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**Editor's Note:** The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at http://www.gpo.gov/nara.nara003.html.


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PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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## Message to the Congress on Most-Favored-Nation Status for Albania

*July 16, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Albania. The report indicates continued Albanian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restrictions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania is not in violation of the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. That action allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual report is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 16, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 17. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serbs

*July 16, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

On May 30, 1992, by Executive Order 12808, President Bush declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Governments of Serbia and Montenegro, blocking all property and interests in property of those Governments. President Bush took additional measures to prohibit trade and other transactions with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (the "FRY (S&M)"), by Executive Orders 12810 and 12831, issued on June 5, 1992, and January 15, 1993, respectively.

On April 25, 1993, I issued Executive Order 12846, blocking the property and interests in property of all commercial, industrial, or public utility undertakings or entities organized or located in the FRY (S&M), and prohibiting trade-related transactions by United States persons involving those areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina controlled by the Bosnian Serb forces and the United Nations Protected Areas in the Republic of Croatia. On October 25, 1994, because of the actions and policies of the Bosnian Serbs, I expanded the scope of the national emergency by issuance of Executive Order 12934 to block the property of the Bosnian Serb forces and the authorities in the territory that they controlled within the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the property of any entity organized or located in, or controlled by any person in, or resident in, those areas.

On November 22, 1995, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1022 ("Resolution 1022"), immediately and indefinitely suspending economic sanctions against the FRY (S&M). Sanctions were subsequently lifted by the United Nations Security Council pursuant to Resolution 1074 on October 1, 1996. Resolution 1022, however, continues to provide for the release of funds and assets previously blocked pursuant to sanctions against the FRY (S&M), provided that such funds and assets that are subject to claims and encumbrances, or that are the

property of persons deemed insolvent, remain blocked until "released in accordance with applicable law." This provision was implemented in the United States on December 27, 1995, by Presidential Determination No. 96–7. The determination, in conformity with Resolution 1022, directed the Secretary of the Treasury, *inter alia*, to suspend the application of sanctions imposed on the FRY (S&M) pursuant to the above-referenced Executive Orders and to continue to block property previously blocked until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. This sanctions relief was an essential factor motivating Serbia and Montenegro's acceptance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina initialed by the parties in Dayton on November 21, 1995 (the "Peace Agreement") and signed in Paris on December 14, 1995. The sanctions imposed on the FRY (S&M) and on the United Nations Protected Areas in the Republic of Croatia were accordingly suspended prospectively, effective January 16, 1996. Sanctions imposed on the Bosnian Serb forces and authorities and on the territory that they controlled within the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina were subsequently suspended prospectively, effective May 10, 1996, in conformity with Resolution 1022. On October 1, 1996, the United Nations passed Resolution 1074, terminating U.N. sanctions against the FRY (S&M) and the Bosnian Serbs in light of the elections that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina on September 14, 1996. Resolution 1074, however, reaffirms the provisions of Resolution 1022 with respect to the release of blocked assets, as set forth above.

The present report is submitted pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and 1703(c) and covers the period from November 30, 1997, through May 29, 1998. It discusses Administration actions and expense directly related to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency in Executive Order 12808 as expanded with respect to the Bosnian Serbs in Executive Order 12934, and against the FRY (S&M) contained in Executive Orders 12810, 12831, and 12846.

1. The declaration of the national emergency on May 30, 1992, was made pursuant to the authority vested in the President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code. The emergency declaration was reported to the Congress on May 30, 1992, pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(b)) and the expansion of that national emergency under the same authorities was reported to the Congress on October 25, 1994. The additional sanctions set forth in related Executive orders were imposed pursuant to the authority vested in the President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including the statutes cited above, section 1114 of the Federal Aviation Act (49 U.S.C. App. 1514), and section 5 of the United Nations Participation Act (22 U.S.C. 287c).

2. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury, implemented the sanctions imposed under the foregoing statutes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnian Serb-Controlled Areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 585 (the "Regulations").

To implement Presidential Determination No. 96–7, the Regulations were amended to authorize prospectively all transactions with respect to the FRY (S&M) otherwise prohibited (61 *FR* 1282, January 19, 1996). Property and interests in property of the FRY (S&M) previously blocked within the jurisdiction of the United States remain blocked, in conformity with the Peace Agreement and Resolution 1022, until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia.

On May 10, 1996, OFAC amended the Regulations to authorize prospectively all transactions with respect to the Bosnian Serbs otherwise prohibited, except with respect to property previously blocked (61 *FR* 24696, May 16, 1996). On December 4, 1996, OFAC amended Appendices A and B

to 31 chapter V, containing the names of entities and individuals in alphabetical order and by location that are subject to the various economic sanctions programs administered by OFAC, to remove the entries for individuals and entities that were determined to be acting for or on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). These assets were blocked on the basis of these persons' activities in support of the FRY (S&M)—activities no longer prohibited—not because the Government of the FRY (S&M) or entities located in or controlled from the FRY (S&M) had any interest in those assets (61 *FR* 64289, December 4, 1996).

On April 18, 1997, the Regulations were amended by adding a new Section 585.528, authorizing all transactions after 30 days with respect to the following vessels that remained blocked pursuant to the Regulations, effective at 10:00 a.m. local time in the location of the vessel on May 19, 1997: the M/V MOSLAVINA, M/V ZETA, M/V LOVCEN, M/V DURMITOR and M/V BAR (a/k/a M/V INVIKEN) (62 *FR* 19672, April 23, 1997). During the 30-day period, United States persons were authorized to negotiate settlements of their outstanding claims with respect to the vessels with the vessels' owners or agents and were generally licensed to seek and obtain judicial warrants of maritime arrest. If claims remained unresolved 10 days prior to the vessels' unblocking (May 8, 1997), service of the warrants could be effected at that time through the United States Marshal's Office in the district where the vessel was located to ensure that U.S. creditors of a vessel had the opportunity to assert their claims. Appendix C to 31 CFR, chapter V, containing the names of vessels blocked pursuant to the various economic sanctions programs administered by OFAC (61 FR 32936, June 26, 1996), was also amended to remove these vessels from the list effective May 19, 1997. There have been no amendments to the Regulations since my report of December 3, 1997.

3. Over the past 2 years, the Departments of State and the Treasury have worked closely with European Union member states and other U.N. member nations to implement the provisions of Resolution 1022. In the United States, retention of blocking authority pursuant to the extension of a national emergency provides a framework for administration of an orderly claims settlement. This accords with past policy and practice with respect to the suspension of sanctions regimes.

4. During this reporting period, OFAC issued two specific licenses regarding transactions pertaining to the FRY (S&M) or property in which it has an interest. Specific licenses were issued (1) to authorize U.S. creditors to exchange a portion of blocked unallocated FRY (S&M) debt obligations for the share of such obligations assumed by the obligors in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and (2) to authorize certain financial transactions with respect to blocked funds located at a foreign branch of a U.S. bank.

During the past 6 months, OFAC has continued to oversee the maintenance of blocked FRY (S&M) accounts and records with respect to: (1) liquidated tangible assets and personalty of the 15 blocked U.S. subsidiaries of entities organized in the FRY (S&M); (2) the blocked personalty, files, and records of the two Serbian banking institutions in New York previously placed in secure storage; (3) remaining blocked FRY (S&M) tangible property, including real estate; and (4) the 5 Yugoslav-owned vessels recently unblocked in the United States.

On September 29, 1997, the United States filed Statements of Interest in cases being litigated in the Southern District of New York: *Beogradska Banka A.D. Belgrade v. Interenergo, Inc.*, 97 Civ. 2065 (JGK); and *Jugobanka A.D. Belgrade v. U.C.F. International Trading, Inc. et al.*, 97 Civ. 3912, 3913 and 6748 (LAK). These cases involve actions by blocked New York Serbian bank agencies and their parent offices in Belgrade, Serbia, to collect on defaulted loans made prior to the imposition of economic sanctions and dispensed, in one case, to the U.S. subsidiary of a Bosnian firm and, in the other cases, to various foreign subsidiaries of a Slovenian firm. Because these loan receivables are a form of property that was blocked prior to December 27, 1995, any funds collected as a consequence of these actions would remain blocked and subject to United States jurisdiction. Defendants asserted that the

loans had been made from the currency reserves of the central bank of the former Yugoslavia to which all successor states had contributed, and that the loan funds represent assets of the former Yugoslavia and are therefore subject to claims by all five successor states. The Department of State, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, concluded that the collection of blocked receivables through the actions by the bank and the placement of those collected funds into a blocked account did not prejudice the claims of successor states nor compromise outstanding claims on the part of any creditor of the bank, since any monies collected would remain in a blocked status and available to satisfy obligations to United States and foreign creditors and other claimants—including possible distribution to successor states under a settlement arising from the negotiations on the division of assets and liabilities of the former Yugoslavia. On March 31, 1998, however, the Court dismissed the claims as nonjustifiable. Another case, *D.C. Precision, Inc. v. United States, et al.*, 97 Civ. 9123 CRLC, was filed in the Southern District of New York on December 10, 1997, alleging that the Government had improperly blocked Precision's funds held at one of the closed Serbia banking agencies in New York.

5. Despite the prospective authorization of transactions with the FRY (S&M), OFAC has continued to work closely with the U.S. Customs Service and other cooperating agencies to investigate alleged violations that occurred while sanctions were in force. On February 13, 1997, a Federal grand jury in the Southern District of Florida, Miami, returned a 13-count indictment against one U.S. citizen and two nationals of the FRY (S&M). The indictment charges that the subjects participated and conspired to purchase three Cessna propeller aircraft, a Cessna jet aircraft, and various aircraft parts in the United States and to export them to the FRY (S&M) in violation of U.S. sanctions and the Regulations. Timely interdiction action prevented the aircraft from being exported from the United States.

Since my last report, OFAC has collected one civil monetary penalty totaling nearly $153,000 for violations of the sanctions. These violations involved prohibited payments to the Government of the FRY (S&M) by a U.S. company.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from November 30, 1997, through May 29, 1998, that are directly attributable to the declaration of a national emergency with respect to the FRY (S&M) and the Bosnian Serb forces and authorities are estimated at approximately $360,000, most of which represents wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in OFAC and its Chief Counsel's Office, and the U.S. Customs Service), the Department of State, the National Security Council, and the Department of Commerce.

7. In the last 2 years, substantial progress has been achieved to bring about a settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia acceptable to the parties. Resolution 1074 terminates sanctions in view of the first free and fair elections to occur in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as provided for in the Peace Agreement. In reaffirming Resolution 1022, however, Resolution 1074 contemplates the continued blocking of assets potentially subject to conflicting claims and encumbrances until provision is made to address them under applicable law, including claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. The resolution of the crisis and conflict in the former Yugoslavia that has resulted from the actions and policies of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and of the Bosnian Serb forces and the authorities in the territory that they controlled, will not be complete until such time as the Peace Agreement is implemented and the terms of Resolution 1022 have been met. Therefore, I have continued for another year the national emergency declared on May 30, 1992, as expanded in scope on October 25, 1994, and will continue to enforce the measures adopted pursuant thereto.

I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal with respect to the measures

against the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and the Bosnian Serb forces, civil authorities, and entities, as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 16, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 17. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## Remarks to the Arkansas State Democratic Committee in Little Rock, Arkansas

*July 18, 1998*

Thank you very much. It's good to see you. It's wonderful to be home. I always learn something new. When Bill Bristow was giving that speech, I said to myself, ''I am sitting here watching before my very eyes the broadening of the base of the Democratic Party.'' He now has got every math teacher in Arkansas committed forever. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much, Bill. I thought that was a terrific—didn't he do a great job? Let's give him another hand. I thought that was great, really great. [*Applause*]

I want to thank Blanche Lincoln, Bill Bristow, Judy Smith for being here and for their candidacies; Kurt Dilday, my longtime friend; Mark Pryor. I thank Congressman Vic Snyder for the wonderful job he does in Washington every day. And in his absence—I know he had to be away at a funeral today—I want to thank Marion Berry, too. He has done a wonderful job, especially for farmers.

I thank Jimmie Lou and Gus Wingfield and Charlie Daniels and all the people who have kept the light going in the Democratic Party and State office; Judge Corbin. I'm so pleased to see many people running for office. You know, I had mixed feelings about this term limit issue when it came along, but I felt a little better when Mary Anne Salmon decided to run for the legislature, and I'm glad to see her back there.

I want to say to all of you, too, I read that article in the paper today, and I want to comment a little more about it, ask you whether my Presidency had been good or bad for the State. And the one example on the negative side they had was what happened in a recent transportation bill where even the Transportation Secretary from Arkansas could not implement the plain recommendation of the study because our neighbor from Mississippi jerked away funding for I–69. No one pointed out in the Arkansas Democrat article that that would not have happened if we had a Democratic Congress—that would not have occurred.

I say that because, what the heck, I never get to be partisan, and it's nice to be home. [*Laughter*] And also because it's true. [*Laughter*] Let me say to all of you, I am profoundly grateful for everything you've done for me and for our family. Hillary just got back from a remarkably successful tour, the first of our millennium tours where we're trying to save the treasures of the United States as we approach the year 2000. She went—first of all, we began by trying to save the Star-Spangled Banner. And then she took a remarkable tour through a lot of our country's heritage: Thomas Edison's home, Harriet Tubman's home, George Washington's military headquarters, and then to Seneca Falls, New York, where the women's movement began 150 years ago, where the declaration of sentiments by 68 women and 32 men who had these radical ideas, like women ought to be able to vote—[*laughter*]—run for office, own the clothes on their back. We've come a long way. And she asked me to tell you hello.

And I just want all of you to know, too, that I think quite often of that day in October nearly 7 years ago now, when I stood on the steps of the old State Capitol—many of you were there—and said that I wanted to build a better future for our children. And I want to quote—I wrote this down—usually when I come home I feel free to speak without notes, but I did want to write this down—nearly 7 years ago, this is really the test—''to restore the American dream, to fight for the forgotten middle class, to provide more

opportunity, insist on more responsibility, and create a greater sense of community for our great country.''

Now, there are some things, it seems to me, that are fairly clear and difficult to debate. And I think it's important when we evaluate the coming campaigns of Blanche Lincoln, Vic Snyder, Judy Smith, Bill Bristow, Kurt Dilday, Mark Pryor, and others to remember what America was like 7 years ago. We had high unemployment, rising crime and welfare rates, increasing social division, no clear vision driving the country at home or abroad preparing us for the 21st century. And Washington was doing what I thought it had done too much of before, and what I still hate to see: they were having increasingly harsh political debates in terms that didn't make a lick of sense to most of us who lived out here in the country.

There were the standard debates about, well, the Government is the problem; the Government is the answer. No one I knew believed either thing. I couldn't figure out anybody who believed it until they got into Washington, DC. Everybody had to be a conservative or a liberal, and if you had a different position, somehow there was something wrong with you because it required the people interpreting you to America, to think about it. And the people driving the politics of the Nation's Capital didn't like it.

But we came forward in that campaign in '91 and '92 with a set of new ideas. We had new approaches to the economy, to education, to crime, to welfare, to the environment, to foreign policy, to the whole idea of Government. It seemed to me that the answer was that we ought to look at Government as our partner in building the American future and that the rule of Government ought to be to give the tools to solve their own problems, to build strong communities and families, and to create the conditions in which that could be possible.

No one thought Government could solve all the problems, but to pretend that by getting out of the way, we'd all be better off would be to violate the very insight of the Founding Fathers, who said they formed a Government in the first place because we could not do alone some of the things that were necessary for America to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

And now, we've had a few years to evaluate the results. So when people ask you, ''Has it made a difference?''—let me ask you this: If on Inauguration Day in 1993, someone that had told you that within 5½ years America would have 16 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, the highest homeownership in history with the smallest Government in 35 years, would you have said, ''I will accept that and be glad for the next 5 years for what's going on in America?'' [*Applause*]

And along the way, with the HOPE scholarships, the tax credits for college, the reformed student loan program, 300,000 more work-study positions, we can literally say we've opened the doors to college to anybody who's willing to work for it.

We have the highest childhood immunization rates in history. We've added 5 million children to the ranks of the health insured—we're in the process of doing that. We protected the pensions of millions and millions of Americans and made it easier for people working for small business or for themselves to take out pensions and to get health insurance; 12½ or 13 million people have taken time off from their job without getting fired when a baby was born or a parent was sick because of the family and medical leave bill. We raised the minimum wage and are trying to do it again to try to help people on the lower end of the economic ladder who are working hard. And we gave a big tax cut in 1993, worth about $1,000 a year today, to working families with incomes under $30,000.

We have 1,000 colleges in America involved in sending their students into our schools to make sure all of our kids can read well by the time they get out of the third grade. We have 100,000 young people now—just at 100,000—who served in the AmeriCorps program, working all over America, including in Arkansas. And I see kids from Arkansas all over America when I travel around, helping to solve the problems of this country at the grassroots level and

earning money for college. Our country is a better, stronger, more united place than it was in 1992. You helped to make it possible, and you ought to be proud of it.

But here's the main point I want to make today, in behalf of Blanche and Bill and all our other candidates up here, in behalf of the record that Vic Snyder has already begun to establish and the efforts that Marion Berry is making. You've been awful good to me, and you made me feel great as a person when I came in. And I appreciate being given some responsibility for the good things that have happened. And I think there is a connection between what we have done and what has occurred, even though, as always, the American people themselves deserve most of the credit, as is always true in a free society. But the changes we made, the decisions we made had consequences.

The point I want to make to you as Democrats in Arkansas, thinking about your State, these elections, and your country's future, is it's not just important to get the right people; it matters if you're doing the right things. If you say, all that matters is that you have the right people, then every election is a new story, and people can say, ''Oh well, Bill Clinton gave a speech,'' or ''this, that, or the other thing'' or, ''He was a pretty good leader; he could take a lot of heat.'' You may have seen, by the way, the other day in Florida, Sylvester Stallone gave me the gloves, the boxing gloves he used in ''Rocky''—[*laughter*]—and I said it was a good thing, because I proved I could take a punch for the last 6 years, and I was ready to deliver a few now. I thought it was a good idea. [*Laughter*]

What I want you to focus on today, because it really matters to the case you're going to make here between now and November, is two things are important: You have to get good people, but you have to do the right things. These things happen because we've done the right things, and there are honest, principled disagreements at home and in Washington about the right things.

We've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years. And they're still trying to stop my efforts to put 100,000 police on the street. I mean, it's unbelievable. We have proved what works in education, and yet, they're still saying no to smaller classes, no to better school buildings, no to so many of our efforts to improve the education of our children.

We have proved we can grow the economy and improve the environment. And they're still trying to weaken our efforts to protect the environment, even though, I might have said, while all this economic good news is occurring; the water is cleaner; the air is cleaner; the food is safer; we have more toxic waste dumps cleaned up in 4 years, our first 4 years, than they did in 12; and we set aside more land in perpetuity than any administrations except Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. So we've proved you could do that, but there's still an assault on the environment.

And all this rhetoric about how perfectly terrible Government is—well, when they had control of it, it was bigger than it is now but not as good.

This is real important. If you want to go out and make an argument for why Bill Bristow or any Democrat should be Governor, for what Attorney General Mark Pryor would do working with like-minded Democrats, for why it would make a difference if Judy Smith were in Congress, and for why one Republican from Arkansas is more than enough in the United States Senate, you've got to know what you're talking about. You have to understand that there are really consequences. I'm telling you it makes a difference.

We're not in this old debate anymore. It's the real world now. People need to see things unfolding as they are. Not all this are you anti-Government or pro-Government? Are you liberal or conservative? What do you stand for? Or what is your education policy? What is your health care policy? Are you for the health care bill of rights, or not? Do you believe that everybody in an HMO ought to have the right to an emergency room service if they need it, ought to have a right to a specialist if they need it?

You've been seeing all the press we're getting in Washington on that. We're bringing in all of these people; we're talking about the horror stories, all the doctors pleading and pleading and pleading with the insurance companies, do this procedure, that procedure, the other procedure. They take 90 days

or 180 days. The time the procedure gets approved, it's too late, and the people die.

We had a woman who spends her life working in a medical office, calling, trying to get authorization for procedures. She broke down and cried at this hearing I had the other day, this meeting, saying, ''I'm just so sick and tired of telling people that they can't have the health care my doctor is begging to give them.''

We had a hearing in Washington last week. We had two brave Republicans show up with all the Democrats in the House and several in the Senate, saying we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. And one of these Republicans was a doctor. And I said, ''You know, we Democrats, now, what we're trying to do, we want to put progress over partisanship. We welcome anybody to come who agrees with our ideas.'' And this brave doctor from Iowa stood up there and said that—he had been introduced as a doctor who in his spare time would go to Central America and help children with cleft palates and fix them, so they wouldn't be disfigured for life. And then he showed a picture of such a child, and the whole room gasps. And he said, ''This child is not from Central America. This child is from the United States of America, and this child was denied coverage for fixing his cleft palate on the theory that it was cosmetic surgery.'' And then he showed another picture where the kid got fixed anyway and how good-looking the child was, and everybody cheered; we all felt good.

Now, the fact is that the Democrats up there are for a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, and the leadership of the other party are opposing it. The fact is the Democrats are for giving the States and the Governors and the legislatures and the teachers help for smaller classes, for better school buildings, for more charter schools, for greater investments of all kinds. And by and large, our whole agenda is being opposed by the leaders of the other party.

The fact is, our party is in Washington working hard to prove that we can grow the economy and preserve the environment. After this summer, don't you believe the climate is warming up? [*Laughter*] Don't you think Al Gore was right after all? [*Applause*] We now have ways of measuring temperature changes for over 500 years. The 5 hottest years in history, the 1990's—in over 500 years, the 5 hottest years in history—1997, the hottest year. This is going to be hotter.

I did my radio address today on things we're trying to do to help farmers. We have this bizarre situation in America now where worldwide bumper crops and financial weakness in Asia, and for many of our farmers, heat or flood or pestilence have created this crazy condition where prices are low because there are big supplies and fewer buyers, and they don't have much of a crop anyway. North Dakota, farm income down 90 percent from last year—90 percent.

And so we're doing what we can to, first of all, purchase a lot more food and give it to countries where people are hungry. Secondly, I presented to Congress a number of other ideas to immediately release hundreds of million of dollars that would raise farm income.

But anyway, we're having this big discussion up there. Now, we either are going to do these things or we're not. But in a larger sense, I want to make the point that the climate is changing. When I was in China recently I spoke to the American Chamber of Commerce—this is not the Democratic Party—the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. [*Laughter*] And I got two spontaneous ovations. One was when I talked about climate change and how we had to work with the Chinese to see them grow their economy without using energy in the same way we did; otherwise, we could burn up the atmosphere, and it would be hard for us to breathe, which is already a big problem over there.

Now, I'm telling you, if you look at what's happening to the climate, if you look at what happened in Florida—you saw all those fires in Florida. Florida had the wettest winter, the driest spring in history. Then June in Florida was hotter than any July and August. And if you've ever been to Florida in July and August, that's saying something—the hottest month ever. Things are changing.

Now, we can put our heads in the sand, or we can say we're going to figure out how Americans solve this problem. The leaders of the other party, in one of their committees they have voted to deny me the right to use

any funds, even to have seminars about this problem and talk to the American people about it.

You know, I never will forget the day some young person who worked for me said, ''Denial is not just a river in Egypt.'' [*Laughter*] And there are lots of examples like this—in health care, in education, in the environment, in economic policy.

In economic policy—yes, we've got a good economy. There are still towns in the delta that need help. There are still neighborhoods in our cities that need help. There are still Native American reservations out West that need help. We've got a whole agenda that says we ought to bring the benefits of this economic moment of golden prosperity to everybody in America and give everybody a chance to be a part of it. And so far it has not been embraced in Congress by the leaders of the other party.

