

the greatest models of integrity and leadership and genuine humanity our Nation has ever produced.

Commander, please read the citation.

Did you think I was going to change my mind? [Laughter]

[Commander Huey read the citation, and the President congratulated Admiral Zumwalt and presented the medal.]

The President. Before we move to the State Dining Room for the reception in honor of our awardees, I'd like to close with a brief note about the future.

Hillary and I and the Vice President—indeed, our entire administration—are going to be working hard in the coming months to help the American people imagine what the 21st century can bring. As of today, that new century is just a little more than 700 days away—which, as you reflect on the remarkable lives we have celebrated today, is not a lot of time.

But I went back and checked. It's about the same amount of time that, from 1961 to 1963, an active citizen named King helped James Meredith go to college, stood up to Bull Connor, wrote a letter from a jail in Birmingham, helped to organize the March on Washington, and gave a little speech—his main line was “I have a dream.” Not a bad 700 days' work.

We must resolve to use our time just as wisely. As we have learned today from the remarkable lives of the people we celebrate, some of whom span nearly this entire century, even a long, long life doesn't take long to live, and passes in the flash of an eye. They have shown us that if we live it well, we can leave this Earth better for our children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on Departure for New York City and an Exchange With Reporters

January 15, 1998

Tobacco Marketing to Youth

The President. Before I leave for New York, I want to say a few words about the disturbing news that a major tobacco company appears to have targeted children to encourage them to begin smoking. For 5 years, we've done everything in our power to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. I've called for strong bipartisan legislation to reduce smoking, especially by young people. The documents that came to light today show more than ever why it is absolutely imperative that Congress take action now to get tobacco companies out of the business of marketing cigarettes to children. Reducing teen smoking has always been America's bottom line, and that's this administration's bottom line; now, it should become the industry's bottom line.

I'm confident that every Member of Congress, without regard to party, who reviews these documents will resolve to make 1998 the year that we actually pass comprehensive legislation to protect our children and the public health.

Thank you.

Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman

Q. Mr. President, did Alexis Herman take money to peddle influence in your administration?

The President. I don't believe that for a minute.

Situation in Iraq

Q. What are you doing about Iraq to put teeth into the statement?

The President. On Iraq, let me say that Mr. Butler is going back to Iraq with the strong support of the United Nations. I am very encouraged that even those who had been more sympathetic to Iraq saw through

this totally unacceptable action. So now we have to see what happens. He ought to be given access. He's going back there; he's got the support of the U.N. We're going to watch this a day at a time and see what happens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks to the Wall Street Project Conference in New York City

January 15, 1998

Thank you very, very much, Reverend Jackson. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. Grasso and Mr. Jones, and all the other sponsors of this event for this historic day. I thank Secretary Herman for her leadership and for coming up here with me today, along with our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez. I don't know if Ambassador Richardson is in the audience, but I'll take a chance, because if he's here and I don't mention him, I'll live with it from now on—[laughter]—and because he cares deeply about these issues. I also see Reverend Suzan Cook, a member of our race advisory board, here. I have many other friends here, business people, the mayors, and others. I thank the Members of the New York congressional delegation for coming, Congressman Rangel, Maloney, Owens, Manton, and Representative-elect Meeks. And I thank Lieutenant Governor Ross and Comptroller McCall and Speaker Silver, and any other State officials who might be here, and Mr. Green and Mr. Vallone and any other city officials who are here.

Let me say that I've looked forward to this, but it occurs to me, on Martin Luther King's birthday, that the real danger we have here is that Reverend Jackson and I and all the others might be here preaching to the saved, that we all agree with what we're here to talk about. But there is still some merit in our being here in the hope that we can reach beyond those in this room in this very high place to those who are at work down below us today here in New York and throughout the country. Maybe we should have just let Santita sing to them. That would have per-

sueded them better than anything I could say.

It is true, Mr. Avant, that I told Jesse that I knew this was a historic day, because you've been to the White House a half-dozen times and never worn a tie. [Laughter] So I know that we are onto something big here. [Laughter]

Let me tell you—this is not part of my remarks, but I want to emphasize on Martin Luther King's birthday, since we're here talking about expanding opportunities of American enterprise to all our citizens, what I did this morning before I came up here. This day is always one of my very favorite days as President. This was the day this year that I awarded the Presidential Medals of Freedom. And let me give you some—I may not have every name down here, but I think this is interesting. If you just listen to the names, it will tell you something about your country.

Arnie Aronson, an 86-year-old Jewish American who founded—cofounded the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, worked all the way back with A. Philip Randolph in the forties on civil rights; James Farmer, 87 years old; Fred Korematsu, the Japanese-American who refused to go quietly into the internment camp in World War II and fought for years to have his conviction overturned—[inaudible]—Mario Obledo, former LULAC leader and one of the founders of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund; Justin Dart, the man who probably is more responsible for the Americans with Disabilities Act than any other single American citizen; Mardy Murie, a 93-year-old conservationist who lives at the foot of the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, who has done so much to save the West; the distinguished American psychiatrist Robert Coles, who probably has had more influence through his academic writings to promote equal opportunity for all children and the whole cause of citizen service than any other academic in America; Frances Hesselbein, who saved the Girl Scouts when they were on the brink of extinction by diversifying the Girl Scouts and unifying them; Al Shanker of New York—[applause]—posthumously.

My wife said these were just ordinary American citizens, and I said, yes, ordinary American citizens like Brooke Astor and