

for what they did today. I thank the few brave Republicans who withstood enormous pressure to stand with them for the plain meaning of the Constitution and for the proposition that we need to pull together, to move beyond partisanship, to get on with the business of our country.

I thank the millions upon millions of American citizens who have expressed their support and their friendship to Hillary, to me, to our family, and to our administration during these last several weeks.

The words of the Members here with me, and others who were a part of their endeavor, in defense of our Constitution, were powerful and moving, and I will never forget them. The question is, what are we going to do now?

I have accepted responsibility for what I did wrong in my personal life. And I have invited Members of Congress to work with us to find a reasonable, bipartisan, and proportionate response. That approach was rejected today by Republicans in the House. But I hope it will be embraced by the Senate. I hope there will be a constitutional and fair means of resolving this matter in a prompt manner.

Meanwhile, I will continue to do the work of the American people. We still, after all, have to save Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century. We have to give all our children world-class schools. We have to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. We have to make sure the economic turbulence around the world does not curb our economic opportunity here at home. We have to keep America the world's strongest force for peace and freedom. In short, we have a lot to do before we enter the 21st century.

And we still have to keep working to build that elusive "one America" I have talked so much about. For 6 years now, I have done everything I could to bring our country together, across the lines that divide us, including bringing Washington together across party lines. Out in the country, people are pulling together. But just as America is coming together, it must look—from the country's point of view—like Washington is coming apart.

I want to echo something Mr. Gephardt said. It is something I have felt strongly all

my life. We must stop the politics of personal destruction. We must get rid of the poisonous venom of excessive partisanship, obsessive animosity, and uncontrolled anger. That is not what America deserves. That is not what America is about.

We are doing well now. We are a good and decent country. But we have significant challenges we have to face. In order to do it right, we have to have some atmosphere of decency and civility, some presumption of good faith, some sense of proportionality and balance in bringing judgment against those who are in different parties. We have important work to do. We need a constructive debate that has all the different voices in this country heard in the Halls of Congress.

I want the American people to know today that I am still committed to working with people of good faith and good will of both parties to do what's best for our country: to bring our Nation together, to lift our people up, to move us all forward together. It's what I've tried to do for 6 years; it's what I intend to do for 2 more, until the last hour of the last day of my term.

So, with profound gratitude for the defense of the Constitution and the best in America that was raised today by the Members here and those who joined them, I ask the American people to move with me to go on from here, to rise above the rancor, to overcome the pain and division, to be a repairer of the breach—all of us—to make this country, as one America, what it can and must be for our children in the new century about to dawn.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief of Staff John D. Podesta, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt, and Vice President Al Gore.

Address to the Nation on Completion of Military Strikes in Iraq

December 19, 1998

On Wednesday I ordered our Armed Forces to strike military and strategic targets in Iraq. They were joined by British forces.

That operation is now complete, in accordance with our 70-hour plan.

My national security team has just briefed me on the results. They are preliminary, but let me say just a few words about why we acted, what we have achieved, and where we want to go.

We began with this basic proposition: Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to develop nuclear arms, poison gas, biological weapons, or the means to deliver them. He has used such weapons before against soldiers and civilians, including his own people. We have no doubt that, if left unchecked, he would do so again.

Saddam must not be prepared to defy the will—be permitted—excuse me—to defy the will of the international community. Without a firm response, he would have been emboldened to do that again and again.

For 7½ years now, the United Nations weapons inspectors have done a truly remarkable job in forcing Saddam to disclose and destroy weapons and missiles he insisted he did not have. But over the past year, Saddam has repeatedly sought to cripple the inspection system. Each time, through intensive diplomatic efforts backed by the threat of military action, Saddam has backed down. When he did so last month I made it absolutely clear that if he did not give UNSCOM full cooperation this time, we would act swiftly and without further delay.

For three weeks, the inspectors tested Saddam's commitment to cooperate. They repeatedly ran into roadblocks and restrictions, some of them new. As their chairman, Richard Butler, concluded in his report to the United Nations on Tuesday, the inspectors no longer were able to do their job. So far as I was concerned, Saddam's days of cheat and retreat were over.

Our objectives in this military action were clear: to degrade Saddam's weapons of mass destruction program and related delivery systems, as well as his capacity to attack his neighbors. It will take some time to make a detailed assessment of our operation, but based on the briefing I've just received, I am confident we have achieved our mission. We have inflicted significant damage on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction programs, on the command structures that di-

rect and protect that capability, and on his military and security infrastructure. In a short while, Secretary Cohen and General Shelton will give you a more detailed analysis from the Pentagon.

