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Protocol, subject to the understandings and declaration contained in the report of the Department of State.

United States military policy and the conduct of operations are entirely consistent with the Convention's provisions. In large measure, the practices required by the Convention to protect cultural property were based upon the practices of U.S. military forces during World War II. A number of concerns that resulted in the original decision not to submit the Convention for advice and consent have not materialized in the decades of experience with the Convention since its entry into force. The minor concerns that remain relate to ambiguities in language that should be addressed through appropriate understandings, as set forth in the report of the Department of State.

I believe that ratification of the Convention and accession to the Protocol will underscore our long commitment, as well as our practice in combat, to protect the world's cultural resources.

I am also mindful of the international process underway for review of the Convention. By becoming a party, we will be in a stronger position to shape any proposed amendments and help ensure that U.S. interests are preserved.

I recommend, in light of these considerations, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification and accession, subject to the understandings and declaration contained in the report of the Department of State.

Protocol II Additional

In his transmittal message dated January 29, 1987, President Reagan requested the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification of Protocol II. The Senate, however, did not act on Protocol II. I believe the Senate should now renew its consideration of this important law-of-war agreement.

Protocol II expands upon the fundamental humanitarian provisions contained in the 1949 Geneva Conventions with respect to internal armed conflicts. Such internal conflicts have been the source of appalling civilian suffering, particularly over the last several decades. Protocol II is aimed specifically at ameliorating the suffering of victims of such internal conflicts and, in particular, is directed at protecting civilians who, as we have witnessed with such horror this very decade, all too often find themselves caught in the crossfire of such conflicts. Indeed, if Protocol II's fundamental rules were observed, many of the worst human tragedies of recent internal armed conflicts would have been avoided.

Because the United States traditionally has held a leadership position in matters relating to the law of war, our ratification would help give Protocol II the visibility and respect it deserves and would enhance efforts to further ameliorate the suffering of war's victims—especially, in this case, victims of internal armed conflicts.

I therefore recommend that the Senate renew its consideration of Protocol II Additional and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the understandings and reservations that are described fully in the report attached to the original January 29, 1987, transmittal message to the Senate.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 6, 1999.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks on Funding for Quality After-School Programs

January 7, 1999

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. I want to thank all those who have spoken before and all of you who are here. I say a special word of appreciation to the Members of the Congress who have come, the members of the education community, the employees of the Department of Education.

I want to thank Congressman Ford for his stirring speech. I was looking at Congressman Ford, thinking, you know, I was 28 once. [*Laughter*] And when I ran for Congress at that age I got beat. I see why he got elected. [*Laughter*]

I thank Senator Kennedy for his lifetime of literally an example of unparalleled service in the United States Senate and Secretary

Riley, who has been my friend since we started our governorships together over 20 years ago now. And I'm glad to see Mrs. Shriver here, and I thank the family of Congressman King for coming, my colleague in the Irish peace process. We're glad to see all of them.

But most of all, I want to thank Lissette Martinez and Leonard for showing up and reminding us while we're all here today, because they were great. When she held her children's pictures up here, I thought, if those kids and their parents are the future of America, we're going to be just fine. We're going to be just fine.

Even though the definition of well-educated was very different over 200 years ago when this country was founded, our Founding Fathers thought it was of pivotal importance. In 1787, they declared that all new territories set aside land for public schools, establishing the principle that public education, though a State and local responsibility, must always be a national priority.

In 1862, President Lincoln signed the legislation creating the land grant college system. In 1944, the GI bill gave millions of returning veterans tickets to what became the first mass middle class in the history of the world. In 1958, the launch of Sputnik led to Federal funds to improve science and math education in our country. In 1965, Federal support for education expanded further to bring minorities and the poor, long shut out of the classroom, inside to the full benefits of public education. At each of these turning points in our history, our country strengthened public education to match the challenges of the times.