So I ask you about all this. What is this, a nightclub? [*Laughter*] I will now sing ''Danny Boy,'' and you will applaud at the right time. [*Laughter*] Somebody leaned against the wall there last night. Somebody was up too late last night over there by the wall, they just leaned against the wall and nodded out. [*Laughter*]

We're laughing; we're having a good time, but I want you to be serious between now and November. I have tried to put progress over partisanship. All of you know me. You know I work with anybody who wants to work with me. And you get it, what's going on, and I can tell by the way you clapped before at the appropriate moment. [*Laughter*]

But let me tell you, in the end what matters is what happens in the lives of the American people. The Democrats will be rewarded if we do the right things, if we have the right consequences, and if we convince people that it's not just a matter of name-calling and labeling, but whether you have the right ideas.

I want you to think about it. We've got new leadership in the party. I thank Vaughn McQuary and all the other folks that are coming in here and trying to get this thing up and going. And I like to see your enthusiasm; I'm glad you're here in such large numbers. But if somebody asks you why you're a Democrat, why you support the President, why we've succeeded in the last 5½ years, what we would do if given the Governor's office and the attorney general's office, you need to have answers. And you need to be able to tell people in ways that are not hateful or small or mean spirited. We don't need to respond to them in kind, as they have to us. We need to remember our scriptural lessons.

We need instead to lift our visions and lift the vision of the people and talk to them about what we're going to do. While I was listening to Bill Bristow talk—you know, we can do a lot in Washington to help education. But the constitution of almost every State in the Union makes it clear that education is the primary responsibility of the States and the communities and the schools.

Now, let me ask you something. No one here, I take it, would dispute the proposition that we have the finest system of higher education in the world in America. No one disputes that. Otherwise, why do people come here from all over the world every year to get into it? And no one would seriously assert that America's elementary and secondary schools are the finest in the world—but they could be, and in points they are, and from time to time they manifest that.

You look over the horizon and you ask yourself, what are the big challenges of the future? The first thing that comes to mind is we've got to prove we can have the finest elementary and secondary education for all our kids without regard to their income, their background, their race, or their region in the world.

Now, if you believe that, then every time you're in the coffee shop, every time you're on the street, every time you're talking to somebody, you have to say to them, ''You cannot make these decisions in November. You cannot cast a vote for Governor; you cannot cast a vote for Congress; you cannot cast a vote for the Senate; you cannot make these decisions without asking yourself, who's got the best ideas for education; who's best for my children or my grandchildren; what's Arkansas going to look like 50 years from now?'' You know this is true.

In the Congress—let me give you another example—a huge issue—I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, and if present rates of

birth, immigration, and retirement continue, by the time all of us get retired, there will only be about two Americans working for every person drawing Social Security. Unless we make some changes and start to make them now, by the time this happens, we will have an unsustainable situation in which we will either have to have a huge cut in the Social Security benefits of retirees, or a huge increase in the taxes on our kids, thereby undermining their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Every baby boomer I know is determined to avoid both these consequences. Now, are there ways we can do it? You bet there are. But we have to start now, which is why I have said, let's don't spend any of this surplus, even on stuff Democrats like. Let's don't give any tax cuts, even tax cuts Democrats like, until we save Social Security for the 21st century. That's important.

Believe me, this is a huge issue. Some of their leaders are saying, ''Well, now they estimate we'll have a $63 billion surplus this year, and that means the surpluses out in the years ahead are going to be even bigger than we thought. And we can't use all that money. We need a big tax cut now.'' And, oh, it just happens to be right here before the election.

Well, I know it's right here before the election, but let me remind you, man, we've been waiting for 29 years for a balanced budget. [*Laughter*] It took me 5½ years to get it done because there was a $290 billion deficit when we got up there. And we won't have a balanced budget or a surplus officially until the new fiscal year starts on October 1st, after we close our books at midnight on September 30th. It looks to me like, after 29 years of being in the red, after the years of 1981 to 1993 when we quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years, it looks to me like we could wait just one year until we figured out how to save Social Security and stop assuming that we were going to have a surplus that hadn't even materialized yet. I'd just like to see the bank account just for a day or two. Wouldn't you? [*Applause*]

Now, if you believe that, that's an important idea. You need to know if you believe that. And you need to tell your friends and neighbors who aren't as political as you are or maybe not even Democrats—and maybe they're independents, maybe they're Republicans, but they're thinking about this—look, you got to think about this. This is not just where you go in and vote the way you normally do. We're in a time of enormous change. We didn't just elect the right people in 1992; we began to do the right things. And it is profoundly important that we do the right things in the future: saving Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century; making education the best in the world; proving we can grow the economy and preserve the environment; taking care of our health care system so that we don't keep ferreting people out and we, instead, keep bringing people in.

And let me just mention one other thing, that Arkansas people I think understand more, partly because we have so many farmers here. One of the biggest problems we've got now, looming ahead, is our trade deficit's gotten real big. Now, why has our trade deficit gotten real big? Because the economic crisis in Asia, primarily. What's happened? Well, when the people you're doing business with run out of money, one of the things that they do is mark down the things that are selling you so it's cheaper, and they hope you buy more of it. And they still don't have any money to buy what you've been selling them.

Now, I have been trying for 6 months—now, this is a hard one, except for people in agriculture who understand it—I've been trying for 6 months to get the Congress just to pay America's fair share to the International Monetary Fund. And there are a lot of politicians up there making those election year speeches, saying, ''Oh, man, this is just a big bailout to the foreigners, and why should we be doing this?''

We contributed, along with other nations, to this fund to stabilize and reform economies when they get in trouble. Why should we do it? Well, 30 percent of the growth that you just applauded for when I came in and I started reeling off all those statistics came because we were selling more of our stuff to other countries. We have 4 percent of the world's people in America; we have 20 percent of the world's income. If we want to keep doing better, we've got to sell something to the other 96 percent. And we have

to expect them to keep doing better, too; otherwise, they not only won't want to, they won't be able to buy more of our things.

That's what this International Monetary Fund issue is about in Washington, DC. If we want our neighbors to buy our products, they've got to have the money to do it. And when they get in trouble because they're developing their societies and their economic systems, this whole fund was set up not as a bailout, not as a gift, not as a welfare program, but as an instrument to force reform and revitalization.

These are things worth debating. You know, there's a big debate here in Arkansas because of what some of the elected officials said about whether I should have gone to China. I take it there's not as much debate now as there was before I went. And I hope there's not. But let me ask you—so we've got to decide that. This matters.

You look all over the world. We've got people that differ with us. They have different religious systems, different political systems, different cultural values. We have to decide when we deal with them and when we don't. Now, if people do things we really think are terrible, should we have economic sanctions? I think we should. But look what happened when I put economic sanctions on India and Pakistan. We pointed out, well, we don't like it if it's on food. And we say, well, we don't like it if it's on food because you shouldn't punish people when they're eating. But we also don't like it because it hurts our farm income in a bad year. So we want a mixed approach, where we kept trying to reach out and work with people.

China has got 1.2 billion people. They're going to have a lot to do with how your children and grandchildren live. And we ought to try to get along with them and work with them and build a common future with them if we can. And we ought to have a way of expressing our honest disagreements when we have to. And you can only do both of those things if you're dealing with people. This is worth debating.

The last point I want to make is this—something a long way from Arkansas usually is my foreign policy job—a lot of the challenges I face. But you just look around the world at the things I've dealt with since you sent me to Washington. Last week three little Irish-Catholic boys, killed in a firebomb in Northern Ireland because they're still fighting over religious battles that have roots that are 600 years old. In Kosovo, a place a lot of Americans still have a little trouble finding on a map, we're worried about a new destabilizing war breaking out because the Albanians and the Serbs can't get along—the same thing that happened in Bosnia. In the Middle East, we still have trouble because we can't get people to take just one more step to bring the Arabs and the Jews, the Israelis, together. But we're working on it.

When Hillary and I went to Africa, we went to Rwanda, where two different tribal peoples, that most Americans aren't even aware exist in a country that has been coherent for hundreds of years, got in a fight, and 900,000 people or so died in a matter of 100 days. Why? Because as we know from our own painful civil rights history, getting people to be pitted against each other because of their differences is deeply ingrained in the human psyche and easy to bring up and very often profitable for people who seek power.

And if you contrast that with what we are trying to achieve in America today, where we're a more and more diverse country, from more and more different backgrounds, in a world that is getting smaller and smaller because of technology, this country's best days are clearly still ahead. But we have to do the right things as well as elect the right people. And it's time the American people and the people of our State actually had to think about that. What are the right things to do in education in Arkansas? What are the right things to do in health care? What are the right things to do in economic policy? What is the right policy in building one community, one State, and one Nation, across all the lines that divide us?

I have tried to give the Democratic Party new ideas based on old values. I have tried to persuade the American people that the consequences that are good that are coming today are due to them, but also due to the fact that in Washington we have done the right things.

Now, this is a very important election. It's important for that little child there and all the kids in this State. And it's very important

that the citizens of our State not do what people so often do when times are good, which is just relax and say, ''Just leave everything more or less the way it is,'' because when times are good but changing rapidly, you have to use the good times and the confidence people have to deal with the underlying challenges, and because, as all of us who are older here know, no conditions last forever. If we can't use these good times to deal with our long-term challenges, when will we ever do it?

So I ask you—I'm glad to see you; I've had a good time; I've enjoyed the jibes and the cheering and the yelling. But I want you to keep clearly in mind that we have a future to build for these children. You've got a State to build and a country to build. And the reason we're in the shape we're in today is because we had good ideas that we implemented that had good consequences. And the reason that I will be a member of this party until the day I die is that more often than not, we have been the instrument in this century and in my lifetime in fulfilling the vision that the Founding Fathers gave us to always deepen our freedom and always perfect our Union.

So I want you to help me. I want you to elect these people. I want you to work. And I want you to go out there and literally grab your friends and neighbors by the shoulder and say, ''Let's talk about this. Don't go through this election in a fog. Don't say, 'Oh, everything is fine; let's just keep on going the way we're going.' '' Think about where we are as a State and Nation. And think about where we were in 1992, and I think you'll have quite a good case to make.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the auditorium at the Embassy Suites Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Arkansas gubernatorial candidate Bill Bristow; senatorial candidate Blanche Lambert Lincoln; Judy Smith, candidate for Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District; Kurt Dilday, candidate for Lt. Gov.; Mark Pryor, State attorney general candidate; Jimmie Lou Fisher, State treasurer; Gus Wingfield, State auditor; Charlie Daniels, State land commissioner; Arkansas Supreme Court Associate Justice Donald L. Corbin; Mary Anne Salmon, executive director, Clinton Arkansas Office; and Vaughn McQuary, chair, Democratic Party of Arkansas.

## The President's Radio Address

*July 18, 1998*

Good morning. I'm speaking to you from my home State of Arkansas, a State that, like many across our Nation, depends heavily on agriculture. America's farm communities are more than a critical part of our economy. They are places where American values have deep roots and flourish: faith and family, hard work and respect for neighbors, devotion to community. Every American has a stake in the strength of rural America.

With family incomes rising, the lowest unemployment in nearly 30 years, the highest homeownership rate in history, most Americans today are enjoying the dividends of the strongest American economy in a generation. Unfortunately, life on the farm is not so easy today.

For 5½ years, I have worked to expand opportunity for our farm families. We've strengthened crop insurance, provided critical disaster assistance to ranchers who have lost livestock, doubled our use of export credits from last year, improved our school lunch programs by buying surplus commodities, and worked to diversify the sources of enterprise and income in rural America.

But with the economic crisis in Asia weakening some of our best customers for farm products, and with strong world crop production bringing prices down, and with farmers facing floods and fires and drought and crop disease, our farmers face a difficult and dangerous moment. Many farm families have been pushed off their land, and many more could suffer the same fate unless our Nation revives its commitment to helping farmers weather hard times.

When I signed the 1996 farm bill, at a time when farm prices were very strong, I made clear my concern that there was not an adequate safety net for farmers. The bill had to be signed to avoid putting our farmers in an even more difficult situation under the old 1949 farm bill. But sooner or later, prices were bound to fall so low that we would need that safety net. That day has come. With prices for many farm products plummeting, America's farm families face a crisis, and we have an obligation to help.

At the same time we see a very different crisis in some parts of the world, a crisis of hunger, where too many families face famine and starvation. For decades, American Presidents have addressed such crises. That's what I'm doing today.

Today I am acting within my full authority as President to take immediate steps to help our family farmers and to reduce crop surpluses at home. Within days, the United States Government will begin to purchase more than 80 million bushels of wheat, which could lift prices as much as 13 cents a bushel. With this wheat, I've instructed Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to launch a new food aid initiative to press the world struggle against hunger.

Secretary Glickman, working with our Agency for International Development, will use the authority granted to him by Congress to oversee substantial donations of U.S. wheat to countries where the need is greatest—places such as Sudan and Indonesia. Donations will also be made to private humanitarian groups. All told, this is in the best humanitarian tradition, an action based on human need to help save lives as it opens new links of trade with these nations. It's good for American farmers, good for our economy, and it's the right thing to do.

This effort will provide a much needed boost to U.S. wheat farmers, but we can and must do more. I'm pleased that this week Congress took prompt bipartisan action to exempt agricultural trade from U.S. sanctions against India and Pakistan in the wake of their nuclear test. But more congressional action must follow. We should expand eligibility for direct and guaranteed loans, extend marketing loans when crop prices are low or transportation problems make marketing difficult, give farmers more flexibility to plant other crops when their primary crops fail. And above all, we must keep the market for our products growing by paying our dues to the International Monetary Fund so that we can stabilize and help to reform Asian economies that are such important customers for America's farmers and for our other exporters who are responsible for 30 percent of the remarkable growth we've enjoyed since 1993.

In my State of the Union Address, I urged Congress to do this for the sake of our own economy. Six months later, the need is greater than ever. We must pay our dues to the International Monetary Fund so that our people can sell their products abroad.

The steps I take today are in the best tradition of America. From our beginnings, we have recognized that the agricultural tradition strengthens the national community. In the depths of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt said, ''No cracked Earth, no blistering Sun, no burning wind are a permanent match for the indomitable American farmers who inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity, and their courage.'' Today, at a moment of broad prosperity for our Nation, we have an obligation to expand opportunity for all Americans as we move strongly into the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:58 p.m. on July 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 18. This transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

## Remarks at an Arkansas Victory '98 Dinner in Little Rock

*July 18, 1998*

Well, first of all, like all of you, I want to thank Maurice and Betty for once again being there for all of us and having us in their home, giving us a view of the river. I'm trying to get accustomed to it. In a couple of years, I'm going to have a library about a mile down the road there, and I'm going to be looking up this river, just like all the rest of you. I also want to thank Vaughn for being willing to come in here and go to work for our party and give us some energy and direction.

Today I had a great, great morning with the State Democratic Committee and a number of other people who came, and I tried to get them revved up and also remind them that the stakes in this election are quite high and we need to go to work on it. I feel very good about our candidates; I feel very good about the issues. I think the main thing we have to recognize is that in the non-Presidential years, voter turnout tends to go down,

and that's not good for Democrats—number one. Number two, when times are good, the tendency of any people in any society is to sort of relax and think, ''Well, why rock the boat?''

If you look at the newspaper, however, on any given day, if you analyze, among other things, the turmoil in Asia, you see, however, that we're living in a very dynamic time. Things can change overnight in a thousand ways. And my whole argument to the American people and the argument that I want to see brought home here in our State is that this is a time when we should be bearing down and moving forward and being even more committed to doing the things that need to be done to get our people ready for a new century and a completely different way of living and relating to the rest of the world. If you can't do it when times are good, then you're not going to do it. And we need to do that.

The other point I tried to make today, which I will make very briefly, is that thanks to the 22d amendment, I'm not going to be a candidate anymore. But I think it's very important that people understand—that the voters understand—and this election gives us an opportunity to—is it's not just a question of putting certain people in and having good things happen; it really matters what your ideas are, what your policies are. There is a connection between what we do in public office and what consequences flow in the country and in the world.

And that's the argument we've got to make. There are real clear, unambiguous, powerful differences on State issues and national issues between Democrats and Republicans. And we are now no longer vulnerable to the kind of reversed plastic surgery they used to do on us at every election. That is, no one can say we're not responsible on the budget or the economy or welfare or crime or foreign policy or national defense or all those other things they used to say. So now people are free to take a clear-eyed view of the future. And it's very important that all of us use these funds you've given and use our personal contacts to say, ''Listen, this wasn't just a matter of Bill Clinton getting elected President. The Democratic Party has a bunch of new ideas; we've put them into action and they worked.'' And they are still relevant, these differences, to every race in the State and every race for Congress that's going to be held this fall.

If the American people believe that, we're going to have an historic upset of the patterns that normally prevail in these midterm elections. So that's what we're going to use these funds for.

I believe that we can do quite well indeed because there are people like you all over America that feel the same way you do. But just don't forget, we have succeeded in convincing people that America is successful, and we're moving in the right direction. And I've been the luckiest person in the world. The American people have continued to support me in the face of unprecedented attacks.

But that's not the most important thing for this election. The most important thing is people realize—is we actually had a plan; we had ideas; we had policies; we had a plan. We implemented them, and the results were good. That's why things are good in America. And that's why they should support all of these other Democrats that are running in all the State offices and the races for Congress.

It is logical, and it is clear, but in good times, sometimes people just don't think about it. That's the case we have to make. We've got all the way between now and November to make it, and we certainly have a very impressive array of candidates. For all of you who are running and all those who were here who are now over at the other event, I want to say I appreciate the fact that you've been willing to offer yourselves. Sometimes I know it's hard to do, especially when you see what happens to people who are successful. [*Laughter*] But you did, and I'm grateful. And I think we're going to be very grateful on election night in November. And I thank you very much.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Maurice Mitchell and his wife, Betty; and State Democratic Party Chair Vaughn McQuary. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in Little Rock

*July 18, 1998*

Blanche, that was a great talk. And I can't believe you remember that, but it is a true story. After we walked on up the steps—that story you were telling—the Irish Ambassador looked at me kind of funny. I said, "Listen, those guys are from my home State, and I'm absolutely certain they're Irish." [*Laughter*] So he was fine. [*Laughter*] People have learned to make allowances for my Arkansas ways in Washington, you know.

I want to thank Senator Pryor for a lot of things, for being my friend—he and Barbara were in the snows of New Hampshire with Hillary and me and our campaign—for many years of service in a stunning, wonderful, decent way, and for coming home and not only not losing interest but actually generating more interest and energy in the future of the children of Arkansas. And we are all very much in his debt that he is doing that, and I thank you, sir.

I want to thank all the officeholders and the candidates who are here. I thank especially Congressman Snyder and Congressman Berry who have been great friends to me and to our administration and to our cause. And I want to ask you all to do everything you can to help Vic Snyder win reelection. He is a truly exceptional human being, and we need more people like him in the Congress.

I ask for your support for Bill Bristow and his running mate, and Judy Smith, and of course, Mark Pryor. Every time I look at Mark Pryor I think, you know, the first time I saw that guy he wasn't old enough to vote. [*Laughter*] Actually, I'm not sure he knew what voting was the first time I saw him.

But it's wonderful to see all these new people coming in, all this new blood, all these young people coming in. I'm very grateful. But the most important thing of all—I'd like to acknowledge all the relatives of Blanche who are here and the other six people in the audience. [*Laughter*] You know, I thought I'd done pretty good; I had relatives in 15 counties. She makes me look like a piker. [*Laughter*]

Actually, it's great to see this election be a family affair, not only for her family members but for all the rest of you. And we've had a good time tonight. I've enjoyed visiting with everybody, and all of you have heard me speak a thousand times anyway, and you probably think that everything that needs to be said has already been said, but not everyone has had the chance to say it yet. But there are a couple of things I would like for you to know.

First of all, I would like for you to know that not everybody in the U.S. Senate is like Dale Bumpers and David Pryor. And I don't mean in terms of party or philosophy. And I see a couple of people nodding their head back there who have to come to Washington and lobby all the time.

I would like for you to know that maybe because we're from here, but for whatever reason, people like Blanche and me, we sort of had this apparently naive idea that if we went to Washington, we'd just sit down with everybody who's interested in solving a problem without regard to their party or where they were from, and we'd figure out how to do it just the way we do at home. We thought that people would always put progress over partisanship. And you can tell by the stories that were told that we believe that politics is about people not power.

We think the Founding Fathers believed that, too, by the way. If you go back and read the Constitution, power is given to people who are in politics temporarily and in limited fashion for the sole purpose of advancing the cause of the rest of the folks that live in this country.

And you know, I went to one of these events in Washington, DC, that the press puts on every year, and it was a kind of a toast and roast, and everyone makes fun of me, so I get to say a few wisecracky things. And I alluded to the fact that some people have criticized Hillary and me for traveling abroad from time to time. And I said that we always liked to go to a new country and that we particularly enjoyed the opportunity to get a visa to come to Washington, DC, and see how a completely different culture lives. [*Laughter*]

I say that to make a very serious point. There are two reasons you should send

Blanche to the Senate. One is because the ideas and the direction that we and our party now represent are good for America. Two is because we still believe politics is about people not power. We still believe progress should be put over partisanship. And I'll say again, not everybody does.

I'll just give you a couple of examples. First of all, let me say, I'm really grateful to all of you for giving me the chance to serve, for giving me permission to run in '91. And I think that you must be pleased that our country is in the shape it's in, that we do have the lowest—every time you hear something about it, I hope you take some measure of personal pride and ownership when you hear that we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the highest homeownership in history, and, oh, by the way, the Federal Government is the smallest—under Democrats, not Republicans—the smallest it's been in 35 years.

Now—but we did not do it by posturing, by putting power over people and politics, by elevating partisanship over progress. We did it in just the reverse way. In other words, I have tried to work with like-minded people to get something done in Washington that would elevate the lives of the American people and the future of our children. And I'm telling you, you cannot possibly underestimate the enormous significance of every single seat in the United States Senate, not only for having the right ideas and doing the right things, but for doing it in the right way.

And a lot of you have been kind enough to come up and say, ''Well, gosh, Bill, you look like you're having a good time; you look pretty good.'' I mean, I don't know what you all expected. [*Laughter*] Did you think they'd wheel me in here in a gurney tonight? [*Laughter*] Listen, you prepared me well. This is no big deal. You know what the deal is; I know what the deal is. I'm working for the American people and their future, and we're all fine because we are determined to take this country into the 21st century in a way that befits our heritage and that honors our children.

I want you to think about this. There really are differences here. We don't see the world in the same way as many of the Washington Republicans. I make a big distinction between Republicans that I come across all over America in different walks of life.

I'll just give you one example. We had an incredible event a couple of days ago in Washington to endorse the passage of a very strong Patients' Bill of Rights, because there are more and more Americans who are insured by HMO's, and because they have cost pressures of all kinds, and because increasingly doctors decisions are being overridden or disregarded when it comes to emergency room treatment or specialists or a whole range of other things.

So I appointed this quality medical care commission, had all different kinds of folks on it from all sectors of our health care society including insurers. And they recommended that we have this Patients' Bill of Rights so that people could have some enforceable way of making sure that when it came right down to it, especially in life-threatening conditions, that these health care decisions were made by doctors.

So we said we're going to have a big event about this. Democrats in the House came; Democrats in the Senate came. Two Republicans showed up. And I honor them. But their real problem is they don't act like they're from Washington, DC; they still act like they're, in one case, Long Island; in another case, Iowa.

One of them has a terrible problem: He's a doctor; he knows what the facts are. It's an enormous burden, you know. [*Laughter*] It's hard to live in that nether neverworld if you actually know what the facts are. So here's this Republican doctor up here with a bunch of Democratic Congressmen, and it had been pointed out that when he wasn't in Congress, because he was a physician, he would often go to Central America and help to fix the cleft palates of young children so that they could have normal lives. So this doctor holds up a picture of a young boy with a cleft palate. And everybody gasped in the room because it was so awful. And he said, ''The problem is this young man is not from Central America; this young man is from the United States of America, and he was denied

the procedure to fix his face because it was deemed by an accountant to be cosmetic.'' Then he held up a picture of the boy with his face fixed, and everybody cheered.

