AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

The Treaty will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of the United States and Korea. It will provide, for the first time, a framework and basic protections for extraditions between Korea and the United States, thereby making a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts.

The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 2, 1999.

Remarks at a Unity Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders

March 3, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. This has been a wonderful morning for me. When I listened to Maureen Marshall and Edwin Beale and Michael Saylor speak, I was again confirmed in my conviction that our principal responsibility here is to give the American people the tools and create the conditions within which they can make the most of their own lives. And if we do that, they will do it every time. These 3 people represent more than 200 million Americans who deserve our best efforts.

I want to thank Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt for their truly outstanding leadership, for their personal friendship, and for their honest commitment to the cause that we meet to discuss today.

I thank the Vice President for being the best partner and friend, adviser and prodder any President could ever have. I can't believe he passed up a chance to remind us all today that in 1993, he cast the decisive vote on the budget plan, and whenever he votes, we win. [*Laughter*]

You know the real, sort of political story out of this meeting today may be that we will have to retire that famous old Will Rogers quip, ''I don't belong to an organized political party. I'm a Democrat.'' The fact is we are organized, and we are united. And we are united around an agenda for America's future: to meet the long-term challenges of this country at the edge of a new century and new millennium; to build on what we have done for the last 6 years.

The new agenda is rooted in the same ideals with which we began in 1993, to bring opportunity to every American, to challenge every American to be a responsible citizen, and to build a community of all American citizens.

When you look around at this Democratic caucus, the Members of the House and the Senate, as the speakers were speaking, I had the opportunity to just scan both sides of this wonderful room today. You all really do look like America. You think like America, and you reflect America. As perhaps the only one of you who is term-limited, and therefore, faces the prospect of making the most of this next 2 years and leaving the rest to you, I felt enormously good, not just for my party but for my country, to look at all of you, to know what I know about all of you, to know about your backgrounds and your perspectives and your experience and your commitment, and to see how in this caucus we have bridged every divide of America that will help us to bring our country together and go forward. And I'm very proud to be here with you today.

Let me say that when I ran for President in 1991 and 1992, I used to say something that seems almost strange today. I said one of the reasons that I left a job at home that I loved and undertook this campaign is that I didn't want to see my daughter's generation grow up to be the first generation of Americans not to do as well economically or in terms of quality of life as their parents had done. Nobody worries about that anymore, but we did then.

And what we had before that was more than a decade in which the leaders of the other party talked tough but took the easy way out. We were unashamed to be compassionate, unashamed that we cared about those who needed a hand up in life. But we were unafraid, when it came down to it, to take the tough decisions that cost many of our fellow Democrats their seats in Congress but gave the American economy and the

American people a new lease on the 21st century.

So what we came here today to talk about builds on what has happened in the last 6 years. It builds on our way of approaching our political responsibilities here, to put people ahead of partisanship and common sense ahead of ideology. Now, we've already talked about how we turned the red ink to black—that that helped to produce the longest peacetime expansion in our history, the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957.

We ought to point out that we did it in a way that looked to the future, not only reducing the deficit but doubling our investment in education and training, putting 100,000 more police on our streets, making dramatic increases in medical research, immunizing 90 percent of our children from basic childhood diseases for the first time ever, providing millions and millions of people with the benefit of the family and medical leave law, and making our environment cleaner. We showed, in other words, that we could balance the budget and honor our common values as Americans.

Now that, to use Senator Daschle's phrase, America is working again, the question is: What shall we do? And we're here to say that, as proud as we are of the record of the last 6 years, this is not a time to boast about the past but to fulfill our solemn duty to the next generation, to meet the long-term challenges our Nation faces.

We're for stronger families, with our child care program and our after-school learning, for a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, for the bipartisan legislation to help people with disabilities move into the workplace, for tax relief to help families provide long-term care, for an increase in the minimum wage and equal pay for men and women, and more free enterprise in our poorest inner-city and rural communities. We're for 50,000 more police on the street and better technology for police, especially in the areas where crime is still too high. We stand together to pass the Earth on to our children with our livability initiative for less traffic congestion and more green space. We stand together, as the Vice President has said, for strong, modern, more accountable schools, for giving teachers like Maureen the support they need to do even better.

