, the way legal immigrants who get hurt, through no fault of their own, are treated and the way the nutrition programs, the food stamp programs are treated for single men who are willing to go to work and, most importantly, for working families. I have set aside several billion dollars in my balanced budget plan to fix those problems. And the budget I present to the Congress will address both of those within the context of a balanced budget plan.

On the question of the disabled children, I want to ask all of you to help all of us on this, because here's the issue: Nearly everyone who reviewed the law as it used to be said that the disability definitions were too broad and that it was very difficult to justify, given all the needs of the country, the coverage that existed under the old law. And we even proposed to the Congress that some changes be made to tighten the standards of disability coverage for children under SSI.

Now what we have to do is to define regulations under the new law. So the trick is going to be to do it in a way that does not hurt genuinely needy children and families and cause harm, instead of tightening up a program that virtually everyone who analyzed it thought ought to be tightened up. So we're all going to have to just watch that one and try not to mess it up. But the welfare reform bill I think is going to prove to be a good bill. I do not think it will increase job poverty if we create jobs. We need to fix the non-welfare parts of the welfare bill.

Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News] let me say before you leave, I know this is your last White House press conference; you'll be too important to mess with Presidents and other people before long. [Laughter] But over the last several years, I think all of us think you have done an extraordinary, professional job under Republican and Democratic administrations alike, and we will miss you. And we wish you well, and congratulations on your new position.

### **Independent Counsels**

**Q.** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you very much, indeed.

Sir, over the years Republicans have sometimes criticized the whole idea of having an Office of Independent Counsel as being subject to abuse, possibly raising the prospect of witch hunts. More recently, one of your chief political advisers seems to have joined in that thinking, and you, yourself, have even suggested that the current Independent Counsel may be, as I believe you put it, "out to get you." I wonder if you could give us your current thinking on the whole independent counsel process and how this particular one is, in your view, doing its job?

**The President.** Well, on the second part of that question, I have nothing to add to what I said earlier on that.

But let me say there may be a few limited cases where this is appropriate. I was impressed by the comments made by Archibald Cox. I believe he wrote an op-ed piece in the New York Times a day or two ago. And what I think what we ought to do is to search out people like that. The American Bar Association recently had a seminar where a lot of people who have been involved in this work for years came and talked about what kind of cases ought to be covered, what kinds of time lines ought to be there, what kinds of limitations there ought to be.

And I think what we ought to do is to take people who aren't so personally involved in it but who understand the enormous costs of the present system, as well as whatever benefits might come to it, and reassess it. But I think, you know, we could start with what Mr. Cox had to say and analyze it and go from there. But I think—I have to focus my attention on trying to complete the agenda the American people elected me to complete, and that's what I intend to do.

I do think this is worth some study and thought, but I think you ought to refer to people who are not so caught up in it and don't have other things to do like I do. I need to not think about that. I need to think about my plans to grow the economy and improve education and other things.

Mr. Frisby [Mike Frisby, Wall Street Journal].

### **Capital Gains Tax Cut**

**Q.** Mr. President, Republicans on Capitol Hill still want to cut the capital gains tax. Are there any conditions in which you would agree to such a cut if it would result in a budget deal?

**The President.** Well, I have always said that I was not inherently opposed to any kind of capital gains tax, and indeed, there was a capital gains treatment in my first budget in '93 for investments in new and small businesses that were held for a significant period of time. It is not part of my balanced budget because I had other priorities which I was trying to advance.

We are not going to get a balanced budget which the American people need, which our economy needs and which would do, I think, very good things for us not only economically but also psychologically as we move forward into this new century in the absence of bipartisan cooperation.

So as—when the 50-plus hours I spent with Senator Dole and Speaker Gingrich and Mr. Armev last year, I made clear to them in private what I have said publicly several times which is that, obviously, I had no right to say that was a show-stopper in a deal. I was perfectly willing to talk about it but only in the context of balanced budget negotiations.

