AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
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- Provide information to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service regional and State program staff and grantees and encourage dissemination of information to families regarding the CHIP and Medicaid programs.

The Secretary of Education shall, among other proposed actions:

- Educate and assist families through its Partnership for Family Involvement program, which promotes family involvement in education, and includes employers, schools, education organizations, and community and religious groups.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall, among other proposed actions:

- Provide information on children's health outreach to applicants for competitive grants, and ask its directors of Public Housing Authorities and Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities to post or distribute this information.

The Secretary of Interior shall, among other proposed actions:

- Develop and distribute culturally relevant referral information to Native American families through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, especially focusing on tribal schools, colleges, and social services agencies.

The Secretary of Labor shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute Medicaid and CHIP outreach information through its Job Corps Centers, One-Stop Career Centers, welfare-to-work grant programs, and small businesses contacts.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall, among other proposed actions:

- Post children's health outreach information for families at IRS walk-in centers and provide this information to Voluntary Income Tax Assistance sites.

The Commissioner of Social Security shall, among other proposed actions:

- Distribute information and/or applications for children's health insurance in its SSA field office reception areas and provide to States names of families of children denied SSI so that States can send these families educational information and applications for children's health insurance programs.

I also direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to continue to work with the above mentioned agencies to assist them in fulfilling these commitments, to engage new agencies and develop other commitments, and report back to me in 1 year on agency accomplishments.

William J. Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty

June 22, 1998

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification on the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks on Signing the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters

June 23, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Carlson for your very eloquent and enlightening statement and for the work you do every day as a farmer, both with your crops and with the bison.

When Dan Glickman said you have bison, I saw a lot of people's eyebrows go up. We've come a long way since Teddy Roosevelt saved the buffalo with the national park. We went from millions of head in the West and the high plains down to only 20 known head of buffalo when Teddy Roosevelt actually established that national preserve. Now we've got enough that we know they'll be there with folks like you farming, and we appreciate that.

Thank you, Secretary Glickman, for the truly outstanding job you do as Secretary of Agriculture. I would like to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Congressmen Smith and Stenholm. And I would also like to thank Congressman Becerra, the head of the Hispanic caucus for the work he did and all the other Members of Congress who are here.

We are joined by a number of local officials who had great interest in this legislation including, but I'm sure not limited to, L.A. County Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chicago City Treasurer Miriam Santos, Virginia State Delegate Karen Darner. I would also like to thank all the representatives of our country's farmers and ranchers who are here, the religious leaders, our immigrant and antihunger advocates.

This is a very good day for me personally for two reasons. First of all, you heard Secretary Glickman give you the official population of the town in which I was born. It's about 50 percent larger than it was when I was born there, but all my mother's people came from a little town called Bodcaw, which still has only 50 people in it. And I have on my desk upstairs a picture of my grandfather with his family in 1907. Just about all of them were farmers, and when they were forced to leave the land and come into the large city of Hope, most of them kept little plots of land out in the country for decades where they kept their hand in, and they continued to grow their crops and harvest them even when they could no longer themselves make a living on the land.

And when I was a boy, it was part of the ritual of every summer that I would go out and help them work the land when I wasn't in school, and in the fall, help them to bring in everything from vegetables to watermelon. I don't know if watermelon is a fruit or vegetable. I think it's something in between.

Also, when I was Governor, I governed a State which had a lot of people who didn't have enough to eat. And I saw this remarkable coalition of people following the moral tradition of virtually every religion, which consistently admonishes us to take care of the poor and the hungry. So this is a remarkable day and something all of you can be proud of. And those of you who worked on this bill know that you can be especially proud of it because you had some very powerful opponents of what we attempted to do.

We are carrying on here a long and proud tradition of bipartisan commitment, a coalition that was first forged by Hubert Humphrey, Robert Dole, and George McGovern a generation ago. By standing together in that tradition, we have ensured that America keeps its compact with our farmers and ranchers and with people in need.

We all know that our Nation's core values in many ways have their deepest roots in rural America, in its commitment to community and mutual responsibility, to strong families, and individual initiative. Direct, trusting interaction among neighbors, so hard to find in some places in our country and throughout the world, still have very strong roots in rural towns. Every American has a stake, therefore, in making sure that rural America stays strong into the 21st century, not only because they feed us but because in many ways they feed our spirit and help us to forge our character as a nation.