Last winter, as has already been said, we issued our call, for the first time, for 100,000 more highly trained teachers, to bring class size down in the early grades. And last fall the Republicans in Congress finally agreed to make a significant downpayment toward that goal. Now, in the next few days, the Senate will vote on whether to finish the job of hiring 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size. It will be our first big chance this year to prove to the American people that we are prepared to put people over party. Let's say politics stops at the schoolhouse door.

Now, I'd also like to ask that politics stop and that the Republican majority in Congress stand with us in meeting the greatest challenge we face, the aging of America. Life expectancy is rising; the number of older Americans will double by the year 2030. There will be only two people working for one person drawing Social Security by that time. Even before then, because people over 80 are the fastest growing group of Americans as a percentage of our country, Medicare will run out of money within 9 years.

Now, I particularly appreciated what Edwin Beale said about this being an issue facing younger, as well as older, Americans and not only because younger Americans would like to know they will have health care in retirement when they reach their retirement years, but also because the quality of life of the children of people on Medicare and Social Security and their ability to raise their grandchildren will be directly dependent upon whether they had to take needed resources away from their own family to care for their parents in ways that previous generations have not. This is a big issue.

But I want to say again—and I feel this with greater conviction as I grow older by the day—this is a high-class problem. We face this challenge because we're living longer. We face this challenge because of the fruits of the medical research that the Congress has funded. We should not be handwringing here. We should be embracing this with joy. This is the inevitable result of our efforts to not only lengthen life but to improve its quality. And because the Democrats took the lead so many years ago, first in Social

Security and then in Medicare, we have a special responsibility to the American people to take the lead in resolving this.

Now, let me restate clearly our principles and where I think we are in this debate now because how we resolve these issues will shape how we resolve the other issues in this session of Congress. First, we should devote 62 percent of the surplus for the next 15 years to saving Social Security, to guarantee the soundness of Social Security for the next 55 years, and to enable us to make further choices, some of which will be difficult, to extend Social Security for 75 years, provide help for elderly women, too many of whom are in poverty, and lift the earnings limit on people on Social Security.

Second, we should devote another 15 percent of the surplus to Medicare, to secure that vital program until the year 2020. And again, I believe we should go further, with broader reforms to strengthen and improve Medicare and to meet the greatest growing need of our seniors, affordable prescription drugs.

If we do this, that will still leave funds for other investments or for tax reduction. I believe we should devote over $500 billion of this surplus to give working families tax relief, creating universal savings accounts, USA accounts, that will help all Americans share in the Nation's wealth and build nest eggs for retirement. If we do these things—saving Social Security, saving Medicare, empowering more Americans to save for their own retirement—we will fulfill our historic challenge to meet the difficulties and the opportunities of the aging of America in a way that provides a stronger economy and more stable families for our children.

If we use the surplus to save Social Security and strengthen Medicare, we will for the next 15 years and beyond, be paying down the national debt, if we follow the proposal that we have made. We can reduce publicly held debt to its lowest level since 1917, before we moved into World War I.

Let me say, for a Member of Congress what that means is, 15 years from now, Congress will be allocating only 2 cents of every tax dollar to pay interest on the debt, instead of the 13 cents you have to take off the top today, before you can pass another bill to do another thing. That means—and again, I was glad to hear Michael Saylor, who told that astonishing story of his company starting with $132 and winding up with 1,000 employees and hundreds of millions of dollars of wealth that have been created. You remember what he said? He said what they need from Government is a responsible set of rational decisions that keep interest rates low and the economy strong. That is the most important thing. And if we do this, we will drive down interest rates for the next 15 to 20 years. We could actually have our country completely out of debt, under this policy, in 18 years. And in a world in which the economy of other countries is obviously troubled at the moment and in which future events are not predictable, we know one thing for sure: If we pay down this debt and things are troubled beyond our borders, we'll do a lot better and interest rates will be a lot lower than they otherwise would have been. If things go well in the global economy, because of our efforts and others, we will do even better than we otherwise would have done.