### **District of Columbia**

**Q.** Mr. President, I'd like to shift the focus to something that I think is equally as important, or at least many people think is important as some of the so-called national things we speak about, and that's the question about the Nation's Capital city—your city, sir. I wonder what you could tell us, what helps perhaps or comment you might offer on what many people think to be is a chaotic and failing District of Columbia government. Now, the financial control board does recommend a partial takeover. I wonder how you feel about that, or is it time for a complete takeover, sir?

**The President.** Let me, first of all, say, I have had several conversations in the last 2 months, leading up to and after the election, about what I believe is my responsibility and the responsibility of our administration

to try to play a constructive role in making Washington the kind of city it ought to be.

In the last 4 years, first Alice Rivlin, and then Frank, have worked hard to coordinate what our administration was doing in Washington. Henry Cisneros, for example, has done a lot of good work on homelessness here in Washington. The Commerce Department has taken some community-based initiatives. Even my Secret Service detail adopted a school in response to my request for people to do more in Washington. But we have not done as much as we can, so that's the first thing I want to say.

The second thing I want to say is that the American people need to understand the unique challenges facing Washington. Washington, DC, is really not quite a State but not quite a city. It is not quite dependent and not quite independent. And I think that is the source of a lot of the difficulties we face today. There is sort of a series of purgatories in which Washington has found itself over the years, and very often when functions are divided in responsibility, they wind up being nobody's responsibility and easy for people to avoid, therefore, the tough decisions that have to be made.

So what—I have asked the Office of Management and Budget and Frank Raines in his capacity as head of this task force to review that. I was very impressed that the DC control board came out with a set of specific recommendations, and I want to review them and try to do two things: Number one, I want to respond to the financial recommendations that will come both from Frank Raines and from the DC control board. And number two, I want to think in a larger way about what kind of more systematic effort we can make to be a constructive force in the revitalization of Washington.

This is a beautiful city. This is a city full of talented people. It has problems, but so does every other city in America. And I am convinced that a lot of these problems have been aggravated over time by the fact that—what I would call “not quite” factor: not quite a State, not quite a city, not quite independent, not quite dependent, and so there has just been too much gray area. And we have to try to resolve this and work through it. And I promise you a more serious effort.

**Q.** Just to follow up, sir, will you be speaking with House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who has mentioned trying to work up a plan, and Senate Leader Trent Lott—

**The President.** Absolutely.

**Q.** —will this be a—

**The President.** Again, I would say we have to do this on a bipartisan basis. When the control board was set up, Congressman Davis was a very constructive force in this, and of course, Eleanor Holmes Norton. So we know we have to do this together. And I think we have—those of us who live here and work here have a real obligation to try to resolve this. But I just want to make it clear that I think we need some serious fixes here that deal with this sort of “not quite” factor. You’re got to resolve who is going to be responsible for what, how is it going to be done, where are we going to be over the long run?

**Q.** But you could do that as President, couldn’t you, sir?

**The President.** Well, not unilaterally, but we’ve got to have some help from the Congress. We’ll work on it.

#### **Nomination Process and Government Service**

**Q.** Mr. President, with it now revealed that there are Justice Department investigations ongoing about two members of your national security team, one nominee and one person who doesn’t have to get Senate confirmation, I’m wondering if you could tell us why you decided to go ahead with people under Justice Department investigation, and whether, as Mr. Daley sort of alluded to, you worry that the level of scrutiny has become so high that maybe people feel that they are driven out of accepting jobs. It’s also been reported that you’re having trouble filling the White House Counsel’s post because people don’t want a job that is going to just be one problem after another—[inaudible]—questions on that.

**The President.** Well, there was a recent—let me answer two points of your question. Number one, I will take full responsibility for whatever happens here; I’m fully aware of the status of the issues relating to Mr. Berger and Mr. Lake, and based on the advice of Mr. Quinn, my White House Counsel,

I decided to go forward because I am convinced that nothing they did was in any way disqualifying, and because the issues involved were very straightforward, but have been over at the Justice Department for some time, and we had to make a decision. I mean, the work of the people has to go forward.