This bill, as has already been said, does a lot of very good things for America. First, it rights a wrong. When I signed the welfare reform bill in 1996, I said the cuts in nutritional programs were too deep and had nothing whatever to do with welfare reform. Last year we restored Medicaid and SSI benefits to 420,000 legal immigrants. Today we reinstate food stamp benefits to 250,000 legal immigrants, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and 75,000 children. In addition, the Hmong immigrants from Laos, who heroically fought for our Nation during the Vietnam war, will again receive their full food benefits, overdue, high time, and I appreciate the fact that they were included in this bill.

None of these benefit cuts had the first thing to do with welfare reform. Reinstating them is the right thing to do and will have nothing to do with the success we've enjoyed which has brought welfare rates in America down to a 29-year low now.

Beyond that, this bill extends opportunity for all Americans, especially for farmers and ranchers. Today I think it's worth noting again, as I prepare to leave for China, American agriculture is one of our most powerful export engines. Products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. As this strong growth continues in the new century our farmers and ranchers will need to feed millions and millions of more people around the world. They will need to do their work in a more sustainable way to protect our water and fragile soil. They will need to continue improving food safety by investing in cutting-edge agricultural research, funding rural development, and bolstering crop insurance. This bill will help our farmers meet the needs of tomorrow's world.

We are channeling an additional $120 million a year over the next 5 years to vital investments in food and agriculture genome research, food safety and technology, human nutrition and agricultural biotechnology. We're allocating $60 million a year over the next 5 years to give grants and loans to underserved rural communities where people must diversify their economy on an available, attainable scale in order to preserve the fabric of life there. These grants will ensure, I hope and believe, that more and more of our rural communities can finally share in this remarkable national economic prosperity that we are enjoying.

We are also providing our farmers with peace of mind because crop insurance will be there for them should disaster strike. In certain parts of the country farmers are hurting now. And it is clear that, in addition, we need to strengthen the farm safety net for the future. The legislation that we sign today is a very good start, but there are some more things I believe we should do.

In addition to strengthening the safety net for farmers, we must protect our exports by passing the legislation, sponsored by Senators Murray and Roberts and Representative Pomeroy, to allow our farmers to continue to export wheat to Pakistan and India. It was never intended, I don't believe, to use food as a weapon in foreign policy even in this extreme circumstance. And I strongly support that legislation and believe we have big bipartisan support for doing something about it immediately. And it's important that it be done immediately because of the necessity of getting those contracts out and making sure the shipments are there if they're going to be there. I feel that we will be successful.

Congress must also give the IMF the resources it needs to help to stabilize the economies of Asia, in part because they are huge markets for United States farm products. Finally, we must protect the many advances we're making in the bill I'm just about to sign. Believe it or not, the bill I'm just about to sign already has some provisions which are in jeopardy.

There are some in Congress who are working to undo the progress embodied in this bill. The appropriations committees have taken steps to cut the funding next year for the research and rural development programs I just mentioned, limit our food safety efforts, and cut as many as 100,000 women and children from the WIC program at a time when our economy is doing well and we can clearly afford to continue these things. This bill is the example of how we should work together.

Let me just mention one other issue before I sign the bill, an example of how the country does well when we put progress ahead of partisanship. In the bipartisan balanced budget agreement I was proud to sign into law last year, we gave Medicare patients new choices, enabled them to enroll in private health plans, and extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade. Building on that new bipartisan law, I instructed our administration to implement a Patients' Bill of Rights for the one-third of Americans who receive Federal health care benefits.

Beginning this week we are putting those protections into effect. From now on, for example, Medicare patients will have the right to see a specialist in a broad range of areas. Women will have a right to see women's

health specialists. Medicare patients will have a right to privacy for their medical records.

This marks the most significant change in Medicare in three decades. It shows what we can do when we put progress over partisanship. That's why I also strongly support the bipartisan effort being launched today in the House of Representatives by Congressmen Dingell and Ganske to extend a Patients' Bill of Rights to all Americans.

Today we mark another milestone in this kind of bipartisan cooperation. We've come a long way from the days when Thomas Jefferson thought every American should be a farmer, even the farmers are glad that's not true. But what he said then is still true in many ways, and I quote, ''The cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens, the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous; they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interest by the most lasting bonds.''

Today we strengthen those bonds. And we strengthen those bonds to those whose hold on the American dream is still fragile. In so doing, we do our part to do what Mr. Jefferson wanted us to do, to always be about the business of forming a more perfect Union.

Thank you very much.

I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here while we sign the bill. Come on up.

[*At this point, Members of Congress joined the President on the stage, and the President signed the bill.*]

The President. Thank you.

Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]—VX—[*inaudible*]—despite reports by U.N. weapons inspectors that they found fragments on SCUD missiles. What do you think this says about Iraq, and what should you do?