Now in our time, as others have said, we face another challenge, the emergence of a global economy that is fast-paced, technologically sophisticated, driven by information and, at the same time, the emergence in our country of a breathtakingly diverse group of young people, diverse by race and ethnic background, by religion, by culture, by income, by circumstance.

We now have an economy in which the workplace is no longer just for men but also for women; the work day is no longer bound by the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and the workplace is increasingly at home. When I became President 6 years ago, only 3 million Americans were earning their living at home. When I ran for reelection, the number was 12. Today there are about 20 million Americans earning their primary income out of their homes. This is a stunning statistic.

To meet the challenges of this new economy with our new society, we have to rely on our old values, but we have to make sure that we manifest them in modern ways. That means our public schools must change. They must teach our children while reflecting the way we work and live now and will work and live in the 21st century.

In the last 6 years we have worked hard on this, with the help of all of you in this room and those whom you represent throughout the United States. Forty-eight of our 50 States have now adopted tougher academic standards which we called for when the Goals 2000 program passed back in 1994. Thousands of schools have become safer, better learning environments, cracking down on gangs and guns, violence and discipline, adopting school uniforms and other systems designed to create a better, more equal learning environment.

The percentage of students who report being threatened or injured at school nationwide is down. We've begun to organize an army of tutors to help elementary school children learn to read and middle school and high school students to prepare for college. And I'm very proud of all the young people all across America who are working in these tutoring and mentoring programs.

We've dramatically increased our investment in early childhood learning through the Head Start program. We're making real progress in connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. And as Secretary Riley said, the e-rate for which the Vice President fought so hard means that we've not only hooked up those classrooms, but they can actually afford to log on.

Last fall, we fought for and won from Congress a downpayment on 100,000 new highly trained teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades, and we made a beginning on our proposal to offer to pay off the college costs of young people who will go into our most underserved areas and teach for a few years when they graduate from school. I hope the new Congress will keep up the payments

so we can keep the teachers going. And I hope they will work with me to build or modernize 5,000 schools.

The charter school movement, which I have championed since 1992, is growing. When I took the oath of office as President, there was one charter school in the whole United States, a public school organized by parents or teachers within the school system but free of a lot of the bureaucratic limitations that are on so many schools. In 1996, there were 700. There are now about 1,000. We are well on our way to our goal of having 3,000 by the year 2000.

All these efforts and others are beginning to show up in SAT scores, which are up; math scores, which have risen in nearly all grades nationwide; even on a lot of the international tests, when we didn't do so well for years and years, our younger people are tending to do better and better.

We should be pleased and thankful, but we should not be fooled into complacency. Why? First, reading scores have hardly budged and many of our foreign competitors are improving their schools faster than we are. Secondly, while our children do very well on these international test scores in elementary school and reasonably well in middle school, by the time they're in high school they're rankings have dropped dramatically.

We know we have more to do. We know that a majority of our schools have not kept pace with the new family patterns and work patterns which dominate America. We know that more and more parents are being drawn into the work force. On any given day, as many as 15 million school children are left to fend for themselves at home, idle in front of the television or out on the streets, vulnerable to gangs, drugs and crime. On any given day when school lets out, juvenile crime goes up, and also the number of children themselves victimized by crime. On any given day when school lets out, tens of millions of working parents look nervously at the clock, hoping and praying their children will be okay.

It is no secret that I believe that the best way for our Nation to meet these challenges is to expand the number and improve the quality of our after-school programs. With quality after-school, parents and educators will be given the tools they need to succeed; students learn their lesson in the schoolhouse, not on the street; youth crime and victimization plummet. Quality after-school programs both enhance opportunity and bolster responsibility. In so doing, they strengthen our communities; they honor our values; they benefit our nation.

That's why I've supported grants for these kinds of quality programs through the 21st Century Community Learning Center Initiative, first introduced by Senator Jeffords from Vermont, championed by Senator Kennedy and Senator Boxer, Congresswoman Lowey from New York and others.

Two years ago, this program received $1 million from Congress. Then it grew the year before last to $40 million, and then last year, to $200 million, in the budget I signed, serving a quarter of a million children. Yet, the demand for quality after-school programs, the bipartisan support it has gained, and its potential to transform public education in America and the futures of our children far, far outweigh the investment we have made to date.

Therefore, today I am pleased to announce that in the new budget I will present to Congress this year, we will triple our investment in academically enriched after-school programs to give over 1 million children across America somewhere to go.

Now, you heard Lissette talking about the Chicago system. It's one I particularly favor. And last year I asked the Congress to set aside some funds that we could give to other school systems to help to adopt the comprehensive approach they have there. That is, no social promotion; more parent involvement in the schools; high standards but don't flunk anybody because the system is failing the kids; don't say the kids are failing; give them the after-school programs; give them the summer school programs; give them the tools they need to succeed. So we are going to give priority to communities that end social promotion in the right way.

She talked about that eighth grade test. Hillary and I, when we were working together in Arkansas on education, made our State the first State in the country to have an eighth grade exit exam. But I never saw it as a way of identifying children who were failing. I thought it would identify the schools

that were failing and give the children a chance to succeed. And that's what they believe in in Chicago, and what we should believe in everywhere.

So I'm looking forward to working with all the Senators and House Members who care so much about this, both to improve after-school programs and to end social promotion but to do it in the right way. We have to do everything in our power—after school, smaller classes, better teachers, modernized facilities, Internet hookups, summer programs—to help our kids succeed. We have to have high standards not only for students but for the preparation of our teachers and for the performance of our schools. And I'll have more to say about that later.

Scarce dollars should not be spent on failed policies. If we've learned anything, Hillary and Dick Riley and I, after 20 years and more of working at this, listening to teachers and parents, going into schools, it is what Congressman Ford said: We do believe all children can learn. And that gives a much greater urgency to this work.

Look, this is not really just about making the American economy strong or even making sure that when we baby boomers retire we'll be supported by two workers that made Bs or better instead of a 1.7. [*Laughter*] It makes a good point. But that's not really what this is about. Everybody just gets one chance. Everyone just has one life. This is about giving people a chance to make the most of that one life. This is about the sure knowledge we have that the rest of us will just be fine; everything is going to work out all right if we give our children the chance to make the most of their lives.

I watched Harold Ford up here giving that speech, and I thought, there's a 28-year-old young guy with his whole life ahead of him. And I knew that he had a family that told him he had to show up in the morning, that his work was school, that he was expected to learn. And I want that for every child.

You know, I go to a lot of schools. Today when I speak to children—I was out in Maryland or Virginia not long before last November, and I was talking to this group of kids, this wonderful group of kids. And they said, "You know, all the parents are going to come, and we just only wish we had time to translate your remarks into Spanish and into Arabic, because there are so many parents who can't understand you." That's the America of tomorrow.

In a global society where we're trying to get other people to put aside their hatreds, to lay down the burdens of the past, to embrace one another, to reach across the lines that divide them, that's a great resource. But the challenge of giving all of the children from whatever backgrounds they come from the chance to make the most of that one life is more formidable than ever. Because of these after-school programs, a million kids will have a better chance. That's really what this is all about, a million more stories like those two beautiful pictures that Lissette showed us today. And that's what we should always, always remember.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:28 p.m. in the East Room at the White Hose. In his remarks, he referred to Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder, Special Olympics; and Lissette Martinez, parent-mentor, Frederick Funston Elementary School, Chicago, IL, and her husband, Leonard.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports

January 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting the attached *Report to Congress on a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports* in response to the request from the Congress described in section 111 of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105–277 of October 21, 1998).

As the global financial crisis has unfolded, it has touched the lives of many Americans. I am very concerned about the surge in low-priced steel imports into the United States and its impact on our companies, workers, and communities. Our steel industry and workers have taken difficult and commendable steps over the past 2 decades to make