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some crack about being an old man and how his time is running out and all that. The truth is he's leaving office because he feels like he's about 25 years old again. [*Laughter*] And he's so happily married he can't be troubled with all these boring affairs of politics. [*Laughter*] But I must say, it's the only time I've ever known him to misrepresent the facts, but that is, I'm sure, what is going on here.

But I ask you to think about that. Every time Nelson Mandela walks into a room we all feel a little bigger; we all want to stand up; we all want to cheer, because we'd like to be him on our best day. But what I would say to you is, there is a little bit of apartheid in everybody's heart. And in every gnarly, knotted, distorted situation in the world where people are kept from becoming the best they can be, there is an apartheid of the heart. And if we really honor this stunning sacrifice of 27 years, if we really rejoice in the infinite justice of seeing this man happily married in the autumn of his life, if we really are seeking some driven wisdom from the power of his example, it will be to do whatever we can, however we can, wherever we are, to take the apartheid out of our own and others' hearts.

Ladies and gentlemen, the President of South Africa.

[*At this point, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa made brief remarks.*]

President Clinton. I want to leave you on a high note here. [*Laughter*] I want to tell you a story that I never told the President. I have a friend who is a minister—a white minister who was in South Africa recently. And he was given the chance to meet the President, but he was told, "You'll have to go to the airport if you want to meet the President." He said, "I'll go anywhere to shake his hand." So he said, "I was standing off here waiting for him to come, and here comes the President across the lobby of the airport." And he said, "President Mandela walked up to this gorgeous little blond-haired, blue-eyed girl, about 6 years old." And my friend went up to hear the conversation.

And he said to the little girl, "Do you know who I am?" She said, "Yes, you're President Mandela." And he looked at her, and he said, "If you study hard and learn a lot you can grow up to be President of South Africa some day."

That's a lot to say after this life. Remember the point. God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Mandela's wife, Graca Machel. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Mandela.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to President Nelson Mandela of South Africa

September 23, 1998

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Senator Thurmond, Senator Daschle, Congressman Gephardt. Representative Houghton, thank you for what you have done to make this day come to pass. We are all in your debt. Congresswoman Waters, Senator Moseley-Braun, Senator D'Amato. Congressman Dellums, thank you. To the Members of Congress here present in both parties, members of the Cabinet, administration; to Graca Machel, and all our friends from South Africa who are here.

To my friend, President Mandela, Americans as one today, across all the lines that divide us, pay tribute to your struggle, to your achievement, and to the inspiration you have given us to do better.

Others have said with profound conviction and eloquence what it is that we love and admire. Today we offer a man who has received the Nobel Prize, the highest honor within the gift of this country. But if this day is to be more than a day in which we bask in his reflected glory, we should ask ourselves, what gift can we really give Nelson Mandela in return for 10,000 long days in jail? How can we truly redeem the life of Amy Biehl? How can we honor all of those who marched and worked with Nelson Mandela, who are no longer standing by his side?

After the President was released and began his public career he said, and I quote,

''The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.'' Whenever we are together he always talks about unfinished business. He thanked me again yesterday for saying something that, to be honest, I didn't even think about consciously. He said that the United States had now said not what can we do for South Africa, but what can we do with South Africa to build a common future. So I ask all of you to think about just two or three things.

The work of our common struggle with people with whom we share a common past and with whom we must build a common future in South Africa and throughout the African continent has only begun. President Mandela says that he has now gotten old and is leaving the scene. The truth is, he has gotten married and he feels young, and he is tired of his public responsibilities, and he wants to go forward into a brighter life.

Those of us who share his vision and lift him up in honor today owe it to him to build a permanent partnership between Americans and Africans, for the education of our children, for the solution of our problems, for the resolution of our differences, for the elevation of what is best about us all. That is what we owe to Nelson Mandela, to Amy Biehl and her family, and to all of those who have sacrificed.

We also owe, for those 10,000 long days and the shining example since, the clear understanding that a man who has given up so much of his life can give us that—even more important than the sacrifice yesterday is what you are doing with today and what you will do with tomorrow. For that is the thing that always humbles me when I am with Nelson Mandela, the sense of serenity and peace and engagement in the moment. And so I say to all of you, we should not waste our days; we should make more of our days.

Mr. Mandela waited a very long time to actually do something for his people, rather than just to be something to keep their hearts and hopes alive. And every day I watch him, that is what he does. So should we.

And finally, in forgiving those who imprisoned him, he reminded us of the most fundamental lesson of all, that in the end apartheid was a defeat of the heart, the mind, the spirit. It was not just a structure outside and jailhouses within which people were kept; it was a division of the mind and soul against itself. We owe it to Nelson Mandela not simply to give him this award but to live by the lesson he taught us and to tear down every last vestige of apartheid in our own hearts, everything that divides us, one from another.

For those of us who have been privileged to know this remarkable man, no medal, no award, no fortune, nothing we could give him could possibly compare to the gift he has given to us and to the world. The only gift that is true recompense is to continue his mission and to live by the power of his profound and wonderful example.

Now, as prescribed by the law, it is my privilege to present the Congressional Gold Medal to President Nelson Mandela.

Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. in the Rotunda at the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to President Mandela's wife, Graca Machel. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Mandela.

Statement on the United Nations Security Council Resolution on Kosovo

September 23, 1998

Today's U.N. Security Council resolution makes absolutely clear that the international community is determined to see an end to the violence and repression in Kosovo. The resolution places responsibility squarely on President Milosevic to take the concrete steps necessary to prevent a major humanitarian disaster and restore peace in the region.

I am particularly encouraged that the resolution, adopted under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, makes clear that the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo constitutes a threat to regional peace and security.

The United States and its allies are moving NATO activities from the planning stage to readiness to act. With more than 250,000 Kosovars displaced from their homes and cold weather coming, Milosevic must act immediately to heed the will of the international community.