So what we decided to do is to let the thing go forward. You know what the issues are; they’ve been fully disclosed; there’s nothing there that has not been disclosed to the best of my knowledge. And I made a decision, based on the advice of my Counsel, that the best people that I wanted to appoint could in fact be appointed and that the issues outstanding were not disqualifying.

Now, to the larger question you asked, there is no question that the climate has changed to the point where a lot of people don’t want to fool with it anymore. There’s no doubt about it. In fact, I was sort of touched by what Mr. Daley said because I have to say that the truly moving thing is how many gifted men and women of all walks of life are still willing to serve, notwithstanding the fact that they know they may be subject to things that are excessive and unfair.

There was, a couple of weeks ago, a commission—I can’t even remember who chaired the commission, but I know Lloyd Cutler was a member of it—on the whole appointment process. You know what I’m talking about, don’t you? I’m—what was the formal name of the commission? Yes, the 20th Century Fund Commission. And they made a lot of recommendations there that I thought had a lot of merit.

Now, of course, the appointment process is largely controlled by the Congress and by the Senate, and it would require the Senate to, with some discipline, moderate its own procedures and change it. But I thought it was quite impressive, the thoughtfulness, the fairness and the balance of that fund’s recommendation. So I couldn’t add anything to the recommendations they made. I think that ought to be studied, and we ought to decide what to do about it.

**Q.** Just to follow up, sir, do you think that there’s any possibility that mistakes made within your own White House, though, have contributed to this perception?

**The President.** But I don't think—when you're making millions and millions of actions, literally, over a 4-year period, everybody's going to make some mistakes. The question is, does the mistake amount to a violation of law? Does it amount to a dereliction of duty? Does it amount to some dark attempt to undermine the public interest?

I mean, there is a sense—what I think we need here is full disclosure, but reasoned judgment, and a certain balance here. You know, in order to get all of the information out, you have to have the information accompanied with balance. And I think everybody has to ask themselves what is fundamentally fair here. I think a lot of people who don't want to come in say, well, somebody raises a question, then there is a presumption of guilt, you have to prove yourself innocent of things you're not even sure of what the charge is. And that's what I think we have to avoid, which is why I thought the suggestions of this 20th Century Fund Commission bore some evaluation.

Again, I don't have time to think much about it, because I have to keep working on the agenda that I ran on, the agenda I've been working on, and the one I'm trying to implement for the next 4 years. But I do think that those of you in a different position might well evaluate it.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN].

### **Legislative Agenda**

**Q.** Mr. President, with Congress coming back into a new session, there seems to be indications they will take up two issues which are contentious which you have opposed in the past—an amendment to balance the budget, a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. You caused some, I guess, concern a few weeks ago among some of your aides by suggesting you could live with a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. And secondly, legislation that would ban a late-term abortion procedure known as partial-birth abortions. Could you tell us exactly what kind of language you could accept on both of those issues that would allow you to go forward and support those matters?

**The President.** Well, they're two different things there. First of all, what I said on the balanced budget thing, I don't think—let me

try to be clear here so I won't be misunderstood. I do not believe it is good policy or needed to have a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. I do believe that it's good policy for America to pass a balanced budget plan now and to implement it. And I believe I have some credibility on that because we've cut the deficit by more in 4 years than anybody has in a month of Sundays. So everybody knows that—and my record as Governor was that of a fiscal conservative.

So this is not about fiscal conservatism. It is about whether you can design a constitutional amendment which in difficult and very different times than the ones in which we now live won't do more harm than good. That's my only concern there.

And so the only thing—what I was trying to say when I was asked about this before is, there have been changes in the composition of the Senate which at least apparently give them enough votes to pass this amendment. So what I was saying is I'm not for this, but if you're going to do it, try to do it in a way that gives you enough flexibility to deal with the kinds of things that can happen. We're passing this constitutional amendment in a very different environment than some of the environments in which we've lived in the last 30 years. That's the only point I was trying to make on that.

Now, perhaps changes in the House will make it more difficult to pass in the House, but I just don't know. You know, the President cannot veto a constitutional amendment. It gets passed and sent out to the States. So that's the point I want to make on that.