Now, why am I here at this event talking to you about what a Republican Congressman from Iowa said? Because all of us who were Democrats were cheering. Why? Because our country comes first and people come first and progress and moving forward and meeting new challenges come first. But don't you forget, that happened at a caucus of our party because we're for that, and they're not.

We're for an education agenda that gives us the best elementary and secondary schools in the world because we already have the best colleges and universities in the world. We're for smaller classes and higher standards and more teachers in the early grades and hooking up every classroom to the Internet and a bunch of other things that they're not for. They think we're wrong. I think our ideas are right.

I don't see how we can ever make America everything it ought to be, I don't see how we can ever lift up every poor community in this State until we can say with a straight face, ''Yes, we've had the best university system in the world for a long time; now we have a system of elementary and secondary education that is second to none in the world.'' I think we're right about that.

I went all over the country when I was running for President—indeed, long before—and asked all these police officers, I said, ''What's the most important thing you could do to drive the crime rate down?'' And they said two things: Put more police on the street working in the neighborhoods, and give these kids something positive to do to keep them out of trouble in the first place.

Now, we had a few Republicans who voted with us to put 100,000 police on the street, but most of them didn't. And some of them are still trying to undo it and stop it, today, when we've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years. I thank those who are voting with us; but don't forget, it is our party that fought for this and stands for this, and it helped to give us the lowest crime rate in 25 years. And anybody here who's ever been a victim of a crime, there is no more issue—no issue more important.

So I just give you these examples. But to back off—you heard Blanche saying all that stuff about Arkansas values. You know, I used to be embarrassed to talk about that—I'll be honest with you—because my mother raised me not to be self-promotional in any way like that. But I'm telling you, it's real. There is a real and profound difference.

There are times when I wake up in our Nation's Capital, and I deal with people day-in and day-out, and they say one thing one day and then the next day they're trying to basically say that I'm the worst thing since Joe Stalin. The day before we were all working together, hunky-dory, and I said, ''What happened here?'' They said, ''Oh, they got a different poll last night or something.'' [*Laughter*] And I said, ''Hello!''

There is a difference in the parties in Washington, not only in what our ideas are—and I believe ours are better and right, and I think you've got evidence of that now, so you don't have to have a debate about that—but in how we believe people should be treated, what we think it is legitimate to do to try to defeat your enemies, and how we believe we should work with everybody when it comes right down to it, to put the interest of the country first.

I'll just give you one last example, because it meant a lot to me. Blanche wrote me a letter. When I said we hadn't had a surplus for 29 years, we quadrupled the debt of the country from 1981 to 1993, and now we're going to have one—the last thing in the world we need to do is start promising all this money to people in an election year in tax cuts or spending programs until we fix Social Security for the baby boom generation in a way that does not require either the baby boomers, because we're so large, to be poor when we're old, or require our children to be poor and our grandchildren to be worse off because they have to spend so much money to take care of us. And Blanche said, ''I am for that.''

Now, we see everybody—we see other people in the other party saying, ''Oh, I don't know, we're going to have a $60 billion surplus this year. That means it's going to be a lot bigger over the next few years than I

thought, so let's just go on and pass a big tax cut now''—oh, by the way, just before the election. Well, just because I'm not running again doesn't mean I don't remember what it's like to be just before an election.

But folks, we've been waiting for 29 years to get out of the red. It's not even going to happen officially until October 1st. Don't you think at least we ought to look at the bank balance for a week or two before we start spending it again? [*Applause*]

That's another important thing. She will come home and say, ''Look, I know this isn't popular, but I think it's the right thing to do.'' And, believe me, there are a lot of those decisions that have to be made.

So when you leave here tonight, I want you to leave here with a happy heart and in good spirits. I want you to be proud that your country is in good shape. And I want you to be proud of your personal role in helping me to play the part in that, that I've had the chance to play. I want you to be committed to the proposition that now is not the time to relax and lay back and enjoy it but to bear down and deal with the large questions that are still before us on the edge of a new century.

And I want you to remember why you are here for Blanche Lambert, besides the fact that you either love her or are kin to her. [*Laughter*] There are differences in Washington more profound than the differences out here in the country on the issues, and we now have evidence. We've got a 5½-year record about who's right about these ideas.

And even more important, when the chips are down, there are profound differences in those Arkansas values. We believe in people over power, and progress over partisanship. And believe you me, we need a lot more of that in the United States Congress. Send her there, and she'll make you proud.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:39 p.m. in the Robinson Auditorium at the Robinson Center Exhibition Hall. In his remarks, he referred to former Congresswoman Blanche Lambert Lincoln, candidate for U.S. Senate; former Senator David R. Pryor, his wife, Barbara, and his son, Mark, candidate for State attorney general; Arkansas gubernatorial candidate Bill Bristow; Kurt Dilday, candidate for Lt. Gov.; and Judy Smith, candidate for Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District.

## Remarks to the 75th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Teachers in New Orleans, Louisiana

*July 20, 1998*

***The President.*** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen of the AFT, Senator Landrieu, Congressman Jefferson, Secretary Slater. Mayor Morial, thank you for hosting this fine group of America's teachers in this wonderful city.

To President Sandy Feldman and Ed McElroy and your newly elected executive VP, Nat Lacour, and all the officers and people who are here. Let me say, when Sandy was up here giving her introduction, my mind was racing back over lots of events going back to early 1992 when we first went to a school in New York together.

***Audience member.*** Cardozo.

***The President.*** Cardozo, that's right; you were there, weren't you? [*Applause*] Now, anytime I'm talking, if I mention something that gives you an opportunity to flack for your school, you stand up and do it. [*Laughter*] I won't be offended. I think you ought to be proud of what you do and where you work and the children that you're trying to help to prepare for tomorrow.

And when you think about where we were then as a nation and where we are now, I was so concerned because not only was the economy in the doldrums, but our society was becoming more divided; the crime rates were going up; the welfare rolls were exploding; there were tensions among our people; people were looking for racial or ethnic or religious or political reasons to blame other people for the general problems and challenges we shared as Americans.

One of the things that I always admired most about the AFT was that I felt that you have always found the right balance between being passionately devoted to public education and to the welfare and working conditions of teachers, and uncompromising—uncompromising—in your advocacy of high

standards and accountability and educational excellence for every single American child.

Shortly before I came out here, your officers told me that Edie Shanker had decided to give the Medal of Freedom that I awarded to Al to the AFT for safekeeping. I love that. For it was your legacy, your values that he worked so hard to serve. You take good care of it. He earned it, and so did you.

This is a remarkable time in our country's history, a time of prosperity and confidence and breathtaking change if you think about where we are now compared to where we were on the day that I was fortunate enough to be inaugurated President. I don't say that our administration is 100 percent responsible for all the good things that have happened. That would be foolish. In a free society, the people deserve the lion's share of any change that occurs.

But I will say this, we had new ideas and new policies. We said we would take this country in a new direction. And there were consequences to those decisions, just as there will be consequences to the decisions of those who disagree with us if they hold sway.

And I think every single one of you should feel a personal measure of pride if you helped Al Gore and me win those elections in '92 and '96 because of what has happened—every single one of you.

Because when you hear these statistics—I mean, think about this. Compared to 1992, we have 16 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest percentage of our people on welfare in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the highest homeownership in the history of the country, and the smallest National Government in 35 years, and the biggest investment in education in our Nation's history. I am proud of that, and you should be too.

Now, today I want to ask you to look ahead at where we are and what our challenges are. And I want to ask you to help me with a lesson plan for America's future. I know you're mildly acquainted with such things. [*Laughter*] I also know that this union represents people who help you in schools who are not teachers, and I thank all of them, all the support people here who are here. Thank you for your service.

We have to decide what to do with this moment. And I want to talk about education and the role of some other issues. But let me just back up and say, there are three things I want you to think about. First of all, all these numbers and statistics that I mentioned are very rewarding because they represent real positive changes in real peoples' lives: incomes for ordinary people are up; poverty is down, as Sandy said; 90 percent of our kids are immunized; we've virtually opened the doors of college to everyone who will work for it. I'm proud of all that.

But you know and I know that we face some big long-term challenges. And I'd just like to mention a couple of them, because I want you to talk to your students and to the parents and to the people that you work with about them, because people need to understand that just because times are good, it doesn't mean we should all be relaxing—except if you want to go out in the Sun in New Orleans and relax, I'm for it. [*Laughter*] But I don't want it to be a permanent condition for the American people.

Because we have big challenges facing us if we're going to go into the 21st century with the American dream alive for everyone, with America coming together as a community across all of our differences, and with our country leading the world for peace and freedom and prosperity. What are they? Well, let me just mention a few of them.

Number one, we have to save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation. And we have to do it in a way that recognizes that they lift millions and millions and millions of seniors out of poverty, but that as presently constructed, it is not sustainable because when—and I'm the oldest baby boomer, so I can say this—when we retire, at present birth rates and present immigration rates and present retirement rates, there will only be about two people working for every person drawing Social Security. So we have to make some changes. If we make modest changes now, we can avoid drastic changes later. We must do that, and every American must support it. And we must find an American, unified way to do it.

The second thing we have to do is to recognize—as you can see from this sweltering heat—that the Vice President is right: The climate of our country and our globe is changing. The globe is warming. And our principal contribution to it, human beings everywhere, is that we're putting too many greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, primarily because we insist on maintaining Industrial Age patterns of energy use when all the technology available indicates that you don't have to do that to grow an economy.

So we have got to take advantage of the fact that our children are natural environmentalists, to use them, to empower them, to help us all to find a way to save our planet, to improve our environment, even as we grow the economy. I promise you it can be done, but we've got to get people to think differently. This is a huge education issue.

The third thing we have to do is to prove that we can bring the benefits of this great economic recovery to all Americans, not just to those who have it now—in our inner cities, in our rural areas, our farming areas, on our Native American reservations.

The fourth thing we have to do is to persuade the American people that if we're going to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, we have to be farsighted. We have to pay our way in an interdependent world. That means we can't walk away from our investment in the United Nations. We can't walk away from our investment in the International Monetary Fund.

I was just home for the weekend, and I know what a lot of folks at home think. They think, ''Why does Bill Clinton want to spend money on the International Monetary Fund? We've got needs here at home.'' I'll tell you why. Because unless we help to reform and restore growth in the Asian countries, for example, they won't be able to buy our products and 30 percent of our growth—if you like these 16 million new jobs, if you like this low unemployment, if you like the taxes that are flowing into local government for education because of the economy—somebody has got to buy our stuff around the world, and if they don't have any money, they can't buy it. And if they don't have any money, the value of their currency goes down, so their products they sell here are cheaper. So our trade deficit goes up.

If you want us to grow in America, we have to grow together with our friends and neighbors around the world. We have to be responsible partners, and we've got to teach people that.

Just two other quick points. We've got to be able to live together as one America across all the lines that divide us. Many of you teach in school districts where there are children from 20, 40, 60, 80, maybe even 100 different racial and ethnic groups, speaking dozens of different languages as their native tongues. This is a good thing for America in the 21st century, in a global economy, an information age.

If we can overcome the demons of racial and ethnic and religious hatred which are bedeviling the world in our time, from Bosnia and Kosovo to Rwanda, to Northern Ireland, to the Middle East, to the conflict between Greece and Turkey, to the difficulties between India and Pakistan, and if you want your country to lead the world away from all that, I can just say this: In order for America to do good throughout the world, we have to be good at home. We have to be one America.

Finally, the last big challenge that I think we face—big challenge for the 21st century—is providing every single child with world-class excellence in education. Every child; every child. No one anywhere in the world questions that we offer more rich, quality opportunities for people to go on to college than any other country in the world. We've worked very hard to open the doors of college to everybody who will work for it. But no one who is honest would say we don't have serious challenges in our elementary and secondary education. There are all kinds of different arguments about, well, what caused it or what the problems are or what the solutions are.

You and I, by and large, agree on the solutions. But the main thing we've got to agree on is that this is one of the five or six challenges that will shape the America our children and grandchildren will live in, in the 21st century. If you do not want our country to continue to be divided along the lines of income, to continue to grow more unequal,

if you don't want the 21st century to see an America where there are fabulously wealthy, successful people living alongside breathtakingly poor people, isolated in areas where opportunity never reaches, we have to realize that if this is an information age and if the economy is growing by ideas, then it is more important than ever before that educational excellence be universal. And we have to provide that.

Now, I also want to say a few words today about an issue that may seem somewhat mundane to people who've never been in the classroom and faced it, but America has been thinking about it because of all the tragedies in all the schools in the last year or so, and that is the whole issue of school safety and the critical role of a safe classroom and a safe school and a safe schoolyard play in the work that teachers do.

Every day, you work hard to broaden young minds, to unlock their potential, to sharpen skills. You have faith in the possibilities of our children. If you didn't, you wouldn't be doing this, because just about every one of you could be making more money doing something else. If you weren't devoted to our children, you wouldn't be doing this. It keeps you in front of a chalkboard or a keyboard; it keeps you up late at night grading papers and making lesson plans.

We have tried to be a good partner with you, as Sandy said. I have loved working with you to raise standards, to increase accountability, to improve teaching, to give schools the tools and the flexibility they need to reach the national education goals, to try to help make sure all of our children can read and can log on to the Internet and can go on to college.

We now have, I think, a great challenge before us, because in spite of the fact that this agenda is clearly an integral part of America's economic success over the next few years, believe it or not, there are people who don't want to continue it in Washington and some who downright are committed to undoing it. But I have put before the Congress an agenda to modernize our schools, to reduce class size, to connect every classroom to the Internet, to end social promotion but provide more funding for after-school and summer school programs that work to give our children a chance, to give more schools who are in disadvantaged areas the funds and the support they need to adopt the kind of comprehensive approach that Chicago is pursuing with such success, to give more students in disadvantaged areas mentors and the certainty in junior high school or middle school that they can go on to college if they learn and become good citizens and succeed in school, to provide more funds to put teachers into underserved areas, to do everything I can to help to provide 100,000 more master teachers so that we can do what needs to be done in every school building in the country, and to support your efforts to improve teaching.

I salute Sandy Feldman's plan to improve teacher quality, and I want to support your efforts. I have always been impressed, I will say again, that the AFT was never afraid to say that before a teacher is certified, it is reasonable to have the demonstrated competence of the teacher. I have always respected that, and I thank you for that.

But I will also say that while I have strongly supported the testing of teachers before they're certified, I also have strongly supported paying them once they are certified and strongly supported having master teachers in every school building in America and doing the things that Sandy outlined in her proposal.

So, as teachers, you're stepping up to your responsibility. I have tried to preserve the gains of the last 5½ years and put forward an ambitious program for the future. And we've had a lot of success working with Congress in a bipartisan way for education. In the balanced budget bill, as Sandy said, we got this huge increase in funding for education, and we got the HOPE scholarship, we got more work-study positions, we got big increases in Pell grants.

We have, earlier than that, got a big improvement in the student loan program to open the doors of college. We've got 1,000 colleges now participating with their kids in the America Reads program, going into your schools. We've got AmeriCorps people, almost 100,000 young people have been in AmeriCorps—when I drove by a grade school this morning on the way here, there

were the AmeriCorps volunteers out there with their kids, holding up signs, welcoming me to New Orleans. We have been able to do those things by working together.

Now is the time for Congress to turn away from some of these recent committee votes where they say no to smaller classes, no to modernized schools, no to AmeriCorps. They haven't yet said yes to America Reads. I am pleased that we seem to be making some bipartisan progress with the proposals to prepare teachers for the classroom.

But I ask Congress to support all these proposals. They are not my ideas. They are the ideas of educators. They are the ideas that we know work. All of them came from grassroots America. I was in Philadelphia the other day where the average age of a school building is 65 years. A lot of those buildings are beautiful, but they need rehabilitating.

I was in Florida in a little town where there were 17—count them, 17—trailers outside the major school building because the school population had grown so much. If you want smaller classes, they have to be held somewhere and there have to be teachers to walk in the classroom. We have got to do this. This is important.

So I ask you to redouble your efforts, to reach out to all Members of Congress without regard to their party and say, look, if there's one thing in America—even in Washington, DC—we ought to be able to put beyond partisan politics, it should be education of our children. Now, if you want to fight about whether you believe in vouchers or not, fine, let's have an argument about it. I don't mind that. But while we're arguing about it, don't forget this: over 90 percent of the people are out there in those public schools, and these ideas are good on their own merit, and they deserve to be implemented and passed without regard to party in Washington, DC. We have the money to do it, it is allocated, and we should do it.

Now, let me also say that you know, better than anybody, learning cannot occur unless our schools are safe and orderly places where teachers can teach and children can learn. Wherever there is chaos where there should be calm, wherever there is disorder where there should be discipline, make no mistake about it, it's not just a threat to our classrooms and to your mission; it is a threat to the strength and vitality of America.

In a recent study, 81 percent of teachers said the worst behaved students absorb the most attention in school—not the struggling students, not the striving students, the worst behaved. Seventy-one percent of all high school students said there were too many disruptive students in their own classes. And only 13 percent of public school students said their classmates were, quote, very respectful of teachers.

Now, teachers can't teach if they have to fight for respect or fear for their safety. Students can't study if there is disorder in a classroom. And the disruption won't change unless there are clear, strict standards for behavior. You know better than anyone that we either have discipline in a classroom or we have disorder and, too often, danger. Hard experience has taught us this lesson all too well. As a nation, therefore, we must recognize that giving you the tools to have a safe, orderly classroom is central to the mission of renewing America.

There is another lesson to be learned from all this. In this case, it is from the overall decline in crime. And let me back up and say one of the cruel ironies of these horrible killings in all these States over the last year or so has been that they have occurred against the backdrop of a dramatic drop in crime and the first drop in juvenile crime in years and years and years. Crime is dropping around the country because we're getting serious about community policing, effective punishment, and effective prevention. Crime is dropping because whole communities, like Boston, are taking responsibility for their streets and their neighborhoods and because government is giving them the support they need.

I mention Boston because they went 2 years and a few weeks without a single, solitary child under the age of 18 being killed with a gun. That's an amazing statistic.

Now, these things do not happen by accident. They happen by design at the grassroots level, but people must have the tools to do the job. That's the idea behind our efforts to put 100,000 police on the street. When I became President, violent crime had tripled in the last 30 years, and the number

of police officers had only increased by 10 percent. You didn't have to be Einstein to figure out that was a mathematical equation for disaster. And the police officers told us we can prevent crime if you give us enough police to walk the streets, to be on the blocks, to know the kids, to know the parents, to know the store owners, to figure out what's going on. So that's what we did.

But if you look at what happened in community after community where the crime rate dropped, they first of all put in place a system that said we are going to have respect for the law, and here's the system we're going to have to maximize respect, hold people accountable who don't respect the law. And guess what? More and more people started to follow the law in the first place, to behave as responsible citizens, to walk away from the prospect of criminal conduct.

That's what we've tried to do with school safety. We've worked hard to tighten security, to give you the tools to do that, to strengthen prevention, to toughen penalties. We initiated this nationwide policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools. In the '96–'97 school year, this policy led to the expulsion of about 6,100 law-breaking students. It obviously prevented countless acts of violence. Yet, as we have seen from the recent acts of violence, we have to do more.

When I was in Springfield, Oregon, I was so moved by what the parents of injured children said, the parents in some cases of children who were killed. The teachers who were there talked about the necessity of doing more and developing the right kinds of intervention strategies. This is terribly important.

And one of the things I came here today to do is to say that in the fall, I will host the first-ever White House conference on school safety, and I want you to be a part of that. We want to bring together educators and law enforcement officers and families whose lives have been touched by these terrible tragedies to find new solutions to this profound challenge.

Again, I ask Congress also to be our partner. And again I say, this should not be a partisan issue. I have proposed a juvenile crime bill to ban violent juveniles from buying guns for life and to take other important steps to give communities much needed support. I've asked that in our balanced budget, $95 million be allocated to the prevention of juvenile crime. I urge Congress to invest in prevention.

You know, when we talk, those of us who have run for office, we all like to talk about punishment because everybody has known someone who's been hurt, who's been a victim of crime, and because we are outraged when we see children have their lives cut short. And I would point out that in our '94 crime bill we did more to stiffen punishment for crimes under Federal law than had ever been done. But you know and I know that we cannot jail our way out of this problem; we've got to prevent more of these kids from getting in trouble in the first place.

Again I say, this is not a Democratic or a Republican issue. We should simply invest in prevention because the police officers tell us it works, because the teachers tell us it works, because the social workers tell us it works, because the religious leaders tell us it works, because the children themselves tell us it works. We should be investing in a summer jobs program, in the summer school program, in the after-school program because it works.

We also know, by way of lessons, that the small stuff matters, the basics matter. In most schools it's not the sensational acts of violence but smaller acts of aggression, threats, scuffles, constant backtalk that take a terrible toll on the atmosphere of learning, on the morale of teachers, on the attitudes of other students. And that's why setting strict standards and enforcing them can make a powerful difference all across America, as they are doing in many places.

And let me just give three or four examples. Our first effort has to be to get kids inside the schoolhouse doors and keep them there during school hours. Truancy is more than a warning sign; it is trouble, a gateway to drugs, alcohol, gangs, and violence. Our children will either sit in class or stand on the streets. They'll either learn from teachers or learn from the gang leaders on the streets. It used to be the rule that truancy laws were enforced, that local police knew kids and brought them back to school. But in too many places, that has long since ceased to be the case.

Thankfully, communities again are turning their attention to the old-fashioned remedy of enforcing the truancy laws. In Milwaukee, officers can now stop students on the street during school hours. In Boston, where more than a quarter of the public school students were absent 3 weeks or more this past school year, they now have a strict new promotion policy. If you don't attend, you don't advance.

Other cities are forming truancy task forces, a united front of schools, social services, community police to keep our children in school and out of trouble. This is important. A teacher's day must sometimes seem very long. But we know the school day lasts precious few hours, and there's no time to waste.

The other thing I—next thing I'd like to say is when the kids are there they need to feel free, and they need to feel free of danger going to and from school. That's one of the ideas behind this incredible wave of enthusiasm across the country for school uniforms. When I spoke about school uniforms in my 1996 State of the Union Address—besides making half the kids in America mad at me—[*laughter*]—it struck a lot of people as an idea long out of date. And it was just gathering steam in places like Long Beach, California.

But in the years since, I have been heartened by the flood of interest, from New York to Houston, from Dade County to Chicago, school districts are adopting school uniform policies. And they're finding ways to do it in ways that give the children and the parents and the teachers all a say in how they do it and that don't put poor kids at a disadvantage when they can't afford the uniforms.

But students have told me—I've talked to a lot of students about this in schools that have uniform policies—when one student is no longer obsessed by another student's sneakers or designer jackets, and where students are focused not on appearances but on learning, crime and violence go down, attendance and learning go up. And I am proud of the support we have given to those of you who have done this.

The next thing I'd like to say—and I know you believe this, because you applauded earlier when I mentioned it—is that the responsibility that we adults have for our kids doesn't end when the last school bell rings. After school, an awful lot of children's parents are still working, and there's nobody home to either supervise them there, or know where they are or where they're going when they leave school. Well, a lot of kids get in trouble after school and youth crime is at its peak during the unsupervised hours of 3 to 6. That's why I have said that our schools should remain open, to become community learning centers where children are safe and can learn and grow.

In this budget for 1999, for next year, I have proposed a significant expansion in our investments for before- and after-school programs. And for the later hours when streets become darker and more dangerous, I have often urged communities to install curfews, to follow the example of New Orleans, where Mayor Morial, who is here with us today, put in place community-based curfews with very impressive results, in no small measure because the children are also taken if they violate curfew to somebody who can help them if they've got a problem, and support them and get them back on the right path. But these are the things that we have to do if we expect you to have a safe learning environment.

I should also say that I think that the character education programs that our Education Secretary, Dick Riley, has done so much to help implement across the country are a positive force for a more disciplined school environment where the little nagging, terrible problems don't occur.

So we're going to have this conference in the fall on school violence. I want the AFT involved. I want the teachers who know what the problems are to participate. But I want to encourage every place to adopt antitruancy efforts, to consider school uniforms, to look at the curfew issue, to look at character education programs, to look to a new approach to restoring discipline in our schools and order in our children's lives. We can do this. The three R's of the AFT: responsibility, respect, results—that's what school discipline is all about.

In closing, let me say I am always struck by how every challenge in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. Therefore, I am always frustrated that we have not yet found a way to make sure

when somebody somewhere solves a problem, we cannot model that and make sure it's solved by everybody everywhere. That is one of the things that the AFT has been devoted to: finding what works, developing a systematic approach, trying to get it done everywhere. And it's one thing America needs desperately in this area of school discipline, school order, and school safety.

Again, I say I am very proud to be your partner in building a 21st century America that is leading the world to peace and freedom and prosperity, an America in which every child is a responsible citizen with unparalleled opportunity, in a community that reveals in its diversity but is bound together in our wonderful ongoing effort to form a more perfect Union.

You, the educators of our Nation, are the architects of that 21st century America. Build well.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; Ed McElroy, secretary-treasurer, American Federation of Teachers; and Edith Shanker, former AFT President Al Shanker's widow.

## Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative William J. Jefferson in New Orleans

*July 20, 1998*

Thank you so much, Congressman. Senator Landrieu, Mr. Mayor, Lieutenant Governor Blanco, members of the city council, the Jefferson Parish Council, and let me thank all of you for coming. If Al Gore were giving this speech, he would say thank you for the standing ovation. [*Laughter*] I think it's a pretty good joke, too, but I can never bear to give it without giving him some credit for it. [*Laughter*]

I want to say also to Andrea and to the Jefferson daughters and to their vast families over there, they could even elect Bill to Congress, they have so many in their families. [*Laughter*]

Let me thank all of you for coming. Let me once again not miss an opportunity to thank the people of Louisiana for supporting Hillary and me and the Vice President and our team, twice, for dramatically increasing our margin in 1996, and for electing Mary Landrieu to the Senate. I thank you for all that.

I have so many rich and wonderful memories of this city. I first came here when I was about 4 years old, and I still remember at least one thing that happened then, when my mother was in nurse's training here—I maybe even was younger. I must have been younger; I must have been about 2½. But I still remember leaving on the train, and I still remember being on the top floor of the Jung Hotel. And I don't remember much else, but whatever happened, I was bit, and I've been coming back ever since.

I want to tell you that I am honored to be here for your Congressman. I remember when Bill and Andrea had me in their home early in 1992. I remember well the meeting that John Lewis and Mike Espy and he had with me, and their early commitment, which meant a great deal. I remember in the Democratic primary in Louisiana, 69 percent of the voters voted for me against a rather wide array of choices that they had. You don't forget things like that, and I'll always be grateful.

But I also want you to know that Mr. Jefferson here, while we rag each other a lot and make a lot of fun of each other and have had an enormously good time knowing each other, is a truly gifted and extraordinary public servant. He has the necessary blend of education and intelligence and practical sense. He is a visionary who wants to get things done. He knows what to be serious about and not to take himself too seriously. And I can tell you that once he makes up his mind to do something, he is absolutely dogged.

I don't know how many people there are in this audience that he has personally talked to me about some issue or another that you were interested in and involved in, committed to. But I am especially grateful to him for his support for education and the education initiatives that we have put before the American people—his family is the living embodiment of that commitment—and for support for economic expansion through

trade. I think the people of New Orleans understand, without regard to party, that if we're going to keep growing our economy and lifting incomes and finding more for more people to do, since we're only 4 percent of the world's people and we enjoy 20 percent of the world's wealth, we have to sell some more to the other 96 percent of the world out there. And I am very grateful for his support on those issues.

I can also tell you he's done a great job with this Africa trade bill, which I think represents an enormous opportunity for America in the years ahead, both in economic opportunity and in opportunity to build friendships and partnerships in a part of the world that too many of our people have ignored for too long, which is very, very important to the future of the globe.

Hillary and I had a wonderful trip to Africa not very long ago, and Bill went on the trip, and he did you proud. You would have been very, very proud of that.

So for all those reasons, I am here for my old friend, for a gifted public servant, for a supporter of the things that I believe in are right for America in the 21st century. I'm glad you're taking good care of him, and I hope you always will, because he sure takes good care of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:43 p.m. in the Imperial Ballroom at the Fairmont Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; Lt. Gov. Kathleen Blanco of Louisiana; Representative Jefferson's wife, Andrea; and former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy.

## Proclamation 7109—Captive Nations Week, 1998

*July 20, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

Freedom, dignity, equality, and justice: these are words sacred to the American people. They define our lives as citizens of a democratic Nation, and they sum up our hopes for all the peoples of the world. More than 2 centuries ago, our founders articulated these fundamental human rights in the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming the truth of human dignity and the idea that governments derive their power and legitimacy from the consent of the people they serve. We reaffirmed these convictions with the ratification of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. And 50 years ago, more than four dozen nations joined us in championing these rights and liberties across the globe by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations General Assembly passed unanimously in December of 1948.

Over the course of the last half-century, the Universal Declaration's call to ''expand the circle of full human dignity to all people'' has been a wellspring of inspiration. The Declaration has served as a framework for laws, constitutions, and other important efforts to safeguard basic liberties, as well as a yardstick for measuring progress. However, while democracy continues to grow and flourish around the world and millions enjoy fundamental human rights unencumbered by tyranny or restraint, the shadow of oppression still lingers.

The last decade has seen a remarkable transformation. The courage, strength, and determination of men and women struggling for liberty have changed the political landscape of the world. Democracy has blossomed and deepened its roots in many countries, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe and the nations of the former Soviet Union. But, the process of building democracy and strengthening civil society in these nations is far from complete. Moreover, there are countries in Europe and elsewhere where democracy is actively being undermined by authoritarian rule and disrespect for the rule of law. In these regions around the world, people are denied the right to worship freely, speak their thoughts openly, or live without fear of sudden arrest, arbitrary imprisonment, or brutal treatment. The rulers of these captive nations, in denying the tide of freedom rising across the globe, have positioned themselves on the wrong side of history.

This year marks the 40th observance of Captive Nations Week. For four decades these proclamations have served to express

America's solidarity with people suffering under communist and other oppressive rule around the world. It is important that we continue to mark this annual observance as a reminder that building and nurturing democracy is an enduring struggle while there are still people in various parts of the world who are captives of tyranny.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week in July of each year as ''Captive Nations Week.''

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 19 through July 25, 1998, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to rededicate ourselves to supporting the cause of freedom, human rights, and self-determination for all the peoples of the world.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 22, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on July 23.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in New Orleans

*July 20, 1998*

Thank you. Now you shamed me, and I can no longer make fun of you. [*Laughter*] Sheriff Lee, what he was afraid is I was going to say that he had offered to take me hunting and take you, and he said that he would provide the game. [*Laughter*] And I said, if you took me, you'd all be safe because I'd be blamed for it, no matter what happened. It would be great. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, I'd better get out of town because I'm really beginning to enjoy myself here and—[*laughter*]—and you know, it's just been wonderful.

First of all, let me thank a lot of the people who are here. I want to thank Len Barrack who came up here before me. I know most of you don't know him, but he is a Philadelphia lawyer and a gentleman and wonderful human being. Like Congressman and Mrs. Jefferson, he has five great children, and like Congressman Jefferson, he overmarried. You can't imagine—here's a guy with a busy life and a lot to do, and he could be home in Philadelphia. And every night he's somewhere else in America trying to help rebuild our party and make sure we're victorious in November. And I thank you. Thank you very much.

I never want to speak again in Louisiana without thanking the people of this State for voting for me twice for President and voting for me overwhelmingly in the primary in 1992 and giving me the chance to serve. And it is a real joy to me to see you doing so well and to see the young leaders coming in.

I can tell you would be very, very proud of the mark that Mary Landrieu is making, not only from what you know here in Louisiana, but if you were in Washington and you heard it the way I hear it from the Senators, they believe that she is a fine Senator with an unlimited future, and so do I.

And I can't say enough about your mayor. New Orleans is getting a national reputation for saving its children, for putting its economy back in order, for showing the right face to the world, for bringing people together, for being a genuinely progressive city in the best sense. And, Mr. Mayor, I thank you for what you're doing, and I'm always proud.

I want to thank your State party chair, Ben Jeffers, and all the other people who've been active in the Democratic Party. I can't say enough in terms of thanks to Ray Reggie and to Congressman Jefferson for doing this tonight. I also want to thank them for the people who are here. I know there are a lot of younger people here tonight that I have not met before. There are some former Republicans who are here tonight that I have not met before, and I thank you.

You know, I always tell my Republican friends in Washington that, being a Southern

Baptist, I believe in deathbed conversions, but I hate to wait that long. [*Laughter*] So I feel somewhat encouraged that I won't have to wait that long for some of you.

I thank my longtime friend and our Transportation Secretary, Secretary Rodney Slater, for being here with me tonight—a great friend of the people of Louisiana.

And let me just recognize one other person. We're just 11 seats from winning a majority in the House of Representatives and being able once again to put progress over partisanship in America. And I believe that Marjorie McKeithen will be one of those 11 victories, and I thank her for being here today. Let's give her a hand. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Jeff talked a little bit about how we tried to change the Democratic Party. I think it's worth all of us, because we're neighbors and friends, going back to where we were a few years ago and thinking about those circumstances. Most of my Republican friends in the late eighties and early nineties thought there would never be another Democratic President in their lifetime, because they thought we kept shooting ourselves in the foot, and because they thought they had developed a kind of a cardboard cookie image of us that they could always present to the American people, and because they thought that they could always sort of divide every issue into the liberal position and the conservative position, and the conservative position was always right, the liberal position was always wrong. And at a very high level of rhetoric with a lot of emotion and a lot of heat and as little light as possible, they could turn every election into one where the voters didn't think, and their emotions carried them to ratify their governance.

The thing that bothered me about that as a Governor of a State that went through all the turmoil of the eighties, just like all of you did, that—I kept reading the newspaper every day, just like all of you, and I heard all those debates in Washington, just like all of you. And most of what I heard didn't make a lot of sense to me, because I didn't know anybody who talked that way or who thought that way. Most of the people that I knew, whether they were Republicans or Democrats—we all had fights over the issues—but we understood there was some core things we had to do in my home State, and we did it; we worked together.

And I thought, well, maybe it was just something in the water, maybe that Washington is so far away from the people that you have to communicate in more abstract terms. And I do think there's something to that. You have to elevate the debate and make it more general to some extent.

But the truth is, this country was in trouble in 1992. And if it hadn't been, I would not have been elected; I think we all know that. I think we all know that I had the great good fortune to bring to the American people some new ideas and a new direction at a time when they were open to hearing it. And otherwise, the Governor of a small Southern State, as my distinguished opponent often dubbed me, would not have had a chance to become President.

But I'd like to review with you just for a moment what those ideas were, because I think it's worth pointing out what they were. We believed that, first of all, we had to ground our party in the values that made our country great and the values that our party embodied when we were the leading party in America; that we were for opportunity for everybody, we were for responsibility from everybody, and we thought we had to build an American community of everybody; and that this country wouldn't work if we couldn't do those three things; and that, basically, the debate which was going on in the early nineties in this country, I thought, was largely irrelevant to the real problems of real people when we had unemployment high, crime rising, welfare rising, incomes diverging, the country showing uncertainty around the world, and great difficulties.

On economic policy it seemed to me that we had a lot of people talking about how terrible Government spending was, while they quadrupled the debt of the country, which I though was a pretty neat trick. It seemed to me that what we had to do was to close the gap between the two positions and say, we can't stop investing in our people, we can't stop investing in education and science and technology and all this research, because that's the future of the country, but we've

got to do it in a way that eliminates this deficit. And when I said, I think we ought to invest more and still cut the deficit, and that if we cut out unnecessary programs and reduced the size of Government, we could do that; if we eliminated unnecessary inflation in some of our programs, we could do that, a lot of people thought we were nuts. But actually, it turned out we were right.

On education, I said I'm all for spending more money on education, but we also have to lift the standards of excellence and accountability. Today I came to New Orleans in part to speak to the American Federation of Teachers, and probably more than any other single educational organization over the last 15 years, they have constantly echoed that theme. And they deserve a lot of credit from the American people for always saying, hey, we want to be held accountable, and if we're not good at what we do, we shouldn't be in the classroom. And we're not afraid of accountability, but we expect you to invest in our children and our future.

On matters of the environment, it always seemed to me that if we got into a position where we had to choose between preserving our environment and growing our economy, we were going to be defeated before we started, because in the end, if we use up our environment, we won't have an economy, and if we have to ask people to give up their right to make a living, then there won't be any support for a clean environment. So we said our environmental policy is going to be designed to improve the environment as we grow the economy.

On crime, it seemed to me that the further away you got from the streets where crime occurred, the more politicians, despairing that they could do anything, talked tough but did nothing. So I said, yes, we ought to punish people more if they deserve it. But we also ought to give local law enforcement officials the tools they need to prevent crime in the first place and give these kids something they can do to stay out of trouble in the first place.

On welfare, the debate in Washington in 1992, before I showed up, seemed to be between those who said we ought to make every able-bodied person work, and if they can't take care of their kids, that's just tough; and those who said there's no way to do that, so we just have to keep the same old system, as bad as it is. I thought that was a foolish choice.

So we said the position ought to be every able-bodied person should work, but we should never forget that everyone's job, most important job—everyone's most important job, even the President—if you have a child, is being a good parent. So we can't make people sacrifice their children. So we're going to make people work, but we're going to give them child care and the support their children need for medical care so you can be a good parent and a good worker. That's what all of us want to do. That's what we should want poor people to do as well.

I haven't won all my debates in the Democratic Party. Mr. Jefferson and I are still fighting the debate on trade, because some people still believe that if you expand trade, well, inevitably you will empower people who will despoil the global economy and weaken workers around the world. It seems to me that when countries get richer, they're more likely to lift the conditions of their workers, and wealthy countries do better by the environment than poor countries do. So my belief is, we can expand trade and improve the conditions of people around the world.

And I want to thank Bill Jefferson for sticking up for that position. I know that's good for the Port of New Orleans. The truth is, it's good for the rest of America, because we're only 4 percent of the world's population, we have 20 percent of the world's income; if we want to keep it—the developing world is growing at 3 times the rate of the already developed countries—you don't have to be a mathematical genius to figure out that if you want to keep your income, we 4 percent have to sell something to the other 96 percent. And we've got a real interest in their growing.

Therefore, Bill Jefferson's interest in Africa, his support of the Africa trade bill, his support of our outreach to the Caribbean and to Latin America—these things are very, very important. And the support that he and Mary and others have given to our attempt to get some funds into the revitalization of the Asian economies is profoundly important. If you want the American economy to keep

growing, then please support our efforts to get growth back in Asia. That is the only way for us to continue to grow over the long run.

So anyway, we said, these are our new ideas. And a lot of people said, oh, they don't believe in anything, because they're not completely liberal, they're not completely conservative. That's the last refuge of a scoundrel, you know, if you have to think, just accuse the other people of having no conscience, no convictions. And I say, yes, we have very strong convictions, but we have new ideas. Only foolish people stay with yesterday's ideas in today's circumstances facing a different tomorrow.

And so we have vigorously pursued those ideas in the Democratic Party, not abandoning our principles, but building on our bedrock principles to meet the needs of America in the 21st century. And while the American people deserve most of the credit for any good thing that happens, there is definitely a connection between the policies we have followed and the results which have ensued.

We have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the smallest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years. We're going to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years. We've got the lowest inflation in 32 years, the highest homeownership in history. And by the way, under a Democratic administration, the Federal Government is the smallest it's been in 35 years. This is working. This is working.

More to the point, one big reason that you ought to elect Marjorie and that what you're doing for the Democratic Party is important is because we are committed to making the tough decisions over the long run, to putting the progress of the country ahead of short-term partisan advantage. I'll just give you a few examples.

We've got to reform the Social Security and Medicare system so they'll be there for the baby boomers under circumstances that don't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We have to do it now. We are committed to doing that in a way that is fair and balanced to all generations.

We have got to continue working until we can say with a straight face, yes, we've had the best college education in the world for a long time; now we've got the best elementary and secondary education for all of our people.

We have got to continue to come to grips with the fact that we have more and more Americans in managed care. And that's a good thing if you're getting rid of waste in the system, but it's a terrible thing if people can't have emergency room care when they need it, can't have specialists when they need it, when you have literally disastrous, heartbreaking circumstances, which is why we have so many Republicans all across America and the American Medical Association and a lot of other people supporting the Democratic Party's position for a Patients' Bill of Rights that will protect the health care interests of all of our people.

Well, you get the idea. We're trying very hard to pass legislation to protect children from the dangers of tobacco. We don't want to bankrupt the tobacco companies; we want to get them out of the business of marketing tobacco to our children. And it's a profoundly important thing.

And we're prepared to make tough decisions, to make principled decisions, to put the progress of the country ahead of the partisan divide. We have to do this. And so I ask all of you to renew your dedication. I thank you.

But remember, what makes a successful country in times like this is not all that different from what makes a successful company or community or family endeavor. If you look at the whole history of America, at all dynamic change eras, when things were really up in the air, as they are now, we have grown stronger and stronger and stronger, and we're now the longest lasting democracy in history, because we have done what the Founding Fathers told us to do.

They set up this very flexible system, rooted in bedrock values, that said in every age and time you must first of all deepen freedom and extend it to all law-abiding people. Secondly, you must seek to widen the circle of opportunity, what they called the pursuit of happiness. Thirdly, you must recognize that you cannot do this alone, and this is maybe the significant difference between the two parties today. And I say that, having eliminated more Government programs,

more Government regulations, and reduced the size of the Government more than any Republican President in the last 50 years. Still, remember what the Founders said: We are forming this Government because alone we cannot protect, pursue, and enhance life, liberty, and happiness. That's why we got together, because in the nature of things we can't do all these things all by ourselves.

Maybe the most important thing we've done is to try to redefine the role of Government. The old debate was, Government's the problem versus Government's the solution. Our position is, Government is neither. Government is a glue that binds us together. And the job of Government on the edge of the 21st century is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives; to solve their problems in their individual lives, their family lives, their community lives, their business lives; to be good for the American people as stewards; and to be a leading force in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity.

And so finally I would say that the third mission is, after freedom and opportunity, is that we are constantly forced to redefine our National Union. And that is the difference, the critical difference between the two parties today. I do not believe that we can be what we need to be unless we still believe that our eternal mission is what they said it was 220 years ago: to form a more perfect Union. Nobody—you won't find anybody in America that likes our diversity anymore than I do. I love our racial diversity. I love our ethnic diversity. I love our religious diversity. I love our cultural diversity. That's why I love to come to New Orleans, right?

But what is important is—and what makes it possible to enjoy all that is that underneath it all, at the bedrock, we are bound together by common values and a common understanding that we are going into tomorrow together. And the only way we can make the most of this phenomenal opportunity we have is to do it.

So I ask you to go and impart that message to your friends and neighbors. Help us to strengthen our party. Help us to continue to move forward. Help us to get the message to Washington. The American people want progress over partisanship, and the Democratic Party—far more important, the American people—will go strong into that new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:24 p.m. at Emeril's Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Sheriff Harry Lee of Jefferson Parish; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; Ray Reggie, event coordinator; and Marjorie McKeithen, candidate for Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District.

## Remarks Announcing New Nursing Home Regulations and an Exchange With Reporters

*July 21, 1998*

***The President.*** Thank you, Secretary Shalala, and Nancy-Ann Min DeParle, and the advocates who are here. I wish your mother were here, Secretary Shalala. I have met her, and even a skeptical press corps would believe your account of her in full if they could see her.

The duty we owe to our parents is one of the most sacred duties we, as Americans, owe to each other. Nowhere is that duty more important than when a family makes the choice to move a parent into a nursing home. When that time comes, all of us need to know that all our parents will be well cared for.

Today, more than 1.6 million Americans live in more than 16,000 nursing homes nationwide. When the baby boom generation moves into retirement, the number will rise even higher. By 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 85 will double, making compassionate quality nursing home care even more important.

At their best, nursing homes can be a Godsend for older Americans and their families, providing a safe haven in times of need. But at their worst, they can actually endanger their residents, subjecting them to the worst kinds of abuse and neglect. For nearly 6 years, as Secretary Shalala said, we've worked hard to give our most vulnerable citizens the security and health services they need to live in peace and safety.

I am committed to honoring the great social compact between the generations, first, let me say, by reserving every penny of the budget surplus until we save Social Security first. The historic balanced budget I signed last summer preserves the Medicare Trust Fund into the 21st century. We've taken action to root out Medicare fraud and abuse, saving taxpayers over $20 billion.

Finally, we're fighting to meet the challenge of our changing health system by enacting a Patients' Bill of Rights, to include access to specialists and the right to appeal health care decisions. I have extended those rights already to Medicare beneficiaries; they should be the rights of every American.

One of the most important ways we can help our senior citizens is by improving the quality of care in our nursing homes. In 1995, when Congress tried to eliminate Federal assurances of nursing home quality, I said no. It was the right thing to do. That same year, we put into place tough regulations to crack down on abuse and neglect in our nursing homes. Since then we have made real progress, as Secretary Shalala said, stepping up onsite inspections and helping nursing homes to find and fix problems.

As the HCFA report Secretary Shalala talked about shows all too clearly, however, the job is far from over. When people living in nursing homes have as much fear from dehydration and poor nutrition as they do from the diseases of old age, when families must worry as much about a loved one in a nursing home as one living alone, then we are failing our parents, and we must do more.

Today I'm acting within my power as President to crack down on unsafe nursing homes. Effective immediately, HCFA will require States to step up investigations of nursing homes, making onsite inspections more frequent and less predictable, so there is no time to hide neglect and abuse. Whenever we find evidence that a nursing home is failing to provide its residents with proper care, or even mistreating them, we will fine that facility on the spot. And if State enforcement agencies don't do enough to monitor nursing home quality, we will cut off their contracts and find someone else who will do the job right.

I'll continue to do everything I can to fight nursing home abuse and neglect and to give more options to elderly, disabled, and chronically ill Americans who choose to stay at home. But Congress also must act. This week I am proposing comprehensive legislation to protect older Americans with a national registry to track nursing home employees down known to abuse nursing home residents, and criminal background checks to keep potentially abusive employees from being hired in the first place. I ask the Congress to put progress ahead of partisanship on this issue and pass this legislation to improve our Nation's nursing homes this year.

Choosing to move a parent or a loved one into a nursing home is one of life's most difficult decisions. But with these steps we can at least give families a greater sense of security in knowing we are doing everything we possibly can to make our nursing homes safe and secure.

Thank you very much.

***Q.*** Do you think the Congress would be against the registry, per se?

***The President.*** No, I have no reason to believe they would be, and I hope they would pass it.

***Q.*** What do you mean by putting partisanship aside?

***The President.*** Well, we haven't had a lot of bills coming out of Congress this year, but I hope very much that they will pass this. I don't believe—not since 1995, when there was an attempt to strip the Federal authority standards, has there been a serious move on this issue. And I believe there are a lot of Republicans, as well as Democrats, in Congress who will support this. So I'm quite hopeful that it will pass.

### *Patients' Bill of Rights*

***Q.*** How about the Patients' Bill of Rights; do you think you're going to get that?

***The President.*** Well, I don't know. That's up to them. We have to have some significant amount of Republican support to get a strong bill. We have to have 60 votes to break a filibuster in the Senate and, obviously, a majority in the House, sufficient to actually make sure the bill could come to a vote. But we're still working on it, and it's terribly important.

