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in 1996, because we stood firm for competition. And we got the E-rate, which is now providing $2.2 billion a year so that poor schools and libraries and hospitals can hook up to the Internet.

Second, he managed our positions, many of them on the environment, including the partnership for new generation vehicles, which I mentioned, and the climate change.

Third, he ran the RIGO program, which many of you were involved in, which in addition to reducing the size of Government, has dramatically improved the performance of many agencies, expanding health care for children and parents of working families, and the mental health parity issue, and the fatherhood initiative.

He cast the deciding vote on the economic plan and on the gun safety legislation in the Senate, and on every tough decision I had to make, from Haiti to Bosnia to Kosovo to loaning money to Mexico—now, there was a winner. The day I made that decision, there was a poll that said, by 81-15, the people didn't want me to do it. To taking on the gun issue and tobacco issue, to lobbying for NASA at the beginning and now all the calls he's made on China PNTR at the end, he's been there.

So I wanted to say that because we did this together. And that's the last thought I'll leave you with. Roosevelt loved ideas, had good ideas, but he had a first-class temperament, and he had a good time, and he enjoyed working with people. So you guys have got to keep working together. We've got to get behind all of our crowd; we've got to work to win elections. But afterward, remember, this document is a big deal.

Some day somebody will write a whole book on how this New Orleans Declaration was the foundation of the success of the last 8 years. That's what what you do at Hyde Park ought to be. And if you do it, you will change America forever for the better. And what happens in 2000 fundamentally is just as important as what happened in '92 and '96, because what a country does with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its character and vision and wisdom as what it does when its back is against the wall.

I've done everything I could to turn the ship of state around. Now you've got to make sure that it keeps sailing in the right direction.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library. In his remarks, he referred to former Ambassador William J. vanden Heuvel, president, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute; Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council, and his wife, Ginger; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Mayor Lee P. Brown of Houston, TX; Hong Kong Democratic Party Chair Martin Lee; Prime Minister Zhu Rongji of China; President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; and Georgia Department of Labor Commissioner Michael L. Thurmond.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa

May 22, 2000

President Mbeki, Mrs. Mbeki, distinguished members of the South African delegation, we welcome you back to America and to the White House, where we hope, despite the rain, you feel our warm welcome and you feel very much at home.

Sometimes the most important history is made quietly. Last June was such a day, when the people in townships in South Africa waited patiently in long lines to vote for President Mbeki, to elect him the new President of South Africa, and complete the first transition from one democratic government to another.

It reminded us that for all the setbacks, the 1990's were a time of extraordinary liberation for humankind, with democracy spreading to more people in 1999 than it did in 1989, the year the Iron Curtain came down.

President Mbeki, you embody both the courage of the long struggle that brought democracy to South Africa and the vision now needed to define South Africa's critical role in the new century. You are leading your nation and an entire continent forward, supporting peacemaking and peacekeeping, fighting against poverty and illiteracy and for economic opportunity.

Our nations have drawn closer together over the last few years, thanks in no small part to the remarkable work that you and Vice President Gore have done together to deepen our ties. Today we will move forward on many fronts, fighting common threats and removing barriers to trade and investment. Last Thursday I was proud to sign into law a bill that will build commerce and investment between us and many other nations in Africa and the Caribbean region.

As I said in South Africa in 1998, I believe in Africa's future, in its progress and its promise. Just one small example, last year three of the world's five fastest growing economies were in sub-Saharan Africa.

Of course, terrible problems remain in the Horn of Africa, where a senseless war is again claiming new victims; in the Congo and Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone, in Angola, and across the continent, where so many millions are too burdened by debt and so many innocents are dying of AIDS, TB, and malaria. These are hard challenges without easy answers, and they will test our partnership. But that is what partners are for, to solve big problems together.

The United States can and must work with South Africa and all our friends in Africa to fight poverty, disease, war, famine, and flood. We do so because it is right and because it is in our interests. If we want a world of rising growth and expanding markets, a world in which our security is not threatened by the spread of armed conflict, a world in which bitter ethnic and religious differences are resolved by force of argument, not force of arms, a world in which terrorists and criminals have no place to hide, a world in which economic activity does not destroy the natural environment for our children, a world in which children are healthy and go to school and don't die of AIDS in the streets or fight in wars, then we must be involved in Africa.

That is why we have passed the Africa trade bill, why we support debt relief for the poorest countries, why we have been working to recognize AIDS as a security threat to the United States, and why we have moved to make critical drugs available at affordable prices and to lead an international effort to develop vaccines for AIDS, TB, and malaria.

A few weeks ago, President Mbeki announced a new coat of arms for South Africa. The motto of the coat of arms, written in an ancient African language, means, "people who are different join together." That sentiment strikes close to the heart of what it means to be an American, as well as a South African. And it concisely summarizes our goal today and for the future, advancing a partnership between two nations that will always be different but are joined together by a profound commitment to freedom and to our common humanity.

We welcome you here, Mr. President, and we look forward to working with you.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 a.m. in the East Room at the White House, where President Mbeki was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, the President referred to President Mbeki's wife, Zanele. The President also referred to Public Law 106–200, the Trade and Development Act of 2000. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the President Mbeki.

Exchange With Reporters Following the Welcoming Ceremony for President Mbeki

May 22, 2000

HIV/AIDS Pharmaceuticals

Q. President Mbeki, do you think your government could be doing more to distribute the medicines for AIDS in South Africa?

President Mbeki. We are discussing that now with the U.N. aides and the WHO. Our Health Minister has just come back from Geneva. We want to look at all of those things so that we can move more effectively against AIDS.

Q. Is it true that you don't consider AZT necessarily a good drug in fighting it?

President Mbeki. I've never said that.

Q. How does that come about?

President Mbeki. Pure invention. Pure invention.

Q. So your position is what, now?

President Mbeki. I've never said that. No, what was said with regard to the anti-