On the partial birth abortion issue, I would very much—I wanted to sign that legislation when I first heard about it; I thought I would sign it, since I am generally opposed to third-trimester abortions anyway and signed legislation to restrict them in Arkansas.

The problem is, I will say again, there are a few hundred women every year who have personally agonizing situations, where their children are born or about to be born with terrible deformities which will cause them to die either just before, during, or just after childbirth. And these women, among other things, cannot preserve the ability to have further children unless the enormous size of

the baby's head is reduced before being extracted from their bodies. This is a very painful thing to discuss. I have met six of these women. I will say again, three of them were pro-life Catholics. One of them was a pro-life evangelical Christian. This is not a pro-life, pro-choice issue. To me this is a practical problem. I believe that people put in that situation ought not to have Congress tell them that they're never going to be able to have children again.

Now, I know there are just a few hundred of them, and I know that all the votes were on the other side. And I am well aware that there were several places in this country where major political headway was made against the Vice President and me and against some of our candidates for Congress and against others running for other things because of this issue, because it sounds so awful when you describe it—that the politics is all on the other side. But one of the things the President is supposed to do is to look out for the few hundred against the many millions when the facts are not consistent with the rhetoric.

And I'm just telling you—Hillary and I, we only have one child. And I just cannot look at a woman who's in a situation where the baby she is bearing against all her wishes and prayers is going to die anyway, and tell her that I am signing a law which will prevent her from ever having another child. I'm not going to do it.

Now, I pleaded and I pleaded and I pleaded last time with the Congress to adopt highly restrictive language on this procedure which would make it clear that there had to be a very serious health problem for the woman involved before it could be adopted, in addition to having her own life at stake—a very serious health problem, like having the ability to have a child again. And they would not do it. And they would not do it. And they would not do it, I believe, because it was great politics. But it's bad policy.

So if we will—if we can have the right sort of language here—I don't like this procedure. I don't think anybody ought to just, you know, show up 8 months and 2 weeks pregnant and say I just think I'd like to have an abortion, and this is what I want to use. I think the States should have taken care of

that. Eighty percent of the States have, but 20 percent haven't. But if they will help me with language here and do it in good faith, I will happily sign this bill.

But there are a few hundred people every year that are adversely affected by this, and I am the only person that's elected by all the people that feels, therefore, less pressure on this. I have to do what I think is right. I cannot take away from these women the right to bear further children. It would be wrong, and I will not do it.

### **Stock Market**

**Q.** Mr. President, do you share Alan Greenspan's view that Wall Street is currently in the grips of irrational exuberance? And agree or not that the market is overpriced, when the inevitable correction comes, what is the degree of risk that it will throw the economy into a tailspin?

**The President.** Well, I don't comment on the Fed's decisions, and I don't comment on the market's movements, so I shouldn't talk about the Fed Chairman's comments about the market's movements. [Laughter] Nothing I say will produce any good.

I think the answer to your second question is the same—I'll tell you an interesting story. You know when the market fell in '87, by blind accident, when the market closed, the then wealthiest man in America, Sam Walton, was sitting in my office in Little Rock, in the Governor's office, just by pure coincidence. He was there on business. He came in to see me, and we were sitting there at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, or whenever it was, and the market closed in New York. So he called, and I said, Sam, "How much money did you lose today?" He said, "A billion dollars, on paper." And I said, "What do you think about it?" He said, "I think tomorrow I'm going to get in my airplane and fly to a little town in Tennessee where they're opening a new Wal-Mart, and if the pickups and the cars show up and people get out and buy goods, America's all right. This is a Main Street economy."

So I say to you, I'm very pleased that not only wealthy people, but a lot of middle class people have made a lot of money in the markets. A lot of people's retirements are more secure because of it. I'm proud of the vibrant

markets we have. They will change. They go up and down; they always do. My job is to keep the underlying fundamentals sound so that tomorrow in all those little towns all across America people can get up and go to work and go to the store and buy something. If that happens, I think we'll be okay.

**Q.** Mr. President, given the fact that people have invested in pensions, 401(k)'s, it really has become a middle class situation, isn't it almost inevitable that a correction would trigger a tailspin?