Everywhere I go in the country—you know, I was just home last weekend, and I was stunned at the number of people who came up to me and just started talking about it and talking about their own experiences and how important they thought it was. So I'm very hopeful we'll get it.

***Q.*** How can you parlay that, then, into a real public response?

***The President.*** Well, I'm working at it. We've had a lot of events on the Patients' Bill of Rights. I'm trying to get the public involved in this, trying to get them to express their opinions to their Members of Congress, and I will continue to do so.

### *Secret Service Agent Testimony*

***Q.*** I wanted to ask you about another issue, sir. Now that the Secret Service agents have testified, are you concerned about what they might be saying, one; and, two, do you find yourself holding them more at arm's length, sir?

***The President.*** The Secret Service has made its own decisions about what to say and how to do it, based on their professional sense of responsibility, and I'm not going to get into this. I've refused to comment on it so far, and I'm going to continue to refuse to comment.

### *Libya and the Pan Am 103 Aircraft Tragedy*

***Q.*** Mr. President, your administration is making a new push to end the standoff with Libya over the Lockerbie bombing, including possibly holding a trial in a neutral country, under U.S. or Scottish jurisdiction. Are you optimistic that this climate might help, and what has brought on this new push?

***The President.*** Well, we have always said that our first goal was to bring the perpetrators of Pan Am 103 murders to justice. That's our first purpose. And since I got here, we've been looking for ways to do that. We have had conversations with representatives of the British Government as well. We've always said we thought that there had to be a trial under American or Scottish law. There may be some possibility of standing up a Scottish court in another country, but there are lots of difficulties with it as well, apparently.

All I can tell you is that it's one of the things that we have explored with a view toward accelerating the day—it's been a long time now; it's been a lot of years since that terrible day when Pan Am 103 crashed over Lockerbie. And we're looking at it, but I don't know that it can be done. Our people have spent a lot of time on it. We've talked to the British at great length about it. We're trying to find some way that has real integrity, that will work. But there are all kinds of practical difficulties that I'm sure our folks can explain. I don't know if we can do it, but we're working on it.

***Q.*** What brought it up now? I mean, what—all of a sudden, after so many years?

***The President.*** I don't know why it is just now coming into the press. But it's not just being brought up now. We have literally been working for years; I have personally been engaged in this for years, trying to find a way to get the suspects out of Libya, into a court where we thought an honest and fair and adequate trial could occur.

And in a case like this, like every other case, as the years go by you run more and more chances that something will happen to the evidence that is available, to any witnesses that might be available. So we've had a sense of urgency about this for some time. But my guess is that it has come to public light because a significant number of conversations have had to be held between the American and the British authorities and between others in potential third-party venues, like The Netherlands. And I know there's been some discussion of that. But it has not been resolved yet.

Thank you.

***Q.*** Is there any indication that the Libyans might go along, sir?

### *Retracted CNN Report on Use of Nerve Gas in Vietnam*

***Q.*** Sir, can you comment on CNN's nerve gas report, that the Pentagon—[*inaudible*]—today?

***The President.*** All I know is what Secretary Cohen has said to you, to the public, and to me, which is that their view is that it did not occur.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy-Ann Min DeParle, Administrator, Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA); and Edna Shalala, mother of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala.

## Statement on Signing Legislation on Funding for the Disposition of Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride

*July 21, 1998*

Today I have signed into law S. 2316, a bill designed to help ensure that certain funds of the United States Enrichment Corporation will be dedicated to the disposition of depleted uranium hexafluoride. I strongly support this bill, but note that by virtue of the Recommendations Clause of the Constitution, Article II, section 3, the Congress may not require the President to recommend legislation to the Congress. Therefore, to the extent the bill would infringe upon my discretion to determine whether to recommend legislation to the Congress, I must treat it as hortatory. In this case, however, I believe that the development of proposed legislation by the Secretary of Energy furthers important and valuable objectives, and I intend to instruct the Secretary to develop proposed legislation for inclusion in my budget request for fiscal year 2000.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 21, 1998.

NOTE: S. 2316, approved July 21, was assigned Public Law No. 105–204.

## Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "Education Savings and School Excellence Act of 1998"

July 21, 1998

*To the House of Representatives:*

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2646, the "Education Savings and School Excellence Act of 1998."

As I have said before, we must prepare our children for the 21st century by providing them with the best education in the world. To help meet this goal, I have sent the Congress a comprehensive agenda for strengthening our public schools, which enroll almost 90 percent of our students. My plan calls for raising standards, strengthening accountability, and promoting charter schools and other forms of public school choice. It calls for reducing class size in the early grades, so our students get a solid foundation in the basic skills, modernizing our schools for the 21st century, and linking them with the Internet. And we must strengthen teaching and provide students who need additional help with tutoring, mentoring, and after-school programs. We must take these steps now.

By sending me this bill, the Congress has instead chosen to weaken public education and shortchange our children. The modifications to the Education IRAs that the bill would authorize are bad education policy and bad tax policy. The bill would divert limited Federal resources away from public schools by spending more than $3 billion on tax benefits that would do virtually nothing for average families and would disproportionately benefit the most affluent families. More than 70 percent of the benefits would flow to families in the top 20 percent of income distribution, and families struggling to make ends meet would never see a penny of the benefits. Moreover, the bill would not create a meaningful incentive for families to increase their savings for educational purposes; it would instead reward families, particularly those with substantial incomes, for what they already do.

The way to improve education for all our children is to increase standards, accountability, and choice within the public schools. Just as we have an obligation to repair our Nation's roads and bridges and invest in the infrastructure of our transportation system, we also have an obligation to invest in the infrastructure needs of our public schools. I urge the Congress to meet that obligation and to send me instead the legislation I have proposed to reduce class size; improve the quality of teaching; modernize our schools; end social promotions; raise academic standards;

and hold school districts, schools, and staff accountable for results.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 21, 1998.

## Message to the Congress Reporting on Terrorists Who Threaten the Middle East Peace Process

*July 21, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments concerning the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

1. On January 23, 1995, I signed Executive Order 12947, "Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process" (the "Order") (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5079, January 25, 1995). The Order blocks all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of 12 terrorist organizations that threaten the Middle East peace process as identified in an Annex to the Order. The Order also blocks the property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of persons designated by the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, who are found (1) to have committed, or to pose a significant risk of committing, acts of violence that have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process, or (2) to assist in, sponsor, or provide financial, material, or technological support for, or services in support of, such acts of violence. In addition, the Order blocks all property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, any other person designated pursuant to the Order (collectively "Specially Designated Terrorists" or "SDTs").

The Order further prohibits any transaction or dealing by a United States person or within the United States in property or interests in property of SDTs, including the making or receiving of any contribution of funds, goods, or services to or for the benefit of such persons. This prohibition includes donations that are intended to relieve human suffering.

Designations of persons blocked pursuant to the Order are effective upon the date of determination by the Secretary of State or her delegate, or the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury. Public notice of blocking is effective upon the date of filing with the *Federal Register*, or upon prior actual notice.

Because terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and vital interests of the United States in the Middle East, on January 21, 1998, I continued for another year the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, and the measures that took effect on January 24, 1995, to deal with that emergency. This action was taken in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)).

2. On January 25, 1995, the Department of the Treasury issued a notice listing persons blocked pursuant to Executive Order 12947 who have been designated by the President as terrorist organizations threatening the Middle East peace process or who have been found to be owned or controlled by, or to be acting for or on behalf of, these terrorist organizations (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5084, January 25, 1995). The notice identified 31 entities that act for or on behalf of the 12 Middle East terrorist organizations listed in the Annex to Executive Order 12947, as well as 18 individuals who are leaders or representatives of these groups. In addition, the notice provided 9 name variations or pseudonyms used by the 18 individuals identified. The list identifies blocked persons who have been found to have committed, or to pose a significant risk of committing acts of violence that have

the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process or to have assisted in, sponsored, or provided financial, material or technological support for, or services in support of, such acts of violence, or are owned or controlled by, or act for or on behalf of other blocked persons. The Department of the Treasury issued three additional notices adding the names of three individuals, as well as their pseudonyms, to the List of SDTs (60 *Fed. Reg.* 41152, August 11, 1995; 60 *Fed. Reg.* 44932, August 29, 1995; and 60 *Fed. Reg.* 58435, November 27, 1995).

3. On February 2, 1996, OFAC issued the Terrorism Sanctions Regulations (the "TSRs" or the "Regulations") (61 *Fed. Reg.* 3805, February 2, 1996). The TSRs implement the President's declaration of a national emergency and imposition of sanctions against certain persons whose acts of violence have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process. There have been no amendments to the TSRs, 31 C.F.R. Part 595, administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury, since my report of January 28, 1998.

4. Since January 25, 1995, OFAC has issued six licenses pursuant to the Regulations. These licenses authorize payment of legal expenses and the disbursement of funds for normal expenditures for the maintenance of family members, the employment and payment of salary and educational expenses, payment for secure storage of tangible assets, and payment of certain administrative transactions, to or for individuals designated pursuant to Executive Order 12947.

5. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from January 23 through July 22, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency with respect to organizations that disrupt the Middle East peace process, are estimated at approximately $165,000. These data do not reflect certain costs of operations by the intelligence and law enforcement communities.

6. Executive Order 12947 provides this Administration with a tool for combating fundraising in this country on behalf of organizations that use terror to undermine the Middle East peace process. The Order makes it harder for such groups to finance these criminal activities by cutting off their access to sources of support in the United States and to U.S. financial facilities. It is also intended to reach charitable contributions to designated organizations and individuals to preclude diversion of such donations to terrorist activities.

Executive Order 12947 demonstrates the determination of the United States to confront and combat those who would seek to destroy the Middle East peace process, and our commitment to the global fight against terrorism. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against extremists seeking to destroy the hopes of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Israelis as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 21, 1998.

## Remarks on Crime Prevention Efforts

*July 22, 1998*

Thank you very much. If I had any sense at all, I would not say a word. [*Laughter*] I've got to tell you, before I came over here, my staff all gathered very solemnly in the Oval Office, and they said, "Now, you know, there's going to be a lot of preachers there today." [*Laughter*] "And Reverend Anthony said he was going to be moved by the spirit. You stick to the text. We don't want you to get too moved by the spirit." [*Laughter*] I don't know if I can honor that.

### *Death of Alan B. Shepard, Jr.*

Let me say before I begin, I was just handed a note—I think it's appropriate since we have so many ministers here that—one of our greatest astronauts, Alan Shepard, has just passed away. Those of us who are old enough to remember the first space flights will always remember what an impression he made on

us and on the world. And so I would like to express the gratitude of our Nation and to say that our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Let me begin by thanking all the people who are here, Eric Holder and Ray Fisher, all the people at the Justice Department who have done such a good job. Commissioner Evans, it's good to see you again, and I never get tired of hearing the story of what Boston has done. Reverend Anthony, thank you for your wonderful statement and the power of your example. I thank Congressmen Cummings and Cardin who are here from Maryland. And two Senators who have supported this program very strongly and were not able to come at the last minute—I want to acknowledge Senator Joe Biden and Senator Carol Moseley-Braun.

I thank Mayor Alan Styles from Salinas, California; Mayor James Garner from Hempstead, New York; Mayor Marion Barry from Washington; Mayor Kurt Schmoke from Baltimore; and Mayor and Reverend Emanuel Cleaver from Kansas City, Missouri, for being here. The chief of police of Washington, DC, Charles Ramsey, is here; Reuben Greenberg from Charleston, South Carolina; Michelle Mitchell from Richmond. There are children here from Brown Junior High School and from Baltimore and from Philadelphia. We welcome you all.

This is really about what we can do together to save our children and to strengthen our country's future. For all the good things that are happening in America—unemployment, inflation, crime, welfare the lowest in somewhere between 25 and 32 years, depending on the statistic—we have to understand that there are still too many of our children who are left out and left behind, and that in order to honor our solemn responsibilities as citizens and our fundamental moral duties as human beings, we have to do a better job.

I am gratified that crime is at a 25-year low. Surely, the improving economy had something to do with it. But I am persuaded that the lion's share of credit goes to people—those nameless people Reverend Anthony spoke about—who wear uniforms and who work in churches and other religious institutions, who work in schools and work on streets, and who talk to their kids at home at night. What is working in America is a community-based, prevention-oriented, broad-based partnership to try to bring crime down and bring out kids back. And the faith community has an important role to play.

I noted—one of the things that I remembered about the first time I went to Boston and met with the mayor's youth council is it was being run by a Roman Catholic nun. Everybody showed up; they were on time. [*Laughter*] It ran like clockwork; it was great. [*Laughter*] Including me—we all did our part.

And I think it is important to say that this community-based, prevention-oriented, broad-based partnership represented by the children and the adults here, including the members of the faith community, that it is working. And what we want to do today is to see it work everywhere in America.

You heard Commissioner Evans say that in Boston, police, prosecutors, principals, pastors, they all got together around the table. They called on everybody to take responsibility to stop gangs and guns and drugs and to change attitudes—above all, to change attitudes—how people look at themselves, how they look at other people, whether they treat them with respect. And they recognized that the only strategy that will work in the long run is one that keeps our children out of trouble in the first place.

I can't help noting that I've had the opportunity to spend quite a bit of time in the city of Chicago. You all clapped when the mention was made of our commitment to before- and after-school programs. There are now over 40,000 children, I believe, that get three square meals a day in the Chicago school system; they stay through supper. And the summer school is now the sixth largest school district in the United States. And a lot of the kids have to go because they don't make good enough grades during the year. But because it's a positive thing, the community groups, the parents groups, everybody supports it. It's a way of building a good future for our children.

So that's what we're here to celebrate, and to emphasize that there is a critical, fundamental role for the faith community in teaching our children a sense of right and

wrong and self-discipline and respect. Boston's pastors and faith communities took the lead. Often, they are the most stable institutions left in unstable neighborhoods. I think it is important that these mentors saw in each child a cause and not just a case file; a future, not just a present full of problems.

When young people learn to turn to values, then they turn away from gangs. That was the message of what Reverend Anthony said more eloquently than I could. When they learn the basic rules of right and wrong, then they can reject the rules of the street. If it's true in Boston, if it's true in Washington, if it's true anywhere, it can be true everywhere. And that is what we're here about.

If something can happen somewhere, it is our duty to make sure it happens everywhere. Indeed, that has been the whole philosophy behind this administration's anticrime efforts. When I was Governor, I worked a lot on these issues at home. Very often, I would work with religious leaders—Christian leaders, Jewish leaders; in my State, black Muslims were often quite active in community-based efforts to save our children. But the thing that struck me was that there was never a system. And the thing that Boston has done so well is that they have created a system within which everybody has a role to play where they can be most effective. And it has worked.

Last year researchers at Harvard found that urban neighborhoods with a strong sense of community and shared values, had much, much lower crime rates than those without it—big surprise. But when you hear people in my position or elected officials talking about crime, how often do you hear them talk about that? You get more emotion on the meter readers if you give some rough, tough speech about jails and punishment. Well, we have to have jails, and people who do the wrong things have to be punished. But we will never jail our way out of America's problems, and you know that.

I want to thank exhibit A here for coming—if I could call him that—Reverend Eugene Rivers, who's sitting behind me. I thank him for being here. He has gotten to know some of Boston's most troubled children, welcoming them to his parish, Baker House, offering counseling, recreation, and an occasional pizza party; introducing children who have known nothing but chaos at home to the serenity of prayer. He mediates fights, visits homes, shows up at school when they get in trouble. He has been there for his kids, making them understand that God cares about each and every one of them and he cares whether they do well. He cares whether they get an A or an F on a test, whether they get in a fight or get a citation for doing good at school. They will be praised when they succeed, disciplined when they fail.

Two of his children are with him today: Kenyatta Moon and Tony Barry. Growing up hasn't been easy for either of them. But with Reverend Rivers' help they have stayed on track. Tony is taking college prep courses; Kenyatta will begin college this fall. And we congratulate you.

You know, we have worked very hard to open the doors of college to all Americans, to give scholarships and tax credits, and to make sure, in effect, we can make 2 years of college virtually free to nearly everyone in this country. But you still have to get in. And this is very, very important, what is being done. I know there are many more just like Reverend Rivers and just like these young people, doing good things across this country—more like our wonderful speaker, who gave me such a powerful introduction. What we have to do is to give all of them the tools they need to succeed.

That is what we're here to do today. Today I am glad and proud to announce that we will be making new value-based violence prevention grants to 16 communities across our country, to help law enforcement, schools, businesses, and faith communities, together work to prevent truancy, mentor, teach values, and offer children positive alternatives to gangs and drugs.

Congress, too, must act because 16 is not enough. In the juvenile justice bill, which I modeled in large measure on the Boston success story, there are funds for more of these kinds of programs. We need these funds. We need more funds for before- and after-school programs, for the summer school programs, for the community-based programs. We need these funds. Our role here in Washington on this is to give people the tools and to clear

away the obstacles necessary to have more success stories.

I can't thank the mayors and the police chiefs who are here enough for the examples that they have set in their own communities.

Carl Sandburg once said that a baby is God's opinion that the world should go on. Well, when we lose our children, we are thwarting the opinion of God. We are blessed with our children. They will be America in the 21st century. What America will be depends upon what we do to help them become all they can be. That depends upon us. It is our responsibility.

I can't tell you how moved I am by all the stories I have read, all the examples I have seen, all the work that has been done by the people that are in this room and the people they represent all across America. Some of them have been out there for years and years and years. But now, they have found a way to work together that will have dramatic, profound, and permanent success. We owe it to them to help them.

We're taking a big first step today, and if Congress will give me the funds, we'll put the welfare of the American people first. Even in an election year, let's not let partisanship get in the way of this critical mission. We will see these stories sweep across this country, and we'll have a lot more children to celebrate.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Lewis M. Anthony, senior pastor, Metropolitan Wesley AME Zion Church, Washington, DC, who introduced the President; Deputy Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.; Associate Attorney General Raymond C. Fisher; Paul Evans, Boston police commissioner; Reuben Greenberg, police chief, Charleston, SC; Michelle B. Mitchell, sheriff, Richmond, VA; and Rev. Eugene F. Rivers, III, codirector, National Ten Point Leadership Foundation.

## Remarks on Signing the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998

*July 22, 1998*

### *Death of Alan B. Shepard, Jr.*

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, before I make my statement, I would like to amplify a little bit on the remarks I made earlier this morning on the death of Alan Shepard.

He is one of the great heroes of modern America: our first astronaut; our first American in space. None of us who were alive then will ever forget him sitting so calmly in *Freedom 7*, atop a slender and sometimes unreliable Mercury Redstone rocket. As President Kennedy observed at the time, America chose to make this first risky launch in full view of the world, and our entire Nation, in his words, ''which risked much, gained much.''

Alan Shepard understood the odds. He faced them bravely, and he led our country and all humanity beyond the bounds of our planet, across a truly new frontier, into the new era of space exploration.

A decade later, in 1971, Commander Shepard fought his way back from a debilitating ear infection to become the commander of *Apollo 14*, and the fifth person to walk on the Moon. On behalf of myself and Mr. Bowles, I can't help noting that there, on the Moon, he lived every golfer's dream—[*laughter*]—taking his six iron and hitting the ball, in his words, ''for miles and miles.'' [*Laughter*]

Alan Shepard truly had the right stuff. His service will always loom large in America's history. I extend to his wife, Louise, his family, and his colleagues in the Navy and at NASA, the thanks of a grateful Nation and our thoughts and prayers.

Now, I'd like to join Secretary Rubin in thanking Commissioner Rossotti, the Vice President, and you, Mr. Secretary, for what you have done. But I especially want to acknowledge the presence of all the Members

of Congress here. And in particular, let me thank Senator Kerrey and Congressman Portman, Senator Roth, Senator Moynihan, Senator Grassley, Congressman Archer, Congressman Rangel, Congressman Cardin for their leading work that makes it possible for me to sign into law today the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act. The bill is a culmination of the commitment and hard work of many people, but especially those whom I have just mentioned.

We've all worked hard to give the American people an IRS that reflects America's values and respects America's taxpayers. Two years ago I was proud to sign into law a Taxpayer Bill of Rights—again, passed by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of the Congress—that has helped to make the IRS fairer and more responsive. Under the leadership of the Vice President and Secretary Rubin, we've upgraded customer service at the IRS, appointing Charles Rossotti, a seasoned private sector CEO, to reshape the agency, expanding office hours and phone hours, making it easier to file taxes over the telephone or by computer. We've created problem-solving days where taxpayers can work face-to-face with IRS customer service representatives.

For the first time this year, IRS helplines were open for the full 24 hours preceding the final filing deadline, April 15th. And in 1999, they will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, all year long. This year 40 million more callers heard a human voice, not a busy signal, when they called an IRS helpline. Nearly 25 million taxpayers took advantage of our new high-tech filing options. That's a 25 percent increase from the previous year.

Our streamlined IRS Web page had nearly half a billion hits this year. All this has meant quicker refunds, less paperwork, and fewer hassles for American taxpayers.

But clearly, there is more to do to build an IRS for the 21st century. This bill takes important steps in that direction. It will help the IRS to serve taxpayers as well as the best private companies serve their customers, building on efforts to offer simple high-tech options for filing taxes and making tax forms more easily available over the Internet.

As Secretary Rubin has said, it expands taxpayer rights, extending refund periods, protecting innocent spouses, cutting penalties in half for 2½ million taxpayers who are paying what they owe on installment plans. In all these ways, the bill will give the American people an IRS they deserve.

Again, let me thank the Congress for helping the IRS to meet the challenge of serving taxpayers by giving it the time it needs also to meet the challenge of the year 2000 computer conversion. I call on the Congress to fully fund our year 2000 effort to allow all Federal agencies to respond flexibly to unforeseen difficulties that are sure to arise.

This bill shows what we can do when we work together, when we put the progress of America ahead of our partisan concerns, when we put our people over politics. That is how we have balanced the budget for the first time in 30 years while cutting taxes, expanding trade, and investing in our people. It is how I believe we can continue to make the Tax Code fairer for our people.

I have asked Congress to provide targeted tax relief for American families for child care, to expand pensions, to spur school construction, to protect our environment. In the context of comprehensive legislation to protect our children from tobacco, I have supported the effort to address the marriage penalty by cutting taxes for American families.

Every one of these tax cuts is prudent, bipartisan, and fully paid for. For 29 years, our country ran up large deficits, quadrupling our debt in the 12 years before I became President. It caused us to fall behind in the global economy; it caused our incomes to stagnate. Now we're on the verge of achieving our first balanced budget and our first surplus in a generation, and our economy is the envy of the world.

Fiscal responsibility has driven this economic expansion. A return to irresponsibility would put that prosperity at risk. After 29 years, it seems to me it's worth taking one year to address the challenge of fixing the Social Security system before we start spending the surplus on tax cuts or new spending programs, however worthy they might be.

The American people expect us to have the good sense to rack up the surplus before we spend it and to save Social Security first.

I know there are many people who think we should spend the surplus now and spend hundreds of billions of dollars on tax cuts before we have the bipartisan plan to save Social Security. I think it's the wrong course for America, in no small measure because we haven't fixed the price tag for saving Social Security and because, as we all know, we can't really predict with any absolute certainty what will happen 10 or 15 years from now.

I believe we should tell our children and our grandchildren that we think enough of them and their future that we're going to resist spending a penny of the surplus on things that I would very much like to spend it on—or you would—until we have met our basic obligation to our future, passing a bipartisan plan to save Social Security, which I am convinced the Congress will do early next year. I do not intend to waver from my commitment to future generations, and I hope the rest of us will do the same.

Now it is my honor to sign into law the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act. I would like to ask all the Members of Congress to come up here and join me on the stage. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. H.R. 2676, approved July 22, was assigned Public Law No. 105–206.