And we know that the success of the American economy has reinforced the budget decisions made in 1993. We have got to keep this going. So I say, take care of Social Security; take care of Medicare; pay down the debt; keep the economy going. These things are the most important things we can do for our children in the 21st century.

Now, let me say where I think we are now. I have, frankly, been gratified to see the Republican leaders have quickly joined us in supporting the first idea, dedicating 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security. At least, I believe the word they used was "setting aside" 62 percent of the surplus, and I'll come back to that in a moment. I've been further encouraged to see some of the Republicans backing away from the irresponsible across-the-board tax cut that is too costly, in favor of standing with us for targeted tax cuts benefiting mostly middle-class working families.

Last week the majority leaders in Congress actually placed an ad in USA Today, with a nice letter promising to save Social Security, to give our children the world's best schools, to target tax relief to the middle class. That was the most welcome news I've

read in USA Today, in terms of progress, since the NBA strike ended. [*Laughter*] And I was encouraged by it.

But I want to make it clear, there are still strong differences in our approach, and we must resolve them in a way that benefits the American people, in the Vice President's words, that benefit Republicans and independents and Democrats alike. We have to do what's right for the country.

First, while the Republicans are joining me in talking about setting aside a substantial part of the surplus for debt reduction and, presumably, for Social Security—and we welcome that—they still have said nothing about how they would extend the life of Social Security and whether they would dedicate all 62 percent of this surplus for that purpose. And that is very important.

Second, I ask the Republican majority to join us in devoting a portion—15 percent—of the surplus to save Medicare. Now, this is very important. They have not done that so far. And as you see from the difficulties of others who have struggled with these issues and the fact that health care costs are beginning to rise again, we cannot secure Medicare as a guarantee for our seniors with any reasonable set of reforms and keep it a recognizable, universal program, unless we also invest some more money in the program.

You can talk to any hospital that's administering programs that have Medicare patients. You can talk to any doctor. You can talk to anybody who's dealt with this program. We must have more money. So I ask those—especially those who still maintain that somehow, out of the surplus, they can afford a very large across-the-board tax cut—where will they find the resources to extend the life of Medicare?

I am not opposed to responsible reforms that enable us to secure Medicare for an even longer period and to begin to add this prescription drug benefit so that we can really help people who need it. But I'm telling you, we cannot deal with the Medicare problem without a greater investment of money.

So, let's say, use the budget surplus to save Social Security, to save Medicare, to pay down the debt. Then we can have an honest and principled disagreement about how much and what kind of tax cut we need with the rest—about how much should go to education; how much should go to defense; how much should go to medical research. But the first and most important things are save Social Security, save Medicare, pay down the debt, secure the future of our children.

Now, we stand today unified. We stand today well aware of the challenges before us. But we stand today beleaguered by beepers and message machines. [*Laughter*] This is my last line I want to say about this. Will Rogers also used to say something that we do not have to disregard. He used to say, and I quote, ''You've got to be an optimist to be a Democrat, and you've got to be humorous to stay one.'' [*Laughter*]

Well, I urge you, let's bring a new energy to this session of Congress. When we get really frustrated by what seems to be excessive partisanship, let's remember these three fine American citizens who talked to us today and the stories they told and the hundreds of millions of people they represent. Let's keep our optimism, our good cheer, our resolve, and our unity, to give them the 21st century they deserve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in the Thomas Jefferson Building, Library of Congress. In his remarks, he referred to Maureen Marshall, special education teacher, Springfield Estate Elementary School, Springfield, VA; Edwin Beale, graduate student, Tuskegee University; and Michael J. Saylor, founder, president, and chief executive officer, MicroStrategy, Inc. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore, Senator Thomas A. Daschle, and Representative Richard A. Gephardt.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

March 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain