

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Hinojosa's wife, Martha Lopez Hinojosa, and their daughter Karen; Zeke and Livia Reyna and Alonzo and Yoli Cantu, luncheon hosts; Texas State Senator Carlos Truan; and former Texas State Attorney General Dan Morales.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
Extension of Normal Trade
Relations Status With Albania**

February 9, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Albania. The report indicates continued Albanian compliance with U.S. and international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restrictions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania was not in violation of paragraphs (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 402(a) of the Trade Act of 1974 or paragraphs (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 409(a) of that Act. That action allowed for the continuation of normal trade relations (NTR) status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual report is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 9, 2000.

**Message to Congress Reporting on
Rescissions and Deferrals**

February 9, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report three rescissions of budget authority, totaling \$128 million, and two deferrals of budget authority, totaling \$1.6 million.

The proposed rescissions affect the programs of the Department of Energy and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The proposed deferrals affect programs of the Department of State and International Assistance Programs.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 9, 2000.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Rotterdam Convention on the
Prior Informed Consent Procedure
for Certain Hazardous Chemicals
and Pesticides in International Trade
With Annexes**

February 9, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, with Annexes, done at Rotterdam, September 10, 1998. The report of the Department of State is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention, which was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Program and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, with the active participation of the United States, provides a significant and valuable international tool to promote sound risk-based decision-making in the trade of certain hazardous chemicals. Building on a successful voluntary procedure, the Convention requires Parties to exchange information about these chemicals, to communicate national decisions about their import, and to require that exports from their territories comply with the import decisions of other Parties.

The United States, with the assistance and cooperation of industry and nongovernmental organization, plays an important international leadership role in the safe management of hazardous chemicals and pesticides. This Convention, which assists developing countries in evaluating risks and enforcing their regulatory decisions regarding

trade in such chemicals, advances and promotes U.S. objectives in this regard. All relevant Federal agencies support early ratification of the Convention for this reason, and we understand that the affected industries and interest groups share this view.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to the understanding described in the accompanying report of the Secretary of State.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 9, 2000.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Dallas, Texas

February 9, 2000

Thank you. First of all, Fred, thank you for what you said, and I thank you and Lisa for being wonderful friends to me and Hillary and to Al and Tipper Gore and to our party. I thank Jess and Betty Jo for being here tonight. I can't help but say, Betty Jo is the niece of former Speaker Carl Albert, who passed away in the last couple of days, a great Democrat. And I had a wonderful talk with his wife today, and it reminded me of why I have been a Democrat all my life. And our thoughts and prayers are with your family.

I thank "B" and Audre Rapoport and Garry Mauro for their work here. And I wanted to acknowledge not only the mayor, who I think has done a superb job, and Senator Cain, thank you for being here, and Sally, thank you for being here and for being our regional Department of Education person, for all the good work you do. But I also want to introduce a former very important person on my White House staff, Regina Montoya, who is now a candidate for the House, who is here. I want you all to help her get elected to Congress. We need to win this seat. [Applause] Thank you. She's here, I think.

I got tickled—I started laughing all over again when Ed Rendell was up here talking about the rap that the Republican chairman laid on him after the New Hampshire primary. He said, we were the candidate of spe-

cial interests, and he mentioned—what did he say—trial lawyers, labor, gays, and Hollywood. [Laughter]

Let me take you back to 1992. In 1991, I was having the time of my life living in Arkansas in the 11th year of my governorship. I had had a new lease on life. I loved my job. I could have done it now to kingdom come. But I was really worried about my country, because that's the kind of stuff that everybody in Washington said, what Ed just said. And there was a Republican line and a Democratic line. There was a liberal line and a Republican line. And everybody was struggling to be politically correct and to be as confrontational as possible, because that is the only way you would get your 15 seconds on the evening news.

I suppose it was perfectly good for the people who got on the talk shows all the time and the people who could raise funds for their reelection and stay in, but the country was in the ditch. Even when we were nominally in a recovery, we couldn't generate any jobs. And we had quadrupled the debt in 12 years, and we didn't have much to show for it, because we were spending less in real terms on things that we needed, like education.

The reason I ran for President is that I had been working on all this stuff for a long time, and it became clear to me there were limits to what any Governor or any people could do, or people in their private lives could do to turn America around until we had a National Government that had it right—that had the right philosophy that was dynamic and change-oriented and was interested in bringing people together and was committed to creating the conditions and giving people the tools to succeed in a very different world.

So I admit that what the chairman of the Republican Party said is right, but I don't think he got it right. That is, I'm not ashamed of the fact we've got a lot of trial lawyers here. I'm not ashamed of the fact that I think, if people have been shafted, they ought to be able to go to court and pursue their remedy. I also want to say this: I'm also proud of the fact that we've had a real relationship. This has not been a political deal. We haven't 100 percent agreed on everything. We've had