

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Editor's Note: The President was in Houston, TX, on January 9, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, January 9, 1998

The President's Radio Address

January 3, 1998

Good morning. The beginning of a new year is a time of promise, and at the start of 1998, we have much to be thankful for. We've made much progress on our mission of preparing America for the 21st century and making our country work for all our people. Both unemployment and crime are at their lowest level in 24 years. The welfare rolls have dropped by a record 3.8 million. The deficit has been cut by 90 percent.

In 1997 in Washington, we passed the historic balanced budget; embraced the idea of national academic standards for our schools for the first time; extended health insurance coverage to 5 million children; moved ahead with our environmental agenda to save the Everglades, the ancient forests in California and Yellowstone Park. And we made a safer, more prosperous world by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention, expanding NATO, keeping the peace in Bosnia, and opening new opportunities for American high-tech products to be sold around the world. We also continued the work of building one America with our race initiative and the Presidents' Summit on Service.

As 1998 dawns, American families can look forward to tax cuts for their children and to truly historic tax relief that will make community college free for almost all Americans and help to pay for the cost of all education after high school, the largest such effort since the GI bill 50 years ago. I have done my best to give the American people a Government for the 21st century, not one that tries to do everything, nor one that does nothing, but a Government that gives Americans the tools and conditions to make the most of their own lives in a new world of information and technological revolution and globalization.

But I've also done my best to call forth a new spirit of citizen service here at home, as necessary to meet our new challenges and

to fulfill our obligations both at home and around the world.

From the beginning, I have worked to give more Americans the chance to serve, to join with their fellow citizens to take responsibilities for their communities and our country. We created AmeriCorps, which has already given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve our Nation and earn money for a college education. We strengthened that commitment with the Presidents' Summit on Service in Philadelphia, which already has moved thousands and thousands of Americans to give our children a helping hand. And this year, the day we honor Dr. Martin Luther King will be a day of service in communities all across America.

Today I want to talk about how we can strengthen one of the finest examples of citizen service, the Peace Corps. When President Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in 1961, he saw it as a bold experiment in public service that would unite our Nation's highest ideals with a pragmatic approach to bettering the lives of ordinary people around the world. He also saw it as an investment in our own future in an increasingly interdependent world. In the years since, it's paid off many times over.

Three decades ago, Peace Corps volunteers worked as teachers in villages in Africa and Asia, Latin America and the Pacific region. They helped communities inoculate their children against disease, clean their water, increase their harvests. In so doing, they helped communities and countries become stronger and more stable, making them better partners for us as we work together to meet common goals.

Today, the Peace Corps continues these efforts, but it's also adapting to the new needs of our era. Since the fall of communism, Peace Corps volunteers have gone to work in new democracies, from Eastern Europe to Central Asia, helping to nurture and strengthen free markets by teaching new

entrepreneurs how to get their businesses running. Volunteers now work to protect the environment and help prevent the spread of AIDS.

Under Director Mark Gearan, the Peace Corps is also preparing to meet the challenges of the next century. To ensure that it does, I will ask Congress next month to continue its longtime bipartisan support for the Peace Corps and join me in putting 10,000 Peace Corps volunteers overseas by the year 2000. That's an increase of more than 50 percent from today's levels. I'll request that funding for the Peace Corps be increased by \$48 million, the largest increase since the 1960's.

In a world where we're more and more affected by what happens beyond our borders, we have to work harder to overcome the divisions that undermine the integrity and quality of life around the world, as well as here at home. Strengthening the Peace Corps, giving more Americans opportunities to serve in humanity's cause is both an opportunity and an obligation we should seize in 1998.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:37 p.m. on January 2 at a private residence in Charlotte Amalie in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 3.

Notice—Continuation of Libyan Emergency

January 2, 1998

On January 7, 1986, by Executive Order 12543, President Reagan declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Libya. On January 8, 1986, by Executive Order 12544, the President took additional measures to block Libyan assets in the United States. The President has transmitted a notice continuing this emergency to the Congress and the *Federal Register* every year since 1986.

The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 7, 1986, has not been

resolved. The Government of Libya has continued its actions and policies in support of terrorism, despite the calls by the United Nations Security Council, in Resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992), and 883 (1993), that it demonstrate by concrete actions its renunciation of terrorism. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Libya. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 2, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:21 a.m., January 5, 1998]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 6.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Notice on Libya

January 2, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the Libyan emergency is to continue in effect beyond January 7, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 7, 1986, has not been resolved. The Government of Libya has continued its actions and policies in support of terrorism, despite the calls by the United Nations Security Council, in Resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992), and 883 (1993), that it demonstrate by concrete actions its renunciation of terrorism. Such Libyan actions and

policies pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and vital foreign policy interests of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure to the Government of Libya to reduce its ability to support international terrorism.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

January 2, 1998

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

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. The previous submission covered progress through July 31, 1997. The current submission covers the period August 1, 1997, to September 30, 1997.

Highlights of the reporting period include the U.N. sponsored talks between President Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash held in Glion-sur-Montreux, Switzerland; U.S. Special Cyprus Coordinator Miller's trip to the region; and U.S. success in convening direct talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders on security issues.

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. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Economic Team and an Exchange With Reporters

January 5, 1998

Federal Budget

The President. Good afternoon and happy new year to all of you. I'm glad to be back at work, and I'm looking forward to 1998.

We can begin the year with some good news. I can now say that we believe that the deficit this year will be less than \$22 billion. That means that it will decline for the 6th year in a row, a truly historic event. Twenty-two billion dollars is a far cry from the \$357 billion the deficit was projected to be this year when I took office or the \$90 billion it was projected to be when the balanced budget agreement was enacted. So we have come a very long way.

I can also say that the budget that I present to the Congress in February will be a balanced budget for 1999. Again, this will be the first time in 30 years we've had a balanced budget, and that's good news for the American people and for the American economy. It continues the successful economic policy that we adopted beginning with the budget in 1993, which was the first major step.

We have followed a policy of investing in our people, expanding the sales of American goods and services overseas, and practicing fiscal discipline. We reversed 12 years of trickle-down economics in which the deficit of this country exploded year after year and our national debt was quadrupled. So we have taken a different course, and thanks to the hard work and productivity of the American people, it is working. And I'm very, very pleased about it.

Now, what we have to do now is to build on it, first with the balanced budget to keep interest rates down and keep the economy growing, secondly with other policies which I will be outlining in the State of the Union. I welcome other people to the debate.

But let me say, I want to caution everyone that I will do everything that I can to prevent anyone from using a projected future surplus as a pretext for returning to the failed policies of the past. We do not want to go back to

the terrible conditions that paralyzed our Government and paralyzed our own people's potential in 1992 when I took office. We have to go forward.

This is great news today. I'm very pleased by it. The American people should be pleased by it. But we should be determined to stay on the course and do what works. And that's my determination.

Tax Cut

Q. Are you ruling out a tax cut, Mr. President, with this surplus?

The President. I do not—let me just say, I want to say just exactly what I said. We don't have a surplus. We can project a surplus, but we don't have one. And we've waited 30 years for a balanced budget. Between 1981 and 1992, we projected all kinds of things and went out and spent the money on tax cuts and spending—both. We spent the money, and we quadrupled the debt, drove up interest rates, put our country in a terrible hole. We have dug ourselves out of that hole with a lot of effort and a lot of pain. In 1993, it was a very difficult dig, and a lot of people paid a very high price for it. Then we had the overwhelming bipartisan support for the balanced budget.

All I'm saying is that any policy we adopt must not—it cannot—run any risk of returning to the failed policies of the past. We got away from trickle-down economics; we're into investing and growing our future. We're doing it the old-fashioned way. I have been exhorting the American people for 5 years now to be responsible, to remember that we cannot have opportunity without responsibility. Well, that same rule applies to the Government. We have to set a good example. We have to create opportunity, and we can't do it unless we're also responsible.

So whatever policies we adopt have to be within the framework of the budget to the best of our knowledge. We cannot take risks with the future that we have worked so hard to build.

Cigarette Tax Increase

Q. Mr. President, are you going to call for cigarette tax increases to help pay for new initiatives?

The President. I will—first of all, on the tobacco issue generally—I'll have more to say about this later, but keep in mind what my first priority is. My first priority is to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, from the illegal dangers of tobacco. And I will propose a plan that I believe is best designed to do that, that will build on the settlement agreement that was reached earlier. And I will work with Members of Congress in both parties in good faith to try to pass comprehensive tobacco legislation that I think will achieve that goal. And I'll say more about the details later.

Presidential Privacy

Q. Mr. President, there's been some controversy today about whether the press invaded your privacy in St. Thomas. Do you feel your privacy was invaded, and where should the press draw the line, sir?

The President. The answer to the first question is yes. The answer to the second question is that's why we have a first amendment; you get to decide the answer to the second question. But—

Q. You didn't like your dancing picture? Everybody liked it.

The President. Actually, I liked it quite a lot. But I didn't think I was being photographed.

Q. Was it off limits, sir?

The President. That's a question that you have to ask and answer.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Medicare

January 6, 1998

Thank you, Ruth. I think she has made clearer than I could ever hope to that, for many Americans, access to quality health care can mean the difference between a secure, healthy, and productive life, and the enormous burden of illness and worry and enormous financial strain.

Today the proposals I am making are designed to address the problems of some of our most vulnerable older Americans. I propose three new health care options that

would give them the security they deserve. The centerpiece of our plan will let many more of these Americans buy into one of our Nation's greatest achievements, Medicare.

When Medicare was first enacted, President Johnson said, and I quote, "It proved that the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times." Once again we are faced with changing times: a new economy that changes the way we work and the way we live; new technologies and medical breakthroughs holding out hope for longer, healthier lives; a new century brimming with promise but still full of challenge and much more rapid change. The values remain the same, but the new times demand that we find new ways to create opportunity for all Americans.

For the past 5 years, we have had an economic strategy designed to expand opportunity and strengthen our families in changing times, insisting on fiscal responsibility, expanding trade, investing in all our people. Yesterday I announced that the budget I will submit to Congress in 3 weeks will be a balanced budget, the first one in 30 years. Within this balanced budget, we propose to expand health care access for millions of Americans.

Last summer, with the balanced budget agreement I signed, we took action to extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund until at least 2010, and we appointed a Medicare commission to make sure that Medicare can meet the needs of the baby boom generation. We took action to root out fraud and abuse in the Medicare system, assigning more prosecutors, shutting down fly-by-night home health care providers, taking steps to put an end to overpayments for prescription drugs. Since I took office, we have saved over \$20 billion in health care claims, money that would have been wasted, gone instead to provide quality health care for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

We want to continue to do everything possible to ensure that the same system that served our parents can also serve our children. That means bringing Medicare into the 21st century in a fiscally responsible way that recognizes the changing needs of our people in a new era.

We know that for different reasons more and more Americans are retiring or leaving the work force before they become eligible for Medicare at age 65. We know that far too many of these men and women do not have health insurance. Some of them lose their health coverage when their spouse becomes eligible for Medicare and loses his or her health insurance at work. That's the story we heard today.

Some lose their coverage when they lose their jobs because of downsizing or layoffs. Still others lose their insurance when their employers unexpectedly drop their retirement health care plans. These people have spent their lifetimes working hard, supporting their families, contributing to society. And just at the time they most need health care, they are least attractive to health insurers who demand higher premiums or deny coverage outright.

The legislation that I propose today recognizes these new conditions and takes action to expand access to health care to millions of Americans. First, for the first time, people between the ages of 62 and 65 will be able to buy into the Medicare program at a fixed premium rate that, for many, is far more affordable than private insurance but firmly based in the actual cost of insuring people in this age group and, as you just heard from what Ruth said, far, far more affordable than the out-of-pocket costs that people have to pay if they need it.

This is an entirely new way of adapting a program that has worked in the past to the needs of the future. It is a fiscally responsible plan that finances itself by charging an affordable premium up front and a small payment later to ensure that this places no new burdens on Medicare. It will provide access to health care for hundreds of thousands of Americans, and it is clearly the right thing to do.

Second, statistics show that older Americans who lose their jobs are much less likely to find new employment. And far too often, when they lose their jobs, they also lose their health insurance. Under this proposal, people between the ages of 55 and 65 who have been laid off or displaced will also be able to buy into Medicare early, protecting them

against the debilitating costs of unforeseen illness.

Third, we know that in recent years too many employers have walked away from their commitments to provide retirement health benefits to longtime, loyal employees. Under our proposal, these employees, also between the ages of 55 and 65, will be allowed to buy into their former employers' health plans until they qualify for Medicare. And thank you, Congressman, for your long fight on this issue.

Taken together, these steps will help to take our health care system into the 21st century, providing more American families with the health care they need to thrive, maintaining the fiscal responsibility that is giving more Americans the chance to live out their dreams, shaping our most enduring values to meet the needs of changing times. It is the right thing to do. And thank you, Ruth, for demonstrating that to us today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ruth Kain, a heart patient who was denied full health insurance coverage after her husband's retirement at age 65; and Representative Gerald D. Kleczka of Wisconsin.

Statement on the Death of Representative Sonny Bono

January 6, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn this morning of the death of Representative Sonny Bono. His joyful entertainment of millions earned him celebrity, but in Washington he earned respect by being a witty and wise participant in policymaking processes that often seem ponderous to the American people. He made us laugh even as he brought his own astute perspective to the work of Congress. Hillary and I express our condolences to Representative Bono's wife and children and to his constituents and all Americans who appreciated his humor, his voice, and his devoted service to his community and Nation.

Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Child Care

January 7, 1998

Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. You know, I was listening to the Vice President and Tipper and Hillary speak, and I was looking at all these people out here, and I was thinking about all the great joys of being President. And one of the greatest joys of being President is that you get to stand up and make an announcement on which other people have done all the work. [*Laughter*]

I want to begin by thanking the Cabinet, especially Secretary Shalala who has done so much work on this. But I thank them all. I thank the Congress, not only the Women's Caucus of Republican and Democratic women in the Congress but the few errant men who are here—[*laughter*—and those who are not here who care so passionately about this issue in the Senate and in the House.

I thank the children and families who are here and the child advocates who are here. I was looking around this room—there are some people in this room that I have been listening to on this issue for way over 20 years now. They have waited a long time for this day. [*Laughter*]

I thank the Gores. You know, they started their family conference every year in Nashville even before we began our partnership together, and it was a brilliant and unique idea, the idea of every year focusing on the American family and some aspect of challenge or opportunity and bringing people in from all over America to talk about it. There's really no precedent for it as far as I know in our public policy, and it's a remarkable contribution that they have made.

And of course, I thank my wife, who has been talking to me about all these things for more than 25 years now and is sitting there thinking that I finally got around to doing what she has been telling me to do. [*Laughter*] I was thinking it would be nice to have something new to talk about for the next 25 years. [*Laughter*] That's one of the major reasons for this event today. And even if the rest of you can't appreciate it as much as I

can, you'll just have to live with the truth. [Laughter]

But mostly I thank these children, for they remind us of our fundamental obligations as Americans and as human beings.

You know, throughout our history, our Founders told us that they organized our country in order to form a more perfect Union. And one of the most important ways we have done that now, for more than 220 years, is to always apply our most fundamental values to the circumstances and challenges of each new age. And the reason we have made it is that we have never forgotten that there is no more fundamental value than the American family, than its strength and its integrity. There is no more important job than raising a child. There is no more important responsibility than to create the conditions and give people the tools to succeed at raising their children. But I think we would all have to admit that as a nation we have not done what we should have done to enable all of our families to meet the challenge of the era in which we live.

For some time now, we have been, at least with one foot, in the 21st century. We know that the 21st century will be dominated by globalization and by information and technological revolutions. And we know that it has brought us many great benefits.

We as Americans should be very grateful today for the prosperity we enjoy. Even though all of you and your fellow Americans have worked hard to earn it and we've made some tough decisions in Washington to help bring it about, we should still be grateful for it. But we know that this new economy, with all the unprecedented prosperity it has brought us, has also imposed some significant new challenges.

We know, for example, that the average working family is spending more hours a week in the workplace than 25 or 30 years ago, with all the benefits of technology. And we know that more and more parents of young children are in the workplace, either because they're single parent households or because both parents have to work to make ends meet or because both parents choose to work—and they ought to have that choice.

But there is no more important responsibility on us to apply the values of America,

the timeless values of America, to modern conditions—none is more important than making sure every American can balance the dual responsibilities of succeeding as parents and succeeding at work. There is no more significant challenge. Indeed, one of the biggest debates we had when we were working through the welfare reform issue was how we could require people to be responsible and go to work without creating conditions which would require them to abandon their first responsibility to be good parents. That is the universal obligation of every parent, and it should be the dominant concern of our Government.

That's what this is about. I don't believe I have ever talked to a parent who was also in the workplace who has not been able to cite at least one example, and oftentimes many, many more, of a conflict between—that he or she felt between the obligations of parenthood and the obligations to the job. And that includes, of course, people who work in the White House—when the President makes them work too late at night. [Laughter] But you just—you know that. Everyone—I saw a lot of you nodding your heads. You just know that. It's part of the fabric of American life.

We know that the Government cannot raise or love a child, but that is not what we're supposed to do. What the Government is supposed to do is to help create the conditions and give people the tools that will enable them to raise and love their children while successfully participating in the American workplace.

Today I am proud to propose the single largest national commitment to child care in the history of the United States. It is a comprehensive and fiscally responsible plan to make child care more affordable and accessible, to raise the quality of child care, to assure the safety of care for millions of American children.

This is an issue that touches nearly every family, and I believe it must rise above politics and partisan interests. I welcome the bipartisan effort to improve child care that is already going on in the Congress. I thank the Members who are here and many who could not come today for their leadership and for demonstrating that this is an American

issue that both Democrats and Republicans are embracing.

This proposal will be an important part of the budget I send to Congress next month. It will be the first balanced budget in 30 years. It will build on the achievements of the year just passed, one that was very good for working families. As has already been mentioned, last summer's historic balanced budget agreement provided working families with a \$500 per child tax credit; it made the first 2 years of college—community college—virtually free for almost every American family and made college more affordable for American families; expanded health coverage to 5 million uninsured people; advanced the cause of placing more children into solid, adoptive homes; and continued our efforts to collect more child support.

Over the past 5 years we have worked hard to abandon the false choices of the past, including the false choice of having to choose between responsibilities at work and responsibilities at home. Our new economic strategy is designed in no small measure to get over that divide. From the Family and Medical Leave Act, to the earned-income tax credit, to the minimum wage increase, we have tried to demonstrate that it is not only possible but imperative to the survival of the American dream to help people meet their responsibilities at home and at work.

Strengthening child care has always been a part of this strategy. Since we came here, we've helped a million children and their families to afford the child care that they need, but we have to do a lot more. Now, this new proposal has three fundamental goals:

First, to make child care more affordable and available to all Americans. With increased block grants to States, we will double the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than 2 million. One of the reasons welfare reform has worked as well as it has is because of the increased investment in child care. Now, we have to help the lower income families who have never been on welfare in the first place but still struggle to pay for child care. We also will help more than 3 million working families to meet their child care expenses by dramatically expanding the child care tax credit.

These tax credits will mean that a family of four making \$35,000 and saddled with high child care bills will no longer pay one penny in Federal income taxes.

I'm also supporting new tax credits to encourage more businesses to provide child care for their employees. When I met the Members of Congress before coming in here, that's the first thing Congresswoman DeLauro said. She had just come from the opening of a corporate child care center. We need more businesses to do more, and we need to help the smaller businesses who can use this tax credit and cannot afford to do it on their own without a little help from the public.

Second, we must make sure that every child has a safe and enriching place to go after school. As the Vice President said, there's simply too many children who, through no fault of their parents, are left to fend for themselves in the hours between 2 and 6 o'clock—too many children roaming the streets, idling in front of the television, or getting into trouble.

I cannot emphasize the importance of this too much. The crime rate in this country has dropped dramatically in the last 5 years. All Americans should be proud of that. The juvenile crime rate has not dropped so much. And where it has dropped, almost without exception, it has dropped because people have found something positive for children to do in the hours between the time school ends and the time their parents come home at night. We do not need to keep building jail after jail after jail to house children who wouldn't be there in the first place if we took care of them while they're out free and able to build constructive, law-abiding, positive lives.

I am proposing the expansion of before- and after-school programs to help some 500,000 children say no to drugs and alcohol and crime and yes to reading, soccer, computers, and a brighter future for themselves. I thank the Vice President especially for his hard work on this issue.

Third, we have to improve the safety and quality of child care and make sure that child care advances early childhood development. I am proposing an early learning fund to help to reduce child-to-staff ratios in child care

centers, train child care workers, and educate parents. We have to also strengthen the enforcement of State codes and licensing requirements, weed out bad providers, and through tougher criminal background checks, make sure that the wrong people aren't doing the right mission that we all need done properly. Finally, we ought to offer scholarships to talented caregivers.

Now, let me take a minute to thank our State leaders, from North Carolina to Washington State, from Rhode Island to Minnesota, for their efforts at improving child care and promoting early learning across America. I know Governor Almond of Rhode Island is here, and I want to especially thank him for Rhode Island's child opportunity zone program. It is a national model.

We are living in what may well be the most exciting era of human history. But the globalization, the information and technology revolution, they continue to alter the way we live and work, the way we do business, and the way we relate to each other and the rest of the world. They make some jobs easier; they render others obsolete. But nothing must be permitted to undermine the first responsibilities of parenthood.

No raise or promotion will ever top the joy of hugging a child after work. Nothing can be more bittersweet than sending a child you once cradled off in your arms off to college for the first time. *[Laughter]* Nothing weighs more heavily on a parent's mind than the well-being of a child in the care of others. No issue is more important to any family.

You know, a lot of us have had our own experiences with child care. I've often wondered how my mother, when she was widowed, would have been able to go back to school if I hadn't been able to move in with my grandparents. I was lucky, and it turned out reasonably well for me. *[Laughter]* But how many children are out there with exactly the same potential, who never got the same break by pure accident of family circumstance? You don't know the answer to that, and neither do I. But we know what the answer should be. The answer should be, not a single one.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Lincoln Almond of Rhode Island.

Statement on the Death of Manuel Zurita

January 7, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Customs Senior Special Agent Manuel Zurita. We are eternally grateful for the courage and bravery of the men and women who protect us each and every day. This tragic accident painfully reminds us of the risks our law enforcement officials face keeping our country safe.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and their four children as they deal with this devastating loss.

NOTE: Agent Zurita was fatally injured in a January 1 boat accident while aboard a U.S. Customs Service vessel providing security for the President's arrival in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in New York City

January 8, 1998

Thank you very much. The good news is this is the only speech I have. *[Laughter]* And I wrote it in the car on the way over from the airport. I want to thank Steve for what he said and for the extraordinary effort he's put in, in a very difficult and challenging year, as head of our National Democratic Party. I thank Craig and Jane for having us in their home. I have not been in this magnificent historic old building in, oh, about 10 or 11 years. And I'm a very schmaltzy person so I get all choked up when I come here. I keep imagining whether I'm standing someplace where John Lennon was, and all that. *[Laughter]* Thank you very much for letting us come here. Thank you, Judith Hope, for leading the New York Democratic Party.

And I think what I would like to do today is just talk in kind of a larger sense about where I think we are at this moment in history and why what you're doing here matters.

And I'd like to begin with two, maybe, apparently, unrelated things.

The first is, you know we're 2 years from a new century in a new millennium, something that only happens every thousand years. I expect all the predictions of doom and the end of time to be rising up, and maybe there will be a lot of wonderful, glowing predictions as well. But the time just begs for historic drama. And the good news is you have it, because of the globalization of the world economy and society, because of the explosion in information and science and technology. People are fundamentally changing the way they work, the way they live, the way they relate to each other and the rest of the world. And that is changing everything else in ways that are, more often than not, quite positive, but sometimes quite troubling.

We have a lot of people in the finance community here today. Everybody is trying to calculate what is going on in Asia: Is it going to keep going on; is it going to stop; is there something the United States can do to stop it; regardless, what impact will it have on us? There is a level of interdependence in the world today and a scope and speed of change in the world today that has hitherto been unknown to the American people, and that is changing things. And that will shape the new—in that sense, we already have a foot in the 21st century.

The second thing I'd like you to think about is that—we have a lot of very distinguished actors here today. Hillary and I went to the premiere in Washington the other night of "Amistad," the new movie about the slave ship. It culminates in the work of John Quincy Adams helping a young American lawyer to get these slaves freed so they could be free to go back home to Africa before the Civil War. And they won a case in the Supreme Court on a unique point of property law. But it's a very moving picture, I think.

Why do I mention that? Because at that moment in our history, John Quincy Adams, a man who was a one-term President, got the living daylight beat out of him for reelection by Andrew Jackson, an American hero, and then was humble enough and dedicated enough to go back and serve nine terms in

the House of Representatives, where he died in service in his early eighties—a unique American story. John Quincy Adams was the embodiment of the Nation's opposition to slavery, and to something called the gag rule which, believe it or not, was imposed by the Southerners on the Congress before the Civil War so that you weren't even supposed to be able to bring up petitions opposing slavery on the floor of Congress.

Now, at that moment, Adams was the symbol for our country of the idea that the National Government ought to take a stand against slavery, to strengthen the Union and to, in effect, apply the guarantees of the Constitution to the present moment—in other words, to acknowledge that we were wrong when we started as a country and we said that black people were only three-fifths human and they didn't really count as citizens.

What's that got to do with this time? In every period of profound change in the whole history of the country, the debate is always the same. The debate is between those who believe that the period of change requires us to come closer together as one nation and to extend the fundamental principles on which we were founded to the new moment. And there have been four or five moments in American history which were literally break points, where we were being tested.

First, we got started. We had to decide are we going to be one country or just a collection of States, kind of like an eating club, and every now and then we'll get together. And we decided to be one country. And then in the Civil War, when slavery and sectionalism threatened one nation and Abraham Lincoln literally gave his life first for the Union and second to get rid of slavery. Then in the industrial revolution, where first Theodore Roosevelt and then Woodrow Wilson's administration, and all the way through FDR, had to deal with the consequences of America moving from an agricultural to an industrial society. Most of them were good, but not all of them were.

How do you get the benefit of all this new wealth and say it's still not okay to work children 15 hours a day, 6 days a week in coal mines? How do you do that? How do you

deal with all these people teeming into the cities of America from all over the world, and how do you assimilate them into our country, and how do you make immigrants a part of the American fabric of life? If the whole system breaks down, as it did in the Great Depression, how do you get it back up?

And throughout there was the debate between—going from Lincoln to Roosevelt and Wilson to FDR—between those who say we have to strengthen the Union in order to preserve and enhance liberty, and those who said, “Ah, the Government, it will screw it up. They will mess up a one-car parade—*[laughter]*—and this country was founded on the principle that we’ve got to limit it, and just let the market take its course.” Then we had World War II and the cold war, which was a 50-year battle against totalitarianism, when there was much more of a consensus among the conservatives and the liberals for united policies to make the Nation strong because our very existence was at stake.

Now we literally are facing an era of globalization and information revolution which is upsetting the established patterns of life to an extent never before known. Most of it’s positive. Some of it’s not.

What are the problems we’re facing? Well, first of all, we’ve got more people in the work force than ever before, more women in the work force than ever before, and nearly every family with children has trouble balancing the demands of work and family, even wealthy people. I don’t know a single couple with young children that hasn’t felt a moment of guilt at some time in the conflict between the demands of work and the demands of childrearing. That’s fundamentally different and rampant.

Second, there is the question of—the perennial question—how do you get the benefits of these new changes but make them available to everybody, give everyone a chance to participate. America has the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years; New York City has an unemployment rate of 9 percent. How do you bring the benefits of the new market to the neighborhoods that it hasn’t reached?

We have children who know more about computers than their parents, but not every child has access to a computer. How do you

make sure that the benefits of technology are made more universal?

Third question that you saw debated at Kyoto in the climate change conference: How do you continue to grow the economy and bring all these vast new countries like China and India—the two biggest countries in the world—into the mainstream of economic life to stabilize the lives of the people there and still not only preserve but indeed restore the economy?

Last question—big question—how do you accept the fact that the global marketplace is dominant and the cold war is over and say we’re not going to disintegrate into chaos and anarchy? That is, how can you have a social contract where everybody has a chance, at least, and where people who deserve a hand-up get it, and where people learn to live with each other amidst all their diversity and localism?

You said your daughter said it was not necessary for Socks and Buddy to like each other, but they did have to get along—maybe that should be my policy in Bosnia. *[Laughter]* I mean—you laugh, but you think about it. This is a significant thing. How do we deal with the fact that the old structures that people used as magnets for identity in the world are breaking down, giving vast new freedoms, and still find ways for people to integrate and make sense of their lives? These are huge challenges.

I believe—and the reason I ran for President in 1991 and 1992—that we had to take a new direction. The progressive party, my party, I thought, had the right idea about trying to hold the country together, but they didn’t seem too willing to change to develop new approaches to deal with the new challenges. The Republicans had basically abandoned what might have been a basis for being a very successful modern party if they had essentially been like traditional northeast Republicans and modified their position. And, instead, they adopted the Reagan position, which was the Government is always the problem, is inherently bad, and is oppressing people, and what we really need to do is just to get it out of the way and everything will be fine. It seems to me that that is self-evidently untrue.

So what we tried to do was to take an approach that said that Government could not do everything, but it couldn't sit on the sidelines; and what we really should focus on is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and to build successful families and communities and to enable America to reach out to the rest of the world in a positive way. That's why we focused on an economic policy that works. That's why we supported local crime policies that work. That's why we've worked on—we've moved historic numbers of people from welfare to work.

And I think we've had a fair measure of success in meeting the new security challenges of the world beyond our borders. And after 5 years, as I said, we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We have cleaned up record numbers of toxic waste dumps, and we're tackling the big challenges of our time. So I think we're moving in the right direction.

Now, what are we about to do in Washington? Congress is about to come back to town, and I have to give the State of the Union Address. And I will very briefly tell you what I think is still out there to be done. First of all, we have got to find a way to bring economic opportunity to the areas in this country which haven't received it. We've got to bring economic empowerment and enterprise into isolated inner-city and rural communities. And I won't bore you with the details—you may have better ideas than I do—but we're going to have an agenda to do that.

Secondly, in the area of crime, the crime rate is dropping, but the juvenile crime rate is not dropping as fast. Kids get in trouble—almost all juvenile crime is committed between 2 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon, almost 100 percent of it. It is a very foolish thing for us to keep building prisons to put young people in to become permanent criminals as a strategy to lower the crime rate, when for much less money we could leave the schools open, give them something to say yes to and build their lives around. And so we're going to try to deal with that.

In the area of welfare reform, the fundamental issue is we've reduced the welfare rolls by 3.8 million, all the people that are left are going to be harder to place. Therefore, there needs to be more training, more child care, but also jobs that are created, if necessary, in community service work so that people aren't just cut off welfare.

The other thing we have to examine is how do we make sure that people aren't required to give up their educational programs if they're actually going to school. There's been a lot of publicity about that here in New York. And one of the things we're trying to do there is to make sure that people on welfare can qualify for work-study while they're going to college and they can work their way through school like everybody else does who has to work their way through school. So we're trying to work through that.

On the issue of balancing family and work, the most single, meaningful action that I've taken as President, I think, if you took a poll, most people would probably say, "I like the Family and Medical Leave Act." Probably around 15 million people have been able to take some time off from work when a baby was born or a parent was sick.

Yesterday Hillary and I and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore announced the largest child care initiative in the history of the country, to try to make child care more affordable, more available, and of a higher quality and safer than ever before to millions more Americans.

The next big challenge we have to face is all of us around here in this room who are baby boomers—some of you are not, some of you are a little older, some of you are a little younger—but the baby boom generation, until—this generation now in the public schools is the biggest we've ever had—but until they were in the public schools, we were the largest generation. If we don't make some changes in Social Security and Medicare, when we retire we either won't be able to draw them in the way that they're now being enjoyed by seniors, or we will impose incredible tax burdens on our children to do it—in ways that I think are morally unacceptable.

So we have to undertake in the next 2 years a significant review of Social Security and

Medicare, and they have to be modernized so that the baby boom generation can actually access them in a way that is universal and fair—but so that they actually work for the 21st century.

Over and above that, we have to recognize that half the people in this country have no retirement savings. And almost no one can maintain their standard of living on Social Security alone. There are very few people living on that little money. So we have to do more to get people to save for their own retirement. We've done a lot of work on that in the last 5 years; we must do more.

The next issue I'd like to mention is education. I spent, in my years in public life, more time on this than any other issue. In the end, a lot of Americans, a lot of you in this room over the last 5 years, have told me that you're very glad you've done well in life, but you're very concerned about the increasing inequality of wealth in America because people in the lower 40 percent of our work force have not had their earnings increase in a proportionate way—for 20 years now. Now, there's some indication, by the way, that that's turning around the last 2 or 3 years, and we've worked very hard on it.

What can a country do if it has great inequality, and you don't believe in punishing the successful—what can you do? Well, in 1993, we asked upper income people to pay more and gave lower income working families a tax break as part of our strategy to bring down the deficit. But that's a one-time deal. We can expand trade and try to change the job mix in America, and we're doing that. For the last 2 years, more than half the new jobs in this country paid above average wages. That's a slow process, since most people are not in jobs that were created last year. The only other thing you can do is to set up a system of lifetime education and training which starts with an excellent primary and secondary education and gives people the chance always to continuously upgrade their skills so they're on the cutting edge of change. In the end, that is the only answer to this. And, therefore, it is imperative that we do that.

History will record that the best thing about the balanced budget bill we passed last August was that we made community college

free for all Americans, that we gave tax breaks for any kind of education after high school, from graduate school to workers in factories who have to go back to school to upgrade their skills.

The second thing we did was to launch the debate on whether America should have high national standards. And I want to talk about that a little bit. Fifteen big city school districts, including New York City, said, we support the President's desire to have national standards and national tests and measure kids by how well they do and tell their parents. But there is still an enormous resistance to that in this country. Now, there was a study that's in the paper today—you may have seen it—showing that big city school districts perform at significantly lower levels by any measure than non-city school districts in America.

You can say, well, what do you expect, the kids there are poorer. They may be poorer, but we spend more money on average on them. And I say that to make this point: We cannot pretend, if we have a truly progressive vision of the future, that we can ever achieve what we want to achieve unless we hold our children—all of our children—without regard to their race, their income, or their background, to high standards of learning, and then give them the support they need to meet those standards, and measure whether they do or not, and if they don't, keep on working at it until they do.

Chicago has just undertaken a complete overhaul of its school system in which local parent councils are involved in local school districts, and they have ended social promotion. You have to pass an exam to go on to the next grade. If you don't, you've got to go to summer school. If you get through summer school and you pass the exam, you can go on. If you don't, you have to stay back. But because it's a community-based, parent-based thing, you don't hear one word about it being discriminatory, about it being unfair, about anything else. Why? Because people have taken control of their children's education. They say, our kids have got to learn something.

In the end, when they're 50, their self-esteem will be more harmed by not being able to read and write and learn new skills than

it will by having been held back one year in school when they were 10. And we have got to have that kind of commitment to national standards, to rigorous standards.

The survey also reported that children in Virginia, for example, in urban school districts—let me—I live across the river from one, from the most diverse school district in America, Fairfax County, Virginia—children from 180 different national and ethnic groups in one school district. And the survey concluded that the reason that the urban students in Virginia scored better was because they had specific, rigorous standards to which they were held and consequences for failure. So I say to you, I hope you will all support that.

Finally, let me say—in this old world we've got a lot of challenges; I just want to mention two. We need a national consensus to do something on global warming. It is real; it is significant; and what we need is an understanding that we can grow the economy and still preserve the environment. Just with the pressures that—public pressure that has been created in the last few months, look at all the new announcements that Detroit has made about cars that no one had anticipated before. We can do this. But we will pay a terrible price if we do not.

The second issue I'd like to raise is that the wonderful explosion in science and technology and information that allow kids in New York City to get on the Internet and talk to kids in Australia about school projects also mean that crazy people in New York can talk to crazy people somewhere else about how to make chemical weapons or biological weapons.

You remember when we had the Oklahoma City bombing trial, the publicity came out that there was a Web page where, if you could hook into it, you could figure out how to make the bomb. I say that simply to make the point that when you see me on behalf of the United States trying to stand up against the spread of chemical and biological weapons, or trying to devise ways to stop the spread of disease, or more rigorous standards to preserve the quality of our food supply as we import more food and more food goes across national borders—see that as part of this larger issue. We want all the benefits

of globalization, but we have to preserve the integrity and the value of our life and that of people around the world.

And since we're in New York, I'll make my last pitch. I need your support for convincing the Congress that they should support and we should pay our way in the United Nations, in the World Bank, in the International Monetary Fund, and all the other international institutions. We live in an era of interdependence, and we have richly benefited from it. We were able to do what we did in Bosnia because others would help us. And I could give you lots of other examples.

Now, why should you be here and why are you doing this? Because we believe that Government is not the enemy, but it has to be an agent of change; because we believe this is an age in which we have to form a more perfect Union by giving people the tools to make the most of their own lives, to serve in their communities, and to build a strong country; and because the evidence is, after 5 years, that this approach is right for America.

You've made it possible for it to continue, and I very much appreciate it. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. at a private residence in the Dakota apartment building. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; luncheon hosts Craig Hatkoff and Jane Rosenthal; and Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party.

Statement on National Education Standards

January 8, 1998

This week, an independent report showed that more than half the students in our Nation's city schools are failing to master the basics in reading, math, and science—the building blocks of all the skills they will need to succeed in the 21st century. And while some city school¹ systems are making progress, all too many are clearly failing our children.

¹ White House correction.

As a nation, we have a responsibility to *all* of our children and especially to those in our most vulnerable communities. That is why I have fought for high national standards and national tests to help our children reach their highest potential.

Since I called for national standards, I am proud to say that 15 major city school systems have stepped forward to accept my challenge. But we must not rest until *every* school system in the Nation commits to adopting high standards—and helping their students to meet them.

If we are going to go strong into the 21st century, we must continue to expand opportunity for all of our people, and when it comes to our children's education, that means continuing to expect and demand the very best from our schools, our teachers, and above all, from our students. That is why I have fought for excellence, competition, and accountability in our Nation's public schools, with more parental involvement, greater choice, better teaching, and an end to social promotion. We cannot afford to let our children down when they need us the most.

Remarks and a Question and Answer Session at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in New York City
January 8, 1998

The President. First of all, let me say to Alan and Susan, it is wonderful to be back here. I remember very well when I was here in 1992. I also remember an event that they were part of in 1992, about 10 days before the New Hampshire primary, when everybody said I was absolutely dead; I had no chance to win; I was dropping like a rock in the polls; and we showed up in New York City for a fundraiser. And there were 700 people in this room for a dead candidate. So I said, "I am not dead yet." [Laughter]

And that night was memorable for two reasons: One was that we had so many people there, thanks to a lot of you in this room, who didn't believe that it was over and who believed in what I was trying to do. The other was that I had a very—what is now a very famous encounter in the kitchen walking to the speech with a Greek immigrant waiter

who said that his 10-year-old son had asked him to vote for me because of what he heard me say, and he would do it if I would be more concerned about his son's safety. He said he lived across the street from a park, but his kid couldn't play in the park without his being there. He lived down the street from a school and that his child couldn't walk to the school. And he said that where he had lived he was much poorer, but he was free.

It was a very compelling portrait of why crime and physical safety is an important public issue. And he said, "So if I vote for you like my boy wants me to, I want you to make my boy free." And that man and his son became friends of ours and they've been to lots of things, and they even went to Ohio once to an anticrime event with us. So a lot has happened because of my friendship with Alan and Susan.

If he had said one more time that he wasn't a Democrat—I thought he was protesting too much. [Laughter] I'm a Baptist, I believe in deathbed conversions. It's not too late. [Laughter]

Let me say what I thought would be helpful. I do have to leave fairly soon, but before—because we've all been here and most of you have heard me give a zillion speeches, I'd like to just talk for 2 minutes and then give you time—if you have any questions or anything you want to talk about, I'd like to just hear from you.

Steve has already said what this investment is about. But let me back up a little bit. In 1992, I ran for President because I thought the country was divided and drifting, and I believed we were on the verge not just of a new century and a new millennium but a profoundly different time in human affairs. We now know that this whole process of globalization and the revolution in information in science and technology is dramatically changing the way we live and work and relate to each other and relate to the rest of the world in ways that are mostly good, but have some stiff challenges as well.

We also know that we are much more interdependent than ever before, both within our country and beyond our borders. Today, you know, as I met people today, it was amazing how freely the conversations went back and forth between issues that once would

have been thought of as foreign or domestic, but all were perceived as having a direct impact on the lives and welfare of the people with whom I was meeting today.

Now, we have tried basically to focus the country on making the changes necessary to create a 21st century America where there will be opportunity for everyone who's responsible enough to work for it; where, out of all of our diversity, we will build a community that is still one America, united and strong; and where our country will have enough support for our continuing involvement in the world, that we can keep leading the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity.

That has required a redefinition of the role of Government, basically, that the Republican Party tried for years with great success to simply discredit the whole enterprise of Government, and to say that Government was the problem, and to basically position individual freedom against Government. President Reagan was quite brilliant at it, and he did it very graphically and compellingly. But I think that the Democrats were not able to successfully counter, in part, because we seemed to be defending yesterday's Government. What we tried to do is to say that Government is the instrument of our personal freedom and our strong community, and there are some things that we can only do through our role as citizens. So I think the basic function of Government in the 21st century will be to establish the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives and build strong families and communities and make this country strong—not to do everything but not to sit on the sidelines. And I'm very mindful of that because of all the obvious challenges we're facing today at home and abroad.

Now, if you look at where we are compared to where we were 5 years ago, basically, we've changed the economic policy, the crime policy, the social policy, and the education policy of the National Government, I think, to good results. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in history, a really serious attempt to deal with the conflicts of family and work that people face through things like

the family and medical leave law, and a serious attempt to prove that we can grow the economy while improving the environment.

In the last 5 years, while we've had 13 million new jobs, the air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, the food supply is safer. We have cleaned up more toxic waste dumps than at any comparable period in history and put more land in trust in one form or another than any administration in American history except the administrations of the two Roosevelts.

So I think that we would have to say the record about the philosophy has been pretty good. In addition to that, the United States has been a force for peace and freedom and expanded mutual trade agreements to reinforce prosperity.

Now, as you look ahead to the future, just very briefly, what will we be dealing with in '98, what still needs to be done before I leave office in 2000? On the economy, first we must do no harm. We have fought very hard. We're going to have very close to a balanced budget this year. When I took office, the estimate was that the deficit would be \$357 billion this year. The last thing we need to do is to explode the deficit again. So anybody who's got any kind of proposals, whether it's for spending or tax cuts or anything else, my view is, first, do no harm. We have fought too hard, and we see evidence all around the world that no country is big enough or strong enough to sustain its prosperity in the face of financial irresponsibility.

