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about the commitment of Russia to the course of reform and democracy. It seems to me that anybody can get on an airplane and take a trip in good times and that friends come to visit each other in challenging and difficult times.

I come here as a friend, because I believe in the future of Russia. I come here also because I believe someone has to tell the truth to the people, so that you're not skeptical when your political leaders tell you things that are hard to hear. There is no way out of playing by the rules of the international economy if you wish to be a part of it. We cannot abandon the rules of the international economy. No one can.

There is a way to preserve the social safety net and the social contract and to help the people who are too weak to succeed. There is a way to do that. And there are people who will help to do that. But it has to be done. So I come here as a friend. I come here because I know that the future of our children and the future of Russia's young people are going to be entwined, and I want it to be a good future. And I believe it can be.

Recently, a woman from Petrozavodsk—I hope I pronounced that right, Petrozavodsk—wrote these words about your people, who won World War II and rebuilt from the rubble. Listen to this. She said, ''We survived the ruins, the devastation, the hunger, and the cold. It is not possible that our people can do this again? If people raise themselves, they can move mountains. Toward what end? Pushkin once said that so long as we burn with freedom, we can fulfill the noble urges of our souls.''

In all this dry and sometimes dour talk about economics and finance, never forget that, whatever your human endeavor, the ultimate purpose of it is to fulfill the noble urges of your soul. That is the ultimate victory the Russian people will reap if you will see this process through to the end. I hope you will do that, and I hope we will be able to be your partners every step of the way.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the auditorium at Moscow State University. In his remarks, he referred to Maxim Safonov, student, Moscow State University; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yevgeniy Primakov and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

*September 1, 1998*

I join Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern in welcoming today's statement by Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams committing to exclusively democratic and peaceful means in the political process in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein joins its voice to the vast majority of Northern Ireland's people who are determined to see, in Mr. Adams' words, that ''violence is a thing of the past, over, done with, and gone.'' This statement is an important contribution to building the trust and confidence necessary to make the Good Friday accord a reality.

I am looking forward to meeting personally with all the party leaders in Northern Ireland. I will urge them to work for full and speedy implementation of the Good Friday accord—the best way to put an end to conflict and ensure peace in Northern Ireland.

## Statement on Harold Ickes' 1996 Campaign Financing Activities

*September 1, 1998*

Harold Ickes has been an important part of this administration's efforts to move our country forward and has devoted much of his life to improving the lives of all Americans. He has been a trusted adviser and a dedicated public servant. I am confident that investigators will find he acted lawfully and appropriately.

## Statement on Senate Action on Appropriations Legislation

*September 1, 1998*

For the past month, I have criticized the House Republican education and training budget because it shortchanges America's future. Today I am pleased that a bipartisan group of Senators voted to reject parts of the extreme House Republican education and

training budget and make many—but not all—of the critical investments in our future that I believe are necessary for America to succeed in the 21st century. This afternoon the Senate Labor-HHS appropriations subcommittee voted to restore full funding for home heating and cooling assistance for low-income families and summer jobs for disadvantaged youth. Unlike the House Republican budget, they voted to make many of the essential investments in our children for which I have been fighting.

The Senate subcommittee, however, did not adequately fund several education and training investments that I believe are vitally important to our Nation's future. For example, they did not provide the resources necessary for us to move forward to ensure that every 8-year-old can read on his or her own and every 12-year-old can log on to the information superhighway. The Senate bill is a good first step, but there is still more work to do.

I look forward to working with the Senate on this bill to expand educational opportunity, improve child care, set voluntary national academic standards, protect continuity in critical health programs, and help young people in high-poverty areas. Finally, as I have said before, Congress must take action to modernize our schools and help provide smaller classes with well-qualified teachers.

## Letter to the Majority Leader of the Senate on the Patients' Bill of Rights

*September 1, 1998*

*Dear Senator Lott:*

Thank you for your letter regarding the patients' bill of rights. I am pleased to reiterate my commitment to working with you—and all Republicans and Democrats in the Congress—to pass long overdue legislation this year.

Since last November, I have called on the Congress to pass a strong, enforceable, and bipartisan patients' bill of rights. During this time, I signed an Executive Memorandum to ensure that the 85 million Americans in federal health plans receive the patient protections they need, and I have indicated my support for bipartisan legislation that would extend these protections to all Americans. With precious few weeks remaining before the Congress adjourns, we must work together to respond to the nation's call for us to improve the quality of health care Americans are receiving.

As I mentioned in my radio address this past Saturday, ensuring basic patient protections is not and should not be a political issue. I was therefore disappointed by the partisan manner in which the Senate Republican Leadership bill was developed. The lack of consultation with the White House or any Democrats during the drafting of your legislation contributed to its serious shortcomings and the fact it has failed to receive the support of either patients or doctors. The bill leaves millions of Americans without critical patient protections, contains provisions that are more rhetorical than substantive, completely omits patient protections that virtually every expert in the field believes are basic and essential, and includes ''poison pill'' provisions that have nothing to do with a patients' bill of rights. More specifically, the bill:

Does not cover all health plans and leaves more than 100 million Americans completely unprotected. The provisions in the Senate Republican Leadership bill apply only to self-insured plans. As a consequence, the bill leaves out more than 100 million Americans, including millions of workers in small businesses. This approach contrasts with the bipartisan Kassebaum-Kennedy insurance reform law, which provided a set of basic protections for all Americans.

Lets HMOs, not health professionals, define medical necessity. The external appeals process provision in the Senate Republican Leadership bill makes the appeals process meaningless by allowing the HMOs themselves, rather than informed health professionals, to define what services are medically necessary. This loophole will make it very difficult for patients to prevail on appeals to get the treatment doctors believe they need.

Fails to guarantee direct access to specialists. The Senate Republican Leadership proposal fails to ensure that patients with serious health problems have direct access to the