

But we're making a grave mistake when we continue to put up excuses for that for which there is no excuse and to pretend that this is the only area of our national life where only punishment and not prevention is the answer.

So I thank the folks who are here. I wish Representative Lofgren well, and I particularly appreciate the leadership of the women Members of the Congress in this issue that affects all of us.

I would like to now call on someone who, of all the people on this stage, has paid the highest price for our failure to do the right thing by our country, Representative Carolyn McCarthy.

*[At this point, Representatives Carolyn McCarthy, Constance A. Morella, and Zoe Lofgren made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** I want to leave you with two thoughts. First of all, not many people who pay the price Carolyn McCarthy did wind up having the personal strength to run for Congress. One of the biggest problems here is most of the people out there whose kids get killed in crimes or by accident, it's all they can do to put their own lives back together, take care of the rest of their kids, and go on with their lives. I can't believe that Suzann Wilson is still doing this after all these years.

There is only a—it was just kind of a God's grace that Jim and Sarah Brady happened to be nationally prominent people and in a situation where they could go on. Mike Barnes is trying to organize people that don't have anything like the natural inclination or ability to come up with the kind of money and power and then employ the kind of tactics that the typical lobby group does. But they're everywhere.

Yesterday I was contacted by a man that I've known for many years, to remind me of the incredible damage done to his family when his son and his son's friend were playing with a gun that killed the friend. His son doesn't have a mark on him, but it took him years to get over it, watching his best friend die there. There are people like this everywhere. And they shouldn't be denied and disenfranchised just because they're not organized. You have to speak for them.

The second thing I want to say is Congressman John Lewis is here. The Sunday before last, I joined him in the 35th anniversary of marching over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, a march that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act. People in our lifetime, those of us that are old enough, over 35, actually died so all Americans could vote. I don't think they marched and died so that their votes would vanish in a howl of special interest politics in Washington. That's not what the Constitution or the Bill of Rights or the civil rights revolution was all about.

This is about more than guns. This is about whether democracy works. So I ask you, don't just go out and talk about how well these women did today and how moved you are. Do something. Mobilize your friends to do something. We can win this battle with your help.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael D. Barnes, president, and Sarah Brady, chair, Handgun Control, Inc., and her husband, former White House Press Secretary James S. Brady, who was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan.

## **Statement on the Congressional Budget Resolution**

*March 15, 2000*

Today the Republican Congress took a first step on a risky budget that threatens to undermine the fiscal discipline that has led to our current economic prosperity. The budget blueprint they have endorsed fails to strengthen Social Security or Medicare, takes us off the path to paying down the debt by 2013, and threatens to slash key priorities like education, law enforcement, and the environment. It was the wrong approach for America last year—it is the wrong approach for America this year.

Republican leaders should work with me on a responsible budget that strengthens Social Security and Medicare, adds a prescription drug benefit, pays down the debt by 2013, and invests in education and other key priorities. Let's work together to meet

America's long-term challenges and keep our economy strong.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Transmitting a Report on Federal  
Agency Climate Change Programs  
and Activities**

March 15, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 568(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, as contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000 (Public Law 106-113), I transmit herewith an account of all Federal agency climate change programs and activities. This report includes both domestic and international programs and activities related to climate change, and contains data on both spending and performance goals.

As the comprehensive nature of this report indicates, my Administration believes that climate change presents one of the premier challenges that America—and the world—will face in this new century. Informed by sound science and based on prudent measures, I believe it is critical that the Federal Government provide leadership to address this serious challenge and to act on behalf of our citizens and future generations. Our action plan, as detailed in this report, features numerous investments in scientific research, in proven public-private partnerships, and in efforts to promote new and developing technologies and practices that will not only reduce greenhouse gases, but will provide significant new economic opportunities and savings for American businesses and consumers.

I appreciate the interest of the Congress in this important issue and in our efforts to address it. I urge the Congress to fully support these initiatives and to join my Administration in meeting the challenge of climate change.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

**Remarks at a Democratic National  
Committee Dinner in Baltimore,  
Maryland**

March 15, 2000

Thank you very much. Peter, Mrs. Angelos, thank you for this incredible evening. Thank you all for coming and for your support. Thank you, Governor, for the kind words you said and for the great work you're doing in Maryland to try to protect people from gun violence. And I want to say, I agree with you; you do have the best Lieutenant Governor in the United States in Maryland. Thank you, Kathleen, thank you very much. And I'm something of an expert on that subject, having served as a Governor for a dozen years, served with 150 different Governors. And I think—it's amazing to me how many times the team of Glendening and Kathleen Kennedy Townsend have put Maryland first in all kinds of reforms, from education to what's good for children to community service, and now in your attempts to do everything you can to protect your children from violence. And you should be very proud of this. This State is very, very well-governed, and I'm grateful to you.

I want to thank the other leaders who have come here: your State treasurer; your secretary of state; speaker of the house, who invited me to come back to address the delegates one last time before I leave. That's good. When people come up to me and start thanking me for what I've done, I feel like it's a eulogy, and I have to pinch myself to make sure I'm still alive. [Laughter] I'm always kind of surprised anybody wants me to show up anymore. [Laughter] So I thank you very much for that.

President Dixon, Commissioner Daniels, I thank all of you for being here. I want to say a special word of appreciation to the Congress Members who are here, Ben Cardin and Elijah Cummings, who have been great friends and allies of ours throughout these last 7 years. I thank you. And Peter Franchot, thank you for your support. And Pete Rawlings, before he was the head of your fortunes with his legislative position, we used to work together on the education commission of the State. And whenever I needed somebody who'd stand up and say I was right