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ministration and the Congress take very seriously.

Accordingly, in conducting your oversight of the ongoing investigation being undertaken by the Department of Defense, with the assistance of other executive departments and agencies, into possible chemical or biological agent exposures during the Gulf War, I am directing your attention to the recently declassified documents. You have a vital role in assisting me, the Congress, and the American public in understanding their full significance.

These documents have been provided to the Inspectors General of the United States Army and the Central Intelligence Agency, both of whom are conducting investigations relating to Khamisiyah. There are two important questions raised by these recently declassified documents that must be resolved by these investigations: (1) When did we have sufficient evidence to conclude that chemical munitions were present at Khamisiyah and that U.S. forces conducting demolition activities may have been exposed to chemical warfare agents; and (2) Once we had that information, what actions were taken by whom to investigate this alarming possibility and were those actions sufficient.

Your oversight efforts should take full account of the evidence disclosed by these ongoing investigations, as well as the information being developed by the Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses at the Department of Defense. Your preliminary assessment relating to the adequacy of the investigations concerning these issues should be provided as soon as possible within the next 60 days, and no later than April 30, 1997, the date specified in Executive Order 13034 for your interim status report.

Thank you for your continuing efforts and those of your fellow members and supporting staff. Your Committee's dedicated efforts are truly indispensable to ensuring that no stone is left unturned on behalf of Gulf War veterans.

William J. Clinton

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Weapons of Mass Destruction

February 26, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104–201), title XIV, section 1411 requires the President to transmit a report to the Congress that assesses the capabilities of the Federal Government to prevent and respond to terrorist incidents involving weapons of mass destruction and to support State and local prevention and response efforts. In accordance with this provision, I transmit the attached report on the subject issue.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 26, 1997.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Frei

February 26, 1997

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President, Mrs. Frei, members of the Chilean delegation, distinguished guests, welcome to the White House. Mr. President, I enjoyed our meeting today, especially your perspective as a trained engineer committed to building bridges. [*Laughter*] You have more experience and credibility at that than I have, but I am glad to be your partner in building those bridges.

The United States respects the extraordinary accomplishments of the Chilean people, the brave struggle to reclaim democracy which has cast the light of liberty over your land and over the entire hemisphere. The United States respects the extraordinary economic achievements of Chile, which have shined the light of hope over your land and the entire hemisphere.

Beyond democracy, you have advanced equality before the law and good government. Beyond economic growth, you have advanced fuller participation in Chile's prosperity, reducing poverty and increasing edu-

cation so that all may have their chance. Under your leadership, Chile is a crossroads for global commerce, a force of freedom and peace, a valued partner of the United States in building a better world for the 21st century.

Three decades ago, Mr. President, during the time of the Alliance for Progress launched by President Kennedy, your father made plans for a state visit to our country. That visit never came to pass. And in the years that followed, the bright hopes that our nations had for cooperation in our hemisphere went unrealized. Now we stand at a moment of unprecedented promise for the Americas. Just as you donned your father's ceremonial sash when you took office, you have completed the journey to the United States that he once set out to make.

Now we must make our bold journey into tomorrow together. Mr. President, I gave a book of poems by your great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, to my wife for our 20th wedding anniversary. In his ''Ode to the Sea,'' Neruda wrote these words that speak to us tonight across the years: ''We'll put the affairs of mankind in order, big things first, then all the rest. We will make you see an Earth, we will make you perform miracles, because inside us, inside our struggle is our daily bread, our fish, and our miracle.''

Mr. President, you have put big things first: democracy, justice, freedom, the future. In so doing, you have given the Chilean people the chance to reach deep within themselves to perform miracles.

Tonight it's my great honor to ask all those here present to join me in toasting you, Mrs. Frei, people of Chile, and the bright promise of our partnership.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:57 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Remarks to the Business Council

February 27, 1997

Thank you, and good morning. Thank you, Larry. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. I want to thank the other officers and all of you who are here today for inviting me to come by. There are a lot of members of my administration here. I know Secretary Rubin spoke earlier, and Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles is here; Gene Sperling, the Director of the National Economic Council; and Maria Echaveste, who is my new Assistant for Public Liaison and Alexis Herman's successor—some of you may not know her. Maria, where are you? Stand up there. I wanted you to know because she'll be relating to you. I want to thank you for the support that so many of you have given to Alexis Herman in the job that she held and in the job that I'm confident she will hold as the Secretary of Labor.

Over the last 4 years, I have worked with many of you in this group to grapple with a lot of great issues facing our Nation from reducing the deficit to expanding trade, to investing in new opportunities for a new century. The Vice President talked about the record that our people together have amassed in the last 4 years, and it is an impressive one and one we can all be proud of.

I understand you had a panel earlier this morning speculating on what has now become the conversation that we all have, which is, can it be possible that we have repealed the business cycle? Or if it hasn't been repealed, has at least it been shaved a little? And I think there is some argument for that if you look at the better inventory control, the changing nature of the economy, the more service jobs, the nature of global competition and technology, and the greater sophistication at the Fed. I mean, there are a lot of reasons for it, but I think there are some indications that we have had some real ability to manage this. But I think the most important thing to remember is that the underlying fundamentals has been good because of the productivity of the American people and our willingness to compete. And I think that if we want this to continue, which is the real question, we have to continue to do the things that will make it likely that success will prevail for another 4 years and into the next century.

It is relatively rare for a country to have both peace and prosperity and the opportunity to shape its own destiny at a time when there are so many fundamental changes in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. You go back to the history of the country; that is a rel-