The President. You asked me about the report about the U.N. weapons inspectors in Iraq, that there were traces of VX found in a missile head?

Well, it proves that the United—let me just say, it proves that the United States has been accurate and correct in our insistence all along that we support the U.N. inspections in Iraq. And it proves that our decision to oppose relaxing the sanctions until all the U.N. resolutions have been complied with is an accurate one.

Mr. Butler is doing his job, and we need to wait until we hear the report. There is a news report to this effect, but it just proves that—you know, our job in the world is to try to reduce the danger that our people and others in the world face from nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. And sometimes we have to do it even when our friends and neighbors don't think it is as important as we do. It is very important.

If this report is true, it will just show that our insistence over these last many years on the U.N. inspection system is the right thing to do for the safety of America and the safety of the rest of the world. And we'll stay with the position we've always had. Let the inspections go forward and don't lift the sanctions until the resolutions are complied with.

China's Refusal of Radio Free Asia Visas

Q. Sir, China has refused visas to three Radio Free Asia journalists. What would you plan to do about that, sir?

The President. Well, I am aware of the Chinese refusal. I think it is a highly objectionable decision. We will protest it. We hope they'll reconsider it. And it is actually rather ironic because this decision to deny the visa to the Radio Free Asia journalists is depriving China of the credit that it otherwise would have gotten for giving more visas to a more diverse group of journalists and allowing more different kinds of people in there than they've ever done before.

And the fact that they denied the visa for the Radio Free Asia people will actually undercut the credit which otherwise would have come their way because of that.

Thank you, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to farmer Robert Carlson, president, North Dakota Farmers Union, who introduced the President; and Richard Butler, executive chairman, United Nations Special Commission. S. 1150, approved June 23, was assigned Public Law No. 105–185.

Radio Remarks on the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I signed into law a new bill to help expand opportunity for America's farmers. The agricultural research act will put funding for crop insurance on a sure footing for the future and boost investment on agricultural research and rural development.

After Congress phased out Federal farm price supports, it became more essential for American farmers to sell grains, meats, fruits, and vegetables to markets around the world. And today, products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. Thanks to cutting-edge research, strong food safety standards, and innovations in biotechnology, our farmers enjoy advantages over their competitors around the world in many sectors. In fact, American farmers have become so productive and so advanced that agriculture should be considered another high-tech industry. By strengthening investment in research and technology, this bill will help our farmers retain that competitive edge so they can export more of what they grow and raise. But to secure the success of U.S. farmers in the global marketplace, we must do more.

That's why we're also fighting hard to tear down unfair trade barriers, to stabilize Asian markets for our products, and to make sure that sanctions do not unfairly penalize American farmers. I've asked the World Trade Organization to take an aggressive approach to reducing tariffs and subsidies on agricultural products and to deliver better scientific-based rules to govern that trade. We're also fighting to enforce our trade agreements and have won critical agricultural disputes, including the European Union's restrictions on hormone-grown beef and greater access to pork in the Philippines. We will continue to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that agreements made are agreements kept.

And I will push Congress to give the IMF the resources it needs to help stabilize the economies of Asia, which are such big markets for American farm products. Finally, we need to make sure that our sanctions policy furthers our foreign policy goals without hurting our farmers. That's why I support legislation that ensures that U.S. wheat will not be the unintended victim of an important nonproliferation law. Our policy has been and will be that food should not be used as a weapon. We'll resist any action that would lead to a de facto grain embargo.

American farmers can continue to compete and win the global marketplace. To make sure that they do, I'll continue to fight to make sure they're given a fair chance to build a better future for themselves and their families.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded on the morning of June 23 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast.

Statement on Signing Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

June 23, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1150, the "Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998." This bill is an example of the Federal Government at its best: the Congress and the Administration working together on a bipartisan basis, bringing together a broad coalition of individuals and groups to address the important needs of our citizens in a fiscally responsible manner. I want to thank Senators Lugar and Harkin and Representatives Smith and Stenholm, whose efforts to forge this compromise were tireless, as well as all the other Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who voted for S. 1150. Their support reflects the strong consensus in this country for the reforms and funding contained in this bill.

S. 1150 and last year's Balanced Budget Act go a long way toward fulfilling the commitment, which I made when I signed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, to reverse the unfair treatment of legal immigrants included in that legislation, which had nothing to do with welfare reform. The Food Stamp provisions of S. 1150 restore benefits to 250,000 elderly, disabled, and other needy legal immigrants, including 75,000 children who lost such assistance under the 1996 Act.