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daughter, Jenny Mae, in the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Statement Announcing Embassy Security Initiatives

February 10, 2000

Today I am announcing initiatives to further improve the security of American men and women serving their country in diplomatic and consular missions overseas and to ensure that the United States performs these activities in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

I intend to request $1.1 billion in my budget for fiscal year 2001 for Embassy security initiatives including construction of new facilities, additional protective measures for existing facilities, and the full cost of maintaining a high level of security readiness. The budget also includes a sustained commitment to this effort, including $14 billion over the next 10 years in security enhancement funding and new construction. I will again ask the Congress to provide advance appropriations for the construction of new facilities in future years to provide a solid foundation on which to plan and execute the Embassy security construction program.

We must continue to reexamine how we manage and protect all U.S. Government employees who work overseas. Last year, following on the excellent work of Admiral Crowe and the Accountability Review Board, the Secretary of State appointed a panel, chaired by Lewis Kaden, to review our overseas operations. The Overseas Presence Advisory Panel included a distinguished array of individuals with diplomatic, military, and governmental experience, as well as important members of the business community. The Panel's report last November recommended a wide range of improvements in rightsizing, managing, improving, and protecting our staff who work abroad. The report also recommended changes to the way our representatives overseas work as a team in support of American interests and in the management and financing of U.S. Government overseas facilities.

The Panel has made an important contribution to our Nation's security and the conduct of international affairs. My budget proposals reflect and fully support their recommendation that a greater commitment is needed in this critical area. I also agree with their recommendation for review and improvement in the way we manage our overseas presence.

I have asked the Secretary of State to lead a Cabinet committee to implement the Panel's recommendations regarding rightsizing. This process will look at the full range of agency staff, who serve in U.S. missions abroad, and make recommendations about the appropriate levels and skills with which we should staff our Embassies in the new century. It will also review and make recommendations regarding the management, financing, and computerization of overseas facilities.

I ask the Congress to join me in working to protect America's presence throughout the world and to ensure that we maintain the best and most effective presence overseas to serve America's interests.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Russia-United States Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters With Documentation

February 10, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Moscow on June 17, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, a related exchange of notes and the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including terrorism, money laundering, organized crime and drug-trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes obtaining the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records and other items; serving documents; locating or identifying persons and items; executing requests for searches and seizures; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; locating and immobilizing assets for purposes of forfeiture, restitution, or collection of fines; and any other form of legal assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested Party.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 10, 2000.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Bilateral Assistance to Opposition-Controlled Areas of Sudan

February 10, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 592(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000 (Public Law 106–113), I hereby transmit to you a report concerning U.S. bilateral assistance to opposition-controlled areas of Sudan.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, and Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Interview With the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times, and USA Today

February 10, 2000

National Economy

Q. I guess I wanted to ask you, given the way that the economy is going—given that there's been so much growth, and it's been so successful—how much credit do you think that you and your administration can realistically take, compared to the other factors that people talk about? There's been some discussion, I'm sure you know, recently, with people crediting everything, going back to President Reagan. And I'm just curious on that topic, what your views are?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, if you look at the difference in the expansions of the eighties and the nineties, we had a—the one in the eighties was funded by an old-fashioned explosion of deficit spending. But it built in a structural deficit, which guaranteed profound long-term problems for the economy, very high interest rates, and very slow job growth.

There was a lot of commentary in '91 and '92 about how, even though nominally a recovery had begun, I think some of the writers called it a "triple dip" phenomenon, that we kept sliding back and sliding back.

So I think the main thing we did was to cut interest rates by getting rid of the deficit. And I think that if you go back and read all—I remember what a boost in the bond market there was when we just—when Lloyd Bentsen announced our economic program in December of '92. So I think our main contribution in the short run was to make it absolutely clear that we would have a consistent, disciplined fiscal approach that would cut and then eventually eliminate the deficit. And I think that played a major role in the investment boom. And it cut interest rates, which also put more money in consumers' pockets, which helped fuel the consumer side of this recovery.

But I think that the consistent policies of the Government that go back to the previous administrations, that reflected the second leg of our approach, which also deserves credit, which is keeping the markets open. You've had three administrations here in a row committed—in the eighties and the nineties—committed to open trade. And I think that that's been very good, because that's kept inflation down and spurred continuing competitiveness. And I do believe the previous administrations deserve credit for that.

Then I don't—you know, the lion's share of the credit belongs to the people in the