So long as Saddam remains in power, he will remain a threat to his people, his region, and the world. With our allies, we must pursue a strategy to contain him and to constrain his weapons of mass destruction program, while working toward the day Iraq has a government willing to live at peace with its people and with its neighbors.

Let me describe the elements of that strategy going forward. First, we will maintain a strong military presence in the area, and we will remain ready to use it if Saddam tries to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction, strikes out at his neighbors, challenges allied aircraft, or moves against the Kurds. We also will continue to enforce no-fly zones in the north and from the southern suburbs of Baghdad to the Kuwaiti border.

Second, we will sustain what have been among the most extensive sanctions in U.N. history. To date, they have cost Saddam more than \$120 billion, resources that otherwise would have gone toward rebuilding his military. At the same time, we will support a continuation of the oil-for-food program, which generates more than \$10 billion a year for food, medicine, and other critical humanitarian supplies for the Iraqi people. We will insist that Iraq's oil be used for food, not tanks.

Third, we would welcome the return of UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency back into Iraq to pursue their mandate from the United Nations—provided that Iraq first takes concrete, affirmative, and demonstrable actions to show that it will fully cooperate with the inspectors. But if UNSCOM is not allowed to resume its work on a regular basis, we will remain vigilant and prepared to use force if we see that Iraq is rebuilding its weapons programs.

Now, over the long-term, the best way to end the threat that Saddam poses to his own people in the region is for Iraq to have a different government. We will intensify our engagement with the Iraqi opposition groups, prudently and effectively. We will work with Radio Free Iraq to help news and

information flow freely to the country. And we will stand ready to help a new leadership in Baghdad that abides by its international commitments and respects the rights of its own people. We hope it will return Iraq to its rightful place in the community of nations.

Let me say in closing again how terribly proud I am of our men and women in uniform. Once again, they have done a difficult job with skill, dedication, and determination. I also want to say that I am very proud of our national security team. I want to thank Secretary Cohen and General Shelton; I want to thank Secretary Albright and Sandy Berger. The Vice President and I have relied on them very heavily; they have performed with extraordinary ability and restraint, as well as effectiveness. I am very, very grateful for the way this operation was planned and executed.

But again, foremost, I want to give my thanks to our men and women in uniform. We are waiting for the last planes to come home and praying that we'll be able to tell you tomorrow that every last one of them has returned home safely.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his address, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Richard Butler, Executive Chairman, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM).

Remarks at the D.C. Central Kitchen December 21, 1998

Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm delighted to be here, delighted to see all of you. I want to thank Robert Egger and everybody here at the D.C. Central Kitchen for the magnificent job they do. Thank you, Harris Wofford, and all the wonderful AmeriCorps volunteers. Thank you, Secretary Glickman. Thank you, Tony Hall, for a lifetime of commitment to the cause embodied by this endeavor here.

I would like to thank Jill Muller, who worked with us, the young AmeriCorps volunteer. I'd like to thank Donna Simmons, the trainee who worked with us, who is very happy about the work she's doing. She has six children at home getting ready to celebrate Christmas. And this Christmas and the

Christmases in the future, I think, will be brighter because of the work that has been done here.

I want to thank Susan Callahan for not only training Donna but for training Hillary and me to mass-produce lasagna today. [*Laughter*] We got—I think Jill said we got a reasonably good evaluation. We finished our task; we made enough lasagna for 500 people to eat in a timely and, I hope, edible fashion. But we enjoyed it very, very much.

There is another person, who is not here, I'd like to acknowledge who has been a great supporter of these causes, and that's Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. She is elsewhere in the city today, hosting an event for needy children.

I would like the members of the press and, through them, the public who are not here to know that since this remarkable organization began on January 20, 1989, D.C. Central Kitchen has taken 3½ million pounds of surplus donated food, turned them into 5.5 million meals for men in homeless shelters, women in battered women's shelters, children in after-school and child care programs. In the process, D.C. Central Kitchen has provided job skills and opportunities in training for a couple hundred Americans who needed it, with a very, very high percentage of people getting jobs and keeping them after 6 months.

You have found here an incredible, I think, an incredible social recipe to combine things that others may be working on but have never been quite put together in this same way. Every day, as much as we hate to admit it, there are people in America who get up hungry and who go to bed hungry. Yet, every day 25 percent of our food supply—25 percent—is wasted, from slightly bruised fruit at wholesale markets to unsold trays of lasagna at restaurants. While the food is going to waste, so are the abilities of millions of Americans who want to work but can't because they don't have skills for which there is a demand in today's economy.

The number of food-service jobs in our country is large and growing. Food-service wages are rising at twice the rate of inflation today. Therefore, the secret recipe is to take the wasted food and the wasted capacity, train people, put the food there, and solve