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Townsend of Maryland; Gov. Roy Barnes of Georgia; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; Maryland State Senate President Thomas V. (Mike) Miller, Jr., and House Speaker Casper R. Taylor, Jr.; civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; Mayor Debra Powell of East St. Louis, IL; Mayor Kirk Watson of Austin, TX; Mayor Donald T. Cunningham, Jr., of Bethlehem, PA; Minnesota State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge; Georgia State Labor Commissioner Michael L. Thurmond; and Hiram Eastland, founding member, Mississippi Democratic Leadership Council.

Statement on the Proposed "African Growth and Opportunity Act"

July 14, 1999

This week Congress has a chance to pass a bill that can transform our relationship with an entire continent for the better. The "African Growth and Opportunity Act" promises a new partnership with Africa based on mutual respect and mutual responsibility.

Last week African nations signed two significant documents—a cease-fire in Congo and a peace agreement ending the war in Sierra Leone. With these agreements, and with democratic government in Nigeria and a new leadership in South Africa, we have an historic opportunity. The United States must do everything we can right now to support the efforts Africans are making to build democracy and respect for human rights, advance peace, and lay the foundation for prosperity and growth.

This bill supports education and job creation so that all of Africa's children can grow up educated and productive. It supports better health care and the flow of ideas and technology that will help Africa's doctors save more lives.

This bill has strong bipartisan support in Congress, nearly unanimous support from the nations of Africa, and brings together a broad group of concerned citizens on both continents—from Jack Kemp and Andrew Young to the African Association of Women Entrepreneurs. It represents an effort to build a partnership with African nations that involves listening and working with them. It serves America's national interests in creating new markets for American goods and services; in building strong, reliable, and democratic partners overseas; and in creating a more prosperous and stable world. I urge Congress to seize this opportunity by passing the "African Growth and Opportunity Act."

Statement on the Deutch-Specter Commission Report

July 14, 1999

I welcome the report of the Commission To Assess the Organization of the Federal Government To Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (the Deutch-Specter Commission).

The Chairman, John Deutch, the Vice Chairman, Senator Specter, and other commissioners have provided a comprehensive study of how we should organize the U.S. Government to deal with the threat of proliferation, which poses one of the most serious challenges to national and international security that we face.

The Commission's report contains a number of interesting recommendations and observations that deserve serious consideration. I have asked my National Security Adviser, Samuel Berger, to coordinate an interagency review and assessment of the Commission's recommendations and report back to me within 60 days with advice on specific steps.

Executive Order 13130—National Infrastructure Assurance Council

July 14, 1999

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in order to support a coordinated effort by both government and private sector entities to address threats to our Nation's critical infrastructure, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Establishment.* (a) There is established the National Infrastructure Assurance Council (NIAC). The NIAC shall be composed of not more than 30 members appointed by the President. The members of the NIAC shall be selected from the private