## Message to the Congress Designating Provisions of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 as an Emergency Requirement

*July 22, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to section 3309(c) of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, I hereby designate the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of section 3309 of such Act as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 252(e) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 22, 1998.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action To Extend Normal Trade Relations With China

*July 22, 1998*

I welcome the strong, bipartisan vote in the House today to extend normal trade relations with China.

This vote reflects my conviction that active engagement with China—expanding our areas of cooperation while dealing forthrightly with our differences—is the most effective way to advance our interests and our values. Over the past year and during my recent trip to China, engagement has produced tangible results and steady progress on vital issues—fostering political and economic stability in Asia, stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction, combating international crime and drug trafficking, protecting the environment, promoting human rights and religious freedom.

Trade is a vital part of engagement—supporting jobs here at home, lowering product prices, and helping us to build ties to nearly one quarter of the world's people. Normal trade relations with China will help us strengthen those ties and continue our efforts to make China an increasingly open and productive partner for America.

## Statement on Senate Armed Services Committee Action on the Nomination of Daryl Jones To Be Secretary of the Air Force

*July 22, 1998*

I am deeply disappointed that the Senate Armed Services Committee declined to send to the full Senate the nomination of Daryl Jones to be Secretary of the Air Force. Mr. Jones has a distinguished record of public service in Florida and a strong commitment to the Air Force. I know him to be a good,

decent, able man. He was an outstanding candidate for this position, and he deserved the opportunity to be considered by the full Senate. I appreciate the support he received from Chairman Thurmond, Senator Levin, and many other Senators in both parties. I thank Mr. Jones for his willingness to serve his country. I am confident that he will continue to make vital contributions to Florida and to our Nation.

## Remarks on the Nation's Heat Wave and the Resignation of Press Secretary Mike McCurry and an Exchange With Reporters

*July 23, 1998*

***The President.*** I have not become the White House Press Secretary—yet. [*Laughter*] I have two announcements to make today; one involves the gentlemen on my—plural—right and left. But first I'd like to make an announcement about the heat wave.

All Americans have been deeply concerned and troubled by the human toll of the record heat wave that has spread across many parts of the United States. Already this summer in many Southern and Southwestern States, temperatures have been 20 percent higher than normal. This scorching heat shows no signs of abating. It has destroyed crops, led to widespread power outages, and worst of all, has resulted in the deaths of over 100 people. The most vulnerable—the very old, the very young, people with disabilities—are at greatest risk. Those who cannot afford air-conditioning are at real peril of further health risks as the heat wave goes on.

In times of human crisis we have an obligation to act, to strengthen the ties that bind us as one nation. When fire or flood or earthquakes strike, we step in. When blizzards and high energy costs put elderly and poor citizens at risk, we step in. When smothering heat threatens the lives of people, we can step in, and that is what I am doing today.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP, makes funds available for emergency use to help at-risk families in times of weather distress. Today I am directing the Department of Health and Human Services to release $100 million in emergency funds for the 11 hottest Southern and Western States, to help families pay for air-conditioners, fans, electric bills, and other ways to beat the heat.

This emergency relief was paid for in the bipartisan balanced budget agreement reached with Congress last year. It reflects the longstanding commitment by both parties to help citizens protect their families in severe weather conditions.

It is, I might say, in light of these terrible weather conditions—and I would point out, I believe—I saw one television program yesterday that pointed out that the 9 hottest years on record have occurred in the last 11 years; that 1997 was the hottest year on record; that in each and every month in 1998, it has beaten the previous record month. So this will be the hottest year on record if something doesn't happen.

Therefore, it is all the more disturbing that Republican leaders in the House of Representatives are attempting to entirely eliminate the LIHEAP program. If Congress proceeds to try and eliminate all funding for this vital emergency assistance, it would be an act of political irresponsibility. It would put partisanship ahead of the progress and the people of our country.

Now, only a few days remain in this session of Congress. We can still make it a time of progress. We can fund the LIHEAP program. We can enact a Patients' Bill of Rights. We can continue our policy of fiscal discipline by reserving the surplus until we fix the Social Security system. We can strengthen education. We can save our children from the dangers of tobacco. There is still time to choose people and progress over partisanship and division.

For my part, I am determined to take every action within my power to help our people, and I look forward to working with lawmakers of both parties to restore LIHEAP funding and to make further progress. Meanwhile, I hope these funds will be of help to people in those 11 States. I know there are many volunteer efforts going on, and I would encourage them.

This is an especially difficult time in a lot of these States. I was home in Arkansas last weekend, and the temperature was above 100 degrees on both days. There are an awful

lot of people, especially elderly people, living in rural areas without access to air-conditioning, or people on limited incomes that can't pay their bills that are at real risk. So I hope we can all band together and redouble our efforts.

Now, I now have the privilege of making the second most important personnel announcement in the news today. I have no information about the status of any of the Chicago Bulls. [*Laughter*] However, the long-awaited coup in the Press Office is finally taking place. [*Laughter*]

Much to my regret but with my full understanding and support, Mike McCurry will be leaving us in the fall. I have also determined to appoint Joe Lockhart as his successor.

Quite simply, Mike McCurry has set the standard by which future White House Press Secretaries will be judged. In an age where Washington has come to be governed by a 24-hour news cycle and endless cable channels with their special niche audiences, Mike has redefined the job of Press Secretary in a new and more challenging era.

Whatever the news, in good times and bad, he is trusted by the American people and trusted by our administration to provide accurate information about our policies and to be a forceful and effective advocate for them. His ability and his eagerness to fight the good fight on political or policy issues is well known. And few could hope to match his intelligence and wit from the podium.

But the most difficult and sensitive part of being White House Press Secretary is explaining the foreign policy positions of the United States to the world. His mastery of foreign policy, his understanding not only of broader issues but of the nuances of them, his ability to respond to developments precisely—and when necessary, not so precisely—have made him a unique and instrumental element of our Nation's public diplomacy around the world.

Hillary and I have both enjoyed and deeply valued Mike's presence, not only for his obvious skills but for his wonderful sense of humor and his genuine friendship. We've appreciated his hard work, his loyalty, and his ability. We will miss him a great deal, and we're glad he's going to be around a while longer.

I am also very fortunate to have in Joe Lockhart an outstanding successor for Mike. I've had an opportunity to work with him very closely, especially over the last several months, not only on important trips to Europe, to Africa, to Latin America but also on our work on economic and other domestic issues. He is smart; he knows our policies, foreign and domestic. And he has skillfully articulated them.

Mike and Joe were a great team in our 1996 campaign. Mike served as Press Secretary at the White House; Joe did a superb job for Vice President Gore and me during our reelection effort. You all know that the great teamwork has continued here at the White House, with Joe and Barry Toiv serving as Mike's deputies.

When Mike told me at the beginning of the summer that he would begin planning an orderly transition, I knew that Joe would be the ideal replacement, not only for me but I believe also for you. Joe knows you well, and you know him well, and that's probably half the battle. Joe knows that he can only serve my interests well if he takes care of yours also by being your advocate here at the White House. He does that well already, and I know he will continue to be sensitive to your requirements when Mike leaves later this year.

I'll have more to say about Joe and about Mike this fall when we actually make the change. But it's rare in this White House that I get to announce my own personnel decisions—[*laughter*]—especially involving the press. So I wanted you to be the first to know—after Mike's Press Office staff, who were just told a few moments ago.

Joe has accepted my offer to be Assistant to the President and Press Secretary.

I also would like to say a word about two very special women who are here—Debra McCurry and Joe's wife, Laura Logan. While these guys have the pleasure of working until all hours here, it's their families, especially their spouses, who make very special sacrifices. We appreciate them and their willingness to lend Mike and Joe to the American people for a short while.

Now I'm going to be with you later at a meeting for Congress, and I'll be able to answer your questions then. So I'd like to get

back to our regularly scheduled programming, under the leadership of old what's his name over here. [*Laughter*]

***Q.*** What does this say for Joe's credibility when I asked him yesterday if McCurry was leaving? [*Laughter*]

***The President.*** Did he say no or not yet?

***Q.*** He didn't say no—yes, he said no; he didn't say not yet.

***The President.*** Well, the answer yesterday was no. [*Laughter*] The answer today is no. But at sometime in the near future, the answer will be yes.

Mike, thank you so much.

***Q.*** ——sir, is there anything else you can do about the drought conditions, the heat wave? Is there other stuff we ought to be thinking about?

***The President.*** Well, we're looking at it. I wish I could seed the clouds and make it rain. But this is very disturbing. We're going to be looking at it. In all the States, I'm sure there are vigorous efforts going on through the State emergency offices, and my understanding is—I've asked for an update, I didn't get it before I came out here, of the volunteer efforts that are going on. This happened to me once when I was Governor, and we had to move a lot of seniors into our senior citizen centers, because they were air-conditioned, and just set up cots. And we were handing out, literally, hundreds and hundreds of fans to people who had no air-conditioning in their homes.

We can give the money out, and we're going to look and see what else we can do. We're going to look and see whether we can get some more help from other States, perhaps, that aren't so hard-hit. Actually, ironically, a few more than half of our States are having temperatures slightly below normal this year. But these 11, there are some more above the 11 who are a little above average, but these are 20 percent above average in the hottest months. So we're looking at it. If I can determine anything else I can do, believe me, I will do it, because there are an awful lot of people that just cannot take this heat without some more help. And we'll do whatever we can.

***Q.*** Mr. President, how serious is this Iranian missile test?

***The President.*** I'll answer all the other questions when I—I'll be glad to answer the questions, but I just—I want to wait to let you do this thing with Mike, and then I'll see you about an hour or whenever.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks Following a Meeting on Agricultural Assistance and an Exchange With Reporters

*July 23, 1998*

***The President.*** After the clicking stops, here's what I want to do. [*Laughter*] As you can all see, I'm here with Senator Daschle, Senator Harkin, Senator Conrad, Senator Dorgan, and Secretary Glickman, Deputy Secretary Rominger; and these young people here are national officers of the FFA.

In a few moments, I'm going to do a national radio press conference with agricultural reporters from agricultural radio networks around the country. I've got a brief statement here that I would like to read, and then I'd like to give the Senators a chance to make whatever comments they would like to make. And then I will do what I said I'd do in the pressroom a while ago, I'll let you all ask some questions, if you have questions on other subjects, and then we'll go do the ag press conference.

We're here because all of us are profoundly concerned about the communities that are suffering from both low prices and all kinds of natural disasters around the country. In Texas, about three quarters of the cotton crop has been lost. Senator Dorgan said the other day that North Dakota retired auctioneers are being pressed into duty to handle all the families that are being forced to sell their farms.

For 5½ years we've worked hard to help America's farm families with disaster assistance to ranchers who've lost livestock, surplus commodity purchases for school lunches, diversifying the sources of enterprise and income in rural America. We've increased our use of export credits by a third in the last year alone.

This year's farm crisis demands that we do more. On Saturday I directed Secretary Glickman to buy more than 80 million bushels of wheat to help lift prices for American farmers and ease hunger in the developing world. Today I'm announcing that we are providing disaster assistance for farmers in Texas—the entire State has been declared a disaster area—to help those whose crops and livestock have been ravaged by the drought. I believe today is the 18th day in a row that it's above 100 degrees in Dallas, Texas. Next week I will send Secretary Glickman to Texas and Oklahoma to assess what other help is needed.

As we head into the conference, I ask all of you young people who are here to go back home and help us to do whatever we can to pass the $500 million in emergency farmer and rancher assistance contained in the amendment sponsored by Senators Conrad and Dorgan and strongly supported by our ranking Democrat on the committee, Senator Harkin, and our leader, Senator Daschle.

We also have to help to revive the rural economy with exports. We have to give the International Monetary Fund the resources it needs to strengthen the Asian economies. Let me tell you how big a deal this is. About 40 to 50 percent of all American grain production is exported; 40 percent of all the exports go to Asia. We have a 30 percent decline in farm exports to Asian countries—excluding China and Japan—they're down about 13 percent in Japan; they're down about 6 percent in China, 30 percent in the other countries this year because of the Asian financial crisis.

The International Monetary Fund is designed to reform those economies and boost them. They need money in order to buy our food. It is not a very complicated thing. But I have asked for this since January now. I was very disturbed to see in the morning press there's been another decision to delay a vote on this in the House of Representatives. I think it is a big mistake. I am doing what I can to continue to boost food exports. I don't believe that they should be subject to sanctions and our policies except under the most extreme circumstances. And I believe we have to do more.

Finally, I want to do whatever I can to strengthen the farm safety net. We should expand eligibility for direct and guaranteed loans, improve the crop insurance program which simply is not working for too many farmers, and extend marketing loans when the prices are low. We have to give farmers more flexibility in planning when to receive Federal income support. They ought to be able to get these payments early. I proposed that last spring. I saw that there was some support for that in the House leadership last week, and I'm grateful for that, but I'd like to pass that and get it out and do it soon.

All these things I think will help. But we have to understand we've got a price crisis in America today because of high worldwide crop production, the decline of the Asian economies, and the decline in the currencies of so many countries relative to the dollar, which means they can't buy as much food; that's why the IMF is important. We also have a disaster problem because of the drought and other significant natural problems. And no farmer should go broke because of an act of God. So that's our policy, and we're going to try to implement it.

And I'd like to give the Senators a chance to make a few remarks, and then I'll answer your other questions.

Senator Daschle.

[*At this point, Senator Thomas A. Daschle made brief remarks.*]

***The President.*** Senator Harkin.

[*At this point, Senator Tom Harkin made brief remarks.*]

***The President.*** The North Dakota Senators—I think North Dakota, I should say for the benefit of the national press, I believe has had the largest drop in farm income in any State of the country by a good stretch.

[*At this point, North Dakota Senators Kent Conrad and Byron L. Dorgan made brief remarks.*]

***The President.*** Well, let me just make one more comment about this, and then I'll answer your questions.

When the freedom to farm bill was passed, those of us who came from farming areas knew that it had a lot of very good provisions.

It got the Government out of micromanaging farming; it gave farmers more freedom to make their own planting decision; it had terrific conservation provisions; it had good rural development provisions. But it did not have an adequate safety net. We all knew it at the time. And there were those, and there still are some, who believe that we really don't need one.

But I just think that's wrong. To go back to what Senator Harkin said, I believe if you look at the trends in world population growth and agricultural production elsewhere, in most normal years for the next 30 years, American farmers should do better and better and better. This would be a very good time for a whole generation of our farmers. But the average farmer is about 59 years old in America today.

So what I'm worried about is that, you know, you get a bad year or two like this coming along without an adequate safety net in this bill, then you wind up changing the whole structure of agriculture in ways that I don't think are good for America.

So we're going to work on this. We're going to try to get it done. But I do say to the young people here, I agree with Senator Harkin, I think the future trends around the world look quite good for America's farmers if we can get through this rough spot.

Thank you.

***Q.*** Why can't you lawmakers convince your fellows on the Hill? I mean, what is the holdup?

***The President.*** Well, don't you think your bill will pass? I think it'll pass.

***Senator Dorgan.*** It passed the Senate. We've got to get it through conference and I think we'll get it——

***The President.*** And the Senate passed the International Monetary Fund.

***Senator Harkin.*** Yes. And we've got the indemnity fund in there.

***Senator Conrad.*** We're about to——

***The President.*** You're about to—but you're going to pass it.

***Q.*** What's the problem?

***The President.*** The problem is in the House, and we just have to hope that they will follow the lead of the Senate here.

### *Iran-U.S. Relations*

***Q.*** Mr. President, what impact do you see the missile test having on your efforts to try and warm relations with Iran?

***The President.*** Well, we've been following this for some time. And we knew that Iran was attempting to develop this capability. It's just a test. But if they—obviously, if they were to develop an intermediate range missile, it could change the regional stability dynamics in the Middle East. And that's why we've worked so hard with North Korea and with others to try to get them not to transfer missiles and missile technology to Iran.

If we do continue to have an opening of relations because the new President seems more open to it, obviously this is one of the things I would raise with him. We've been very concerned about this. And we believe that the future of the Middle East would be better if they'd invest more money, all those countries, in something other than military technology.

So we're very, very concerned about it, but not surprised by it.

***Q.*** [*Inaudible*]

***The President.*** One at a time. Obviously, it is an obstacle. But I don't think it's an argument for closing off all avenues of opportunity. The country is in a dynamic state now. There's some dynamism there, and there's some reason to believe that—it seems to me that at least making it clear what our position is on that, on the Middle East peace process, on terrorism, support of terrorism, on all these issues with which we've had problems with Iran in the past, and still being glad that there's some movement toward greater popular government, more openness in the country argues for what we're doing—a cautious, deliberate approach.

### *Fast-Track Trade Legislation*

***Q.*** Mr. President, besides the IMF bill, high on the farm agenda is fast-track legislation. Why not go along with Speaker Gingrich and schedule a vote—a September vote on this?

***The President.*** First of all, I strongly support fast track, as you know. I was bitterly disappointed that we couldn't pass it earlier. And he and I both worked very hard to pass it. There is no evidence that one single vote

has changed. If anything, there's some evidence that we'd have more trouble passing it.

So if we bring it up in a bill that also has the International Monetary Fund or the Africa trade bill or the Caribbean Basin initiative—all of which I think are good for America—the impact would be, in all probability, to kill them all and to make it even harder to pass fast track early next year. I still believe we'll pass fast track next year when we get beyond this election year. I think it is so evidently in the best interest of the country. That's the first answer.

The second point is, the International Monetary Fund funding will do much more good in the short run because it puts money into the countries that want to buy our food today. Fast track gives the United States the power to open new markets in the future, to enter negotiations to open new markets in the future.

So it's not terribly significant whether we get the fast-track legislation in August, let's say, or September or January or February next year or March, because we still have to start the negotiations and open new markets. We're already going to negotiate in opening agricultural markets, for example, within the World Trade Organization to try to deal with the European subsidy issue that was mentioned earlier.

So I'm strongly for fast track. I think we will pass it next year. I have no evidence that a single vote has changed since it was not passed earlier, and I don't want to kill all the rest of that. We ought to pass the Africa trade bill now, the modified Caribbean Basin bill now. But most important of all, dwarfing everything else, in the near term for these farmers with their prices low is the International Monetary Fund funding, because that will float cash into these countries as a condition for reform, and it will give the money to buy our food. That's more important.

### *Middle East Peace Process*

***Q.*** Why have you thrown in the towel on the Middle East?

***The President.*** Well, we haven't. I saw that story. That's just not so.

Let me say first of all, if I thought the process were over, I would say it was over. We have continued intense negotiations to this day with both sides, based on the ideas we advanced earlier, which, as you know, were accepted in principle by Mr. Arafat and not by Mr. Netanyahu, but a negotiation ensued.

Secretary Albright has worked very, very hard on this. We have made a not inconsiderable amount of progress. But differences remain. We haven't thrown in the towel because I think it's a lot better to get an agreement, to get them into final status talks than it is to give up and let this thing drift dangerously toward conflict and dissolution.

So if we come to a time when I think it's hopeless, I'll say it's hopeless and that ideas weren't accepted. But right now, I'm not prepared to say that. I think there's still a chance we can get an agreement, and we're going to keep working for it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks in a Teleconference With Rural Radio Stations on Agricultural Issues and Farming

*July 23, 1998*

[*Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, acting as moderator of the teleconference, made brief opening remarks and introduced the President.*]

***The President.*** Thank you very much, Secretary Glickman. And I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to speak to people in rural America.

Today, most of our fellow citizens are enjoying the dividends of the strongest American economy in a generation. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years. We're about to have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, with the highest homeownership in American history. But with the economic crisis in Asia hurting our farm exports, with crop prices squeezed by abundant world supplies, and with farms devastated by

floods and fires and droughts, communities in parts of the South and Great Plains are withering. In Texas, almost three-quarters of the cotton crop is lost; and in North Dakota, retired auctioneers are being pressed into duty just to handle all the families who are being forced to sell their farms.

Secretary Glickman and I are joined in the Oval Office today by several young leaders of the FFA. They represent the future of American agriculture and they deserve a chance to have that future. As the former Governor of a State that depends heavily on farming, I know we must never turn our backs on farmers when Mother Nature or the world economy turns a callous eye.

Our farm communities feed our Nation and much of the world. They also nourish the values on which our country was born, and which has led us now for over 220 years—hard work, and faith, and family, devotion to community and to the land. We simply can't flourish if we let our rural roots shrivel and decline.

For 5½ years, I've worked to expand opportunity for farm families, providing critical disaster assistance to ranchers who have lost livestock, purchasing surplus commodities for school lunches, working to diversify the sources of income in rural America, increasing our use of export credits by a third in the past year alone. But this year's farm crisis demands that we provide more help to farmers teetering on the edge.

Last Saturday I directed Secretary Glickman to buy more than 80 million bushels of wheat to help lift prices for American farmers, while easing hunger in the developing world. Today, in addition to helping citizens in 11 Southern States beat by unrelenting heat, I'm announcing we will provide immediate disaster assistance for farmers throughout the state of Texas to help those whose crops and livestock have been ravaged by drought.

Next week, I'll send Secretary Glickman to Texas and Oklahoma to talk with drought-stricken farmers and assess what other help they require. And once again, I urge Congress: We must provide the $500 million in emergency assistance, sponsored by Senators Conrad, Dorgan, Daschle, and Harkin, for farmers and ranchers throughout the country who have been afflicted not only by drought but also by fires and floods and other disasters. They are our neighbors in need.

With these measures, we can help farmers weather the current crisis. But to strengthen rural America for the long run, we have to do more. First, we have to revive the rural economy with exports. Today, products from one of every three acres planted in America are sold abroad. We have to continue to open new foreign markets and enforce our existing trade agreements. We must give the International Monetary Fund the resources it needs to strengthen and reform the Asian economies so that they will have the money to buy our farm products.

Yesterday, unfortunately, the House of Representatives delayed this critical funding for the IMF. American farmers cannot afford to wait; they need help now. We should also be prepared to donate food generously to those around the world at risk of malnutrition or starvation. As a general principle, I believe commercial exports of food should not be used as a tool of foreign policy, except under the most compelling circumstances.

A week ago, I signed the Agricultural Export Relief Act, enabling U.S. farmers to sell 300,000 tons of wheat to Pakistan the next day. I urge Congress to provide me authority to waive sanctions on food when it is in the national interest, and to work with me to incorporate flexibility in sanctions policy more broadly.

Second, we simply have to strengthen the farm safety net. We should expand eligibility for direct and guaranteed loans, improve crop insurance, which is not working for a lot of farmers today, and extend marketing loans when crop prices are too low.

And we should give farmers more flexibility in planning when to receive Federal income support payments and in planting new crops when their primary crops fail. I proposed allowing our farmers to receive Federal income support payments—early—last spring. There is now some support for it apparently in the Congress; I hope very much it will pass soon.

Third, we must improve the infrastructure in rural communities. We have to preserve universal service and defend the vital E-rate initiative so that all rural homes can count

on affordable telephone rates and rural schools, libraries, and health centers can tap into the promise of the Internet. We have to modernize rural schools and transportation systems, improve the quality of rural health with advanced telemedicine, cleaner drinking water, and safer food.

These steps are in the best tradition of our Nation. Whenever disaster strikes, Americans join together to help see their neighbors through. That's what happened in Florida when brave men and women from across the country help put out the State's fires, and that's what we'll do throughout rural America to save our farmers from losing their homes and crops.

At this moment of broad prosperity for our Nation, we are certainly able to, and we clearly must, help our neighbors on the farm throughout this current crisis so that we can strengthen our rural communities for the 21st century. Now, I'll be happy to take your questions.

***Secretary Glickman.*** Thank you, Mr. President. I get to be the role of moderator today, and our first question comes——

***The President.*** You sound kind of like a deejay.

***Secretary Glickman.*** That's right. You should hear me sing. But we won't do that here. Our first question comes from Shelly Beyer who is with the Brownfield Network out of Jefferson City, Missouri.

