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So it is not only for humanitarian reasons that I have sought to end the slaughter in Kosovo and Bosnia, to try to bring peace from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, to try to deal with the test ban treaty. It's also very much in the immediate daily interest of the people of this city, this State, and this Nation. This is a different and a better country than it was in 1992, and I'm grateful that I had a role to play in it. But don't be deceived here. It wasn't because of me; it was because what we did was the right thing to do. It is the ideas, the policies, the direction, the conviction of where we're going—that's what counts.

And you can keep America changing in the right way with the right decisions in all these elections in 2000. After those elections, I'll just be a citizen again, but I took forward to bearing this message for the rest of my life. And I thank you for being here to help make America work.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Eiffel Tower Restaurant at the Paris Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Oscar B. Goodman and former Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; Senatorial candidate Ed Bernstein; Arthur M. Goldberg, president and chief executive officer, Park Place Entertainment; President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin of France; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Fire at the Department of Commerce

October 1, 1999

I am relieved that today's fire at the Department of Commerce was extinguished quickly and apparently without any serious injuries. The DC Fire Department and all those who worked to put out the fire deserve credit for ensuring the safety of the Department of Commerce employees who work at the Herbert Hoover Building. I hope that the damage can be repaired quickly and that Secretary Daley and his entire team can be back to full speed as soon as possible.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Proposed "Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1999"

October 1, 1999

Yesterday's nuclear accident in Japan is a tragic reminder that we must do everything in our power to ensure safe, responsible handling of radioactive materials. Upon reviewing Senate bill 1287, regarding potential nuclear waste disposal at Yucca Mountain, I have determined that it would not adequately ensure the protection of public health and safety. If this bill is presented to me in its current form, I will veto it.

I am encouraged that this latest Senate bill, the "Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1999," does not seek to authorize interim storage of nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain before a thorough scientific analysis of the site has been completed. That would be an unconscionable mistake, and I have consistently opposed such proposals in the past. However, the bill would take away the existing authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to protect public health and safety. It is vital that this authority be preserved.

I urge the Congress to join with me in opposing this legislation and ensuring that we fulfill our responsibility to protect this and future generations.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7231—Fire Prevention Week, 1999

October 1, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Of the many disasters that affect our communities in a given year, fire is one that Americans can actually prevent; and, through early warning and appropriate response, we can minimize the havoc fire wreaks when it