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ing progress in trying to beat back the new security threats of our time.

In short, this really is an age of great possibility, and it requires us to work together. But in the kind of country we have where the public sector is limited and the private sector is large, which I like, you have to play a role in public decisions, and it's good citizenship. And that's what you're doing. And again, let me say I'm proud of you. I appreciate what you've done, and I hope that you will continue to make your voices heard on the things that we are doing.

We have a lot of other decisions I haven't even gone into tonight. Secretary Slater's here; we're going to redo the transportation bill this year. Secretary Peña has got a lot of our most important research going on in the Department of Energy. We've got a lot going on. We want you to be a part of it. But we want you to be proud of the fact that what you have done has made America a better place. In 4 more years, it'll be a much better place, indeed.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 p.m. at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Carol Pensky, treasurer, Alan Solomont, national finance chair, Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Secretary of Energy Federico Peña's wife, Ellen Hart Peña; and Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater's wife, Cassandra Wilkins Slater.

Remarks Honoring the 1996 NBA Champion Chicago Bulls

April 3, 1997

The President. Good morning. Please be seated. Just think of me as another injured basketball player. [*Laughter*]

Congressman Rush; Congressman Jackson; Mr. Cedrick Dempsey, the Executive Director of the NCAA; Richard Lapchick, who is with the Center for Sport in Society; to the young athletes who are here with us today who have been recognized for their academic achievements and their personal heroism as well as their achievements in athletics. We're all delighted to be here with our Secretary of Commerce, Bill Daley, and half the city of Chicago has come. [*Laughter*] Will everybody from Chicago please raise your hand, be recognized, stand up. [*Applause*] That's good.

As all of you know, the First Lady is from Chicago, and it's sort of become my adopted big city. And around here, we like it when the Bulls are doing well, which means that no matter what's in the newspaper in Washington every day, I can nearly always find some reason to be happy. [*Laughter*] And believe me, some days we need it more than others.

On behalf of all of us here and people around the Nation, I want to congratulate Jerry Reinsdorf, Phil Jackson, and the entire team on winning the 1996 championship and on winning four of the last six championships.

The '96 championship was the first one captured at the United Center, and I had that in mind when we picked it for the site of the Democratic National Convention last summer. We wanted the home court advantage. I think we got it.

Last year, the Bulls had a record of 72 and 10. And I checked this morning; I think it's 63 and 9 now. I'd say that's pretty good. The individual Bulls stars are well-known to America, all of them, but I'd like to point out that this is a team that plays great defense as well as great offense and a team with a great sense of teamwork, a team that plays together and works together and tries to win together. It seems to me that that's something that we'd all do well to remember. That's one of the things I like about the city of Chicago. Whenever I go there, I think that it's a city that tends to work because it works together with coherent teams of people and neighborhoods and all walks of life.

So let me say again, the Chicago Bulls have given America a lot of thrills. They've given Chicago a lot of pride. They've produced perhaps the greatest basketball dynasty ever and perhaps the greatest basketball individual feats ever. But more than anything else, they've given us the sense that when people do things together, a lot more is possible.

Now, I'd like to introduce now Jerry Reinsdorf so we can go on with the rest of the program. And meanwhile, I want you to know that in 6 months I'll be as good as new and available for the next draft. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

[*At this point, team owner Jerry Reinsdorf made brief remarks and presented the President with a championship watch and Bulls jacket.*]

The President. Think I'll be safe in this in Washington? [*Laughter*] Thank you.

[*Mr. Reinsdorf then introduced coach Phil Jackson and cocaptains Scottie Pippen and Michael Jordan.*]

The President. Look at those shoes.

[*Mr. Jackson made brief remarks and presented a Bulls jersey to the President.*]

The President. Do I have your permission? [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

Mr. Jackson. Thank you.

The President. You guys aren't going to speak? You got to say something. Come here, Scottie, say something. [*Laughter*] Everybody from Arkansas talks. You have to. [*Laughter*]

[*Mr. Pippen made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you.

[*Mr. Jordan made brief remarks.*]

The President. I want to thank again all the people from Chicago for coming. I want to say how proud—I can't help but say that all the people that I know, and I know half the town from the little community in southeast Arkansas where Scottie Pippen grew up, are still wildly proud of him. So it's okay for somebody outside Chicago to like that.

And I want to say to Michael Jordan, I like your two-tone shoes. [*Laughter*] When I was growing up, all well-bred young Southern boys learned to wear two-tone shoes in the springtime—[*laughter*]—and I'm glad you kept up the tradition.

And finally, I'd like to thank the Bulls for being so good to Hillary when she visited them at the United Center recently. And that night, she got Dennis Rodman's jersey. It is now freshly washed and hanging in the White House in a place of honor.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m. at the South Portico at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal and an Exchange With Reporters

April 3, 1997

The President. Let me say it's a great honor for the United States to have Prime Minister Guterres here from Portugal. We are immensely grateful to Portugal for many things and our partnerships.

But I would especially mention their peacekeeping role as a nation in Bosnia and Africa, the work we've done together in the United Nations, the work we are going to discuss today regarding NATO. And we appreciate the very progressive and strong leadership the Prime Minister has given to his nation. So I'm looking forward to this, and it's been too long coming but I'm very glad to have you here.

Would you like to say anything?

Prime Minister Guterres. Well, first of all, let me say how happy and proud I am to accept the invitation of President Clinton. Portugal, as you know, is very much in favor of a united Europe, but we want a Europe that preserves its Atlantic character. And for us, the relationship between Europe and the United States is an extremely important part of our own way of life. And this is relevant in economics, in culture, in people-to-people contacts, and also in defense and security.

We want NATO to go on as the basic framework for European security, and we consider that the United States has an irreplaceable role in the guarantee of European security. And we are very happy with the partnership that we have been able to establish in the past, and we are looking forward to improve as much as possible our bilateral relations that have been excellent, as a matter of fact, in the past.

President Clinton's ideas have been very inspiring to our own programs, and we hope to go on doing our best to take profit of your initiatives, your ideas, your policies.

Russia and NATO Expansion

Q. And you also are in favor of expansion of NATO, and what kind of an agreement, charter are you going to have with Russia?