Shelly, are you on?

[*Ms. Beyer asked the President if he favors Congress taking steps on fast-track trading authority.*]

***The President.*** Well, Shelly, fast track wouldn't actually help the farmers right now. I would support voting on fast track whenever we think we can pass it. But, you know, we had a huge struggle to pass fast track earlier this year, and we failed. I believe it will pass early next year. I don't believe that any votes have changed.

And keep in mind what fast track does. Fast track simply gives me the authority that previous Presidents have had to negotiate new trade agreements tearing down trade barriers to American products in other countries. By contrast, getting the funding for the International Monetary Fund will immediately create markets for American products.

Let me just give you an example. About 40 to 50 percent of our grains are exported. Forty percent of our export market is in Asia. If you take all the Asian countries except for Japan and China, our exports are down 30 percent because of their economic problems; they're down 13 percent in Japan; they're down 6 percent in China.

Now, if we could get the International Monetary Fund funding, and those countries could get more money, then they'll immediately have more money to buy our food. So I think that the IMF funding will do more in the short run to boost American farm prices.

Now, over the next year, we've got to get the fast-track authority so that we can continue to open more markets. We will also begin negotiations in the World Trade Organization to try to get every country that signed on to that to lower their agricultural tariffs and other barriers so that we can sell in more markets.

So I agree that we need to do fast track. I am determined to get other countries to lower their agricultural barriers, but all that takes time. And if I had the fast-track authority tomorrow, it would still take time to open those markets and reach those agreements. We need to open the markets now. That's why the International Monetary Fund is more important, because it will flow cash into countries, they'll immediately have money when they can immediately start to buy more food.

[*Secretary Glickman introduced Gary Wergin of WHO Radio in Des Moines, Iowa, who asked the President why Democratic votes in Congress for fast-track trade authority have been difficult to obtain.*]

***The President.*** I believe that what happened was the Members got dug in before they saw the final bill. And I also think that there were more Republicans voting against it than the Speaker thought. This was one issue where, notwithstanding our well-publicized conflicts, Speaker Gingrich and I worked hand-in-glove, and we worked very, very hard.

But the truth is that, for reasons that I wasn't privy to, by the time the bill was actually brought up in the House, the people who were against fast track had been working against it so hard they'd gotten so many commitments, that when—even though the bill, on its merits, I think, was very much deserving of passing and met a lot of the concerns for labor rights, for environmental concerns, and other things, we couldn't get the votes.

The only point I want to make is, to the best of my knowledge, we have not changed either 10 Democratic votes or 10 Republican votes from no to yes. If we don't have those votes, why would we kill the Africa trade bill, which is good for us, or the Caribbean trade bill, or even more important by far, the International Monetary Fund, by tying all this stuff together? Why not pass what we can pass now, get the immediate benefits, and then work on passing fast track when the election is behind us?

I think it's clear that it will pass early next year, because it's manifestly in the national interest, and because, frankly, then a lot of the Members of Congress who got committed against it early, will be forced to look at what the actual details of the bill say and will feel freer to vote for it.

[*Secretary Glickman introduced Stewart Doan of the Arkansas Radio Network, who spoke from KARN in Little Rock.*]

***The President.*** Hello, Stewart. What's the temperature down there?

***Mr. Doan.*** Right about 100, sir. About the same as it was Saturday when you were out at Chenal.

***The President.*** I know. It was over 100 both days I was out there.

[*Mr. Doan quoted congressional leaders who have blamed recent agriculture crises on farm legislation from 2 years ago. He asked the President if he agreed with the characterization and if he favored increasing the guaranteed minimum price for grain, soybeans, and cotton.*]

***The President.*** Well, first of all, I think I would partly agree with what they say. I think that fundamental cause of the crisis today is a price crisis. It's a market crisis caused by a combination of things. You've got adequate—and more than adequate—world supplies. You've got a significant decline in the economic capacity of Asia to buy our food products. You've got a big drop in the currency values in other countries relative to the American dollar, which makes our food, relatively speaking, more expensive, which makes it even harder. And that's a big problem. And then in America, you've also got a disaster crisis. You've got some places where they have no price and no crop. Usually when farmers have no crop, at least the no crop they have has a high price, because the supply has dried up. But now the worldwide supply is so big that they've got a double hit. So that's the fundamental problem.

When I signed the '96 freedom to farm bill, I pointed out that it had a lot of good provisions in it, but it didn't have a real safety net. Let's remember what the good provisions were. Number one, it got the Government out of micromanaging planning decisions. Number two, it had terrific conservation provisions. Number three, it had good rural development provisions. And I had no choice but to sign it, because if I hadn't we would have been back on the '49 farm law, which would have been even worse for the farmers. But I said in '96, the crop prices are not going to be high forever, and when they drop, we're going to regret not having an adequate safety net. So the first thing we have to do is to develop an adequate safety net.

Now, let me just—you asked about the proposals by Senator Harkin and others; let me just run through some of the things that I have proposed, and then I'll answer your question about their proposal. First of all, Senators Dorgan and Conrad have a $500-million bill up there—it's passed the Senate and I hope and believe will pass the House—which would improve and expand crop insurance; it would compensate farmers whose crop and pasture land is flooded; it would provide emergency feed assistance to livestock producers who are suffering from drought and allow us to use export enhancement funds that are left over in future years for food aid and other purposes. These things I think will be quite helpful.

Now, in addition to that, I've asked the Congress to help strengthen the safety net by extending the term of marketing assistance loans, by allowing flexibility for farmers to receive advanced AMTA payments. I asked for that last April. The Speaker and other House Republicans are now saying in the last week or so they are open to that. That would have I think a lot of impact.

And I, finally, asked for a provision that would improve credit ability and modify the one-strike policy for farmers who have had a debt write-down, and I've also proposed to let USDA guaranteed operating loans be used to refinance. So if we were to do all these things, I think we'd strengthen the safety net.

Now, in principle, I think it's clear that the commodity loan cap is not working, and it needs to be modified. The question is, how should we modify it, and how are we going to pay for it within the context of the balanced budget? But in principle, I don't think there's any question that what Senator Harkin and Congressman Gephardt and others say is right, that the present cap is too low.

And there are some people who think this system is fine the way it works, but I don't. I think what it will do is inevitably reduce the number of family farmers, even if it doesn't reduce the acreage being farmed. And I don't think that's a good thing for America. So I would like to see a system where farmers don't fail because of acts of God.

[*At this point, Secretary Glickman made brief remarks, noting his Department will continue to provide responsible policy that will not artificially keep farm prices too low and allow farmers some flexibility in marketing. He agreed there are problems with current farming laws. He then introduced Mike Hergert of the Red River Farm Network in Grand Forks, ND, who asked what farmers could expect in terms of fixing the crop insurance program.*]

***The President.*** Well, first of all, we've expanded the size of the program, which I thought was important; it was way too small in '93 when I took office. We've more than doubled it, and we've expanded farmers' choices by creating new varieties of crop insurance. And we've introduced the concept of revenue insurance in a large majority of the grain-producing parts of the country.

But I still think there are some other things that have to be done. I think that even though we've improved the program by offering coverage on preventive planning since '93 and increasingly based the coverage on farmers' individual yields, it's just not working for most farmers. And what we're trying to do now is to look at all the ways we can help our farmers get through tough times that we can pass in the Congress.

Maybe Secretary Glickman would like to talk about this, but I must say, I've been waiting for someone to ask this question, because when I was home last weekend talking to the farmers, that's the only thing they said. They said, this crops insurance is a joke; it doesn't really help anybody. So maybe, Secretary Glickman, that's too blunt for me to say that our Government's crop insurance program is a joke, but maybe you should talk a little more about some of the things we're looking at to improve it.

[*Secretary Glickman noted problems getting Congress to fully fund recently passed agriculture legislation, funding which could aid farmers in the Dakota-Minnesota regions whose wheat crops are badly affected by a disease called "scab." On crop insurance, he compared conditions to the way bankers lend money, that those whose farms have suffered much crop damage in the past are akin to bad credit denying a bank loan. He noted the difficulty in running the crop insurance program like a private insurance company, to be actuarially sound, which the law requires, but pointed to current legislation introduced by Senators Kent Conrad and Byron L. Dorgan which provides funds to supplement crop insurance. The Secretary agreed that it is a great challenge.*]

***The President.*** Mike, Senator Dorgan and Senator Conrad were just here with us in the Oval Office just a few minutes ago, and we were talking about this. I think the provision in their bill is going to pass—I believe it will. But I would just say to any of our listeners there, if you have got any ideas about what we can do with this program, this insurance

program, to make it fairer and more affordable and more functional, or how it could be modified in some ways, I would urge you to directly contact Secretary Glickman or write to us here at the White House. Because I am hearing from farmers all over the country that it's simply not working, and as Dan Glickman said, it's really not like buying car insurance or home insurance or something like that. It's almost like buying flood insurance in a 25-year flood plain where you just have no control over what's going to happen. But we have a national interest in seeing that land, which is highly productive, in North Dakota be planted.

So I think the whole concept behind the requirement that it be, quote, ''actuarially sound'' misperceives the facts there. And I don't believe the Congress meant to say we don't want anybody planting in North Dakota anymore because they've had floods and disease and pests and everything. I don't believe that was the intent of the act of Congress. So I think this is one where an honest error was made, and we would like to correct it and if you've got any ideas, for goodness sakes, give them to us.

[*Secretary Glickman next introduced Bart Walker from WGNS in Murfreesboro, TN, who said that economic success in his area has driven up population, which resulted in family farms being turned into subdivisions. He noted that most students majoring in agriculture at Middle Tennessee State University are going into related fields but not actual farming. Mr. Walker asked the President if there are plans for low-interest loans for programs that would enable and encourage students to take up farming.*]

***The President.*** Yes. We actually have a program that provides low interest loans for first-time farmers, as well as a program in the Department of Agriculture that gives kind of technical support and assistance for new farmers. And one of the things that I've asked Secretary Glickman to do is to assess the adequacy of that program and to look at some of the things that we're doing in nonfarm communities, setting up community financial institutions that make extra loans and things of that kind to see if they might be relevant to first-time farmers.

As I said at the beginning of our interview here, I got the national officers of the FFA here with me. And these young farmers are the future of America. The average farmer is about 59 years old in America today. And I'm very concerned about that in places where, like in Murfreesboro, where you're doing very well economically, if a farmer chooses to sell his or her land to a developer, and you subdivide it, well, there's nothing I can do about it and probably nothing you would want to do about it. You don't remove the right to do that if that's what the market is dictating. But I think where young people want to farm and are able to farm, if they can get the credit they ought to be able to get the loans at affordable terms and at good repayment terms.

One of the things that we've done for college loans since I've been here that I think might have some applicability to first-time farmer loans I want to look at is to structure the repayment in a way that's tied directly to income. So, for example, if a young person wants to go to college and then take a job as a schoolteacher, and another would go to college and takes a job as a stockbroker, and they borrow the same exact amount of money to get out of college but the stockbroker has an income of 3 times the schoolteacher's, under the new provisions of our college loan program, the schoolteacher can pay back the money with a ceiling on it as a percentage of his or her income. So if a young person wants to go into some sort of public service—to be a police officer, a nurse, a schoolteacher, a social worker, something like that—they can do that.

Well, if you think about the early years of farming and how meager the income might be, there may be something we can do to structure the same sort of loan program for first-time farmers. So we're looking at a lot of other options. But we do have—to go back to your first question—we actually do have a program in the Department for first-time farmers to provide for loans and for technical assistance to help them get started.

[*Secretary Glickman noted that the Agriculture Department's outreach office provides technical assistance to first-time farmers. He then introduced Bill Ray of the Agrinet Farm Radio Network in Kill Devil*

*Hills, NC, who welcomed listeners to the Outer Banks.*]

***The President.*** That's near Kitty Hawk, isn't it?

***Mr. Ray.*** That's exactly right.

***The President.*** I went there once, about 26 years ago. It's beautiful.

***Mr. Ray.*** Well, a lot of folks would like to have you back,Mr. President.

***The President.*** Thank you.

[*Mr. Ray asked the President what long-range plans he recommends to help food producers in the Nation.*]

***The President.*** Well, over the long haul, I believe that the provisions of the '96 bill—let me just say what I think we ought to keep. I've said what I think is wrong about it. Let me say what I think we ought to keep. I think it would be better if we could avoid having the Government go back to micromanaging the farmers planting decisions. I think letting the farmers make the decisions about what crops they're going to plant is the right thing to do. I think we ought to keep the strong conservation provisions of the farm bill of '96.

And finally, I'd like to keep, and even strengthen the rural development provisions of the farm bill. One of the things that we haven't talked about is, there are a lot of people who live in agricultural communities who farm, who—either they—either the farmer or the farmer's spouse gets a significant income from other kinds of work. And so what I would like to see is—I'd like to see us do more on rural development, because the more we can diversify the economies of these small towns, the more people can afford to farm because they'll have a salaried income coming in, too, which will help them to deal with the problems of the bad years. So I think those are the good things to keep.

I think that we should redouble our efforts in agricultural research. Secretary Glickman mentioned this. I hope that we can get the actual dollar figure I recommended for ag research funded in this year's budget, because we get such a huge return from ag research.

The second thing I'd like to say is I think if we can get an adequate farm safety net in this present structure, and then we can continue to open farm markets and get fair treatment with the fast-track legislation, with the new agricultural negotiations we're going to have through the World Trade Organization, with the funding for the International Monetary Fund, then I think the future for our farmers actually looks quite good.

If you look at the all the new things that are coming out of agricultural research, if you look at all the new applications of farm products that are being developed, and if you look at the growth of world population and the projected agricultural production in other parts of the world, I would say that the next 30 years for our farmers will probably be very, very good if we can continue to invest in research and stay ahead of the curve, and if we can continue to open new markets, and if we're smart enough and honest enough to recognize that we're always going to have bad years, we're always going to have act of God, we're always going to have things like this go wrong—especially when there's some evidence that there is a lot of change in our climate, that's warming the Earth's climate and leading to more disruption—so let's put in an adequate safety net, pay for it, deal with it, and say it's an investment in America's future. I think if we just do those things, our farmers are going to do quite well.

[*Secretary Glickman introduced Tony Purcell from the Texas State News Network.*]

***President Clinton.*** What's the temperature down there?

***Mr. Purcell.*** We're pushing 100 degrees right now for the 19th day in a row.

***President Clinton.*** Well, I'm surprised you're not shorted out. I'm glad we can hear each other.

[*Mr. Purcell thanked the President for providing emergency disaster funding for areas suffering losses during a heat wave. He then asked what kind of relief might be available for agribusinesses suffering losses.*]

***President Clinton.*** Depending on the dimensions, there are standards in the Federal law for my disaster declarations, but normally, when a disaster declaration affects an entire State in agricultural losses, then small businesses that are affected by it and communities that are affected by it are also eligible for other kinds of assistance. And I tell

you what I will do; I'll have our people do some research on it and get back to you directly on it.

But let me also just say, there's one thing in this bill that's coming up that I think could be quite helpful. I've mentioned this several times, the bill by Senators Conrad and Dorgan that's got $500 million more in emergency assistance. A lot of the problems in Texas are livestock problems, even though you've lost most of your cotton crop and had a lot of other problems.

We had a program which permitted the Federal Government, in times of disaster for people with their livestock, to buy up surplus feed and give it to the livestock farmers. That was suspended in 1996 in the farm bill until 2002. Under our provision, under this emergency provision, we'd get some of that back, and we could get some feed down there to those livestock folks that I think would be very, very helpful. So that's another thing we're trying to do for the farmers. But I believe that there is some community and small business assistance that can flow, too. If Secretary Glickman can answer the question now, fine; if not, I'll have somebody directly contact you later today.

[*Secretary Glickman mentioned there are several disaster assistance programs, and he said he'd get those to the region. He said the President is sending him to Texas and Oklahoma, and he intends to meet with people at Texas A&M to discuss the nature and extent of the damage from heat wave. He noted that emergency loans will be triggered to respond.*]

***The President.*** But if I could, to go back to your question about the nonagricultural losses related to the agricultural crisis—as Secretary Glickman said, some of our emergency programs were funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. And we have—obviously, you have a Governor's emergency management person there who works with us on that.

Then, we also have some programs funded through the Small Business Administration, some programs funded through the Commerce Department, some programs funded through the Housing and Urban Development Department. We'll just have to do an inventory. And I would urge all of the people who are listening to us through your network there to make sure that their mayors or Members of Congress or State officials have access to Secretary Glickman when he comes down there and give him as complete a picture as you can of what the problems are. And, obviously, we'll do our best to bring to bear whatever resources we can legally provide to help you deal with the terrible difficulties you are in.

Today I announced that we were going to give $100 million to Texas and 10 other States just to help with utility bills, with air-conditioning, with fans, with other things, for all these people who don't have adequate cooling. We've had 100 deaths now between—basically between Dallas on the West and then across Arkansas and north Louisiana, and then to Tennessee and north Alabama and Mississippi, and all in through that 11-State area, all the way over to the East Coast because of the record heat. And I'm hoping that we can help you with that as well and save some more lives.

[*Secretary Glickman noted the program was out of time and invited the President to make closing comments.*]

***The President.*** Well, I would just like to say, first of all, that I'm very concerned about the problems that are being faced up and down and North and West and East and South in the farm belt. They're significant and they're different from place to place in our country. We're doing our best to respond. I'm trying to listen to your elected representatives here. I'm trying to move the system here as quickly as I can. I hope you will urge your representatives to vote for the Conrad-Dorgan bill to get some more emergency assistance out there. I hope you'll support us in building a more permanent, adequate farm safety net and in building new markets for our farm products.

But if you have any more ideas, I would urge you to get in touch with the Secretary of Agriculture or with me. We did this interview in part just to reach out and show our concern to farmers and to rural America and to ask for your ideas. If you have any ideas about anything else we can do, if there's something we're overlooking, we want to get

on it; we want to be responsive. We know that it's not the best of times for a lot of our farmers, and we want to be there for you. America is doing very well as a whole, and we think you should be part of that.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action on Environmental Legislation

*July 23, 1998*

I am pleased that the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan fashion, today rejected an unwise and unwarranted attempt to deny the American people the facts about global warming.

With much of the country suffering a stifling heat wave, and with each month so far this year setting a new record for global temperature, the American people expect and deserve a fair, honest, and informed debate on the issue of climate change. Some in Congress would have stifled that debate by effectively imposing a gag order on Federal agencies. Thankfully, the House voted to remove this language from the VA–HUD appropriations bill.

Unfortunately, the bill still contains other provisions that would restrict our ability to move forward with cost-effective steps to reduce the greenhouse gases that cause global warming. And appropriations bills moving through Congress would cut by nearly one half my proposed research and tax incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy technologies—measures that would reduce energy costs for American families while curbing greenhouse gases.

Americans have demonstrated time and again that we can protect our environment while growing our economy. We can and must meet the challenge of climate change in the same way. I urge Congress to join us in this critical endeavor.

## Remarks at a Birthday Celebration for Jazz Musician Lionel Hampton

*July 23, 1998*

Thank you. I would say you gave a better speech for me than I played a song for you. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to Lionel Hampton and this wonderful orchestra, to all of you who are here who made this evening possible—LeVerne, thank you. Max Roach, thank you for coming. All of us who have been your fans for so long are honored to be in your presence. Thank you, Reverend Jackson. Thank you, all the Members of Congress who are here. A very, very special word of thanks to two perfectly wonderful men and fellow travelers along the road of jazz music and progressive politics—[*laughter*]—John Conyers and Charlie Rangel. Thank you for making this evening possible.

You know, Hillary and I have loved many things about the opportunity to serve here, but maybe none more than the opportunity to share with America the great gifts of our artists. And this is a special night. Lionel Hampton is 90 years old this year. You should know that he has played for every President since Harry Truman. I was minus one when Harry Truman became President—[*laughter*]—so he's been at this a day or two.

It's been a long time since he joined Louis Armstrong and gave him a hit song and revolutionized jazz music forever. I was telling Hillary when Hamp was up there playing and singing, I said, ''You know, my ears are going. I can't even hear the pitch anymore, and there he is, hitting the pitch.'' [*Laughter*] All of you who've ever played or tried to sing, the idea that he hit the pitch is something. And they played magnificently tonight. They lifted our spirits; they lifted our hearts.

I am personally indebted to Hillary and Charlie Rangel and John Conyers for cooking this night up, and I think all of us are. And I just want to say that even though your real birthday was a few months earlier, what the heck, you only turn 90 once—[*laughter*]—we think it ought to be a year-long celebration.

So I would like to ask the White House magnificent chef who does these things for

us to bring Mr. Hampton a little gift in here. And I'd like to ask all of you to stand and join me in singing ''Happy Birthday'' to him.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to LeBaron Taylor, senior vice president-corporate affiars, Sony Corporation; musician Max Roach; and civil rights advocate Rev. Jesse Jackson.

## Remarks to the American Legion Boys Nation

*July 24, 1998*

Thank you very much. Good morning. And thank you, Sheriff Riley, for that introduction and for your wonderful work for the education of our young people.

I'd like to welcome your Boys Nation director, Ron Engel; your legislative director, George Blume; your director of activities, Jack Mercier, celebrating 35 years with Boys Nation—he was here when I was here, back in the ''dark ages''; your national chairman for the American Legion, Joseph Caouette; President Sladek; Vice President Rogers.

We've got a good representation for former Boys Nation people here. I know Fred Duval, my Deputy Assistant, who was in Boys Nation class of 1972, has already spoken to you. I'd also like to recognize Sean Stephenson, class of 1996, now an intern in Cabinet Affairs. Thank you for what you're doing here. And I'd like to acknowledge someone who has worked with Boys Nation year after year as long as I've been here in facilitating this event, a long, longtime friend of mine, Dan Wexler, who is leaving the White House. This is his very last event. And thank you, Mr. Wexler, for a wonderful job for the United States.

As some of you may know, a few days ago we had a reunion here at the White House for our 35th anniversary of our Boys Nation summer, and ''Nightline'' ran 2 nights on our reunion. I asked your president if he'd seen either one of them; he said he saw the first one, the second one he was here on duty. But I had an opportunity to meet with about half the men who were with me 35 years ago, and we were reminiscing. It was exactly 35 years ago on this day, July 24, 1963, that President Kennedy spoke to us right here in the Rose Garden about our future. He made us believe that together we could change the world. I still believe that, and I think it is no less true for your generation. Indeed, I believe you will live in the time of greatest possibility in all human history.

Today I want to talk with you a little bit about what we have to do as a country to make the most of those possibilities, specifically about what we have to do to strengthen our education system.

When I was here, President Kennedy complimented us for supporting civil rights legislation which the Nation's Governors had declined to do. I was very proud of that because two delegates from Louisiana and I and one from Mississippi were four Southerners who broke from the pack and ensured that the legislation would pass. But I have to say that, looking back over the years, we knew then that our school systems were separate and unequal and that we never could make them what we ought to until we integrated our schools so that we could integrate our country. What we did not see then and what we know now is that equal access to public schools does not guarantee the educational excellence that should be the birthright of every American on the edge of the 21st century.

Today we enjoy a remarkable amount of peace and prosperity and security. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, lowest percentage of our people on welfare in 29 years, lowest crime rate in 25 years. On October 1st we will realize the first balanced budget and surplus we have had in 29 years. We have the highest homeownership in history, and the Government has played an active role in this, but it is the smallest Government we have had in 35 years—since I was here where you are today.

Still, the world is changing fast, and it is full of challenges that we have to meet. We must build an alliance of nations, committed to freedom and human rights and to fighting against terrorism and organized crime and drug trafficking; against weapons of mass destruction, and racial, ethnic, and religious violence that bedevils so much of the world. We must build a global alliance against the global environmental and health challenges we face, including the degradation of our oceans and especially the problem of climate change.

Those of you who come from Texas and Arkansas and Oklahoma and the other places in the South that have been experiencing record heat know a little about this. But it's worth pointing out that the 9 hottest years on record have occurred in the last 11 years; 1997 was the hottest year ever recorded; each and every month of 1998 has broken a record. So unless something happens, notwithstanding this cool morning we're enjoying now, 1998 will be the hottest year on record. Unless we act now, by the time you're my age, you will have a much, much more severe problem to confront.

We have a lot of challenges here at home. We have to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century in a way that protects the retirement age of the baby boomers without bankrupting our children and our grandchildren. Until your generation—that is, you and all the people younger than you, starting the year before last—entered school, my generation—and I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—were the largest group of Americans ever. When our fathers came home to meet our mothers after World War II, there was a sense of enthusiasm and exuberance which manifested itself in unusually large families. [*Laughter*] And we all enjoyed being part of the baby boom generation, at least I think most of us did. But all of us now, I think without regard to our station in life, are quite concerned about the potential burdens we might impose on our children.

Not so long ago I had to go home to Arkansas because we had some serious tornadoes. After I toured the damage sites, I had dinner at the airport in Little Rock with about 20 people I grew up with. And I try to stay in touch with them, and we just went around the table, and most of them are just middle class working people. Everyone of them was absolutely determined that we had to make the changes now to prepare ourselves to retire in ways that didn't impose undue burdens on our children. Because when we begin to retire, when all the baby boomers get into their retirement age—that is over 65—at present birth rates and immigration rates and retirement rates, there will only be about two people working for every person retired.

Now, this is a significant challenge. But it can be met. It is in this way like the problem of climate change. If we act now and take modest, but disciplined steps now, well ahead of the time when we have to face the crisis, then we won't have to take big, dramatic, and maybe draconian steps later. So, especially saving Social Security is important.

And I'd like to say just a couple more words about it, because I want all of you to think about it; it's important. The idea behind Social Security is, number one, even though your retirement may be a long way off, you can know that it's going to be there for you. Number two, even though most Americans have something other than Social Security to retire on—and you should begin as soon as you get into the workforce to save and plan for your own retirement, because if you save a little bit when you're young, you'll have a whole lot when you're older—Social Security actually is responsible for keeping about half of our senior citizens out of poverty. And beginning about 10 or 15 years ago, we achieved a remarkable thing for a society. We had a poverty rate among seniors that was lower than the poverty rate for the society as a whole. We want to continue that, and we can.

Thanks to your fiscal discipline, we're going to have the first budget surplus we've had, as I said, in 29 years. And this gives us some money to help to pay for the transition. I believe it is very important to set aside every penny of this surplus until we save Social Security. Now, that's a big challenge here in Washington, because after all, it's an election year, and it's more popular to give tax cuts or even to have big new spending programs than to say to people, ''Okay, we've got this money, but we don't want to spend it right now. We may well be able to afford new spending programs; we may well be able to afford a tax cut, but we need to know how much it's going to cost to fix Social Security and how we can make it as small a burden as possible today and tomorrow.''

That's why I have said save Social Security first. If it doesn't take all the money of the projected surplus, then we can figure out what else to do with it. I believe that is important. Some people here disagree with me;

some want a tax cut before we fix Social Security. I am determined not to let that happen, because I think we should invest in your future, not squander it.

I do not believe that those of us who are adults should enjoy a limited small tax cut now and sacrifice your future tomorrow. And I'm going to do what I can to stop that. I think there is broad support for this position among both Democrats and Republicans in Washington, and I hope very much that by the time you're out in the workforce and having children of your own, that this will be yesterday's problem and you will not have to confront it. And we're going to do our best to see that that happens.

Let me talk a little about, very briefly, some other challenges we face. We have to provide access to affordable quality health care to all Americans. More and more Americans, probably a lot of you here, are in managed care plans. Managed care has done a lot of good; it's cut a lot of inflation out of health care costs. But health care decisions ought to be made by doctors and patients, not by accountants and insurance company executives who are determined to save money whether or not it's the right thing to do for the patients. That's the idea behind the Patients' Bill of Rights we're trying to pass up here in this session of Congress.

I think it is very important that we recognize that in spite of all this economic growth there are still areas of our country which have not reaped the benefits of American enterprise. There are inner-city neighborhoods, there are Native American communities, and as a lot of our farmers have been telling America lately, there are a lot of rural American communities that still have not felt the benefits of the economic recovery. If we can't find a way to expand opportunity to these areas now, when we're doing so well, we will not be able to do it the next time a recession comes along. So that, I think, is a very important challenge.

I think it is very important that we build an America, as Secretary Riley says, that crosses the boundaries of race and religion and culture; that respects, revels in our diversity; that enjoys our heated arguments, but that recognizes that underneath it all we are bound together by those things that the framers laid out so long ago. We all believe in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We all believe that we have constituted a free Government of willing citizens because there are things we have to do together that we can't do alone. We all believe that America will always be on a permanent mission to form a more perfect Union.

So I say to all of you, even though I think it's a great thing to have vigorous debates, I love them, I think it's a good thing that we have different opinions. I think it is a terrific thing that we have people in America who come from every other country on Earth. Just across the Potomac River here, in Fairfax County, there are students from 180 different national, racial, and ethnic groups in one school district, and they come from 100 different language groups. That is great for America in a global society. But we still have to find a way to be one America, to recognize that what we have in common as human beings, as children of God, is more important than what divides us.

And finally let me say we have to build a world-class system of elementary and secondary education. You heard Secretary Riley say that we have done a lot of work to open the doors of college to everyone who is willing to work for it. And just about everyone in the world believes that America has the finest system of higher education in the world. Now we have the HOPE scholarship, a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; tax credits for the junior and senior year, for graduate school, for adults who have to go back for continuing education; a direct student loan program that allows you to borrow money and then pay it back as a percentage of your income so you don't ever have to worry about borrowing money, making you go broke later, just to get an education; more work-study positions, more Pell grants. We have the AmeriCorps program for young people who want to do national service for a year or two and then earn credit for college. And this has been a very, very good thing.

But almost no one believes that every American has access to world-class elementary and secondary education. And if you think about all the other challenges I have mentioned, they all rely on a well-educated, responsible citizenry. You have to be well

educated, and you have to be a good citizen to say—take the Social Security challenge—don't give me a little bit of money now; save me a huge headache later. Save my children; save my grandchildren. I'll give it up right now so we can do something good for tomorrow.

You have to be well educated to imagine what the world would be like if this climate change continues and the polar ice caps melt and the water levels rise and the Everglades are buried or the Louisiana sugar plantations are underwater or Pacific island nations are buried, to understand what it means when the climate changes and mosquitoes bearing malaria go to higher and higher climates and infect more and more people, and then they get on airplanes and meet you in the airport. And now people in Norway come home with airport malaria. It sounds funny, but it's happening. You have to have an education to understand these things.

It helps to be well educated to understand the importance of diversity and respect for diversity, and still what we have in common. So every other challenge we face requires us to meet the challenge of educating all our citizens.

We've come a long way since 1963, when most of the schools in the South were segregated, and when I was here—listen to this—one quarter of our high school students dropped out of school before they graduated; less than half went on to college. Today almost 90 percent of high school students do graduate, and nearly 70 percent will get some further education.

Many of you are here, as I was 35 years ago, in part because of a special teacher who's had a positive influence on your life. Our schools have always been the cornerstone of our democracy. At a time of increasing diversity through immigration, they are more important than ever. Ninety percent of our children are in our public schools, and in an age of information and ideas, a strong education system is now even more important to you than it was to me when I was your age. Now is the time to strengthen public education, not to drain precious resources from it. That is America's first priority, and it is our administration's first priority.

If our schools are to succeed in the next century, however, it will require more than money. We have to raise standards for students and teachers. We have to heighten accountability. We should widen choices for parents and students. We have to expect more of everyone—of our students who must master the basics and more, and behave responsibly; of our teachers who must inspire students to learn and to be good citizens; and of our schools which must be safe and state-of-the-art.

We've worked hard to strengthen our public schools, to promote higher standards and to measure student progress, to do what we can to improve teaching, and to certify more master teachers throughout the country, to give schools the means to meet our national education goals, and to help students not going to 4-year colleges make the transition from school to work, to get more aid to students in schools with special challenges, and to hook all the classrooms and libraries in our country up to the Internet by the year 2000 and to have more public school choice.

But we clearly have to do more. I have called for smaller classes in our early grades and 100,000 new teachers to fill them—teachers that pass rigorous competency tests before they set foot in the classroom. I've called for an end to social promotion so that no child is passed from grade to grade, year after year, without mastering the materials and for extra help for those who don't pass—like the summer school program in Chicago.

Chicago now has mandatory—mandatory—summer school for children who don't make the social promotion hurdle. And the summer school there is now the sixth biggest school district in the entire United States of America. I don't think I have to tell you that more children are learning and the juvenile crime rate is way down. We need more of that in America.

These are important investments. We have to also do more. We need to build more schools and modernize more schools. I was in Philadelphia the other day where the average school building is 65 years old. They are magnificent old buildings; they're very well built, but they need to be modernized. A child that goes to school every day in a school where a whole floor is closed off or the roof

leaks or the rooms are dark or the windows are cracked gets a signal, a clear signal, that he or she is not as important as we all say they are day in and day out.

I have been to school districts in Florida where there were more than a dozen trailers outside the main school building because the schools are so overcrowded and the districts don't have the funds to keep building schools to deal with the new students. We have to do that.

We have to finish our effort to connect all our classrooms to the Internet. We have got to, in other words, make these investments that will make our country strong.

President Kennedy said our progress as a Nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. That is more true now than ever before, and I hope in the remaining few days of this congressional session, our Congress will put progress above partisanship, leave politics at the schoolhouse door, and make the education of our children America's top priority.

We know our schools are strengthened also by innovation and competition brought about increasingly in our country by more choice in the public schools children attend. Public school choice gets parents and communities more involved in education, not just in helping with homework or attending parent-teacher conferences but actually in shaping the schools.

Some of you, having gone to public schools of choice, may know this from experience. David Haller, for example, from Arkansas, attends a school that's very close to my heart, in the town I grew up in, the Arkansas School of Math and Science in Hot Springs, which I help to found as Governor.

Across our Nation, public school choice, and in particular, charter schools, are renewing public education with new energy and new ideas. Charter schools are creative schools, innovative schools, public with open enrollment, strengthened by the commitment of parents and educators in the communities they serve. They can be models of accountability for all public schools, because they are chartered only when they meet rigorous standards of quality and they should remain open only as long as they meet those standards.

According to new data from Secretary Riley's Department of Education, parents are choosing charter schools more and more often because they're small, safe, supportive, and committed to academic excellence. We can do more of this.

I am pleased to report some interesting progress. When I was elected President, campaigning on the idea that we should have more of these charter schools, there was only one such school in the country. It was in the State of Minnesota. I am pleased to tell you that this fall there will be 1,000 of them, serving more than 200,000 children. We're well on our way to meeting my goal of creating 3,000 such schools by the beginning of the next century. And again I ask Congress to help us meet the goal and finish its work on the bipartisan charter school legislation that is now making its way through Congress.

The Department of Education has released a guidebook to help communities learn from each other's successes. I commend it to you. Charter schools do very well in general, but they face a lot of challenges, including finding the funding to get started and keep going. Lack of access to startup funding, as the report I release today shows, is the biggest obstacle facing more rapid development of these schools. To make it easier for parents and educators to innovate, I have proposed to increase the $80 million for startup funds this year to 100 million next year. That's up from 6 million when we started in 1994.

Now, let me just say one other thing. A lot of you are going back for your senior years. You'll be leaving your hometown school; some of you will be going a long way away to college. I urge you to go wherever your dreams take you. But in the years to come, I hope you won't forget about your schools. I am very impressed by all the resolutions and the legislation that you have passed, and I have been given a review of it this morning before I came out here. But I'm also impressed by the commitment that so many of you have expressed to citizen service. I hope you will always take part of your time to be servants to young people who are younger than you are.

Some of you may become teachers or professors, but most of you won't. Wherever

your life's travels take you, every one of you can find some enduring connection to education. I hope some of you will consider sometime during your next few years joining our national service program, AmeriCorps, and serving young people in your community and building up some more scholarship money. But whatever you do when you get out of school, I hope you will maintain a connection to young people and to their schools.

You can volunteer your time, you can mentor someone who needs guidance. You can remember that only a very few young people ever have the experience you're having now, but hundreds and thousands more can hear about it from you and be inspired by it, to believe in our country and to believe in themselves and their capacity to learn and live out their dreams.

As I get older and older I think more and more, as is natural, I suppose, about people who are coming along behind me. It's hard to get used to—most of us will tell you that we consider anyone who is a year younger than we are to be young, however old we are. I never will forget, once I was talking to Senator Mike Mansfield, who was our Ambassador to Japan, and Senator Mansfield must be about 96 now. He still walks about 5 miles a day. And he was having lunch with another former Senator, J. William Fulbright, who was a mentor of mine and for whom I worked when I was in college—when Senator Mansfield was 91, and Senator Fulbright was 87. He looked at him and he said, "Bill, how old are your now?" And he said, "I'm 87." And Mansfield said, "Oh, to be 87 again." [*Laughter*]

So we all get our perspective from our own age. And for you, your future is all ahead of you. But just think about how many Americans there already are who are younger than you are, and think about how many there are who would never have a chance like the one you've had this past week. And just remember, never, never, never underestimate your ability to teach, to inspire, to guide, to help them to love this country the way you do, to embrace concepts of good citizenship the way you have, and, frankly, to live a good, constructive, ambitious life the way you will. All of us—all of us—sometimes underestimate the enormous power that we have to influence other people one-on-one.

Alexis de Tocqueville said a long time ago that America is great because America is good. America cannot be good except through her people. To say America is good is to say the American people are good. We have all these big challenges; I'm convinced we will meet them, as we have all our other challenges for over 200 years, because America is good.

I ask your support in meeting those challenges, and I ask for your commitment never to forget all those young people who are coming along behind.

Good luck, and God bless you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, who, as a boy, was elected sheriff of Boys State, South Carolina; and Kevin Sladek, president, and Jeffrey Rogers, vice president, 1998 Boys Nation Session.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

*July 24, 1998*

The Patients' Bill of Rights should not be designed for the political needs of any party; it should be designed to meet the health needs of all Americans. Unfortunately, the House Republicans passed legislation today that simply does not meet this test. This bill leaves out millions of Americans; it leaves out critical patient protections; and it adds in "poison pill" provisions which undermine the possibility of passing a strong bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

The Republican leadership's legislation does not apply to the individual insurance market and therefore excludes millions of Americans. It does not include many important protections such as ensuring direct access to specialists, so that patients can see the cancer doctors or heart specialists that they need, or ensuring that care will not abruptly change if a patient's provider is unexpectedly dropped or an employer changes health plans. Moreover, the enforcement

mechanism in this legislation is insufficient as it gives little recourse to patients who are injured or who die because of a health plan's actions. Finally, this legislation is undermined by provisions that have nothing to do with patients' rights.

Americans want a Patients' Bill of Rights that gives them the protections they need in a rapidly changing health care system. The legislation passed by the House Republicans today falls far short of ensuring Americans the quality care they need and deserve. It is my strongest hope that the Senate will move quickly to have a fair and open debate that can produce a strong, enforceable, and bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

## Proclamation 7110—National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 1998

*July 24, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

In 1950, the thoughts of most Americans were far from war. With the recent end of World War II and economic recovery in full swing, the American people had resumed their everyday lives—going back to school, starting new jobs, and raising their families. But the tenor of the times changed suddenly and dramatically that summer, as communist North Korea crossed the 38th Parallel to invade its free neighbor to the south.

Once again, the world watched to see if the right of self-determination would prevail in the face of aggression, and once again Americans answered the call to serve. A United Nations force—spearheaded by U.S. air, sea, and ground troops and under a unified command headed by the United States—rushed to the support of South Korea. In the following 38 months, Inchon, the Chosin Reservoir, the Yalu River, and a hundred other locales indelibly etched into the memory of our Korean War veterans were added to the long list of places where Americans have fought and died for freedom. The fighting was brutal; the toll in injuries, lives lost, and those missing in action was heavy. But American forces, fighting side by side with South Koreans and our U.N. allies, halted communist aggression, preserved the Republic of Korea, and won a victory for democratic peoples everywhere.

Yet, for many years, these important achievements and the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of our forces in Korea received little recognition. For too long, overshadowed by the broad dimensions of World War II and the complexities of the Vietnam War, the Korean conflict seemed to be America's forgotten victory.

But in 1995, with the dedication of the Korean War Veterans Memorial in our Nation's capital, America finally paid fitting tribute to those brave Americans whose devotion to duty wrote a crucial chapter in freedom's history and whose valor and determination in battle laid the foundation for our Nation's ultimate triumph in the Cold War. With its haunting column of determined troops, the Memorial has the power to evoke strong memories within those who served. But it serves another enduring purpose: to teach future generations about America's heroes, the depth of their sacrifice, and the historic contributions they made to the cause of peace and freedom.

The Congress, by Public Law 104–19 (36 U.S.C. 169m), has designated July 27, 1998, as "National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 27, 1998, as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor and give thanks to our distinguished Korean War veterans. I also ask Federal departments and agencies, interested groups, organizations, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff on July 27, 1998, in memory of the Americans who died as a result of their service in Korea.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the

United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:51 a.m., July 27, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 28.

## Proclamation 7111—Parents' Day, 1998

*July 24, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

***A Proclamation***

Parents play a central role in the life of our society and our Nation. They are a link with the past, teaching our children the history and values of our individual families and of our national community. They are the stewards of the future, shaping the hearts and minds of the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and workers.

Being a good parent means much more than protecting our children from harm. It means teaching our children how to love and how to learn; it means working to give them the opportunities they need to make the most of their lives; it means fostering their self-esteem and independent spirit so they can make their own contributions to our world. Being a parent is a challenge, a privilege, and a lifelong commitment.

My Administration has worked hard to help parents raise happy, healthy children. With the Family and Medical Leave Act, we gave working parents up to 12 weeks of leave to care for a family member in need. We protected family incomes through an increase in the minimum wage, expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the new Child Tax Credit. We stood up for reliable health insurance with the Kennedy-Kassebaum law and improved childhood immunization, with our new Children's Health Insurance Program. We opened the doors of higher education to more families by making student loans less expensive and easier to repay and by providing new tax credits and larger Pell Grant scholarships. We have proposed an historic initiative to ensure that parents have access to quality, affordable child care for their children. I pledge to continue supporting these types of effective programs and legislation so that America's parents have the tools they need to give their children a strong start in life.

Too often in the rush of daily existence, we fail to remember or acknowledge the many blessings we enjoy because of the love of our parents. On Parents' Day, we have an opportunity to express our profound appreciation to our own parents, to remember with love and gratitude those who are no longer with us, and to pay tribute to the millions of men and women across our Nation whose devotion as parents strengthens our society and forms the foundation of a bright future for America.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States and consistent with Public Law 103–362, do hereby proclaim Sunday, July 26, 1998, as Parents' Day. I invite the States, communities, and the people of the United States to join together in observing this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor our Nation's parents.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:51 a.m., July 27, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 28.

## Executive Order 13092—President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, Amendments to Executive Order 13035

*July 24, 1998*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–194), and in order to add five more members to, and to change the name of the Advisory Committee on High-

Performance Computing and Communications, Information Technology, and the Next Generation Internet, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 13035 of February 11, 1997, is amended as follows:

1. In section 1, the words "Advisory Committee on High Performance Computing and Communications, Information Technology, and the Next Generation Internet" are deleted and the words "President's Information Technology Advisory Committee" are inserted in lieu thereof at the end of the first sentence of section 1; and

2. In section 1, the words "25 nonfederal members" are deleted and the words "30 nonfederal members" are inserted in lieu thereof.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 24, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 27, 1998]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 28.

## Message to the Congress Reporting a Budget Rescission

*July 24, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report one proposed rescission of budgetary resources, totaling $5.2 million.

The proposed rescission affects programs of the Department of the Interior.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,
July 24, 1998.

## 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.

***July 19***

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New Orleans, LA.

***July 20***

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced the appointment of Richard Davies, Susan Savage, and Thomas L. Strickland as members of the National Recreation Lakes Study Commission.

***July 21***

In the late afternoon, the President signed the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998 in an Oval Office ceremony.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ritajean H. Butterworth to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to nominate Leigh A. Bradley to be General Counsel at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bernard Rostker to be Under Secretary of the Army.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Melvin Yates to be Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea.

***July 22***

The President announced his intention to nominate James E. Newsome to be a Commissioner on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Harry J. Bowie to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank.

The President declared a major disaster in Indiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on June 11–July 7.

***July 23***

In the afternoon, the President met with President Julio Maria Sanguinetti of Uruguay in the Oval Office.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by flooding and severe storms on July 13 and continuing.

The President announced the release to 11 States of $100 million in emergency Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds.

***July 24***

In the morning, the President met with University of Georgia gymnasts in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert L. Mallett as a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert Elliot Kahn as a member of the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee.

The President named Ambassador Richard L. Morningstar to be Special Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State for Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, straightline winds, tornadoes, heavy rain, and flooding on June 18–30.

## Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

***Submitted July 21***

Leigh A. Bradley,
of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, vice Mary Lou Keener, resigned.

Scott Richard Lassar,
of Illinois, to be U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, vice James B. Burns, resigned.

Sylvia M. Mathews,
of West Virginia, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, vice Jacob Joseph Lew.

Robert C. Randolph,
of Washington, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development, vice Margaret V.W. Carpenter, resigned.

Bernard Daniel Rostker,
of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Army, vice Robert M. Walker.

James A. Tassone,
of Florida, to be U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Florida for the term of 4 years, vice Daniel J. Horgan.

John Melvin Yates,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Ritajean Hartung Butterworth,
of Washington, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2004 (reappointment).

Thomasina V. Rogers,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2003, vice Velma Montoya, term expired.

***Withdrawn July 21***

Thomasina V. Rogers,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 27, 2001, vice Daniel Guttman, which was sent to the Senate on June 24, 1998.

Bernard Daniel Rostker,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Frederick F.Y. Pang, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on April 2, 1998.

***Submitted July 22***

James E. Newsome,
of Mississippi, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the term expiring June 19, 2001, vice Joseph B. Dial, term expired.

Howard Hikaru Tagomori,
of Hawaii, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of Hawaii for the term of 4 years, vice Annette L. Kent, term expired.

## 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 July 18***

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and Agency for International Development Administrator Brian Atwood on the President's radio address

***Released July 20***

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton Will Visit Ireland and Northern Ireland

Statement by the Press Secretary: IMF Additional Financing for Russia

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Florida

***Released July 21***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Health Care Financing Administrator Nancy Ann DeParle on new nursing home regulations [1]

***Released July 22***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Marshal for the District of Hawaii

***Released July 23***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Julio Maria Sanguinetti of Uruguay

Statement by the Press Secretary: Execution of Baha'i in Iran

Statement by the Press Secretary on proposed Senate legislation on nursing home care

***Released July 24***

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton Names Ambassador Richard L. Morningstar to be Special Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State for Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy

Fact sheet: Vital Voices of the Americas: Women in Democracy

## Acts Approved by the President

***Approved July 21***

H.R. 1635 / Public Law 105–203
National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998

S. 2316 / Public Law 105–204
To require the Secretary of Energy to submit to Congress a plan to ensure that all amounts accrued on the books of the United States

[1] This transcript was embargoed for release until 3:00 p.m. on July 21.

Enrichment Corporation for the disposition of depleted uranium hexafluoride will be used to treat and recycle depleted uranium hexafluoride

***Approved July 22***

H.R. 1316 / Public Law 105–205
To amend chapter 87 of title 5, United States Code, with respect to the order of precedence to be applied in the payment of life insurance benefits

H.R. 2676 / Public Law 105–206
Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998