Second, we have got to do a better job of bringing the benefits of enterprise in the modern economy to poor areas. You heard Alan talk about how we once were interested in this. We see a real renaissance in some urban neighborhoods, but not in most urban neighborhoods. We must do better there.

On the environment, we have a number of challenges—I'll just mention one. I think this agreement we made at Kyoto will prove to be a very historic agreement. It wasn't perfect, it didn't have everything we wanted, but it's the first time that major nations of the world ever committed themselves to the proposition that they could grow the economy, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and do it primarily through market mechanisms. And I believe it's profoundly important, and

I intend to work very hard on implementing it this year.

We have an entitlement challenge in this country because the baby boomers are so numerous that we have to make some adjustments in both Social Security and Medicare if we expect to preserve them for the baby boom generation at a bearable cost for our own children. And I think you will see significant progress on that in the next 2 years.

In education, the fundamental problems it seems to me are—I'm very proud of the fact that in the balanced budget act we basically make community college free for people with the tax credits and open the doors of college—we did more for college access than anytime in 50 years, since the GI bill. It's a stunning piece of work that, for some reason, doesn't seem to have acquired a lot of notice in the press. But when I talk to ordinary people about it, they think it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. So that's a big deal.

But what we have to do now is make our schools work again. There's a report just today saying that urban schools basically are performing vastly below suburban schools on all national measures of testing. I've done my best to try to promote a set of structural reforms and high standards and rigorous testing with consequences. The report shows that in Virginia, where they have urban schools that have done much better than the national average, it's because they have specific, rigorous standards; they measure the standards, and there are consequences to the results they find. This is not rocket science. These children can learn. Most of the teachers are fully capable of doing what they need to do. The system is not adequate to meet what the children deserve and the country needs, and we intend to keep working on that.

Well, there are a lot of other issues I can—yesterday we announced the biggest child care program in the history of the country, that we will have to pay for. I think that's a good thing. But it must be paid for with the successful resolution of the tobacco issue, which I hope the Congress will resolve satisfactorily. On the international front, I hope we will approve the expansion of NATO. I'd still like to have more trade authority. And

I hope the Congress will pay our debts to the United Nations and we can resume our global role and I think that will help.

I do believe that we will give some gifts to the millennium. I think you'll see a significant increase in medical research and a number of other things that are of interest to a lot of you in this room. I think '98, even though it's a political year, will be a good year. Some of you asked me about political reform, I will do my best. We have a vote scheduled in the springtime—in March, I think—and both the leadership in both Houses has promised to vote on some kind of campaign finance reform. They've not promised to vote on the bill that I support, McCain-Feingold, but a vote on some kind of campaign finance reform.

And I have said this repeatedly—I'll say it again—I think the trick is if we're going to have limits on soft money, then the hard money contribution limits ought to be realistic in light of today's cost, number one. And, number two, we ought to have access to free or reduced air time for candidates who observe overall spending limits. The Supreme Court has made clear that you can't control how much money people spend on their own campaigns, because money is speech. I'm not sure I agree with the decision, but there it is, and it's been there for over 20 years.

What's driving the costs of campaigns is the cost of air time, the cost of communicating directly with the voters. If there were some standards for how that could be done, if you got the benefit of free or reduced air time, I think you might see a big turn-up in voter turnout because you could have more, if you will, interactive air time—longer programs, call-in programs, town hall meetings, questions and answers. The whole thing could be changed. But we're going to have to have some help on the expenditure side, as well as on the money raising side.

So I think it will be a good year. I'm excited about it. We've already got more than one foot in the 21st century, but we also have some really significant challenges. And when you think about all the medical research that's going on, on the one hand, and the dangers of chemical and biological warfare on the other; when you think about how we're getting along in America with a couple

of hundred racial and ethnic groups, on the one hand, and the fights that still go on from Africa to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Bosnia on the other, you see the two sides of the 21st century. We have to make sure that interdependence and community triumph over anarchy and chaos. And I think we can do it if we stay on the course we're on.

Thank you. Anybody got a—I'll answer two questions. Anybody want to ask a question? Yes.

Federal Budget Surplus

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Well, let me say first, we shouldn't spend it mindlessly because we have to realize that the surplus is produced in large measure because Social Security taxes are still higher than Social Security outlays on an annual basis. And we are now—we have under careful review what our various options are and—I'd like to be more candid, but I have to go through a consultative process with members of my party and others in Congress as well before I can announce a final position. But I've tried to make it as clear as I could that I favor being as prudent as possible with this money.

And I also think you've got to realize, we've got to think about, before we run off and spend all the money that is going to be generated, number one, it has not been generated yet. I mean, we hope that we can keep this economy going. We hope we can keep the growth going. We hope that—but this surplus everybody is talking about is a projected surplus. It's not a bird in the hand. So that's something you should know.

Number two, we have not yet decided as a country what we're going to do about Social Security and Medicare and how to handle the attendant changes and whether there will be costs to those changes, how they will be borne, and where the money will come from. So I'm taking a very cautious approach and I'm going to look at all the alternatives, but the number one thing is we've got to realize that this economy is humming along because we got the deficit down in large measure—not entirely—there's a lot of productivity in the American economy, millions of people make great decisions—but we got the deficit

down and people perceive that we know what we're doing and that we're going to proceed with discipline and prudence in a world that is full of some uncertainty.

And the one thing I can tell you is whatever I do, I'm not going to do anything that will make anybody think we have abandoned our commitment to discipline and prudence and long term growth and investment. You make room for domestic spending if you pay the debt down; because if you pay the debt down, you reduce the percentage of the budget going to debt service. So you have more money that way. There are all kinds of things, I mean, there are lots of ways to look at this. I've not reached a final decision. And even if I had, frankly, I couldn't discuss it in great detail because I haven't finished my consultations yet. But I'm going to do something I think is economically prudent, that's the most important thing.

And, secondly, I want to think about the long run. We have to think about our intergenerational responsibilities on this entitlement business.

Q. Mr. President, one thing that I think most people—[inaudible]—

The President. Thank you. Yes, in the back.

President's Race Initiative

Q. Mr. President, I'm very impressed with your initiative on race, but I'm concerned that you seem to be the only person in America who cares about this issue. And I wonder what you can do to have other members of your administration—Cabinet members and other prominent Democrats, Governors, whatever, speak out on it.

The President. Well, interestingly enough, first of all, my Cabinet—they've all been doing things. When I did my town hall meeting in Akron, my Cabinet that week, they were all doing different things around America. And Andrew Cuomo has, in particular, been very active in HUD in the last few months largely, I'm sad to say, because there is still a lot of housing discrimination in this country, a lot of old-fashioned discrimination in this country in housing. And he's done a lot on it.

We're trying to do more and more visible things. But let me say, we're trying to

achieve—let me tell you what we're trying to achieve with the race initiative. First, we're trying to make sure that there is an honest dialog in every community—community-based approach to this about how each community is going to deal with whatever their racial composition is and whatever the challenges of working together are. And the evidence is clear that the answer is to get people to work together, learn together, and serve together in the community.

The second thing we're trying to do is to catalog promising practices of really exhilarating things that are going on around this country now; put them on our home page and make them widely available. And we now have a lot of them at our Web site and we have huge numbers of people tapping into that and then getting in touch with others around the country to learn what they can do in their own community.

The third thing we're trying to do is to recruit leaders. I sent a letter to 25,000 student leaders and asked them to get involved in the race initiative and we've gotten literally hundreds of replies from young people telling us exactly what they're doing. Some of them are fascinating, including a young, white football player, star football player, who involved athletes in an interracial initiative in the Washington, DC, area.

And the fourth thing we're trying to do is to identify specific Governmental policies that will help to not only address race problems that disproportionately affect minorities, but will do it in a way that will bring people together, like the initiative we had to give scholarships to people who go teach in inner city schools.

So we'll keep trying to turn it up. But I think it's been quite a productive thing, and I think the American people are actually quite interested in it. You know, people know—they pick up the paper every day. They see that there are tribal warfares in Africa. They know that we're still having trouble resettling the Croatians and the Muslims and the Serbs in Bosnia. They know that the Irish just had another round of killings, right on the verge of breaking through the Irish peace process. They know that there's still trouble in the Middle East. And they know there's still trouble in America. In the Wash-

ington papers we've been living through the efforts of a Muslim school that wants to expand trying to find a location in a community that feels comfortable accepting it. And a Muslim symbol was defaced on the Capitol during the Christmas season and Jewish leaders came out and condemned it—interesting.

So we're trying to work through this stuff. I think being explicit and open about it is helping us to get it right. In some ways the most important thing—if we can prove that along with all of our economic strength and our native political system that we can figure out how to be bound together and still celebrate our differences, but say what unites us is more important, that may be the most important meal ticket to the 21st century we have.

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, how bad do you see the situation in Asia right now? What are your nightmare concerns—

The President. Well, I hope you will understand that because of the fact that what is going on in Asia is the function of markets and they operate on perceptions, that I should be very careful about what I say about that.

Let me tell you what I think. I think that the United States has an interest in a stable and successful Asia. I think there's an enormous amount of productive capacity in those countries. And I think if we can get the policies right, we'll get through this. And I'm working as hard as I can to try to get it right. And there are some encouraging signs and some troubling signs and it's a complex thing; we have to work it hard. I can say this, I think we've been very well served to have Bob Rubin and Larry Summers and the other people we've got at the Treasury Department working on this. I think they're making about the best stab at it anybody could. And we have worked very long hours for some extended period of time now on it, and we're just going to keep at it and try to make it come out okay.

Middle East Peace Process and Iraq

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Well, on the Middle East peace process, I'm going to see Mr.

Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat in the next few days and try to move the thing forward a little bit. And I think it really depends upon whether the recent change in Israel, political change, is seen as a spur to action or a break on action, and whether we can find a way to keep this thing going forward.

The real problem with the Middle East peace process is it's like a living organism that gets sick if it doesn't move, you know. It's got to move. You've got to just keep something happening, even if it's not ideal—you've got to keep something happening. So we're working very hard on that and I'm very hopeful about it.

With Iraq, keep in mind what happened. We've already achieved a not insignificant portion of our objective. Saddam Hussein's goal was to say, "I'm going to throw all these inspectors out and leave them out until you drop some or all of the sanctions." And we said, "You don't understand. We'll leave the sanctions on until hell freezes over unless you let the inspections go forward."

Now, I have not ruled out or in any further action of any kind because there are still all kinds of unresolved questions about the integrity of the inspection process, and we're working on that. But keep in mind, Iraq's capacity to do damage to its neighbors has been dramatically eroded because of the sanctions process. There are a lot of countries that would like to relax it because they would benefit from that relaxation. But we have an obligation to try to limit the vulnerability not only of Americans but of the rest of the world to chemical and biological warfare.

This is not about refighting the Gulf war. It's not about Kuwait or anybody else. It's about—there's a reason those U.N. resolutions passed and a reason the world is rightfully concerned about trying to contain the damage of chemical and biological warfare.

So we're going to stay firm and I'm not ruling in or out anything, but we're being vigilant. But keep in mind, what he tried to do didn't work. What he wanted was a relaxation of the sanctions in return for just going back to business as usual, and that strategy failed. And therefore, his capacity to do more harm is not materializing.

Federal Funding for Medical Research

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Well, let me basically say, I think you will see a significant increase in medical research coming out of this Congress. It's one thing we have bipartisan agreement on. It is something we know we have to do to try to offset the cutbacks to our health institutions that have come, not only from the HMOs but from our attempts to save money in the Medicare and Medicaid programs which indirectly, at least, funded a lot of the teaching and research hospitals of the country. And I think you will see a big step forward there.

Support for the Arts

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. She asked if we saw any future in national support for the arts. I think that we have defeated the effort coming from the Republican right to destroy the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. I don't think that will be revived; I don't think it will. I think the real question is, since in some cases it's life or death, in other cases it's largely symbolic support. It says that we think this is important, an important national purpose.

What I have looked at is whether or not there was some way we could institutionalize and make permanent more of a genuine endowment on the arts—and we're battling that around and asking for ideas around the country—in a way that would take it out of the annual political debate, which would be helpful to some of our Republican friends who really do want to help, want to be supportive. I personally think it's very important, and I think that there will not be the onslaught there has been in the past to kill it. The question is whether we can institutionalize it maybe even at a higher level and make it permanent.

Go ahead.

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Well, I hope so. But that's up to Cuba. You know, we were making real progress in our relations with Cuba, and even in the Cuban-American community there

was ample evidence of changing attitudes and an attempt to change within Cuba, reciprocated by change in the United States. That was the concept of the Cuba Democracy Act, which passed before I became President. The Democratic Congress passed it; President Bush signed it; I supported it strongly, and I used it.

And it was a series of carrots and sticks designed to say, as Cuba opens we will open to Cuba, like two flowers coming to bloom at the same time. And then they murdered those people. They shot those people out of the sky in international waters. And it would not have been legal for them to shoot them down if they had been in the territorial waters of Cuba or flying right over Havana, for that reason, under the Chicago Convention to which Cuba was a signatory.

So innocent people were killed. That put a deep chill on our relationship. It led to a new and more rigorous act being passed, which would prevent me from lifting the embargo without the support of Congress, among other things.

But my position, however, is the same as it has always been: I think there ought to be a reciprocal relationship here where as Cuba shows more support for human rights and democracy, we should open up. We should try some reciprocal effort. But it has to be reciprocal. We can't—I don't think, after what happened to those people, I don't think that—I don't have any confidence that a unilateral gesture would have any success.

Now, I would be interested to see how the Pope's visit goes and what happens there. I'm very encouraged that he's going. I was encouraged that the Cuban people were permitted to observe Christmas. And we'll just see what happens. I've got—the Pope is a very persuasive fellow and he, after all, is the voice of God to those of us who believe that. And we hope that he does well.

I've got to run, I'm sorry. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:18 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Alan and Susan Patricof; Greek immigrant Dimitrius Theofanis and his son, Nick; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Pope John Paul II.

Remarks at Mission High School in Mission, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you. Good morning. Well, first of all, weren't you proud of Elizabeth? Did she do a great job or what? [Applause] And she looked so tall standing here. [Laughter] Thank you, Elizabeth.

You know, there's been a lot of exciting things in Mission in the last couple of weeks. The valley got its first snowfall in 40 years, and, you know, all these limousines and cars descending on the area—to get an unexpected visit from Koy Detmer.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to be here. I have so many people to thank, but I want to start with Congressman Hinojosa, who has been a great friend of yours, a great Representative, and a great ally of mine to expand economic opportunity and trade and to improve education and to reduce the dropout rate especially among young Hispanic students. He represents you very, very well, and I thank him for helping me to come here today.

I'd like to thank Congressman Solomon Ortiz and Congressman Cyril Rodriguez and a native of Mission, Mission High School class of 1946, the former chairman of the Agriculture Committee in the House of Representatives, Congressman Kika de la Garza, and his wife, Mrs. de la Garza. Thank you for being here.

I'd like to thank the education commissioner, Mike Moses; the land commissioner, Garry Mauro; members of my administration who are here, including White House aides Mickey Ibarra, Janet Murgia, Cynthia Jasso-Rottunno; and the head of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, George Munoz. All of them came down here today to meet with community leaders before I came out here to talk about the economic future of the valley and what we could do to help to accelerate the growth of your area.

I want to thank the legislators and the mayors who are here—Senator Carlos Truan, Representative Ismael Flores, Representative Miguel Wise, Representative Roberto Gutierrez, Mayor Ricardo Perez of Mission, the McAllen mayor, Leo Montalvo, the Edinburg mayor, Joe Ochoa. I thank the chairman

of the Democratic Party, Bill White, for coming here. And as an old member of the band, I'd like to thank the high school bands from Mission, Edinburg, Weslaco, and Hidalgo for playing.

I thank the college students from South Texas Community College and UT-Pan Am, high school students from Hidalgo, Willacy, Bee, Brooks, and San Patricio Counties, and I thank the other AmeriCorps volunteers for being here.

This morning I talked with some community leaders about economic opportunity. Today, to this great and happy crowd, I want to talk with you about educational opportunity. And I want America to know about this school district. The Mission school district may not be the wealthiest one in the Nation, but it is rich in results. Attendance is up; dropout rates are down.

Ten years ago, only about a quarter of Mission's high school seniors went on to college. This year, thanks in part to the new opportunities at the South Texas Community College, almost two-thirds of the high school graduates will go on to college.

I am trying to see that every high school classroom, every middle school and elementary school classroom, and every library in this country are hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000. Let me tell you what that piece of paper says that just blew away—it says that just 2 days ago, every classroom in Mission High School was hooked up to the Internet, well ahead of schedule. Congratulations to you. Now some of the classrooms will become laboratories for the Nation as you begin using state-of-the-art video conferencing to take advanced college courses, as well as virtual field trips all around the world. Congratulations. I want America to see you and know that all children can learn and every school can improve. You have proved it, and I want you to stay on the course.

I want America to have an educational system where every 8-year-old can read, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old can go to college, and every adult can keep on learning for a lifetime. We have to have high standards and proven reforms, the best use of new technology, help to the children who need it, and a real commitment

to the proposition that every child can learn. We have to work to reduce the dropout rate.

We have to convince many of our students, interestingly enough, especially in Latino communities throughout the United States, that what used to be a good thing to do, to drop out of school and go to work to help your family, can now in fact hurt your family and hurt your future because there is so much difference today between what someone with an education can learn and what someone who leaves high school before graduation can learn. That message has to be hammered home. And again I say, together we can do it, and you are setting an example here in Mission. And I thank you for that.

I also came here with a guarantee, one that is embodied in the sign that I stand in front of, for young people and for adults who work hard and achieve in the classroom, the results will pay off. Just a week ago, we began a new era in American education. Thanks to brand new HOPE scholarships and other initiatives, money is now no longer an obstacle to any American going to college. For the first time in this country's history, we can literally say we have opened the doors of college to everyone who has the desire and who has the preparation to go. That is a signal, important achievement for the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen, I loved it, and I think you did, too, when Elizabeth said that I was the first sitting President to come here not running for election. But I did come here in 1992 running for election, and I saw good, hard-working Americans, patriotic Americans, people who always answer the call of service when their country needs them, people who love their families and believe in their children and desperately want a better future for their communities. And I said I wanted us to take a new direction to the 21st century to make the American dream alive for every person who was willing to work for it, to make every American, without regard to race or background, part of our American community, and to do what is necessary to keep America the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity.

And the bargain I offered the American people was opportunity for everyone who is responsible, but we must have responsibility for everyone if we want opportunity, and a

community in which everyone was part of our national family. The Government's job in that kind of America is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. That is what we have tried to do with the economy, and we must do more. That's what we talked about this morning in our community leaders meeting, and that is what we must do with education.

Right now, our approach looks pretty good. Our Nation is on a roll. Just this morning we learned that the economy added another 370,000 jobs last month. That means 14.3 million new jobs for Americans in the last 5 years. The deficit has been reduced by 90 percent, and next year, for the first time in three decades, we will have a balanced budget. Wages are rising for ordinary working people for the first time in 20 years. Hispanic unemployment is dropping. Record rates of small business growth are occurring. Hispanic-American new small businesses are being started at 3 times the national average rate. There are hundreds of thousands of new Latino homeowners in America, and we have over two-thirds of the American people in their own homes for the first time in our history.

Despite these gains, you and I know that Hispanic family income is not yet on the rise, and here in the valley and other areas of America the unemployment rate is still unconscionably high. One of the biggest reasons is that too many young people who live here drop out of school. Many leave for good reasons, as I said earlier; they want to help their families by working. But in a global economy, the best way for a young person to help his or her family is to stay in school, set yourself on a college path early, and complete at least 2 years of college. People who at least have a community college degree have a very good chance of getting a job with stability and prospects of a growing income. People who do less than that in a global economy where we depend more and more on what we can learn every day and the new skills we can apply, are playing Russian roulette with their future. That is why we have worked very hard with dedicated Members of Congress like Mr. Hinojosa to reduce the dropout rates and to reward people who stay and learn.

And let me tell you what I meant when I said there's a guarantee for people who go on to college now. Last year in the balanced budget, we put in place a college opportunity agenda that literally had the largest investment in helping people go to college since the GI bill was passed when the soldiers from the valley came home 50 years ago.

Here's what it means to the people who live here. First we created HOPE scholarships and an education IRA; they started on January 1st. HOPE scholarships will basically use the tax system to reimburse families for up to \$1,500 a year to pay for the first 2 years of college. That means schools like South Texas Community College will be virtually free to virtually all Americans. With education IRA's, parents will now be able to set money aside for their children's college education and let it grow, and then withdraw from the fund later without paying any taxes on it.

The second thing we've done is to create lifetime learning credits, tax cuts worth up to \$1,000 a year to students who go to the third and fourth years of college or who go to graduate school, and those are available to adults who go back to school or to training programs because they have to change careers or they need to upgrade their skills.

The third thing we did is to increase Pell grant scholarships for nearly 4 million low and moderate income families. And finally, we made student loans easier to get and easier to pay off as a percentage of your income, so that no one ever has to fear borrowing money to go to college because they're afraid they will go broke trying to pay the loan back. Now you can get the loan at lower cost and less time and pay it back as a percentage of your income when you get out of school.

We are also offering young people more opportunities to do community service through the AmeriCorps program and earn money to go to college; 100,000 have taken advantage of it.

Now, there is one other thing I want to talk about. A lot of people have to work their way through school, like I did, and usually those of us who do think we're the better for it. Sometimes, if you have to work a little, you even are more disciplined with your time and you wind up studying a little more. The

balanced budget I will submit to Congress next month will include a record one million work-study positions for college students. That represents an increase of nearly 50 percent during the last 3 years alone. It's not just about increasing financial aid, that's about increasing the circle of community service and the winner's circle of opportunity for the future.

For example, work-study students at more than 800 colleges in America today are helping to make sure that we reach one of our education goals, that every 8-year-old can read. Through the America Reads challenge, tens of thousands of college students are earning money for college while going into our schools to tutor young people to make sure that they don't get out of the third grade without being able to read independently; and now we'll have a million people doing that kind of work.

Let me just say this to all the young people here in this audience: We can create opportunities, but you have to seize it. I am determined—whenever I come to South Texas, I leave more determined than ever to find some way to better reward the energy, the patriotism, the commitment, the vision of the people here. We can do more to build on the empowerment zones and to do other things to help you to grow your economy, to preserve your environment, to create more jobs. But nothing—nothing—will matter in the end unless the young people who live here are committed to developing their own minds and keeping their visions high and believing in themselves and their futures. That is the most important thing. You have to believe that. You have to make sure that you have raised your sights as high as you can.

And let me just say, I don't want to embarrass him, but I'd like to compliment the principal here at Mission High School, Mr. Ahmadian. He came here in the late seventies from Iran, without being able to speak a word of English. Now, as the leader of this remarkable school, he's helped thousands of people go on to careers in education, in medicine, in law enforcement. He's helping them to do what he did with high standards for higher education. Whether you're the son or daughter of a migrant laborer, or a doctor, the same formula applies: high standards and

higher education; taking responsibility; sitting down with family, teachers, guidance counselors; committing to work hard to learn, to do the homework, to think about the future.

We're going to do our part in Washington to make sure that those of you who are prepared for the future can go on to college. We've removed the obstacles. There's an open field ahead, but you have to reach the goal line. Take the ball and run with it. Your future is bright; the future of the valley is bright; and the future of the Nation is in your hands.

God bless you. *Gracias. Viva el valle.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in Tom Landry Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Elizabeth Gonzales, student body president who introduced the President, and Masoud Ahmadian, principal, Mission High School; Koy Detmer, NFL Philadelphia Eagles backup quarterback and Mission High School alumnus; Lucille de la Garza, wife of former Representative Kika de la Garza; and Bill White, chair, Texas State Democratic Party.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

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.

January 4

The President returned to Washington, DC, from St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

January 5

The White House announced that the President invited President Petar Stoyanov of Bulgaria for a working visit to Washington on February 10.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel in Washington on January 20, and he will meet with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority in Washington on January 22.

January 6

In the afternoon, the President attended a surprise birthday party for Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley at the Education Department.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, high winds, tornadoes, and flooding, beginning December 25 and continuing.

January 7

The President announced his intention to appoint Maureen White as the U.S. Representative to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

January 8

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City. In the afternoon, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore to discuss the Asia-Pacific economic situation.

In the evening, the President traveled to McAllen, TX. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with President Soeharto of Indonesia to discuss the Asia-Pacific economic situation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rita R. Colwell as Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation.

The White House announced that the President will award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 15 distinguished Americans at a White House ceremony on January 15.

January 9

In the morning, the President met with local community leaders at the Embassy Suites Hotel in McAllen.

In the afternoon, the President attended a reception for Representative Ruben Hinojosa at a private residence. Following the reception, he traveled to Brownsville, TX, where he addressed citizens of the Brownsville area at the Brownsville-South Padre Island International Airport. Later in the afternoon, he traveled to Houston, TX.

In the evening, the President addressed Houston High School students, parents, and teachers at the George Brown Convention Center. Later in the evening, he attended a reception for Representative Sheila Jackson

Lee at the Four Seasons Hotel. Following the reception, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Andrew P. Scalzi as U.S. Commissioner to the International Pacific Halibut Commission.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

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

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

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 January 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Franklin Raines and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the budget

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Stoyanov of Bulgaria

Released January 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's proposed legislation on Medicare

Released January 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Planning Bruce Reed on the President's proposed legislation on child care

Statement by the Press Secretary: Asia-Pacific Economic Situation

Released January 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients

**Acts Approved
by the President**

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