

[At this point, Maj. William Mullen III, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.]

The President. Now we have a special treat to cap off this event. But before I introduce the final presenter, I want to say again how much I appreciate the very large delegation from Congress from both parties who are here and particularly the fact that every Representative from our home State is here, Representative Hutchinson, Representative Dickey, Representative Berry, and Congressman Vic Snyder, the Congressman from Central High School. Thank you all for being here.

And I want to thank the really large number of people from our home State, from Arkansas, who are here, many who live in Washington, many who have come up here from Arkansas to be here, and thank all of you for coming.

And now I would like to ask Reverend Wintley Phipps to come forward to sing us on our way, a great gift to America. And thank you for sharing your time and your gift with us. God bless you, sir.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to gospel singer Rev. Wintley Phipps, and civil rights activists Daisy Bates, who died on November 4. The Congressional Gold Medals were presented to Ernest Green, Elizabeth Eckford, Jefferson Thomas, Dr. Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls Lanier, Minnijean Brown Trickey, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Thelma Mothershed-Wair, and Melba Pattillo Beals, collectively known as the Little Rock Nine.

Statement on Minimum Wage Legislation

November 9, 1999

The Senate Republican leadership made a serious mistake by insisting on using a minimum wage increase as a cynical tool to advance special interest tax breaks that aren't paid for and do little to help working families. I cannot let this bill become law in its current form. I once again call on Congress to give working American families the pay raise they

deserve. Congress should pass clean legislation that boosts the minimum wage by one dollar over the next 2 years and simply restores the value of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. American workers deserve no less.

Statement on the Resignation of Michel Camdessus as Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund

November 9, 1999

Today I want to express my appreciation to Michel Camdessus, who announced his intention to resign as Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, for his years of service. Mr. Camdessus exhibited strong leadership during his two-plus terms at the IMF. His tireless efforts helped contain the fallout from the East Asian economic crisis in 1997 and 1998, improve the global financial architecture, increase the transparency of the IMF itself, establish "good practices" for transparency of national governments, and create greater focus on debt relief for the world's poorest countries. I will greatly miss working with Mr. Camdessus in the international economic policy arena and wish him the best in his retirement.

Remarks to the Democratic National Committee Women's Leadership Forum Reception

November 9, 1999

Thank you. Well, Janice, thank you, and thanks for giving this group such a build-up when you said there were 300 here for Tipper and 250 for me. [Laughter] This is the first concrete manifestation I have had of the fact that I'm the only one in this crowd not running for anything anymore. [Laughter]

Let me first of all say, I'm delighted to be here. I got a good report from Hillary on her visit with you, and thank you for the good reception you gave her. I brought—I see Ann Lewis is here. I brought Minyon Moore, my political director, with me, and the new head of our women's outreach office,