**The President.** No. I don't think we should over-conclude that. Look at '87. Look at everything since 1929. You've seen long-term—over the long term, if we have the discipline, all of us, to ride out the inevitable changes in the markets, the markets have produced a very steady growth over the long run, even with ups and downs and even when the downs were fairly significant.

#### **Television Rating System**

**Q.** Mr. President, as the country prepares to see its first television rating system devised, can you give us some of your thoughts about whether or not an American parent who feels particularly concerned about violence but perhaps not so concerned about exposing his or her child to sexual content or bad language—should that parent be able to know in advance if a television program has violent content?

**The President.** Let me try to answer you based on what I know now. Of course, that is the controversy about the proposed television rating system which the industry has come up with. They said that they would try to develop a television rating system which would more or less parallel the movie rating system. I have not yet had a report on it, but apparently that is what they have done. All I know is what all of you have reported about it, but apparently that is what they have done. Therefore, the big conflict now is whether the rating system should be more content-based instead of age-based. This is like the movie system except it has more age categories than the movie system, as I understand it.

I guess what I would say to you is that I believe that it's a good thing that on these cable movies you have—you get a sort of a

sheet comes on the screen and checks the content issues. But it's a very different thing with all of these hundreds and hundreds of television programs that are on and everything. What I would say is, let's remember how far we've come. This has been debated for 10 years. We now have one; we're going to have one a year before televisions have to start including the V-chip.

The industry itself has promised to review where they are within 10 months. So what I think we should do, since I feel very strongly the Government should not do this; this must be an industry-based thing; the Government should not be involved in this—what I think ought to happen is that all of the parents in the country ought to look at these ratings, ask themselves the questions you've just asked, check the shows against the ratings, give it 10 months to work, and then if they're inadequate or there needs to be some more content in the rating systems, then after a 10-month test period we'll be able to make that argument. I think, all of us, and I think the industry has shown that they're interested in doing something here.

I believe that at this moment, we shouldn't say that the whole thing is not worth doing. I think, because it does bear rough parallels to what's been done in the movies, except there are more age categories, as I understand it.

#### **Foreign Campaign Contributions**

**Q.** Mr. President, our political system does not outlaw contributions by foreigners, and these legal contributions are made to both Democrats and Republicans. When foreigners give huge sums of money—\$10,000 or \$100,000 or \$400,000—what do you think they think they will get in return?

**The President.** I think it's probably different for different people. You know, when—sometimes, according to reports that I've read in the press, they think maybe it may enhance their standing in their own countries. Sometimes they may think that it's something they ought to do because they have business operations in America, which they have to have—you know, they have to be somehow involved in America to give legally. They may think that it enhances their standing as citizens.

Sometimes there may be a specific issue. I suppose—and I don't begrudge this; this is perfectly legal—but when the British tobacco company, Brown and Williamson, made significant contributions to the Republicans, they did it because they agree with their position and disagree with my position on the regulation of tobacco and the restriction of the advertising, sales, and marketing of tobacco to children.

So there are different reasons. But let me reiterate what I said about this earlier. I believe that has been legal, and I can understand why it has—you know, if you've got a green card, you're paying taxes, you're working here, maybe you ought to be able to give. If you have a business here, maybe you ought to be able to give. I understand the argument. But I think that, as we've seen in the last few weeks, it raises more questions than it answers, and I personally believe that the campaign finance reform legislation should make contributions by adult non-citizens illegal. Now—and we shouldn't do it anymore.

Furthermore, I think we ought to go on and pass the campaign finance reform legislation. As I said Wednesday in my speech to the DLC, repeated reasonable bills have died by Senate filibuster. Let me tell you, there is always an objection to any bill. There has never been a perfect piece of legislation passed by the Congress. There is always a theoretical or actual objection anybody can raise to any bill. But the time has come to quit killing this by filibuster and to pass it. And I'm prepared to do my part. And we ought to start with the McCain-Feingold bill. It's a good bill, it's a reasonable bill, it's a bipartisan bill, and we ought to pass it. And we should amend it to make the foreign contributions not legal anymore.

Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

### **Education**

**Q.** Mr. President, when you begin your campaign to improve public education in this country, are you going to follow up on a suggestion that you made in the first Presidential debate, which is to encourage States and cities to offer vouchers for private school choice?

**The President.** I don't believe I made that suggestion.

**Q.** You said that States and cities should be allowed to do it.

**The President.** No—well, I've always thought they should be allowed to do it. I supported Milwaukee's right to do it. But I'm not going to encourage or discourage. I think it should be made based on the facts of the case. I am opposed to the Federal Government doing it. Our aid is too limited, and it is too targeted, and it is too much needed for what is done now. And if I were at the State and local level, I would not be in favor of it because I think the schools are underfunded. I don't think they're overfunded. But I do believe that they have the legal right to do it, and I don't support any action to take that legal right away from them. And if they think the situation is totally out of hand and they want to try what they did in Milwaukee, I think they ought to have the right to do it.

**Q.** This is along the same lines. You talked over the course of your Presidency a lot about college accessibility, affordability, tuition credits, et cetera, but there are festering problems at the secondary and elementary levels across this country probably nowhere more pronounced than in this very city. Do you have any initiatives or programs in mind that can reform, if not rescue, the public schools of America?

**The President.** Well, the rescue of the public schools of America will have to be done by the people who are in control of them. We do fundamentally have local control of our schools and under the constitutions of virtually every State in the country, the States are constitutionally responsible for them. So when you hear people say they want local control and they don't like all these Federal rules, the truth is, we do have local control.

The Federal contribution to public education is about 7 cents on the dollar; never been higher than 10 cents on the dollar. But there are things that we can do and that I believe we should do. First of all, I think we should support reform efforts. That's why I have supported things like public school choice and charter schools. We have in this balanced budget plan sufficient funds for

3,000 charter schools which would triple the number of schools created under the umbrella of local school districts but without a lot of the rules and regulations which I think make real learning more difficult, with more control for the parents and the principals and the teachers in each school.

Secondly, I think we should support the establishment in every State of national standards of excellence and means of measuring it. And one of the things I think we should do more of where I think we have not—let me back up and say, when we did the education summit in 1989 with President Bush and the Governors all came together and we stayed up all night and wrote the national education goals, if you read the document that goes with the goals we wrote, we were moving to deal with what was a really tough issue.

Keep in mind, this is now a 13-year effort in our country, starting back—going back to the “Nation At Risk” Report in early ’83, when we said our schools are in trouble, we need more math, we need more science, we need more foreign language, we need higher standards, we need better paid, better trained, and more accountable teachers—all those things that came out in ’83.

So then, all of the States worked on that. So about ’89, we could see that the problem was, you can always have more and better of anything, but what is the goal here. And that’s why the national educational goals were adopted, so we would have some way or measuring whether we were succeeding.

But we all understood that even though we wanted constitutional responsibility and local control, that our children were going to be judged by global standards. And the next step is plainly to devise not Federal Government but national standards of excellence. We got there in mathematics and science—there actually are pretty widely accepted mathematics and science standards at the high school level and, to some extent, at the junior high school level.

There was all the controversy over the history standards. Do you remember that, right after I took office? There were not developed in our administration, but they were presented then. I still think we can achieve standards in the arts. And then I believe

there has to be a nationally recognized means of testing kids so that we know by some more or less universal standards whether our kids know what they’re supposed to know. And I think that we should work very hard on that—not Government standards, but national standards. And I think unless we’re prepared to hold all of our kids up to the light of real measurement, we’ll never know and we’ll never succeed in having a genuine national education system.

### **Campaign Practices**

**Q.** Mr. President, in the last election the Democratic Party raised more money than it ever had before. Do you think you put too much pressure on your fundraisers, and do you take any sort of personal responsibility for the problems and the embarrassments that subsequently developed?

**The President.** Well, yes, I think any of us who were involved in it have to take some responsibility. I certainly do. But let me say that I did everything I could to make it clear that I wanted the law followed to the last letter. I wanted every “t” crossed, every “i” dotted.

In our campaign, Lyn Utrecht and others rigorously checked every check that came in. But I feel very badly that there were some funds received which should not have been received. Some of them were illegal. Some of them were not illegal, but on better judgment would dictate that they not be received. I also believe it’s a disservice to the more—to the 99 percent of the people plus and the more than 98 percent of the contributions that the Democratic Party received that were perfectly legal and perfectly appropriate.

So, yes, I think that. And that’s why I am pleased that the Democratic Party has contracted with a law firm and an accounting firm to review all this, to analyze what was done, get to the bottom of it, and make sure that it never happens again.

But I’ll say again, the real answer, in spite of all of that, it is very difficult to raise that kind of money in that kind of way without some problem occurring. You remember back during the campaign, there was an official of the Dole campaign who actually had to plead guilty to a money-laundering operation. And I’m sure Senator Dole felt some-

what responsible for that, although I do not believe in any way he knew about it or condoned it.

What you see here is too much money being raised, raising too many questions, and taking too much time away from all the people involved. The answer to this—there will never be a perfect answer until we reform the campaign finance system.

So, yes, we should—the Democratic Party should investigate, evaluate what's done, make sure its house is clean, and should live within the rules. But even living within the rules, you're going to have—the amount of money it takes to communicate with the American people today, unless you make campaign finance reform—restrict spending limits, give people access to free media time in return for restricted limits—unless you do that there will always be questions raised, even when their contributions are perfectly legal.

The answer is to reform this system. We can do it now. If one good thing could come out of this whole issue, it would be shining the bright light on the larger issues of how campaigns are financed today and how we're the only country in the world that really does it like this—or at least in the Western world, I believe, and we ought to stop it and have some campaign finance reform.

### ***Khobar Tower Bombing***

**Q.** Can we get just one foreign policy question, sir? Have you seen any evidence to support Saudi Arabia's suspicions that Iran may be somehow involved with the Khobar Tower bombing? And if those suspicions do get played out, what kind of consequences might Iran face?

**The President.** As you might imagine, I have spent a great deal of time on the Khobar issue since it occurred, first of all, making sure that we redeployed our forces in Saudi Arabia, making sure that we strengthened our defenses, making sure that we analyzed very carefully what had been done, because all of us policymakers from top to bottom underestimated the degree of terrorist threat which could be presented to our men and women in uniform, and they don't deserve that. They deserve the best possible decision-making by us.

I have also exerted a lot of effort to make sure that we were cooperating and working with the Saudis in investigating the murder. The FBI Director has been there on more than one occasion. We have worked hard on this.

I think it is only fair, however, to say that the investigation is not completed. I have not reached any—been presented with any final conclusions. I have not reached any final conclusions myself. And because of that, anything I say about what we might do if we knew what had happened would only give rise to an inference that I had really concluded someone was guilty of something that I don't know they're guilty of yet. So I can't say more except to say that we are on top of this and we are going to stay on top of it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 132d news conference began at 2 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

### **Proclamation 6965—Wright Brothers Day, 1996**

*December 13, 1996*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### ***A Proclamation***

Ninety-three years ago, on a windswept North Carolina beach, air travel by hot air balloon and gliders gave way to American ingenuity and the era of powered flight. Wilbur and Orville Wright—employing innovations like the wind tunnel and single component testing—designed, built, and ultimately flew the first powered, heavier-than-air craft on the dunes of Kitty Hawk. Years later, Wilbur was to say of this historic event, "It is the complexity of the flying problem that makes it so difficult. It is not . . . solved by stumbling upon a secret, but by the patient accumulation of information upon a hundred different points." No longer would the ability to travel by air be bounded by the simple

physics of wind and weather, but by the power of the human imagination.

As we have expanded the scope of our dreams, our love of flight has extended our command of the sky. Today, air travel is not only the fastest means of transportation, but the safest as well, and the United States air transportation system, which continues to improve every year, serves as the model to which all others are compared.

My Administration continues to work to make the skies ever safer. Integral to this effort has been the dedicated service of thousands of men and women throughout the air transportation community who strive daily to protect air travelers. Indeed, this month, the Vice President and I were pleased to announce that the major airlines have agreed to install fire detection systems in the cargo holds of some 3,700 airliners that carry the vast majority of Americans flying each year. We cannot make the world risk free, but we can reduce the risks we face. Working together, we have taken another important step to ensure the safety of the flying public.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Federal aid for our Nation's airports. Working in partnership with State and local governments, private airport operators, and the air carrier and general aviation communities, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assisted numerous airports with critical safety, security, and capacity projects that directly benefit the American traveling public. It is particularly fitting, as Americans celebrate an important milestone in the history of air transportation, that this year also marks the beginning of important reforms for the FAA that recognize its vital role in advancing sound aviation management and development in the United States and around the world.

On April 1, 1996, the FAA began transforming itself from the model previously mandated by law into a more effective, streamlined system, better designed for the challenges of the twenty-first century. In the recently enacted Federal Aviation Reauthorization Act of 1996, the Congress, working with my Administration, complemented those important reforms with a new financial model for the agency to help it meet the safety and capacity challenges it faces. This legis-

lation also provided the FAA with improved tools to perform its mission more effectively. It builds on security recommendations of the Vice President's Commission on Aviation Safety and Security that will improve the FAA's ability to more comprehensively address the threat posed by terrorists to civil air transportation. With these statutory improvements, the world of aviation will be an exciting one in which future aviation pioneers may fulfill their dreams and aspirations.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved December 17, 1963 (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 169), has designated December 17 of each year as "Wright Brothers Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 1996, as Wright Brothers Day.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:01 a.m., December 17, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 18.

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Cyprus** *December 13, 1996*

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)*

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. The previous submission covered progress through July 31, 1996. The current submission covers the period August 1, 1996, through September 30, 1996.

I regret that intercommunal violence, including unprecedented killings of civilians, dominated events in Cyprus during this re-

porting period. These incidents raised intercommunal tensions to their worst level in many years and complicated efforts aimed at achieving a lasting solution to the Cyprus dispute. In meetings with the two Cypriot communities and the governments of Greece and Turkey, my representatives noted that the violence underscored the unsustainability of the status quo and the need for redoubled efforts toward a negotiated settlement. They advised that provocative rhetoric and actions be avoided to permit intercommunal relations to move onto a more constructive track. Similar calls were made by the United Nations and the European Union.

Notwithstanding the tragic events of August and September, my Administration remains committed to promoting a lasting peace on the island. Given the urgency of the current situation, we are appealing again for the implementation of practical measures to reduce the potential for conflict. We remain hopeful that both sides will recognize the importance of such measures and put them into immediate effect.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

#### ***December 7***

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, to attend the Army-Navy football game at Veterans Stadium. He returned to Washington, DC, in the afternoon.

#### ***December 8***

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended a gala in the Opera House

at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

#### ***December 9***

In the morning, the President met separately with Defense Minister Gen. Chi Haotian of China and with Crown Prince Sid Mohamed of Morocco in the Oval Office. Later, he taped an interview with Brian Lamb of C-Span in the Map Room for broadcast on December 15.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe thunderstorms, high winds, rain, and flooding on November 8-15.

#### ***December 11***

In the morning, in the Oval Office the President received a report of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

The White House announced that the President will visit marines and their families at Camp Lejeune, NC, on December 23, to celebrate the holiday season and highlight the contributions and sacrifices made by America's Armed Forces and their families.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

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### **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

#### ***Released December 9***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

**Released December 10**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

**Released December 11**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement of Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the President's upcoming holiday visit to Camp Lejeune, NC

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Presidential election in Ghana on December 7

**Released December 12**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by the Director of National Drug Control Policy Barry McCaffrey and Transportation Secretary Federico Peña on the national drug control

strategy and a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on National Security Adviser Anthony Lake's meeting with President Isaias Afworki of Eritrea

**Released December 13**

Announcement of transmittal of the Aggregate Report on Personnel to congressional leaders

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.

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