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States; everybody around the globe has a stake into that.

And for me, I cannot agree more than the President that the leadership of the United States for the allies is extremely important. And keep up the good fight.

And unfortunately, we have to go. *Merci beaucoup*. Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 181st news conference began at 12:05 p.m. in the Parliament Building. In his remarks, he referred to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy of Canada. The President also referred to LIHEAP, the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on an Inappropriate Metaphor Used in Discussing the Irish Peace Process

October 8, 1999

Earlier today, in a discussion of the Irish peace process, I used a metaphor that was inappropriate. I want to express my regret for any offense my remark caused.

Proclamation 7236—Leif Erikson Day, 1999

October 8, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In preparing for the new millennium, Americans have become increasingly aware of the richness of our Nation's history and heritage and of the generations of men and women whose contributions have brought us safely to this moment in our American journey.

One of those remarkable individuals was Leif Erikson, who led a small, intrepid band on a voyage of discovery across the North Atlantic from Greenland, arriving on the coast of North America almost a thousand years ago. The courage, resourcefulness, and fortitude of Leif Erikson and the other Viking seafarers foreshadowed the strength and character of the many Nordic pioneers who would make their own voyage to America centuries later. Building new lives through hard work, they also helped build our Nation and sustain our fundamental values of freedom, justice, and democracy.

The millions of Nordic Americans who have contributed so much to our peace and prosperity through the decades have also strengthened the bonds of friendship between the United States and the people Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and Norway. With a shared past and common ideals, we have worked in partnership to promote democracy and opportunity around the world. Through our Northern European Initiative, the Nordic countries and the United States continue to promote our common values in the region and to facilitate Baltic and Russian integration into Western institutions.

The next millennium will hold great challenge and great promise for our Nation and for the people of the Nordic countries. We have only to look back on the achievements of Leif Erikson to rekindle our spirit of adventure and to inspire us as we embark on our own exploration of the uncharted territory of the future.

In honor of Leif Erikson, son of Iceland, grandson of Norway, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on September 2, 1964 (Public Law 88–566), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

Now Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 1999, as Leif Erikson Day. I encourage the people of the United States to observe this occasion with appropriate ceremonies and activities commemorating our rich Nordic American heritage.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton