

children. That's why we banned them 3 years ago and why we're taking action today.

Effective immediately, the Secretary of the Treasury is suspending the importation of all modified assault weapons for 120 days while we study whether they can be permanently blocked from our borders and banned from our streets. We must continue to do everything we can to crack down on illegal firearms and the organized criminals, terrorists, and drug lords who seek them. Yesterday President Zedillo of Mexico and I signed an unprecedented international convention to help fight illegal gun trafficking in our own hemisphere and to strengthen law enforcement's ability to combat this deadly trade.

Working together over the last 5 years, we've proven that we can drive down the crime rate. Now we have to press on, confident that we can take our streets back from crime, take assault weapons and illegal firearms out of the hands of criminals, enact a tough but smart juvenile justice bill, and eventually give our families and our children the real security they deserve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on November 14 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 15.

Remarks on Arrival in Sacramento, California

November 15, 1997

Good morning. Two years ago, I approved a BRAC recommendation to close McClellan Air Force Base, but only after I was convinced it was feasible for McClellan to privatize and that the prospects of success were strong. Since then, I've had to fight at every turn with the Members of Congress who have resisted our efforts to give the Department of Defense the tools it needs to privatize more of its operations more easily.

This year, the so-called Depot Caucus tried to block the ongoing competition for the Kelly and McClellan workload altogether. I said if they did that, I would veto the entire defense bill. Eventually, Congress reached a compromise to allow the competitions for this important work to go forward.

The Secretary of Defense has assured me that although the language in the bill is not ideal, I quote, "the Department of Defense has flexibility to proceed with the remaining public-private competitions at Kelly and McClellan bases in a way that is fair to both sides." For this reason, I have decided to sign the defense bill.

We will continue to do everything we can to help McClellan make the transition. The Vice President and I have met with business and community officials. We have listened to your concerns. Today I am pleased to announce seven steps we are taking.

First, by December 31st, the Air Force will transfer McClellan to Sacramento County at a significantly discounted price to encourage rapid economic development and job creation.

Second, the Coast Guard will remain at McClellan through at least 2004, contributing \$2 million a year to support private airfield operations.

Third, the Defense Department will retain liability for the eventual shutdown of McClellan's nuclear reactor, making it possible to support scientific and commercial research here for the next 30 years.

Fourth, the Department recently announced that it will provide an additional \$7.2 million to retrain 1,700 civilian workers who face layoffs over the next 2 years.

Fifth, our EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, will visit McClellan early next month to discuss with community leaders a schedule for environmental cleanup to promote redevelopment and job creation.

Sixth, the Defense Department will provide an additional \$11.3 million to complete funding of the casting emission reduction program at McClellan to develop environmentally friendly technology for manufacturing.

Finally, we will give high priority to capital improvements at McClellan to promote economic development and job creation.

Today we're also announcing a series of actions we're taking to help San Antonio redevelop the Kelly Air Force Base.

This is the third base conversion challenge this community has taken on. You've done a tremendous job. Your efforts are a model for the Nation. And I will continue to work

with McClellan to make this third story a very successful one for this remarkable community.

Thank you very much. And I'm sorry for the weather inconvenience.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. at McClellan Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to BRAC, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Remarks at the Yolo Basin Wetlands in Davis, California

November 15, 1997

Thank you very much. You can't imagine how much I wanted to get out of cold, rainy, windy Washington, DC, to come to California. [*Laughter*] But after all, this is a wetlands event.

I want to, first of all, thank Sarah for her introduction. Didn't she speak well? [*Applause*] She was terrific, I thought. And listening to her recount the experiences of the last several years of her life I think was as good a statement as any as could be made about so many of you who are here and the work you have done to make this day come to pass. I want to thank all of you very much.

I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to your secretary of natural resources, Doug Wheeler, and two people who came from Washington with me, our Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Rich Rominger, who is from Yolo County, and he's already been mentioned, but our Deputy Secretary of the Interior, John Garamendi, who grew up not far from here, and they've both done a terrific job for you back there.

I thank John Walker for his statement. We were dedicating a wetland in Arkansas once, a few years ago, on a much warmer day. And I was a Governor, and he was a president, but after all, I'm term-limited and he can go on forever. [*Laughter*]

I'm very glad to be here with all of you. I want to thank Robin and Greg for showing me around the area and giving me a chance to look at some of the birds and just see what you've done here. I asked him how many ducks and geese there were going to be here and whether you had any eagles or ospreys

or egrets, and I got a pretty good rundown on it.

And I have to say that I have been, as you have heard already, a big supporter of these kinds of endeavors. I thank the people here from the California Waterfowl Association, and I do want to say a special word of thanks to two groups with which I have been associated, first, the folks from the Corps of Engineers. They have not only changed their image, they've changed their reality. They're working hard not only to give us water projects but to give us the kind of environmental conservation that we need for the long run. And I thank you very much, Colonel, and I thank all the people from the Corps for what you've done.

And let me just echo what was said earlier. I'm very proud of my very long association with Ducks Unlimited. They've done a wonderful job in helping us to bring waterfowl back to our State and they do a great job in this country.

Finally, I'd like to say a word of appreciation to Vic Fazio, who is clearly one of the most outstanding Members of the United States Congress in either party. If we had a hundred more people like him, America would have no problem. He is a very good man. I want to thank Vic not only for his work here but for the general efforts he's made, along with Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein and John Garamendi, for our efforts in the Bay Delta area and the work that we are doing to try to guarantee the long-term needs of California for water supply, as well as water quality, habitat preservation, and environmental progress. And that's very, very good.

Let me say, I wanted to be here today because to me this project is the embodiment of not only what we should be doing as Americans on the edge of a new century but how we should be doing it. We worked very hard to create a country where things were working for ordinary Americans, where we were coming together across the lines that divide us, and where we can be strong enough to continue to lead the world in the right direction. And that bridge that I talked about all the time I'm trying to build to the 21st century is going pretty well. We've got the strongest economy in a generation; crime and