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Director of Central Intelligence Nomination

Q. Mr. President, given the frustrations of what Tony Lake went through for his nomination, are you confident that George Tenet will sail through on his nomination—confirmation process?

The President. I believe he will be confirmed. I sure do.

Flood Aid

Q. Mr. President, while you are gone, the House and Senate are going to take up the legislation regarding the flood aid. Are you still threatening to veto that? Do you still feel a need to, especially with the budget deal?

The President. I have no reason to change the position I adopted.

Q. But people are waiting for that aid.

The President. That's right, and that's why Congress ought to pass it unencumbered.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on the Resignation of Cynthia A. Metzler From the Department of Labor

May 5, 1997

From the time she assumed the role of Acting Secretary of Labor in January, Cynthia A. Metzler provided leadership and vision for the 16,000 employees of the Department of Labor. As a result of her unique blend of skills, the Department did not miss a beat in fulfilling its mission for America's working families. As Ms. Metzler departs for the private sector, the Department of Labor is positioned for a smooth and effective transition to Alexis Herman's leadership.

During her tenure as Acting Secretary, Ms. Metzler continued and accelerated the Department's initiatives on behalf of working families. Low wage workers now have better protections as a result of Ms. Metzler's efforts to expand the Department's sweatshop initiative, as well as new initiatives launched in other low wage industries. Ms. Metzler has also assured that workers' pensions are better protected.

In addition, Acting Secretary Metzler kicked off this year's Washington, DC, summer jobs program earlier than any other year. She doubled the number of summer youth the Department will hire, and she led the Department's effort to create more job opportunities for DC residents in furtherance of this administration's DC initiative. She also provided outstanding leadership in our effort to train and employ welfare recipients.

As Cynthia Metzler starts a new chapter in her exceptional career, Hillary and I wish her the very best and thank her for her outstanding service to this administration and to the American people.

Proclamation 6998—Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 1997

May 5, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Today, almost 10 million Americans can trace their roots to Asia and the Pacific Islands. This month provides a wonderful opportunity to recognize and celebrate all the ways in which Asian and Pacific Americans have enhanced our Nation and strengthened our communities.

North America was visited regularly by Asian and Pacific traders as early as the 16th century, and by the late 1800s, this continent was receiving large numbers of immigrants from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and the Indian subcontinent. These settlers worked hard, turning wilderness into bountiful farmland in Hawaii, opening new industries in the West, and helping to build the first transcontinental railroad.

Along with a vast array of skills, Americans of Asian and Pacific Island ancestry brought their remarkable traditions of hard work and respect for family and education to their new country. Their belief in the American Dream of equality and opportunity enabled them to face the challenges of adversity and discrimination and achieve a record of distinguished service in all fields, from academia to government, from business to the military, and medicine to the arts. These people and their children managed to preserve the rich legacy