

China and almost guarantee the very things they say they're worried about.

Look, this is an economic no-brainer. It's almost—it's amazing to me that anybody could say the contrary. China opens all their markets to us for reducing tariffs, allowing us to invest there, allowing us to open business there. In some areas, we no longer have to transfer technology. We get special rights outside the WTO if they bombard our markets unfairly with cheap products that forge a big surge and throw a lot of Americans out of business. We have special rights in this agreement to go against them, something most Members of Congress don't know. So it is clearly an economic plus.

So the real issue is, from the point of view of national security, do you want them in the international system, as responsible players, or do you want to say, "We don't want you in the international system until you're governed exactly the way we think you should be, and until you do exactly what we think you should. And until that time, we will keep you out. So there."

Now, based on all your knowledge of human nature, which do you think is more likely to produce constructive partnerships and constructive conduct on the part of the Chinese? All I can tell you is, I know this is an election year. I know that some Members are receiving pressure—in both parties, I might add. I think it is very interesting that most of the religious groups, for example, that have done missionary work in China and have seen the impact of religious persecution or the absence of religious liberty there—virtually all of them that have actually worked in China strongly favor China's coming into the WTO because they understand once there are millions and millions of Internet connections, once the Chinese are open to the world, once they are involved in an international system, the Government will be more likely to be responsible, and the people will be more likely to find their own freedom.

And I believe that if we do not do this, that our country will be regretting this 5, 10, 15, 20 years from now. We will be shaking our heads saying, what in the world got a hold of our judgment in the year 2000? If we do it, 10 years from now, we will marvel that it was ever even a hard debate. That's

what I believe. And so I'm going to stick with it, and I believe we'll make it.

Now, the statement on Taiwan may get harder, but you have to see it in the context of the electoral politics playing out in Taiwan and not necessarily assume that some destructive action will follow—just as I saw the Taiwanese provocative comments in the context of the Taiwanese elections.

Thank you. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. Following the President's remarks, he went to the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel for presentation of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards, but a fire in the hotel at the beginning of the President's remarks prevented him from completing his participation in the ceremony.

Statement on the Report of the Interagency Task Force on the United States Coast Guard Roles and Missions

February 25, 2000

I am pleased to receive the report of the Interagency Task Force on the U.S. Coast Guard Roles and Missions. I extend my sincere appreciation to Chairman Mortimer Downey and the 15 other members who provided advice as to the appropriate future roles and missions for our Coast Guard. I also would like to commend the leadership of Secretary Rodney Slater and the Department of Transportation for their vision and vigilance in maintaining safety—my administration's highest transportation priority.

As we have witnessed time and again, and most recently with the tragic loss of Alaska Air Flight 261, the Coast Guard provides America with a maritime military and a multimission presence that is flexible and adaptable.

The Coast Guard will continue to safeguard America's maritime safety and security. I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure that the world's best Coast Guard remains as its motto proclaims: *Semper-Paratus*—Always Ready.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 19

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton attended the wedding of a former White House staff member at the Foundry United Methodist Church.

February 22

The President announced his intention to nominate Michelle Andrews Smith to be Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Laurence E. Pope to be Ambassador to Kuwait.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rose M. Likins to be Ambassador to El Salvador.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Edward Herbst to be Ambassador to Uzbekistan.

The President announced his intention to nominate Howard Franklin Jeter to be Ambassador to Nigeria.

The President announced his intention to nominate A. Elizabeth Jones to be Ambassador to Germany.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Robert Dinerstein, Ann Forts, Sally Jochum, Deborah Spitalnik, and Cathy Ficker Terrill as members of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

February 23

In the morning, the President met with King Juan Carlos I of Spain in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patrick Francis Kennedy to be Representative of the U.S. to the European Office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Nina V. Fedoroff and Diana S. Natalicio to be members of the National Science Board.

Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

The White House announced that the President will travel to Aachen and Berlin, Germany, on May 1-2.

February 24

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and in the evening, he traveled to New York City.

Later, the President traveled to Chappaqua, NY.

February 25

In the morning, the President returned to the Washington, DC.

In the afternoon, the President went to the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel for the presentation of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards, but a fire in the hotel at the beginning of the President's remarks prevented him from completing his participation in the ceremony.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted February 22

John Edward Herbst, of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Howard Franklin Jeter, of South Carolina, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

A. Elizabeth Jones, of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.