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what could have been done. But this should be a wake-up call for all parents. We can never take our children for granted. We must never let the lines of communication, no matter how frayed, be broken altogether. Our children need us, even if they don't know it sometimes.

This terrible tragedy must not be an occasion for silence. This weekend I ask all parents, if they have not already done so, to sit down and talk to their children about what happened at Littleton and what is happening in their schools and their lives.

If we are not careful, when our children move through their teen years and begin to create their own separate lives, the bustle and burden of our daily lives can cause families to drift too far apart, to ignore the still-strong needs of children for genuine concern and guidance and honest conversation. This is sometimes the hardest thing of all, but it is vital, and lives depend on it.

Finally, I ask students to do more to help each other. Next week, if you have not already done so, I ask every student in America to look for someone at school who is not in your group. You know, there have always been different crowds in schools, and there always will be. This, too, is an inevitable part of growing up and finding your own path through life. But it should not be an occasion for disrespect or hostility in our schools. After all, our children are all on the same journey, even if they're trying to chart different paths. And this can be profoundly important in building a safer future.

The spirit of America can triumph in this troubling moment, and I am convinced it will. But we must build the energy and will and passion of our country and the fundamental goodness of our people into a grassroots movement to turn away from violence and to give all our children the safe and wholesome childhoods they richly deserve.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the National Economy

April 30, 1999

Today we received more good news for America's working families about our economy. In the first quarter of this year, the U.S. economy expanded at a robust 4.5 percent annual rate. Driven by high investment and vigorous consumer demand, America's expansion continues to grow steady and strong.

Strong growth, high investment, low inflation, and low unemployment are a winning combination and more evidence that we should stick with an economic strategy that has helped usher in a new era of prosperity for the American people.

Memorandum on Emergency Refugee Admissions Consultations Relating to Kosovars

April 30, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 1999 Emergency Refugee Admissions Consultations Relating to Kosovars

In accordance with section 207(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(b)), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning the authorization of 20,000 emergency refugee admissions during FY 1999, which would be allocated to Europe for the purpose of admitting Kosovar refugees to the United States.

William J. Clinton

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